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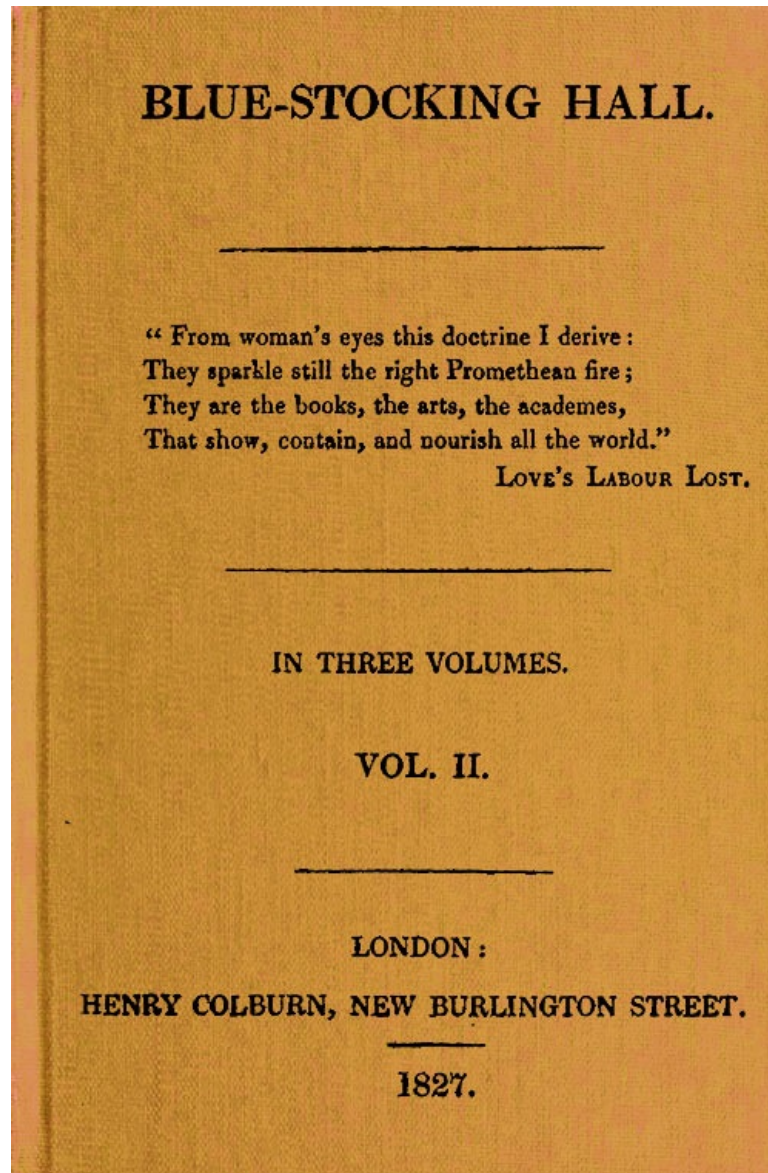
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK BLUE-STOCKING HALL, (VOL. 2 OF 3) ***



BLUE-STOCKING HALL.

"From woman's eyes this doctrine I derive:
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;
They are the books, the arts, the academes,
That show, contain, and nourish all the world."

LOVE'S LABOUR LOST.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1827.

BLUE-STOCKING HALL.

LETTER XII.

MR. OTWAY TO GENERAL DOUGLAS.

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[In point of *time*, this letter should not appear till later in the series; but as it is an answer to the preceding, the Editor judged it expedient to insert it in this place.]

Lisfarne.

My dear General,

It gave me sincere pleasure to see your hand-writing once more; and if I had required any thing beyond the gratification of an assurance that you had not forgotten your old friend, to put me in good humour, the commission which you have given me would secure all the benevolence of which I am possessed in excusing your long silence. Most readily do I accept the trust which you confide in me, and happy shall I be if my exertions facilitate the event of your return to your native land, there to enjoy the *otium cum dignitate* to which every man naturally aspires who has passed the best of his days in toiling for and realizing an honorable independence.

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It is one of the sophisms of this paradoxical age in which we live, to prove that the absentee commits no crime against either patriotism, or political economy; but I rejoice that you have not fallen into the snare, and are coming to repose your mind, and spend your money, where every honest man ought to bring himself to anchor; namely, in his own country, and amongst his own people. By a lucky coincidence there is a splendid mansion with highly finished grounds and plantations, just offered for sale in Hampshire; and if I am fortunate enough to conclude a bargain for the sum which I have offered in your name, I shall think myself no ordinary diplomatist. The present possessor, Sir Reginald Barnes, is like yourself, a *nabob*, but after rendering his demesne at Marsden a fit residence for a prince, he is grown weary of it, and is so anxious to dispose of the whole as it stands, that I am not without hope of procuring all you want at a single stroke.

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This letter shall be sent through Ingoldsby, to catch you at the Cape, and of my farther negociation with Mr. Snubb, Sir Reginald's agent, you shall have due notice. I know the place for which I am in treaty, and therefore, if I succeed, my *trouble* will be as *zero*. If not, I must look elsewhere, and you shall have reports of progress.

With respect to your relations, I have the pleasure to give you satisfactory intelligence. Your eldest brother, poor man, was rapidly advancing towards "that bourne from which no traveller returns," when Mr. Howard died and left him a fine estate, though very heavily burthened, in Buckinghamshire, together with his house in Grosvenor-square, plate, books, etcætera. To substitute the name of Howard for that of Douglas was all the qualification required to enable the family to take possession, and this was soon arranged. Your brother was taken to his grave without ever having visited any part of his new property, of which young Arthur is the heir, and a very fine youth he is: he will soon be of age, and is now on a visit in this neighbourhood to his aunt, Mrs. Henry Douglas, who lives at a sweet spot which you may remember that I purchased for my invaluable friend. A legacy of £20,000 left to your sister-in-law, by her great aunt, old Mrs. Norton, has enabled that first of women and mothers to reside at Glenalta, where she lives adored by her children, and by all who surround her dwelling. I have the happiness to enjoy the beloved society which her family affords, from which I am not more than half a mile distant, and here I shall hope to see you, ere long, added to the circle. Of Mrs. Howard and her daughters I only know by report: they live *in* the world, and I *out* of it; but of Caroline and her children I can venture to affirm, that had independence (beyond which their wishes never appear to extend) been withheld by Providence, you would never have known them in the character of needy suppliants, or cringing sycophants. They are as much above any people with whom I am acquainted in every noble principle of heart, as they excel all others that I have met with in their powers of pleasing. Your nephew is likely to make a distinguished figure at the University, and is as amiable as he is clever.

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There are three girls, all pretty and accomplished; and as to your sister, she is such a woman as, when you have once been in her company, will no longer permit you to remain in astonishment that our dear lamented Henry should have preferred poverty itself in Caroline's society, to the wealth of Potosi without her.

I trust to your own taste and discrimination for this tribute to your departed brother when you become acquainted with the object of his tenderest and unceasing affection; and will not take up any more time in describing the characters of your family, nor anticipate the delight which you will feel in exercising your own judgment as they develop themselves to your penetrating eye.

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The family of Glenalta beg to send you, through me, their affectionate greetings, and old Bentley, who is likewise a neighbour of mine, and as *caustic* as ever, desires me to say how much he rejoices in the hope of shaking you by the hand.

Farewell, my dear General! may you have a prosperous voyage, and be permitted, ere long, to set your foot on British ground once more! Believe me very

Sincerely and faithfully yours,
ED. OTWAY.

LETTER XIII.

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MRS. ELIZA SANDFORD TO MRS. DOUGLAS.

My beloved Friend,

Your kind affection has anticipated all that I have to say: it has pleaded for me more powerfully than I could do for myself, and has surely told you how much I have been engaged on returning after so long an absence, to Checkley. At last I begin to breathe; and my little Agnes makes such rapid advance to returning health, that I can now, without self-reproach, indulge in the dearest pleasure of life except that of conversing with you, and begin once more to pour out my heart into your faithful bosom. I may now in full security of our punctual English posts give you undisguised details of every thing most interesting, and expect the same from you, till the happy season arrive which will, I trust, re-unite us, and give me the delight of re-visiting Glenalta. I must obey you before I follow the dictates of my own feelings, and answer your questions ere I touch upon matter of another description. "Describe your girls," you say. Well, then, in a few words, they are dear children: Julia is a charming creature, and if I do not take the *mother too much upon me* in saying so, is worthy of that friendship which is the boast and pride of her life, and which is bestowed upon her by your Emily. *Such* a letter as she has lately received, describing *the retreat!* but I must not digress. Julia, then, is really, at seventeen, a most interesting character. She is docile as possible, singularly artless and innocent, yet possessed of admirable faculties, which appear capable of application to a great variety of different pursuits. In short, whatever Julia attempts she accomplishes, and performs well, but without the slightest vanity that I have been able to detect. Bertha is handsomer, *quicker*, and more striking, though not nearly so solid nor reflecting as her elder sister. She commits more faults in a week than Julia in a year, from an impetuosity of temper which was not corrected while she was a little one; but her contrition is so genuine, and her nature so frank, that I always find myself loving her better than I did before whenever she has offended. She will be fifteen, you know, her next birth-day, and is certainly much improved since we went abroad.

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The extreme youth of my dear girls, my particular *object* in leaving England being *truly* the recovery of health for one of them; the recent losses which they had sustained, and my dislike of company, all conspired to preserve *us* from the contagion of foreign influence; while I was enabled, by taking my young charge entirely from home, to break at once through a thousand ties which would have perplexed me exceedingly had I remained at Checkley. What I should have found much difficulty in *gradually* unloosening, I have now boldly dis severed, I shall not hold myself under any obligation to resume the thread of acquaintance with any whose society may not be advantageous to my young people, who at present furnish me with ample excuse for declining *all* invitations, and thus avoiding *jealousy* on the part of our neighbours. Julia has never been in company, and is the only one of my girls whose age makes it *expected* that she should go out. Bertha will suffer no *persecution* as yet, and my little dear Agnes is *hors de combat*. Her delicate state affords me a reason, as genuinely sincere as it is opportune, for lying by in perfect tranquillity; and during this happy *interregnum* I shall profit by your advice, and learn to act with decision when I am forced out of my retirement.

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As I consider myself only in the light of *guardian*, and have really no *stake* in this country myself, even the most calculating of the neighbouring gentry must perceive that I am not bound to any particular style of life; and the more discriminating amongst them, I may hope, will give me credit for acting upon principle. This is all that I want. I know how impossible it is to *please* every body, and indeed I wonder how an upright mind should desire the approval of a multitude made up of the most discordant elements; but I am much puzzled, notwithstanding, what course to steer, and shall require all your pilotage to keep me steadily in the right track. To give you an idea of my dilemma, I must tell you what sort of people we are living amongst, and present you with a survey of our vicinage, before you can be of use in directing my steps.

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The Burleys, who are our nearest neighbours, are people of large fortune, and decidedly children of this world. They have sons and daughters all brought up in luxury. They have a house in London, go to town every year, have large expectancies, and *so* no doubt are full of the present "life's futurities;" but while they are in the country, they are inclined to be very friendly, and it will not be *their* fault if the inhabitants of their splendid hall and those of humbler Checkley are not allied in close intimacy. I am quite aware how the homely adage of "for want of company, welcome trumpery," applies upon many occasions when fine people leave the "flaunting crowd," and come to rusticate for a season in their country seats. But the Burleys, to do them justice, seem to wish for a familiar acquaintance on truer principles. Sir Thomas is a complete Englishman, worthy, hospitable, open-hearted, up to the eyes in county politics, and when the affairs of this *wider* range are so balanced as not to call forth the extent of his powers, the parish cabals supply an under plot, which is sure to keep them in full practice for larger matters when they may arrive. At present, the game laws absorb all that is not given to conviviality, in the circuit of his head and heart, *without* the pale of his own family, *in* which he is deservedly beloved, and *of* which he is the sun-beam. Lady B. is simply vapid. She is neither ill-natured nor unkind, but so exceedingly insipid, that were not a log as troublesome as a wasp, though not so active, you might be justified in forgetting that she makes one of the family group. Devoured by *ennui* herself, she operates on all around her till the whole mass would be *vaporized*, were it not for the broad good-humour of her spouse, who is as alert as she is inanimate. They do not *quarrel*, however, and the young people, though very uninteresting, are sufficiently alive to keep

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up something like cheerfulness, though not of that species which the French appropriately denominate *gaieté du coeur*. The *talk* at Burley Hall is so entirely of fashion, and *supposes* such a sympathy of pursuit, as well as conversancy with topics of which Julia is ignorant, that I question the honesty of permitting her to associate amongst those whose thoughts and feelings are so much at variance with her own, and of such a nature that I never desire to see her approximate to increased congeniality with them.

A mile farther off, we have the Henleys; excellent people, who are from morning till night engaged in doing good. They are rich and bountiful, friendly and good-humoured, but so strict, and so devoted to the *letter* of their particular sect, that if you agreed to travel with them over a line which had been divided into a hundred distinct measures, of a cubit length in each, and that after performing ninety-nine steps in the series, you were to stop at the hundredth, your former task would go for nothing, and you would be as completely distanced as if you had never attempted to walk the course. These good people are anxious in the greatest degree to enlist my young folks, and like the nuns think it no harm to employ every art of affectionate inveiglement to persuade them into an adoption of a certain distinctive phraseology, and *form* of thinking which I do not like, and therefore shall endeavour to avoid without wishing to repel the kind fellowship which is proffered, though I conclude that *our* religion will be at once condemned, when it is discovered that I do not disapprove of many things which are proscribed at the Priory. I heard it rumoured the other day, that I am considered one of the *pie-bald* race. What am I to do?

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Well, a third description of neighbour, and by much the most numerous, I find planted in three or four pretty places at no great distance from Checkley. There is a family of Liner, another of Peachum, and others whose names I need not plague you by calling over, who with competent fortunes enjoy all the comfort of life which money can bestow, and feel all the title to consideration which belongs to independence; *but* who are so intolerably dull, unimproving, and self-complacent, so vulgar too in a perpetual rivalry of fine dinners, fine furniture, and fine dress, which have not even the stamp of fashion to recommend them, that my mind revolts against introducing my nieces into such a society as they form.

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A fourth order remains to be mentioned, and here my pen could expatiate, untired of so delightful a theme. There is a family of Stanley who live six miles from this, and with whom it would be delightful to live in constant communion, if the distance between our two houses did not throw a barrier in the way of daily intercourse. They put me in mind of the Douglas circle, and can I say more to mark the estimation in which I hold them? Father, mother, and children of both sexes are superior to almost any people that I have ever met with, learned, informed, accomplished, the mind is kept in a continual round of exertion in their company, refreshing from its variety, and stimulating from its animation. An hour passed at Brandon Court supplies materials for a week's *rumination*; and, like animals that chew the cud, we repose day after day, living on the nutriment which we have collected in the fertile pastures of that attractive spot. Nature's economy is such, in the midst of her lavish profusion, that she seldom endows the same individual with very opposite qualities; and we usually seek for the serenity of contemplation in scenes and amongst people far remote from the busy practitioner. The Stanleys, like yourselves, combine all the characteristics so rarely found in union. At Brandon Court you have meditation, not monastic—seriousness, not rigid—sentiment, never morbid—and practical energy, neither coarse nor bustling. Perfect harmony subsists amongst the various members of the interesting group. Mr. and Mrs. Stanley are truly *one*. Every thought expressed by either, meets from the other a response of delighted affection, whilst a joyous band of happy youth disport around them, whose only rivalry consists in trying who shall contribute most to the general stock of happiness, and pay most attention to the cherished authors of their being.

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I fancy that I hear you exclaim, "How can Elizabeth hesitate? Why not cultivate the Stanleys, and forget that there is a vulgar world to be passed by?" I will tell you why Elizabeth doubts what path to choose. These inestimable persons are stigmatized by the paltry and mindless animals who environ them, and the Miss Stanleys are yclept blues, while all the rest are called philosophers.

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For *myself* you know, that I have no possible feeling upon such a subject. Were I called *Blue*, because I was seen with the Stanleys, or reading any thing but a novel, it would not signify. *My* walk in life has long been determined, and I have outlived (if indeed I ever felt like the Mimosa upon such occasions) all sensibility to those nick-names, which are so generously bestowed upon single women. I am a *veteran*, and can stand fire. I can endure to be called by any appellation, the *true* meaning of which, is that I have preferred remaining unmarried to being encumbered by the cares of wedded life; and if heaven have granted any measure of understanding, have chosen to employ, rather than let it lie fallow. But this is my individual view of the matter. Have I a right to place my *nieces* in society which they would certainly love and imitate? am I to incur for them the obloquy that waits on superior knowledge and acquirements in their sex? impeding perhaps, also, the chances of that settlement in future life which, though I have never desired for myself, and am in reality very indifferent about for them, I am still bound to consider as the ordinance of nature, besides being the point to which the artificial laws of the world are universally directed. Many cares will necessarily spring up in my way as I proceed, but at present, how to steer a middle course between Scylla and Charybdis is my chief difficulty. With the inanity of fashion, and its opposite vulgarity on the one hand; a religion which deals too much in external observances, and the reproach of female *learning* on the other, is there any *honest* method by which, without sacrificing integrity of principle, I may *skim the cream* of *each* class, and save my children from the evils attendant upon *all* the classes that I have described? Be my Cumean Sybil; look into the page of destiny for me; say what is before me, and how I shall act.

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The priest in the proverb, "christens his own child first;" you see that I have adopted the same prudent maxim, and given you nothing as yet, but my own story; but for this you need no apology my dearest Caroline. Innumerable interruptions break my purposes, and deprive me of any command over my time just now. By and by I shall be able to write less selfishly I trust, and repay your kindness by more agreeable matter than you will find in a *dish* of egotism which I have served up for your this day's fare. Before I release you, however, I must tell you that I was not a little surprised yesterday, by the appearance of an Irish acquaintance, Mr. Bentley, whom I have seen frequently at Lisfarne, and uncle to George, who is, I believe, an intimate still at your house, and Mr. Otway's. When I was at Glenalta, the young man was, I suppose, at the University, for I did not see him, but I heard the girls and Frederick name him familiarly.

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In the midst of giving directions to my work-men, a travelling carriage drove up to the hall-door, and I was really delighted to see Mr. Bentley, who is a highly respectable man, but who appeared in a new light of interest to my eyes, from all the associations which his presence awakened. I endeavoured to shew how glad I felt to see him; and though I could not prevail with him to make a longer stay, he indulged me by remaining, to pass a few hours, and walk round our pretty grounds. In the course of conversation, I asked for his nephew, and was answered, that he was at Lisfarne, where he would remain till Mr. Bentley, senior, returns to the county of Kerry. I spoke of the advantage which any young person must derive from such society as that of Mr. Otway, upon whose character I expiated with my usual warmth.

"Yes," replied Mr. Bentley, "Otway is a noble fellow, though one of your *oddities*; and poor George absolutely worships him, but nevertheless; I am not very sure that his staying at Lisfarne is for either his happiness or advantage."

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"Pray, how so?" answered I, "with perfect unconsciousness."

"My dear madam," said the good man, "your friends at Glenalta are too near I should think, for my poor boy's peace. I do not say that *it is* so. I only mean that such things flow naturally from near neighbourhood, which often brings people into *scrapes*. I have known many a heart lost through the insensible influence of contiguity. *Opportunity* is the deadliest foe of the one sex, *Importunity* of the other; and between them both, many a match is brought about, to which an unwilling consent is wrung out of parents and guardians when it is too late to withhold one's fiat."

I looked grave, and begged him to be explicit. "Do you speak merely," said I, "Mr. Bentley, upon a general supposition of what may be possible, or have you any reason to suppose that your nephew's happiness is likely to be endangered? Not the remotest suspicion has ever glanced across *my* mind, and I should take it as a favour, if, since you have touched upon the subject, you would enlighten me farther, by mentioning the ground of your surmise?"

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"My dear ma'am, it is not *actually* surmise. I may be wrong, and must acquit George of having given me the slightest insight into his mind. In fact, he is very close; it is the only fault that I find with him, and my sole reason for *suspecting*, is derived from my own observation of his avidity to puzzle his brains about a great many useless things, such as chemistry, botany, and the like, which never put a guinea into a young gentleman's pocket. Now, you know that Mrs. Douglas and her daughters are so learned, that they could sack a grand jury; though I must do them the justice to add, that no people in the country are more beloved than they are. Nothing can exceed their unpretending goodness. But George has no pretensions; he must make his own way in the world, and cannot afford to waste his precious hours in learning what I call *fal lals*, that will never help him through life. To tell you the honest truth, I am a little jealous of both Lisfarne and Glenalta. I see no business that any young man has to love or like mortal better than his own flesh and blood; and more time and wits are lavished in these foolish *episodes* which just end in nothing, than would put a man many a mile forward in his professional career. People fall in love through very idleness and vacuity. A young tenant of my own, excused himself lately, when I asked him what could possess him to marry a girl without sixpence, by replying, 'Indeed, sir, she lived *so handy* that we were always together, and 'twas the same thing we thought to get married.' Poor George would be probably dismissed by the Douglas family if they entertained the least idea of such presumption, as no doubt, a hope on my nephew's part, would be considered; and you will therefore not wonder, my dear Mrs. Sandford, that I am anxious to get my business in London, and a month at Buxton well over, that I may return home, where it is necessary that George should see after my affairs during my absence. I have seen a great deal of life, though not upon a *grand* scale; and I know the folly of romance. Mrs. Douglas, I make no question, is as prudent as she is sensible, and has never given her children so elegant an education, to throw them away upon paupers. My own opinion is, that money is the only thing that does not disappoint. I do not say the only thing that is *good*, far from it; but while mental qualities may be only feigned, sweet tempers and dispositions assumed but for a season, accomplishments suffered to languish, beauty doomed to fade, money performs its promise, and procures all the comfort, and all the happiness that it ever engages to purchase. I repeat this every week of my life to poor George, but he is so reserved, that I never have the satisfaction of hearing whether or not I make any impression upon him."

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To this *exposé*, I listened with the most profound attention, and could only reply, "my dear sir, it appears to me that you are putting trouble out to interest, and *compound* interest, by the view that you take of your family affairs. I can assure you that the remotest hint has never reached me, respecting any suspicion of a feeling such as you ascribe to your nephew, who I dare say, is too much in the habit of venerating your counsels to fly in your face, by presuming to bestow his affections without your approbation; though whenever he *does*, at some distant period of his life, obtain your permission to offer his hand in marriage, I conclude that you will have no objection to

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his loving his wife better than you, as he must make a solemn vow to that effect, and cleave to her in preference to all created things. But of one part of your anxiety, I can with certainty relieve you; rest assured, that if the slightest symptom appeared to warrant my friend, Mrs. Douglas, in *imagining* as you do, the most decisive measures would be instantly adopted to prevent any painful result."

"I *thought* so; I always *said* so," rejoined hastily, Mr. Bentley. "I knew that Mrs. Douglas had a judgment too profound not to determine on marrying her daughters to men of fortune. I have told my opinion in George's presence (not *to* him, for the last thing I should desire, would be to convey to *his* mind, that an idea, such as I have confided to you, ever entered *mine*), a thousand and a thousand times; and I feel that my discernment is extremely flattered by your assurance, that I saw how the land lay so clearly. Your allusion to interest, and compound interest, is very just and beautiful; and I declare that you have set my mind quite at rest."

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So enraptured was the poor man, or rather I *suspect, rich* man, with his own sagacity, and my illustration, that I found the greatest possible difficulty in edging in a word or two to undeceive him respecting your mercenary projects. If none are so blind as those who will not see, there are certainly none more deaf than such as will not hear. Full of courtesy, bustle, and acknowledgment, this little worldly, but goodly *puffin*, bundled himself up in his chaise, and posted off, lightened of a load of care, and in such buoyant humour, that I prophecy a fortnight at Buxton will do the needful, and return him in half the time that he had devoted to his bodily weal, in a state of perfect restoration, to Mount Prospect and "poor George."

When he was gone, I resolved on giving you intimation of all that had passed. It is very evident to me, that this visit, which I took so kindly, was paid at Checkley, for the sole purpose of *sounding*; and I think that I can perceive exactly the conflict of his mind. His vanity would be flattered to the highest degree, by even the remotest hope that his nephew might be accepted at Glenalta, while he is also manifestly bent on a rich wife for George with such hearty purpose, that no disappointment is consequent upon believing, as he now does, that there is no chance of a Miss Douglas for his niece. I am *sure* that he has a very *snug* store laid up somewhere or other; that being an old batchelor, George is his object, and that had he found reason for his conjecture in any confirmation afforded by me, he would have taught himself to be very well pleased, while he can, as sincerely, turn the current of his thoughts into another stream, in which he hopes that a larger quantity of the precious metals may be found. How comically people who are accustomed to employ a little cunning in their devices, betray themselves. Old Bentley, however, is a worthy man; and a very acute, though rather a vulgar observer. You need not dread the slightest indiscretion on his part, in making the young man a party in his cogitations. One excellent remark which he made with much shrewdness, convinced me that you have nothing to fear on that score. "Madam," said he, "I shall never give George the remotest hint of what has been passing in my head. No, no, when you want to keep young people from committing themselves, be very sure of what you are about, in expressing your fears upon the subject. If you have reason to *know* that there is an understanding, why then you *must* either sanction or refuse, and of course must speak; but if you have to deal with timidity, or reserve, be assured that the first word is half the battle; and in proclaiming your own apprehensions, you have at one stroke levelled a barrier which might have remained for ever impregnable but for your incaution."

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Well, dearest friend, here is a long letter. Let me have a speedy answer, and tell me of George Bentley; is there any foundation for his uncle's fancy: is he a person of whom you could ever think, for one of your dear children? My sweet girls unite in all that is affectionate to their young friends. Farewell.

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I am ever your attached,
ELIZ. SANDFORD .

LETTER XIV.

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ARTHUR HOWARD TO CHARLES FALKLAND.

My dear Falkland,

Whether I blush or not is not for me to tell; but surely I feel that I ought to do so. Yes, it is an absolute fact, that I am ashamed to recollect the date of my last letter; and, therefore, if you please, we will hush it up. All that I will put forward in extenuation of my guilt is, that my journal bears weighty evidence to the truth of your not being forgotten. In that faithful repository you will find, one of these days, a minute registry of all that passes; and I promise myself much amusement at some future time in recalling to my own mind, while I read it to you, this record of the happiest period of my life. Hey day! here is a downright confession. Even so: and I am not inclined to retract the avowal. As I am not in love, (at least I do not *believe* that I am,) I suppose that I have less hesitation in proclaiming the state of my feelings than were Dan Cupid to be a witness to the declaration of my being more at home at Glenalta, and more happy with the Douglas family, than I ever felt at any place, and amongst any people, since I was born. I find one great disadvantage in having lost the thread of my good old diary, for I know not now where to begin or what to tell you, though I would have you to know that my difficulty does not arise from paucity of incident. On the contrary, my time has been so occupied, and so many novelties have varied the scene, that I am, to use a homely illustration, in the predicament of "not being able to see the wood for trees." The *ground tint* of life at Glenalta is soft and reposing, without being dead; and it has latterly been *picked* out (my simile savours, you will say, of Long Acre) by sundry events which have given contrast to its colouring. You are to be informed that I am up to the eyes in all the pursuits which afford constant delight to the Cousins: and would you believe that from morning till night I am never conscious of time, except by its rapid flight? Falkland, I am awakened as if from a heavy sleep, which had dulled my faculties, and my mind seems to take new views of everything. Will this last? If it should, the age of man is doubled by the animation of such feelings as have been evolved in this Irish world. I tread on air—the sun shines into my *heart*—and you will never hear me again envying an opium-eater while I live. In three days we set out for Killarney; and, as I will certainly devote a letter exclusively to the *Lakes*, this shall contain a sketch of some minor exploits in the way of sight-seeing.

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But I ought not to have proceeded thus far without saying that our Fred. returned, after his short absence, wreathed with victory; and I would give more than I am worth to have been able to call back the shade of Titian by some magical incantation, that his glowing pencil might have *fixed* that arrival in perennial freshness. Domestic love, what an exquisite painter thou art! Not all the most skilful efforts of factitious refinement can group and touch like this artist of Nature.

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It was Frederick's plan to be his own messenger; and, therefore, as no announcement of success or failure preceded his appearance amongst us, suspense hung upon the carriage-wheels as it drove to the very door, and only gave way to joyful assurance, from the uncontrollable gladness of Domine's eye, which sparkled a contradiction, detected at the first glance by Fanny, to the serious air with which the travellers had determined on playfully deceiving the sisterhood. "The Science Premium" presently resounded through the air, and a delighted group of servants, headed by old Lawrence, wafted the glad tidings to an outer circle, who stood peeping from behind the holly-hedge, ready to catch the first contagion that might reach them of joy or sorrow, without understanding how excited, or for what displayed.

When the transport seemed at its height, Mr. Oliphant abruptly exclaimed, "But how easily you are all satisfied! Not a soul has asked me what became of all *my* hard work at Greek and Latin." Here followed the news that Fred. was doubly crowned, and had also borne away the palm of classical triumph. This was too much; the cup of bliss was full before, and now it overflowed. No, I never saw any thing like it; and even *this* scene, I suppose, could never *again* produce the magical sensations which I felt. The intensity of emotion, and the gradations evinced in its exhibition, from the silent, grateful tear that trickled down the hectic cheek of aunt Douglas—then passing through the gentle transports of Emily and Charlotte, the mad delirium of Fanny, the honest pride of Oliphant, the full, yet chastened glow of Frederick, the paternal exultation of old Lawrence, down to the untutored burst of the barefooted mountaineers, reminded me forcibly of that admirable picture by Le Thiers of the Judgment of Brutus, in which you and I used to admire the author's tact in apportioning the varieties of expression in all those numerous countenances, to the exact measure of refinement in each which accompanied the feeling that gave it birth. After the first tumult of congratulations had subsided, I ran to the seashore, to get rid of some unwelcome thoughts, that were not in unison with the scene which I had witnessed, when I overtook a little band of young peasants, who were dragging along large bundles of what we call gorse, but is here yclept furze; and this circumstance soon turned the current of my musings.

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"Where are you going, my lads?" quoth I. "Plase your honour, to get ready the bonfires for Maaster Frederick agin the evening." "I am a stranger in these parts, and should like to know what all this work is for," said I, turning to a fine, active youth, who led the van. "Why, indeed, sir, I don't *rightly* know; but, be what I can larn, Maasther Fred. is to be King o' the College from this time out." "Och! you fool, Jack!" cried another, "that isn't it at all. I heard my father say just now that he was (that's Maasther Fred.) *cheered* round the city like a Parliamint man, and that he flogged all the scholars in Ireland." "Well *you're* out too, Flurry," vociferated a third; "for Nance Hagerty tould Kit Lacy and she ought to know, be raison of being about the cows morning

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and evening at the big house, that Maaster Fred got a power of money for making an illigant spaach about mancipashon."

I was greatly amused. It was all the same to these poor fellows. Joy was depicted on every face at Glenalta, and to enquire into whys and wherefores is quite too tame for the rush of Hibernian sympathy. The meeting with *Phil*. was another rich repast of mind; and young Bentley seemed so share the scene like a brother. When I returned to dinner, I found preparations going forward near the house which ended in a piper and a dance upon the green turf, in which the young people of the family took part. A great basket of bread-cakes sweetened with a little sugar, and a single draught to each of Kerry cider, made *all* the entertainment as related to eating and drinking; hilarity and affection supplied the rest, and I could not help remarking, that I had never till then seen so many people made supremely happy at so trifling an expense. With us at Selby it would have required the winning wiles of at least an ox, and tree tierces of ale, to have prevailed

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on so many people to come together. When assembled, they would neither pipe nor dance: the gladdest tribute would consist in a few deafening shouts, and, after some coarse and clumsy merriment, the well-fed sons of England would stagger home, filled to the throat, regardless of all sentiment which could not be identified with roast beef and brown stout. Only give an Irish population permission to share in your feelings, and you may have a crowd at your heels in a moment, in any part of the kingdom, as I am told; but I can now say from experience, that, if you *deserve* affection, you may have an honest flow of its choicest streams unbought, except by reciprocating kindness. These poor people would endure anything for my aunt, her children, and Mr. Otway; and though I have given you a ridiculous specimen of ignorance, in relating the conversation of the bonfire, I am bound in justice, as a *set off*, to add, that when the festivities of the evening were at an end, Mr. Oliphant beckoned to two youths, who appeared to be about

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seventeen or eighteen, and whom he called by the names of Cronin and Riely, saying, "Boys, I know very well that you are just longing to hear more about Mr. Frederick, so come in the morning, bring your Homer, and I will show you the part in which he was examined." The poor fellows seemed overjoyed, and kicking up a bare heel behind, pulled each a lock of hair on his forehead in token of thanks, neither of these young men having a hat with which to perform the ceremony of a bow, and this extra-ordinary mode of salutation serving as the substitute here for a more civilized mode of obeisance. To my amazement, I now learned that several individuals are to be found in these mountains who can read Horace and Virgil familiarly. The Homer which was brought in the morning was a curiosity too, for so filthy, so broken, and so disjointed a concern, I suppose you never beheld; and it astonished me, not only to hear these tattered academicians read passages with precision which were almost effaced, but translate with fidelity, of which

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Cowper would not have been ashamed. Frederick gave them each a new book, and I presented a trifling sum to be expended in shoes and hats, sending off our poor scholars as happy as kings are said to be in fairy tales. When Frederick had been at home a day or two, he proposed that we should make the first use of his liberty in extending our excursions both by land and water. "We will begin with the nearest object," said he, "and as you enter with so much zeal into our Irish character, I *must* take you to see a person whom we have given the name of Wise Ned of the Hill." The next day was appointed, and we were on horseback at four in the morning, each provided with a sort of *wallet*, containing an ample supply of sandwiches, a small bottle of brandy, a canister of snuff for Ned, with a large parcel of newspapers, and a tin box (which Fanny insisted on adding to our accoutrements) to be filled with any plants which Glenalta did not produce. In this rustic guise, accompanied by three fine dogs, one of which is a noble animal of a species now very scarce, namely, the Irish wolf dog, we commenced our campaign, halting at

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Lisfarne, to call for young Bentley, by whom we were speedily joined. As we rode along, I begged to know in the true Irish style what it was that we were going to see, and why "Ned of the Hill," was worthy of a pilgrimage to his shrine. "He is," said Frederick, "a most uncommon character, and one who will, I think, reward your trouble in *getting at him*, for I can tell you that his only neighbours are the eagles. Ned, like the poor boys of Homeric memory, received an education beyond the vulgar level, in the days of his youth. He was born of parents who were strict Roman Catholics; and having an uncle who was priest in a neighbouring parish, it was intended that young Edmund Burke (a promising name, you will say) should succeed to his relation's holy office. With this view he was taught Greek and Latin, though his temporal situation was scarcely raised above absolute want. His father was an idle profligate, his mother a bigot, entirely under the control of her brother, the priest. The boy grew up in the strange jumble of fastings and confessions, prayers and penances, with swearing, drinking, and all manner of profaneness,

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acted continually in his presence, till his father was suddenly seized with a fit of apoplexy, on recovering from which he had some 'compunctious visitings,' and desired his son, for the first time, to read the Bible for him. There was none to be had except one which had been left in pledge by a poor Protestant woman, who owed a trifle to the little shop kept by these people. Ned objected to read out of such an unholy book, but the father insisted, alleging that his time was hastening to a close, and it was no season to stand upon ceremonies. A Bible was a Bible; and, if it was good *at all* to read it, the Protestant version could not be *very* far astray. Ned reluctantly complied, and felt it necessary at first, I dare say, to perform a sort of quarantine after touching the sacred volume; but his father desired that neither his wife nor the priest her brother should hear a word about the matter. The invalid gradually recovered strength, which he ascribed to the fit of piety that had come upon him; and though he did not dream of changing his religion, and was punctilious in his observance of its rites, he still felt a sort of superstitious respect for the book that had been instrumental in keeping up a serious impression of divine things upon his mind; and was not displeased at seeing his son frequently poring over its contents after the daily task of reading to the old man was ended."

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"At length Ned, through the single and simple force of truth, became convinced of the errors of

the Romish Church; and, afraid to tell his parents, he quitted home, and sought the aid of an exemplary clergyman in an adjoining county. From this gentleman he received the kindest treatment, and the most judicious advice not to be precipitate in the adoption of a new creed. This good man gave him books, and protected his destitute youth from persecution, to which the poor fellow became subject, as soon as it was hinted that he was likely to renounce Popery; but Heaven had endowed Ned with one of those acute understandings which are rarely found in any class of men, and the books which were given him by the excellent pastor under whose tutelage he had placed himself, did not satisfy his inquiring mind. Contending between a sense of duty to his family, his temporal benefit, and the habits of his whole life, on one side, and his newly awakened, and, as he considered, providentially directed, search after truth on the other, he roamed about, suffering the greatest privations, sculking in the mountains, and indebted to charity for his scanty fare, till accident brought Mr. Otway to the spot where he lay stretched upon the heath apparently dead, and a ragged Bible clenched in his hands. He was conveyed to Lisfarne, where he found the asylum after which his soul panted. When his strength was recruited, he was supplied with such books as were calculated to meet the sagacity of his doubts, and a short time made him a fixed and conscientious believer in the superiority of the Protestant faith over that in which he had been educated. About this time his father died, leaving him a little profit-rent of fifteen pounds a year, arising out of a poor tenement in Tralee. This is Ned's *all*, and as soon as he became possessed of independence he resolved to quit his benefactor and devote himself to the good of his fellow creatures. No argument will tempt him to accept of a salary that would better his condition. A few books, newspapers, and a little snuff, are all that he will permit any of us to add to his hermit's fare. You will see his dwelling, and be surprized perhaps by his remarks. The mountain on which he resides belongs to an absentee nobleman, and Ned lives there unmolested amongst almost inaccessible crags. The singularity of his character, its natural force, and the genuine disinterestedness of conduct which he manifests, combine to produce unbounded influence on the minds of the people, who, notwithstanding the charge of heresy against him, seek his advice, and consider his wisdom as quite oracular. Ned's life is passed in doing good. He traverses hill and dale on foot in quest of all whom he can succour by his counsel or sooth by his kindness. His Bible travels with him, and in spite of the avowed hatred of the priests, and the heavy denunciations of punishment which two or three of them have fulminated against any one who shall listen to, or harbour, poor Ned, he is a universal favourite, and often let in at a back door when his hosts would not venture to receive him at the front of their miserable hovels. He reads the scriptures incessantly, expounding and applying them to the individual necessities of his needy neighbours. He attends the fairs, and prevents many a quarrel. His talents as an arbitrator are in such request that he keeps several paltry cases of contention from the petty sessions, and is even consulted as an almanack, for the signs of bad or good weather."

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With this outline of Ned's character and history we approached his extra-ordinary *tabernacle*, which had no appearance whatsoever of human dwelling, till we reached it close enough to see a little wreath of blue smoke curling up from an orifice in the rock, and were assailed by the sharp and angry bark of a terrier, who lay sunning himself, with a cat lying close by him on a tuft of dried heath. A few great stones piled one upon the other, at each side of a natural aperture in the craggy face of the mountain, seemed to indicate the hand of man in bringing them together, and likewise to afford shelter to the entrance. A stout wooden door opening inwards appeared the only means of ingress to admit even the light of heaven, for windows I saw none.

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A few goats were roused from their *meditations* by our arrival, and I had just pronounced the name of Robinson Crusoe to my companions, when, at the end of our scramble, which had occupied three hours in its performance, Ned himself started from his *lair*, and stood before us clad in a strong comfortable loose coat of a greyish frize, manufactured in this country by the poor people. He had shoes and stockings of coarse but warm materials; and moreover, a hat, which, though it had seen better days, defended his head from the rude blast of this desolate wilderness, and was fastened to a button-hole by an old red worsted garter. Such was his joy at sight of Frederick, that some minutes elapsed before he seemed sensible that his friend had any companions. "Oh, sir," said he, "the news came to me just as I was lying down last night; Tom Collins sent off little Maurice his son to Tim Scannel, who put his brother across the bay in the fishing-boat; and he ran every step o'the way over the hills till he brought me *the account*."

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To have asked *what* account would have been a direct insult to all Ned's best feelings, and so Frederick thought, for he replied, "Well, though I am grateful to poor Collins, and also to Scannel, I am very sorry that they have been beforehand with me; I thought to have had the pleasure of telling you myself." "Never mind," answered Ned, "they, poor fellows, have not so many pleasures as you have, don't *begrudge* them *that*, for they had a sore *trot* of it bare legged over the stones to bring me the news; and by the same token I had nothing but two or three potatoes that were cold in the dish after my supper to give Jack after his long tramp over the mountain, and he was afraid of being late for work in the morning, so would not wait till I could get him a drop of milk."

Here was a journey of at least eight miles, by the shortest route, across the bay, performed at the end of hard day's work without the refreshment of food or sleep, and without the expectation of a single sixpence to reward the toil! La Bruyere, Rochefaucauld, and all the host of the Machiavelian school to boot, could hardly *concoct* a bad motive out of the given materials, with all the maceration and trituration which they could put this action through in their moral crucible, which can contrive to disfigure so much of human nature. The *worst* incentive to such a deed which ingenuity could extract from its analysis, might perhaps be discovered in that love of stimulus common to all lively people, and of which the Irish are peculiarly susceptible: they love

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to surprise, and be surprised; but I feel certain that Tom Collins would have performed the part of *Speaking Trumpet* to "Ned of the Hill," without the aid of this excitement. I am becoming enthusiastic about these Hibernians: but to return to our mountain sage. He received us with native courtesy: his small deal table was quickly spread with the sandwiches which we had brought, to which Ned added a pot of fine smoking potatoes, and a red-herring or two which he took from a stick on which they were hanging in the chimney. Brandy and water (the latter from a stream clear as crystal that babbled by his door) finished our repast; and, whether from the effect of novelty, my long ride, the purity of the mountain air, or all united, I cannot tell, but I never remember to have thought the best dinner in London half so good as this upon the top of an almost trackless waste, from which we could see nothing but a boundless expanse of ocean lying to the west. When we had finished our luncheon, or whatever you please to call it, Ned invited us to come and sit by the stream in which he said that we should find the finest water-cresses that ever were seen; and "Gentlemen," said he, "I will get you an oaten cake, and new laid eggs, and plenty of milk, before you quit me."

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In the first part of his invitation we acquiesced, but told him that my aunt would be uneasy if we were not at home early, and would wait dinner. "Go, then," said Ned, "and my blessing go with you; for I would not have her suffer the smallest fretting or vexation for all the pleasure of your company during a whole week. She is a good mother, and a good Christian; and deserves all the love and duty that you can shew her."

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We then walked with poor Ned, and I begged of Frederick to draw him out in conversation, that I might hear some of his opinions. When we were about a quarter of a mile from his *fortress*, Ned invited us to sit down in a sunny nook, formed by the rock, where the stream widened into a large surface, and here we found the cresses with which our host had promised to crown our simple repast. "I often," said he, "bring a handful of potatoes here, with a grain of salt, and gather a few of these to make out my dinner. It is a fine thing, sir, to think how easily a man may live, and that too upon food better for him than a lord mayor's banquet."

"You are very happy, Ned, I should think," said Bentley, who looked at him with the most profound admiration.—"No one is happy," answered the hermit; "but I believe that I am as much so as anybody, for I am contented with the lot in which Providence has placed me, and would not desire to exchange it. Man is a poor creature, his life is but a vapour, and the less that he is in the way of temptation the better is it for him in time and in eternity."

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"Ned," said Frederick, "you have leisure for meditation, and wish that you would tell me what you think of public affairs at present?"

"Why, sir, I should be considered a bad judge of what the public are about, I who live in the desert; but as every man has his own way of thinking, I have mine."

"This is," said I, "a time of great *stir*, and a great deal is *doing* that ought to tell either one way or the other for much good or evil."

"Ned smiled, and answered, "Sir, *you* might set up for an oracle, for you are *sure* to be right, as your prophecy will answer either way: and that is the method that a great many take to get *over* a knotty point, when they do not know how to get *through* it. No offence, sir, I hope."

I really felt a little disconcerted, and my companions laughed; but I begged Ned to explain what he thought himself of king's ministers, men, and nations.

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"Why, sir, indeed we all flatter ourselves, even such a poor humble being as I am, that we can see all the working of the puppets, little and big, but people are often mistaken who have better means of coming at the truth than I have: all the way, sir, that I have to know what is doing in the world is by the newspapers, which my young master there (looking at Frederick) kindly brings me, and my notion is, from spelling and putting together, that though I may never live to see the day when such a matter will come to pass, a revolution is hanging over these countries as sure as you are sitting there opposite to me."

"That would be a strange event, Ned," said I, "as the consequences of those changes to which I alluded, I meant the change from darkness to light, from ignorance to knowledge."

"Sir, I mean the same thing, though I do not give such good names to what I think undeserving of them."

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"Why, Ned," said Bentley, "I know a place within three miles of this spot where you go three or four times a-week to teach: how does your conduct consist with what you have said?"—"It fits like a pea in the pod, sir," replied Ned; "I go to give what instruction I can to a few poor things who are longing to know God through His word; and as some are too young, and others too weak to climb this rugged height, I go to the foot of the mountain to meet them; and don't you think that I would teach every man, woman, and child, if I could make them learn the road to heaven?" I told him that Nature herself seemed to point a finger to the course of education in Ireland, for that such surprising faculties as I found in the poor sons and daughters of Erin could never have been designed by their Creator to lie dormant. "Young man, we know," replied Ned, "nothing of God's designs, and your reason for teaching right hand and left, is about as just as if you were to burn a hay-rick in your neighbour's farm, and when you were asked why you did such mischief, you were to answer, that a heap of combustibles was lying convenient, and that as combustibles were by nature made to be burned, you thought proper to set them on fire. But, sir, my notion is, that the gentry are, as fast as they can, changing sides with the mob of the country, for they are winding off at the upper end of the spindle as much as they are winding on at the bottom, and so it will be only one thing in the place of another after all. Education seems to be declining amongst the

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heads of the community, as much as it is flourishing amongst the *tails*, and, before long, it will be found that the tails will take the post where the heads are now."

"Upon what grounds do you prognosticate this up-side-down, this new order, or disorder, of things?" said Bentley.—"Why, sir, upon two grounds: first, upon the ground of my natural reason, which tells me that it cannot be otherwise; and, secondly, upon the ground of the newspapers, which shew me that the matter is already coming to pass under our own eyes. Without any help to my own thoughts, I should be a fool outright if I did not know that education is bringing out all the faculties that were rolled up like those daisies there, before you, in their winter-quarters, till the sun warmed the mountain, and untied the cords that bound every button of them tight and hard in their green cases. Now, sir, God is no respecter of persons: His providence has given understanding to the poor as well as to the rich, which only wants what it is now receiving to bring it into full bloom, and if the rich, who are the smaller number, neglect the instruction which the poor, who are the greater number, are eagerly devouring, you will find how it will be by-and-by: the lean kine will swallow up the fat; and when men find out that their hungry wits, sharpened by want, have gained the power belonging to knowledge, they will use it, and not rest contentedly upon a wild heath like this, without asking themselves the question, "Why should not we take those places that are held by men who do not know how to fill them, and benefit ourselves and the country by shoving out a set of pampered geese, and coming down upon their snug nests with all the force, as I may say, of those eagles yonder?" Sir, when things are ripe for this question, the end is at hand."

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"But, my good Ned, why suppose this neglect in the higher classes? What should lead you to conclude that, though the blessings of light and knowledge are spreading over the mass of mankind, the upper ranks are not holding their own, and cultivating as before, the benefits, which, with increased liberality, they are now determined to share?"

"Why, sir, I know very well that 'as the twig is bent the tree's inclined,' and if I look to your great schools, and your colleges, what do I see but an undisciplined rabble, doing what they please, and the masters, who ought to control youthful vice and folly, become like so many ciphers. At one of your great seminaries I see murder committed in a boxing-match, and the whole affair hushed up, as if no harm were done. At another of your great schools, the man to whose care the morals of your English youth are intrusted, runs away without saying a word to any one, leaving a debt of £50,000 behind him."

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"Did I not hear young Master Fitzallan tell his father the other day that after being at a third of your great English establishments he had never spoken but twice to the head Master of it? Don't I read of Oxford and Cambridge time after time expelling the young lords and high gentlemen, for every sort of misconduct and disorder? What do *they* learn at the University, but to gamble away their money, and drink French wines? Sir, my notion is, that the times are out of joint. Children don't respect their parents and rulers. Parents and rulers suffer children to get the upper hand, and think themselves before their time, and without taking the *trouble* to gain wisdom. The wholesome restraint of the old school is out of fashion; bit and bridle are taken off, and all the world scamper in the way they like best; while, to crown all the folly, the grandees are whetting knives to cut their own throats."

"Suppose now, sir, that there was in all England, or any other country, but one single regiment of men who had arms and ammunition; and that it was the business of this single regiment to protect the king, and stand sentry over your banks, and prevent all commotions in your capital. If neither gun nor pistol, a dust of powder, nor a grain of shot could get into any other hands, would not that regiment, of only perhaps a thousand strong, be able to keep down a multitude that we could hardly reckon? but if the tower is opened, and a hundred thousand stand of arms taken out, and given to the people with plenty of balls and cartridges, and they are drilled from morning till night, learning all the new modes of squaring and filing off, the new *this* and the new *that*, while the old regiment does nothing at all, but stand as if it was cut of paste-board, at the palace gates, and the gates of your city; where will the rulers be then? Why, to be sure, in the young and vigorous recruits, who only wanted what you have put into their hands to knock your train-bands upon their faces on the ground, like the poppy heads that some ancient warrior cut down for a sign to let the enemy know what he intended to do."

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"But Ned have we not some long heads in Parliament that will keep watch over our interests?"

"Yes, sir, you have a few *long*, and a great many *short* ones. Lord Liverpool is an honest man and a sensible man. Mr. Peel is a man that I believe would not tell a lie to make himself a duke; and the greatest fault I see in him, is that he is so fond of sporting, and so afraid that any of poor Dick Martin's feeling for the suffering dumb creation, should interfere with his diversion, that he stifles the voice of humanity within his breast; but it will not be so always, I hope, for the best courage is ever to be found in a tender heart. The lion and the lamb, sir, make a fine mixture in a man's character."

"Then you think cruelty to animals a sin, Ned?"

"Think it a sin!" replied Ned, with an expression of countenance that would had have brought thunders of applause at Drury-lane; "Yes, sir, it is a crying sin, and one of the very worst signs of our time. It is a foul blot upon our scutcheon. When I was a youngster, the gentlemen did not set their poor neighbours such examples as they do now, and we see the fruits. What right has a man, who is returning home from a bull-bait himself, though he rides a fine horse, and has ten thousand a year, to talk to an ignorant savage that he sees on the high road for goading a jaded bullock to market, or belabouring an overloaded ass up the hill? or what right has any man who encourages the wicked amusement of prize fighting, which teaches people to become brutes, and

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mangle each other in cold blood, to abuse others for doing the same in hot blood, when they meet at a fair, and meet too as enemies who think that they are *bound* to revenge some real or imagined wrong? No, no, sir, preachers must be *doers*, or they will only be laughed at."

"Whom else do you think well of in our great National Assembly, Ned?" asked Bentley.

"Sir, I like Mr. Robinson. He knows his business. He found things in a bad condition, and it is more troublesome to mend than to make. He is going the right way to work, and he is not frightened by opposition. Mr. Huskisson too, sir, is a sensible man, and knows what he is about."

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"What say you, Ned, to Mr. Canning?"

"Why, sir, I think that at all events he can *talk* well, and I love him better for one thing that he said the other day, than if he had given me a hundred pounds in hand. Do you remember, sir, when he defied the house to shew him any act of liberality, any treaty upon a broad generous foundation, that was not proposed by the Tories. That was nuts and apples, to my heart, for it was *truth*, and very well they all knew it, for not a man dared to contradict him; even Mr. Hume, who contradicts every thing and every body, let *him* alone when he threw that challenge in their teeth."

"You do not then like Mr. Hume, Ned.?"

"I should like him better, sir, if he took the trouble of being better informed. He, sir, is the watch dog in the orchard, but he barks so often when no harm is at hand, or when he mistakes a crow for a band of robbers, that when the thieves come in earnest, people do not mind him, and the uproar that he makes then, passes by unheeded, which is a pity. However, sir, he does some good, though not so much as he might do, and the fear of *giving tongue* keeps many a pilferrer out of the apple trees."

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"Well, Ned, will it not be a fine thing for Ireland, if we live to see the day when emancipation is proclaimed, and all animosity, discontent, and rebellion, are laid in the dust?"

Ned laughed heartily. "Wait a while," said he, "and if we live to see that day I am a pickled herring. No, sir, 'tis not because I am no longer a *Roman* myself that I say it, but the never a bit of good would emancipation do in this country. The *name* of it indeed, would make the people light fires, and drink a double dose of whiskey, when they heard of it; and they would shout, and those that have hats would throw them up into the air. You would have more noise, and drunkenness, and bloodshed, and battery for a week or so, and when that was over, and not a rap was to be found in their pockets, or a tatter left on their backs, they would begin to look about them, and ask one another, what they had got? Whether the potato-garden was lowered in its rent, or leather in its price? Whether wages were raised or the necessaries of life cheaper than they were before; and when they discovered that all the difference in their condition was, that Daniel O'Connell and his partner Shiel, might stun the House of Commons in London, with their blustering speeches as they do now the Catholic Association in Dublin; the people would find that they had gained nothing but broken heads."

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"But though it were only a shadow, a mere name," said I, "if the people's hearts are set upon obtaining it, will they not be happier and more tranquil, if they succeed in the object of their wishes?"

"Why, sir, as to *wishes*, you may set an ignorant multitude wishing for anything you please. You might make them wish, like an infant, for the moon, though they know no more about it, than that it looks like a fine big Gloucester cheese; but if the moon dropped down to them, and they discovered that they could not neither eat, drink, nor wear it; that it would neither relieve them from tithe, nor cess, pay their rent, nor manure the ground; nor, in fact do anything but set a few learned men in the college talking about the length and the breadth of it; I would not go security for their being satisfied with their bargain. Sir, when people are set on wishing, without knowing what they are wishing for, it is well for them if it ends as well as the fable, in a yard of good black pudding."

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We were excessively amused by Ned's dry sarcastic manner. Bentley continued: "I think, however," said he, "that let Parliament decide as it may, the bonds of affection between landlord and tenant will be drawn closer by the discussions that have taken place. The poor will love the rich better from finding the sympathy so general in their suffering, whether the wrongs of which they complain be real or imaginary."

"Not at all, sir," answered Ned, with energy, "the people are poor and wretched; they have many wants and many grievances to complain of, but *those*, which their landlords might relieve or redress are never thought about, unless now and then by such a blessed man as Lord H. or Mr. Otway. *They* make their tenants happy, they treat them like Christians, and among *their* poor people you hear no cant about emancipation, they have enough to eat and drink, they are encouraged in their industry, protected in their rights, they enjoy all the freedom that they require, and as much as is good for them. But, sir, the *talking* landlords spend their breath and spare their purses; and the people, who are not such fools now-a-days as to be caught in springes, know the difference between saying and doing; they understand the *decoy ducks* much better than you seem to suppose. I know a great man, not a hundred miles off, who is building a house as fine as Solomon's temple, and he makes long speeches, and shakes hands with every ragamuffin who can give him a vote; but he is not a whit the better loved for all that, and why should he? He is a hard landlord, and they say that he makes his poor tenants pull down their stone walls, and raise mud cabins for themselves, that they may bring the materials of their former habitations to help in constructing his palace Ah, sir, words cost nothing, and a poor man

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would depend more upon the kindness that assisted him with a sack of oatmeal, or a warm blanket, than upon all the talk, empty and flourishing, that takes up the newspapers, and gives the county gentlemen the pleasure of seeing themselves in print. When the people had not so much experience as they have at present, it was easier to deceive them; but you can hardly now 'find an old weazel (as we say) asleep on his perch;' and the *true* characters of the landholders are very well known."

Then said I: "Ned, if you have many such landlords, it is the less to be lamented that they are so fond of going abroad. The absence of such men is as good as their presence."

"No, sir, bad as they are, they could not *help* being of some use if they stayed at home, and spent their money in their own country. Never believe any one who tells you that the absentees are not one of poor Ireland's greatest curses."

"Ned," said I, "while I listen to you, and hear so many sensible remarks from your lips, I cannot help thinking what a fine thing is universal education, and how great a change *must* be effected by learning which will enable the mass of any nation to reason with the force which you can bring to meet every subject that we have discussed to day."

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"Sir, I thank you," answered Ned, "for the compliment, but I cannot return it without telling a lie. *Your* reasoning, sir, is not of the best, if you will consider the matter again, when you would say, all as one, as that books make brains. Why should the knowledge of reading and writing, and casting sums in arithmetic make wisdom amongst the poor, any more than amongst the rich; and you have plenty of dunces, sir, in the higher walks of life, who cannot argue a bit the better for any thing that they ever got hold of in school, or at college. But even if learning gave understanding, which it does *not*, for that is God's gift, still, sir, it might be, with all its worth, not fit for *us* in our present condition. If you gave me a barrel of the best seed corn that your rich country ever grew, I could not say but that it was a good gift, and the grain fine grain; but if I threw it on the surface of that barren rock yonder there, what return would it make? Wouldn't it only bring the mag-pies in flocks about me, to eat not only that, but what little I had before? First, fence in a bit of ground; then, burn it, and dig it, and clear it; after that, you may sow your grain, and it will come up and yield increase. In like manner, sir, if you gentry would make your tenants more comfortable, give them a little property in their labours, encourage them to decent habits, reward the sober and peaceable, punish the bad, live amongst them, and employ them, you would soon find your soil prepared for sowing a crop which at present is thrown to waste, or only devoured by birds of prey."

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I could have staid till midnight with poor Ned, and Bentley seemed rivetted in attention to his acute observations and sound common sense; but Frederick looked at his watch, and gave the signal "to horse."

As we were moving towards the place where our palfreys were in waiting, I said to Burke, "tell me how is it that the mass of the people in Ireland speak so much purer English than we do, though it is *our* native tongue, and with you *not* so?"

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"That is the very reason of it, sir, I suppose," replied this extra-ordinary man. "You speak English amongst your poor, as we speak Irish, by ear, and so we speak it badly enough, and differently in different places; but *our English* we learn out of books, because it is *not* our natural language, and so perhaps we may speak it nearer to the manner in which it is written than you do at your side of the water."

With intelligence thus superior to his humble lot, did this *desert* "Hampden" (for "*village*" would not suit with his desolate dwelling) discourse with us till we were mounted. Frederick made him promise to come to Glenalta, where he told him that a present of books awaited his arrival: and we promised to visit him again on our return from Killarney. With affectionate and mutual adieus, we parted, and left the wide blank of a deathlike solitude and silence, to contrast with the merry din of our voices and the cheerful shew of life which had been produced by the group of men, dogs, and horses, on the gloomy heath.

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I shall never forget Ned of the Hill while I live, and though his *brogue* is the *ne plus ultra* of possible discord to a musical ear, I would rather listen to him than to *almost* any *West-Indian* of my acquaintance. Bentley is *beside himself* with admiration of Ned, and I believe would like nothing better than a cave next door to our mountain sage, where some future bookmaker, travelling this way, might set down the neighbours as a settlement of the Troglodites, who, by some wonderful chance, had been cast on shore upon the coast of Kerry. I am not yet sure how to classify Bentley. He is very worthy of a place in my Irish Pantheon, but I have not a niche ready for him, and as I hardly think that I shall be able to unravel his character without help, I will ask Mr. Otway about him, some day or other, if I cannot satisfy myself respecting certain incongruities which I perceive in his manner.

As we neared Glenalta, Frederick observed several traces of carriage wheels on the road, and, on examining them more nearly, prophesied that we should find company on reaching home.

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"Not at this hour, surely," said Bentley. "Mr. Otway would not drive to Glenalta when he is able to ride or walk thither; and my uncle being an absentee at present, *who* is there that could venture to pay a visit at five o'clock with any hope of being at their more distant homes in reasonable time for dinner?"

"Depend upon it," answered Frederick, "that whoever came to Glenalta this day, is there still. Like Cacus' den, it exhibits no returning footsteps. All the marks of the horses' feet are in the same direction." See what it is to live in this out of the way sort of place!

The speculation of who could have come in our absence kept our minds for the last mile in the most animating state of inquiry and suspense. We rode up directly to the stable-yard, on entering which, a nice calèche and smart dennett were drawn up in order. The stable-boy could not tell more than that "*quality*" had come, and old Lawrence, whom we met, could only add, that they were to stay, and were *English*, but every body was in such a bustle that, he told us, he could learn no more. On entering the house, we found the rooms deserted, and Fanny, who came radiant with excitement, skipping down stairs to meet us, was the only living thing that presented itself to our view. To our eager inquiries she would only reply, that we must go and dress, and that when we appeared in the drawing-room that we should know who were the guests. There was no use in expostulating, Fanny was inexorable, and to our toilettes we were sent. As soon as mine was completed, I hurried down stairs, and Fanny again was the first to me. She took me by the hand, and throwing open the drawing-room door, I found my aunt, Emily, and Charlotte all dressed, and looking full of some mystery, respecting which I was proceeding to ask questions, when two figures bounced from behind the large Indian screen, and who should stand confessed before me, but Russell and Annesley. Astonishment was no adequate word to express what I felt at sight of them. How to account for the vision, how to express amazement, pleasure, at the unexpected rencontre, I knew not. What a creature of circumstance is man! Though I am fond of both Russell and Annesley, and they are the only people besides yourself, of whom I have spoken as friends since I came here, and introduced by character to my relations, yet a meeting with either of them in the Regent's Park, in Bond-street, at the Theatre, or the Opera, how insipid! Nay, sometimes even a bore. Yet here at Glentalta, county of Kerry, South of Ireland, it was rapture to behold their faces, though neither their personal identity nor my own can have undergone any material alteration since we met last at Cambridge. Is it that I, without knowing it, have got a drop of Irish blood in my veins, or that the features of my countrymen, my schoolfellows, my College friends, operate naturally in a strange place, like the *Ranz des Vaches* on Swiss hearts in a foreign land? I must leave you to develop the cause, I have only to do with effects.

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After the first tumult of surprise was over, I gained in ten minutes the following outline respecting the hows, whys, and whens of this sudden incursion into the wilds of Kerry. From the time when first Russell heard of my being here, he began to devise a scheme for slipping over in summer, but as his father wanted him to join a party who were going to the Highlands, he did not find it an easy matter to accomplish his plan; having been told, however, by my sisters, that I was *bound* to Killarney, he determined on coming to Ireland; and, meeting Annesley, offered him a seat in his dennett. The project resolved on by these *wags* was, to keep me in profound ignorance of their movements, while they watched ours, and to meet us in some romantic spot of our Lake scenery; but in pursuing their route, they fell in with a travelling carriage which had just *smashed* down in the bog, and, having left all their English *sang froid* behind them, they immediately jumped from their own vehicle to make a proffer of every assistance in their power to bestow. A lady, her maid, and footman, were the party submerged by fate beneath the murky waves of Acheron. Literally they were all struggling out of a dyke full of water as black as if it flowed direct from the forge of Vulcan. The knights flew to the rescue with all the zeal of chivalric adventure, and conveyed their fair charge to a neighbouring cabin, where a blazing fire, for which they were indebted to the same morass that had treated them so uncourteously, repaired the evil, and set them moralizing on bogs and bees, which, together with the bane, provide an antidote. They found the lady very agreeable, and moreover they discovered that she was steering for Glentalta, upon which they drew up their *visors*, proclaimed their names, and told her that a friend whom they were seeking was a guest under that roof. This coincidence pleased the lady, as savouring of a regular adventure, and she at once invested herself with the responsibilities of a godmother, and (one good turn deserving another) prevailed on her deliverers to step into her carriage, and resign theirs to the charge of her servant, promising to introduce them to the Douglas family. Well now, you naturally inquire who is the lady whose intimacy at Glentalta warrants such a stretch of privilege? She is a Mrs. Fitzroy, with whom my aunt became well acquainted, during her long sojournment in Devonshire, and whose society beguiled her sorrows in the deep retirement of Linton. Mrs. Fitzroy is a highly-gifted person, and a most agreeable addition to our party; but to proceed with my narrative, her visit was not a surprise to my aunt, though a very great one to the rest of the family.

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A letter came just about the time when Emily and Frederick had finished their works in the Glen, and the unlooked for pleasure which they had prepared for their mother, in introducing her to the rustic temple which they had with filial fondness dedicated to her, suggested the idea of concealing Mrs. Fitzroy's intentions, and thus repaying the young people in *kind*, by a pleasant necromancy. Nothing could be better managed, and my aunt enjoyed, to use the language of old Du Deffand, a *grand succès*. I was put in possession of all this before Mrs. Fitzroy made her appearance. Frederick, who came next into the drawing-room, was now informed of all that had happened; and as to my two English comrades, they were at home in a quarter of an hour, a delightful reception for them having been doubly secured by their *sponsors*. Mrs. Fitzroy now completed our circle, in which Mr. Otway and Bentley had previously taken their posts, and a merrier group you never saw.

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Mrs. Fitzroy deserves to be distinguished by a separate portrait, and therefore I must prepare my canvass, and endeavour to sketch her likeness. She appears to be about forty; her features are well defined; replete with intelligence, and when lit up by a gay expression, singularly playful and pleasing. Her faculties are strong and clear, her understanding comprehensive, and her mind apparently equal to any exercise of its powers which she chooses to put into action. She is evidently possessed too of considerable sensibility, which makes her peculiarly alive to whatever

is interesting in the character of others. She and my aunt do not in the least resemble each other, but the difference between them is not such as to impede the growth of a very warm friendship. The young people are excessively fond of her, and her arrival at Glenalta is considered quite a jubilee. Though an English-woman by birth, and living almost continually amongst people of her own country, all her sympathies are Hibernian, and she has much of that *raciness* in her own composition which she says is so attractive a composition in the Irish. The delight with which she goes into the cottages to converse with the peasantry, is something very amusing to witness. She says that, "Irish thoughts are so *fresh*, and the expression of them so eloquent," that she feels as if transported amid a new order of beings. She seizes on every idea, presented in whatever guise, with such intuitive quickness, that she charms the poor people in return, and Tom Collins paid her an odd sort of compliment yesterday which brought tears into her eyes: "Indeed, God bless your honour, you're just as if you were bred and born in the bog among ourselves." This is her second visit to Ireland, though her first at Glenalta; and she runs about in raptures collecting traits of disposition which seem to have a native affinity with her own. I shall tell you more of her in a future letter.

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We are to set out, a formidable *muster*, for Killarney, at six o'clock to-morrow, and I shall not seal this till the last moment, reserving my next exclusively for a report of our expedition. As I tell you every thing, I cannot conclude without mentioning a letter which I have lately received from my eldest sister, and which has caused me much disquietude; she tells me that my uncle the General is coming home from India, which is fully confirmed by a letter direct from himself to Mr. Otway, and it is my mother's wish that I should be in England when he arrives. What is still worse, there is an evident anxiety expressed by Louisa, who, I conclude, conveys the general feeling of the family *conclave* in this case also, that I should quit Glenalta directly. The rustication which I am enduring will, she says, totally disqualify me for polite society; my manners will become boorish, my person *unsightly*, and, in short, it is *voted*, that as it is supposed my health is perfectly re-established, I shall quit my banishment, and revisit the regions of civilization, which it is apprehended I may forget, if my recal be not speedy and imperative. Then certain hints are thrown out respecting Adelaide, and that ass Crayton, whose coronet, were it of ducal form, and decorated with strawberry leaves imported from Brobdignag, could never hide the length of his ears. How short a time has elapsed since these things which now perplex would have given me joy? I should have been thankful for a good excuse to bid adieu to Ireland for ever; and I should have thought my mother the first of human manoeuvrers, and Adelaide the most fortunate girl in London to have succeeded in *hooking* that first-rate blockhead, who, it is likely, I am told, may be my brother-in-law. Another subject of painful reflection is added to these, and it is a relief to my spirit to tell you *all* that oppresses it. Such a change has taken place in my own mind, that I see the character of others with new organs. My personal identity almost seems doubtful to myself, and I can hardly believe what is nevertheless true, that Louisa's letter, independently of the intelligence that it communicates, has shocked me in a manner difficult to be explained within my *own* breast, and scarcely possible to be expressed intelligibly to another. My sister's language is lively; she speaks of people familiar to me, of amusements in which a few months ago I used constantly to participate; of fears and hopes, in all of which I could have sympathized, and of events which would have excited my vanity and gratified my pride. Surely it is something savouring of magic that can have converted these things into their very opposites. You have often said that I was not formed for the society in which I was placed; that my character would have taken another direction had it not been *trained* by habit to a distorted deviation from its natural bias. Perhaps you were right; but, allowing that you were so, still I cannot account for the metamorphosis. Apply a ligature that shall bind the branch of a tree, or a limb of the human body, in any particular curve, and there it rests. The bark, the wood, the pith of the one; the muscles, tendons, arteries of the other, obey the rule of distortion, and the removal of restraint effects no alteration; the crooked will not become straight. On the contrary, here I am a changeling in my mother's house; I see all objects with new powers of vision, and such as, I lament to add, render me ill satisfied with those who stand in the relations to me which I have now learned to appreciate. With a mind just awakened to affection, and a heart just opened to the genial influence of domestic love and harmony, my feelings, which this soft climate of Glenalta has unfolded, are blighted by the very thought of Selby. Yes, I sicken at the bare idea of return, and a consciousness which I only felt before upon *great* occasions, now represents the whole mechanism of that artificial compact sealed by fashion in the most intolerable view to my imagination. I cannot call things by their old names; the words no longer appear to suit their purposes, and the new nomenclature, which now seems most appropriate, disgusts me. How can I apply the terms bold, indelicate, unfeeling, unaffectionate, to a *sister*; and not turn with horror from such sounds; or attribute the base design of selling a child's happiness, carrying a daughter to market, and disposing of her to the best bidder, with all the cunning and trickery of professed jockeyism—how *can* I attach such devices to the character of a mother, and not shudder as I write the word? Yet all this is but an unexaggerated picture of those relations, as I have hitherto known them; an epitome of that world in which I have had my being, and though a fugitive feeling, perhaps, occasionally whispered disapprobation, and I *have* now and then shrunk from certain violations of modesty or integrity in the conduct of those around me—such starts were but momentary. I quickly rejoined the beaten track, and pressed forward with the giddy throng. When I look at my aunt Douglas, I feel how I could worship such a parent. When I am with Emily, Charlotte, and Fanny, I say to myself, if I had such sisters how I could love them; then comes the sting, I *have* a mother, I *have* sisters, and my mind revolts from their society. Poor Ned of the Hill told Bentley that "man is *never* happy." He was right, Glenalta would be Paradise did not the unwelcome intrusion of such reflections disturb its felicity.

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I was called away, or you might have had more of my melancholy musings. We have had a

charming ride to-day, and seen some *patches* of scenery so beautiful, that I can hardly suppose any thing to surpass them at Killarney, but like the fine beryls which were shewn to you and me, that had been found in the Kremlin, and looked as if they were set in a mass of pewter, these favoured spots are surrounded by such savage wildness as I can scarcely describe. You could hardly imagine any part of the dominions which own a British Monarch for their Sovereign to present such desolation to your view as met our eyes in this morning's excursion; but now and then we lit upon an oasis in the desert, the fertility and romantic loveliness of which would teach the veriest wilderness to smile. Annesley, who sketches admirably, took some hints for his port folio, which will astonish you some time or other. Emily and Fanny were of our party, and are excellent horsewomen. Our guests were delighted, and we had another cheerful meeting at dinner, but the evening was marked by a discovery which has *knocked up* poor Russell's repose for *this* night, I fancy, if not for a longer season. You know his devotion to music, in which he excels, and you are aware of his enthusiasm in collecting national airs, amongst which he thinks none so melodious as the old Irish strain. When the harp and piano-forte were opened this evening, we were listening to a *descant* of Russell's on the favourite theme, when Frederick said, "I *do* think Charlotte that you might now accompany yourself. I saw you practising some days ago, and never heard you touch the strings more sweetly."

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"I am only trying to recover a little of what I have lost," answered Charlotte, "but, if mamma does not say no, I will do the best that I can. My old Irish airs are in the dressing-room, will you bring them here?"

Till this moment I had never remarked that Emily or Fanny had always accompanied, and that Charlotte only joined in glees and duets, which she sings with her brother and sister in excellent style; but just before I came to Glenalta she fell, as she was dismounting from her horse, and hurt one arm so much, that it has been ever since regaining its ordinary strength. In any *other* family your ears would have been persecuted from morning till night with the details of such an accident. At Selby, I know that Eau de Cologne, Arquebusade, and every nostrum ever invented, would have been arrayed, and there would have been an incessant demand on the attentions of every mortal throughout the house, but such is the difference of education, that *self*, in all its branches, is banished from Glenalta. I had nearly forgotten that Charlotte was hurt, and as no one boasted of her powers, I never heard a word of her peculiar talent in music till in this unpremeditated manner it was called forth by Russell's dissertation on the character of Irish melody. The book was brought, Emily saved her sister the labour of tuning, and Charlotte, for the first time, saluted our ears with such divine enchantment as quite baffles every attempt of mine to convey a sense of it to your imagination. Russell furnished a *study* to Mrs. Fitzroy, who was watching the variety of his emotion with the deepest interest. His account of Charlotte's music, perhaps, may give you the best idea of it that words can impart:—"it is not," he says, "earthly harmony. No mortal finger touches that harp; no human voice is uttered in the song; that strain floats in mid air, and the soft southern breeze has sighed through the strings"—

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"'Twas the Genius of Erin that rose from her cave,
And poured out her lament to the answering wave."

It is not in nature to conceive any expression of sorrow more penetrating than that which mourns in the wail of an ancient Irish ditty. Charlotte has contrived to procure several airs which are not in Moore's collection, and which carry internal evidence of antiquity in the irregularity of their *rhythm*, if I may apply such a term to music. No sea bird's note was ever more sweetly sad; and she has picked up translations from time to time of some poetical fragments which she has adapted with great taste, as well as judgment to the music, for which she has often been indebted to the peasants as they pursued their daily toil; not that *they* sing agreeably in almost any instance, I am told; the extreme barbarism which is induced by such poverty as reigns in the South of Ireland, is very unfavourable to the Muses; yet they *will* linger amongst a people who possess such uncommon tact in appreciating their charms, notwithstanding the homely reception with which they are obliged to be contented. A death-song (*vulg. caöne* or *keen*), the words of which, I believe, are published in a late work on the Antiquities of this Kingdom, by Mr. Croker, and which Charlotte has set to an old *howl* that she heard a poor woman uttering (for singing would be a misnomer) with nasal twang, as she milked her cow, is the most heart-rending melody that I ever heard; and a march which she plays, to which the famous Brian Boirombh led his troops forward at the battle of Clontarf, is remarkable for a character of pathetic grandeur that I never found before in martial music. Russell's feelings underwent such excitement during the evening, that had not his sex preserved him from the simile, we should have compared him to a Sybil in the contortions of forthcoming inspiration. I now perfectly comprehend the pleasure which, I am informed, some of our first-rate public performers profess in exhibiting their powers to an Irish audience. The Irish feel music in the "heart of heart," and express what they feel with peculiar energy. Our English guests are *bitten* I promise you; I heard them both emphatically declare their gratitude to Mrs. Fitzroy for her introduction to this "charming family," but I *must* have a nap before we sally out upon Lake adventures, so fare thee well. On my return you may expect a budget.

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Vale, vale, yours ever,
A. HOWARD.

LETTER XV.

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MISS HOWARD TO A. HOWARD, ESQ.

Dear Arthur,

Your letter of the 10th to me, has produced a horrible combustion, and I am ordered to recal you immediately. Well or not well, you must be off; and as fast as coaching and steaming can bring you it will be prudent for you to appear before your angry parent, who will vent all her bile on us, if you do not come and relieve Adelaide and me from her ill humour. She accuses us of having persuaded her into consenting to your Irish expedition, and protests, at the pitch of her voice, that she would greatly prefer seeing you dead at her feet, to beholding you return a methodist, which she is convinced you are already become. You have no time to lose; but lest you should not consider the reception which I am teaching you to anticipate from your *tender mother*, too attractive, I have another reason to urge for your speedy appearance, which will surely turn the scale, if you are in any doubt how to act. I gave you a hint in my last, which will prevent your being surprised with the sequel. *La mere* has played her game so well, that were it not for the dreams of affrighted fancy, which represent you with parted locks of greasy sable, mounted on a tub, and haranguing the multitude *al fresco*—in short, if she did not believe you in the high road to become a field preacher, unless you are one already, she would have reason to sound the trumpet, and claim the honours of a triumph. She gave a splendid ball by way of *clincher*, for which her cards were out when I wrote last to you. The bait took *à merveille*. Crayton and Ady waltzed together, after which, mamma sailed round the rooms, and whispered to three or four friends (good telegraphs), that she wished Lord C. was not quite so *particular* in his attentions. "*Le bruit court*," so rapidly said *la bonne mere*, "that things are *settled* by the world before the parties themselves have the slightest idea of being serious." Of course you know the *eyes of Europe* were directed to the pair. The buz went round, and on the following day, old Lady Bilton bethought her of a *cheap* return, for at least half a dozen parties, and sent off a note to the following effect, which mamma received before six o'clock, at which hour Crayton made his morning call to ask how we did. Old Bilton's *billet* was to this effect:—

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"My dear Mrs. Howard,—As no one can possibly take precedence of me in the most lively interest for all that concerns you, I have made it a point to deny myself this morning to some particular friends, that I may write, to tell you of the rumours which are afloat. To be *explicit*, Lord Crayton and Adelaide Howard occupy the public mind, and the *on dit* of this morning is, that the settlements are *en train*. Do say, by a line, whether I may congratulate you. To a girl of Adelaide's expectations, the report cannot be of any disagreeable consequence if unfounded; but should it be true, I shall long to hear particulars.

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Yours very truly,
S. BILTON."

No sooner was Crayton announced, than he was caught and *closeted* by *la madre*, who imparted Lady Bilton's intelligence with becoming gravity, and sundry comments on the pain to *delicate feelings*, produced by talking people; the necessity of being more circumspect, her own disinterested sentiments, desire for her daughter's happiness, dread of Adelaide's affections being engaged; all which matter, judiciously interlarded with my uncle's great riches, speedy return, devoted attachment to his brother's children, and her own fears that his generosity would be so profuse as to bring all the fortune-hunting tribe to torment us, operated so powerfully on my Lord, added to the surprise of his *capture* on entering the house, that the whole matter was arranged, Ady was sent for, mamma vanished, the proposal was made, and accepted, the horrid business-people are put in motion, and you must come over, not only to take your seat amongst the musty parchments, but likewise to go through the silly form of giving your sister away. This latter ceremony is much more appropriate to the old Indian Plutus; but there are two reasons against waiting his arrival. One is, that we are not sure but he may leave us in the lurch; and, secondly, he may possibly be such an outlandish sort of animal, that we shall find it advisable to keep him in the shade. Now, it *may be*, that if you proclaim all that I am telling you, to the tiresome *primitives*, whose notions you seem to adopt with a degree of zeal, which I can assure you gains no credit *here*, I dare say that the eyes of your pious relatives will turn as naturally to the *new*, as the sun-flower does to the *old* light, and the blue, green, grey, or hazel, which may distinguish the organs of your serious aunt and cousins from each other, will be lost in the general *field argent*, as their pupils become heaven-directed, and the white of their eyes alone remain visible, like the sculptured orbs of so many statues. You will then hear a volley of methodistic nonsense,—of "fraud," "take in," "future unhappiness," and such like mawkish stuff, which I protest makes me feel, while I am writing, as if I had swallowed a score of ipecacuanha lozenges; *therefore* it will be wiser of you to say nothing of what I have mentioned. It will be quite enough to tell Mrs. Douglas and her gawky lasses, that affairs of importance demand your presence in England, and that, having been cured of your cough, the object of your visit to them is accomplished. We are the more anxious that you should act promptly, because Russell, and that blockhead Annesley, are gone to see Killarney, the Giant's Causeway, and whatever other odds and ends, in the way of *lionizing* that savage island may offer. Now, if they *poke* you out from the hole in which you are buried, or stumble upon you in a bog, the ass, alias Annesley, will begin to bray; he will tell the antediluvians of Glenalta that Crayton is not exactly such a puritan as he is himself; that he has gambled away money enough to build four-and-twenty chapels all in a row. Every irregularity of his life will be dragged into notice, and as your *good* people are

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stubborn as mules in performing what they call their "*duty*," we shall have postage to pay for some of your aunt's homilies, and not only that, but folks who know nothing of the world, act so entirely without line or compass, that I should not be surprised if she took up her pen, and committed the monstrous absurdity of addressing a *tract* to Crayton himself.

To prevent such an absurdity must be our care, and silence is the only plan to pursue with your Kerry relations. If possible, your mother will write a few lines herself, but lest she should be hindered from doing so, I may as well mention that Lady Araminta Sandes strongly recommends a practice of which she has lately set the example, insisting on the insertion of a clause in every modern marriage settlement, to secure a proper provision for the lady, in case of a *separation*. I think the council *so* good, that whenever it comes to *my* turn, I am resolved to stipulate for at least a thousand a year.

The Duchess of Naresbury has fitted up her *pallazo* in the best style, and intends to be very splendid; but she will never *be one of us*, with all her endeavours. She is to be "at home" on the twenty-first of next month, and Crayton asked her permission to take young Fancourt, who is just come back from his travels, along with him to her house. The Duchess forgot who he was, and when *Cray.* had *ticketed* him like a geranium in the conservatory, "honorable Augustus, second son to Lord Alison, a very fine young man, and my particular friend," her Grace drew herself up with as much dignity as if she was going to pronounce sentence, and answered, "Lord Crayton, I make it a point not to give any encouragement to younger brothers, 'tis a dangerous folly, of which sooner or later one has to repent. I am sorry for it, but I cannot make exceptions. I *cannot* receive Mr. Augustus Fancourt." Now, the rule is certainly *sound*, though this was rather an extreme case; but you know that our charming Byron says, somewhere or other,—I forget the lines,

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—And pious mothers
Inquired had they fortunes, and if they had brothers.

Well, Crayton was *piqued*, and as he would have felt it quite a personal thing had he not succeeded in taking Fancourt to Naresburg-House, he essayed again, and with great presence of mind calmly replied, "I beg a thousand pardons, for my presumption, but I thought your Grace liked talents, and Fancourt is an acquisition any where. He is just come from Greece, and his *book* comes out in six weeks." "Oh! that is *toute autre chose*," said the Duchess; "I like clever people excessively. You know I patronize authors, and have a host of *protégés* continually about me. Lord Crayton, this is quite another view of the matter. Pray bring Mr. Fancourt; I shall be glad to see him, and wish that he was *out*. He should have brought his materials all ready for the press. He will be late for the season in town. Tell him so from me, and bid him print without delay. I will speak of his book. I will announce it to night at the Duchess of L—'s."

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So ended the dialogue, and Cray. came off with flying colours. I was interrupted here by his entrance. Poor fellow! he looked pensive I thought; but I fancy he had a double dose of Burgundy at Lord Morley's yesterday, and *who* does not *wince* at sight of the sable squadron in perspective, of those terrible law folks with their long bills, and yellow faces? It was not a week ago since Crayton was laughing heartily at a monstrous sum which rich Burton of Norfolk had to pay to his solicitors for some black letter job. Amongst the items in account was, "To anxiety for my client, March the tenth, two pound fifteen." How very good! When the affair was nearly at an end, old Burton thought it would be a clever thing to spur Rosinante, and accordingly ordered his coach and four to stop, at the "special Attorney's," persuading Mrs. Burton, that a *friendly call* on *market-day*, carriage and liveries at the *door*, would diminish the bill by a cool hundred at *least*. Mrs. B— waddled out of the coach in a full suit of green with yellow ribbons, like a walking bank of daffodils, and spoke most condescendingly to Mr. Pim and Mrs. Pim, and the Miss Pims, and the Master Pims, but notwithstanding, and nevertheless, the last entry in the account when it came in was, "To a long and tedious conversation with Mr. and Mrs. Burton, thirteen and fourpence." Crayton is so funny! He tells a story when he is in spirits so well!

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Here comes *La Madre* with her letter, and so *Adio*. Adelaide would send her love, but we are to *suppose* that she has none to spare. *By and by*, I dare say, that she will have plenty on hand; but that is *selon les regles*. The only danger is, that what goes *out* love, may come *back* hatred. Well, Rochefaucauld says, that "hatred is distempered love," so 'tis all the same thing in the end. I am growing *prosy*, but do you know that the foolish story I told you in my former letter has made such a noise, that I am provoked, and shall begin to turn *blue* in earnest to vex the blocks. Old Pagoda is at hand, or I assure you it is well if my "Ostracism" were not to send *me* into banishment. It was rather an unlucky hit, half the young men in town do not understand it, and it is voted a *poser*. Crayton tells me that money is lost and won upon it daily in St. James's Street. When my uncle is fairly come, and I have touched the rupees, and golden maures, I will positively not keep my wits under *hatches* any longer. After all, it is egregious folly to give opiates to one's brains because our exquisites are unfurnished in the upper story. I must, however, take the matter quietly, for *under* a hundred thousand, it will not do to use a word of more than two syllables in length, or *any* dimensions *at all* in *height* or *depth*; but you shall see what revenge I will have when, like the princess in the fairy tale, my "thread-papers are made of bank-notes, and my favorite spaniel drinks out of a diamond cup." I will then ransack Johnson's *folio*, and oblige every aspirant to come to my levees with the pocket Lexicon in his bosom. Remember what I have said—*mum* is the word. Let us not have a commission to try whether we are of sane, or insane mind, nor yet be forced, like Rodolpho, to seek our wits in the moon, for I promise you we should not find a Pegasus to mount so high now-a-days. *Encore, adieu*.

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Yours, ever,

L. H.

LETTER XVI.

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MRS. HOWARD TO ARTHUR HOWARD, ESQ.

(*Inclosed in the preceding.*)

My dear Boy,

I am so full of business that I can only send you a few lines. I rejoice to hear that you are quite well, and that "Richard is himself again." Come to me *directly*. Adelaide's approaching marriage requires your immediate presence, and as you are within a few weeks of your majority, you will be able to enter into all my views for the establishment of your sister. You know *what* a mother I have been—how entirely devoted to the interests of my children; and I hope, my dear love, that I shall find you, on the present momentous occasion, ready to give your best aid in raising money for an immediate supply. You will feel with me, the propriety of a suitable outfit; and I am sure that it would be as painful to your mind as to my own, were our dear girl to want any proper accompaniment of her new dignity. The Granvilles too (Crayton's sister, you know is Lady G.) are people of such connection, that we must make an effort extra-ordinary, and I do not think it will be possible to get through the necessary expenses for less than five thousand pounds for present use. I want you also on Louisa's account; and, *entre nous*, feel very uneasy at a silly flight of her's the other evening. She was in high spirits at our Thursday's *soirée*, and imprudently *let fly* a scrap of history. As *really* very few young men now read any thing but the Morning Post, and the Novel of the day, it is not surprising that Louisa's learning confounded the party. I was much vexed, but it cannot be helped. When *you* come, you may be of use, in assuring all your acquaintance that she has not a particle of *blue* in her whole composition, and that the long word which has made such a sensation, was picked up from Blackwood, or the New Quarterly; that she never reads history, and knows no more of the Greeks than of a plum-pudding. Nothing alarms me more, than the apprehension of her taking to literature in a fit of disgust. You see how much we have for you to do. Commend me to Mrs. Henry Douglas and her family. They are very good people I am sure, and I feel much obliged by their attentions to you. It is a great comfort when folks are doomed to live in retirement, to see them enjoy it; and nothing can be wiser than your aunt's determination to remain in her present abode; but I need not, my dear Arthur, I am *convinced*, impress upon your mind the absurdity of taking up such notions as are highly commendable as well as suitable to Ireland, and confined circumstances. You are born in another *sphere* altogether, and must leave your Kerry ways behind you. Lady Cantaloupe and the Comtesse de Soissons just come! I must see them. Dear Arthur,

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Your affectionate mother,
MARIANNE HOWARD.

P.S. I had a great deal to say of my dear brother the General, but will postpone. *Au revoir.*

LETTER XVII.

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ARTHUR HOWARD TO MISS HOWARD.

Dearest Louisa,

On my return from Killarney, I find your packet, and hasten to say to my mother and you, that I shall obey your summons with as little delay as possible, consistently with all that I owe to the beloved friends whom I am about to leave. So many conflicting thoughts press for utterance, that I know not how or where to begin. Louisa, you will find me a very different being from the Arthur of your recollection; and I fear that at first the change which has been wrought in me will not please you. If you disliked my friendship with Falkland, and less powerful, yet still strong, regard for Annesley, what will you think of a devotion which can only end with life for my aunt Douglas, her children, and her friend Mr. Otway?

Yes, I own it to you. At Glenalta, in this despised and remote corner of Ireland, which you and I have so often ignorantly ridiculed, I have met with the most perfect happiness which it has ever fallen to my lot to enjoy. At Glenalta I have found the kindest affection, the most genuine refinement, not confined to mere exterior observance assumed for strangers, but originating in the heart, and living in every action. I have been instructed and amused; and while each hour has done something towards the cultivation of feelings and powers which I did not imagine I possessed, I have never been once a prey to *ennui*, that constant and wearisome associate of my former life.

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Dear Louisa, you have a good understanding and your heart is naturally lively, and even *kind*, if you were not perverted by the precepts, creeds, and example of that most dogmatizing of all human teachers—Fashion. Why not break the bonds that shackle your every thought, as well as action? Why not exchange the coarse, (alas, yes, I *must* speak truth) I say the coarse, unfeminine language of your last letter for that of true delicacy and female softness? My ears are new strung I suppose, for sounds which scarcely made a passing impression before I came to Ireland, now grate upon the organs of sense, and vibrate painfully to my heart.

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When I picture to my mind the scene which is now acting in Grosvenor Square, I confess that I feel disgusted almost to estrangement from those who are the chief performers in such a drama; and you are very right in the belief that were there any means by which without lowering a mother's character, I could inform that *arch*-blockhead, whom she has entrapped, of the fraud that has been employed to take him in, I would certainly, in humbling his vanity, remove his blindness, and charitably catch him from the brink of a precipice. What a marriage you are *brewing* amongst you! Were *you* the victim about to be sacrificed on the altar of folly, I could not restrain my feelings, which would burst into immediate counteraction of a plot to destroy all happiness and respectability; and I am more quiescent on *this* occasion, *not* because I have always loved you so much better than Adelaide, but that I question the utility of endeavouring to snatch *her* from the evil to come. She has no strength of character: her mind is a mere machine, ready and willing to be worked upon by the arts of any juggler who can produce a certificate of skill in the only science respected by a world holding all things in abhorrence that do not present themselves clad in the trappings of rank and fortune.

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If Adelaide were saved from falling into the hands of *one* profligate coxcomb, she would quickly throw herself into the arms of *another*. Crayton is not a designing man, and that is the only redeeming circumstance that I can see in his character—if the word character have any meaning when applied to a person who has *none*.

Say to my mother that, as a point of duty, I shall obey her mandate, and as soon as I am legally empowered to act, will do any thing to assist her which can be done without injuring a property too heavily burthened already. But, dear Louisa, you must prepare her, Adelaide, and yourself for my absence at the marriage ceremony: I cannot perform the part assigned to me. My mind revolts from participating in a *trick*, and I will never sanction the fraud by becoming a witness. I warn you of the evil, and I can do no more. We are totally unacquainted with my uncle, who may never give us a shilling, who may dislike when he is acquainted with his relations, and either marry, adopt a stranger for his heir, or leave his wealth to public charities. In short, we know nothing about him, and if it should turn out that the golden dreams with which my mother has dazzled the imagination of a man who has wasted his patrimony, and involved himself almost in ruin, melt in empty air, what consequences may not be anticipated? I turn with horror from the perspective, and dare not tell you *all* my fears! Crayton has an uncle too, and one from whom he expects the fortune, upon a reversionary hope of which, he has, to my knowledge, been trading for a long time past to supply the exigencies of the gambling table, to which he is obstinately addicted; and the pale face which you visited on a double dole of Burgundy, was probably attributable to a loss at play which, under existing circumstances, it would not be pleasant to reveal.

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I have now said enough to put my mother and Adelaide on their guard. A little *candour* would easily bring the matter to a conclusion, and prevent the mischief which is likely to ensue; but it rests with them to determine. I am not asked to advise, and do not say that I am qualified to act as counsel for any one. I trust, however, that I may be forgiven for this unsolicited interference, on the score of brotherly feelings, which *shrink* from the projected alliance, splendid as it appears.

Louisa, should the day arrive, in which you become acquainted with the Douglas family, I am not without hope of your proselytism. What joy it would give me to see you like these charming girls, and I am the more impatient that it *should be so*, because you have all the materials which might promise a rich harvest, were they but used to advantage. I would stake more than I shall ever be worth, that you will delight in the society of our aunt and cousins, if you are ever introduced to them.

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Say all that is affectionate to my mother and Adelaide, and add, that I give them present pain, to avoid for them a severer future pang. Adieu.

Your affectionate,
ARTHUR HOWARD.

LETTER XVIII.

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ARTHUR HOWARD TO CHARLES FALKLAND.

My dear Falkland,

I commence my Killarney *advices* on the first evening of my arrival there, or I should despair of sending you the promised packet on my return to Glenalta. We reached our inn in gay spirits, having come over bad and good roads alternately, and through a barren wild looking country; but a party, composed of such agreeable ingredients, and affording so much variety as ours did, is very independent of external scenery. If beautiful, it affords an additional source of pleasure, and *one* topic more for occasional comment; if otherwise, one can *do without* it: the latter was our case. Having once exclaimed, How desolate! we thought no more about the grievance of an ugly country, but laughed and talked, exchanged places—some riding, some driving, till we found ourselves at our journey's end, after performing five-and-thirty miles without any misadventure. Mr. Otway had written on before to provide "entertainment for man and horse;" so when we arrived we had the satisfaction of finding ourselves *expected*, which makes a *difference* everywhere, but particularly in a situation which cannot afford to relax in a single instance the discipline which keeps up some appearance of order and cleanliness; however, I do not mean to throw aspersions on our *hotellerie*, and am not one of those who consider it fair to abuse unmercifully whatever we find near home, while with something *more* than philosophy, we *revel* in the *desagrémens* of foreign countries, preferring dirt and inconvenience abroad to all the luxuries of *comfortable* England.

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In ten minutes after our arrival we were assailed by all sorts of people; boatmen wishing to engage our large party, musicians desirous of attending us on the lakes, beggars hoping to receive charity, with sundry applicants bringing boxes made of the red deer-hoofs, which are very neatly manufactured here, and various cups, goblets, and other utensils formed from the arbutus, which grows at this place in lavish profusion; all anxious to sell their wares, and all clamorous to recommend them.

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Mr. Otway, who knows the genius of the place, and is well known here and loved everywhere, undertook to direct our operations; and, singling out a remarkably fine looking man from the rough personages by whom we were surrounded, addressed him by the name of M'Carty More, and ordered him to be ready with all possible punctuality and accommodation at seven o'clock on the following day at Ross Castle, where we were to embark. The workers in red deer-hoofs and arbutus, were ordered to bring large supplies of the toys in which they dealt on the day preceding our departure, and the beggars were dispersed with a promise that they should have a *scramble* when we were going away, for which these ill-fed, worse clothed, cheerful, and easily-satisfied beings, were as grateful as if every want had been supplied at the present and prevented for the future.

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After this *clearance*, we sat down to a repast rendered delightful by companionship, had it been less intrinsically excellent; but Killarney salmon ought to have a place in my journal, and should be farther noticed *here*, were it not not to figure on the scene again. After dinner we walked to Lord Kenmare's, and amused ourselves in his demesne, during two or three hours, my aunt having insisted on our leaving her at the inn, as she complained of being fatigued; and those who were best acquainted with all her feelings, suspecting that to be left *alone* would soothe them, no offer was made to remain with her by any of the group.

On our return to the inn, we were surprised to find an elderly gentleman sitting with her, who proved to be old Bentley, and never did I see more evident annoyance expressed in a countenance, than was depicted in the nephew's at sight of his uncle. They met, however, with cordiality *too*, but the younger of them, though singularly unexcitable in general, changed colour upon the present occasion, and appeared suddenly cast down by this accession to our party: however, we were sufficiently numerous to prevent any *downright* awkwardness, whatever might be the existing cause of young Bentley's uneasy sensations; and his uncle explained his sudden appearance by telling us, that having reached his home too late on the preceding evening to disturb the families at Glenalta and Lisfarne, he delayed announcing his return till the following day, when, having learned our *elopement*, he resolved on not being left behind.

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You may fancy us rather closely packed in our *dormitories*: Russell, Annesley, and I, were crammed into a hole just large enough to hold three small camp-beds, no bigger than births on board a Holyhead packet: we could neither toss nor tumble, for the best possible reason, we had not *room* for such indications of restlessness; but we lay quietly as sleeplessly we "chewed the cud of sweet and bitter fancy" upon all that we had seen and heard in company with each other since the "*English foreigners*," as old Lawrence calls them, had been at Glenalta. In the pauses which will occur, even in the best supported colloquy, sundry sighs, which had not quite so far to travel as from "Indus to the Pole," were borne right into my bed by the *impetus* with which they were sent from Russell's, and a certain melancholy expression, which even a sigh can convey to a *finely constructed* ear, convinced me that my friend had lost his heart, or at least *mislaid* it since he came amongst us. While exercising my ingenuity a little farther, to determine the person who had committed grand larceny on his affections, a few notes whistled from time to time, *sotto voce*, assured me that Charlotte was the thief, and that her Irish melodies lived in the memory of my poor *chum*. Annesley is such a sensitive fellow, that if his heart is anything the worse for the wear since he came to Ireland, I have it to discover; but from the specimen which I have given

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above, I flatter myself that you have already decreed my sagacity to be worthy of apotheosis, even amongst the North American Indians. [Pg 118]

This Killarney will be a good test, I think, of our amatory tendencies, and a romance *a-piece* must be the result of such "means and appliances" as a glance from Lord Kenmare's park, across the lower Lake, promise for our *coup d'essai* on the morrow. Mine is rather a situation of responsibility, for, in addition to my *own* loves, should these bowers inspire the tender passion, I feel a God-fatherly sort of security called for on my part, that the new guests shall conduct themselves so as to return well pleased, and pleasing, to the last. In short, though, like Mrs. Gilpin we are "on pleasure bent," it must be to resemble her discretion also, "with a prudent mind," and I clearly perceive that I shall have to enact the part of a male *duenna*.

The appointed hour found all ready, and M'Carty More, that noble *savage* before-mentioned, who claims to be king of the boatmen, was the first object that we beheld on issuing from our *malapardis*. This man is quite a character, and so strikingly fine a specimen of rude, but manly beauty, that were he a little less weather-beaten, he might stand for a Hercules to Canova, were he alive again, or to Chauntry. His *calling* renders him quite familiar with his superiors, and he takes the command of his party as a pilot does of the ship, *pro tempore*. Mrs. Fitzroy, whose animation is very inspiriting, and whose enthusiasm I told you in a former despatch is glowing for the Irish character, chose him for her *Cicerone*, and, taking him by the arm, led the van towards the scene of embarkation. [Pg 119]

If you wish to know, as that mad-cap Melville used to say, "who and who were together," you may *enfilade* us as follows. Next to M'Carty More and Mrs. Fitzroy marched my aunt, leaning on the arm of Frederick, who, I believe, in the midst of all the beauty that Circassia could boast, and all the fashion that London and Paris exhibit, would still be found his mother's prop: on her left side Bentley the elder with his hands tight in his breeches pockets, as though he feared that their contents were going to fly away, *paddled* along, with unequal steps. Mr. Otway took charge of Emily; and I observed that a simultaneous movement of that slow and fearful nature that scarcely indicates design, incited at the same identical moment Bentley the younger and Annesley to wish that the disengaged hand of my cousin were safely lodged under the protective care of a right arm belonging to them, though neither had courage to step forward and offer himself as a candidate for the honour to which both aspired. Moreover I made a second observation; and though these sapient remarks were formed *in transitu* from the threshold of the inn to the street, I'll be sworn that I am right. "But what was your second observation?" quoth you. Why, it was, that the *mauvaise honte* which prevented our rival *beaux* from interfering with Mr. Otway's exclusive possession of the fair one's attention, arose from different causes, and produced different effects in the minds of the disappointed knights. Annesley's timidity lay in his breast, where, if he has made the confession to himself, he has truly said that Emily's is the character, of all he has ever seen, which comes nearest to his abstract of perfection in woman. On this *beau idéal* I have heard him dilate, and thus far can decide upon his feelings. *He* then was moved by an incipient desire to improve acquaintance, and secure a sort of prescriptive right to be Emily's *particular* in our wanderings by "wood and lake;" but the thought, though proceeding from preference established since the day of his arrival, was an *impromptu* of the instant in its present shape, and the reality of the sentiment which gave birth to the wish, confounded its ready expression; whereas in Bentley's manner I could trace more of the guardian than the lover; he was less anxious to appropriate Emily's society exclusively to himself, than to prevent its being appropriated by another, and this again was less dictated by a jealous or churlish feeling, than by a strictness of opinion on the subject of a young lady's walking arm-in-arm with a stranger. All this I read at a glance, and perhaps you will tell me that such profound skill in what the French call *le metaphysique de l'amour*, could only be learnt in Cupid's court; but the fact is, that I am *only* in love with the entire family, and therefore safe for the *present*, at least, from the imputation of having been a *booby* till the blind god had sharpened my penetration. [Pg 120]

Charlotte and Fanny were hooked upon my arms; Russell keeping a steady eye upon the former's left side, which he contrived to secure as soon as we had cleared the door; and our brace of *shy* youths were presently resolved into *unattached flankers*, who changed sides, fell back, or pushed forward, as pigs, dogs, children, &c. interrupted our progress to the water's edge. At length we were seated in our barge, and Cleopatra on the silver Cydnus could never have swung the oar more gallantly than we did from Ross Castle. I shall not favour you with the history of tenfold reverberations, which you will hear when you visit this scene of enchantment; nor shall I think it necessary to give you such details as if I were going to raise the wind in these book-making days by publishing, "A Companion to the Lakes of Killarney," but hastening to our first *stop*, land you on the exquisite island of Innisfallen, where we lingered for hours, unable to tear ourselves from its tiny shores, every little pebbled indenture of which might represent that where Ellen is described by the northern bard to have landed from her skiff in Loch Catrine. [Pg 121]

This Killarney is a centre of legendary lore, and the lovely islet on which we first touched *terra firma* from our boat, was the depository of those annals which bear its name. Domine, who did not appear in our procession from the inn, because he had walked alone to the castle that he might try the echo at his leisure before we came up, told us a thousand interesting particulars of this spot, and entertained us with various stories, rich in fabulous, as well as real events, of the olden time. Why does not that wizard Scott, draw from a source so worthy of his magic pen? He has been here, but passed, I am told, through Ireland generally with such rapidity, that his carriage wheels hardly seemed to come in contact with the earth. Positively, unless he can endure it to be thought that with a few lithographic sketches in his hand, he skimmed over the country, contracting for views *as per sample*, like a corn merchant bargaining to replenish his [Pg 122]

Charlotte and Fanny were hooked upon my arms; Russell keeping a steady eye upon the former's left side, which he contrived to secure as soon as we had cleared the door; and our brace of *shy* youths were presently resolved into *unattached flankers*, who changed sides, fell back, or pushed forward, as pigs, dogs, children, &c. interrupted our progress to the water's edge. At length we were seated in our barge, and Cleopatra on the silver Cydnus could never have swung the oar more gallantly than we did from Ross Castle. I shall not favour you with the history of tenfold reverberations, which you will hear when you visit this scene of enchantment; nor shall I think it necessary to give you such details as if I were going to raise the wind in these book-making days by publishing, "A Companion to the Lakes of Killarney," but hastening to our first *stop*, land you on the exquisite island of Innisfallen, where we lingered for hours, unable to tear ourselves from its tiny shores, every little pebbled indenture of which might represent that where Ellen is described by the northern bard to have landed from her skiff in Loch Catrine. [Pg 123]

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stores, the author of *Waverly* *must* shew signs of having visited this little focus of imagery by dressing one of his matchless casts in the drapery with which Killarney could furnish his splendid powers of tasteful decoration.

Will that genius, who can transform into gems the commonest minerals produced in a desert, and give with African prodigality, the purest gold in return for rusty nails, and beads of glass; will *he* permit Erin to draw the ungracious inference from his silence, that she could supply *no* materials for his laboratory? and while so many immortal records of Scotland's fame and England's glory, have been charmed from their dark retreats by his necromantic spells, shall Ireland, the fertile Isle of Emerald glow,—the island of saints,—the land of heroes,—the fane of learning, piety, and music, —be left to rest on the divided property in Fingal for all poetical memorial of her traditional celebrity? Forbid it justice! forbid it gratitude! Let not a people who have so liberally bestowed their praise on those numbers in which their neighbours have been so sweetly harmonized, remain themselves unsung!

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Some of our party eloquently urging the claims of Hibernia to a niche in the temple of Apollo, Russell, addressing himself to Mr. Oliphant, said, "I hope that you will not mistake my object in asking you a question which I have often heard triumphantly asked, and never answered, namely, if Ireland was really, at a former period distinguished as a seat of learning, virtue, and genius, where are her credentials? What is become of her buildings? Where are her documents of proof to support these fond pretensions? Now I echo this inquiry not in the spirit of a sceptic, but because I can never in future listen to such interrogatories with the phlegm of indifference, and I wish to be provided with an argument to rebut the conclusion which is frequently drawn from silence on this subject."

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"Indeed, my dear sir," answered Mr. Oliphant, "I have always thought the question very irrelevant, and the triumph very unfair. If we boasted that Ireland had produced the finest architects in the world, we might be desired to shew the monuments of their skill. If we arrogated the fame of wealth, we might be challenged to point out the palaces in which the splendid of past days had held their revels; but we lay claim to none of these things. Our pride consists in having been a learned and pious people. Now piety and scholarship are not so often allied to worldly distinction in *this* age of mankind, that we should associate them in a *past* time through any existing analogy. That Ireland was resorted to for education; that she produced men remarkable for knowledge and virtues; that her *magi* were held in repute and invited into other countries, to impart the treasures of superior light; that her ambassadors took precedence upon different occasions, of those sent by the sister kingdom, to continental courts and councils, are matters of historical record which we have no right to contradict, unless we can prove their falsehood; and as to the remnants of antiquity, which are insisted upon, we may collect ample testimony to evince a high state of former cultivation, if we make due allowance for poverty, subsequent civil wars, and the dilapidating influence of a damp climate. The language of Ireland bears evidence of ancient date. Every letter in the alphabet is in itself *the name of a tree*, which leads to the inference of originality in its design. The round towers of this country, many of which are in the highest state of preservation, baffle the utmost skill in research to account for their purpose, and determine their age. Of one thing only are we certain, and that is, of their great duration, and that, as far as present information extends upon the subject, Persia is the only country, besides Ireland, where buildings of this remarkable structure have been found. Our Druidical remains are in fine preservation, in various parts of the island. The names of several of our elevated promontories, with other circumstances, mark the fire-worship of eastern usage to have prevailed here. In many parts of the kingdom, ornaments in gold and silver have been discovered, of the purest metal, and most elaborate workmanship. I have seen some lately that were dug up in the neighbourhood of Dublin, which, for beauty in execution and elegance of device, may vie with any modern manufacture, and which, likewise, are identified with eastern fashion, as the decorations to which I allude were exactly similar to the Indian bangles, and must have been employed as such, to deck the ancles of the wearer. In our search after mines, we have come upon ancient excavations, and often found tools of brass which bore testimony to the former working in different places, and at a period so remote that the instruments used for the purpose are formed of a material, and exhibit shapes totally unlike any of our modern implements. In this very county are to be found curious remains of two spacious amphitheatres which, if discovered in any other country of the earth, would excite the liveliest competition of industry to explain; but because these things are discovered in Ireland instead of Tartary or Siberia, ridicule and contempt are their portion. However, as the one flows from ignorance, and the other from coldheartedness or jealousy, and neither affords demonstration, we may hope that they will cease, and that a land, too fertile of soil, too rich in the finest harbours in Europe, to have been overlooked in early times, will regain her character which has been lost through the misfortunes of her history. You must bear in mind that in the very remote periods of which our accounts are scanty and imperfect, the religion of this country was not Roman Catholic. It was a much purer faith, and free altogether from those superstitions which now disfigure the Popish ritual. The poor Waldenses in their vallies of Piedmont, though they have lost much of their original simplicity in a necessary communion from time to time with the Protestants of Geneva, still preserve, I believe the nearest approach of any mode of worship extant, to what *was* our creed about the time of Saint Patrick, whose *purgatory* was instituted many centuries after his death. In *those* days then, the magnificent piles which owe their existence to the zeal of papal devotion, would not have been erected here, whatever might have been the pecuniary abundance of the people; and at a later time, when abuses crept in, and the pure faith was exchanged for that inconsistent mass of human invention appended by bigotry and avarice to gospel truth, Ireland was too poor, and too savage a nation, to raise such mighty altars as bear witness to the

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former wealth and glory of your beautiful England.

"*Some* remnants we do possess of ancient grandeur, and we can still shew you specimens both of Saxon and Gothic architecture, which are worthy of your highest admiration, though they not numerous, I confess.

"Lord Elgin has transplanted much of the Athenian Parthenon into the heart of London; what he left, is daily suffering deterioration, and diminution. If the pride of Greece, the classic, the inimitable Athens, should vanish, and, like the Golgotha of Troy, only exhibit the *place* where once stood in unrivalled grace and splendor, would you not still declare that her temples and her statues, though crumbling in the dust, proclaim that Pericles and Phidias *once* had being.

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"If but a single column of the once astonishing Pæstum now survived the decay of time and the barbarism of man, would you suffer incredulity to take her stand amid the ruins, and fulminate her tasteless anathemas from the very scene of whilom greatness? *We* only crave a measure of the same candour which you liberally employ on other occasions. Let our round towers and cromlechs, our castles and abbeys, be allowed in evidence of our not being a nation just sprung from the sea; and suffer our annals and chronicles to be received in testimony of our having sent forth pious and learned men, when less favoured countries sought our assistance. Come now, and I will shew you a fine Saxon arch in this wee island."

As we moved on towards the ruin, we found some of our party gazing on the lake below, from a little rocky eminence on which they were seated, and here we caught Mrs. Fitzroy and old Bentley in furious debate. He is an odd sort of *restive* old fellow; sharp, clear sighted, and very bitter in his remarks; but withal good-natured, and, though rough, by no means implacable. Mrs. Fitzroy had been, I suppose, expressing some sentiment in favour of the Irish peasantry, perhaps in praise of the Herculean M'Carty; for just as we reached the spot where the antagonists were contending, Bentley exclaimed with stentorian vehemence, "Madam, I tell you that they are rascals, one and all. It is a mere fiction to talk of the Irish as you do. I know them better. They are a cringing lying race; and as to your admired M'Carty More, he is a drunken dissolute dog; and you spoil him by letting him prate for your diversion."

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"Upon my word, Mr. Bentley," answered his adversary, "your abuse is wholesale, and spreads over too large a surface to cut deeply. I do not agree with you; and I repeat, that such is my preference for the people of this country, that I shall beg my friends Mrs. Douglas and Mr. Otway to be on the look out for a cottage to suit me in their vicinity at Glenalta."

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"No, no, madam, you will do no such thing," retorted the cynic; "you are acting more wisely. Believe me, that the most knowing people are those who *travel about, if society be their object*. By change of place, you come in for the best of every stage at which you halt. You skim the cream as it were, and ought never to rest long enough any where to alter your opinions of people, very few of whom, be assured, will stand the test of intimacy. There is nothing truer than that Alexander was no hero to his valet-de-chambre, and the maxim applies as forcibly to nations as to individuals. You will tire of us, if you know us better, and look back upon your present judgment as mere poetry. Every oyster is made up of the fish and its shells. Swallow the one and get rid of the others as fast as you can: they are not worth keeping, and you will do well to throw them away."

"Not with *my* charitable feelings," said Mrs. Fitzroy, "pounded oyster shells are a fine corrective of acid. I would reserve them for the good of all who require alteratives, and you should have a Benjamin's dose."

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Old Bentley is a merry wight, with all his acerbity, and as this *hit* was made with perfect good-humour, and a playful countenance, it had a happy effect, and seemed to raise his estimation of the powers of mind opposed to him.

"Madam," answered he, "I thank you for your desire to make me better, though your *sweetners* should not succeed. I pique myself on seeing things as they *are*, and set my face always steadily against every species of romance."

In so saying, he gave a consequential *hem*, and turned his eyes towards "poor George," his nephew, whose nerves are, luckily for himself, not externally perturbable, and though I am certain he *felt* that "more was meant than met the ear," he continued, as calmly as possible, to converse with my aunt, whom he had engaged in a *tête-à-tête*.

We were now reminded by M'Carthy More that Innisfallen was only the beginning, not the end of our progress; and, regaining our barge, we were again embarked. This may be a proper place to tell you, lest I should forget it here-after, that to prevent any unavailing efforts on your part at tracing the pedigree of so great a personage as the said King of our Killarney lake-men, the word *More*, which appears like a surname, is in reality the Irish for *Great*, as *Beg* is for *Little*: so that M'Carthy More means the great or chief M'Carthy.

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We now bent our course towards Glena. If you were not coming one of these days to see with your own eyes, and hear with your own ears, the wonders of this little elysium, I should send you my journal at once, where almost every tree is registered as if I were an Irish tenant, and had planted them myself; but of description you will not have much in my letter, or it would swell to a volume; and, as it is, you would be bankrupt, were it not for your good luck, which again presents a private opportunity of sending a packet to you.

At Glena we landed, and here the arbutus arrested our steps, and fixed the party for some time in amazement at its quantity and size. Here too, our *Monarch* informed us that we should fish for our dinner, inviting us to watch the process of drawing a net. Broken into groups, we seated

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ourselves along the margin of the lake, and I for one could have believed myself translated into some happier region, *at least* intermediate between heaven and earth. As I muttered something to this effect, I heard a sound behind me resembling the growl of a dog who is not quite sure whether he should bark or not. I turned round, and beheld old Bentley at my heels; and this movement had the effect which it would have operated on one of the canine species in giving voice to the *grumble*.

"Aye, aye, poetry and sentiment—romance and delusion! But yours, Mr. Howard, is the natural age for all these humbugs. You will come to your senses before your glass runs out, and find that you are mistaken in your views of happiness."

"Well, sir," said I, "it is some comfort that at my time of life you *admit* of my being deceived into bliss; and as life is short, as well as precarious, it is a great matter to be delighted even with *shadows*. But why do you set your face, Mr. Bentley, against nature, and insist upon forestalling the season of care, and laying burthens of anxiety on shoulders not fitted to the toil of supporting them? The colt in the forest is allowed to range at liberty till his strength is matured, and he can bear the load that is destined for his back. Do you really think that it is right to anticipate evil, and never enjoy present good?"

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"No, sir," replied Mr. Bentley; "but a wise man removes the veil from his eyes as soon as possible, and endeavours to see through the mists of folly and prejudice which obscure his horizon. He directs all his energies to the pole star of truth, which will quickly place the things of this world in their just light to his understanding, and teach him that what is called society is a foul cheat; a dishonest compact, by which people agree to jockey each other, and pass, like counterfeit coin, for the things that they are not; assuming manners, professing regard, and displaying dispositions the very opposite of those that are exhibited when the mask is taken off in the privacy of retirement. Then, as to sunshine, and fine scenery, let people enjoy them for the *time* if they will, but not imagine that a cloudless sky or perennial green would change the heart of man and make him contented. No, sir, independence is the only positive good of merely earthly origin; it gives us the power of being useful to others, and of being disengaged from the trammels of the world ourselves."

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"And pray," said Mrs. Fitzroy, who leaned on my right arm, while Emily occupied the left, Mr. Otway and George Bentley bringing up the rear of *our* division, "are such feelings as you express likely to lead to your conclusion? Will riches be employed for the relief of others who want their aid, by a man who thinks of his fellow-creatures as you do, and looks at creation through a jaundiced medium?"

"Perhaps not always with *intention*, madam," said old *Crabstick*; "but the beauty of money is that it works without impulse, and *must* do good in spite of its possessor. Even a miser, who expends only enough to preserve life, is hoarding that which, if useless now, will circulate here-after for the benefit of mankind. And this is an extreme case: there are few misers in the community."

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"I conclude then," said Mrs. Fitzroy, "that you approve of money matches as they are called, and would not readily forgive a son of yours if you had one, for marrying badly, in a worldly sense?"

"Certainly, madam," answered old Bentley, with great animation, and apparently charmed with having an opportunity in this natural manner of giving out the whole "head and front" of his opinion upon so important a subject, *perhaps* with a secret view of regulating the conduct of his nephew, "You are perfectly right, very right indeed in your supposition, Mrs. Fitzroy. Money matches are the *only matches*. Money meets money, there is no deception in that sympathy, all else is balderdash; and except in a very few remarkable cases of happy marriage, which like the flowers of the aloë, bloom only once in a hundred years, you may pick out and select with all your care the finest ingredients of learning, taste, accomplishments, and so forth. I give you *carte blanche* in your choice, but bring them together at the altar, and in a year you will have a dish of *sour crout* as the result of your compound."

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"How *can* you hold such opinions of your fellow-creatures, Mr. Bentley? It is surely you yourself that convert all mankind into acids, by looking on them. I should be afraid if you walked into my dairy, that the very milk-pans would turn to curds and whey on your entrance," answered Mrs. Fitzroy; "but were the fact really as you describe, I should like, for the sake of curiosity, to hear how you account for this transmuting effect of marriage on the human mind?"

"Why, madam, in various ways. In the principal number of instances, no transmutation at all takes place; the only difference is, that people discover each other's true characters when it is too late to remedy their want of accordance, and then it is much worse to find yourself ill yoked in marriage, than suffering disagreement in any other relation of life. If children live unhappily with parents, there are all the chances of death, matrimony, and profession, for separating the discordant elements. If brothers and sisters quarrel, *they* too are free to hope at least for better days; and in both these cases the evil in question is not of a man's own contriving. No one feels lessened in his own eyes, however he may be otherwise vexed, if he loses at a game of hazard; but marriage is like chess, if we are *check-mated* there, it is our own fault, and proves our want of penetration. This, madam, is a grand cause of unhappiness in married life. People cannot forgive themselves for having sacrificed their liberties, and committed *felo de se* on their own peace. If you are not satisfied with the causes already given, of disunion in this generally luckless bond, I can supply you with fresh impediments to contentment, without going out of my way in search of them. I see people every day whose wits are all laid up in ordinary, like ships of war after a battle, which, when once the conflict is over, are dismantled, and left to their fate. Intellect, madam, which you ladies of the *Blue school* make such a fuss about, is a pretty toy in the hands and heads of single folk, who turn it to account for pleasure or profit; but in married

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life, it is not wanted. People who are buckled together, probably know each other's sentiments upon most subjects; and no one would ever be at the trouble of talking upon abstract matters, if the vanity of display, the pride of triumph and the stimulus of novelty, were put out of the question. The world of *fashion* is not troubled with brains in either *one* condition or the *other*; and as for your Darbys and Joans, it is far better for them to nod at each other in a couple of arm-chairs in the chimney corner, than debate about morals, manners, or 'the Punic war.' Madam, man is *sui generis*, a pugnacious dogged animal, and requires all the restraints which public opinion imposes, to prevent him from being rude and overbearing. Amongst strangers he *must* not be so, or if he give way, and outstep the bounds of propriety, he is sure to get a timely rap over the knuckles, which calls him to order; but in his own family he is generally a bear without its muzzle on, and depend upon it, the less *argument* the better between the sexes, when once they are noosed in the holy bands. They have enough to do to get through the daily affairs of life, without fighting in earnest upon practical subjects; and are foolish if they throw away time in idle skirmishing on theoretical topics. What signifies it to any man, or woman either, whether Newton's *Principia* be founded, or not, in true philosophy; whether Lock's Essay on the Human Understanding be or be not unanswerable; whether air and water are simples or compounds; whether the earths can be turned into metals, and diamonds be reducible, so as to leave no residuum behind in the crucible. Such points are very useful and interesting to mathematicians, professors of moral philosophy and chemists, but what have lawyers, physicians, officers in the army and navy, merchants, and country gentlemen, to do with these matters at their fire-sides? No, madam, people must, that is, the *major part* of mankind, must marry, for so it is ordained. The earth must be replenished, and marriage is the nursery to furnish a succession of young plants, as the old ones die down, and return to their dust; but *wise* people (I grant you that they are few in number), purchase exemption from many of the thorns and vexations of life by the union of well-lined purses. Prudent parents, by insisting on good settlements and suitable *pin-money* (as a separate income is foolishly called), may secure their daughters against the tyranny of present power, and future extravagance; while a man who marries a good fortune, is enabled to relieve both himself and his wife from the *tedium vitæ* of each other's society, by keeping a hospitable table at which cheerful company may beguile the monotony of domestic routine."

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Mrs. Fitzroy smiled, and said, "Well, at least you are candid enough to throw the principal odium on the male part of creation, and I believe that many women would heartily thank you for the establishment of liberal *pin* money, which, according to your account, is very *aptly* named I think, as it is the only arrangement you say, that attaches the parties to each other, and prevents perpetual flying off?"

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"Yes, madam, in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, money is at the *bottom* of domestic strife. Some women are fools and lavish, others are cunning and narrow-minded; but, almost *all* men are devoted to the *love of power*, and hate to share the dominion over their coffers. It may perhaps surprise you to hear what I am going to say, coming from the lips of a rough mortal like myself, but I will confess that I have never known any thing approaching to happiness or respectability in married life where, if the woman did not manage all the pecuniary concerns of the family, she had not at least an equal share in them. I have a tolerably bad opinion, generally speaking, of *both* sexes, but of the *two*, I think yours better than my own. Lord Chesterfield, who saw human nature in its true colours, though he abuses men and women without *parsimony*, still allots something of a better character, because a less selfish one to the ladies, when in his division of mankind, he asserts that "the former are compounded of vanity and avarice; the latter of vanity and love."

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"I hate these cynics," said Mrs. Fitzroy; "and as to *you*, Mr. Bentley, I feel certain, that some early disappointment in life might tell its tale, and account for your cross-grained notions of the world. Let me hear what Mr. Otway says on this subject."

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"My opinions," said the amiable Lord of Lisfarne, so far agree with those of my worthy friend, that I feel the imperfection of my *species*, and have only to turn my thoughts inward to perceive the depravity and weakness of the human heart. Yet in this motley world there is *much* enjoyment, *much* rational happiness, if we use with moderation the materials which Providence has bountifully placed within our reach. The fact is, that this scene is *too* alluring with all its errors and misfortunes; and a far greater share of good might be achieved if we did not mar our own happiness. It has been my lot to see the finest endowments of human character united in the bonds of wedded affection, and I have lived to see such perfect harmony in married life, that I can never charge the preponderance of misery that we daily witness to the state *itself*. On the contrary, were people to employ only as much attention in this most important act of life, as they do in any ordinary traffic, we should not have to deplore the shipwreck of domestic happiness in ninety-nine instances out of every hundred: but I am far from thinking that it requires to be highly gifted to be happy. If the capacity of one vessel be as a pint, that of another as a gallon, and a third as a hogshead, all may be *full*, and none can be *more* than full. I am of opinion, too, that very unequal measures of intellect may meet both profitably and agreeably in connubial life, though there can be no doubt of the superior charms of such companionship as that to which I first alluded; but it is a singular coincidence, that I should at this moment have a letter in my pocket from a relation of my own, precisely apposite to our present argument, which, if you like, I will read to you."

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We had just requested to hear the story, when Frederick came running out of breath, to summon us all to the beach where the nets were drawing. We immediately started up, and hurrying towards the shore, adjourned our debate till after dinner, when *Phil.* engaged to fulfil his promise. Assembled on the edge of the lake, we saw several of the finest salmon I ever beheld,

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brought to land, and M'Carty More having secured two of the largest, for which he made the bargain himself, he proposed that we should proceed to Dinas Island, where the fish was to be roasted after the manner in which the people here are accustomed to dress it. As we were preparing to go on board the boat, Frederick whispered to me a remark that M'Carty had made, in his untutored phrase, upon Bentley the elder, and Mr. Otway, as he saw them walking forward together.

"There goes a pair that were never made to walk abreast."

"How do you mean?" said Fred.

"Why, sir, that straight and crooked, bitter and sweet, short and long, are fitter for-harness than those two men."

"Describe them M'Carty," answered Fred. "I will then," replied the boatman. "Mr. Otway is just what a *raeal* gentlemen ought to be, neither too rough nor too smooth. He knows his *distance* (meaning, I conclude, his station), and never mounts above it, nor falls below it; he is mild and good like a child, though a *raisonable* man, that has a why for every wherefore; but Mr. Bentley, Sir, never got out of bed in his life, that it was'nt with the left foot foremost, and so every thing goes contrary with him."

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How admirable are these rough sketches by ignorant beings of the lowest class! Oh the exquisite beauty of Dinas! but I have made a vow not to entangle you in bowers, nor plunge you in the silver stream. This island is flat, and of much greater extent than Innisfallen; there is a pretty cottage upon it, where preparations were made for our repast by those amphibious animals who live indifferently on land and water, and who were suddenly metamorphosed into cooks, having previously performed the parts of rowers, and next of fishermen. They instantly split the salmon, and having cut some stakes of arbutus, *spitted* the fish, and fixed it in the ground, then lighting a fire all round, completed the operation with culinary skill, and served up, in process of time, the best dish of fish that I have tasted. This mode of cooking has a peculiar name, and a salmon dressed in the manner that I have mentioned, is said to be *kibboded*, the term, as Mr. Oliphant informed us, applied to a favourite food in Persia, which is made by splitting and broiling fowls, as the fish was managed here, and in the method to which we gave the name of *spatchcock*—another coincidence between that country and the Island of Saints. When we had finished our rural banquet, and again *filed off into* detachments, I found myself pursuing a beautiful pathway among the trees, along the border of the Lake, arm-in-arm with Mr. Otway; and, when we had interchanged some remarks on the loveliness of the surrounding scenery, I begged him to give me a key to some of the characters that composed our party.

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"Mr. Bentley is a very amusing person to me," said I, "and his *running bass* of *ill* humour so *good* humouredly expressed, forms an anomaly in his manner exceedingly diverting. Mrs. Fitzroy too is very agreeable, and the continual skirmishing sustained with so much spirit on her side, between that lady and Mr. Bentley, is fully as pleasant as "Mathews at Home;" but I am not enough acquainted to understand her completely, and, as for young Bentley, though I *like* him much, and *esteem* him more, I am not familiar with his *style*, and wish, of all things, for some light into his history."

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"You have set me a task," answered Mr. Otway, "which would require more time to execute than we have at present to spare; but you are perfectly right in your conjecture, that they are all three worth knowing *au fond* as characters of peculiar though very different construction; and I look upon every one of them as such a well defined specimen of its genus, that were I assorting mankind, as a cutler does knives and scissors, I would stick my three friends on the outside of my parcels, as indexes to the contents within each paper of the several classes to which they belong. Though the lady claims precedence, I will tell you something of my old neighbour to begin with:—Mrs. Fitzroy made a true hit to-day, when she said that she was certain he had been disappointed in early life. It was exactly the case. He began the world with humble expectations, and was intended for the profession of an attorney. Nature had given him a strong and shrewd understanding, set in one of those brazen scabbards that defy the inroads of time and bad weather. He was one of many children, and accustomed, as the sailors say, to *roughing it*, through life. With a body in which *nerves* were left out, and a mind divested of any troublesome sensibilities, he *tackled* to his calling, and had not fortune stepped in between him and the necessity of working for his bread, would not only have been one of the most active of the busy fraternity with which he was incorporated, but would also, I believe, have set a praiseworthy example of upright conduct; for I look upon him as a man of incorruptible integrity. He had finished his *noviciate*, and was just embarking in this minor department of the law, with a respectable coadjutor, when he began to think that a partner of the softer sex might be a proper *coping to the wall* of his destiny; and accordingly he made his proposals to a young lady of some personal attraction, and such a convenient *modicum* of wealth as, without rendering it presumptuous to approach her, flattered his self-complacency with the prospect of meriting, at least, an *ovation* for his success. There was no *if* in the calculation; a doubt never once insinuated itself into his mind; not that he was a conceited or overbearing young man by any means; but his opinions, derived from vulgar sources, were made up in bundles, endorsed, and stowed away in the various compartments of his pericranium, where they were alphabetically arranged like papers in the pigeon-holes of his desk. On looking at number thirteen, letter M, and taking down the packet, he found it docketed 'Marriage;' and on turning a page, the following synopsis of contents may, we suppose, have presented itself to his view:—'Eight and twenty; fair time to look for a wife—marriage, convenient for man—indispensable for woman—idle to marry without money—a profession, may reasonably be reckoned against three or four thousand pounds. Any thing over five feet eight *tells* in the appearance of a man; figure of more consequence than face,

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with a man *on his preferment* as touching the other sex.' It was not needful to seek farther into the documents thus labelled. My worthy friend, perhaps, heaved a natural sigh, as he involuntarily approached his faithful mirror for the purpose of smartening his dress, and read the mortifying sentence of 'hard featured,' which, added to the painful certainty that he wanted two inches of standard measure, might have damped the energies of our would-be Benedick, had it not been that some unseen but friendly spirit so frequently takes compassion on our humiliation, and whispers comfort in extremity. Such consolatory unction was poured into Bentley's bosom in this trying moment. If his optics rested on a snub nose, ferret eyes, and pock-marked cheeks, his good genius breathed into his ear the words 'quick, intelligent, droll;' and when the fidelity of a two-foot rule forced the unwelcome conviction of five feet six as the utmost height to which truth would permit him to aspire, the soothing sounds of 'well-built, compact, genteel,' again fell on his organ of hearing, as if sent from Heaven to encourage his faltering purpose. The toilette ended, Bentley took his well brushed hat, and catching up a slight rattan, which not only gave a finish to that *dapper* activity on which he meant to rest the character of his appearance, to which *grace* was unfortunately denied, but was likewise useful in supplying an object *with* which to twirl away an awkward feeling, should such arise, our hero set out, and walked towards Surgeon Sharp's, with an expression in his gait which, if called upon to translate, you would have interpreted by the words, 'secure, confiding, and self-satisfied.' Alas! what vicissitudes are incident to our mortal career!

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"Bentley returned to number one, Mortgage Row, had a rapid vision of his chop-fallen countenance in the large brass plate upon which was engraved 'Deeds, Bentley and Co.:' rushed to his apartment, exchanged his black stock for an easier neck-cloth, and, whistling louder than he had ever been known to do before, took four steps in every stride down stairs, and joined his partner, a keen, sarcastic, but sensible man, from whom I had the greater part of these particulars, at dinner. But, as every man has his evil, as well as his friendly genius, rumour has spread to the winds that poor Bentley's thoughts being unpleasantly occupied, he wished to drown them, and swallowing a more liberal potation than was his ordinary custom, of native spirit, diluted with warm water, and seasoned with lemon and sugar, experience confirmed the proverb of '*in vino veritas*,' the half-muttered sounds of 'rejected addresses,' and stimulated the curiosity of Mr. Jacob Deeds. The distressing confession distilled from Bentley's lips, and so entirely did he lose all prudent controul over his feelings, that the boy who passed to and fro with the dinner apparatus, heard sufficient of his misadventure to make a good foundation, and splicing on from his own invention as much as was requisite to complete the story, he published his master's disgrace with the diligence of a bell-man that evening. When Bentley went to court on the following day, he was attacked on all sides, and to come to the *moral* of my tale, this *debut* in *love affairs* gave the bias which has influenced the life and character of my honest neighbour from seven and twenty to sixty years of age. Had *affection* been blighted, I could not even *now* laugh at his expense, but his pride alone was engaged. The prudential aphorisms which he had learned of vulgar parents, had established certain points as fixed principles in his mind, not requiring farther discussion. Amongst these, was the firm belief that no young woman could possibly refuse a tolerable match, and *partiality* having, perhaps, represented the offer of his own hand as something *beyond* the average of good luck in the case of Miss Sharp, it was too much for his philosophy to find such a flaw in a theory which might have otherwise lasted to the end of his days, and not only this vexation in the abstract, but the particular sting of furnishing the contradiction in his own person. He began with rage, and finding no balsam in his wrath, he turned on mankind, and revenged, by the poignancy of his satire against the whole species, this fancied wrong inflicted by a single individual. In a short time after, an advertisement appeared in the papers, setting forth the death of a person who possessed considerable property, and who dying intestate, and without any near relations, the next of kin were called upon to declare themselves. At the end of a suit which occupied four or five years, my friend's claim was substantiated, and he was put in peaceable possession. The progress of time, which mellows men and wine, together with the healing which affluence brought to his pride, operated a salutary change, not in kind but degree. His mind had received a bent which no after circumstances of his life had power to alter, but every year has produced a softening effect, and he is now, comparatively, smooth as oil. George, who is the only son of a brother, who died a few years ago, will probably inherit his uncle's estate, if he can submit to the penalty of being guided solely by his advice. Of this I doubt, and, as I have a great regard for the young man, I cannot help watching him with anxiety."

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I delight so much in Mr. Otway, that I treasure all he says, and have given you his account of old Bentley as nearly as possible, in his own words; but just as I pressed him to tell me all that he knew of the nephew, we were joined by some stragglers of our party, amongst whom was Bentley himself. The weather was enchanting, the Lake dotted with boats, and we perceived that our island was not sacred to us. As we proceeded to explore the intricacies which thickets of the finest evergreens concealed from our view, several voices assailed us at once; we saw a number of gay-looking people land from a barge at a little distance; feathers waved in the air, peals of laughter were driven by the breeze, and we would gladly have retired, but a sort of rude curiosity, common to fashionable people, impelled the strangers to overtake and see *what we were like*. Conceive my astonishment on hearing my name pronounced, and, in a moment, finding myself in the midst of a group composed of Lady Matilda Murray, her pretty daughters, her son Henry, Lord John Craven, young Lewellyn Spencer, and half a score others, with whom I was slightly, or not at all acquainted, and who might have been mistaken for figures hired from a hair dresser's shop window to swell Lady Matilda's train, if it had not been for the uproar that they made. Conscious, long ago, of the revolution which has taken place in my mind, I never knew its full extent till this meeting. Nay, I have often felt at intervals that opportunity might again betray

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me into my former participation in all the follies which used to occupy without interesting me; but Dinas island has finished my conversion. The place seemed absolutely profaned by the presence of this silly group of milliners' dolls, and hair-dressers' dandies. It was so incongruous a sight, that, forgetting how lately I had been one of themselves; that I too had lived in London's west end, and that steam packets and post horses had not ceased to be when I was deposited in the County of Kerry, I wondered like an idiot how they came to Killarney; and I believe looked as the savage of Averon might have done, had he suddenly met the *beau monde* of Versailles in his forest. The whole set gathered round me at once, and, totally regardless of the company to which I was attached, they overwhelmed me with questions all talking together. Even Miss Murray, whom we used to call the "sleeping beauty," seemed inspired with animation, and became as obstreperous as her sister. When the din had in some degree subsided, Lady Matilda, in a languid drawl, said, "I assure you, Mr. Howard, you should not waste time in these wilds. Reports are in circulation respecting some members of your family; and delays are dangerous. The prize may slip out of your sister's fingers if you are tardy. I speak as a true friend, I do assure you." "Aye, aye," added her ass of a son, who was standing close to us, "bag the game Howard as fast as you can, or i' faith it may fly and leave you in the lurch."—Before I had time to utter a syllable in reply to these impertinencies, Miss Angelina Murray abruptly exclaimed, "oh! but would it not be excellent if Mr. Howard were to give us a sermon *al fresco*. All the world is of opinion that he has turned Methodist, and it would be charming to tell of this adventure when we go back. Do dear Mr. Howard, you may make it as short as ever you please; but *do* indulge us with a discourse. Here I will send Lord John for my cloak; you shall put it on, and fancy it a full suit of canonicals. Pray do not disappoint your congregation."

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This wit, which appeared to be considered quite attic, was received with bursts of laughter, which intoxicating its vapid author, she would have gone on plaguing me with her nonsense till now, if I had not cleared my throat, and, like a canary bird, conquered every other voice by the vociferation of my own. At length I was heard, and succeeded in telling Lady Matilda that I had come like herself to see Killarney; that like her too I intended returning to town, and if arrived there before her Ladyship, should be happy to execute her commands.

"Thank you," said she, "I shall return myself as fast as my delicate health will permit, and shall be happy to take you back in my suite. You seem to have got into a set of odd-looking people here. *Natives*, I conclude; and the sooner you leave them the better. As to me, I never was so weary in my life; and am so frightened too, since I came into this barbarous country, that I do not attempt to sleep, though I make two of the servants sit up every night with loaded arms to repel an attack. It is more than my nerves can endure; and I fear that I have already suffered in a greater degree than I am aware of."

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"Are you not pleased with this scenery," said I, "Lady Matilda?" turning a deaf ear to absurdities which I could not answer: "Killarney is the only place with which, after hearing such encomiums as all people of taste lavish upon its exquisite beauty, I have not been disappointed; and the lower Lake is nothing, I am told, in comparison of what we have to see." "I shall see no more, I promise you," replied *Miladi*; "I have had enough of this sort of thing. The air is too damp—it disagrees with me; and besides, the object is achieved. *We have been at Killarney*, and may pass our travelling examination. This sort of thing is vastly tiresome, and too fatiguing for my nerves. Then '*le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*,' I dread the Trosach, but I suppose that we must make a tour in Scotland, Lord John is so bent upon it; and really three days more in this horrible place would kill me."

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Joyful to my ear were the sounds of parting; and having extricated myself, I scarcely know how, from this "unreal mockery," I took my leave, with a promise to call upon her Ladyship, and, bidding adieu to the rest of her *Court*, I bounded over every obstacle of rock or brush-wood, that separated me from my own party, and never felt the triumph of nature and good sense to be so complete as when I regained their society, and listened once more to their refreshing conversation. We were not molested any farther. I saw some of Lady Matilda's attendant swains yawn and stretch their arms, as I passed them by; and it was not long before we discovered them re-embarked, with cloaks spread across their knees, as a substitute for tables, and engaged in two regular matches at cards, while their boat returned towards Ross' Castle.

We lingered untired till the moon rose upon the water, and never will the impression of that evening be erased from my imagination. We rowed round Dinas, we coasted Glena, and again took a view of Innisfallen wrapped in shadows. We had two bugles on board, and were so fortunate as to secure a man of the name of Spillane, who is a capital performer, for our principal musician. Nothing could be more rapturous than the sensations I experienced when M'Carty, whose fine athletic form, as he sweeps the oar, is worthy of the canvass, called to Spillane and his brother bugler, saying, "Come, my hearties, the oars are flagging—blast up a tune that will make the boat walk of herself." No sooner had the word been given, than the inspiring air of Stuart memory, called "Who'll be King but Charley?" was admirably played. The effect was magical. The sinews that had been flaccid before, from heat and toil, seemed braced afresh. The men were silent—sat erect—and appeared endowed with new powers. No longer a set of slouching boors, mumbling each his quid of tobacco, which the peasants here chew as the Turks do opium or beetle nut, our boatmen rose in dignity as they yielded to the talismanic influence of a strain replete with the expression of spirit and pathos, that *rainbow* character of music, so deeply interesting, and of which the Irish are so sensible, that it seems to speak directly to their hearts, in a language all their own. The boat really *did* appear, as M'Carty said, "to walk of herself" over the Lake, so long, so smooth, so vigorous, was the pull, and such perfect time did the rowers observe; but Spillane's power of enchantment was not confined to them. The whole band partook

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of the emotion which he excited. My dear aunt turned her face towards the dark wooded side of Glena, and rivers of gentle tears were silently mingled with the waves below. Mrs. Fitzroy stood up, fired, as she afterwards said, with such enthusiasm, that, like Semiramis of antient memory, she could in that moment have placed herself at the head of a warlike host, and led them on to death or victory. She absolutely looked pale with the intenseness of sublime sensation. Russell was, as usual, in a state of convulsion; and all were silent, till, actuated by an impulse compounded of all the varied sensibilities of those around me, I gave utterance to a passing wish that I was Charles-Edward. "And *I* Flora M'Donald!" exclaimed dear little Fanny; who seemed delighted at having her tongue untied, and finding a precedent in my rapture for expressing her own—but without the most distant idea of paying me a compliment, by coupling her destiny with mine. *Her* wish had, in fact, been formed without reference to me; and, had I said anything else than what I did say, it would have equally unlocked Fanny's lips, who longed to speak, but who was withheld by a native modesty, which is inseparable even from her moments of greatest excitement, from being the *first* to do so. It was *her* turn now to govern our sympathies. She had touched a new spring, and many a gay smile shone through the tears that had been flowing. Many a merry peal of hearty laughter brought us again into cheerful communion. "Miss Fanny Douglas," said Russell, "I envy Howard, who has received so explicit a declaration of your kind feelings towards him." Fanny looked *blank* for a second or two before she caught his meaning, so *single* had been the thought that occupied her mind when she spoke—but seizing on the new idea presented, she blushed violently, *only* because it *was* new; and with that exquisite *naïveté* which is worth all the treasures of Golconda, she hastily answered, "Indeed, no: I did not think of any one except my favourite Pretender alone; but that makes little difference, for my cousin knows perfectly well that whatever Flora could accomplish for Charles-Edward I should desire to perform for Arthur, if he stood in need of my assistance."

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I must now hurry you to the landing-place, transport you from thence to the inn, dispatch supper, and distribute the group into their several apartments. Russell contrived, as I squeezed into mine, which is hardly large enough to turn about in, to impart his secret to the faithful *porches* of mine ear; and I have it now from his own confession, that he is in the list of *killed and wounded*. I asked whether he had any reason to expect reciprocity of disposition, but he said no. "I *hope*, but I certainly have no reason to *expect*. These charming Douglasses love each other so much that it is very difficult to penetrate their sentiments towards strangers. Girls in general think little of mothers, except as necessary appendages. A *chaperone* is indispensable, and therefore young ladies tolerate their mammas in that character; but these cousins of yours seem to idolize their parent, and to be almost absorbed in studying her countenance, and reading every thought as it arises in her soul." Annesley's entrance interrupted our dialogue, which ended for the present; and the next morning saw us gliding over the calm expanse which we had traversed the day before, to visit a new region, of such perfection as, if I had not forsworn all description, would puzzle me to find words in which to clothe it. Traits and touches—mere memoranda—are all that I shall give you. Of the first, I must relate one which is worthy of your moral sketch-book. There is a narrow strait, of exquisite beauty, dividing the upper from the lower lake, which, from the shelving nature of the ground, assumes somewhat the appearance of a rapid. At this place it is customary for the boatmen to quit their boats, which are dragged up by main force to a joyous cry, which they raise in concert, as American sailors do in heaving the anchor. It is a particularly cheerful sound, and pleasing from the measured cadence in which it is given. While the boatmen, who strip off their shoes and stockings, jump into the water, and ranging themselves two and two, perform this feat, the company are always landed, and pursue a winding path on the verge of the water, till the boat is drawn into the lake above, and they are ushered into that aquatic paradise.

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On the night preceding this day, a poor fellow had reached this narrow pass from the upper country in a tiny skiff. A sudden gust, which frequently occurs in this amphitheatre of mountains, hurried him so irresistibly down the watery descent that his little bark was upset, and no human being living near the spot, his voice was not heard;—unable to swim, he was drowned, and his lifeless corse was extricated in the morning from a bed of arbutus, which lay so softly on the surface of the lake that it appeared more like a Naiad's couch than the bier of poor Florence O'Neil. Our men were none of them related to him. They only knew who he was, and that he was unfortunate. When we reached this little gorge, we were told to prepare for landing, and M'Carty More standing up in the boat, poising his oar with graceful ease, and making no more of its weight than if it had been a straw, addressed himself to us all, and said, "Ladies and Gentlemen, I hope that your honours will not take it amiss if we draw up the boat silent and quiet, like the poor fellow himself that lay here this morning." So saying, he and his comrades, without uttering a sound, pulled our bark forward in the profoundest stillness; thus paying a tribute of delicate feeling to the manes of a departed brother, which would have adorned a far higher class in life. We were all affected by this incident, which was quickly changed from a merely sentimental occurrence into one of practical compassion and usefulness, by a proposal from my aunt, that the same spot which had in the former moment been dedicated to remembrance of the dead, should now be marked by tender care for the living. "Here is my subscription," said she, "and when we have made up a little sum for the widow and orphans of poor Florence, M'Carty More, if you please, shall have the pleasure of bestowing it." Joy lit up the countenances which had been just before honestly expressive of sadness, and showers of choicest blessings were lavished on the mover of this benevolent project. M'Carty's thanks were as warm, as if he had been made rich himself; and when Russell good humouredly said to him, "I suppose that you are flattered, by being chosen to convey glad tidings to the poor woman and her children, and pleased that Mrs. Douglas should put such confidence in you;" his noble reply was, "No your honour. The lady would not have mistrusted *any* of us; we may all be bad enough, but there is not a man in the

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boat, I'll be bound to say, would rob the widow. Every one of these lads, sir, gave half a crown this morning to bury poor O'Neil, and while they had a potato themselves they would not *begrudge* the half of it to her that's left desolate." [Pg 173]

Mrs. Fitzroy gave a searching look, and shook her head at old Bentley, who growled under his breath, but for *once* did not express his scepticism in words. We now entered the upper lake, and all language fails to do justice here.

Do you remember the happy valley of Abyssinia, described in Rasselas? Here is in water what that was in land. So completely are you surrounded with the magnificent range of mountains which inclose this little world of beauty, that you seem as if separated at once from all that is external to it. You perceive no means of either egress or ingress, and but for the recollection of having entered by that narrow pass which I have described, might fancy yourself let down from the skies. This lake is sprinkled over thickly with islands, every one of which would make a picture in itself. These are covered with the most luxuriant evergreens, the glossy brightness of which might warrant a belief (were fairies as efficient personages as in the "olden time") that they had been under water till your approach, and rose at that moment into air, "dripping odours" in all the freshness of a new creation. While we gazed in astonishment at the scene before us, silence again took up her sceptre, and no one appeared willing to disturb her reign. [Pg 174]

I cannot with accuracy describe any feelings save my own, though I think I could read several minds amid the group; but for myself, I felt actually raised above this nether sphere, and as if I was holding communion with Deity, in this the first hour of my life in which I beheld his perfect workmanship, unspoiled by the finger of man. I was in a *trance*, and should have lost every remembrance that human creatures surrounded me, had not M'Carty More, in a half whisper directed to Frederick, who wins every heart which was not already his own, interrupted my musings by saying, "Mr. Douglas, I come from the rightful kings of this place, and though I am a poor man now, I can make *you* king, sir, of one of these *islands*, and, with the help o'God, you *shall* be king of it sure enough: pull my hearties for M'Carty More's Island." [Pg 175]

We were awakened from our reverie. The tear drops were brushed from aunt Douglas's eye. Mrs. Fitzroy's cheek, which blanches with emotion, resumed its colour. Emily and Charlotte, whose countenances are the most pelucid, mirrors of all that passes within, were illuminated by Frederick's approaching triumph, and Fanny's ready joy sparkled so brightly in her eyes, as, in a poet's fancy at least, to make the rippling of the lake, while our bark shot nimbly through its gentle bosom, shine with more dancing radiance than the sun alone could have imparted. Now followed a scene of mock heroic, amusing from the gravity with which it was conducted, and curious from the mixture of knowledge and ignorance, of law and fiction, which it involved. We were marshalled by M'Carty in a circle, on this beautiful *spangle* of earth, the sovereignty of which was to be bestowed upon our youthful chief. Frederick was placed in the midst; a sod was cut from the turf, and an arbutus twig severed from the shrubs which hung over our heads. With these insignia of feudal investiture, M'Carty approached the monarch who was to be, and kneeling on one knee presented *seizin* of his dominions, with an appropriate enumeration in correct Latin, of the rights and royalties intended to be conveyed by this Imperial grant, the boatmen forming a semicircle exterior to the ring already mentioned. When Frederick received the symbols of his enfeoffment with a graceful bow, a shout from the men proclaimed the act of acceptance; and next followed the anointing, which was *here* performed with "mountain dew," alias whiskey, which I suspect M'Carty and his fellows prefer on such occasions to oil. Two or three bottles of this Irish usquebaugh were brought from the boat, one of them was dashed upon a rock, and the name of "Frederick's Island," pronounced by M'Carty, who enacted the part of high-priest. The next step was to quaff a libation to the honour of the new monarch, in which part of the ceremony he was obliged to join; and after drinking to the health and happiness of the crew, Fred. was installed, desired to take his seat on the rude throne prepared by spirituous unction for his accommodation, and to exercise his first act of authority, in arresting the arm of Russell, who was busily employed in cutting a fine walking-stick of arbutus. [Pg 176]

The party were again seated in their boat, when old Bentley repaid Mrs. Fitzroy's piercing look, of which I told you, *in kind*, and with his *grimmest* expression of discontent, turned to her, with, "*There* madam! *There* are cunning rascals for you! Those scoundrels will elect a king from every boat-load of blockheads that they bring to the upper lake during the season, and will wheedle money out of the *royal* pocket, and guzzle whiskey at the general cost, till they have not an eye left in their heads." How Mrs. Fitzroy would have turned the edge of old Bentley's ire if she had been disengaged, I cannot tell, but she was listening with so much interest to Domine, that Bentley's tirade passed over her mind, and seemed to be shaken from it like "dew drops from the lion's mane," while she gave her attention to Mr. Oliphant, who is really a mine of knowledge, and who possesses the art of rendering it always pleasing, by his unaffected simple manner, the accuracy of his information, and the tact with which he imparts it. [Pg 178]

The *investiture* which we had just witnessed, called forth an agreeable and instructive account of consecration in all its varieties of mode, from the field of Luz mentioned in the 28th chapter of Genesis, to the stone alluded to in the Odyssey, on which Neleus sat "equal in counsel to the Gods." Pope, I remember, translated this passage in four lines, which I gave to Mrs. Fitzroy, in pencil on a scrap of paper, as Domine paused on his tide of learned lore:

"The old man early rose, walk'd forth and sat
On polished stone, before his palace gate;
With unguent smooth, the lucid marble shone,
Where ancient Neleus sat, a rustic throne."

From thence Mr. Oliphant adverted to the superstitious accounts of the Baithylia, or consecrated stones of Phoenicia mentioned in *Sanchoniatho*, and a great deal more very pleasantly communicated, which you shall have in my journal, but not *here*. I must, however, give you the history of the stone which you and I looked at not long ago, in Westminster Abbey. It lies, you may recollect, under the old chair on which the Kings of England are crowned in the Chapel of Edward the First, and a Scotchman who was standing by when you and I were there took the whole credit of this sacred relique to himself, declaring that it was originally a supernatural gift to his country, and had a prophecy attached to it of the highest importance to the Caledonians. It was called "*Ni fallit Fatum*," and gave rise to the verses which are translated into English thus:

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"Or Fate's deceived, or Heaven decrees in vain,
Or where they find this stone the Scots shall reign."

But it seems that this precious morsel of antiquity, said to be the pillow of Jacob, on which he laid his head, when he slept on the plain of Luz, and dreamed of the ladder that reached to the skies, was really wrested from Ireland (whither it had travelled from its original site, first to Jerusalem, from thence into Spain, and thence again into this country, where it lay treasured as it deserved to be, in the great Cathedral on the rock of Cashel) by Fergus the First of Scotland, who conveyed it to Scone, and on it the Scottish Kings were always placed to be crowned, till Edward the First transported this "Patriarchal bolster" to Westminster, where it is still preserved with veneration, not unmixed perhaps with a certain dread of seeing the dynasty pass away, should the stone set out again upon a *tour*, as the marriage of Margaret of Scotland into the Royal Family of England, gave colour to the fidelity of that prophecy to which I have alluded, when this bone of contention quitted its Northern abode.

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If Domine had not soon come to the end of his story, we should probably have been out all night in the lakes, for so intense was the curiosity of M'Carty and his myrmidons to devour every syllable of the tale, that they lay upon their oars, and appeared in danger of being metamorphosed into images of stone themselves, such fixed attention did they bestow upon a legend which I am certain they quickly made their own.

To avoid producing a dearth of paper at Tralee, whence I procured my last supply, I shall now pack you up, and placing you in the car of a balloon, permit you no longer to loiter your happy hours amid scenes of enchantment. You must neither land on Ronayve's Island, nor accompany me to Fure Lake, nor wander by moonlight through the Abbey of Muccruss, nor toil to the top of the eagle's nest, nor visit Dunlow-gap, Mangerton punch-bowl, nor any other spot in this region of fascination. Were I to indulge your passion for romance, and allow you to linger any longer at Killarney, I should fear your becoming a hermit, and requesting Lord Kenmare's permission to build a cell, in which the remainder of your days would be dedicated to solitude and contemplation. Take then your bird's-eye view of the map, as it lies spread beneath you; return to your inn; with a mind torn between love and curiosity, quit the society of our charming female companions, leaving them under the care of Messieurs Otway, Oliphant, and Bentley senior, descend from your balloon, mount a rough Kerry poney, and if you can ride like a Tartar through the desert, you may join Russell, Annesley, Frederick, Bentley *secundus*, and your humble servant, in a two day's trip over Kenmare mountain, the Priest's leap, and through Neddeen to Bantry. Oh Glengariffe, surpassing Glengariffe! thou "brightest gem of the Western wave," in what words am I to paint thee?

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This transcendent spot was the limit of our excursion, and how can I, in general terms, more aptly sum up its attractions than in telling you, that *reeking*, as we were, from Killarney, the matchless scenery of which was still vibrating on every retina, shadowed in our imaginations and resting in the hearts of all our party, who felt as if nature was reposing, admiration drained to its dregs, and language run out, by all that we had been called upon to see, think, and feel, so recently, Glengariffe strung each palsied nerve anew. We rose "like giants refreshed with wine," and experienced that delight which only the highest excitement of mental or physical excellence occasionally produces, namely a consciousness of power within ourselves, of which, till thus extraordinarily elicited, we do not dream of being in possession. Perhaps this is one of the most pleasurable feelings of the human mind, and we now enjoyed it rapturously, surprising our own ears with the awakened flow of eloquence, poured out from fountains which might have been supposed already exhausted; and admiring beauties in all around, the greatest charm of which, though sometimes undiscerned, is the vivid reflection from our own souls. But you must only glance your eye along that blue expanse, and catch a hasty glimpse of that splendid bay, where the concentrated powers of France, while menacing destruction, were themselves destroyed. Before we regain our inn, and rejoin our friends, you must pause for a moment with me in a scene which, from its singularity, delayed our retrograde progress.

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Having mounted our shaggy steeds, we turned our faces, like Sir Bertram, "to the wolds," and conceitedly imagined ourselves able to retrace, unassisted, the homeward path; but we were mistaken; and after proceeding for sometime without meeting a living creature of whom to ask the way, we at length espied a thing scarcely human, naked almost to the hips, and trotting at a

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quick, equal pace, holding a staff horizontally in both hands, and having a tattered weather-beaten bag that looked like an old Spanish wine skin, strapped upon his back.

"Who, and what are you?" exclaimed Russel.

This was not a conciliating address, and accordingly it was rudely answered: "May be as good as yourself. I am a post; and my father was a post before me."

This letter-carrier for so we interpreted him to be, never relaxed his steady trot, nor condescended to be angry. Calm contempt appeared to be the feeling which dictated his reply; and he would have passed on his way with-deigning to look behind him, if Frederick had not said, in his cheerful manner, "My good fellow, I know that you are the very man to tell us how we shall get into the track that leads over the mountain to Killarney, for I have lost my way, and my friends here are strangers?"

The youth immediately became a *poste restante*, and gazing benignantly on Frederick, setting his voice to a very different modulation from that in which he first spoke and resting his chin on the staff which he now stuck into the ground, he replied, "Why then, indeed, I'd do more than that for ye. Go down till you see the smoke, then turn to the left and face north'ards; turn again to the west, and you'll find a track that will bring you out at the kiln by a short cut, and then you can't miss your way any more, but will get down into the *illegant* new road, along the upper lake which is so lonesome, and smothered in trees, that you might be *murthered* there in all aise, and pitched over into the lake, and no one know what become of you during ash nor oak."

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"And pray," said Frederick, "how am I to find out north and west in this strange place."

"Then sure, your honour, I suppose, isn't such a poor scholar as that you wouldn't know very well by the sun."

Fred. gave the poor fellow a shilling, and encouraged with this agreeable notice, of the perfect *convenience* with which we could be "*murthered*," we pursued our route; and found the instructions which he had received, accurate to a tittle. The smoke, which was the first finger-post in the journey, brought us into a deep ravine, wild, barren, and silent as the grave, yet judging by the wreaths that seemed to be sent up from numerous chimnies that were invisible, populous of human life. We looked for habitations but there was not a single roof to be seen, nor an individual to be met with. Curiosity prompted us to approach nearer to this uncommon defile; and here we found numbers of poor creatures, who, terrified at the sound of so many horses' feet, and dreading a visit from the police, were employed in hastily extinguishing their fires. We speedily tranquillized their minds, and then received that generous welcome and hospitality which the poorest sons and daughters of Erin, never fail to extend to the stranger.

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To be a *stranger*, far from exciting suspicion here, is a free passport to the best which these kind people possess. Whiskey was all which these had to offer, for this was a little colony of illicit distillers. We tasted their *pottein* (their name here for the purest spirit) to oblige our hosts, and scattering a few pieces of silver amongst them, turned to the left, then to the north, made for the kiln, and were just descending from the moor, into something resembling a road, when a figure stalking along the horizon, of apparently gigantic stature, arrested our attention; we drew up, and as he *neared* us, we beheld indeed a prodigious form of at least six feet in height, black as Erebus, skin, clothes, and all; and armed with a pole of fully ten feet in length, terminated by an immense bush of holly. Warned by the former incivility which he had excited, Russell now thought proper to leave all enquiries to Frederick, who with a kind, "good morrow my lad," begged to know where this Patagonian was going, and why so accoutered?

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"Plase your honour," answered the spectre, "I am the sweep o'the mountains, and I'm going yander to clane some chimblies for the people."

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What grotesque habits, and how extra-ordinary the mixture in this country of barbarism and civilization!

Arrived at length, we found all the pleasure of joining such a circle as we had left behind, doubled by our short absence.

An excursion such as this to Killarney, brings the people who are included in it, so informally and so constantly together as to preclude the possibility, I should think, of neutral feelings at parting. This is a strong proof, one would imagine, that a state of life mid-way between poverty and riches is the surest soil of domestic felicity. Rise *above* this middle standard, and you soar beyond the want of sympathy, and owe your principal gratifications, it may be, to fortune alone. Fall *below* the medium, and the anxieties of life press so painfully as to annihilate, from an opposite cause, that dependence on each other, which constitutes the perfection of human happiness.

Falkland, did you ever expect to hear these sentiments from your friend Arthur Howard?

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We had now passed ten days in an intercourse so intimate, so intellectual, the tastes, the faculties, of each individual had been brought into such activity, that, like the manufacturers of soda water who compress three or four atmospheres into a pint bottle, we seemed to have condensed into one short fortnight, more solid enjoyment of life, than would eke out half a century in the vapid inanity of fashionable routine. During this blissful dream, we had known nothing of factitious wants, nor artificial accommodations. There was a simplicity, a reality in our pleasures which deluded us into forgetfulness that the "sweetest are still the fleetest," because they seemed so natural that one did not see *why* they were to cease; and when the last evening actually arrived, it came with a shock as dreadful, as if entirely unexpected. The fastidiousness of former habits had vanished. Our apartments were large, and numerous enough, our cold dinners were eaten with appetite. We had felt no blank, and we desired no accession to our comforts.

Such are the charms of *that* society which I reviled, because I did not comprehend, and was unable at first to appreciate its value. Alas! I know it now too well; and yet I am better off than my neighbours. I may hope to pass much of my time with the Douglas family, while poor Russell and Annesley, who are certainly minus a heart each, may never see them again. The former will not leave Glenalta, for which place we set out to-morrow without trying his fate. A few short months ago, and I should have ridiculed the idea of Russell's being refused by one of my country cousins. Handsome, gay, musical, sought after, with fair prospects, and good connections, that Russell could not command any possible Miss Douglas, or Miss any thing else, possessing no more than five or six thousand pounds, was I confess what never occurred to me as matter of doubt. I now feel apprehensions that my friend may suffer disappointment, as with all the penetration which I can exercise, I perceive nothing in Charlotte's manner beyond easy kindness and polite attention. [Pg 190]

Annesley is not a free agent: *his* views are lost in clouds; and should little Kepple live to be of age, his father may levy fines, and cut off the entail which will otherwise give the estate of Compton to Frank, who will have little or nothing, except in this event, and he will therefore never betray his feelings towards Emily. Perhaps he may hope that in absence they will wear away; but were this not the case, Annesley has great self-command, and would suffer much rather than commit himself. I know too that he has pride, which would ill brook defeat, and in his present circumstances he could not expect to be successful. [Pg 191]

I think that I can perceive a knitting of your brow, and can also tell the cause of it. I anticipate your question, and reply, before it is asked, No, there is not the slightest tendency in my cousin's manner indicating that Annesley's departure will leave a single pang in her breast. Emily is free as the air of her mountains; so let your forehead resume its unruffled serenity.

How various were the feelings of the individuals that composed our party, and how different from those which accompanied us when we left that place a fortnight ago. In my aunt's face I read the word *home* written in every direction. Spite of all her efforts to be cheerful, suppressed pain sat on every feature during her stay at Killarney; and spite of all the natural glow which beamed in the countenances of her children amid the pure pleasures of that enchanting scene, their mother's looks so far alloyed their happiness as to make them sometimes long for return on *her* account, and therefore on their own. Mr. Otway, too, retraced the road to Lisfarne with calm satisfaction; but for the younger members of the group (and I believe that I may also include Mrs. Fitzroy) the prospect of a *break-up*, the certainty of parting, and the uncertainty of meeting again, corroded every heart. [Pg 192]

We reached Glenalta in a beautiful sun-set, but the letters which awaited our return have so completely absorbed my thoughts, that I pass over sufficient materials, *at our* rate of corresponding, to furnish half a quire of paper, and hasten to say that a few lines from Louisa bring me the disagreeable intelligence that I have offended my mother, who desires me not to go to town, but to set out directly for the Continent and join you. This I shall only do in case of finding that my presence in London is of no use; and thither I must fly. Mrs. Fitzroy offers me a seat in her caleche if I remain here another week; and as there is nothing to prevent this short delay, I have arranged to be her companion. Russell and Annesley leave this in two days, and you will probably meet them ere long; at all events they will take care that this packet reaches you in safety. I have inclosed for your amusement the letter to which Mr. Otway alluded at Glona, when the conversation between Mrs. Fitzroy and old Bentley induced him to mention having lately received it. Mrs. Fitzroy desired a copy, and permits me to send it to you, provided that you return it whenever you have an opportunity. I inclose you also Louisa's letter. [Pg 193]

You shall hear from me after I reach Grosvenor-square, and will not envy my feelings in the interim. [Pg 194]

Adieu, my dear Falkland!

I am ever your affectionate,
ARTHUR HOWARD.

LETTER XIX.

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MISS HOWARD TO A. HOWARD, ESQ.

(*Inclosed in the preceding.*)

My dear Arthur,

Your letter has made me gloomy, and my mother's temper does not improve my spirits: she is very angry with you, and so offended by the style of your remarks on Adelaide's approaching marriage, that so far from wishing your presence, I am commissioned to say, it is my mother's express desire that you should not come to town till the ceremony is over. As you are not yet *quite* of age, you could not be of any absolute use at present; and she will contrive, upon the good faith of your assistance when you are enabled to give your aid, to supply the immediate necessity for money by borrowing on bond. This is her message; but as her anxiety that you should quit your present situation is fully equal to her wish that you should not come here, she would be glad if you were to *go* to the Continent; and as your friend Falkland is somewhere in Italy, and his company may be an inducement to *immediate* arrangements, she has no objection to your joining him and his tutor wherever they may be. It is my mother's design to hasten the marriage as quickly as possible. She means to inform Crayton that you have seriously hurt your leg, which will be sufficient excuse for your non-appearance; and should he ever discover that you have left Glenalta to go abroad while it might be supposed that you could not stir from your sofa, it will be easy to make out a new *version*; or if the wedding is *over*, as soon as we hope that it *will* be, we shall not care much about a slight inconsistency which will not signify a *rush* when the deed is done.

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You look grave, but really it cannot be helped. Nothing could be worse than any interruption to the nuptials of Clayton and Adelaide; it must not be; and though I *believe* him to be a gambler, and *know* him to be a dunce, our sister is willing to wear his coronet, and excuse his errors and deficiencies. For myself, I am not sorry that the bustle of coachmakers, jewellers, milliners, &c. in which we are involved, prevents my having time to *think* much, for I am low, and quite out of humour. What you say of the world is true enough, and no one feels *how* true except he is carried round like a fly upon its wheel; but to stand still is worse: it makes one's head giddy to pause; and the country after all is so flat, so utterly devoid of interest, that tiresome as I *confess* a London life to be, any thing is better than the cobwebs of retirement. A rural bower sets one to sleep, even in imagination, and the only part of the system kept *alive* in retreat is the muscular apparatus by which we yawn.

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If I could find out any "Royal road" to happiness, I should like to cut many of my acquaintances; but till I do, they must be endured, idle and silly as they are.

Here comes a man with Ady's diamonds, and I am called to council. I will write a line to Paris, *poste restante*; so as you will probably make at once for the French capital, as a central point; you will there receive intelligence of *our advancement* to *the peerage*. I will send you the newspapers that you may see how the paragraph *runs*. Old Lord Hawkston, being our hundred and fiftieth cousin, *La Madre* applies to him to act your part in giving the bride away.

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Called again. Coming! coming!
Yours, ever affectionately,
L. HOWARD.

[Alluded to by Mr. Otway, addressed to him, and inclosed to Charles Falkland.]

My dear Friend,

I hasten to obey your injunctions, and give you some account of your amiable kinswoman, Clara Browne. On reaching York, I found a letter from her so earnestly praying me to visit at her house, and so warmly expressive of her wishes to make, as she kindly called me, "one of her oldest and most valued friends" acquainted with her husband, that I prepared as soon as I could to accept the invitation, and set out for Stockton. I found Clara the picture of contentment, and surrounded by all the substantial comforts and rational elegancies of life. Nothing could exceed the openness and affection with which she received me; and I was welcomed by Mr. Browne in such a manner as to assure me, in the most gratifying language, that I was not a stranger to him. In a few days after my arrival at his house, a letter on urgent business required his presence in a distant part of the country; and I yielded to the united entreaties of my two friends that I would take care of Clara till his return in two days from D—.

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Clara and her sister were now my only companions; and upon the first opportunity which occurred in a *tête-à-tête* walk, the former demanded of me a full, free, and candid declaration of my opinion respecting the object of her choice. I told her truly that I liked her husband extremely, and congratulated her with all my heart on having united herself to a man of high principle and worth; adding, that the suavity of his temper, mildness of his manners, and polite acquaintance with the world, attracted my admiration as sincerely as the graver qualities of his mind commanded my esteem and respect.

"Clara," said I, "you know that I was always a plain man, and as I am an old fellow, too, and used to abuse your fastidiousness in days of yore, I have the more pleasure in praising now the sensible, excellent person with whom you have allied yourself. There *was* a time when nothing short of a galaxy of light, a constellation of genius and talent, would have satisfied you. I often told you then that you would one day or other discover your mistake, and I hoped not experimentally. I told you that good sense and a sweet disposition were of more value than all the *brilliant*s upon which you set so high a price. May I not now wish to hear from your own lips that you have proved the truth of my doctrine?"

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"Yes," answered Clara, "I glory in my renunciation of the follies which marked my youth; and, as dear Edward Otway will take the same interest that you do in my change, I shall egotize a little, and through you make confession to him of the motives which produced it. You remember, both of you, how I worshipped intellect, and if I am not too insignificant to have made so lasting an impression, you may recollect the silly energy with which I used to descant on moral virtue, and say that, like air and water, it was certainly indispensably necessary, but so common—so entirely a thing *of course*, that it slipped out of calculation, and only served as a vehicle for the ingredients of happiness, without ever presuming to be an item in the recipe. In short, all the truly valuable parts of human character were mere *negatives* in my flippant creed, while to genius, intellect, and splendid abilities, did I hold mankind to be indebted for whatever exalts the human species. Under this delusion I passed my early years, that period of life which the French call "*La premiere jeunesse*," and at five-and-twenty was still as much inclined as ever to be a dreamer, if the marriage of my two dearest associates to what the world styles *prodigiously clever men*, had not awakened me to clearer views, and, by a striking practical lesson, caused me to understand that it was possible to shine brightly as the glow-worm at a distance, and be a sightless grub, when brought close to the eye. As one experimental fact is better than a world of theory, I began to apply the melancholy instruction which I derived from the unhappiness of my friends, to my own profit. The result was a firm conviction that plain sense, and gentle temper, resting on the foundation of a sincerely religious and moral character, are the very best ingredients to depend upon in the cup of domestic union; and that with a few beautiful but very rare exceptions, the worst companion of earth at a family fire-side, is a *man of genius*. I know that an instance now and then occurs to prove the *possibility* of higher things. I know that minds have sometimes met, bringing the richest gifts of head and heart in heavenly communion to the altar; such signal deviations, however, from the common history of mankind, but serve to establish the opposite rule, repressing those visions of romance, which only entail disappointment.

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"When I had paid a visit of some months to each of my friends, I perceived that their husbands were men of whom they might be *vain* but could not be *fond*. Isabella, the eldest, had married one of your "admirable Creighton" sort of people. He was a Mr. Mills, and set up for a person of universal science, taste, and talent. There was nothing too high or too low for the omnivorous appetite of his ambition; and he has often reminded me of Johnson's sarcasm directed against Goldsmith, "Sir, he would be jealous of Punch;" and so would Mr. Mills. There was no trial of skill, however humble its object, in which he would not exert his powers for the pleasure of a triumph. He knew every thing, at least superficially, and astonished every society of which he was a member. How clever! what talents! such a memory! such universal information! echoed from room to room whenever he appeared; and the sweet savour of this incense is the food upon which he lives, it is his daily bread, and to purchase it his continual employment. How Mr. Mills should ever have married, would surprise, had it not been that the general habit of mankind protesting against single blessedness, he thought it necessary to prove that he possessed superlative powers of captivation, and accordingly set his eye on my poor friend, who, in an hour of infatuation,

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consented to be his bride. That purpose being accomplished, some newer project succeeded. He lives as if the world were indeed a stage, and he a player, continually occupied in learning or rehearsing a part for the next exhibition, and his wife is no better in his eyes than candle-snuffer to the theatre (though far surpassing him in all that gives solid dignity to human character), because she is too wise and too honest to flatter him.

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"My younger friend, Lavinia, is just as miserably yoked as her sister, though Mr. Dormer does not resemble Mr. Mills. The latter hates society as much as the former courts it; and *his* weakness is that of authorship. He writes for every newspaper, magazine, and review, that will give a place to his lucubrations. He worries all the members of parliament with prosing dissertations on political economy, finance, agriculture, and commerce; he wastes his property in trying experiments which never come to good. The restless activity of Mr. Dormer never slumbers, and is exhibited in endless schemes, the utter failure of which has no influence in deterring him from new attempts. He set up a school at considerable expense, hired a master and mistress at a large salary, to teach in a method of his own device, and found at the end of three years, that the children had not learned to spell. His sheep were all shorn in the winter to prove the excellence of a theory on the fineness of wool; but, as might naturally be expected, the poor animals all died. He plants trees at mid-summer to demonstrate that those people are mistaken who prefer spring and autumn for the purpose, but as you may easily anticipate, never beholds a leaf on any of his ill-fated groves, which, after a few months of "hope deferred," are consigned to the oven. He drowned a favourite dog the other day in trying a life-boat of his own construction; and broke his arm last year by a fall from a balloon which he had inflated with some new gas, and Icarus-like, would essay himself with *such* success as attended the first flight of the Dædalian wings. Though he lives at home, all the endearing relations of life are despised and neglected. He hates the sight of two lovely children, because they interrupt him; and though I passed four months with Lavinia, I never saw her husband come but twice to the room where she and I sat in the mornings: oh the first occasion, to ask for one of her harp strings, with which to make experiment on a new theory of vibration; and upon the second, to beg a bit of gum from his wife's drawing-box, with which, to secure one of his retorts. Always in a hurry, he makes a perpetual *breeze* through the house, by the rapidity of his motions; and, as his hands are generally imbrued in chemical compounds, not of Arabian odour, I cannot say that the gale thus stirred, wafts perfume on its wing. Nothing can rouse his attention to his own affairs, which would fall into utter confusion were it not for the good sense of his wife. He dislikes the neighbouring gentry, because he does not consider them people of *talent*; and expends his money without any reference either to ornament or real utility, but simply with the vain-glorious hope of advancing his individual fame as a man of genius.

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"Thus instructed by the shipwreck of others, I did not dare to fancy that my bark would escape where goodlier vessels had foundered. I therefore resolved, that should it be my fate to encounter the voyage of matrimony, I would try another course; and though sunken rocks might mar my hopes, I determined that I would steer clear of the quicksands which had been fatal to my friends. It is but justice to the long contemned counsel of you and my valuable Edward Otway, to finish my story with a tribute to *him* who furnished the comment on your text.

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"Adolphus is remarkable for an excellent understanding and correct judgment. Others may outshine him in original powers of mind, but none can surpass him in the tasteful appreciation of merit, whatever be its form, and wherever it exists. Kind and unselfish, he can praise in others those attributes which he does not himself possess; and every scheme in which he is engaged, has for its object the comfort and advantage of his fellow-creatures. If he find that his views are erroneous, or detect a flaw in their application, far from becoming the *advocate*, because he was the *proposer* of a plan, he resigns his particular views with a noble ingenuousness, and, confessing that they were either unfounded, or not suited to the case, seeks farther light from whatever source is most likely to afford information. This complete absence of pertinacity has a powerful effect in enhancing the weight of his opinion in every deliberation, as it is well known, that he will not adhere to the wrong side because it is that which he had first adopted. While others pursue the 'bubble reputation' abroad, Adolphus seeks to be loved at home, and his own fire-side is the scene in which the best energies of his mind, and the purest affections of his heart are expanded. I am reclaimed by his virtues from my visionary absurdities, and shall endeavour to make all the reparation in my power for having wandered so far from the truth by *preaching a crusade* to the youth of my own sex, who may be inclined to deviate into the labyrinth from which I was myself so happily extricated. If you have any female friends to whom my tale may be useful, advise them from the experience of Clara Browne, against an overweening admiration of talents without due reflection on the manner in which such talents are associated. Tell them that books, and occasional conversation may supply all that is necessary of mental variety, while *nothing* is capable of compensating for the want of common sense, disinterestedness, and affection."

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Clara ceased; and as I remained a month at Stockton, after her husband's return, I am enabled to bear a willing testimony to the fidelity of her narrative, as well as to the soundness of her views: and as I know how glad you will be to hear of her happiness, I have given you this detail without fear of your being fatigued by its perusal.

I am, my dear Otway,
Your sincere friend,
G. L.

LETTER XXI.

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MRS. DOUGLAS TO MRS. E. SANDFORD.

My dearest Elizabeth will believe that Glenalta has charms which even Killarney cannot boast for me. Yes; though the word *home* never meets my eye or ear without producing a *gulp*, which tells of other days, when that little monosyllable of four letters contained the *world* for me, yet repose is so necessary to my existence, that I sighed for return to my peaceful glen, and the pain of concealing every feeling that warred against the happiness of my beloved children, from their acute observation, increased my restraint, and has converted the enjoyment of my *cell* into more positive pleasure than I have felt for years. How gracious are the mercies shed upon our daily path, and how tender the dispensation which so often renders what we conceive to be inflictions, conducive to our comfort! Elizabeth, my spirits are unusually depressed, but you are expecting an answer to your letter, and I will not suffer my pen to forget its duty, nor wander from the subject of your inquiry, till I have given you what little aid, my longer experience of your present cares, may contribute. You think that my advice would be, that you should resign yourself exclusively to the charm of such society as you find amongst the Stanleys, No, dear friend; I would only allow you to *prefer* them; but there is a net of kind, expansive benevolence which it would seem as if Nature loved to throw more widely in scenes of rural life than in any other. "Man made cities, God formed the country." It is very true, every heart must acknowledge the distinction, and yours my friend would desire to emulate, as far as the imperfect creature is enabled to do, the bounty of that Being who has placed you where all the sweet charities of fellowship may be called into exercise. I do not mean that you should mingle indiscriminately, nor *over-much* in society: I would only say avoid unkindness; exclusion should be reserved for the unworthy, but not visited on those who have only the misfortune to be less pleasing than their neighbours. A judicious *assortment* will always prevent the disagreeable effects which sometimes spring from neglect of selecting such people only as harmonize with each other in manners and modes of thinking. I should be more diffuse upon this subject, were there the slightest danger of your supposing for a moment that I could be the advocate of an *electioneering* system. You know how I abhor the arts of popularity, and revere independence; but human virtues and vices are often separated from each other by such imperceptible shades, that in giving ourselves credit for the performance of the one, it is too often our lot to glide into the other. Selfishness is an arch fiend, and ever at hand to whisper temptation. I know that it is a prevailing opinion amongst a large number of respectable and worthy people, that we are bound to make profession of our creeds in the highways, and in the corners of our streets, that every sentence which we utter should tell of the sect to which we belong, every article of dress which we wear be a symbol of distinction; and every person with whom we converse, every book that we open, be submitted to an ordeal, and pronounced upon, by a few self-elected judges, before we venture to pursue acquaintance with the one, or advance in perusal of the other.

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I cannot enter into this system of parcelling out mankind by quite so restrictive a rule; I see nothing of all this in the inspired precepts of the great Founder of our faith, whose beautiful simplicity of doctrine and extensive charity of example, are too little dwelt upon as matter of imitation, while His name is mingled with disgusting familiarity in every trifling discourse.

Oh, my friend, human nature is so frail that we should not *tempt* our pride, or our vanity, by putting on external marks that may deceive even our own hearts, and persuade us that we are better than others. Let our consistency be seen in our *lives*; our religion shine through our actions; our tastes be proclaimed by our preferences; and let us not *profess* at all, let us not belong *exclusively* to one party, or one preacher. Let us catch illumination from those who possess more than we do, contributing our own light to such as have less. Do not suffer your dear girls to assume names or badges. Do not permit them to be tied down by observances. Let their books, their society, their opinions, and their tastes, spring from their *habits* and their *principles*. It is an *inverted* method, to begin with the mere trappings, and argue to the indwelling of the spirit, from the rigidity of the letter. Set up no sign-posts; use no cabalistic phraseology; make no premature vows, and adopt no rule but that of your Bible in matters of religion. In matters of inferior concern, I would advise equally against precipitancy either in proscribing or adopting. *Parade* is of all things to be avoided; be natural, be kind. You will find that some, of whom you may at first have formed high expectation, are over-rated, whilst others may rise in your estimation as you know them better. A little *time* settles our modes of life, and regulates our conduct without any *eclat* much more consistently than any pre-arrangement of our own, and with a little patience we may gradually *sift* people and things, till we find ourselves placed as nearly as circumstances permit, in the situation most suited to our characters. My little experience leads me to certain conclusions which had they been earlier impressed upon my mind I should have been spared much anxiety. One of them is, that in the beginning of our career we all *plan* too much. We take as it were a *survey* of all the territory that lies spread before us, and sitting down in the pride of full possession, we scan the map of futurity, dazzle our imaginations with mines that are to be dug, and riches that are to be realized, amuse our fancies with palaces to be built, and forests to be planted, worshipping within our breasts the idol of self-complacency, while we contemplate *ourselves* as the *great* engineers whose skill is to operate these mighty improvements. We *assume* too much, we *trust* too little; we know nothing but the present, and the present we despise. Our limited vision cannot extend beyond a point, and we strain our eyes over all created space. *Little* things and *proximate* purposes, make up the real sum of happiness and virtue: but we pass by these in contemptuous disdain, to aim at the great and the distant; the

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undefined and generally unattainable. True wisdom is surely to watch with our best attention, and cultivate with assiduity, the daily, the hourly circumstances which arise in our path, leaving the widely spreading consequences of unseen result, to Him who alone is acquainted with the final issues.

I have never known a failure in any wish of my own respecting the good of my family, which I could not resolve into over solicitude in *looking* too far, and *doing* too much in my *own strength*. Examine your heart; be sure that it is single, that no divided empire *there* is likely to split its councils, and lead to compromise or dissimulation. *Simplicity* of design is a panoply of power. Clad in its protective guardianship, put up your prayers with confidence for that aid, without which all your efforts will be abortive, and rising from your knees refreshed by the blessed assurance that the sincere suppliant is *never* disregarded, go forth to your *daily* task; as you are taught to ask for your *daily* bread. Endeavour to perform the little duties which are allotted to a *given hour*. Neither perplex your thoughts, nor weaken your sight by scrutinizing the hidden things, and pouring through the darksome mists of future time, but leave it to *become* the present. At its appointed period your duty is declared, and its boundary is traced: be that your *practical* object. What mind indeed of "lofty pitch" would be contented with the prison that I prescribe, were I not confining the consideration to that part which we are individually called upon to *act* in life; but you do not mistake my meaning. Ah! who would wish to walk over "the field of Marathon, or wander amid the ruins of Iona," without desiring to possess the power of abstracting thought from the fleeting moment that eludes our grasp, to expatiate in the mighty vast of years gone by? Or who that has ever loved and lost, would clip the spirit's wing, and stay its airy flight from stretching beyond this narrow strait of time and space into the boundless regions of eternal blessedness, where it is not forbidden to seek amongst the dazzling host, the happy myriads of the sky, for *one* bright seraph, dearer than the rest, towards whom the newly emancipated stranger flies to meet its fondest though unearthly welcome? *Can* there be danger—*is* there impiety—in this vision which steals with heavenly influence on my solitary musings? Oh, if there be, speak, my Elizabeth, and I will try to curb my *waking* thoughts, and turn imploringly to *sleep* for the precious imagery which perhaps my day-light dreams ought not to mingle.

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Sleep! balmy Sleep! thy poppies shed
A pitying respite on my woes;
Bind on thy charm around my head,
And lull my soul to calm repose!

Yet not those slumbers I implore,
That steep the brain in Lethe's wave,
Tho' such the weary sense restore,
'Tis not this lifeless boon I crave!

I woo thee with thy world of dreams,
That o'er the mind in vision play
Thro' mimic shades—by airy streams
Where phantom Hope delights to stray.

Now gorgon Reason sinks to rest,
And Fancy, with unchartered range,
Soars to the regions of the bless'd;
The transit neither hard, nor strange.

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How radiant the ethereal light!
Credulity, companion kind,
Has spread her wing to join the flight—
The spirit's dungeon left behind.

Borne upward to the glorious sky,
Crowds of celestial beings throng;
Whose brighter, more inquiring eye,
Is that which beams their ranks among?

'Twas his!—no more—the vision's past!
Hark! is that sound the funeral bell?
Raptures too vivid cannot last—
That dream is but a broken spell!

There are days so sad, and feelings so overwhelming, that to make war against their flow is as fruitless as to oppose a barrier to the sea. Forgive me. *You* are not one of the unskilful comforters who attempt to impart consolation by checking the tide of sorrow. *You* understand better the nature of the human heart, and are aware that a little kind sympathy is the truest balm which friendship can bestow.

I will now impart to you some circumstances which have weighed upon spirits, at *best* so tremblingly poised, that the slightest addition to their usual burthen destroys the balance. As I mentioned to you, my excursion to Killarney was, in itself, a great effort. *Such* scenery, and sweet music, are the most powerful excitors, in my mind, to a train of association which I dread in

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company. Memory is so acutely painful, from the minuteness with which its traces are engraved, and the fidelity of its pictures, that I fly from whatever is likely to unlock the stores, and present to my view *much* that I dare not contemplate, unless I am alone. The delight, however, of gratifying my dear children overcame every other consideration: and I accompanied a party composed of admirable materials, but too numerous and too gay for me. I had not been long from home before I felt myself, for the first time, involved in those cares which, as my children grow up, I must expect to encounter.

My dear friend Mrs. Fitzroy, whose enlivening society charmed the whole group, was the first to awaken my attention to the expressions, both by looks and manner, of feelings in Mr. Russell's mind, which her quick eye discovered that Charlotte had excited. I have such perfect confidence in the delicacy of my dear girls, that I was spared all solicitude on the score of *conduct*; but I watched with uneasiness the progress of a sentiment which, as it met no return, will I fear be the cause of pain to an amiable and an accomplished young man. I find that he is acquainted with you, and, as he talks of going into Derbyshire on his return from France, you will probably see him, and perchance hear his story from his own lips.

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The conversation, in which he made known his attachment to Charlotte, took place on the evening preceding his departure, and was so unlike the common place dialogues upon such occasions, that I could not, when it was repeated to me, repress a smile in the midst of more serious impressions. It was a lovely evening, and the young people had, as usual, strayed away from the elders, whose more sober views of happiness, and less active powers of locomotion, happily prepare us, as time advances, for the final rest.

As lovers always contrive to find the opportunity which they are seeking, Russell soon detached Charlotte from the group, by some appeal to her taste in particular; and when removed from all ears, save her own, he exclaimed (and, poor fellow, I believe with genuine truth), "How wretched is the *ending* of such happiness!"

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"It is indeed," replied my innocent Charlotte, who willingly perhaps gave her companion a share in the feeling which she echoed.

Perhaps assured by this encouraging sympathy that all might be as he wished, Russell continued: "Even inanimate objects interest the heart when we are about to quit them."

"Yes," said Charlotte, "and when one lives entirely in retreat, where the living objects are few, we do *really* love trees, rocks, and streams, as if they were human beings. Is it not for this reason that mountaineers, like the Swiss, Scotch, and Irish, are fonder of their homes than any other nation?"

This is not what Russell wanted to know, or cared to inquire respecting. "To waste love upon trees and rocks, when so many of our own species are dying for want of the food lavished upon *them*, is not right," said Russell; "and *you* are more guilty than any one, inasmuch as your affection is more prized."

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Charlotte interrupted what she perceived to be a *compliment*, by answering: "You must not make *speeches*. The love that one feels for rural objects, long known, and seen with daily interest, can never interfere with better affections. It is a different thing, and *you* must know how *very* different, as you have a father, mother, and sisters." The honest air of directness, which I can imagine to have accompanied this *reasoning* upon love, was not very favourable to farther dalliance.

When the youthful heart is *first* excited, and hope is felt that kindred feeling has touched the soul in which it feels an interest, how exquisite the happiness of developement! Like the beautiful buds of early spring, the unfolding of each individual scale that binds the young leaves is in itself delightful, and we do not wish to lose a single hour of *progressive* enjoyment, in impatience to behold the crown of summer foliage. Did you ever meet with an old book called "*Guadentio di Lucca*?"—It is a story in which, amongst some primitive race of people in South America, I think the lovers are made to declare their mutual sentiments by an interchange of buds, and, as inclinations advance, the full-blown flower.

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But to return. Russell felt that his way was retrograde, and therefore, making an effort, he bounded over rocks, shrubs, and rivulets, and, taking my sweet child by the hand, declared, in the spirit of Hector to Andromache, though with the difference between *is* and *might be*, that *all* relations, however fond, concentrate in the object of tender and devoted love. To hear a confession of this nature, for the first time, must necessarily produce confusion in the mind of so gentle a being as Charlotte, and she told her sister that she felt quite unable for a few minutes to collect herself. Courage was imparted at length, by the fear of conveying the opposite of what she intended to communicate by her silence; and, summoning resolution, she turned to our young friend, and, thanking him kindly for the preference which he had just expressed, added:

"I have many blessings, and I am very young. It has never before occurred to me even to *think*, in my own case, of parting with such treasures as I possess; and though I shall always remember your visit to Glenalta as a period of *great* pleasure, and *you* as an agreeable member of our happy party, I can say no more."

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Russell urged the usual arguments. "Surely she did not mean to devote herself to a single life. She might still have the society of mother, sisters, brother. Marriage was the natural object of life: it was the happiest lot when 'heart met heart.'"

"And *how* can heart meet heart," replied Charlotte, "on a three weeks' acquaintance? *My* heart would require a much longer time for disposing of itself, if I could disengage it from the ties that

bind it here; and I cannot imagine how people should be either so vain, or so confiding as to fancy that the foundation of happiness, for perhaps a long life, can be laid in a short moment of time."

Russell assured her that to the quick eye of a lover, moments were years in bringing people acquainted.

"Ah then," said Charlotte, "why are so many married people unhappy?"

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"They are just as well off in the end," answered Russell, "as those who are single, and certainly, till they discover their mistakes, much happier."

"Well, my life," replied Charlotte, "is too happy for any change of my *own* making, I believe. If heaven deprived me of all that I love, it is another question, but to deprive *myself*, I cannot. My idea of marriage is not so favourable as yours. I think it would require the most powerful affection to render it a relation of real felicity; and if not *that*, I should think it much worse than even an unfortunate lot in single life."

"Have I then *no* ground of hope," said Russell.

"Indeed, I feel wholly disinclined to marry any mortal at present," answered Charlotte. "To you I am scarcely at all known; and I believe that you are entirely mistaken in supposing for an instant that we are suited to each other. You and I have been educated in very different schools, and could never sympathize."

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"Do you then forget our musical sympathies. Am I not devoted to your sweet melodies, and have we not often admired them in unison?"

"Oh yes, certainly," said Charlotte, "but music is a very little part of life.—We must not stay any longer from our party, who, perhaps, are wondering at our absence." Fanny appeared precisely as Charlotte spoke the last word, and the latter, seizing her sister's arm, was delighted to find excuse for terminating the conversation.

The *last* evening is always sad, when those who have been pleased in each other's society are to part; but there is generally also some degree of bustle, immediately preceding a journey, which prevents the mind from dwelling on gloomy thoughts, at least in *common* cases; and as all were ignorant of what had happened, except the pair immediately concerned, there was less reserve than might have been anticipated by any one who knew the fact that a proposal had been made and rejected.

Mr. Annesley is a very sweet young man, and he too was happy enough in our friendly circle to leave us with regret, which expressed itself silently in a fine and speaking countenance. We said farewell. The morning saw our visitors set out at so early an hour that the track of their carriage wheels alone reported of them when we met at breakfast. Is there one bright, breathless, listening joy that ever hung upon expected happiness which is not familiar to my memory; and is not that memory too a faithful register of every pang that severed love could teach the heart? How is it then, I wonder, that a tear is left for minor griefs? Yet tears *will* flow; and I felt the difference between the gladsome merriment of approach, when our young friends were introduced by Mrs. Fitzroy, and the melancholy of their departing hour.

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Still we are not bereaved of our guests all at once, though I grieve to add that another week will deprive me of dear Augusta Fitzroy, and my charming Arthur. I have real pleasure in the hope of presenting the latter to you one of these days, and in the mean time I prepare you for finding him *almost* all that I desire to see him. Such a change I did not imagine possible, as has taken place in his mind since he has been with us. The materials were in existence, no doubt, but a London life has little need of *heart*, and, therefore, *his* remained *hermetically sealed*, except when brought into action by his inestimable friend young Falkland, whose letters, which Arthur preserves like "leaves of the Sybil", have rendered me acquainted with his extra-ordinary virtues. *Now* in full exercise, my dear nephew's affections are the source of happiness to himself and delight to all around. His abilities are shining, and, as habit strengthens the power of applying them, I feel no doubt of his becoming an ornament to society, and filling the situation appointed for him by Providence so as to set an example worthy of imitation. Domestic anxiety at present weighs upon his spirits, proving at once an acuteness of feeling and exalted sense of rectitude, which promise a foundation of future character, delightful to anticipate.

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I must speak of George Bentley before I conclude; and, to answer your inquiry in the *first* instance, I am wholly unconscious of any ground for his uncle's apprehensions, though had I been aware of any such before we set out, I should not have consented to his being of our Killarney party; however, as Mr. Bentley followed us, my anxiety was removed. The young man is a fine and uncommon character: you shall have a sketch of it as far as I can trace its peculiarities. George Bentley offers a remarkable instance to prove, that what climate is to the vegetable kingdom, such to man is the moral atmosphere by which he is surrounded in early life. The temperature and aspect will not indeed convert an oak into an elm; but as the sapling of either, or of *any* kind may be checked in its growth by the chill north-eastern blast, and turned aside from the natural tendency of its course; or, as the tender and languid seedling may be improved in strength by the care which tempers its exposure, and provides shelter for its weakness, just so may a particular bias of nature in the human mind be enfeebled or invigorated by circumstance, that powerful agent in the completion of its structure. Young Bentley came into the world with excellent faculties and dispositions, but nothing could be less favourable than that society in which they were to be unfolded. It is not the tutor's lessons, it is the manners and opinions which *breathe* around us, that impart the *tone* which distinguishes individuals from each other. Young Bentley was formed in a different *mould* of intellect from all his family, and soon discovered in

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books, a companionship which was denied in the circle of his immediate relations. As he advanced in years, his mind, stimulated by a general sense of hunger, rather than by any discrimination of appetite, sought food for the cravings of curiosity in a library of motley mixture, accruing from various professional hoards, and a medley of novels, annual registers, and magazines, accumulated in a series of generations, through family survivorship. He was not met at home by either literary tact or talent. No, nor by that sort of tact which sometimes supplies in a great degree, the defect of one and the other.

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Let loose as it were in an immense common, without a guide to direct him in the choice of his pasture, he devoured with avidity whatever presented itself. He passed through school and university with distinguished success, less the meed of brilliant talent than the reward of diligent application, and, unfortunately for himself, was emancipated from the trammels of education long before his age would permit him to enter one of the learned professions for which he was designed. The interval between the termination of a young man's first course of scholastic discipline, and the commencement of his professional career, is perhaps by far the most important period of existence in determining his future fate, and no prudent parent should permit that interval to be a long one. The mind, relieved from its former habitual restraint, and not yet *harnessed* in a new pursuit, dashes wildly forward to revel in the charms of liberty, and woe to him who enjoys such length of holyday as to unfit him for returning to the toilsome track in which he must plod for daily bread. George Bentley employed the *chasm* in *his* course, chiefly in reading every thing upon which he could lay his hands in the region of fiction and romance. His college studies were ended before he had passed that awkward time of life, when neither child, nor man, the youth not knowing how to dispose of the disproportioned length of legs and arms by which he is encumbered, often flies from polished society in which he cannot expect to receive much notice; and young Bentley was too amiable, too aspiring a character to seek in low company the ease which he might have attained at the expense of morality. Thus while he was sliding into manhood, his days were principally occupied in solitude, amidst a heterogeneous mass of books, except during the hours of occasional meeting with his parents, brothers and sisters.

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Inelegant, and unrefined in the habits of domestic economy, the circle of his relations presented not a single likeness to any of the pictures of imagination which were promiscuously piled in his memory. What he *saw*, did not in the least agree with what he *imagined*; but there were two powerful motives, though of opposite parentage, which co-operated to prevent him from making the humiliating confession, even to *himself*, that he could not trace the most distant resemblance in his mother and sisters, to the portraits which delighted him in story. These motives were the *vice* of pride, and the *virtue* of filial piety; and these combined, determined him to try every effort that was practicable in the way of twisting and turning, letting out and taking in, to fit some of the drapery with which his favourite novels abounded, on those forms which his affectionate heart would have gladly invested with whatever he found most attractive. It would not do: and he has at length given up the attempt, satisfied to respect and esteem, what he cannot admire; but the effect upon his mind of this war which I have described between his tastes and his fortunes, is singular. Let him describe character, whether in actual existence, or of abstract contemplation; and you would be surprised by the accuracy of his judgment, and the refinement of his taste; yet from having studied books more than men, and been debarred in early life from referring the rules which he learned, to any living examples which might have afforded a practical illustration of them, he seems at a loss in society, and gives one the idea of a person who had attained to a perfect skill in geography by mere inspection of maps, without ever having stirred from a close room in the heart of London. If such a person were suddenly brought to the coast, he would be confused, and quite unable for some time to follow the line of bays and harbours, creeks and head-lands, with which he was familiar on paper. When George Bentley, at a later period extended his acquaintance, and quitted home, a number of new varieties were presented to his view, in which he might have found specimens of every character; but the most impressible time of life had passed away, he did never possess, originally, the power of comparison in any vividness, and the absence of all encouragement to its exercise in youth, has rendered him slow, now that he is of maturer age, in adapting objects for the first time to his patterns. The eye accustomed only to painting, does not come at *once* to criticise sculpture; and a surgeon, who knows the whole anatomy of the living subject, which *either* is employed to represent, may be a dunce in *both*. The things are *different*, and will remain so, unless early habit and natural tact familiarize the mind in applying them to each other, and seeking similitudes between them. Young Bentley's mind and manners in fine do not amalgamate; one *layer* lies upon the other like a *fineering*, which does not make a part of the plank to which it is cemented, but is glued on to a material less fine than itself. He *reasons* more than he *feels*, is more solid than brilliant, and wants that beautiful *lightning* of the mind which plays sometimes round characters not half so intrinsically valuable as his, with fascinating illumination. Such is my brief sketch of 'poor George,' as his uncle calls him. The future is concealed in mist. If a child of mine ever love young Bentley well enough to marry him, she shall have my full consent, for I am *sure* of all the essentials that give security for substantial peace. The graces which he wants *may* be dispensed with. The virtues which he possesses are indispensable; but I shall avoid giving *direction* to the inclination of my girl, towards any particular objects, not because I do not think that many a parent might choose more wisely than young people do for themselves; but there is something perhaps inseparable from the human heart, which renders us more willing to excuse our own blunders, than those of even the people whom we love best. "Youth is easily deceived;" "love is blind," &c. Many of these flattering aphorisms occur to extenuate our own errors, while the question of "how did *your* experience fail, how did you commit a mistake?" arises in the heart, though it may not be expressed by the lips, of every young romancer, who, finding life a

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chequered scene in which the *tessalæ* of black and white, hold perpetual contrast, attributes to the influence of a friend's advice, the failure of those *generally* disappointed hopes that paint the marriage state in colours bright and fleeting as the imagination which supplies them.

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This moment comes a letter from the India House, to say that my poor brother, General Douglas, has had so serious an attack of illness, that his voyage to England is hastened, and we are informed, that his arrival may be looked for immediately. How this event may operate at Glenalta, I cannot tell; but though "the noiseless tenour of my way" should be disturbed, I shall rejoice if it be permitted me to afford comfort and assistance to the invalid. Adieu, my Elizabeth.

Your faithful
CAROLINE DOUGLAS.

LETTER XXII.

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ARTHUR HOWARD TO CHARLES FALKLAND.

My dear Charles,

This letter, if not melancholy in its commencement, will surely be tinged with a very gloomy colouring ere its close, for the day of departure is at hand, and to quit Glenalta is no easy matter, I assure you. Poor Russell and Annesley left us the day before yesterday. I told you that I expected to be informed of Charlotte's reply to certain questions which I felt confident would be *put*; but I miscalculated: however, silence tells *some* tales, it is said, as well as language, and so in this case I found it. It was plain to *my* eyes, and others too amongst our party, that Russell chose his opportunity while we were loitering about the Glen, to make his proposals, which were evidently met in a feeling not *sympathetic*: an increased *activity* of countenance told me this. It would be injustice to call it anger, but there was an expression of eye, and a bright spot on each cheek-bone, that seemed to indicate a very honest surprise, mingled with what the peasants here comically call the "least taste in life," of indignation. If I am *right*, this is all in the strict *keeping* with Russell's character. You and I long ago decreed that he would never die of *love*, notwithstanding all his enthusiasm about soft music. No; Russell loves his *own* emotions better than the object who excites them; and though I just feel sufficient *esprit de corps* not in *general* to like an individual of the other sex better for having made one of our own look *foolish*, yet I am sincerely glad that Charlotte has not accepted our friend; first, because she would not be happy if she married him, and secondly, because I *do* think that just such a *hitch* will do him good. He is a fine honest-hearted fellow, and has a great deal of taste; but he surely knows it rather too well, or at least he *shews* that he does so, too much. Perhaps, more truth-telling than his neighbours, *he* only expresses what others have art enough to conceal. You will say that I am catching infection, and growing *acrid* in the society of old Bentley: it may be so; but I tell you *all* my remarks.

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Frederick and I got up to see the travellers off at *cock-crow* on the morning of their departure, and they left a blank which was felt by us all. What a sweet contrast was presented in this family with what I have so often witnessed on similar occasions, when a gay party had reached its *finale*, and was *crumbling* away by twos and threes! I remember at Featherston, when the last shooting-match broke up in Autumn, Lady Frances and Giorgina Lightfoot, who had been just saying "*adio*" in the most melting accents to a *brace* of departing guests (by the bye, the very Russell of whom we were speaking was one of them) called to Gifford and me in the moment after the post-boy cracked his whip and the horses had turned from the hall door, to accompany them back to the breakfast-parlour. We obeyed; and the ladies, drawing their chairs close to the fender, and desiring us to do the same, Lady Fanny said, "For goodness' sake, come, let us talk over those two creatures, and *cut them up cosily*—I dote on a good *cosé* when people have turned their backs; don't you?" To *laugh* was all that one had for it; but the feeling that Gifford and I were to be brought under the *scalpel* of two such keen operators as our fair hostesses proved themselves to be anatomizing the *lately defunct*, glanced across my mind, not certainly to the increase of ease or benevolence.

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How different at Glenalta! With talents ten thousand times superior to those of the Lightfoot sisterhood, and discrimination which seems to grow in solitude, and preserve its fineness of edge because it is not, like a school-boy's penknife, employed to hack and hew at every chair and table that comes in the way: the truest hospitality protects all who go out from under this happy roof; and all that is worthy, pleasing, and amiable, is recollected, while the *contraries* are held back in shade by that charity which *desires* their reform, and will not render a change less probable by proclaiming to mankind how much it is required. *Here* the absent were talked of, and thought of, with real kindness; and could they have taken a peep amongst us from their first evening's halt, they would have felt proud and gratified at seeing the manner in which they were remembered. Is there any thing so delightful as this feeling of *security*? Charlotte was calm and unperturbed; but I thought her more pensive than usual. After breakfast we all appeared, without saying so, as if inclined to pay a tribute to "the friend that's awa," by not proposing any plan for the morning; and it so happened, that though not assembled by any agreement to meet, we had all sauntered in pairs into the wood, and all found ourselves dropping in two and two at the Moss House, where we were at length seated together, moralizing in concert, rather sorrowfully upon meetings and partings, when that very diverting compound, Mr. Bentley, followed by George, joined our party. He cannot resist the attraction of Mrs. Fitzroy's society, and I have found out in what consists the great difference (dearly as they love each other) between her character and that of my aunt: it is this,—Aunt Douglas is drawn by sympathy, Mrs. Fitzroy stimulated by opposition. The former lives more in a region of feeling, though one in which intellect too is continually busy. The latter, though very affectionate, can exist for a long time without applying to the stores of her heart; and provided you give her plenty of brains, she will feed upon them, and keep her affections like the furniture of a state drawing-room, with the *covers on*. *Par consequence*, then, Mrs. Fitzroy delights in seeing Mr. Bentley come to pay a visit, and always rouses to the combat which is sure to ensue, certain that her antagonist is strong, and feeling that "wit sparkles in collision."

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"Good morrow, good people," said our rough diamond, "I thought you would be all as low as 'gib cats' this morning, after the departure of those two *swains*, (casting a sidelong glance at Charlotte, which she caught, and blushed immoderately,) and so I thought it might divert you all, and adorn a page of Madam Fitzroy's Anthologia Hibernia, to bring you a pretty specimen of Irish impudence which I have had to provoke me to-day. You must know, that while I was playing the

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fool, and strolling about at Killarney instead of minding my business at home, a dozen of very fine geese were stolen from my farm-yard, by some of those sweet primitive sentimentalists whom the fair flatterer there has decked in such fanciful tissues, that when sent forth from the dressing-room of her imagination, nobody knows who they are. Well, I took proper steps to trace the thief, and have put the neighbourhood into a deuce of a fright; but what do you think of the impertinence of some funny dog (and here he laughed heartily as he drew out from his waistcoat-pocket a dirty scrap of paper) who sent my large gander *twaddling* home this morning by himself, making such plaguy noise that all the servants ran together to see what was the matter; I found this novel species of carrier-bird with a small bag tied round his neck, containing a bright new shilling, and the following ingenious sample of poetry, after something of the leonine fashion. He then unfolded at arm's length, the crumpled composition, and read,

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"Squire, dear, I live here,
And you live *yander*;
I bought your geese, for pence a-piece,
The money I send by the gander."

We were indeed cheated out of our philosophy, and set laughing most comfortably by the ridiculousness of this adventure of neighbour Bentley, which, as he anticipated, was seized upon with rapture by Mrs. Fitzroy, for her "Irish Reminiscences," but poor Charlotte was writhing under the remembrance of her having *blushed*, and Mrs. Fitzroy, who is very good-natured, and who saw exactly the cause, which was no other than that of having been *suspected* to feel what in reality she did *not* feel, endeavoured to relieve her by recurring to the subject of our conversation, saying, "Oh! Charlotte, you must repeat your last observation, I scarcely heard it. Were you not saying that in wild places where there is no great choice of society, the bonds of fellowship are drawn closer, and people are disposed to like each other better than in situations which render one fastidious by the variety they present? If *that*, my dear, was your remark, I think it a very just one, and I believe that I may apply the rule to our young friends who are gone to-day; one of whom, had I met him in what is called the *world*, I should probably never have known, he is so reserved: and the other is so volatile, that he would have been completely evaporated over a larger surface."

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Charlotte, who had quite recovered her *nerve*, answered with perfect ease, "Well, there is great pleasure in liking our fellow-creatures, and, if retirement produce philanthropy, it is better than the world; is it not?" "I believe," answered Mrs. Fitzroy, that I shall be entirely of your opinion some time or other, though we arrive at this agreement by very opposite paths. *You*, having seen nothing of the world, and *I* a great deal too much of it; you inhabitants of Glenalta are making me long for settlement amongst you; and I feel as if you were the only set of people living

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"Whose hearts keep the promise I had from the face."

Old Bentley *fidgeted*; giving one of his rapid glances at George, to ascertain how he stood *affected* by Mrs. Fitzroy's panegyric, and finding "pleased acquiescence" seated on his nephew's countenance, suddenly clapped his hands on his knees (a favourite movement of his) and exclaimed, "Pooh, madam! all fal lal sort of talk. You might sit here till doomsday ringing the changes upon these matters of sentiment, and *all* be right and *all* be wrong. I dare say that Miss Douglas could say something different from what you and her sister think upon the subject. Miss Fanny, if we call her from tying up those sweet peas, would probably tell us something else; and our young gentlemen, all, I dare say, could produce a different reading of the self-same thought. The fact is, that each individual character gives its own hue to such sort of disquisitions. Miss Douglas what do you say?"

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"Indeed, Mr. Bentley, I believe that I do think differently from Mrs. Fitzroy and Charlotte on this occasion, and so I dare say that I am wrong; but it strikes me that the more retired the situation in which we live, the more nice do we grow, and the more necessary do we find *great* congeniality in the people with whom we associate; *that* is if we want to love them. In the world where every variety of talent and disposition is to be found, one can choose, and if disappointed in one instance, try in another; but in retreat, we must make the best of the given ingredients."

Bentley chuckled with delight, and rubbed his hands in triumph. This keen observer knew that Emily's opinion would justify his assertion, and moreover that it would be favourable to his views of keeping George's hopes, *if he has any*, down to the ground, Emily being the person, towards whom I suspect that he thinks his nephew's half averted eyes, are directed.

"Aye, there it is," said the uncle, "all right, all wrong; exactly as I said. Mrs. Fitzroy is social in all her tendencies. Human nature is the book in which she principally delights to study. Her love even of fine scenery is coupled with society. She does not like any thing much, except with a reference to communicating her ideas, and puts me continually in mind of a passage that I have met with in the works of Balsac, an old French author, who says, "Que la solitude est un belle chose, mais qu'il est agréable d'avoir quelque un qui sache répondre, a qui on puisse *dire* que la solitude est une belle chose." Now another thing is, that Mrs. Fitzroy does not require coincidence so much as intelligence. Her mind is generally in search of a good whetstone, while Miss Douglas—."

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"Oh, do not paint me, Mr. Bentley," said Emily, "I should fly from a portrait of myself."

"And I," said Mrs. Fitzroy, "declare loudly against Mr. Bentley's rough sketches. I will, however,

admit that there is *some* truth in what he says, and it exceedingly amuses me to catch glimpses of his caricatures, though they would terrify if I looked long at them." [Pg 252]

"That is because my caps fit," answered our Diogenes.

"Your caps are so ugly that no one would *try them on*," replied Mrs. Fitzroy. "Mr. Otway is *my* milliner, and to prove that I do not wish to hoist false colours, I here pledge myself to let you all see, if you like it, whatever our friend of Lisfarne brings me this day, as answer of a question, which I proposed to him yesterday evening, while we were walking, and talking, on this very subject. I then made a complaint and told him that it has been my fate most unjustly, and most painfully to my feelings, to be thought insincere, though I know to a positive certainty, that I err on the other side and speak the truth with less reserve than is prudent. I told Mr. Otway, for whom I entertain the highest regard and admiration, that his *review* of my character might be very useful, if, as I am, alas! on the wing, he would give me an explanation of what seems so extra-ordinary to myself, in comparing causes with effects; and though I shall not be paid any compliments, I am so sure of not being made worse than I am, that, as I said before, whatever picture I receive of myself from Lisfarne you shall certainly see." [Pg 253]

"Come, madam," said old Bentley, "the coroner's inquest will be called immediately to try the matter, and judge whether you are *murdered* or not, for here is Mr. Otway. I see him through the acacias, walking this way with Mrs. Douglas."

"Then I will go and meet them," answered Mrs. Fitzroy. "Frederick, you shall go with me. I will ask for the paper which I expect, and you shall bring it back to be read here before I look at it myself, but I cannot stay like a culprit at the bar, while you are all scanning me according to evidence."

So saying, she gaily hastened away, joined my aunt, and sent back with the following account of herself from the pen of Mr. Otway:

Answer to Augusta's Question.

"Augusta inquires why she, who never feels conscious of desiring to deceive, should be reckoned insincere by those who do not understand her; and as this comprehends by far the largest portion of the people with whom she converses, how it is that the general voice of mankind, which is usually considered to convey the truth with respect to individual character, is in her case a false criterion, representing her as the opposite of what she really is? I think that I can solve the enigma satisfactorily. Augusta is a woman of decided genius, a word which comprehends the union of fine talent, and quick perception. She also possesses that force of understanding which has been commonly, though not correctly distinguished by the epithet masculine, she herself furnishing proof that we of the other sex have no right to the *monopoly* which we often assume; and that, in seizing on the *copy-right* of solid sense, we are guilty of an untenable usurpation. Augusta is particularly qualified to appreciate merit, for her mind is penetrating and her taste refined; but *enthusiasm* is the blind that interposes to prevent the exercise of her judgment. Eager to find materials on which to employ her intellect and affections, and ever in search of objects that may prove worthy of exciting them; her progress through life has been one continued voyage of discovery. She dislikes the common track, and avoids those ports where low traffic and vulgar merchandise are all the allurements that presents itself. She delights in setting her sails for some *terra incognita*; and in the true spirit of an animated adventurer, if on landing she find a few grains of gold in the sands, she imagines rich mines in the distance, and precipitately announcing the Eldorado of her hopes, hastens forward to secure the treasure in prospect. Delusion has too frequently mocked her career: not that Augusta invented a fiction; she had found the grains of precious metal, and fancied that it was only to follow the course of the stream, and be rewarded with store of riches; but in ascending the current no glittering prize repays her toil. Rugged mountains, barren rocks, and tedious flats, fatigue the eye; returning weary and disappointed, she trims her bark and invokes a favourable breeze, and bidding adieu to the region which had exhibited poverty instead of wealth, she weighs anchor and steers for another coast. Under this allegory would I present Augusta a mirror in which to behold herself. Tired of the vapid circle by which she has been encompassed in the world, and weary of crowds in which she found little congenial society, she has been perpetually engaged in seeking for what might interest her better feelings, and fill the vacuum which she experienced in her mind. In this pursuit it has frequently occurred that some agreeable quality met her view, and encouraged the activity of her research; but, mistaking her own energy of anticipation for success, she proclaims with joy, the *treasure trove*, ere she knows the extent of its value, and from impetuosity of gratitude, is condemned to the humiliating confession that the single attribute which she admired is not associated with others which her own enthusiasm had supplied, but lies, like the grain of gold upon the surface of the sand, in solitary insulation." [Pg 254] [Pg 255] [Pg 256]

The apparent contrariety then, it would seem, which has obtained a character of caprice for Augusta, is produced by the very excess of that quality which it is denied that she possesses, and results from a superabundance rather than a deficiency of sincerity. She speaks nothing but the truth, when she praises prematurely, and as honestly condemns when she discovers that her panegyric was misapplied. I venture to predict the operation of a new process in Augusta's mind, which if I do not greatly mistake, has been gradually awakening of late to a sense of the only *true* estimate. She will never, here-after, be satisfied I think with tracing character *downwards* from some light ornamental decoration at the *top*; but in future only expect that those wreaths which adorn the capital shall be firmly supported when the pillar rises from a broad base of solidly established foundation. The fire of a vivid imagination has prolonged the *youth* of Augusta, and it is only now that she is beginning to learn a valuable lesson in morals, namely, that happiness, like [Pg 257]

liberty, is often overlooked in the search after it. Young people, through inexperience, and sometimes those who are older from sanguineness of temperament, expect more from life than it has to bestow. They consider happiness as a precious jewel never hitherto possessed, yet certainly to be found though in what shape, place, or circumstances, it never occurs to them to define; it is with them a sort of vague ideal charm, always to be pursued, and as constantly eluding the grasp. Liberty in like manner, with the same description of persons, does not consist in the absence of restraint; in the rational enjoyment of property, or preservation of rights. It is a loose ungovernable spirit of infringement on the privileges of others. The mere security derived under a just and equal administration of the laws is no better than bondage in the eyes of what are technically known by the name and style of "radical reformers." All this is flat and tame; they must *kick* and *fling*, to be assured that they are not confined; they must be permitted to do that which has neither reference to pleasure nor utility, merely to exercise the *power* which absolute freedom bestows, just as a child in a garden lays about him, and batters down the flowers on each side with the stick in his hand, without any need of, or desire for, the things thus destroyed. We deceive ourselves much in supposing that happiness of mind any more than health of body depends upon *place*. I do not say that change of scene is not often both agreeable and convenient; but if the heart be oppressed, or there be 'a thorn in the flesh,' the *Mordecai* travels with us. We cannot run away from ourselves. To be happy in the limited sense which Providence permits, let us endeavour to make *home* the centre of our enjoyments. The fulfilment of those little duties which are at every moment presenting their claims, may be thought by many a strange *receipt* for contentment; yet it is a very sure one, and if there ever was an axiom on the truth of which we may rely, it is, that "the mind is its own place." Instead of looking to new faces, and seeking in new situations for that undiscovered *something*, we know not what, which upon approaching will, like the sailor's "Cape fly away," always vanish, or recede from our view; let us be assured that, in every condition of life, and in every spot of earth, much may be done with the materials that lie immediately around us; and if we evince no skill in the manufacture of these, we should not turn a wider range to profit. My dear friend Augusta begins to feel these truths, and when they come to be steadily acted upon, she will no more be a prey to disappointment—no more be accounted insincere. Her judgments will be slower, and therefore less apt to err; her friends will be fewer, and chosen not for their brilliancy so much as their worth, and Augusta will find that all the blessings which do not mock our grasp, are to be possessed *every where*, if sought upon the only principles which can never deceive."

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"Excellent sense," exclaimed Bentley, "my opinions are not expressed in such courtly phrase as my friend Otway uses; but I agree in the substance of every syllable that he has written. He is quite right, but, like the prophet who ordered a dip into the river Jordan to cure the leprosy, your moral physicians who prescribe simples which are to be met with in the field of our own minds, will never be attended to. No, no, we must ransack the remotest ends of the earth for our remedies, because no one is inclined to think his own case a common one. Mrs. Fitzroy returned at this moment with *another* paper in her hand, over which she was laughing heartily. "Oh come," said she, "and read a most delightful copy of verses written impromptu this moment for me by 'poet Connor,' who, it appears, having missed us at Killarney, stepped across the country to Glenalta, that he might do honour in due form to the strangers. Arthur, he is inquiring for you, and as he is one of the most grotesque figures I ever saw, I pray that you may look at him."

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I went in quest of the poet, as I was desired, and you may form some idea of these Irish *improvisatori* by the few commencing lines of Connor's composition in praise of Mrs. Fitzroy, which, if you *admire*, shall be preserved with their "*tail on*," along with his eulogy on your humble servant, for a future day. What think you of the following invocation:—

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"Egregious Dame! thine ear benignly bend,
And to the Muse of Kerry kindly lend
Attention meet, while he shall aptly sing,
And from Apollo's lyre soft music bring.
The *ægis* of thy sweet protection grant,
While to thy praise he tunes harmonious chaunt.
Glory of England! here we gladly see,
Renowned epitome arrived in thee.
&c. &c. &c."

The rude figure who met my eyes on gaining the house, gave a finish to the poetical treat; and, certainly, in all my travels I have never seen a person less formed by nature or art to captivate *the nine*, than this votary of the Castalian choir. He is a man of about sixty, of Bardolphian physiognomy, who, I rather imagine, is much more frequently indebted for the fire of inspiration to a glass of whiskey, than to the fountain of Helicon. A large, battered tin snuff-box also contributed its aid to enliven those numbers

"Which warm from the still, and faithful to its fires,"

were dealt out with equal readiness and prodigality to all who looked as if they were inclined to purchase Parnassian fame; and the same snuff-box supplied a substitute for sand, with which ever and anon, the bard sprinkled his effusions. Fancy a large, obtuse red face, curled head, rough coat, of dark brown cloth, fastened with a cord round his waist; a hat full of holes, an ink bottle cased over with a *surtout* of pack-thread, and tied at a button-hole; a pen stuck behind one ear, and a roll of the coarsest description of paper sticking out of his bosom, and you have before you as much of poet Connor as I shall give till you see his fac simile admirably sketched by

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Fanny's pencil in my journal. Mrs. Fitzroy and I, whose perfections had been "theme of song," gave half a crown each to the verse-vender, and received another scolding from old Bentley for encouraging these idlers, who, he says, truly enough I believe, are amongst the most worthless part of the community. We then dispersed, and went our several ways, for the first time since the "*English foreigners*" had been at Glenalta without saying when shall we meet again? I am melancholy I confess. My heart is full, as the hour of my departure advances. The last week has brought me more intimately acquainted than ever with the excellence from which I must tear myself; and I am sorrowful in proportion as I compare the feelings which I brought to Ireland with those which now on the eve of separation over-whelm me, as I bid farewell to this happy abode of all that is best and brightest. Where shall I look for such affection; where seek such disinterested kindness, mental improvement, and variety of pleasurable excitement, as I have found in this charming spot, which I nicknamed Blue-stocking Hall, and believed to be a centre in which pedantry, dullness, affectation, and presumption, had agreed to meet and lodge together?

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Glenalta, "I cry you mercy;" if repentance merit pardon, I may hope to be forgiven. I love even Domine, and down to the very dogs, nothing is an object of indifference that I leave behind. How painful the sensation that one experiences when the heart swells as though it would burst its confine, an unbidden tear starts, and utterance is palsied? Yet this is what we pay our money for, and delight in the actor or the actress who can most powerfully call forth such emotion, by only imitating those passions, and feigning those incidents which *naturally* affect our sympathies. Why do we thus liberally bestow our best feelings on theatrical fiction, while we so frequently withhold them from the legitimate claims of reality? Old Bentley would give some reason, I dare say, for this anomaly, not very favourable to human nature; and if I think of it I will ask him the question before I go. We are to have strangers at dinner to-day, which is a *bore*, but my aunt wishes to repay some of the many attentions shewn to Frederick, since his return from Dublin, by all the neighbouring gentry, who have been profuse of congratulation, and perhaps she is desirous of *constraining* us all to be more cheerful in spite of ourselves, than the prospect of a parting scene on the day after to-morrow would permit, were it not for a little gentle compulsion. I shall go on writing till we set out, and shall not finish this till I reach London, where I shall hope to find means of sending my packet as *usual* by private hand. What a lucky dog you are in receiving such *pounds* of stationery free of cost, in a country where epistolary taxation is calculated by weight? Adieu, till to-morrow.

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Well, yesterday is "numbered with the years before the flood," and the company which, while in perspective, I thought would be a *gène*, turned out a resource, and gave us a great deal to talk of when spirits were flagging, and threatened to fail unless given fresh motion by some new *impingement* from without. The ladies who were asked did not come, and the most prominent features among the gentlemen of the country who made their appearance were, Mr. Fitzallan, a man of large fortune, generally an absentee, and Mr. Ridley, another person of good estate, together with their respective sons. The politics, manners, and sentiments, in every possible department of conversation between these neighbours are north and south of each other, but as they met *here* on neutral ground, and in a *lady's* house, all was smooth to outward seeming. Mr. Fitzallan is a *liberal*, and very eloquent; he talked admirably on the rights of the people, the errors of Administration, the total want of honesty in Ministers; the shameful abuse of power, speculation in every quarter, prostitution of the national purse, and dereliction of justice. He sat next to Mrs. Fitzroy, whose animated countenance almost emitted *light*, as she listened to a flow of mind so congenial with her own. Mr. Ridley, on the opposite side, who took his seat next my aunt, supported even the very thickest skull to be found on the Ministerial side of Lords and Commons. To a person not immediately engaged in conversation with either of our *leaders*, nothing could be more comical than the effect of opposition in the chance-medley of sounds that vibrated round the table. It was what the printers call *a pie*, when the *devils* have jumbled their types into confusion. I heard liberty, authority, equal rights, wholesome rule, universal suffrage, Kingly prerogatives, emancipation, Protestant ascendancy, the curse of tithes, the blessings of an Established Church, &c. in the drollest *mess* that could be imagined. When the speakers descended from their stilts, and, quitting the arena of dispute on public affairs, *meandered* into the paths of private life, the same remarkable difference was observable in the style of our orators. Mr. Fitzallan talked with enthusiasm of the peasantry of Ireland as the finest, but most oppressed, people under Heaven; declaring that West Indian slavery had nothing to compare, in its horrors, with the subjugation of this British island; this land of beauty, this nursery of the brave. He told some striking anecdotes of his own tenantry, who, he said, would follow him to the confines of earth, and that were he like Roderick Dhü, only to whistle as he rode along, the whole country would rise in his defence. When he spoke of his family, he dwelt on the lovely innocence of childhood, and said how hard he felt it even to *look* angrily. All *discipline* he left entirely to Mrs. Fitzallan, who was, he acknowledged, so much wiser than himself, that he willingly relinquished every title to controul, and gladly confessed that he was *hen-pecked* and *chicken-pecked*, and *pecked* in every possible manner of *pecking*; adding, "I live, in fact, totally under petticoat government, and find nothing suits with my temper so pleasantly as to be led in all things by my wife." Mr. Fitzallan's appearance is very handsome, and his manners are perfectly polished, which gave the most finished, at the same time the most playful tone to every thing he said, while Ridley looked as serious in describing a game of German tactics to Fanny, as if he had been delivering evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons on the Corn Laws. Young Fitzallan gave a scowling glance at his father every time that he spoke; and whenever he could slide in a word, it was sure to be a *cut* at the difference between theory and practice. Young Ridley, on the contrary, seemed to hang with delight on every word that his father uttered, though with the most perfect freedom and considerable intelligence, he sometimes ventured a flight in praise of some of our Opposition men, who met with no quarter from the old man. When

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the party broke up in the evening Mrs. Fitzroy burst into a glowing eulogium on Mr. Fitzallan, "who," she said, "was the most noble creature she had met for ages. That man has such heart, he is overflowing with love for his species, and his views upon every subject are so generous, so exalted, so comprehensive"—

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"That they comprehend *nothing*, madam," interrupted Mr. Bentley in a high state of irritation. "I repeat, madam," continued he, "that you were never so mistaken in the course of your life. This shewy man, who has attracted so much of your admiration, possesses property to a large amount in several counties in Ireland. The agent whom he employs in this part of the country, I know to be one of the most grinding, heartless, fellows in creation. Mr. Fitzallan is one of the worst landlords in Ireland, and never does an act that is not dictated by the grossest self-interest. In private life he is a compound of pride and laxity. The former governs his conduct with wife and children, to all of whom he behaves in the most imperious yet capricious manner; and, *though* he has too little controul over *himself* to enforce subordination in *others*, he is selfish and tyrannical with all whose actions he can dare to command. You might have observed how small a degree of credit he has with his son, who dotes on his mother, and resents, as far as he can, his father's neglect of her. Madam, Mr. Fitzallan fastened on your ear because you were a stranger, and he found that he could play off an artillery of *words* upon your ignorance of his true character.

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"Now there is honest Jack Ridley, whom you did not condescend to address, I believe, for the whole day; I would bet a sovereign that you think every syllable of what I have told you fits him to a *tee*, and that I am either an idiot or a madman for having given you such an account of your favourite. The *truth* is, that you and I may exchange our portraits, and each will then possess a good likeness, for my worthy friend Jack is all that you ascribe to Mr. Fitzallan. If he incline perhaps a little to what is *now* called bigotry, it is in defence of his King and his Church, though he would not hurt the feelings of *any* man, whatever be his creed. He is an excellent magistrate, one of the best of landlords, and it is worth going from this to Fort Ridley to see him in the midst of his family. When he returns to-night, the smile of welcome will greet his arrival. His son and he are probably at this moment cheerfully discussing in their way home the agreeable party at Glenalta; and will make the fire-side group partakers in every little incident or remark that has occurred during the absence of two of its members.

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"Were we to accompany the Fitzallans in *their* homeward course, I promise you that your enthusiasm would be plunged in an ice-bath ere you had left this gate three perches behind you. Imagine the father and son, fitted like corner-cupboards into the extreme angles of their carriage, asleep, or feigning sleep; knees approximating, but not *touching*, towards the centre. Arrived at the *Rialta* (foolish name), the gentlemen contrive to separate without a mutual "good night,"—no "blazing hearth," no "crackling fagot;" no beaming open countenance awaits their return. A silence dark and chill as death pervades the mansion, and morning's sunny ray has no power over the gloomy hearts that dwell within it. At the Rialta absenteeism stares you in the face whichever way you turn. Offices dilapidated, plantations overgrown, gates off their hinges, walls scolloped into gaps, weeds flourishing in the very porch, paper hanging about your ears, bell-ropes pulled down from their cranks, furniture thinly scattered, old fashioned, yet ill preserved, heavy, but not magnificent: these are the dreary indications of approach to the residence of a popular orator, who lives beyond his means, and comes annually amongst his tenants to obtain supplies which may enable him to pass another year in estrangement from their wants and their wishes.

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"At Fort Ridley you find tight cottages, whole fences, trim gardens, clean walks, and warm welcome. You hear no cant about a radical reform; but you see progressive and constant improvement. Your ears are not assailed by cataracts of fine words, but your heart acknowledges a continued flow of kindness and good humour. You encounter no tirades about liberty and equality, but you find all happy in their *own places*. Parents walking hand-in-hand, sustaining each other's authority, not struggling for their own: children respectful and affectionate: servants orderly and comfortable: the poor protected: the unhappy consoled. Mrs. Fitzroy, I only say, give me one Ridley, man, woman, or child, and I will joyfully contract to let you have as many Fitzallans as you can steam away from us in your packet. Take an old man's assurance, that there is little *reality*, whenever you find much *shew*. Good wine (the proverb says) needs no bush; and when people *do*, they need not *talk*. Things tell their own stories. "Be not solitary, be not idle," is the conclusion of Johnson's beautiful fiction on the Search after Happiness; and Voltaire, the very opposite of our great moralist in all but the possession of superior talent, finishes his disgusting, but witty, *Candide*, with words to the same effect, '*Il faut cultiver le jardin*.'"

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"You always set your face against whatever I approve," said Mrs. Fitzroy; "but Mr. Fitzallan seems *quite* a practical man," added she, "and that is the reason that I like him. All his principles are pure; and, judging by what I have seen, I should say they are reduced to daily exercise, else how should he know so much of the Irish peasantry, or be able to relate so many interesting anecdotes respecting them?"—"Why, madam," replied old Bentley, "you might as well argue to the original humour of a man who had learned Joe Miller by heart. Mr. Fitzallan studies stage effect, and has tragedy as well as comedy at his fingers' ends. An Irish story, well purged from its yellow clay, and dressed to advantage, is a nice morsel, even in the heart of London, if you do not stuff your friends with too much of a good thing; and the gentleman of whom we are speaking knows exactly how much pudding will choke a dog."

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Mrs. Fitzroy is so genuinely diverted by Mr. Bentley, that they always part the best friends imaginable. He now shook hands and went home. When he was gone, Mr. Otway said of him, "There goes one of the bluntest, and yet the kindest, people I know. It would seem as if Nature, in forming my worthy neighbour, had been playing at hide-and-seek with herself; for in his

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character there is a jumble of the most heterogeneous materials: rude as a bear, he is gentle as a lamb; and though sly as a fox in detecting the wiles of his species, he is one of the most single hearted persons I have ever met with, in all his own dealings with mankind. The penetration with which he delves into character, is almost supernatural. He decides on a counterfeit at a glance; and though it is rarely his habit to indulge a sentimental vein, you would be astonished by the tenderness of feeling which sometimes softens that rugged exterior. I know him so intimately that I am aware of the contradictions in his mind, and he is not ashamed of being *himself* with me; but in common society he avoids the least exhibition of softness, and is generally glad when he has frightened strangers by his roughness, though upon *occasion*, if he be in the *humour*, I have known him delighted with individuals, who, not repelled by his frown, have braved opposition, and surmounted the obstacles to his friendship.

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"Mrs. Fitzroy is a grand favourite, notwithstanding *appearances*, and he told me to-day in his own way of expressing sorrow for her departure, that he expects to be like a fish out of water when she bids farewell to Ireland."

The word farewell struck as a knell on every heart: dear Phil. sighed, and wished us good night; and ere we separated to reap the harvest of his blessing, Mrs. Fitzroy, in a few words, but most comprehensively summed up *his* character.—"Aye," said she, soliloquizing as he left the room, "and there *you* go! the reviewer of reviews—the critic of critics—possessing more of every quality than you find to admire or value in all the men of your acquaintance, yet bearing your honours so meekly, with a mind so exquisitely balanced, a temperament so calm, and humility so lovely, that you allow anybody to get before you and shine out his short-lived triumph of display, while you in quiet majesty pursue the equal tenor of your course, and, like a mighty river, possessed between its banks, and full, 'though not o'erflowing,' wind onwards to the sea."

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I close my journal here, and shall not open the portfolio which contains it till I awaken in the unwonted scenery of Grosvenor Square. Adieu, Glenalta! thou sweetest Glen adieu! As I turn from this beloved spot I feel inclined to exclaim, "Fate drop the curtain—I can lose no more."

London!!! Oh, my dear Falkland, how shall I take to my narrative, and resume an occupation which *has been* so delightful, but which loses its charm in this disgusting round of idleness and dissipation? In any other mood than that which I now am in, I could dilate with melancholy pleasure on every step of my journey. I could tell you that I felt as if my heart would break when I lost sight of the last mountain which is visible in the distance from Glenalta. While I could gaze upon its lofty peak, I felt as if some connecting link still bound me to a place where all my best affections were deposited; and when all trace was lost of every object that continued the illusion, I could not speak. The pang was unutterable, and a thousand vague fancies crowded over my mind, perplexing it "with fear of change," and whispering unwelcome thoughts that I should not revisit my Irish home. There can be no *reason* for this, but I find now by experience what I have *read of* before, that low spirits enfeeble the understanding, and make one start, though at nothing.

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"'Tis only the willows that wave in the wind."

Yet the imagination conjures up phantoms of ideal existence, and I worked myself into such a dread of death, separation, misfortune, and I know not what, that the turning of a straw would have sent me back again, envious of the very rocks that bent their faces towards the happy valley which I left behind.

Mrs. Fitzroy was a charming companion, for she felt as I did; and we were neither of us inclined to talk on any subject foreign to Glenalta.

I cannot give you a detail of our progress. We reached Dublin, where the bustle of a new scene obliged us to turn our thoughts from those dear friends, whose society we missed so grievously on the preceding day. We rested only one night, and, after a calm passage of seven hours, found ourselves at Holyhead.

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Have you ever felt that as long as you are *near* an object of attachment, the mind is restless in the direct ratio of proximity, and, as you recede from it, you become more satisfied, as it would seem, from a feeling that every mile increases the difficulty of contact, till impossibility at length stares you in the face, and produces resignation *per force*. Is not this the reason why people who differ most widely from each other in religion and politics are more tranquil, and forbearing than such as are *all but* agreed? The *little* difference, like the *mile* of separation, seems to have no *right* to interpose a barrier, and we are impatient accordingly that what appears so easily surmountable does not give way to our wishes. Mrs. Fitzroy and I, in the course of our philosophizing, extended the same principle to that disgust which is occasioned by an attempt to carry imitation beyond a certain limit. The painted statue is unpleasing, because it assumes too much of similarity without reaching identification; and we are nauseated by the chattering of a monkey, who is *almost* human, though we listen with pleasure to the articulations of a parrot.

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Having left my fair charge in Worcestershire, at the house of one of her friends, I hastened to town, and found every thing here in the confusion attendant upon hurry. My poor mother, dreading an *explosion* on my part, laid her plans so as to circumvent me completely, and, on the plea of my uncle's sudden illness, which gives us reason to expect him by the very next ship from Bengal, instead of at the distance of some months, Adelaide's marriage has been *got up* without any of the usual forms, which my mother trusts to her own ingenuity and generalship for having executed as well *after*, as *before* the ceremony. Behold then, on my arrival, the whole house turned topsy-turvy—servants in new liveries flying to and fro, white and silver favours glittering on their breasts, and the wedding party just returned from St. George's Chapel. I could hardly

find a place to dress in, nor a creature to do any thing for me. Having, however, caught a flying lacquey, I desired that Louisa only should be informed of my arrival, and she ran for five minutes to bid me welcome. Whether agitated by my return, or forced into disapprobation of the graceless contract which had just been solemnized, I cannot tell, but she flew into my arms with a burst of emotion which I had never seen before, and which deeply affected me. Louisa is formed for better things than she lives amongst; but she has had no conductor. Oh may I henceforward be truly a brother! May I be enabled to cultivate her tenderness, and obtain an influence over her understanding! We agreed that I should be allowed to repose in peace, and that the breakfast, departure of the *nouveaux mariés*, *cake-cutting*, and all the idle mummery of a bridal day, should go on without me. [Pg 282]

My sister returned to the banquet, and my arrival was concealed from every body, till a splendid travelling carriage drove off with Lord and Lady Crayton, and all the *figurantes*, who are brought together on these occasions to feed the vanity of display, had dispersed. My mother and Louisa joined the giddy throng, and went to drive about the park, and exhibit the hymeneal paraphernalia. I looked from a window on the scene below, and sighed, as I thought how differently a marriage would be conducted at Glenalta. [Pg 283]

With eyes opened to a new order of things, I could not help musing heavily on what I saw. A deaf man suddenly introduced for the first time into the midst of a ball room would think the people all mad, whom he beheld jumping about, without being able to hear the inspiring sounds which gave activity to the feet. Perhaps, had I been engaged in this nuptial pageant, it would have seemed, as it did to those who had parts to act in it; but to me it appeared, from an upper story of the house, the most senseless piece of parade that I had ever witnessed, rendered melancholy by anticipations of events which I perceived in the vista of Adelaide's futurity. Various analogies started to my mind. I recollected the gay deception which precedes the sacrifice, when a poor nun is about to relinquish the natural enjoyments of life, and lay down her hopes and affections on the altar of superstition. I thought of her, when dressed in all the trappings of this world's glory, she is led, more frequently deceived than deceiving, to the temple, there to resign her liberty and happiness, perhaps her life, and become the sorrowing victim of an ill-fated vow. [Pg 284]

In the gloomy solitude of a large house, emptied of its inhabitants, I had scope for much disagreeable meditation, and wandered from room to room, reflecting with sad foreboding, on what is likely to be the lot of poor Adelaide, and ruminating on the heavy expenses incurred by my mother to seal a bond of misery. The furniture of all our principal apartments is new and sumptuous, of the last Parisian fashion, and chosen with the best taste. The housekeeper told me that a splendid new carriage had been purchased, and that every thing connected with this marriage had been done in the "best-possible manner."

My mother and Louisa returned late, and much fatigued. With the former I had but little conversation. She met me with an air of great displeasure, and I fear that the only way by which I can reinstate myself in her favour will prove a destructive one. My property is already burthened to a large amount, and to extricate my mother I must plunge myself a great deal deeper in debt. This must be done, however, as I will use my best endeavours to set her mind at ease. [Pg 285]

Poor Louisa and I sat up till morning, and, though her mind is a complete chaos, she has too much natural strength of character not to perceive the folly, as well as meanness, of the late arrangement, in which each side has been trying to outwit the other. I find that the Craytons set out directly after the ceremony for Dover, and are on their route to the continent, where their sojournment is to be regulated by circumstances. "Pecuniary difficulties," though not defined, are confessed to, *generally*, by my new brother-in-law, who gives his title in the hope of being paid for it in solid gold; and I suspect that we shall find, ere long, how much his creditors have been cajoled by an assurance that between General Douglas and me, all their demands will be satisfied. If the speculation of my uncle's assistance should fail, as much as the hope of aid from me must necessarily do, I see no prospect of aught but beggary for my unfortunate sister. [Pg 286]

Were we in the country, I should not despair of operating a great change in Louisa's opinions; but I have scarcely an opportunity of saying a sentence to her in private. My mother does not like to see us alone, and the interruptions from company are incessant. I proposed going to Selby, and should have found no difficulty in prevailing, for in fact we are ridiculously out of season *here*, but my uncle is certainly coming, and so speedily, that he may land while I am writing. All the people of *note* in town at present are, Louisa tells me, brought together by this marriage, which is flattering to those who take pride in it; but, not being of that number myself, I long to be set free, and when I *am*, no time shall be lost in joining you as quickly as possible. If I do not *soon* set out for Paris, you shall hear again from, my dear Falkland,

Your affectionate,
A. HOWARD.

LETTER XXIII.

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DR. PANCRAS TO MR. OTWAY.

Limmer's Hotel.

Sir,

I am commissioned to notify the arrival in England of your friend General Douglas, and to inform you that in the present state of his health, he feels himself incompetent to any manner of exertion. He has been so ill on the voyage, as to excite my constant apprehension lest I might not enjoy the happiness of delivering up my patient alive to his friends. He has been somewhat better since we arrived in the Channel, and I have no doubt that a little rest will be of much benefit; but as he means to remain in town for the arrival of another ship, which sailed when we did, and on board which is a part of his baggage, he will have the best medical advice here, and proceed at leisure to Marsden, the place which you were so good as to purchase for him. The principal object of this letter is to entreat, that if not very inconvenient, you will come over, and allow your friend the pleasure of shaking you by the hand once more. He bids me tell you, that he has much to say, and that the power of communicating with you upon several subjects near his heart, would contribute more than any medicine to his recovery. May it be permitted a stranger to enforce this request, by adding his testimony to the General's own conviction? It is not the physician who "can minister unto a mind diseased;" it is the *friend* alone who can sooth and sustain the sinking spirits, and I look upon my patient as requiring *your* advice as much as he does mine, though I have had long knowledge of his complaints, and have accompanied him from India. I will not longer trespass on your attention than to request an immediate answer, saying whether or not you can comply with the entreaty of which I am the medium.

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I am, Sir,
your obedient, humble servant,
A. PANCRAS.

LETTER XXIV.

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FROM MISS DOUGLAS TO MISS SANDFORD.

My dearest Julia,

It is some time since you have heard from me, and in the interval much has happened to disturb our even course of life. The departure of our friends, particularly that of Arthur, produced a degree of desolation at Glenalta, which can only be understood by such as have felt the pangs of separation from those they love. When *you* left us, a similar chasm was made in our happiness, but you could not comprehend our feelings, though you were very sorry to say farewell. You were *going*, we were *staying*, and supposing the same measure of affection, there must be a wide difference between the situation of a mind presented continually with new objects that force themselves on the observation, and one that is bound in all the melancholy associations of that scene which had witnessed its happiness. The fresh air, the constant movement, the necessity of speaking and interesting oneself in the details of a journey, must save the heart much bitterness, which is reserved for the saddened spirits left behind. I never shall forget the tomb-like silence that pervaded our cheerful abode when the last sound of the carriage wheels, that bore away dear Mrs. Fitzroy and Arthur, were no longer to be heard. We *then* only seemed to feel the full extent of our deprivation.

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Charlotte and I, unable to occupy ourselves, wandered like ghosts. Oh the emptiness of a bedchamber from which your friend has just departed! The pillow still bearing impress of the head which had rested on it so recently; the spikes of lavender scattered on the floor, which, perhaps, you had gathered yourself in a happier hour, to give fragrance to the now vacant wardrobe; the back of a letter inscribed with the name that now stops your utterance, and the thousand other trifles, light as air, that take affection by surprise, and make one wretched through every fibre of the frame! Fanny's grief had quicker vent; she wept, till like a babe that cries itself to sleep, nature *would* have rest; and I envied her the power of listening with rapture, to the history of some young cygnets, which old Lawrence had got from Bantry as a present for her. Frederick was sincerely sorrowful, but he was obliged to attend to Mr. Oliphant, and his mind was relieved by the necessity of being employed.

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The beloved mother who suffers more than she enjoys society, always returns to the stillness of retirement, glad to repose after exertion, and rewarded by the happy feeling of having practised self-denial in order to make others happy.

Charlotte and I then were the *miserable* of our little circle, and the kind Phil. accordingly gave his principal attention to us. He insisted on our being *busy*. He drove us to our gardens, to our poor people, to the schools, all of which had been less carefully watched, while our friends were with us. How slow is the progress of improvement. How rapid the growth of whatever is baleful in its nature! We found much to reclaim, and were ashamed, as well as astonished to find how things may go astray, and run to ruin, while one is only pursuing what appears an innocent gratification. Well, it shall not happen again. We have now restored matters to their former good order, and if we enjoy less *pleasure* than we did in the midst of more varied attraction; I feel more contentment and less self-reproach, since we have resumed our accustomed course. I now understand that of which it was so difficult to convince me, namely, that *company*, however delightful, is too stimulating for a continuance, and that it is very wholesome to be left alone now and then with one's own heart.

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Letters (that blessed invention) have informed us constantly of all that is interesting in the lives and adventures of our absent friends; but the last accounts from Arthur have distressed mamma, and produced commotion in our tranquil valley.

My poor uncle is in short arrived, and so ill that his physician has written to beg Mr. Otway's immediate presence in London. It is thought right that Frederick should accompany him as a proper mark of respect, and also to add weight to mamma's request, that should our mild climate be considered advisable for the invalid, he will repair as soon as possible to Glenalta.

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To lose Frederick and our friend of Lisfarne at one and the same moment is a stroke which needs some philosophy to endure; and I am afraid that we are not bearing it as we ought to do. Then I cannot help feeling sadly afraid of uncle Douglas, who is, Arthur says, very *repellent* in his manners. Poor man! he suffers much, and it is unreasonable to expect that he should be agreeable in his present circumstances; but I am so accustomed to the sweet accents of gentleness and affection, that nothing terrifies me so much as the idea of severity. I feel still more for mamma than for myself, and as the general has apparently taken a dislike already, Arthur tells us, to my aunt Howard and Louisa, why should we expect better at the hands of one, governed, perhaps, by prejudice against all his family, with whom he has kept up very little intercourse?

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Mr. Otway and Frederick set out next week, and but for the delight I have in the hope that they will soon return, and the latter be happy in his cousin's society, while he is enjoying his first visit to London, I should be inconsolable.

We have had intelligence of Lord and Lady Crayton's arrival in Rome, where young Stanhope has seen them. Lord C. is fond of play, and poor Adelaide Howard, I am afraid, is destined to be any thing but blessed in her union with him. What can induce people to make the sacrifice of liberty and peace for the sake of a paltry title? Perhaps I am careless about such things only because I

am placed in a situation where they are of little value; but a coronet seems of small estimation in my eyes, and I wish that my cousin had a husband less extravagant and more domestic, though plain Mr. instead of Viscount, preceded his name. He and Adelaide are to pass the winter in Paris.

You bid me to describe our late visitors. To say that we found them a very agreeable addition to our party, is saying nothing that will help you to distinguish one from the other. Yet beyond some such general description, what can tell of strangers? If you delineate the features of a landscape, you can speak not only of them as they seem, but as they *are*; but what a length of time is required to guard against misrepresentation in painting the human character, of which we can for a long while only know the *signs*, but may remain in profound ignorance of the motives which govern them!

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You may remember how much I used to admire Miss Talbot. I saw her frequently last summer, when she looked so pretty, and was so kind to me, that I became quite enthusiastic in her praise; and should have been very foolish about her, if mamma had not damped my energy, by saying one day, "dearest Emily, do not take so much for granted: wait to know Miss Talbot better before you give her *all* your heart." I felt that there must be good reason for this reproof, or I should not have received it. I paused, and ceasing to inflate my mind with my own exaggerations, mistaking them for realities, I *did* wait to know Miss Talbot better, and one *look*, though unaccompanied by a word, darted at her father, who asked for a particular song which she did not choose to sing, levelled the whole edifice of my admiration to the dust. The same song which she had refused to a parent's request, she *volunteered* when Mr. Mortimer Fitzallan came into the room, saying, in her sweetest accents, and with her winning smile, "I will now sing *your* favourite." To return after a digression, which contains my apology for not attempting to give you exact portraits of our guests, I will proceed to say, that as far as I am acquainted with them, I like Mr. Annesley better than Mr. Russell, and *both* pleased me, though not in the same manner. The former is more gentle and reflecting than his friend, the latter full of music and of merriment; but one is not always merry, and if *not*, Mr. Russell's animal spirits fatigue. Then, as to music, I think that he likes it less for its own sake, than as a subject on which to be eloquent. Mr. Annesley *says* less, but *does* more than the other, in the way of those little polite attentions which mark a wish to please; and he looks so sincere, that one feels always ready to *believe* whatever he utters, while the wandering eye of his companion would indicate that his thoughts are every where, or no where, though his tongue be employed in giving to them the liveliest expression. Mr. Annesley's animation arises out of the occasion, while Mr. Russell is ever intent on *seeking* opportunity to exhibit *his*. In conversing with the one, you find your spirits refreshed by the natural alternation of stimulus and repose. In talking to the other, you are made to feel that a certain measure of excitement is to be *run out*; after which, you must lie by to recruit, ere you commence anew. They are both polished, and have received all the advantages of modern education, and thus ends my story of them.

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Mamma will write to dear Mrs. Sandford, when she can tell her of *the general's* movements. Have you ever remarked how many people tack an emphatic *the* to any admiral, general, colonel, dean, or archdeacon, accidentally appended to their family, just as if there were no other of each class in the world beside their own? Adieu, dearest Julia: our united loves to all at Checkley.

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Believe me, ever your
Affectionate friend,
EMILY DOUGLAS.

LETTER XXV.

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FREDERICK DOUGLAS TO HIS MOTHER.

Beloved Mother,

Our dear Phil. insisted on writing the first letter from London, and as this point was settled before we left Glenalta, you have not charged me with neglect; forgetful I can never be. You all live continually in my thoughts; I fancy how you are all employed during every part of the day, and never see any thing that delights or surprises me, without wishing that my mother and sisters were to enjoy whatever is worthy of their admiration. This is to me a scene of wonder, and I have a great deal of trouble in suppressing too true an exhibition of my rusticity, and curbing my astonishment at things so common, that no one here could comprehend my ignorance of them. London is a world full of interest to a novice like myself, and while the charm of novelty lasts, and curiosity is kept alive, I shall find as much happiness as I can feel away from you; but the people with whom I meet at my aunt Howard's, though I am told that they are of the first circle, have little merit, I must confess, in my eyes. I ought however, to begin with the *hosts*, before I describe the company. My aunt is as unlike you, as Louisa is different from Emily, Charlotte, or Fanny. The former is so rouged, so dressed, and made up, that a natural emotion, if any such live within her breast, has no power to reach the surface. Every feature seems fixed, as though she were a *cast*, and not a real human form of flesh and blood. Her manners are so cold, and her eye so disdainful, that had I come to Grosvenor-square *alone*, one glance would have been enough to settle my resolves not to encounter a second; but she treats Arthur, her only son, and *certainly* a favourite, as frigidly as she behaves to me; and with her daughter, there is a perpetual *sparring* kept up, which to my unaccustomed ear is perfectly dreadful, though at the same time, she is evidently vain of Louisa's beauty and accomplishments. To Mr. Otway she is *civil*, and towards my poor uncle, *officious* to excess, without being *able* to look kind. My cousin is very handsome, and if she had been *your* child, would, I believe, have been very amiable, for she is good-natured, in spite of every effort to make her the contrary; and her love for Arthur is genuine, I believe, though of a species very new to me. Her person is encumbered with ornaments, and her mind with fashion. Her understanding is excellent, and *will* break its bounds, and start forth through all the London fogs that would obscure its light; but it is only in accidental scintillations that Louisa's brightness discovers itself, and *then*, sarcasm is generally the medium through which it shines; nothing can exceed the stupid inanity of such conversation as I hear at my aunt's, where *people* only are ever discussed. It is one eternal round of dress, public places, and gossip. *Every* body is said to be out of town, yet the streets are full. *Nobody* is ever in London at this season, yet the Howards live in a crowd of society, and would be very angry with *any* body who ventured to affirm that their acquaintance is not *first-rate*. Mr. Otway reconciles many apparent incongruities through his explanations, when we reach our lodgings at night, and I am already bidding fair to part with the nick-name which Louisa has bestowed upon me of the "novice of Saint Patrick." My *Mentor* tells me, that London is in fact, at this moment, full of people who are ashamed of not being at their country seats, the watering places, or on the continent; and are detained here *malgrè* for want of money to go elsewhere, or pay off the bills which continue daily to increase, while they remain in town, *shying* each other. It is true that the people do not imprison themselves: they meet in the streets, in the shops, in the park, at the theatres; but there seems to be a conventional agreement to tell lies, which are permitted, like base metal, to circulate in the place of sterling coin, though known to be counterfeit by all who use it as a medium of exchange. There is a sort of *sinister* honesty in this compact, as deception is avoided in the universality of the fraud. One family is detained by Dr.—, who will not suffer his patient to undertake as yet a journey to Leamington. Another is just *going* to France. A third *waits* for a carriage which has been promised by the coachmaker, but is not *quite* finished, and so on. Not a word of truth in any of the stories. A country bumpkin, however, benefits by all this *charlatanerie*, and finds food for eyes, ears, and reflection, at a time when the metropolis ought to be according to the rules of *haut ton*, a perfect desert.

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The friendship of Arthur sets me at ease. Were it not for him, I should sneak into a corner I suppose, and not dare to utter a word for fear of *committing* some Hibernicism, and bring the eyes of Europe upon me; but, supported by my faithful Achates, I am bold, and you would perhaps be astonished to see me *doing the agreeable* at my aunt's evening parties. I assure you that I make my way surprisingly, and am beginning to feel rather triumphant. Louisa put me through a sort of ordeal which was unpleasant enough for three or four days; but Arthur gave me a few hints behind the scenes which enabled me to come off victorious, and now like a *freshman* at school, who has *boxed* himself into character, I am *let alone*, and actually applied to, for my opinions upon "Shakspeare, taste, and the musical glasses." Some contrivance is necessary, however, to slide out of a group when it happens that a cross subject is started; but in general, I find myself *au fait*, for a grain of intellect, like a grain of gold will hammer out into surface enough to cover a prodigious field of "worshipful society;" and if you are quick in picking up names, admiring the right music, the fashionable singer, the favourite novel, and the *newest* of every thing, you need not draw unmercifully on your brains, nor put your eyes in danger of Ophthalmia, by poring over the midnight lamp. I fancy Emily and Charlotte, with inquiring eyes, pressing forward together, to ask Frederick whether his soul has not been entranced by the finished performance of our London *belles* on the harp and piano-forte.

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Dearest girls, publish it not in Gath, if I whisper the homespun confession, and tell you in depth

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of secrecy, that pleasure is a stranger to me at our concerts. I hear compositions so chromatic, modulations so unnatural, transitions so violent, and harmony so entirely divested of the character which I have been in the habit of attaching to it, that, were it not for information to the contrary, I should not be aware that I was listening to music at all, but should imagine myself introduced to a new and wonderful mechanism for exhibiting the muscular powers to their utmost extent, and also trying how far it is practicable to exert the licence of caprice without ever touching on the borders of melody. In the same spirit of confidential avowal I may add, that there seems to be a strict covenant between the modern composers and the instrument-makers to murder music, and prevent a concerto, as well as the piano-forte on which it is performed, from a longer existence in the fashionable world than will be allotted to the preposterous flat hats, which only require poles supporting their circumference, to give the Regent's-park exactly the air of an encampment. Another musical observation which I have made, is, that every young lady on first setting down, and running over the keys of the finest Stoddart or Broadwood, piped, barred, and *dandified*, according to the very latest vogue, declares the instrument to be out of tune. Quere, is this to make boast of an exquisite ear, or is it done to bespeak mercy for imperfect execution? In either case, to produce *effect* it should not be a *general* fashion; and there should be at least a foundation of truth in the complaint; but it literally happened yesterday evening, that Louisa's magnificent instrument had been put into the highest order only half an hour before the company arrived, and yet the fair competitors for fame were not a whit the better satisfied. Perhaps after all it is necessary to talk a little nonsense, and tumble over the leaves of whatever music is open on the desk, to gain time for shaking back the manacles which load the wrists of a fashionable lady with such *shekels* of gold that their weight is apt to determine the blood towards her finger tops. This is an inconvenience, and certainly an alloy to the pleasure of exhibiting richer ornaments than were ever *à la mode* till now, but what advantage is there without its counterpoise? It is unlucky too that necklaces are *out*, as they afforded great opportunity in perpetual fiddling with them to regulate the *circulation*, and shew off bracelets and rings in the best possible position for securing white hands and arms, during the time being.

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Dearest mother, do I see you shake your head, and call this ill nature? If I thought that a shadow of displeasure glanced over that brow on which I pray unceasingly that I may never be the means of gathering a cloud, I would make a vow against opening my eyes to the ridiculous while I remain in London; but I hope that even *you* will laugh with me at the absurdities which we must be blind not to see, and dumb not to tell of. If the sisters imagine that my heart is likely to be perforated like a *cullender*, tell them that not a single missile has reached it as yet,

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"Th' invaders dart their jav'lins from afar."

Nevertheless, I am safe, and likely to remain *unscathed* by any lightning from London eyes. This is fortunate; for what chance would a poor Kerry *bog-trotter* have of meeting "sweet return" in this meridian blaze—this dazzling glare?

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"For sight no obstacle found here, or shade,
But all sunshine; as when his beams at noon
Culminate from the Equator."

I love our dear Glen better than any scenery that I have met with since I left its sunny lawns and tangled dells; and, if I may be allowed to compare the moral with the physical world, there is an enchanting refreshment in the lights and shades of a refined yet *natural* character, beyond all the glow of fashion's artificial splendour to impart.

Last night I sat for a short time by a young lady who had something pensive in her countenance, which brought Emily to my mind: and feeling a sort of *attraction* towards her, I listened to her conversation, in which, hearing some words through the din of voices, that bespoke a love of painting and sculpture, I determined on getting *alongside*, as the sailors say. I did so, and we talked of the Exhibition, the Elgin Marbles, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Chauntry, Canova, &c. but *talk* it was, aye, "*vox et preterea nihil*." Not a particle of enthusiasm had reached her mind, it only flickered round her lips. She had been in Rome, had seen Naples, visited the Louvre, ransacked every *atelier* of every celebrated artist in her travels; and, as a matter of course, is come back discontented with every thing in England. I sought as vainly for a single grain of taste in her conversation as I generally do for a strain of sweetness in the music which I daily hear: no;—terms of art and fashionable echoes met my ear, but not a sentiment that originated in feeling: no description drawn by a pencil dipped in the heart.

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I ventured to say something, I know not what, but my remark was my own; I was not to be found, I suppose, in the common-place book acknowledged at present, as the reception that it encountered was a rude burst of laughter, in which my fair antagonist's mamma, who came to present Lord Oldfield to her daughter, joined immediately, and I should have been the *butt* of the company, I conclude, if my happy stars had not sent a nobleman to my rescue, who so entirely engrossed the attention of both mother and *ma'mselle*, that a *mouse* would have been a greater object than I was. Otway's lines rushed on my memory as I gazed indignantly on this vulgar pair; for how can I give them any more appropriate epithet? When I looked around me, and rested my eyes on the *wool-pack*, matrons lounging in their easy chairs so large and languid, I could not help mentally exclaiming,

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"Those lazy owls, who, perched near Fortune's top,
Sit only watchful with their heavy wings
To cuff down new-fledged Virtues that would rise
To nobler heights, and make the grove harmonious."

I suppose that the immense size of the elderly ladies here, must proceed, from the little exercise they take, and *that* little in a carriage which is next to not taking any; but I am told that it is the fashion to be *monstrous*, and if beauty be reckoned by weight and measure, the tonnage and poundage of London are prodigious. [Pg 311]

When Lord Oldfield left my aunt's to vapour at another party, the above-mentioned young lady of pensive mien, seemed to recollect that she had treated me somewhat cavalierly, or perhaps she was amused by my *outlandish* ways of thinking, and returned to look at me, as people used to do at the Cherokee chiefs, or Sandwich Islanders; but from whatever motive, so it was, that she called me to her, and with a smile of such *concentration* as appeared to say, "*Sauve qui peut*," she invited me to attend her to-day and look at some statues, at the house of an Italian newly arrived. Now I had charity enough to believe that she had only *heard* of them as fine specimens of sculpture, and was ignorant altogether of what she was going to see; but before I could reply, she added that she had begun to model from a Cupid in the collection, and hoped that I should approve her performance. Arthur and I had been to see these statues two or three days ago, and all I can say is, that as I have not yet had the advantage of *case-hardening* on the continent, I blushed as I bowed a seeming assent, resolving to make my excuse this morning, which I have accordingly done. [Pg 312]

If modesty be really one of those cumbrous virtues, which, like the ponderous armour of former days, is no longer necessary in the high state of civilization to which we have attained, why is not the word honestly banished along with the quality which it represents? and why do we foolishly retain the sign, if we must lose sight of the idea to which it belongs? It would be wrong, perhaps, to charge a modern fair one with actual vice because she can walk with perfect unconcern through files of statues representing the human form in a state of nudity, and *that* too in company, it may be, of a profligate man; but I *must* say, that to my untutored sense, the thing is very disgusting; and as London is certainly not the Garden of Eden, I should venture to add, that the practice is not very safe, unless moral virtue be no longer considered requisite to the well-being of the community, but with other antiquities is to be only reserved for the cabinets of the curious; *there*, as we view it clothed in venerable rust, to excite our astonishment at the difference between the clumsy accoutrements of our ancestors, and the convenient accommodations of our own time. [Pg 313]

I am interrupted by Mr. Otway, who sends his love, and bids me say, that he has a letter on the *anvil*; so I will send mine. But I have been led into the mazes of this brilliant scene, so far remote from *domestic* subjects, that I find not a word in all my prosing of poor uncle, for whom I feel both tenderness and respect. He suffers much, and, if I am not greatly mistaken, has "that within which passeth shew." His mind appears to me as if it had gone out of Nature's loom a goodly tissue, but has been pulled *bias* by untoward circumstances of fortune and ill health. As yet I know very little of him, and he is so reserved with his relations, that were there not certain loopholes through which I peep into the interior, and thence form judgment of his true texture, the first and second words of Cæsar's *triplicate* would answer every purpose of description in my instance; and in saying *veni vidi*, I should tell you all that is to be known; but I sometimes see him shake his head, and catch him now and then, his eyes suffused with tears, and fixed intently on me. The moment of observation is that of change, and, as a person who has dropped asleep in Church, coughs, hems, and kicks his heels, to *prove* how much awake he is, so my uncle throws a tartness, an abruptness, into his manner after one of these little affectionate *lapses*, to assure us of the sternness of his character. My next shall be to Emily. [Pg 314]

Adieu, beloved! My heart is with you all, though the *casket* be far from you. I shall have much to tell the three, *Graces* I *will* not call them, *Furies* I *cannot* call them: what then *shall* I call them? They shall be the *Destinies*, because my fate is in their hands, and as they love and value me through life, I shall be happy or the contrary.

Remember me affectionately, if you please, to dear Mr. Oliphant, and do not drive your little car from the door without telling Lawrence that I enquire for him. Farewell! [Pg 315]

Your own
FREDERICK.

LETTER XXVI.

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MR. OTWAY TO MRS. DOUGLAS.

Dearest Friend,

My former letters have been faithful transcripts from the book of our lives, and Frederick has filled up all interstices, but before I proceed to the main purpose which induces me to write to-day, I must indulge myself, and not *displease you*, by saying a few words of this dear youth, whom I have hitherto only mentioned incidentally, because I wished to see how he would bear the whirl of a London scene, and comport himself in some situations as trying as they were novel to him, ere I trumpeted his praise. You know how I abhor flattery, and will therefore give me credit for believing what I express of admiration for your son, who really astonishes me. Though introduced for the first time to what is called, certainly not *par excellence*, the Great World, he is neither awkward nor confused. The easy polish of *true* refinement which he learned at home, in the bosom of that loved retreat where all the best affections of his noble and manly heart are centered, *frank* him into a metropolitan drawing-room, as fearlessly as into your's at Glenalta; and his manners exhibit the happiest combination of boldness, in which there is no mixture of presumption, and modesty without *mauvaise honte*. With all the freshness of curiosity, and the candour of one who disdains subterfuge, he flies about collecting information—gratifying his good taste, and honestly confessing his previous ignorance of a thousand objects which have ceased to stimulate, if they ever did so, the vapid group by which we are environed. The courage with which Frederick dares to express his own thoughts, instead of borrowing the hacknied reverberation of opinions often adopted without discrimination, and rendered current by an idle multitude, who, contented to follow a fashionable leader, never exert a faculty for themselves, has something in it that *commands* attention, and I continually hear the inquiry of "who is he?" succeed the avowal of some sentiment on his part at variance with the modish creed.

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If the novelty of Frederick's remarks occasionally excite a smile, it is evidently always accompanied with a desire to know more of him. Even those who would not, for any consideration, imitate his example, involuntarily respect the *power* of his valorous intrepidity; and that which in a vulgar man would be denominated mere boorishness, assuming a very different character when associated with native elegance and good breeding, the automaton throng are forced to admit the superiority which they dare not copy, and venerate the independence to which they cannot aspire. I assure you also, that he is an object of great admiration amongst the young ladies, one of whom having heard, I suppose, that he was an Irishman, sweetly lisped a few evenings ago, in half articulated accents, "*le bel sauvage!*" Tell Fanny that this anecdote is *genuine*, which she may be at first inclined to doubt; and tell her likewise that many a pretty head is half turned round to see that Frederick lingers near the harp or piano-forte, though he *does* come from that

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"Land of bogs,
With ditches fenced—a Heaven fat with fogs."

This information will not surprise his sisters, who have frequently experienced his dexterity in turning over the leaves of a music book; and for his dear mother's particular gratification I must add, that I know not when I have been more delighted with my young friend since we left home together, than when any appeal to his free will has elicited the declaration of his entire dependence on the wishes of a parent. There is something affectingly beautiful in the generous openness, the amiable devotion, with which this fine young man, just arrived at the period of life so trying to the silly pride that struggles against the semblance of authority, refers to *your* wishes and opinion, upon every occasion when he is called upon to enter into projects for future amusement; and this not in the low tone and creeping attitude of fear or bashfulness, but with the erect air of honest strength, that glories in the fond submission, where love and duty bid it yield. His uncle's discriminating eye has already marked these things without a prompter's aid; and every little instance which indicates *character*, is registered with evident pleasure in favour of Frederick, by the acute discernment of my poor friend, on whom it is now time to say that I have prevailed, in concert with Dr. Pancras, a very worthy man, who accompanied him from India, in quality of attending physician, to give up all thoughts of going to Marsden for the present. He is totally unfit to undertake a house and establishment of his own, at this time, and will require a long exemption from care of every kind. His bodily frame is debilitated to a great degree, and his mind calls for every strengthener, too, that can be administered to invigorate its tone. His character is deeply interesting, and his situation mental, as well as corporeal, extremely critical. The moral atmosphere in which he is to be placed during the next six months appears, if possible, more important to his future happiness than the climate in which he is to breathe is of consequence to his health; and no part of the globe furnishes such a union of all that he stands in need of as Glenalta; I have therefore urged his passing the winter in our valley. Till this morning I could not obtain an answer, but at length he promises to try an experiment, not, however, *binding* himself to any definite period of sojournment amongst us. When truth and delicacy preside at the helm, there is no danger of steering a wrong course. It is the manoeuvrer only who requires a pilot; your guileless nature needs no *hints* for regulating your conduct towards this interesting invalid, and it is only to make you in some measure acquainted with, not to guide you in the *management* of his peculiarities, that I dwell upon the description of them. *You* knew

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nothing of your brother before he went to India, and we have all lost sight of him for many years; I cannot therefore attempt to pursue, in any concatenated series, the circumstances which have made him what he is. I can only trace *effects*, and judge from the data furnished by these to my observations of what the *causes* may have been. Since we have been together, a thousand trifling occurrences have assisted me in developing a character which must be unrolled with as much nicety as is required to spread open the Pompeian manuscripts. The slightest accident would prove fatal in either case, and one rude touch would so effectually destroy the delicate fabric of one and the other, as to render fruitless any after attempt at deciphering the contents. I was engaged in studying whatever had arisen naturally to my view, when I one day, as usual, went to visit him directly after breakfast; he was not in the room when I entered, and I found a volume of Shakspeare open on the table, at which he had been reading. The book was turned on its face, in the play of Macbeth, and a pencil lay upon the outside, which had been probably employed the moment before my entrance in marking with extra-ordinary emphasis the following passage:—

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"I have lived long enough: my way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf:
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud, but deep, mouth-honour, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, but dare not."

I instantly replaced the volume, and mused when I left my poor friend on the singularity of this little incident; for it is actually a fact that, in rising to something like an abstract of his character the night before, as I lay awake, and contemplated the several traits which fell under my remark, these very lines were cast up by memory to pourtray the man.

Now, philosophers tell us, that when we arrive at the same result by the opposite processes of synthesis and analysis, we have good ground to believe in the correctness of an argument. If so, your brother's picture is delineated; for these affecting words addressed to Seyton by the unhappy Thane, whether taken as a text from which to deduce, or a conclusion at which you arrive by a previous train of induction, equally "*land*" the observer in that morbid melancholy which has marked Douglas for her own. His mind is of the finest material, bearing impress of the race from which he springs. Had he lived at home, and had his affections been cultivated in those relations which supply successional *crops* as it were to feed the heart, when the first indigenous growth has died away, he would have been a very *different* man, whether *happier* or not we cannot tell. But loosened by distance, and then dissevered by death from those early bonds of instinct which "plays the volunteer within us," he formed no new connections to keep in exercise his best feelings, which having lost the objects prepared for them by nature, were scattered to the winds till they became annihilated in diffusion. What a mistake it is to fancy that a man acquires love for his species in proportion to his becoming indifferent towards individuals? Yet this is a common error. No, true philanthropy shines on the circumference from a glowing centre, and the fond domestic affections are those which send out most commonly the sweetest charities to mankind.

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Douglas is not a misanthrope, but he has met with many disappointments, as all men must do who form their early acquaintances—friendships I will not call them—amongst the multitude who are only bound together by the casual ties of pleasure and convenience. The temporary purpose gained, or the transient gratification satisfied, no memory remains of favour conferred, no gratitude survives for benefits received. While youth continues we *waste* our resources, because they are liberally replenished, and in the abundance and variety of the springs from whence they flow, we cannot anticipate a season of dearth; but the cisterns, however bounteously supplied, will become dry at last, and even *drops* will, in the end, seem precious of that which we lavished before with thoughtless prodigality. Your brother, however, is too just to hate his fellow-creatures because he has neglected to render himself an object of their love; but, though he does not actually set his mind in array against them, he is too proud to acknowledge dependence, and his temper is not sufficiently under controul to prevent him from involuntarily revenging on society the insulation which he has imposed on himself, by avoiding rather than courting communion with the world, for an intercourse with the best and wisest of which he is peculiarly gifted. It would seem as if he had laid down a law for himself to be severe and repellent, which the natural kindness of his character renders impossible, and the *most* that he can achieve is an air of uncertainty bordering on caprice, which strangers ascribe to bad health. I suspect that during the halcyon days of youth, religion which, in India, has been cruelly neglected, made no part of his concern, but a mind of such height and depth as his can never continue careless on the subject of its immortal interests; and, if my observations be correct, he is at this moment suffering those *transition pangs* incident to the awakened conviction of having been wrong, and desiring to be right, which are rendered more than commonly poignant in his instance by that scrupulous conscientiousness which suggests the inquiry whether his motive in searching after truth may not partly arise from a belief that he feels "the silver cords" beginning to give way and threaten dissolution.

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You will not think me tedious in thus endeavouring to give you a clue to the character of one who is formed in no ordinary mould, and for whom I anticipate all the happiness which he is capable of enjoying at Glenalta. You will have no difficulty to contend with, no plot to sustain. Oh! my dear Caroline, it is worth coming into a sophisticated scene like this, to behold, in all its loveliness, the beauty of a single heart. The moral like the physical circumstances which

surround us daily, are not half appreciated, because that they want contrast. We are ungrateful and forget our blessings. I shall have much to tell you, which I do not like to write. Dear Arthur would furnish materials for another sheet, but I must not lengthen this letter, already so voluminous. Frederick's love, with mine, to the *Trias Harmonica*, and Mr. Oliphant. Adieu, dearest friend.

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Yours ever and sincerely,
E. OTWAY.

END OF VOL. II.

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Transcriber's note

Spelling and punctuation have been preserved as printed in the original publication.

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