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Volume 5, by Charles James Lever**

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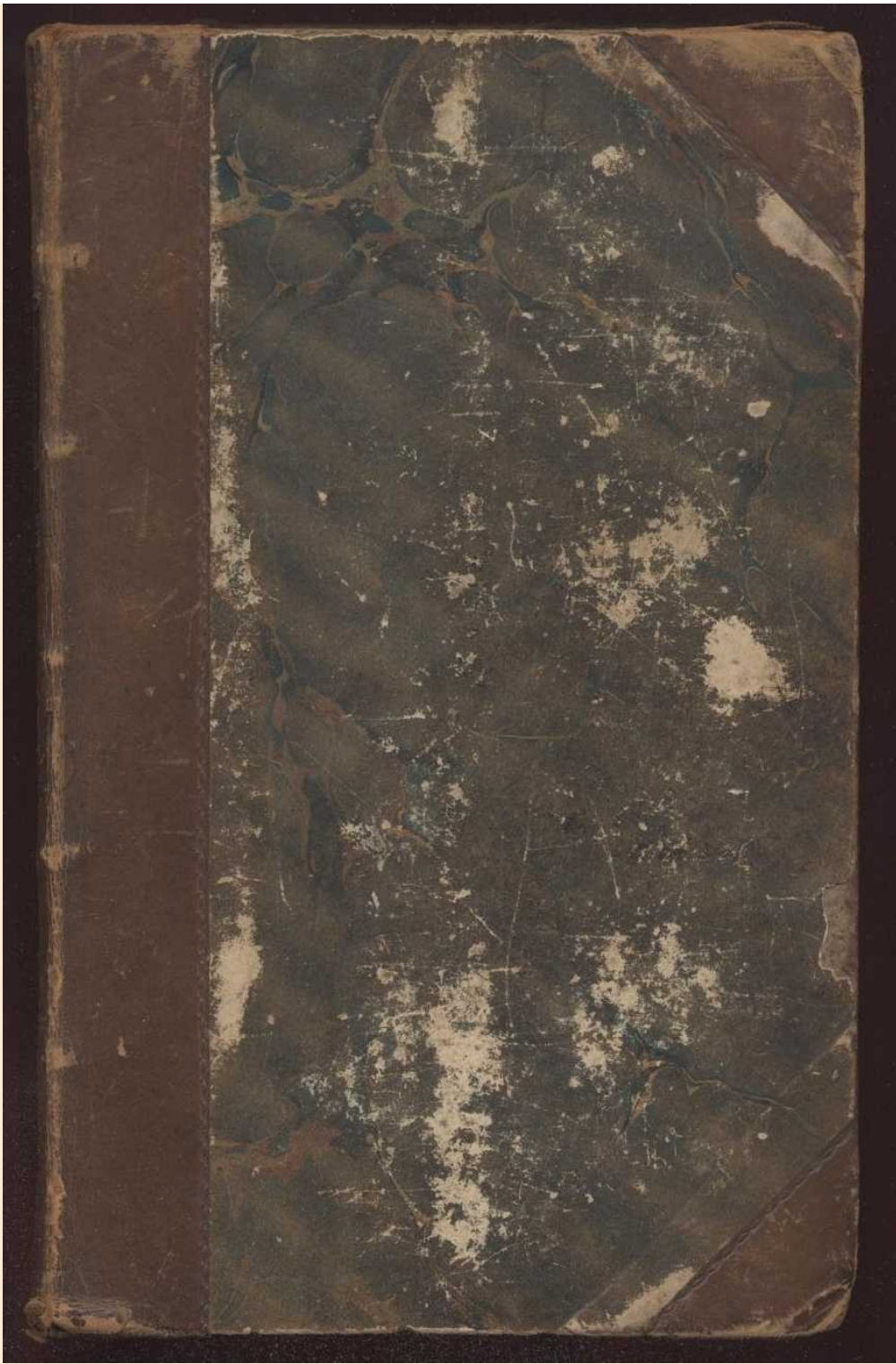
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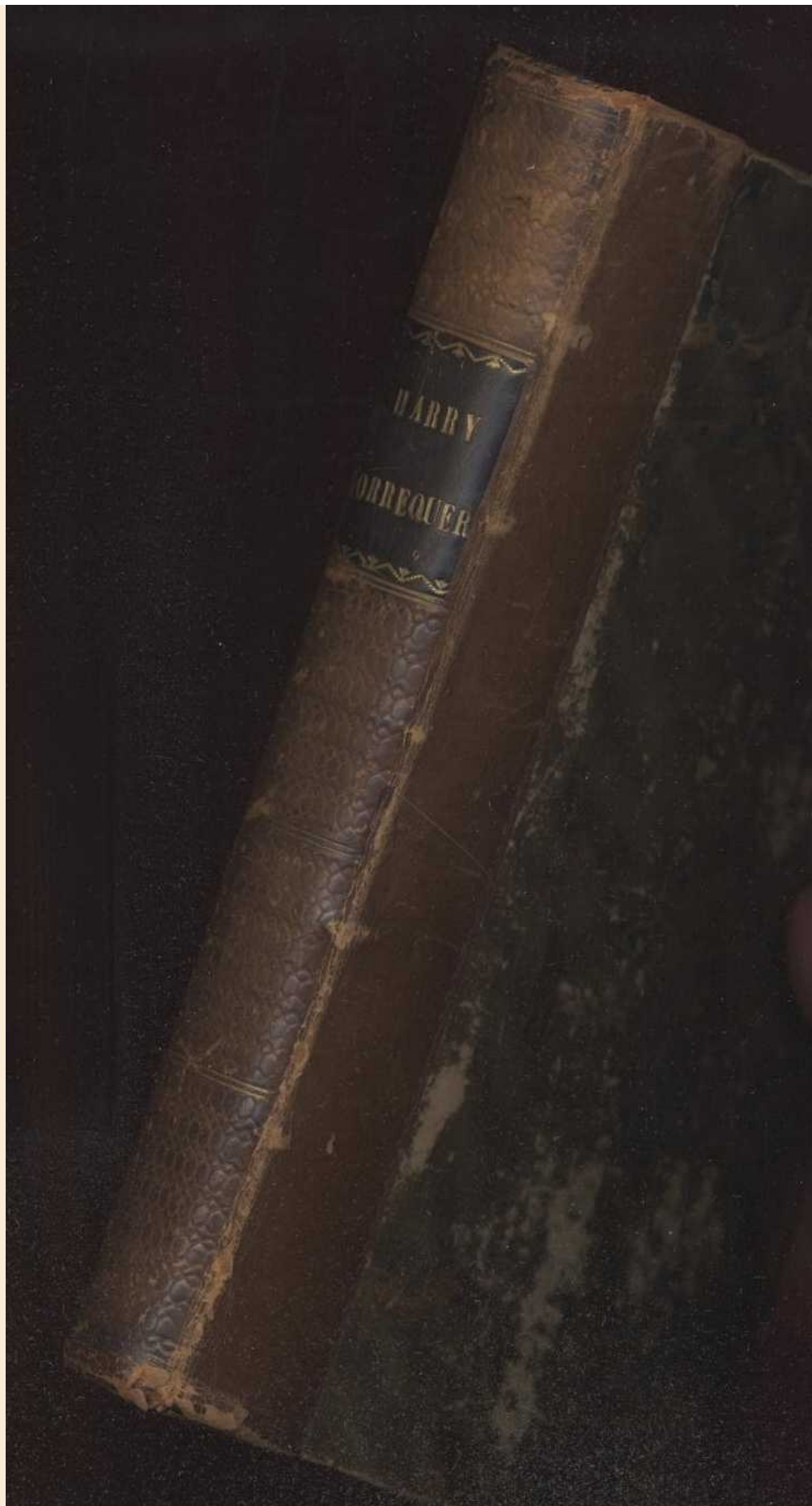
[By Charles James Lever (1806-1872)]

Dublin

MDCCCXXXIX.

Volume 5.





HARRY
CORREQUER

THE
CONFESSIONS
OF
HARRY LORREQUER.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

Phiz.

1839

"We talked of pipe-clay—regulation caps—
Long twenty-fours—short culverins and mortars—
Condemn'd the 'Horse-Guards' for a set of raps,
And cursed our fate at being in such quarters,
Some smoked, some sighed, and some were heard to snore;
Some wished themselves five fathoms 'neath the Solway;
And some did pray—who never prayed before—
That they might get the 'route' for Cork or Galway."

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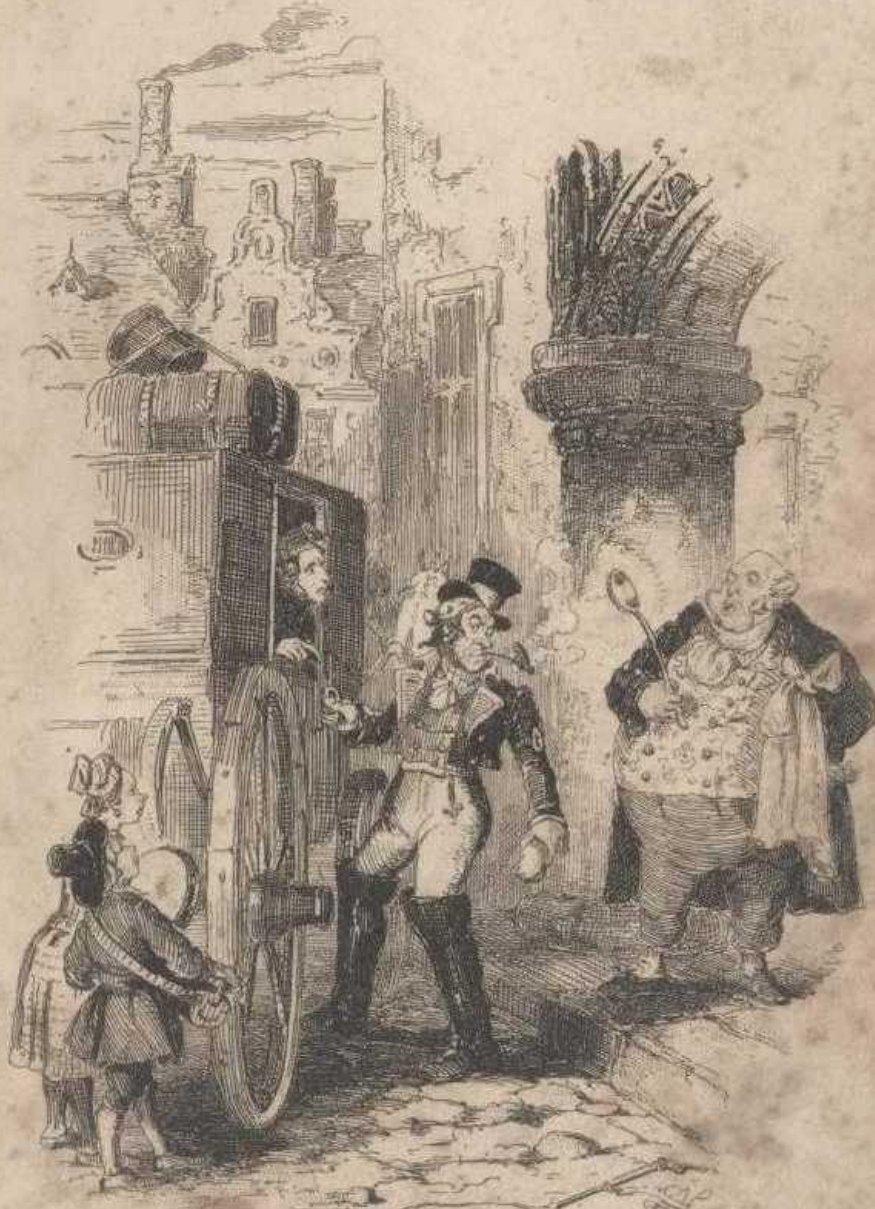
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1839

[Note: Though the title page has no author's name inscribed, this work is generally attributed to Charles James Lever.]

The Inn at Munich

THE
CONFESSIONS
OF
HARRY LORREQUER



The Inn at Minster

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CHAPTER XXIX.

CAPTAIN TREVANION'S ADVENTURE.

Trevanion Astonishing the Bully Gendemar



As the day was now waning apace, and I was still unprovided with any one who could act as my second, I set out upon a search through the various large hotels in the neighbourhood, trusting that amid my numerous acquaintance I should be fortunate enough to find some of them at Paris. With a most anxious eye I scanned the lists of arrivals at the usual haunts of my countrymen, in the Rue Rivoli, and the Place Vendome, but without success; there were long catalogues of "Milors," with their "couriers," but not one name known to me in the number.

I repaired to Galignani's library, which, though crowded as ever with English, did not present to me one familiar face. From thence I turned into the Palais Royale, and at last, completely jaded by walking, and sick from disappointment, I sat down upon a bench in the Tuilleries Garden.

I had scarcely been there many minutes when a gentleman accosted me in English, saying, "May I ask if this be your property?" showing, at the same time, a pocket-book which I had inadvertently dropped in pulling out my handkerchief. As I thanked him for his attention, and was about to turn away, I perceived that he continued to look very steadily at me. At length he said,

"I think I am not mistaken; I have the pleasure to see Mr. Lorrequer, who may perhaps recollect my name, Trevanion of the 43rd. The last time we met was at Malta."

"Oh, I remember perfectly. Indeed I should be very ungrateful if I did not; for to your kind offices there I am indebted for my life. You must surely recollect the street row at the 'Caserne?'"

"Yes; that was a rather brisk affair while it lasted; but, pray, how long are you here?"

"Merely a few days; and most anxious am I to leave as soon as possible; for, independently of pressing reasons to wish myself elsewhere, I have had nothing but trouble and worry since my arrival, and at this instant am involved in a duel, without the slightest cause that I can discover, and, what is still worse, without the aid of a single friend to undertake the requisite negociation for me."

"If my services can in any way assist—"

"Oh, my dear captain, this is really so great a favour that I cannot say how much I thank you."

"Say nothing whatever, but rest quite assured that I am completely at your disposal; for although we are not very old friends, yet I have heard so much of you from some of ours, that I feel as if we had been long acquainted."

This was an immense piece of good fortune to me; for, of all the persons I knew, he was the most suited to aid me at this moment. In addition to a thorough knowledge of the continent and its habits, he spoke French fluently, and had been the most renomme authority in the duello to a large military acquaintance; joining to a consummate tact and cleverness in his diplomacy, a temper that never permitted itself to be ruffled, and a most unexceptionable reputation for courage. In a word, to have had Trevanion for your second, was not only to have secured odds in your favour, but, still better, to have obtained the certainty that, let the affair take what turn it might, you were sure of coming out of it with credit. He was the only man I have ever met, who had much mixed himself in transactions of this nature, and yet never, by any chance, had degenerated into the fire-eater; more quiet, unassuming manners it was impossible to meet with, and, in the various anecdotes I have heard of him, I have always traced a degree of forbearance, that men of less known bravery might not venture to practise. At the same time, when once roused by any thing like premeditated insult—or pre-determined affront—he became almost ungovernable, and it would be safer to beard the lion in his den than cross his path. Among the many stories, and there were a great many current in his regiment concerning him, there was one so singularly characteristic of the man, that, as I have passingly mentioned his name here, I may as well relate it; at the same time premising that, as it is well known, I may only be repeating an often-heard tale to many of my readers.

When the regiment to which Trevanion belonged became part of the army of occupation in Paris, he was left at Versailles seriously ill from the effects of a sabre-wound he received at Waterloo, and from which his recovery at first was exceedingly doubtful. At the end of several weeks, however, he became out of danger, and was able to receive the visits of his brother officers, whenever they were fortunate enough to obtain a day's leave of absence, to run down and see him. From them he learned that one of his oldest friends in the regiment had fallen in a duel, during the time of his illness, and that two other officers were dangerously wounded—one of whom was not expected to survive. When he inquired as to the reasons of these many disasters, he was informed that since the entrance of the allies into Paris, the French officers, boiling with rage and indignation at their recent defeat, and smarting under the hourly disgrace which the presence of their conquerors suggested, sought out, by every means in their power, opportunities of insult; but always so artfully contrived as to render the opposite party the challenger, thus reserving to themselves the choice of weapons. When therefore it is borne in mind that the French are the most expert swordsmen in Europe, little doubt can exist as to the issue of these combats; and, in fact, scarcely a morning passed without three or four English or Prussian officers being carried through the Barriere de l'Etoile, if not dead, at least seriously wounded, and condemned to carry with them through life the inflictions of a sanguinary and savage spirit of revenge.

While Trevanion listened to this sad recital, and scarcely did a day come without adding to the long catalogue of disasters, he at once perceived that the quiet deportment and unassuming demeanour which so strongly characterise the English officer, were construed by their French opponents into evidences of want of courage, and saw that to so systematic a plan for slaughter no common remedy could be applied, and that some "coup d'etat" was absolutely necessary, to put it down once and for ever.

In the history of these sanguinary rencontres, one name was continually recurring, generally as the principal, sometimes the instigator of the quarrel. This was an officer of a chasseur regiment, who had the reputation of being the best swordsman in the whole French army, and was no less distinguished for his "skill at fence," than his uncompromising hatred of the British, with whom alone, of all the allied forces, he was ever known to come in contact. So celebrated was the "Capitaine Augustin Gendemar" for his pursuits, that it was well known at that time in Paris that he was the president of a duelling club, associated for the express and avowed object of provoking to insult, and as certainly dooming to death every English officer upon whom they could fasten a quarrel.

The Cafe Philidor, at that period in the Rue Vivienne, was the rendezvous of this reputable faction, and here "le Capitaine" reigned supreme, receiving accounts of the various "affairs" which were transacting—counselling and plotting for the future. His ascendancy among his countrymen was perfectly undisputed, and being possessed of great muscular strength, with that peculiarly "farouche" exterior, without which courage is nothing in France, he was in every way calculated for the infamous leadership he assumed.

It was, unfortunately, to this same cafe, being situated in what was called the English quarter, that the officers of the 43rd regiment were in the habit of resorting, totally unaware of the plots by which they were surrounded, and quite unsuspecting the tangled web of deliberate and cold-blooded assassination in which they were involved, and here took place the quarrel, the result of which was the death of Trevanion's friend, a young officer of great promise, and universally beloved in his regiment.

As Trevanion listened to these accounts, his impatience became daily greater, that his weak state should prevent his being among his brother officers, when his advice and assistance were so imperatively required, and where, amid all the solicitude for his perfect recovery, he could not but perceive they ardently wished for him.

The day at last arrived, and restored to something like his former self, Trevanion once more appeared in the mess-room of his regiment. Amid the many sincere and hearty congratulations on his recovered looks, were not a few half-expressed hints that he might not go much out into the world for some little time to come. To these friendly admonitions Trevanion replied by a good-humoured laugh, and a ready assurance that he understood the intended kindness, and felt in no wise disposed to be invalidated again. "In fact," said he, "I have come up here to enjoy life a little, not to risque it; but, among the sights of your gay capital, I must certainly have a peep at your famed captain, of whom I have heard too much not to feel an interest in him."

Notwithstanding the many objections to this, made with a view to delay his visit to the Philidor to a later period, it was at length agreed, that they should all repair to the cafe that evening, but upon the express understanding that every cause of quarrel should be strictly avoided, and that their stay should be merely sufficient to satisfy Trevanion's curiosity as to the personnel of the renomme captain.

It was rather before the usual hour of the cafe's filling, that a number of English officers, among whom was Trevanion, entered the "salon" of the "Philidor;" having determined not to attract any unusual attention, they broke into little knots and parties of threes and fours, and dispersed through the room, where they either sipped their coffee or played at dominoes, then, as now, the staple resource of a French cafe.

The clock over the "comptoir" struck eight, and, at the same instant, a waiter made his appearance, carrying a small table, which he placed beside the fire, and, having trimmed a lamp, and placed a large fauteuil before it, was about to withdraw, when Trevanion, whose curiosity was roused by the singularity of these arrangements, determined upon asking for whose comfort they were intended. The waiter stared for a moment at the question, with an air as if doubting the seriousness of him who put it, and at last replied—"Pour Monsieur le Capitaine, je crois," with a certain tone of significance upon the latter words.

"Le Capitaine! but what captain?" said he, carelessly; "for I am a captain, and that gentleman there—and there, too, is another," at the same instant throwing himself listlessly into the well-cushioned chair, and stretching out his legs at full length upon the hearth.

The look of horror which this quiet proceeding on his part, elicited from the poor waiter, so astonished him that he could not help saying—"is there any thing the matter with you, my friend; are you ill?"

"No, monsieur, not ill; nothing the matter with me; but you, sir; oh, you, sir, pray come away."

"Me," said Trevanion; "me! why, my good man, I was never better in my life; so now just bring me my coffee and the Moniteur, if you have it; there, don't stare that way, but do as I bid you."

There was something in the assured tone of these few words that either overawed or repressed every rising feeling of the waiter, for his interrogator; for, silently handing his coffee and the newspaper, he left the room; not, however, without bestowing a parting glance so full of terror and dismay that our friend was obliged to smile at it. All this was the work of a few minutes, and not until the noise of new arrivals had attracted the attention of his brother officers, did they perceive where he had installed himself, and to what danger he was thus, as they supposed, unwittingly exposed.

It was now, however, too late for remonstrance; for already several French officers had noticed the circumstance, and by their interchange of looks and signs, openly evinced their satisfaction at it, and their delight at the catastrophe which seemed inevitable to the luckless Englishman.

In perfect misery at what they conceived their own fault, in not apprising him of the sacred character of that place, they stood silently looking at him as he continued to sip his coffee, apparently unconscious of every thing and person about him.

There was now a more than ordinary silence in the cafe, which at all times was remarkable for the quiet and noiseless demeanour of its frequenters, when the door was flung open by the ready waiter, and the Capitaine Augustin Gendemar entered. He was a large, squarely-built man, with a most savage expression of countenance, which a bushy beard and shaggy overhanging moustache served successfully to assist; his eyes were shaded by deep, projecting brows, and long eyebrows slanting over them, and increasing their look of piercing sharpness; there was in his whole air and demeanour that certain French air of swaggering bullyism, which ever remained in those who, having risen from the ranks, maintained the look of ruffianly defiance which gave their early character for courage peculiar merit.

To the friendly salutations of his countrymen he returned the slightest and coldest acknowledgments, throwing a glance of disdain around him as he wended his way to his accustomed place beside the fire; this he did with as much of noise and swagger as he could well contrive; his sabre and sabretasch clanking behind, his spurs jangling, and his heavy step, made purposely heavier to draw upon him the notice and attention he sought for. Trevanion alone testified no consciousness of his entrance, and appeared totally engrossed by the columns of his newspaper, from which he never lifted his eyes for an instant. Le Capitaine at length reached the fire-place, when, no sooner did he behold his accustomed seat in the possession of another, than he absolutely started back with surprise and anger.

What might have been his first impulse it is hard to say, for, as the blood rushed to his face and

forehead, he clenched his hands firmly, and seemed for an instant, as he eyed the stranger, like a tiger about to spring upon its victim; this was but for a second, for turning rapidly round towards his party, he gave them a look of peculiar meaning, showing two rows of white teeth, with a grin which seemed to say, "I have taken my line;" and he had done so. He now ordered the waiter, in a voice of thunder, to bring him a chair, this he took roughly from him, and placed, with a crash, upon the floor, exactly opposite that of Trevanion, and still so near as scarcely to permit of his sitting down upon it. The noisy vehemence of this action at last appeared to have roused Trevanion's attention, for he now, for the first time, looked up from his paper, and quietly regarded his vis-a-vis. There could not in the world be a stronger contrast to the bland look and courteous expression of Trevanion's handsome features, than the savage scowl of the enraged Frenchman, in whose features the strong and ill-repressed workings of passion were twitching and distorting every lineament and line; indeed no words could ever convey one half so forcibly as did that look, insult—open, palpable, deep, determined insult.

Trevanion, whose eyes had been merely for a moment lifted from his paper, again fell, and he appeared to take no notice whatever of the extraordinary proximity of the Frenchman, still less of the savage and insulting character of his looks.

Le Capitaine, having thus failed to bring on the eclaireissement he sought for, proceeded to accomplish it by other means; for, taking the lamp, by the light of which Trevanion was still reading, he placed it at his side of the table, and at the same instant stretching across his arm, he plucked the newspaper from his hand, giving at the same moment a glance of triumph towards the bystanders, as though he would say, "you see what he must submit to." Words cannot describe the astonishment of the British officers, as they beheld Trevanion, under this gross and open insult, content himself by a slight smile and half bow, as if returning a courtesy, and then throw his eyes downward, as if engaged in deep thought, while the triumphant sneer of the French, at this unaccountable conduct, was absolutely maddening to them to endure.

But their patience was destined to submit to stronger proof, for at this instant le Capitaine stretched forth one enormous leg, cased in his massive jack-boot, and with a crash deposited the heel upon the foot of their friend Trevanion. At length he is roused, thought they, for a slight flush of crimson flitted across his cheek, and his upper lip trembled with a quick spasmodic twitching; but both these signs were over in a second, and his features were as calm and unmoved as before, and his only appearance of consciousness of the affront, was given by his drawing back his chair and placing his legs beneath it, as for protection.

This last insult, and the tame forbearance with which it was submitted to, produced all their opposite effects upon the by-standers, and looks of ungovernable rage and derisive contempt were every moment interchanging; indeed, were it not for the all-absorbing interest which the two great actors in the scene had concentrated upon themselves, the two parties must have come at once into open conflict.

The clock of the cafe struck nine, the hour at which Gendemar always retired, so calling to the waiter for his petit verre of brandy, he placed his newspaper upon the table, and putting both his elbows upon it, and his chin upon his hands, he stared full in Trevanion's face, with a look of the most derisive triumph, meant to crown the achievement of the evening. To this, as to all his former insults, Trevanion appeared still insensible, and merely regarded him with his never-changing half smile; the petite verre arrived; le Capitaine took it in his hand, and, with a nod of most insulting familiarity, saluted Trevanion, adding with a loud voice, so as to be heard on every side—"a votre courage, Anglais." He had scarcely swallowed the liqueur when Trevanion rose slowly from his chair, displaying to the astonished gaze of the Frenchman the immense proportions and gigantic frame of a man well known as the largest officer in the British army; with one stride he was beside the chair of the Frenchman, and with the speed of lightening he seized his nose by one hand, while with the other he grasped his lower jaw, and, wrenching open his mouth with the strength of an ogre, he spat down his throat.

So sudden was the movement, that before ten seconds had elapsed, all was over, and the Frenchman rushed from the room, holding the fragments of his jaw-bone, (for it was fractured!) And followed by his countrymen, who, from that hour, deserted the Cafe Philidor, nor was there ever any mention of the famous captain during the stay of the regiment in Paris.

CHAPTER XXX.

DIFFICULTIES.

While we walked together towards Meurice, I explained to Trevanion the position in which I stood; and having detailed, at full length, the fracas at the Salon, and the imprisonment of O'Leary, entreated his assistance in behalf of him, as well as to free me from some of my many embarrassments.

It was strange enough—though at first so pre-occupied was I with other thoughts, that I paid but little attention to it—that no part of my eventful evening seemed to make so strong an impression on him as my mention of having seen my cousin Guy, and heard from him of the death of my uncle. At this portion of my story he smiled, with so much significance of meaning, that I could not help asking his reason.

"It is always an unpleasant task, Mr. Lorrequer, to speak in any way, however delicately, in a tone of disparagement of a man's relatives; and, therefore, as we are not long enough acquainted —"

"But pray," said I, "waive that consideration, and only remember the position in which I now am. If you know any thing of this business, I entreat you to tell me—I promise to take whatever you may be disposed to communicate, in the same good part it is intended."

"Well, then, I believe you are right; but, first, let me ask you, how do you know of your uncle's death; for I have reason to doubt it?"

"From Guy; he told me himself."

"When did you see him, and where?"

"Why, I have just told you; I saw him last night at the Salon."

"And you could not be mistaken?"

"Impossible! Besides, he wrote to me a note which I received this morning—here it is."

"Hem—ha. Well, are you satisfied that this is his handwriting?" said Trevanion, as he perused the note slowly twice over.

"Why, of course—but stop—you are right; it is not his hand, nor do I know the writing, now that you direct my attention to it. But what can that mean? You, surely, do not suppose that I have mistaken any one for him; for, independent of all else, his knowledge of my family, and my uncle's affairs, would quite disprove that."

"This is really a complex affair," said Trevanion, musingly. "How long may it be since you saw your cousin—before last night, I mean?"

"Several years; above six, certainly."

"Oh, it is quite possible, then," said Trevanion, musingly; "do you know, Mr. Lorrequer, this affair seems much more puzzling to me than to you, and for this plain reason—I am disposed to think you never saw your cousin last night."

"Why, confound it, there is one circumstance that I think may satisfy you on that head. You will not deny that I saw some one, who very much resembled him; and certainly, as he lent me above three thousand francs to play with at the table, it looks rather more like his act than that of a perfect stranger."

"Have you got the money?" asked Trevanion dryly.

"Yes," said I; "but certainly you are the most unbelieving of mortals, and I am quite happy that I have yet in my possession two of the billets de banque, for, I suppose, without them, you would scarcely credit me." I here opened my pocket-book, and produced the notes.

He took them, examined them attentively for an instant, held them between him and the light, refolded them, and, having placed them in my pocket-book, said—"I thought as much—they are forgeries."

"Hold!" said I, "my cousin Guy, whatever wildness he may have committed, is yet totally incapable of—"

"I never said the contrary, replied Trevanion, in the same dry tone as before.

"Then what can you mean, for I see no alternative between that and totally discrediting the evidence of my senses?"

"Perhaps I can suggest a middle course," said Trevanion; "lend me, therefore, a patient hearing for a few moments, and I may be able to throw some light upon this difficult matter. You may never have heard that there is, in this same city of Paris, a person so extremely like your cousin Guy, that his most intimate friends have daily mistaken one for the other, and this mistake has the more often been made, from the circumstances of their both being in the habit of frequenting the same class in society, where, knowing and walking with the same people, the difficulty of discriminating has been greatly increased. This individual, who has too many aliases for one to know which to particularise him by, is one of that numerous order of beings whom a high state of civilization is always engendering and throwing up on the surface of society; he is a man of low birth and mean connexions, but gifted with most taking manners and an unexceptionable address and appearance; these advantages, and the possession of apparently independent means, have

opened to him the access to a certain set of people, who are well known and well received in society, and obtained for him, what he prizes much more, the admission into several clubs where high play is carried on. In this mixed assemblage, which sporting habits and gambling, (that grand leveller of all distinctions,) have brought together, this man and your cousin Guy met frequently, and, from the constant allusion to the wonderful resemblance between them, your eccentric cousin, who, I must say, was never too select in his acquaintances, frequently amused himself by practical jokes upon their friends, which served still more to nurture the intimacy between them; and from this habit, Mr. Dudley Morewood, for such is his latest patronymic, must have enjoyed frequent opportunities of hearing much of your family and relations, a species of information he never neglected, though at the moment it might appear not so immediately applicable to his purposes. Now, this man, who knows of every new English arrival in Paris, with as much certainty as the police itself, would at once be aware of your being here, and having learned from Guy how little intercourse there had been of late years between you, would not let slip an opportunity of availing himself of the likeness, if any thing could thereby turn to his profit."

"Stop," cried I; "you have opened my eyes completely, for now I remember that, as I continued to win last night, this man, who was playing hazard at another table, constantly borrowed from me, but always in gold, invariably refusing the billets de banque as too high for his game."

"There his object was clear enough; for besides obtaining your gold, he made you the means of disseminating his false billets de banque."

"So that I have been actually playing and winning upon this fellow's forgeries," said I; "and am perhaps at this very instant inscribed in the 'Livre noir' of the police, as a most accomplished swindler; but what could be the intention of his note of this morning?"

"As to that," said Trevanion, "it is hard to say; one thing you may assuredly rely upon—it is not an unnecessary epistle, whatever be its object; he never wastes his powder when the game flies too high; so we must only wait patiently for the unravelment of his plans, satisfied that we, at least, know something. What most surprises me is, his venturing, at present, to appear in public; for it is not above two months since an escapade of his attracted so much attention of the play world here, that he was obliged to leave, and it was supposed that he would never return to Paris."

"One piece of good fortune there is at least," said I, "which, I can safely say repays me for any and all the annoyance this unhappy affair may cause me; it is, that my poor old uncle is still alive and well. Not all my anticipated pleasures, in newly acquired wealth, could have afforded me the same gratification that this fact does, for, although never so much his favourite as my cousin, yet the sense of protection—the feeling of confidence, which is inseparable from the degree of relationship between us—standing, as he has ever done, in the light of a father to me, is infinitely more pleasurable than the possession of riches, which must ever suggest to me, the recollection of a kind friend lost to me for ever. But so many thoughts press on me—so many effects of this affair are staring me in the face—I really know not which way to turn, nor can I even collect my ideas sufficiently, to determine what is first to be done."

"Leave all that to me," said Trevanion; "it is a tangled web, but I think I can unravel it; meanwhile, where does the Militaire reside? for, among all your pressing engagements, this affair with the Frenchman must come off first; and for this reason, although you are not really obliged to give him satisfaction, by his merely producing your card, and insisting that you are to be responsible for the misdeeds of any one who might show it as his own address, yet I look upon it as a most fortunate thing, while charges so heavy may be at this moment hanging over your head, as the proceedings of last night involve, that you have a public opportunity of meeting an antagonist in the field—thereby evincing no fear of publicity, nor any intention of absconding; for be assured, that the police are at this moment in possession of what has occurred, and from the fracas which followed, are well disposed to regard the whole as a concerted scheme to seize upon the property of the banque, a not uncommon wind-up here after luck fails. My advice is therefore, meet the man at once; I shall take care that the prefect is informed that you have been imposed upon by a person passing himself off as your relative, and enter bail for your appearance, whenever you are called upon; that being done, we shall have time for a moment's respite to look around us, and consider the other bearings of this difficult business."

"Here, then, is the card of address," said I; "Eugene Dejoncourt Capitaine de Cavalerie, No. 8, Chausse D'Antin."

"Dejoncourt! why, confound it, this is not so pleasant; he is about the best shot in Paris, and a very steady swordsman besides, I don't like this."

"But you forget he is the friend, not the principal here."

"The more good fortune yours," said Trevanion, drily; "for I acknowledge I should not give much for your chance at twenty paces opposite his pistol; then who is the other?"

"Le Baron d'Haulpenne," said I, "and his name is all that I know of him; his very appearance is unknown to me."

"I believe I am acquainted with him," said Trevanion; "but here we are at Meurice. Now I shall just write a few lines to a legal friend, who will manage to liberate Mr. O'Leary, whose services we shall need, two persons are usual on each side in this country, and then, 'a l'ouvrage.'"

The note written and despatched; Trevanion jumped into a cab, and set out for the Chausse D'Antin; leaving me to think over, as well as I could, the mass of trouble and confusion that twenty-four hours of life in Paris had involved me in.

CHAPTER XXXI.

EXPLANATION.

It was past seven o'clock when Trevanion made his appearance, accompanied by O'Leary; and having in few words informed me that a meeting was fixed for the following morning, near St. Cloud, proposed that we should go to dinner at Verey's, after which we should have plenty of time to discuss the various steps to be taken. As we were leaving the hotel for this purpose, a waiter requested of me to permit Mr. Meurice to speak a few words to me; which, having agreed to, I entered the little bureau where this Czar of hotels sits enthroned, and what was my surprise to learn the request he had to prefer, was nothing less than that I would so far oblige him as to vacate the room I possessed in the hotel, adding that my compliance would confer upon him the power to accommodate a "milor" who had written for apartments, and was coming with a large suite of servants. Suspecting that some rumour of the late affair at Frescati might have influenced my friend Meurice in this unusual demand, I abruptly refused, and was about to turn away, when he, perhaps guessing that I had not believed his statements, handed me an open letter, saying, "You see, sir, this is the letter; and, as I am so pressed for spare room, I must now refuse the writer."

As my eye glanced at the writing, I started back with amazement to perceive it was in my cousin Guy's hand, requesting that apartments might be retained for Sir Guy Lorrequer, my uncle, who was to arrive in Paris by the end of the week. If any doubt had remained on my mind as to the deception I had been duped by, this would completely have dispelled it, but I had long before been convinced of the trick, and only wondered how the false Guy—Mr. Dudley Morewood—had contrived to present himself to me so opportunely, and by what means, in so short a space of time, he had become acquainted with my personal appearance.

As I mentioned this circumstance of the letter to Trevanion, he could not conceal his satisfaction at his sagacity in unravelling the mystery, while this new intelligence confirmed the justness and accuracy of all his explanations.

While we walked along towards the Palais Royale, Trevanion endeavoured not very successfully, to explain to my friend O'Leary, the nature of the trick which had been practised, promising, at another time, some revelations concerning the accomplished individual who had planned it, which, in boldness and daring, eclipsed even this.

Any one who in waking has had the confused memory of a dream in which events have been so mingled and mixed as to present no uniform narrative, but only a mass of strange and incongruous occurrences, without object or connexion, may form some notion of the state of restless excitement my brain suffered from, as the many and conflicting ideas my late adventures suggested, presented themselves to my mind in rapid succession.

The glare, the noise, and the clatter of a French cafe are certainly not the agents most in request for restoring a man to the enjoyment of his erring faculties; and, if I felt addled and confused before, I had scarcely passed the threshold of Verey's when I became absolutely like one in a trance. The large salon was more than usually crowded, and it was with difficulty that we obtained a place at a table where some other English were seated, among whom I recognised by lately made acquaintance, Mr. Edward Bingham.

Excepting a cup of coffee I had taken nothing the entire day, and so completely did my anxieties of different kinds subdue all appetite, that the most recherche viands of this well-known restaurant did not in the least tempt me. The champagne alone had any attraction for me; and, seduced by the icy coldness of the wine, I drank copiously. This was all that was wanting to complete the maddening confusion of my brain, and the effect was instantaneous; the lights danced before my eyes; the lustres whirled round; and, as the scattered fragments of conversations, on either side met my ear, I was able to form some not very inaccurate conception of what insanity may be. Politics and literature, Mexican bonds and Noblet's legs, Pates de perdreaux and the quarantine laws, the extreme gauche and the "Bains Chinois," Victor Hugo and rouge et noir, had formed a species of grand ballet d'action in my fevered brain, and I was perfectly beside myself; occasionally, too, I would revert to my own concerns, although I was scarcely able to follow up any train of thought for more than a few seconds together, and totally

inadequate to distinguish the false from the true. I continued to confound the counterfeit with my cousin, and wonder how my poor uncle, for whom I was about to put on the deepest mourning, could possibly think of driving me out of my lodgings. Of my duel for the morning, I had the most shadowy recollection, and could not perfectly comprehend whether it was O'Leary or I was the principal, and indeed cared but little. In this happy state of independent existence I must have passed a considerable time, and as my total silence when spoken to, or my irrelevant answers, appeared to have tired out my companions, they left me to the uninterrupted enjoyment of my own pleasant imaginings.

"Do you hear, Lorrequer," at last said Trevanion; "are you asleep, my dear friend? This gentleman has been good enough to invite us to breakfast to-morrow at St. Cloud."

I looked up, and was just able to recognise the well-trimmed moustache of Mr. Edward Bingham, as he stood mumbling something before me. "St. Cloud—what of St. Cloud?" said I.

"We have something in that quarter to-morrow."

"What is it, O'Leary? Can we go?"

"Oh! certainly—our engagement's an early one."

"We shall accept your polite invitation with pleasure"—

Here he stooped over, and whispered something in my ear; what, I cannot say, but I know that my reply, now equally lost to me, produced a hearty fit of laughing to my two friends.

My next recollection is, finding myself in a crowded loge at the theatre. It seems that O'Leary had acceded to a proposal from some of the other party to accompany them to the Porte St. Martin, where Mrs. Bingham and her daughter had engaged a box. Amid all the confusion which troubled thoughts and wine produced in me, I could not help perceiving a studied politeness and attention on the part of Mr. Edward Bingham towards me; and my first sobering reflection came, on finding that a place was reserved for me beside Miss Bingham, into which, by some contrivance I can in no wise explain, I found myself almost immediately installed. To all the excitements of champagne and punch, let the attractions of a French ballet be added, and, with a singularly pretty companion at your side, to whom you have already made sufficient advances to be aware that you are no longer indifferent to her, and I venture to predict, that it is much more likely your conversation will incline to flirting than political economy; and, moreover, that you make more progress during the performance of one single pas de deux upon the stage, than you have hitherto done in ten morning calls, with an unexceptionable whisker and the best fitting gloves in Paris. Alas! alas! it is only the rich man that ever wins at rouge et noir. The well-insured Indiaman, with her cargo of millions, comes safe into port; while the whole venture of some hardy veteran of the wave, founders within sight of his native shore. So is it ever; where success would be all and every thing, it never comes—but only be indifferent or regardless, and fortune is at your feet, suing and imploring your acceptance of her favours. What would I not have given for one half of that solicitude now so kindly expressed in my favour by Miss Bingham, if syllabled by the lips of Lady Jane Callonby—how would my heart have throbbed for one light smile from one, while I ungratefully basked in the openly avowed preference of the other. These were my first thoughts—what were the succeeding ones?

"Comment elle est belle," said a Frenchwoman, turning round in the box next to us, and directing at the same moment the eyes of a moustached hero upon my fair companion.

What a turn to my thoughts did this unexpected ejaculation give rise to! I now began to consider her more attentively, and certainly concurred fully in the Frenchwoman's verdict. I had never see her look half so well before. The great fault in her features, which were most classically regular, lay in the monotony and uniform character of their expression. Now this was quite changed. Her cheek was slightly flushed, and her eyes more brilliant than ever; while her slightly parted lips gave a degree of speaking earnestness to her expression, that made her perfectly beautiful.

Whether it was from this cause I cannot say, but I certainly never felt so suddenly decided in my life from one course to its very opposite, as I now did to make l'aimable to my lovely companion. And here, I fear, I must acknowledge, in the honesty of these confessional details, that vanity had also its share in the decision. To be the admitted and preferred suitor of the prettiest woman in company, is generally a strong inducement to fall desperately in love with her, independently of other temptations for so doing.

How far my successes tallied with my good intentions in this respect, I cannot now say. I only remember, that more than once O'Leary whispered to me something like a caution of some sort or other; but Emily's encouraging smiles and still more encouraging speeches had far more effect upon me than all the eloquence of the united service, had it been engaged in my behalf, would have effected. Mrs. Bingham, too—who, to do her justice, seemed but little cognisant of our proceedings—from time to time evinced that species of motherly satisfaction which very young men rejoice much in, and older ones are considerably alarmed at.

The play over O'Leary charged himself with the protection of madam, while I enveloped Emily in her cachmere, and drew her arm within my own. What my hand had to do with her's I know not; it remains one of the unexplained difficulties of that eventful evening. I have, it is true, a hazy recollection of pressing some very taper and delicately formed finger—and remember, too,

the pain I felt next morning on awaking, by the pressure of a too tight ring, which had, by some strange accident, found its way to my finger, for which its size was but ill adapted.

"You will join us at supper, I hope," said Mrs. Bingham, as Trevanion handed her to her carriage. "Mr. Lorrequer, Mr. O'Leary, we shall expect you."

I was about to promise to do so, when Trevanion, suddenly interrupted me, saying that he had already accepted an invitation, which would, unfortunately, prevent us; and having hastily wished the ladies good night, hurried me away so abruptly, that I had not a moment given for even one parting look at the fair Emily.

"Why, Trevanion," said I, "what invitation are you dreaming of? I, for one, should have been delighted to have gone home with the Bingham's."

"So I perceived," said Trevanion, gravely; "and it was for that precise reason I so firmly refused what, individually, I should have been most happy to accept."

"Then, pray, have the goodness to explain."

"It is easily done. You have already, in recounting your manifold embarrassments, told me enough of these people, to let me see that they intend you should marry among them; and, indeed, you have gone quite far enough to encourage such an expectation. Your present excited state has led you sufficiently far this evening, and I could not answer for your not proposing in all form before the supper was over; therefore, I had no other course open to me than positively to refuse Mrs. Bingham's invitation. But here we are now at the 'Cadran rouge;' we shall have our lobster and a glass of Moselle, and then to bed, for we must not forget that we are to be at St. Cloud by seven."

"Ah! that is a good thought of yours about the lobster," said O'Leary; "and now, as you understand these matters, just order supper, and let us enjoy ourselves."

With all the accustomed despatch of a restaurant, a most appetizing petit souper made its speedy appearance; and although now perfectly divested of the high excitement which had hitherto possessed me, my spirits were excellent, and I never more relished our good fare and good fellowship.

After a full bumper to the health of the fair Emily had been proposed and drained by all three, Trevanion again explained how much more serious difficulty would result from any false step in that quarter than from all my other scrapes collectively.

This he represented so strongly, that for the first time I began to perceive the train of ill consequences that must inevitably result, and promised most faithfully to be guided by any counsel he might feel disposed to give me.

"Ah! what a pity," said O'Leary, "it is not my case. It's very little trouble it would cost any one to break off a match for me. I had always a most peculiar talent for those things.

"Indeed!" said Trevanion. "Pray, may we know your secret? for, perhaps, ere long we may have occasion for its employment."

"Tell it, by all means," said I.

"If I do," said O'Leary, "it will cost you a patient hearing; for my experiences are connected with two episodes in my early life, which, although not very amusing, are certainly instructive."

"Oh! by all means, let us hear them," said Trevanion; "for we have yet two bottles of chambertin left, and must finish them ere we part."

"Well, agreed," said O'Leary; "only, once for all, as what I am about to confide is strictly confidential, you must promise never even to allude to it hereafter in even the most remote manner, much less indulge in any unseemly mirth at what I shall relate."

Having pledged ourselves to secrecy and a becoming seriousness, O'Leary began his story as follows:—

CHAPTER XXXII.

MR. O'LEARY'S FIRST LOVE.

"It was during the vice-royalty of the late Duke of Richmond that the incidents I am about to mention took place. That was a few years since, and I was rather younger, and a little more particular about my dress than at present." Here the little man cast an eye of stoical satisfaction upon his uncouth habiliments, that nearly made us forget our compact, and laugh outright. "Well, in those wild and headstrong days of youthful ardour, I fell in love—desperately in love—and as always is, I believe, the case with our early experiments in that unfortunate passion, the object of my affection was in every way unsuited to me. She was a tall, dark-haired, dark-eyed maiden, with a romantic imagination, and a kind of a half-crazed poetic fervour, that often made me fear for her intellect. I'm a short, rather fat—I was always given this way"—here he patted a waistcoat that would fit Dame Lambert—"happy-minded little fellow, that liked my supper of oysters at the Pigeon-house, and my other creature-comforts, and hated every thing that excited or put one out of one's way, just as I would have hated a blister. Then, the devil would have it—for as certainly as marriages are made in heaven, flirtations have something to say to the other place—that I should fall most irretrievably in love with Lady Agnes Moreton. Bless my soul, it absolutely puts me in a perspiration this hot day, just to think over all I went through on her account; for, strange to say, the more I appeared to prosper in her good graces, the more did she exact on my part; the pursuit was like Jacob's ladder—if it did lead to heaven it was certainly an awfully long journey, and very hard on one's legs. There was not an amusement she could think of, no matter how unsuited to my tastes or my abilities, that she did not immediately take a violent fancy to; and then there was no escaping, and I was at once obliged to go with the tide, and heaven knows if it would not have carried me to my grave if it were not for the fortunate (I now call it) accident that broke off the affair for ever. One time she took a fancy for yachting, and all the dangles about her—and she always had a cordon of them—young aides-de-camp of her father the general, and idle hussars, in clanking sabertashes and most absurd mustachios—all approved of the taste, and so kept filling her mind with anecdotes of corsairs and smugglers, that at last nothing would satisfy her till I—I who always would rather have waited for low water, and waded the Liffey in all its black mud, than cross over in the ferry-boat, for fear of sickness—I was obliged to put an advertisement in the newspaper for a pleasure-boat, and, before three weeks, saw myself owner of a clinker-built schooner, of forty-eight tons, that by some mockery of fortune was called 'The Delight.' I wish you saw me, as you might have done every morning for about a month, as I stood on the Custom-house quay, giving orders for the outfit of the little craft. At first, as she bobbed and pitched with the flood-tide, I used to be a little giddy and rather qualmish, but at last I learned to look on without my head reeling. I began to fancy myself very much of a sailor, a delusion considerably encouraged by a huge P. jacket and a sou'-wester, both of which, though it was in the dog-days, Agnes insisted upon my wearing, saying I looked more like Dirk Hatteraick, who, I understood, was one of her favourite heroes in Walter Scott. In fact, after she suggested this, she and all her friends called me nothing but Dirk.

"Well, at last, after heaven knows how many excuses on my part, and entreaties for delay, a day was appointed for our first excursion. I shall never forget that day—the entire night before it I did not close my eyes; the skipper had told me in his confounded sea-jargon, that if the wind was in one quarter we should have a short tossing sea; and if in another a long rolling swell; and if in a third, a happy union of both—in fact, he made it out that it could not possibly blow right, an opinion I most heartily coincided in, and most devoutly did I pray for a calm, that would not permit of our stirring from our moorings, and thus mar our projected party of pleasure. My prayer was unheard, but my hopes rose on the other hand, for it blew tremendously during the entire night, and although there was a lull towards morning, the sea, even in the river, was considerable.

"I had just come to the conclusion that I was safe for this time, when the steward poked his head into the room and said,

"'Mr. Brail wishes to know, sir, if he'll bend the new mainsail to-day, as it's blowing rather fresh, and he thinks the spars light.'

"'Why the devil take him, he would not have us go out in a hurricane; surely, Pipes, we could not take out ladies to-day?'

"'O, bless your heart, yes, sir; it blows a bit to be sure, but she's a good sea-boat, and we can run for Arklow or the Hook, if it comes fresher.'

"'Oh, nonsense, there's no pleasure in that; besides I'm sure they won't like it—the ladies won't venture, you'll see.'

"'Ay sir, but they're all on board already: there's eight ladies in the cabin, and six on deck, and as many hampers of victuals and as much crockery as if we were a-goin' to Madeira. Captain Grantham, sir, the soldier officer, with the big beard, is a mixing punch in the grog-tub.'

"'From the consequences of this day I proclaim myself innocent,' said I with a solemn voice, as I drew on my duck trowsers, and prepared to set out.

"'And the mainsail, sir,' said the steward, not understanding what I said.

"'I care not which,' said I, doggedly; 'act or part in this wilful proceeding I'll not take.'

"'Ay, ay, sir,' said the stupid wretch, 'then I'll say you're coming, and he may stretch the large canvas; for the skipper says he likes a wet jacket when he has gentlemen out.'

"'Never did a victim put on a flame-coloured garment, the emblem of fate, and set out on the

march of death, with a heavier heart, than did I put on my pilot-coat that morning to join my friends.

"My last hope deserted me as I saw the little vessel lying beside the quay; for I continued to trust that in getting out from the dock some accident or mischance might occur to spoil our sport. But no; there she lay, rolling and pitching in such a way that, even at anchor, they could not stand on the deck without holding. Amid the torrent of compliments for the perfection of all my arrangements, and innumerable sweet things on my taste in the decoration and fitting up of my cabin, I scarcely felt myself afloat for some minutes, and we got under weigh amid a noise and uproar that absolutely prevented the possibility of thought.

"Hitherto our destination had not been mentioned, and as all the party appealed to Lady Agnes, I could not be less gallant, and joined them in their request.

"'Well then, what do you think of Lambay?' said she, looking at the same moment towards the skipper.

"'We can make it, my lady,' said the man, 'but we'll have a roughish sea of it, for there's a strong point of westward in the wind.'

"'Then don't think of it,' said I. 'We have come out for pleasure, not to make our friends sick, or terrify them. It does very well for us men.'

"'There you are, Dirk, with your insolent sneers about women's nerves and female cowardice. Now, nothing but Lambay will content me—what say you, ladies?'

"A general reply of approval met this speech, and it was carried by acclamation.

"'Lambay then be it,' said I, with the voice of a man, who, entreating to be shot, is informed that he cannot be afforded that pleasure, as his sentence is to be hanged. But I must hasten over these painful recollections. We dropped down the river, and soon left the light-house and its long pier behind us, the mast bending like a whip, and the sea boiling like barm over the lee gunwale. Still the spirit of our party only rose the lighter, and nothing but eulogies upon the men and sailing of the craft resounded on all sides; the din and buz of the conversation went on only more loudly and less restrictedly than if the party had been on shore, and all, even myself, seemed happy, for up to this moment I had not been sea-sick, yet certain pleasant sensations, that alternately evinced themselves in my stomach and my head, warned me of what was in store for me. The word was now given to tack; I was in the act of essaying a soft speech to Lady Agnes, when the confounded cry of 'ready about, starboard there, let go sheets and tacks, stand by, hawl.' The vessel plunged head-foremost into the boiling sea, which hissed on either bow; the heavy boom swung over, carrying my hat along with it—and almost my head too. The rest of the party, possibly better informed than myself, speedily changed their places to the opposite side of the boat, while I remained holding off fast by the gunwale, till the sea rushing over, what was now becoming the lee-side, carried me head over heels into the shingle ballast in the waist. Lord, how they did laugh! Agnes, too, who never before could get beyond a very faint smile, grew almost hysterical at my performance. As for me, I only wanted this to complete my long threatened misfortune; sea sickness in all its most miserable forms, set in upon me, and, ere half an hour, I lay upon that heap of small stones, as indifferent to all round and about me as though I were dead. Oh, the long, dreary hours of that melancholy day; it seemed like a year. They tacked and tacked, they were beat and tacked again, the sea washing over me, and the ruffianly sailors trampling upon me without the slightest remorse, whenever they had any occasion to pass back or forward. From my long trance of suffering I was partly roused by the steward shaking my shoulder, saying,

"'The gentlemen wish to know, sir, if you'd like summat to eat, as they're a goin' to have a morsel; we are getting into slack water now.'

"'Where are we?' I replied, in a sepulchral voice.

"'Off the Hook, sir; we have had a most splendid run, but I fear we'll catch it soon; there's some dirty weather to the westward.'

"'God grant it,' said I, piously and in a low tone.

"'Did you say you'd have a bit to eat. Sir?'

"'No!—eat!—am I a cannibal?—eat—go away—mark me, my good fellow, I'll pay you your wages, if ever we get ashore; you'll never set another foot aboard with me.'

"The man looked perfectly astounded as he moved away, and my thoughts were soon engrossed by the proceedings near me. The rattle of knives, and the jingling of plates and glasses went on very briskly for some time, accompanied by various pleasant observations of my guests, for such I judged them, from the mirth which ever followed them. At last I thought I heard my name, or at least what they pleased to use as its substitute, mentioned; I strained my ears to listen, and learnt that they were planning to talk over the pretended intention to run for Cowes, and see the regatta. This they discussed then, for about twenty minutes, in a very loud voice, purposely to see its effects upon me; but as I was now aware of the trick, I gave no sign of any intelligence.

"'Poor Dirk,' said Grantham; 'I believe by this time he cares very little which way her head lies; but here comes something better than all our discussions. Lady Agnes, sit here—Miss Pelham,

here's a dry cushion for you—did you say a wing, Lady Mary?'

"Now began the crash and clatter of dinner; champagne corks popping, glasses ringing, and all that peculiar admixture of fracas and fun, which accompanies a scrambled meal. How they did laugh, and eat, ay, and drink too. G's punch seemed to have its success, for sick as I was, I could perceive the voices of the men grow gradually louder, and discovered that two gentlemen who had been remarkably timid in the morning, and scarcely opened their lips, were now rather uproariously given, and one even proposed to sing.

"If any man, thought I, were to look for an instant at the little scene now enacting here, what a moral might he reap from it; talk of the base ingratitude of the world, you cannot say too much of it. Who would suppose that it was my boat these people were assembled in; that it was my champagne these people were drinking; that my venison and my pheasants were feeding those lips, which rarely spoke, except to raise a jest at my expense. My chagrin increased my sickness and my sickness redoubled my chagrin.

"'Mr. Brail,' said I, in a low whisper, 'Mr. Brail.'

"'Did you speak, sir?'" said he, with about as much surprise in his manner, as though he had been addressed by a corpse.

"'Mr. Brail,' said I, 'is there any danger here?'"

"'Lord love you, no, sir, she's walking Spanish, and the sea going down; we shall have lovely weather, and they're all enjoying it, sir,—the ladies.'

"'So I perceive,' said I, with a groan; 'so I perceive; but Mr. Brail, could you do nothing—just to—to startle them a little, I mean for fun only? Just ship a heavy sea or two, I don't care for a little damage, Mr. Brail, and if it were to wash over the dinner-service, and all the wine, I should not like it worse.'

"'Why, sir, you are getting quite funny, the sickness is going.'

"'No, Mr. Brail, worse than ever; my head is in two pieces, and my stomach in the back of my mouth; but I should like you to do this—so just manage it, will you, and there's twenty pounds in my pocket-book, you can have it; there now, won't you oblige me, and hark ye, Mr. Brail—if Captain Grantham were to be washed over by mere accident it cannot be helped; accidents are always occurring in boating parties. Go now, you know what I mean.'

"'But sir,' began he.

"'Well, then, Mr. Brail, you won't—very well: now all I have to say is this: that the moment I can find strength to do it, I'll stave out a plank; I'll scuttle the vessel, that's all; I have made up my mind, and look to yourselves now.'

"Saying these words, I again threw myself upon the ballast, and, as the gay chorus of a drinking song was wafted across me, prayed devoutly that we might all go down to the bottom. The song over, I heard a harsh, gruff voice mixing with the more civilized tones of the party, and soon perceived that Mr. Brail was recounting my proposal amid the most uproarious shouts of laughter I ever listened to. Then followed a number of pleasant suggestions for my future management; one proposing to have me tried for mutiny, and sentenced to a ducking over the side, another that I should be tarred on my back, to which latter most humane notion, the fair Agnes subscribed, averring that she was resolved upon my deserving my sobriquet of Dirk Hatteraick. My wrath was now the master even of deadly sickness. I got upon my knees, and having in vain tried to reach my legs, I struggled aft. In this posture did I reach the quarter-deck. What my intention precisely was in this excursion, I have no notion of now, but I have some very vague idea, that I meant to re-enact the curse of Kehama upon the whole party. At last I mustered strength to rise; but alas! I had scarcely reached the standing position, when a tremendous heel of the boat to one side, threw me in the gunwale, and before I was able to recover my balance, a second lurch pitched me headlong into the sea. I have, thank God, no further recollection of my misfortunes. When I again became conscious, I found myself wrapped up in a pilot-coat, while my clothes were drying: the vessel was at anchor in Wexford. My attached friends had started for town with post-horses, leaving me no less cured of love than aquatics.

"'The Delight' passed over in a few days, to some more favoured son of Neptune, and I hid my shame and my misfortunes by a year's tour on the continent."

"'Although I acknowledge,'" said Trevanion, "that hitherto I have reaped no aid from Mr. O'Leary's narrative, yet I think it is not without a moral."

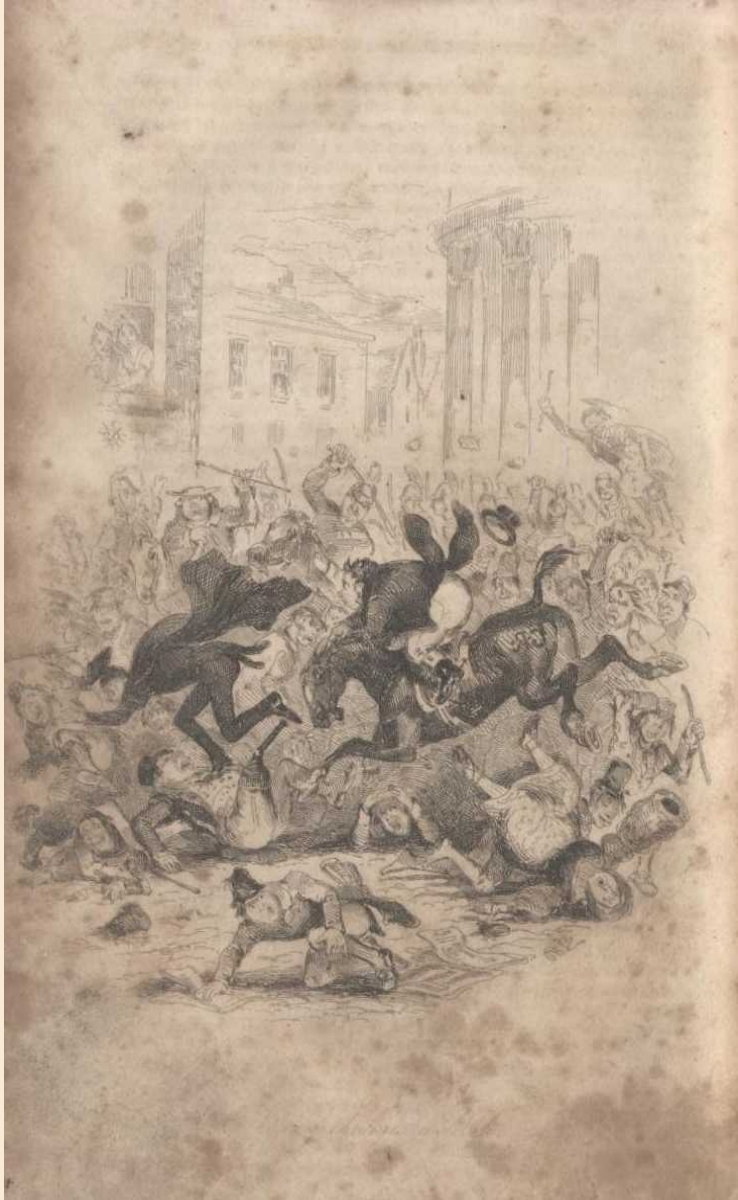
"'Well, but,'" said I, "he has got another adventure to tell us; we have quite time for it, so pray pass the wine and let us have it."

"'I have just finished the burgundy,'" said O'Leary, "and if you will ring for another flask, I have no objection to let you hear the story of my second love."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

MR. O'LEARY'S SECOND LOVE.

Mr. O'Leary Charges the Mob



"You may easily suppose," began Mr. O'Leary, "that the unhappy termination of my first passion served as a shield to me for a long time against my unfortunate tendencies towards the fair; and such was really the case. I never spoke to a young lady for three years after, without a reeling in my head, so associated in my mind was love and sea-sickness. However, at last what will not time do. It was about four years from the date of this adventure, when I became so, from oblivion of my former failure, as again to tempt my fortune. My present choice, in every way unlike the last, was a gay, lively girl, of great animal spirits, and a considerable turn for raillery, that spared no one; the members of her own family were not even sacred in her eyes; and her father, a reverend dean, as frequently figured among the ludicrous as his neighbours.

"The Evershams had been very old friends of a rich aunt of mine, who never, by the by, had condescended to notice me till I made their acquaintance; but no sooner had I done so, than she sent for me, and gave me to understand that in the event of my succeeding to the hand of Fanny Eversham, I should be her heir, and the possessor of about sixty thousand pounds. She did not stop here; but by canvassing the dean in my favour, speedily put the matter on a most favourable footing, and in less than two months I was received as the accepted suitor of the fair Fanny, then one of the reigning belles of Dublin.

"They lived at this time about three miles from town, in a very pretty country, where I used to pass all my mornings, and many of my evenings too, in a state of happiness that I should have considered perfect, if it were not for two unhappy blots—one, the taste of my betrothed for laughing at her friends; another the diabolical propensity to talk politics of my intended father-in-law—to the former I could submit; but with the latter, submission only made bad worse; for he invariably drew up as I receded, drily observing that with men who had no avowed opinions, it was ill agreeing; or that, with persons who kept their politics as a school-boy does his pocket-money, never to spend, and always ready to change, it was unpleasant to dispute. Such taunts as these I submitted to as well as I might; secretly resolving, that as I now knew the meaning of whig and tory, I'd contrive to spend my life, after marriage, out of the worthy dean's diocese.

"Time wore on, and at length, to my most pressing solicitations, it was conceded that a day for our marriage should be appointed. Not even the unlucky termination of this my second love affair can deprive me of the happy souvenir of the few weeks which were to intervene before our destined union.

"The mornings were passed in ransacking all the shops where wedding finery could be procured—laces, blondes, velvets, and satins, littered every corner of the deanery—and there was scarcely a carriage in a coach-maker's yard in the city that I had not sat and jumped in, to try the springs, by the special directions of Mrs. Eversham; who never ceased to impress me with the awful responsibility I was about to take upon me, in marrying so great a prize as her daughter—a feeling I found very general among many of my friends at the Kildare-street club.

"Among the many indispensable purchases which I was to make, and about which Fanny expressed herself more than commonly anxious, was a saddle-horse for me. She was a great horsewoman, and hated riding with only a servant; and had given me to understand as much about half-a-dozen times each day for the last five weeks. How shall I acknowledge it—equestrianism was never my forte. I had all my life considerable respect for the horse as an animal, pretty much as I dreaded a lion or a tiger; but as to my intention of mounting upon the back of one, and taking a ride, I should as soon have dreamed of taking an airing upon a giraffe; and as to the thought of buying, feeding, and maintaining such a beast at my own proper cost, I should just as soon have determined to purchase a pillory or a ducking-stool, by way of amusing my leisure hours.

"However, Fanny was obstinate—whether she suspected any thing or not I cannot say—but nothing seemed to turn her from her purpose; and although I pleaded a thousand things in delay, yet she each day grew more impatient, and at last I saw that there was nothing for it but to submit.

"When I arrived at this last and bold resolve, I could not help feeling that to possess a horse and not be able to mount him, was only deferring the ridicule; and as I had so often expressed the difficulty I felt in suiting myself as a cause of my delay, I could not possibly come forward with any thing very objectionable, or I should be only the more laughed at. There was then but one course to take; a fortnight still intervened before the day which was to make me happy, and I accordingly resolved to take lessons in riding during the intervals, and by every endeavour in my power become, if possible, able to pass muster on the saddle before my bride.

"Poor old Lalouette understood but little of the urgency of the case, when I requested his leave to take my lessons each morning at six o'clock, for I dared not absent myself during the day without exciting suspicion; and never, I will venture to assert, did knight-errant of old strive harder for the hand of his lady-love than did I during that weary fortnight, if a hippogriff had been the animal I bestrode, instead of being, as it was, an old wall-eyed grey, I could not have felt more misgivings at my temerity, or more proud of my achievement. In the first three days the unaccustomed exercise proved so severe, that when I reached the deanery I could hardly move, and crossed the floor, pretty much as a pair of compasses might be supposed to do if performing that exploit. Nothing, however, could equal the kindness of my poor dear mother-in-law in embryo, and even the dean too. Fanny, indeed, said nothing; but I rather think she was disposed to giggle a little; but my rheumatism, as it was called, was daily inquired after, and I was compelled to take some infernal stuff in my port wine at dinner that nearly made me sick at table.

"'I am sure you walk too much,' said Fanny, with one of her knowing looks. 'Papa, don't you think he ought to ride; it would be much better for him.'

"'I do, my dear,' said the dean. 'But then you see he is so hard to be pleased in a horse. Your old hunting days have spoiled you; but you must forget Melton and Grantham, and condescend to keep a hack.'

"I must have looked confoundedly foolish here, for Fanny never took her eyes off me, and continued to laugh in her own wicked way.

"It was now about the ninth or tenth day of my purgatorial performances; and certainly if there be any merit in fleshly mortifications, these religious exercises of mine should stand my part hereafter. A review had been announced in the Phoenix-park, which Fanny had expressed herself most desirous to witness; and as the dean would not permit her to go without a chaperon, I had no means of escape, and promised to escort her. No sooner had I made this rash pledge, than I hastened to my confidential friend, Lalouette, and having imparted to him my entire secret, asked him in a solemn and imposing manner, 'Can I do it?' The old man shook his head dubiously, looked grave, and muttered at length, 'Mosch depend on de horse.' 'I know it—I know it—I feel it,'

said I eagerly—'then where are we to find an animal that will carry me peaceably through this awful day—I care not for his price?'

"Votre affaire ne sera pas trop chere,' said he.

"Why. How do you mean?' said I.

"He then proceeded to inform me, that by a singularly fortunate chance, there took place that day an auction of 'cast horses,' as they are termed, which had been used in the horse police force; and that from long riding, and training to stand fire, nothing could be more suitable than one of these; being both easy to ride, and not given to start at noise.

"I could have almost hugged the old fellow for his happy suggestion, and waited with impatience for three o'clock to come, when we repaired together to Essex-bridge, at that time the place selected for these sales.

"I was at first a little shocked at the look of the animals drawn up; they were most miserably thin—most of them swelled in the legs—few without sore backs—and not one eye, on an average, in every three; but still they were all high steppers, and carried a great tail. 'There's your affaire,' said the old Frenchman, as a long-legged fiddle-headed beast was led out; turning out his forelegs so as to endanger the man who walked beside him.

"Yes, there's blood for you, said Charley Dycer, seeing my eye fixed on the wretched beast; 'equal to fifteen stone with any foxhounds; safe in all his paces, and warranted sound; except,' added he, in a whisper, 'a slight spavin in both hind legs, ring gone, and a little touched in the wind.' Here the animal gave an approving cough. 'Will any gentleman say fifty pounds to begin?' But no gentleman did. A hackney coachman, however, said five, and the sale was opened; the beast trotting up and down nearly over the bidders at every moment, and plunging on so that it was impossible to know what was doing.

"Five, ten—fifteen—six pounds—thank you, sir,—guineas'—'seven pounds,' said I, bidding against myself, not perceiving that I had spoken last. 'Thank you, Mr. Moriarty,' said Dycer, turning towards an invisible purchaser supposed to be in the crowd. 'Thank you, sir, you'll not let a good one go that way.' Every one here turned to find out the very knowing gentleman; but he could no where be seen.

"Dycer resumed, 'Seven ten for Mr. Moriarty. Going for seven ten—a cruel sacrifice—there's action for you—playful beast.' Here the devil had stumbled and nearly killed a basket-woman with two children.

"Eight,' said I, with a loud voice.

"Eight pounds, quite absurd,' said Dycer, almost rudely; 'a charger like that for eight pounds—going for eight pounds—going—nothing above eight pounds—no reserve, gentlemen, you are aware of that. They are all as it were, his majesty's stud—no reserve whatever—last time, eight pounds—gone.'

"Amid a very hearty cheer from the mob—God knows why—but a Dublin mob always cheer—I returned, accompanied by a ragged fellow, leading my new purchase after me with a bay halter. 'What is the meaning of those letters,' said I, pointing to a very conspicuous G.R. with sundry other enigmatical signs, burned upon the animal's hind quarter.

"That's to show he was a po-lice,' said the fellow with a grin; 'and whin ye ride with ladies, ye must turn the decoy side.'

"The auspicious morning at last arrived; and strange to say that the first waking thought was of the unlucky day that ushered in my yachting excursion, four years before. Why this was so, I cannot pretend to guess; there was but little analogy in the circumstances, at least so far as any thing had then gone. 'How is Marius?' said I to my servant, as he opened my shutters. Here let me mention that a friend of the Kildare-street club had suggested this name from the remarkably classic character of my steed's countenance; his nose, he assured me, was perfectly Roman.

"Marius is doing finely, sir, barring his cough, and the thrifle that ails his hind legs.'

"He'll carry me quietly, Simon, eh?'

"Quietly. I'll warrant he'll carry you quietly, if that's all.'

"Here was comfort. Certainly Simon had lived forty years as pantry boy with my mother, and knew a great deal about horses. I dressed myself, therefore, in high spirits; and if my pilot jacket and oil-skin cap in former days had half persuaded me that I was born for marine achievements, certainly my cords and tops, that morning, went far to convince me that I must have once been a very keen sportsman somewhere, without knowing it. It was a delightful July day that I set out to join my friends, who having recruited a large party, were to rendezvous at the corner of Stephen's-green; thither I proceeded in a certain ambling trot, which I have often observed is a very favourite pace with timid horsemen, and gentlemen of the medical profession. I was hailed with a most hearty welcome by a large party as I turned out of Grafton-street, among whom I perceived several friends of Miss Eversham, and some young dragoon officers, not of my acquaintance, but who appeared to know Fanny intimately, and were laughing heartily with her as I rode up.

"I don't know if other men have experienced what I am about to mention or not; but certainly to me there is no more painful sensation than to find yourself among a number of well-mounted, well-equipped people, while the animal you yourself bestride seems only fit for the kennel. Every look that is cast at your unlucky steed—every whispered observation about you are so many thorns in your flesh, till at last you begin to feel that your appearance is for very little else than the amusement and mirth of the assembly; and every time you rise in your stirrups you excite a laugh.

"Where for mercy's sake did you find that creature?" said Fanny, surveying Marius through her glass.

"Oh, him, eh? Why he is a handsome horse, if in condition—a charger your know—that's his style."

"Indeed," lisped a young lancer, "I should be devilish sorry to charge or be charged with him." And here they all chuckled at this puppy's silly joke, and I drew up to repress further liberties.

"Is he anything of a fencer?" said a young country gentleman.

"To judge from his near eye, I should say much more of a boxer," said another.

Here commenced a running fire of pleasantries at the expense of my poor steed; which, not content with attacking his physical, extended to his moral qualities. An old gentleman near me observing, "that I ought not to have mounted him at all, seeing he was so damned groggy;" to which I replied, by insinuating, that if others present were as free from the influence of ardent spirits, society would not be a sufferer; an observation that I flatter myself turned the mirth against the old fellow, for they all laughed for a quarter of an hour after.

Well, at last we set out in a brisk trot, and, placed near Fanny, I speedily forgot all my annoyances in the prospect of figuring to advantage before her. When we reached College-green the leaders of the cortege suddenly drew up, and we soon found that the entire street opposite the Bank was filled with a dense mob of people, who appeared to be swayed hither and thither, like some mighty beast, as the individuals composing it were engaged in close conflict. It was nothing more nor less than one of those almost weekly rows, which then took place between the students of the University and the town's-people, and which rarely ended without serious consequences. The numbers of people pressing on to the scene of action soon blocked up our retreat, and we found ourselves most unwilling spectators of the conflict. Political watch-words were loudly shouted by each party; and at last the students, who appeared to be yielding to superior numbers, called out for the intervention of the police. The aid was nearer than they expected; for at the same instant a body of mounted policemen, whose high helmets rendered them sufficiently conspicuous, were seen trotting at a sharp pace down Dame-street. On they came with drawn sabres, led by a well-looking gentlemanlike personage in plain clothes, who dashed at once into the midst of the fray, issuing his orders, and pointing out to his followers to secure the ringleaders. Up to this moment I had been a most patient, and rather amused spectator, of what was doing. Now, however, my part was to commence, for at the word 'charge,' given in a harsh, deep voice by the sergeant of the party, Marius, remembering his ancient instinct, pricked up his ears, cocked his tail, flung up both his hind legs till they nearly broke the Provost's windows, and plunged into the thickest of the fray like a devil incarnate.

Self-preservation must be a strong instinct, for I well remember how little pain it cost me to see the people tumbling and rolling before and beneath me, while I continued to keep my seat. It was only the moment before and that immense mass were in man to man encounter; now all the indignation of both parties seemed turned upon me; brick-bats were loudly implored, and paving stones begged to throw at my devoted head; the wild huntsman of the German romance never created half the terror, nor one-tenth of the mischief that I did in less than fifteen minutes, for the ill-starred beast continued twining and twisting like a serpent, plunging and kicking the entire time, and occasionally biting too; all which accomplishments I afterwards learned, however little in request in civil life, are highly prized in the horse police.

"Every new order of the sergeant was followed in his own fashion by Marius; who very soon contrived to concentrate in my unhappy person, all the interest of about fifteen hundred people.

"Secure that scoundrel," said the magistrate, pointing with his finger towards me, as I rode over a respectable looking old lady, with a grey muff. "Secure him. Cut him down."

"Ah, devil's luck to him, if ye do," said a news monger with a broken shin.

On I went, however, and now, as the Fates would have it, instead of bearing me out of further danger, the confounded brute dashed onwards to where the magistrate was standing, surrounded by policemen. I thought I saw him change colour as I came on. I suppose my own looks were none of the pleasantest, for the worthy man liked them not. Into the midst of them we plunged, upsetting a corporal, horse and all, and appearing as if bent upon reaching the alderman.

"Cut him down for heaven's sake. Will nobody shoot him?" said he, with a voice trembling with fear and anger.

At these words a wretch lifted up his sabre, and made a cut at my head. I stooped suddenly, and throwing myself from the saddle, seized the poor alderman round the neck, and we both came rolling to the ground together. So completely was he possessed with the notion that I meant to assassinate him, that while I was endeavouring to extricate myself from his grasp, he

continued to beg his life in the most heartrending manner.

"My story is now soon told. So effectually did they rescue the alderman from his danger, that they left me insensible; and I only came to myself some days after by finding myself in the dock in Green-street, charged with an indictment of nineteen counts; the only word of truth is what lay in the preamble, for the 'devil inciting' me only, would ever have made me the owner of that infernal beast, the cause of all my misfortunes. I was so stupified from my hearing, that I know little of the course of the proceedings. My friends told me afterwards that I had a narrow escape from transportation; but for the greatest influence exerted in my behalf, I should certainly have passed the autumn in the agreeable recreation of pounding oyster shells or carding wool; and it certainly must have gone hard with me, for stupified as I was, I remember the sensation in court, when the alderman made his appearance with a patch over his eye. The affecting admonition of the little judge—who, when passing sentence upon me, adverted to the former respectability of my life, and the rank of my relatives—actually made the galleries weep.

"Four months in Newgate, and a fine to the king, then rewarded my taste for horse-exercise; and it's no wonder if I prefer going on foot.

"As to Miss Eversham, the following short note from the dean concluded my hopes in that quarter.

"Deanery, Wednesday morning.

"Sir,—After the very distressing publicity to which your late conduct has exposed you—the so open avowal of political opinion, at variance with those (I will say) of every gentleman—and the recorded sentence of a judge on the verdict of twelve of your countrymen—I should hope that you will not feel my present admonition necessary to inform you, that your visits at my house shall cease.

"The presents you made my daughter, when under our unfortunate ignorance of your real character, have been addressed to your hotel, and I am your most obedient, humble servant,

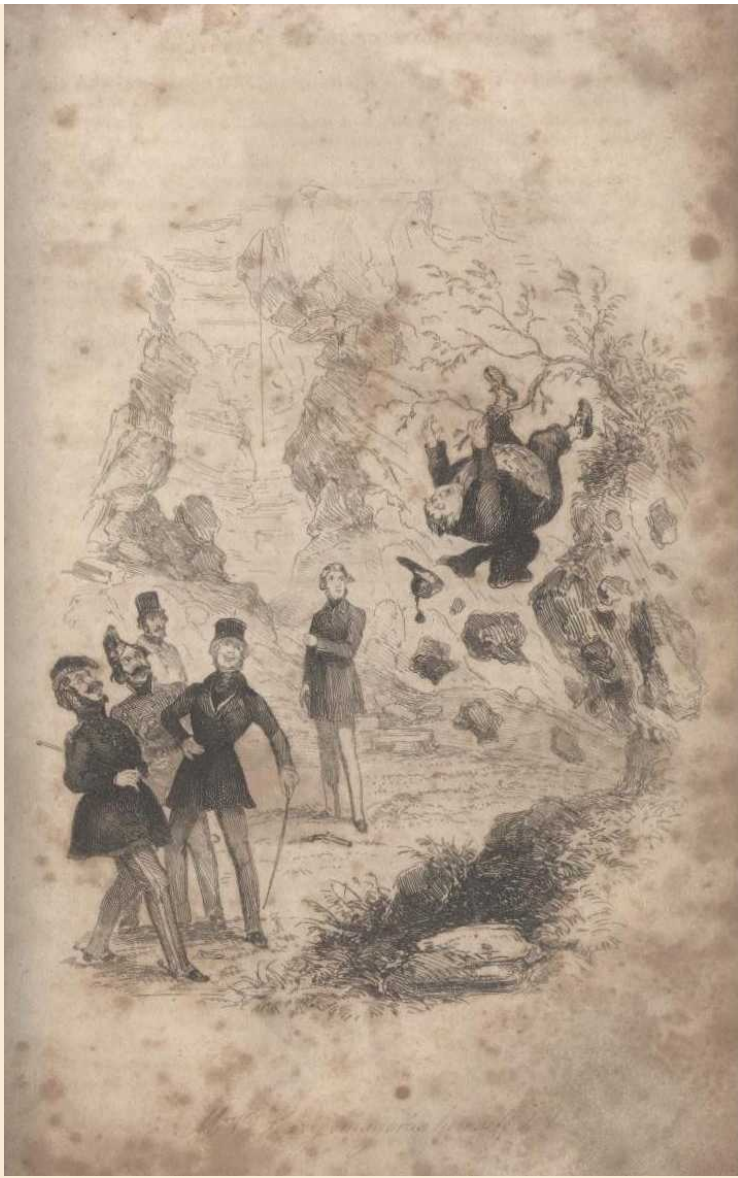
"Oliver Eversham.'

"Here ended my second affair 'par amours;' and I freely confess to you that if I can only obtain a wife in a sea voyage, or a steeple chase, I am likely to fulfill one great condition in modern advertising—'as having no incumbrance, or any objection to travel.'"

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE DUEL.

Mr. O'Leary Imagines Himself Kilt



Mr. O'Leary had scarcely concluded the narrative of his second adventure, when the grey light of the breaking day was seen faintly struggling through the half-closed curtains, and apprising us of the lateness of the hour.

"I think we shall just have time for one finishing flask of Chambertin," said O'Leary, as he emptied the bottle into his glass.

"I forbid the bans, for one," cried Trevanion. "We have all had wine enough, considering what we have before us this morning; and besides you are not aware it is now past four o'clock. So garcon—garcon, there—how soundly the poor fellow sleeps—let us have some coffee, and then inquire if a carriage is in waiting at the corner of the Rue Vivienne."

The coffee made its appearance, very much, as it seemed, to Mr. O'Leary's chagrin, who, however, solaced himself by sundry petits verres, to correct the coldness of the wine he had drunk, and at length recovered his good humour.

"Do you know, now," said he, after a short pause, in which we had all kept silence, "I think what we are about to do, is the very ugliest way of finishing a pleasant evening. For my own part I like the wind up we used to have in 'Old Trinity' formerly; when, after wringing off half a dozen knockers, breaking the lamps at the post-office, and getting out the fire engines of Werburgh's parish, we beat a few watchmen, and went peaceably to bed."

"Well, not being an Irishman," said Trevanion, "I'm half disposed to think that even our present purpose is nearly as favourable to life and limb; but here comes my servant. Well, John, is all arranged, and the carriage ready?"

Having ascertained that the carriage was in waiting, and that the small box—brass bound and Bramah-locked—reposed within, we paid our bill and departed. A cold, raw, misty-looking morning, with masses of dark louring clouds overhead, and channels of dark and murky water beneath, were the pleasant prospects which met us as we issued forth from the Cafe. The lamps, which hung suspended midway across the street, (we speak of some years since,) creaked, with a low and plaintive sound, as they swung backwards and forwards in the wind. Not a footstep was heard in the street—nothing but the heavy patter of the rain as it fell ceaselessly upon the broad pavement. It was, indeed, a most depressing and dispiriting accompaniment to our intended

excursion: and even O'Leary, who seemed to have but slight sympathy with external influences, felt it, for he spoke but little, and was scarcely ten minutes in the carriage till he was sound asleep. This was, I confess, a great relief to me; for, however impressed I was, and to this hour am, with the many sterling qualities of my poor friend, yet, I acknowledge, that this was not precisely the time I should have cared for their exercise, and would have much preferred the companionship of a different order of person, even though less long acquainted with him. Trevanion was, of all others, the most suitable for this purpose; and I felt no embarrassment in opening my mind freely to him upon subjects which, but twenty-four hours previous, I could not have imparted to a brother.

There is no such unlocker of the secrets of the heart as the possibly near approach of death. Indeed, I question if a great deal of the bitterness the thought of it inspires, does not depend upon that very circumstance. The reflection that the long-treasured mystery of our lives (and who is there without some such?) is about to become known, and the secret of our inmost heart laid bare, is in itself depressing. Not one kind word, nor one remembrancing adieu, to those we are to leave for ever, can be spoken or written, without calling up its own story of half-forgotten griefs or, still worse, at such a moment, of happiness never again to be partaken of.

"I cannot explain why," said I to Trevanion, "but although it has unfortunately been pretty often my lot to have gone out on occasions like this, both as principal and friend, yet never before did I feel so completely depressed and low-spirited—and never, in fact, did so many thoughts of regret arise before me for much of the past, and sorrow for the chance of abandoning the future"—

"I can understand," said Trevanion, interrupting—"I have heard of your prospect in the Callonby family, and certainly, with such hopes, I can well conceive how little one would be disposed to brook the slightest incident which could interfere with their accomplishment; but, now that your cousin Guy's pretensions in that quarter are at an end, I suppose, from all I have heard, that there can be no great obstacle to yours."

"Guy's pretensions at an end! For heaven's sake, tell me all you know of this affair—for up to this moment I am in utter ignorance of every thing regarding his position among the Callonby family."

"Unfortunately," replied Trevanion, "I know but little, but still that little is authentic—Guy himself having imparted the secret to a very intimate friend of mine. It appears, then, that your cousin, having heard that the Callonbys had been very civil to you in Ireland, and made all manner of advances to you—had done so under the impression that you were the other nephew of Sir Guy, and consequently the heir of a large fortune—that is, Guy himself—and that they had never discovered the mistake during the time they resided in Ireland, when they not only permitted, but even encouraged the closest intimacy between you and Lady Jane. Is so far true?"

"I have long suspected it. Indeed in no other way can I account for the reception I met with from the Callonbys. But is it possible that Lady Jane could have lent herself to any thing so unworthy."—

"Pray, hear me out," said Trevanion, who was evidently struck by the despondency of my voice and manner. "Guy having heard of their mistake, and auguring well to himself from this evidence of their disposition, no sooner heard of their arrival in Paris, than he came over here and got introduced to them. From that time he scarcely ever left their house, except to accompany them into society, or to the theatres. It is said that with Lady Jane he made no progress. Her manner, at the beginning cold and formal, became daily more so; until, at last, he was half disposed to abandon the pursuit—in which, by the by, he has since confessed, monied views entered more than any affection for the lady—when the thought struck him to benefit by what he supposed at first to be the great bar to his success. He suddenly pretended to be only desirous of intimacy with Lady Jane, from having heard so much of her from you—affected to be greatly in your confidence—and, in fact, assumed the character of a friend cognizant of all your feelings and hopes, and ardently desiring, by every means in his power, to advance your views—"

"And was it thus he succeeded," I broke in.

"'Twas thus he endeavoured to succeed," said Trevanion.

"Ah, with what success I but too well know" said I. "My uncle himself showed me a letter from Guy, in which he absolutely speaks of the affair as settled, and talks of Lady Jane as about to be his wife."

"That may be all quite true; but a little consideration of Guy's tactics will show what he intended; for I find that he induced your uncle, by some representations of his, to make the most handsome proposals, with regard to the marriage, to the Callonbys; and that, to make the story short, nothing but the decided refusal of Lady Jane, who at length saw through his entire game prevented the match."

"And then she did refuse him," said I, with ill-repressed exultation.

"Of that there can be no doubt; for independently of all the gossip and quizzing upon the subject, to which Guy was exposed in the coteries, he made little secret of it himself—openly avowing that he did not consider a repulse a defeat, and that he resolved to sustain the siege as vigorously as ever."

However interested I felt in all Trevanion was telling me, I could not help falling into a train of

thinking on my first acquaintance with the Callonbys. There are, perhaps, but few things more humiliating than the knowledge that any attention or consideration we have met with, has been paid us in mistake for another; and in the very proportion that they were prized before, are they detested when the truth is known to us.

To all the depressing influences these thoughts suggested, came the healing balm that Lady Jane was true to me—that she, at least, however others might be biassed by worldly considerations—that she cared for me—for myself alone. My reader (alas! for my character for judgment) knows upon how little I founded the conviction; but I have often, in these Confessions, avowed my failing, par excellence, to be a great taste for self-deception; and here was a capital occasion for its indulgence.

"We shall have abundant time to discuss this later on," said Trevanion, laying his hand upon my shoulder to rouse my wandering attention—"for now, I perceive, we have only eight minutes to spare."

As he spoke, a dragoon officer, in an undress, rode up to the window of the carriage, and looking steadily at our party for a few seconds, asked if we were "Messieurs les Anglais;" and, almost without waiting for reply, added, "You had better not go any farther in your carriage, for the next turn of the road will bring you in sight of the village."

We accordingly stopped the driver, and having (with) some difficulty aroused O'Leary, got out upon the road. The militaire here gave his horse to a groom, and proceeded to guide us through a corn-field by a narrow path, with whose windings and crossings he appeared quite conversant. We at length reached the brow of a little hill, from which an extended view of the country lay before us, showing the Seine winding its tranquil course between the richly tilled fields, dotted with many a pretty cottage. Turning abruptly from this point, our guide led us, by a narrow and steep path, into a little glen, planted with poplar and willows. A small stream ran through this, and by the noise we soon detected that a mill was not far distant, which another turning brought us at once in front of.

And here I cannot help dwelling upon the "tableau" which met our view. In the porch of the little rural mill sat two gentlemen, one of whom I immediately recognised as the person who had waited upon me, and the other I rightly conjectured to be my adversary. Before them stood a small table, covered with a spotless napkin, upon which a breakfast equipage was spread—a most inviting melon and a long, slender-necked bottle, reposing in a little ice-pail, forming part of the "materiel." My opponent was coolly enjoying his cigar—a half-finished cup of coffee lay beside him—his friend was occupied in examining the caps of the duelling pistols, which were placed upon a chair. No sooner had we turned the angle which brought us in view, than they both rose, and, taking off their hats with much courtesy, bade us good morning.

"May I offer you a cup of coffee," said Monsieur Derigny to me, as I came up, at the same time filling it out, and pushing over a little flask of Cogniac towards me.

A look from Trevanion decided my acceptance of the proffered civility, and I seated myself in the chair beside the baron. Trevanion meanwhile had engaged my adversary in conversation along with the stranger, who had been our guide, leaving O'Leary alone unoccupied, which, however, he did not long remain; for, although uninvited by the others, he seized a knife and fork, and commenced a vigorous attack upon a partridge pie near him; and, with equal absence of ceremony, uncorked the champaign and filled out a foaming goblet, nearly one-third of the whole bottle, adding—

"I think, Mr. Lorrequer, there's nothing like showing them that we are just as cool and unconcerned as themselves."

If I might judge from the looks of the party, a happier mode of convincing them of our "free-and-easy" feelings could not possibly have been discovered. From any mortification this proceeding might have caused me, I was speedily relieved by Trevanion calling O'Leary to one side, while he explained to him that he must nominally act as second on the ground, as Trevanion, being a resident in Paris, might become liable to a prosecution, should any thing serious arise, while O'Leary, as a mere passer through, could cross the frontier into Germany, and avoid all trouble.

O'Leary at once acceded—perhaps the more readily because he expected to be allowed to return to his breakfast—but in this he soon found himself mistaken, for the whole party now rose, and preceded by the baron, followed the course of the little stream.

After about five minutes' walking, we found ourselves at the outlet of the glen, which was formed by a large stone quarry, making a species of amphitheatre, with lofty walls of rugged granite, rising thirty or forty feet on either side of us. The ground was smooth and level as a boarded floor, and certainly to amateurs in these sort of matters, presented a most perfect spot for a "meeting."

The stranger who had just joined us, could not help remarking our looks of satisfaction at the choice of ground, and observed to me—

"This is not the first affair that this little spot has witnessed; and the moulinet of St. Cloud is, I think, the very best 'meet' about Paris."

Trevanion who, during these few minutes, had been engaged with Derigny, now drew me aside.

"Well, Lorrequer, have you any recollection now of having seen your opponent before? or can you make a guess at the source of all this?"

"Never till this instant," said I, "have I beheld him," as I looked towards the tall, stoutly-built figure of my adversary, who was very leisurely detaching a cordon from his tightly fitting frock, doubtless to prevent its attracting my aim.

"Well, never mind, I shall manage every thing properly. What can you do with the small sword, for they have rapiers at the mill?"

"Nothing whatever; I have not fenced since I was a boy."

"N'importe—then we'll fight at a barriere. I know they're not prepared for that from Englishmen; so just step on one side now, and leave me to talk it over."

As the limited nature of the ground did not permit me to retire to a distance, I became involuntarily aware of a dialogue, which even the seriousness of the moment could scarcely keep me from laughing at outright.

It was necessary, for the sake of avoiding any possible legal difficulty in the result, that O'Leary should give his assent to every step of the arrangement; and being totally ignorant of French, Trevanion had not only to translate for him, but also to render in reply O'Leary's own comments or objections to the propositions of the others.

"Then it is agreed—we fight at a barriere," said the Captain Derigny.

"What's that, Trevanion?"

"We have agreed to place them at a barriere," replied Trevanion.

"That's strange," muttered O'Leary to himself, who, knowing that the word meant a "turnpike," never supposed it had any other signification.

"Vingt quatre pas, n'est pas," said Derigny.

"Too far," interposed Trevanion.

"What does he say now?" asked O'Leary.

"Twenty-four paces for the distance."

"Twenty-four of my teeth he means," said O'Leary, snapping his fingers. "What does he think of the length of Sackville-street? Ask him that, will ye?"

"What says Monsieur?" said the Frenchman.

"He thinks the distance much too great."

"He may be mistaken," said the Captain, half sneeringly. "My friend is 'de la premiere force.'"

"That must be something impudent, from your looks, Mr. Trevanion. Isn't it a thousand pities I can't speak French?"

"What say you, then, to twelve paces? Fire together, and two shots each, if the first fire be inconclusive," said Trevanion.

"And if necessary," added the Frenchman, carelessly, "conclude with these"—touching the swords with his foot as he spoke.

"The choice of the weapon lies with us, I opine," replied Trevanion. "We have already named pistols, and by them we shall decide this matter."

It was at length, after innumerable objections, agreed upon that we should be placed back to back, and at a word given each walk forward to a certain distance marked out by a stone, where we were to halt, and at the signal, "une," "deux," turn round and fire.

This, which is essentially a French invention in duelling, was perfectly new to me, but by no means to Trevanion, who was fully aware of the immense consequence of not giving even a momentary opportunity for aim to my antagonist; and in this mode of firing the most practised and deadly shot is liable to err—particularly if the signal be given quickly.

While Trevanion and the Captain were measuring out the ground, a little circumstance which was enacted near me was certainly not over calculated to strengthen my nerve. The stranger who had led us to the ground had begun to examine the pistols, and finding that one of them was loaded, turned towards my adversary, saying, "De Haultpenne, you have forgotten to draw the charge. Come let us see what vein you are in." At the same time, drawing off his large cavalry glove, he handed the pistol to his friend.

"A double Napoleon you don't hit the thumb."

"Done," said the other, adjusting the weapon in his hand.

The action was scarcely performed, when the bettor flung the glove into the air with all his force. My opponent raised his pistol, waited for an instant, till the glove, having attained its greatest height, turned to fall again. Then click went the trigger—the glove turned round and

round half-a-dozen times, and fell about twenty yards off, and the thumb was found cut clearly off at the juncture with the hand.

This—which did not occupy half as long as I have spent in recounting it—was certainly a pleasant introduction to standing at fifteen yards from the principal actor; and I should doubtless have felt it in all its force, had not my attention been drawn off by the ludicrous expression of grief in O'Leary's countenance, who evidently regarded me as already defunct.

"Now, Lorrequer, we are ready," said Trevanion, coming forward; and then, lowering his voice, added, "All is in your favour; I have won the 'word,' which I shall give the moment you halt. So turn and fire at once: be sure not to go too far round in the turn—that is the invariable error in this mode of firing; only no hurry—be calm."

"Now, Messieurs," said Derigny, as he approached with his friend leaning upon his arm, and placed him in the spot allotted to him. Trevanion then took my arm, and placed me back to back to my antagonist. As I took up my ground, it so chanced that my adversary's spur slightly grazed me, upon which he immediately turned round, and, with the most engaging smile, begged a "thousand pardons," and hoped I was not hurt.

O'Leary, who saw the incident, and guessed the action aright, called out:

"Oh, the cold-blooded villain; the devil a chance for you, Mr. Lorrequer."

"Messieurs, your pistols," said Le Capitaine la Garde, who, as he handed the weapons, and repeated once more the conditions of the combat, gave the word to march.

I now walked slowly forward to the place marked out by the stone; but it seemed that I must have been in advance of my opponent, for I remember some seconds elapsed before Trevanion coughed slightly, and then with a clear full voice called out "Une," "Deux." I had scarcely turned myself half round, when my right arm was suddenly lifted up, as if by a galvanic shock. My pistol jerked upwards, and exploded the same moment, and then dropped powerlessly from my hand, which I now felt was covered with warm blood from a wound near the elbow. From the acute but momentary pang this gave me, my attention was soon called off; for scarcely had my arm been struck, when a loud clattering noise to my left induced me to turn, and then, to my astonishment, I saw my friend O'Leary about twelve feet from the ground, hanging on by some ash twigs that grew from the clefts of the granite. Fragments of broken rock were falling around him, and his own position momentarily threatened a downfall. He was screaming with all his might; but what he said was entirely lost in the shouts of laughter of Trevanion and the Frenchmen, who could scarcely stand with the immoderate exuberance of their mirth.

I had not time to run to his aid—which, although wounded, I should have done—when the branch he clung to, slowly yielded with his weight, and the round, plump figure of my poor friend rolled over the little cleft of rock, and, after a few faint struggles, came tumbling heavily down, and at last lay peaceably in the deep heather at the bottom—his cries the whole time being loud enough to rise even above the vociferous laughter of the others.

I now ran forward, as did Trevanion, when O'Leary, turning his eyes towards me, said, in the most piteous manner—

"Mr. Lorrequer, I forgive you—here is my hand—bad luck to their French way of fighting, that's all—it's only good for killing one's friend. I thought I was safe up there, come what might."

"My dear O'Leary," said I, in an agony, which prevented my minding the laughing faces around me, "surely you don't mean to say that I have wounded you?"

"No, dear, not wounded, only killed me outright—through the brain it must be, from the torture I'm suffering."

The shout with which this speech was received, sufficiently aroused me; while Trevanion, with a voice nearly choked with laughter, said—

"Why, Lorrequer, did you not see that your pistol, on being struck, threw your ball high up on the quarry; fortunately, however, about a foot and a half above Mr. O'Leary's head, whose most serious wounds are his scratched hands and bruised bones from his tumble."

This explanation, which was perfectly satisfactory to me, was by no means so consoling to poor O'Leary, who lay quite unconscious to all around, moaning in the most melancholy manner. Some of the blood, which continued to flow fast from my wound, having dropped upon his face, roused him a little—but only to increase his lamentation for his own destiny, which he believed was fast accomplishing.

"Through the skull—clean through the skull—and preserving my senses to the last! Mr. Lorrequer, stoop down—it is a dying man asks you—don't refuse me a last request. There's neither luck nor grace, honor nor glory in such a way of fighting—so just promise me you'll shoot that grinning baboon there, when he's going off the ground, since it's the fashion to fire at a man with his back to you. Bring him down, and I'll die easy."

And with these words he closed his eyes, and straightened out his legs—stretched his arm at either side, and arranged himself as much corpse fashion as the circumstances of the ground would permit—while I now freely participated in the mirth of the others, which, loud and boisterous as it was, never reached the ears of O'Leary.

My arm had now become so painful, that I was obliged to ask Trevanion to assist me in getting off my coat. The surprise of the Frenchmen on learning that I was wounded was very considerable—O'Leary's catastrophe having exclusively engaged all attention. My arm was now examined, when it was discovered that the ball had passed through from one side to the other, without apparently touching the bone; the bullet and the portion of my coat carried in by it both lay in my sleeve. The only serious consequence to be apprehended was the wound of the blood-vessel, which continued to pour forth blood unceasingly, and I was just surgeon enough to guess that an artery had been cut.

Trevanion bound his handkerchief tightly across the wound, and assisted me to the high road, which, so sudden was the loss of blood, I reached with difficulty. During all these proceedings, nothing could be possibly more kind and considerate than the conduct of our opponents. All the farouche and swaggering air which they had deemed the "rigueur" before, at once fled, and in its place we found the most gentlemanlike attention and true politeness.

As soon as I was enabled to speak upon the matter, I begged Trevanion to look to poor O'Leary, who still lay upon the ground in a state of perfect unconsciousness. Captain Derigny, on hearing my wish, at once returned to the quarry, and, with the greatest difficulty, persuaded my friend to rise and endeavour to walk, which at last he did attempt, calling him to bear witness that it perhaps was the only case on record where a man with a bullet in his brain had made such an exertion.

With a view to my comfort and quiet, they put him into the cab of Le Baron; and, having undertaken to send Dupuytrien to me immediately on my reaching Paris, took their leave, and Trevanion and I set out homeward.

Not all my exhaustion and debility—nor even the acute pain I was suffering, could prevent my laughing at O'Leary's adventure; and it required all Trevanion's prudence to prevent my indulging too far in my recollection of it.

When we reached Meurice's, I found Dupuytrien in waiting, who immediately pronounced the main artery of the limb as wounded; and almost as instantaneously proceeded to pass a ligature round it. This painful business being concluded, I was placed upon a sofa, and being plentifully supplied with lemonade, and enjoined to keep quiet, left to my own meditations, such as they were, till evening—Trevanion having taken upon him to apologize for our absence at Mrs. Bingham's dejeuner, and O'Leary being fast asleep in his own apartments.

CHAPTER XXXV.

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS—A FIRST LOVE.

I know of no sensations so very nearly alike, as those felt on awaking after very sudden and profuse loss of blood, and those resulting from a large dose of opium. The dizziness, the confusion, and the abstraction at first, gradually yielding, as the senses became clearer, to a vague and indistinct consciousness; then the strange mistiness, in which fact and fiction are wrapped up—the confounding of persons, and places, and times, not so as to embarrass and annoy—for the very debility you feel subdues all irritation—but rather to present a panoramic picture of odd and incongruous events more pleasing than otherwise.

Of the circumstances by which I was thus brought to a sick couch, I had not even the most vague recollection—the faces and the dress of all those I had lately seen were vividly before me; but how, and for what purpose I knew not. Something in their kindness and attention had left an agreeable impression upon my mind, and without being able, or even attempting to trace it, I felt happy in the thought. While thus the "hour before" was dim and indistinct, the events of years past were vividly and brightly pictured before me; and strange, too, the more remote the period, the more did it seem palpable and present to my imagination. For so it is, there is in memory a species of mental long-sightedness, which, though blind to the object close beside you, can reach the blue mountains and the starry skies, which lie full many a league away. Is this a malady? or is it rather a providential gift to alleviate the tedious hours of the sick bed, and cheer the lonely sufferer, whose thoughts are his only realm?

My school-boy days, in all their holiday excitement; the bank where I had culled the earliest cowslips of the year; the clear but rapid stream, where days long I have watched the speckled trout, as they swam peacefully beneath, or shook their bright fins in the gay sunshine; the gorgeous dragon-fly that played above the water, and dipped his bright wings in its ripple—they

were all before me. And then came the thought of school itself, with its little world of boyish cares and emulations; the early imbibed passion for success; the ardent longing for superiority; the high and swelling feeling of the heart, as home drew near, to think that I had gained the wished-for prize—the object of many an hour's toil—the thought of many a long night's dream; my father's smile; my mother's kiss! Oh! what a very world of tender memory that one thought suggests; for what are all our later successes in life—how bright soever our fortune be—compared with the early triumphs of our infancy? Where, among the jealous rivalry of some, the cold and half-wrung praise of others, the selfish and unsympathising regard of all, shall we find any thing to repay us for the swelling extacy of our young hearts, as those who have cradled and loved us grow proud in our successes? For myself, a life that has failed in every prestige of those that prophesied favourably—years that have followed on each other only to blight the promise that kind and well-wishing friends foretold—leave but little to dwell upon, that can be reckoned as success. And yet, some moments I have had, which half seemed to realize my early dream of ambition, and rouse my spirit within me; but what were they all compared to my boyish glories? what the passing excitement one's own heart inspires in the lonely and selfish solitude, when compared with that little world of sympathy and love our early home teemed with, as, proud in some trifling distinction, we fell into a mother's arms, and heard our father's "God bless you, boy?" No, no; the world has no requital for this. It is like the bright day-spring, which, as its glories gild the east, display before us a whole world of beauty and promise—blighted hopes have not withered, false friendships have not scathed, cold, selfish interest has not yet hardened our hearts, or dried up our affections, and we are indeed happy; but equally like the burst of morning is it fleeting and short-lived; and equally so, too, does it pass away, never, never to return.

From thoughts like these my mind wandered on to more advanced years, when, emerging from very boyhood, I half believed myself a man, and was fully convinced I was in love.

Perhaps, after all, for the time it lasted—ten days, I think—it was the most sincere passion I ever felt. I had been spending some weeks at a small watering-place in Wales with some relatives of my mother. There were, as might be supposed, but few "distractions" in such a place, save the scenery, and an occasional day's fishing in the little river of Dolgelly, which ran near. In all these little rambles which the younger portion of the family made together, frequent mention was ever being made of a visit from a very dear cousin, and to which all looked forward with the greatest eagerness—the elder ones of the party with a certain air of quiet pleasure, as though they knew more than they said, and the younger with all the childish exuberance of youthful delight. Clara Mourtray seemed to be, from all I was hourly hearing, the very paragon and pattern of every thing. If any one was praised for beauty, Clara was immediately pronounced much prettier—did any one sing, Clara's voice and taste were far superior. In our homeward walk, should the shadows of the dark hills fall with a picturesque effect upon the blue lake, some one was sure to say, "Oh! how Clara would like to sketch that." In short, there was no charm nor accomplishment ever the gift of woman, that Clara did not possess; or, what amounted pretty much to the same thing, that my relatives did not implicitly give her credit for. The constantly recurring praises of the same person affect us always differently as we go on in life. In youth the prevailing sentiment is an ardent desire to see the prodigy of whom we have heard so much—in after years, heartily to detest what hourly hurts our self-love by comparisons. We would take any steps to avoid meeting what we have inwardly decreed to be a "bore." The former was my course; and though my curiosity was certainly very great, I had made up my mind to as great a disappointment, and half wished for the longed arrival as a means of criticising what they could see no fault in.

The wished-for evening at length came, and we all set out upon a walk to meet the carriage which was to bring the bien aime Clara among us. We had not walked above a mile when the eager eye of the foremost detected a cloud of dust upon the road at some distance; and, after a few minutes more, four post-chaises were seen coming along at a tremendous rate. The next moment she was making the tour of about a dozen uncles, aunts, cousins, and cousines, none of whom, it appeared to me, felt any peculiar desire to surrender the hearty embrace to the next of kin in succession. At last she came to me, when, perhaps, in the confusion of the moment, not exactly remembering whether or not she had seen me before, she stood for a moment silent—a deep blush mantling her lovely cheek—masses of waving brown hair disordered and floating upon her shoulders—her large and liquid blue eyes beaming upon me. One look was enough. I was deeply—irretrievably in love.

"Our cousin Harry—Harry Lorrequer—wild Harry, as we used to call him, Clara," said one of the girls introducing me.

She held out her hand, and said something with a smile. What, I know not—nor can I tell how I replied; but something absurd it must have been, for they all laughed heartily, and the worthy papa himself tapped my shoulder jestingly, adding,

"Never mind, Harry—you will do better one day, or I am much mistaken in you."

Whether I was conscious that I had behaved foolishly or not, I cannot well say; but the whole of that night I thought over plans innumerable how I should succeed in putting myself forward before "Cousin Clara," and vindicating myself against any imputation of schoolboy mannerisms that my first appearance might have caused.

The next day we remained at home. Clara was too much fatigued to walk out, and none of us would leave her. What a day of happiness that was! I knew something of music, and could sing a second. Clara was delighted at this, for the others had not cultivated singing much. We therefore spent the whole morning in this way. Then she produced her sketch-book, and I brought out

mine, and we had a mutual interchange of prisoners. What cutting out of leaves and detaching of rice-paper landscapes! The she came out upon the lawn to see my pony leap, and promised to ride him the following day. She patted the greyhounds, and said Gipsy, which was mine, was the prettiest. In a word, before night fell Clara had won my heart in its every fibre, and I went to my room the very happiest of mortals.

I need not chronicle my next three days—to me the most glorious "trois jours" of my life. Clara had evidently singled me out and preferred me to all the rest. It was beside me she rode—upon my arm she leaned in walking—and, to comble me with delight unutterable, I overheard her say to my uncle, "Oh, I doat upon poor Harry! And it is so pleasant, for I'm sure Mortimer will be so jealous."

"And who is Mortimer," thought I; "he is a new character in the piece, of whom we have seen nothing."

I was not long in doubt upon this head, for that very day, at dinner, the identical Mortimer presented himself. He was a fine, dashing-looking, soldier-like fellow, of about thirty-five, and with a heavy moustache, and a bronzed cheek—rather grave in his manner, but still perfectly good-natured, and when he smiled showing a most handsome set of regular teeth. Clara seemed less pleased (I thought) at his coming than the others, and took pleasure in tormenting him by a thousand pettish and frivolous ways, which I was sorry for, as I thought he did not like it; and used to look half chidingly at her from time to time, but without any effect, for she just went on as before, and generally ended by taking my arm and saying, "Come away, Harry; you always are kind, and never look sulky. I can agree with you." These were delightful words for me to listen to, but I could not hear them without feeling for him, who evidently was pained by Clara's avowed preference for me; and whose years—for I thought thirty-five at that time a little verging upon the patriarchal—entitled him to more respect.

"Well," thought I, one evening, as this game had been carried rather farther than usual, "I hope she is content now, for certainly Mortimer is jealous;" and the result proved it, for the whole of the following day he absented himself, and never came back till late in the evening. He had been, I found, from a chance observation I overheard, at the bishop's palace, and the bishop himself, I learned, was to breakfast with us in the morning.

"Harry, I have a commission for you," said Clara. "You must get up very early to-morrow, and climb the Cader mountain, and bring me a grand bouquet of the blue and purple heath that I liked so much the last time I was there. Mind very early, for I intend to surprise the bishop to-morrow with my taste in a nosegay."

The sun had scarcely risen as I sprang from my bed, and started upon my errand. Oh! the glorious beauty of that morning's walk. As I climbed the mountain, the deep mists lay upon all around, and except the path I was treading, nothing was visible; but before I reached the top, the heavy masses of vapour were yielding to the influence of the sun; and as they rolled from the valleys up the mountain sides, were every instant opening new glens and ravines beneath me—bright in all their verdure, and speckled with sheep, whose tingling bells reached me even where I stood.

I counted above twenty lakes at different levels, below me; some brilliant, and shining like polished mirrors; others not less beautiful, dark and solemn with some mighty mountain shadow. As I looked landward, the mountains reared their huge crests, one above the other, to the farthest any eye could reach. Towards the opposite side, the calm and tranquil sea lay beneath me, bathed in the yellow gold of a rising sun; a few ships were peaceably lying at anchor in the bay; and the only thing in motion was a row-boat, the heavy monotonous stroke of whose oars rose in the stillness of the morning air. Not a single habitation of man could I descry, nor any vestige of a human being, except that mass of something upon the rock far down beneath be one, and I think it is, for I see the sheep-dog ever returning again and again to the same spot.

My bouquet was gathered; the gentian of the Alps, which is found here, also contributing its evidence to show where I had been to seek it, and I turned home.

The family were at breakfast as I entered; at least so the servants said, for I only remembered then that the bishop was our guest, and that I could not present myself without some slight attention to my dress. I hastened to my room, and scarcely had I finished, when one of my cousins, a little girl of eight years, came to the door and said,

"Harry, come down; Clara wants you."

I rushed down stairs, and as I entered the breakfast parlour, stood still with surprise. The ladies were all dressed in white, and even my little cousin wore a gala costume that amazed me.

"My bouquet, Harry; I hope you have not forgotten it," said Clara, as I approached.

I presented it at once, when she gaily and coquettishly held out her hand for me to kiss. This I did, my blood rushing to my face and temples the while, and almost depriving me of consciousness.

"Well, Clara, I am surprised at you," said Mortimer. "How can you treat the poor boy so?"

I grew deadly pale at these words, and, turning round, looked at the speaker full in the face. Poor fellow, thought I, he is jealous, and I am really grieved for him; and turned again to Clara.

"Here it is—oh! how handsome, papa," said one of the younger children, running eagerly to the window, as a very pretty open carriage with four horses drew up before the house.

"The bishop has taste," I murmured to myself, scarcely deigning to give a second look at the equipage.

Clara now left the room, but speedily returned—her dress changed, and shawled as if for a walk. What could all this mean?—and the whispering, too, what is all that?—and why are they all so sad?—Clara has been weeping.

"God bless you, my child—good by," said my aunt, as she folded her in her arms for the third time.

"Good by, good by," I heard on every side. At length, approaching me, Clara took my hand and said—

"My poor Harry, so we are going to part. I am going to Italy."

"To Italy, Clara? Oh! no—say no. Italy! I shall never see you again."

"Won't you wear this ring for me, Harry? It is an old favourite of yours—and when we meet again"—

"Oh! dearest Clara," I said, "do not speak thus."

"Good by, my poor boy, good by," said Clara hurriedly; and, rushing out of the room, she was lifted by Mortimer into the carriage, who, immediately jumping in after her, the whip cracked, the horses clattered, and all was out of sight in a second.

"Why is she gone with him?" said I, reproachfully, turning towards my aunt.

"Why, my dear, a very sufficient reason. She was married this morning."

This was my first love.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

WISE RESOLVES.

Musing over this boyish adventure, I fell into a deep slumber, and on awakening it took me some minutes before I could recall my senses sufficiently to know where I was. The whole face of things in my room was completely changed. Flowers had been put in the china vases upon the tables—two handsome lamps, shaded with gauzes, stood upon the consoles—illustrated books, prints, and caricatures, were scattered about. A piano-forte had also, by some witchcraft, insinuated itself into a recess near the sofa—a handsome little tea service, of old Dresden china, graced a marquetry table—and a little picquet table stood most invitingly beside the fire. I had scarcely time to turn my eyes from one to the other of these new occupants, when I heard the handle of my door gently turn, as if by some cautious hand, and immediately closed my eyes and feigned sleep. Through my half-shut lids I perceived the door opened. After a pause of about a second, the skirt of a white muslin dress appeared—then a pretty foot stole a little farther—and at last the slight and graceful figure of Emily Bingham advanced noiselessly into the room. Fear had rendered her deadly pale; but the effect of her rich brown hair, braided plainly on either side of her cheek, suited so well the character of her features, I thought her far handsomer than ever. She came forward towards the table, and I now could perceive that she had something in her hand resembling a letter. This she placed near my hand—so near as almost to touch it. She leaned over me—I felt her breath upon my brow, but never moved. At this instant, a tress of her hair, becoming unfastened, fell over upon my face. She started—the motion threw me off my guard, and I looked up. She gave a faint, scarce audible shriek, and sank into the chair beside me. Recovering, however, upon the instant, she grasped the letter she had just laid down, and, having crushed it between her fingers, threw it into the fire. This done—as if the effort had been too much for her strength—she again fell back upon her seat, and looked so pale I almost thought she had fainted.

Before I had time to speak, she rose once more; and now her face was bathed in blushes, her eyes swam with rising tears, and her lips trembled with emotion as she spoke.

"Oh, Mr. Lorrequer, what will you—what can you think of this? If you but knew—;" and here she faltered and again grew pale, while I with difficulty rising from the sofa, took her hand, and led

her to the chair beside it.

"And may I not know?" said I; "may I not know, my dear"—I am not sure I did not say dearest—"Miss Bingham, when, perhaps, the knowledge might make me the happiest of mortals?"

This was a pretty plunge as a sequel to my late resolutions. She hid her face between her hands, and sobbed for some seconds.

"At least," said I, "as that letter was destined for me but a few moments since, I trust that you will let me hear its contents."

"Oh no—not now—not now," said she entreatingly; and, rising at the same time, she turned to leave the room. I still held her hand, and pressed it within mine. I thought she returned the pressure. I leaned forward to catch her eye, when the door was opened hastily, and a most extraordinary figure presented itself.

It was a short, fat man, with a pair of enormous moustaches, of a fiery red; huge bushy whiskers of the same colour; a blue frock covered with braiding, and decorated with several crosses and ribbons; tight pantaloons and Hessian boots, with long brass spurs. He held a large gold-headed cane in his hand, and looked about with an expression of very equivocal drollery, mingled with fear.

"May I ask, sir," said I, as this individual closed the door behind him, "may I ask the reason for this intrusion?"

"Oh, upon my conscience, I'll do—I'm sure to pass muster now," said the well-known voice of Mr. O'Leary, whose pleasant features began to dilate amid the forest of red hair he was disguised in. "But I see you are engaged," said he, with a sly look at Miss Bingham, whom he had not yet recognised; "so I must contrive to hide myself elsewhere, I suppose."

"It is Miss Bingham," said I, "who has been kind enough to come here with her maid, to bring me some flowers. Pray present my respectful compliments to Mrs. Bingham, and say how deeply I feel her most kind attention."

Emily rose at the instant, and recovering her self-possession at once, said—

"You forget, Mr. Lorrequer, it is a secret from whom the flowers came; at least mamma hoped to place them in your vases without you knowing. So, pray, don't speak of it—and I'm sure Mr. O'Leary will not tell."

If Mr. O'Leary heard one word of this artful speech, I know not, but he certainly paid no attention to it, nor the speaker, who left the room without his appearing aware of it.

"Now that she is gone—for which heaven be praised," said I to myself; "let me see what this fellow can mean."

As I turned from the door, I could scarcely avoid laughing aloud at the figure before me. He stood opposite a large mirror, his hat on one side of his head, one arm in his breast, and the other extended, leaning upon his stick; a look of as much ferocity as such features could accomplish had been assumed, and his whole attitude was a kind of caricature of a melo-dramatic hero in a German drama.

"Why, O'Leary, what is all this?"

"Hush, hush," said he, in a terrified whisper—"never mention that name again, till we are over the frontier."

"But, man, explain—what do you mean?"

"Can't you guess," said he drily.

"Impossible; unless the affair at the saloon has induced you to take this disguise, I cannot conceive the reason."

"Nothing farther from it, my dear friend; much worse than that."

"Out with it, then, at once."

"She's come—she's here—in this very house—No. 29, above the entre sol."

"Who is here, in No. 29, above the entre sol?"

"Who, but Mrs. O'Leary herself. I was near saying bad luck to her."

"And does she know you are here?"

"That is what I can't exactly say," said he, "but she has had the *Livre des Voyageurs* brought up to her room, and has been making rather unpleasant inquiries for the proprietor of certain hieroglyphics beginning with O, which have given me great alarm—the more, as all the waiters have been sent for in turn, and subjected to long examination by her. So I have lost no time, but, under the auspices of your friend Trevanion, have become the fascinating figure you find me, and am now *Compte O'Lieuki*, a Pole of noble family, banished by the Russian government, with a father in Siberia, and all that; and I hope, by the end of the week, to be able to cheat at *ecarte*, and deceive the very police itself."

The idea of O'Leary's assuming such a metamorphosis was too absurd not to throw me into a hearty fit of laughing, in which the worthy emigre indulged also.

"But why not leave this at once," said I, "if you are so much in dread of a recognition?"

"You forget the trial," added O'Leary, "I must be here on the 18th or all my bail is forfeited."

"True—I had forgot that. Well, now, your plans?"—

"Simply to keep very quiet here till the affair of the tribunal is over, and then quit France at once. Meanwhile, Trevanion thinks that we may, by a bold stratagem, send Mrs. O'Leary off on a wrong scent, and has requested Mrs. Bingham to contrive to make her acquaintance, and ask her to tea in her room, when she will see me, en Polonais, at a distance, you know—hear something of my melancholy destiny from Trevanion—and leave the hotel quite sure she has no claim on me. Meanwhile, some others of the party are to mention incidentally having met Mr. O'Leary somewhere, or heard of his decease, or any pleasant little incident that may occur to them."

"The plan is excellent," said I, "for in all probability she may never come in your way again, if sent off on a good errand this time."

"That's what I'm thinking," said O'Leary; "and I am greatly disposed to let her hear that I'm with Belzoni in Egypt, with an engagement to spend the Christmas with the Dey of Algiers. That would give her a very pretty tour for the remainder of the year, and show her the pyramids. But, tell me fairly, am I a good Pole?"

"Rather short," said I, "and a little too fat, perhaps."

"That comes from the dash of Tartar blood, nothing more; and my mother was a Fin," said he, "she'll never ask whether from Carlow or the Caucasus. How I revel in the thought, that I may smoke in company without a breach of the unities. But I must go: there is a gentleman with a quinsey in No. 9, that gives me a lesson in Polish this morning. So good-by, and don't forget to be well enough to-night, for you must be present at my debut."

O'Leary had scarcely gone, when my thoughts reverted to Emily Bingham. I was not such a coxcomb as to fancy her in love with me; yet certainly there was something in the affair which looked not unlike it; and though, by such a circumstance, every embarrassment which pressed upon me had become infinitely greater, I could not dissemble from myself a sense of pleasure at the thought. She was really a very pretty girl, and improved vastly upon acquaintance. "Le absens ont toujours torts" is the truest proverb in any language, and I felt it in its fullest force when Trevanion entered my room.

"Well, Lorrequer," said he, "your time is certainly not likely to hang heavily on your hands in Paris, if occupation will prevent it, for I find you are just now booked for a new scrape."

"What can you mean?" said I, starting up.

"Why, O'Leary, who has been since your illness, the constant visiter at the Binghams—dining there every day, and spending his evenings—has just told me that the mamma is only waiting for the arrival of Sir Guy Lorrequer in Paris to open the trenches in all form; and from what she has heard of Sir Guy, she deems it most likely he will give her every aid and support to making you the husband of the fair Emily."

"And with good reason, too," said I; "for if my uncle were only given to understand that I had once gone far in my attentions, nothing would induce him to break off the match. He was crossed in love himself when young, and has made a score of people miserable since, in the benevolent idea of marrying them against every obstacle."

"How very smart you have become," said Trevanion, taking a look round my room, and surveying in turn each of the new occupants. "You must certainly reckon upon seeing your fair friend here, or all this propriete is sadly wasted."

This was the time to explain all about Miss Bingham's visit; and I did so, of course omitting any details which might seem to me needless, or involving myself in inconsistency.

Trevanion listened patiently to the end—was silent for some moments—then added—

"And you never saw the letter?"

"Of course not. It was burned before my eyes."

"I think the affair looks very serious, Lorrequer. You may have won this girl's affections. It matters little whether the mamma be a hacknied match-maker, or the cousin a bullying duellist. If the girl have a heart, and that you have gained it"—

"Then I must marry, you would say."

"Exactly so—without the prompting of your worthy uncle, I see no other course open to you without dishonour. My advice, therefore, is, ascertain—and that speedily—how far your attentions have been attended with the success you dread—and then decide at once. Are you able to get as far as Mrs. Bingham's room this morning? If so, come along. I shall take all the frais of la chere mamma off your hands, while you talk to the daughter; and half-an-hour's courage and resolution will do it all."

Having made the most effective toilet my means would permit, my right arm in a sling, and my step trembling from weakness, I sallied forth with Trevanion to make love with as many fears for the result as the most bashful admirer ever experienced, when pressing his suit upon some haughty belle—but for a far different reason.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE PROPOSAL.

On reaching Mrs. Bingham's apartments, we found that she had just left home to wait upon Mrs. O'Leary, and consequently, that Miss Bingham was alone. Trevanion, therefore, having wished me a safe deliverance through my trying mission, shook my hand warmly, and departed.

I stood for some minutes irresolutely, with my hand upon the lock of the door. To think that the next few moments may decide the fortune of one's after life, is a sufficiently anxious thought; but that your fate may be so decided, by compelling you to finish in sorrow what you have begun in folly, is still more insupportable. Such, then, was my condition. I had resolved within myself, if the result of this meeting should prove that I had won Miss Bingham's affections, to propose for her at once in all form, and make her my wife. If, on the other hand, I only found that she too had amused herself with a little passing flirtation, why then, I was a free man once more: but, on catechising myself a little closer, also, one somewhat disposed to make love de novo.

With the speed of lightning, my mind ran over every passage of our acquaintance—our first meeting—our solitary walks—our daily, hourly associations—our travelling intimacy—the adventure at Chantaine.— There was, it is true, nothing in all this which could establish the fact of wooing, but every thing which should convince an old offender like myself that the young lady was "en prise," and that I myself—despite my really strong attachment elsewhere—was not entirely scathless.

"Yes," said I, half aloud, as I once more reviewed the past, "it is but another chapter in my history in keeping with all the rest—one step has ever led me to a second, and so on to a third; what with other men have passed for mere trifles, have ever with me become serious difficulties, and the false enthusiasm with which I ever follow any object in life, blinds me for the time, and mistaking zeal for inclination, I never feel how little my heart is interested in success, till the fever of pursuit is over."

These were pleasant thoughts for one about to throw himself at a pretty girl's feet, and pour out his "soul of love before her;" but that with me was the least part of it. Curran, they say, usually picked up his facts in a case from the opposite counsel's statements; I always relied for my conduct in carrying on any thing, to the chance circumstances of the moment, and trusted to my animal spirits to give me an interest in whatever for the time being engaged me.

I opened the door. Miss Bingham was sitting at a table, her head leaning upon her hands—some open letters which lay before her, evidently so occupying her attention, that my approach was unheard. On my addressing her, she turned round suddenly, and became at first deep scarlet, then pale as death: while, turning to the table, she hurriedly threw her letters into a drawer, and motioned me to a place beside her.

After the first brief and common-place inquiry for my health, and hopes for my speedy recovery, she became silent; and I too, primed with topics innumerable to discuss—knowing how short my time might prove before Mrs. Bingham's return—could not say a word.

"I hope, Mr. Lorrequer," said she, at length, "that you have incurred no risque by leaving your room so early."

"I have not," I replied, "but, even were there a certainty of it, the anxiety I laboured under to see and speak with you alone, would have overcome all fears on this account. Since this unfortunate business has confined me to my chamber, I have done nothing but think over circumstances which have at length so entirely taken possession of me, that I must, at any sacrifice, have sought an opportunity to explain to you"—here Emily looked down, and I continued—"I need scarcely say what my feelings must long since have betrayed, that to have enjoyed the daily happiness of living in your society, of estimating your worth, of feeling your fascinations, were not the means most in request for him, who knew, too well, how little he deserved, either by fortune or desert, to hope, to hope to make you his; and yet, how little has prudence or caution to do with situations like this." She did not guess the animus of this speech. "I felt all I have described; and yet, and yet, I lingered on, prizing too dearly the happiness of the

present hour, to risque it by any avowal of sentiments, which might have banished me from your presence for ever. If the alteration of these hopes and fears have proved too strong for my reason at last, I cannot help it; and this it is which now leads me to make this avowal to you." Emily turned her head away from me; but her agitated manner showed how deeply my words had affected her; and I too, now that I had finished, felt that I had been "coming it rather strong."

"I hoped, Mr. Lorrequer," said she, at length, "I hoped, I confess, to have had an opportunity of speaking with you." Then, thought I, the game is over, and Bishop Luscombe is richer by five pounds, than I wish him.— "Something, I know not what, in your manner, led me to suspect that your affections might lean towards me; hints you have dropped, and, now and then, your chance allusions strengthened the belief, and I determined, at length, that no feeling of maidenly shame on my part should endanger the happiness of either of us, and I determined to see you; this was so difficult, that I wrote a letter, and that letter, which might have saved me all distressing explanation, I burned before you this morning."

"But, why, dearest girl,"—here was a plunge—"why, if the letter could remove any misconception, or could be the means of dispelling any doubt—why not let me see it?"

"Hear me out," cried she, eagerly, and evidently not heeding my interruption, "I determined if your affections were indeed"—a flood of tears here broke forth, and drowned her words; her head sank between her hands, and she sobbed bitterly.

"Corpo di Baccho!" said I to myself, "It is all over with me; the poor girl is evidently jealous, and her heart will break."

"Dearest, dearest Emily," said I, passing my arm round her, and approaching my head close to her's, "if you think that any other love than yours could ever beat within this heart—that I could see you hourly before me—live beneath your smile, and gaze upon your beauty—and, still more than all—pardon the boldness of the thought—feel that I was not indifferent to you."—

"Oh! spare me this at least," said she, turning round her tearful eyes upon me, and looking most bewitchingly beautiful. "Have I then showed you this plainly?"

"Yes, dearest girl! That instinct which tells us we are loved has spoken within me. And here in this beating heart"—

"Oh! say not more," said she, "if I have, indeed, gained your affections"—

"If—if you have," said I, clasping her to my heart, while she continued to sob still violently, and I felt half disposed to blow my brains out for my success. However, there is something in love-making as in fox-hunting, which carries you along in spite of yourself; and I continued to pour forth whole rhapsodies of love that the Pastor Fido could not equal.

"Enough," said she, "it is enough that you love me and that I have encouraged your so doing. But oh! tell me once more, and think how much of future happiness may rest upon your answer—tell me, may not this be some passing attachment, which circumstances have created, and others may dispel? Say, might not absence, time, or another more worthy"—

This was certainly a very rigid cross-examination when I thought the trial was over; and not being exactly prepared for it, I felt no other mode of reply than pressing her taper fingers alternately to my lips, and muttering something that might pass for a declaration of love unalterable, but, to my own ears, resembled a lament on my folly.

"She is mine now," thought I, "so we must e'en make the best of it; and truly she is a very handsome girl, though not a Lady Jane Callonby. The next step is the mamma; but I do not anticipate much difficulty in that quarter."

"Leave me now," said she, in a low and broken voice; "but promise not to speak of this meeting to any one before we meet again. I have my reasons; believe me they are sufficient ones, so promise me this before we part."

Having readily given the pledge required, I again kissed her hand and bade farewell, not a little puzzled the whole time at perceiving that ever since my declaration and acceptance Emily seemed any thing but happy, and evidently struggling against some secret feeling of which I knew nothing. "Yes," thought I, as I wended my way along the corridor, "the poor girl is tremendously jealous, and I must have said may a thing during our intimacy to hurt her. However, that is all past and gone; and now comes a new character for me: my next appearance will be 'en bon mari.'"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THOUGHTS UPON MATRIMONY IN GENERAL, AND IN THE ARMY IN PARTICULAR —THE KNIGHT OF KERRY AND BILLY M'CABE.

"So," thought I, as I closed the door of my room behind me, "I am accepted—the die is cast which makes me a Benedict: yet heaven knows that never was a man less disposed to be over joyous at his good fortune!" What a happy invention it were, if when adopting any road in life, we could only manage to forget that we had ever contemplated any other! It is the eternal looking back in this world that forms the staple of all our misery; and we are but ill-requited for such unhappiness by the brightest anticipations we can conjure up for the future. How much of all that "past" was now to become a source of painful recollection, and to how little of the future could I look forward with even hope!

Our weaknesses are much more constantly the spring of all our annoyances and troubles than even our vices. The one we have in some sort of subjection: we are perfectly slaves to the others. This thought came home most forcibly to my bosom, as I reflected upon the step which led me on imperceptibly to my present embarrassment. "Well, c'est fini, now," said I, drawing upon that bountiful source of consolation ever open to the man who mars his fortune—that "what is past can't be amended;" which piece of philosophy, as well as its twin brother, that "all will be the same a hundred years hence," have been golden rules to me from my childhood.

The transition from one mode of life to another perfectly different has ever seemed to me a great trial of a man's moral courage; besides that the fact of quitting for ever any thing, no matter how insignificant or valueless, is always attended with painful misgivings. My bachelor life had its share of annoyances and disappointments, it is true; but, upon the whole it was a most happy one—and now I was about to surrender it for ever, not yielding to the impulse of affection and love for one without whom life were valueless to me, but merely a recompense for the indulgence of that fatal habit I had contracted of pursuing with eagerness every shadow that crossed my path. All my early friends—all my vagrant fancies—all my daydreams of the future I was now to surrender—for, what becomes of any man's bachelor friends when he is once married? Where are his rambles in high and bye-ways when he has a wife? and what is left for anticipation after his wedding except, perhaps, to speculate upon the arrangement of his funeral? To a military man more than to any other these are serious thoughts. All the fascinations of an army life, in war or peace, lie in the daily, hourly associations with your brother officers—the morning cigar, the barrack-square lounge—the afternoon ride—the game of billiards before dinner—the mess (that perfection of dinner society)—the plans for the evening—the deviled kidney at twelve—forming so many points of departure whence you sail out upon your daily voyage through life. Versus those you have that awful perversion of all that is natural—an officer's wife. She has been a beauty when young, had black eyes and high complexion, a good figure, rather inclined to embonpoint, and a certain springiness in her walk, and a jauntiness in her air, that are ever sure attractions to a sub in a marching regiment. She can play backgammon, and sing "di tanti palpiti," and, if an Irishwoman, is certain to be able to ride a steeple-chase, and has an uncle a lord, who (en parenthese) always turns out to be a creation made by King James after his abdication. In conclusion, she breakfasts en papillote—wears her shoes down at heel—calls every officer of the regiment by his name—has a great taste for increasing his majesty's lieges, and delights in London porter. To this genus of Frow I have never ceased to entertain the most thrilling abhorrence; and yet how often have I seen what appeared to be pretty and interesting girls fall into something of this sort! and how often have I vowed any fate to myself rather than become the husband of a baggage-waggon wife!

Had all my most sanguine hopes promised realizing—had my suit with Lady Jane been favourable, I could scarcely have bid adieu to my bachelor life without a sigh. No prospect of future happiness can ever perfectly exclude all regret at quitting our present state for ever. I am sure if I had been a caterpillar, it would have been with a heavy heart that I would have donned my wings as a butterfly. Now the metamorphosis was reversed: need it be wondered if I were sad?

So completely was I absorbed in my thoughts upon this matter, that I had not perceived the entrance of O'Leary and Trevanion, who, unaware of my being in the apartment, as I was stretched upon a sofa in a dark corner, drew their chairs towards the fire and began chatting.

"Do you know, Mr. Trevanion," said O'Leary, "I am half afraid of this disguise of mine. I sometimes think I am not like a Pole; and if she should discover me"—

"No fear of that in the world; your costume is perfect, your beard unexceptionable. I could, perhaps, have desired a little less paunch; but then"—

"That comes of fretting, as Falstaff says; and you must not forget that I am banished from my country."

"Now, as to your conversation, I should advise you saying very little—not one word in English. You may, if you like, call in the assistance of Irish when hard pressed?"

"I have my fears on that score. There is no knowing where that might lead to discovery. You know the story of the Knight of Kerry and Billy McCabe?"

"I fear I must confess my ignorance—I have never heard of it."

"Then may be you never knew Giles Daxon?"

"I have not had that pleasure either."

"Lord bless me, how strange that is! I thought he was better known than the Duke of Wellington or the travelling piper. Well, I must tell you the story, for it has a moral, too—indeed several morals; but you'll find that out for yourself. Well, it seems that one day the Knight of Kerry was walking along the Strand in London, killing an hour's time, till the house was done prayers, and Hume tired of hearing himself speaking; his eye was caught by an enormous picture displayed upon the wall of a house, representing a human figure covered with long dark hair, with huge nails upon his hands, and a most fearful expression of face. At first the Knight thought it was Dr. Bowring; but on coming nearer he heard a man with a scarlet livery and a cocked hat, call out, 'Walk in, ladies and gentlemen—the most vonderful curiosity ever exhibited—only one shilling—the vild man from Chippoowango, in Africay—eats raw wittles without being cooked, and many other surprising and pleasing performances.'

"The knight paid his money, and was admitted. At first the crowd prevented his seeing any thing—for the place was full to suffocation, and the noise awful—for, besides the exclamations and applause of the audience, there were three barrel-organs, playing 'Home, sweet Home!' and 'Cherry Ripe,' and the wild man himself contributed his share to the uproar. At last, the Knight obtained, by dint of squeezing, and some pushing a place in the front, when, to his very great horror, he beheld a figure that far eclipsed the portrait without doors.

"It was a man nearly naked, covered with long, shaggy hair, that grew even over his nose and cheek bones. He sprang about, sometimes on his feet, sometimes, all-fours, but always uttering the most fearful yells, and glaring upon the crowd, in a manner that was really dangerous. The Knight did not feel exactly happy at the whole proceeding, and began heartily to wish himself back in the 'House,' even upon a committee of privileges, when, suddenly, the savage gave a more frantic scream than before, and seized upon a morsel of raw beef, which a keeper extended to him upon a long fork, like a tandem whip—he was not safe, it appears, at close quarters;—this he tore to pieces eagerly and devoured in the most voracious manner, amid great clapping of hands, and other evidences of satisfaction from the audience. I'll go, now, thought the Knight: for, God knows whether, in his hungry moods, he might not fancy to conclude his dinner by a member of parliament. Just at this instant, some sounds struck upon his ear that surprised him not a little. He listened more attentively; and, conceive if you can, his amazement, to find that, amid his most fearful cries, and wild yells, the savage was talking Irish. Laugh, if you like; but it's truth I am telling you; nothing less than Irish. There he was, jumping four feet high in the air, eating his raw meat: pulling out his hair by handfuls; and, amid all this, cursing the whole company to his heart's content, in as good Irish as ever was heard in Tralee. Now, though the Knight had heard of red Jews and white Negroes, he had never happened to read any account of an African Irishman; so, he listened very closely, and by degrees, not only the words were known to him, but the very voice was familiar. At length, something he heard, left no further doubt upon his mind, and, turning to the savage, he addressed him in Irish, at the same time fixing a look of most scrutinizing import upon him.

"'Who are you, you scoundrel' said the Knight.

"'Billy M'Cabe your honour.'

"'And what do you mean by playing off these tricks here, instead of earning your bread like an honest man?'

"'Whisht,' said Billy, 'and keep the secret. I'm earning the rent for your honour. One must do many a queer thing that pays two pound ten an acre for bad land.'

"This was enough: the Knight wished Billy every success, and left him amid the vociferous applause of a well satisfied audience. This adventure, it seems, has made the worthy Knight a great friend to the introduction of poor laws; for, he remarks very truly, 'more of Billy's countrymen might take a fancy to a savage life, if the secret was found out.'"

It was impossible for me to preserve my incognito, as Mr. O'Leary concluded his story, and I was obliged to join in the mirth of Trevanion, who laughed loud and long as he finished it.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A REMINISCENCE.

Harry Proves Himself a Man of Metal



O'Leary and Trevanion had scarcely left the room when the waiter entered with two letters—the one bore a German post-mark, and was in the well-known hand of Lady Callonby—the other in a writing with which I was no less familiar—that of Emily Bingham.

Let any one who has been patient enough to follow me through these "Confessions," conceive my agitation at this moment. There lay my fate before me, coupled, in all likelihood, with a view of what it might have been under happier auspices—at least so in anticipation did I read the two unopened epistles. My late interview with Miss Bingham left no doubt upon my mind that I had secured her affections; and acting in accordance with the counsel of Trevanion, no less than of my own sense of right, I resolved upon marrying her, with what prospect of happiness I dared not to think of!

Alas! and alas! there is no infatuation like the taste for flirtation—mere empty, valueless, heartless flirtation. You hide the dice-box and the billiard queue, lest your son become a gambler—you put aside the racing calendar, lest he imbibe a jockey predilection—but you never tremble at his fondness for white muslin and a satin slipper, far more dangerous tastes though they be, and infinitely more perilous to a man's peace and prosperity than all the "queens of trumps" that ever figured, whether on pasteboard or the Doncaster. "Woman's my weakness, yer honor," said an honest Patlander, on being charged before the lord mayor with having four wives living; and without having any such "Algerine act" upon my conscience, I must, I fear, enter a somewhat similar plea for my downfallings, and avow in humble gratitude, that I have scarcely had a misfortune through life unattributable to them in one way or another. And this I say without any reference to country, class, or complexion, "black, brown or fair," from my first step forth into life, a raw sub. in the gallant 4th, to this same hour, I have no other avowal, no other confession to make. "Be always ready with the pistol," was the dying advice of an Irish statesman to his sons: mine, in a similar circumstance, would rather be "Gardez vous des femmes," and more especially

if they be Irish.

There is something almost treacherous in the facility with which an Irish girl receives your early attentions and appears to like them, that invariably turns a young fellow's head very long before he has any prospect of touching her heart. She thinks it so natural to be made love to, that there is neither any affected coyness nor any agitated surprise. She listens to your declaration of love as quietly as the chief justice would to one of law, and refers the decision to a packed jury of her relatives, who rarely recommend you to mercy. Love and fighting, too, are so intimately united in Ireland, that a courtship rarely progresses without at least one exchange of shots between some of the parties concerned. My first twenty-four hours in Dublin is so pleasantly characteristic of this that I may as well relate it here, while the subject is before us; besides, as these "Confessions" are intended as warnings and guides to youth, I may convey a useful lesson, showing why a man should not "make love in the dark."

It was upon a raw, cold, drizzling morning in February, 18__ , that our regiment landed on the North-wall from Liverpool, whence we had been hurriedly ordered to repress some riots and disturbances then agitating Dublin.

We marched to the Royal Barracks, our band playing Patrick's Day, to the very considerable admiration of as naked a population as ever loved music. The __th dragoons were at the same time quartered there—right pleasant jovial fellows, who soon gave us to understand that the troubles were over before we arrived, and that the great city authorities were now returning thanks for their preservation from fire and sword, by a series of entertainments of the most costly, but somewhat incongruous kind—the company being scarce less melee than the dishes. Peers and playactors, judges and jailors, archbishops, tailors, attorneys, ropemakers and apothecaries, all uniting in the festive delight of good feeding, and drinking the "glorious memory"—but of whom half the company knew not, only surmising "it was something agin the papists." You may smile, but these were pleasant times, and I scarcely care to go back there since they were changed. But to return. The __th had just received an invitation to a ball, to be given by the high sheriff, and to which they most considerately said we should also be invited. This negociation was so well managed that before noon we all received our cards from a green liveried youth, mounted on a very emaciated pony—the whole turn-out not auguring flatteringly of the high sheriff's taste in equipage.

We dined with the __th, and, as customary before going to an evening party, took the "other bottle" of claret that lies beyond the frontier of prudence. In fact, from the lieutenant-colonel down to the newly-joined ensign, there was not a face in the party that did not betray "signs of the times" that boded most favourably for the mirth of the sheriff's ball. We were so perfectly up to the mark, that our major, a Connemara man, said, as we left the mess-room, "a liqueure glass would spoil us."

In this acme of our intellectual wealth, we started about eleven o'clock upon every species of conveyance that chance could press into the service. Of hackney coaches there were few—but in jingles, noddies, and jaunting-cars, with three on a side and "one in the well," we mustered strong—Down Barrack-street we galloped, the mob cheering us, we laughing, and I'm afraid shouting a little, too—the watchmen springing their rattles, as if instinctively at noise, and the whole population up and awake, evidently entertaining a high opinion of our convivial qualities. Our voices became gradually more decorous, however, as we approached the more civilized quarter of the town; and with only the slight stoppage of the procession to pick up an occasional dropper-off, as he lapsed from the seat of a jaunting-car, we arrived at length at our host's residence, somewhere in Sackville-street.

Had our advent conferred the order of knighthood upon the host, he could not have received us with more "empressement." He shook us all in turn by the hand, to the number of eight and thirty, and then presented us seriatim to his spouse, a very bejewelled lady of some forty years—who, what between bugles, feathers, and her turban, looked excessively like a Chinese pagoda upon a saucer. The rooms were crowded to suffocation—the noise awful—and the company crushing and elbowing rather a little more than you expect where the moiety are of the softer sex. However, "on s'habitué a tout," sayeth the proverb, and with truth, for we all so perfectly fell in with the habits of the place, that ere half an hour, we squeezed, ogled, leered, and drank champagne like the rest of the corporation.

"Devilish hot work, this," said the colonel, as he passed me with two rosy-cheeked, smiling ladies on either arm; "the mayor—that little fellow in the punch-coloured shorts—has very nearly put me hors de combat with champagne; take care of him, I advise you."

Tipsy as I felt myself, I was yet sufficiently clear to be fully alive to the drollery of the scene before me. Flirtations that, under other circumstances, would demand the secrecy and solitude of a country green lane, or some garden bower, were here conducted in all the open effrontery of wax lights and lustres; looks were interchanged, hands were squeezed, and soft things whispered, and smiles returned; till the intoxication of "punch negus" and spiced port, gave way to the far greater one of bright looks and tender glances. Quadrilles and country dances—waltzing there was none, (perhaps all for the best)—whist, backgammon, loo—unlimited for uproar—sandwiches, and warm liquors, employed us pretty briskly till supper was announced, when a grand squeeze took place on the stairs—the population tending thitherward with an eagerness that a previous starvation of twenty-four hours could alone justify. Among this dense mass of moving muslin, velvet and broad-cloth, I found myself chaperoning an extremely tempting little damsel, with a pair of laughing blue eyes and dark eyelashes, who had been

committed to my care and guidance for the passage.

"Miss Moriarty, Mr. Lorrequer," said an old lady in green and spangles, who I afterwards found was the lady mayoress.

"The nicest girl in the room," said a gentleman with a Tipperary accent, "and has a mighty nice place near Athlone."

The hint was not lost upon me, and I speedily began to faire l'amiable to my charge; and before we reached the supper room, learned certain particulars of her history, which I have not yet forgot. She was, it seems, sister to a lady then in the room, the wife of an attorney, who rejoiced in the pleasing and classical appellation of Mr. Mark Anthony Fitzpatrick; the aforesaid Mark Anthony being a tall, raw-boned, black-whiskered, ill-looking dog, that from time to time contrived to throw very uncomfortable looking glances at me and Mary Anne, for she was so named, the whole time of supper. After a few minutes, however, I totally forgot him, and, indeed, every thing else, in the fascination of my fair companion. She shared her chair with me, upon which I supported her by my arm passed round the back; we eat our pickled salmon, jelly, blanc mange, cold chicken, ham, and custard; off the same plate, with an occasional squeeze of the finger, as our hands met—her eyes making sad havoc with me all the while, as I poured my tale of love—love, lasting, burning, all-consuming—into her not unwilling ear.

"Ah! now, ye'r not in earnest?"

"Yes, Mary Anne, by all that's"—

"Well, there now, don't swear, and take care—sure Mark Anthony is looking."

"Mark Anthony be—"

"Oh! how passionate you are; I'm sure I never could live easy with you. There, now, give me some sponge cake, and don't be squeezing me, or they'll see you."

"Yes, to my heart, dearest girl."

"Och, it's cheese you're giving me," said she, with a grimace that nearly cured my passion.

"A cottage, a hut, with you—with you," said I, in a cadence that I defy Macready to rival—"what is worldly splendour, or the empty glitter of rank."

I here glanced at my epaulettes, upon which I saw her eyes rivetted.

"Isn't the ginger beer beautiful," said she, emptying a glass of champagne.

Still I was not to be roused from my trance, and continued my courtship as warmly as ever.

"I suppose you'll come home now," said a gruff voice behind Mary Anne.

I turned and perceived Mark Anthony with a grim look of peculiar import.

"Oh, Mark dear, I'm engaged to dance another set with this gentleman."

"Ye are, are ye?" replied Mark, eyeing me askance. "Troth and I think the gentleman would be better if he went off to his flea-bag himself."

In my then mystified intellect this west country synonyme for a bed a little puzzled me.

"Yes sir, the lady is engaged to me: have you any thing to say to that?"

"Nothing at present, at all," said Mark, almost timidly.

"Oh dear, oh dear," sobbed Mary Anne; "they're going to fight, and he'll be killed—I know he will."

For which of us this fate was destined, I stopped not to consider, but amid a very sufficient patting upon the back, and thumping between the shoulders, bestowed by members of the company who approved of my proceedings. The three fiddles, the flute, and bassoon, that formed our band, being by this time sufficiently drunk, played after a fashion of their own, which by one of those strange sympathies of our nature, imparted its influence to our legs, and a country dance was performed in a style of free and easy gesticulation that defies description. At the end of eighteen couple, tired of my exertions—and they were not slight—I leaned my back against the wall of the room, which I now, for the first time, perceived was covered with a very peculiar and novel species of hanging—no less than a kind of rough, green baize cloth, that moved and floated at every motion of the air. I paid little attention to this, till suddenly turning my head, something gave way behind it. I felt myself struck upon the back of the neck, and fell forward into the room, covered by a perfect avalanche of fenders, fire-irons, frying-pans, and copper kettles, mingled with the lesser artillery of small nails, door keys, and holdfasts. There I lay amid the most vociferous mirth I ever listened to, under the confounded torrent of ironmongery that half-stunned me. The laughter over, I was assisted to rise, and having drank about a pint of vinegar, and had my face and temples washed in strong whiskey punch—the allocation of the fluids being mistaken, I learned that our host, the high sheriff, was a celebrated tin and iron man, and that his salles de reception were no other than his magazine of metals, and that to conceal the well filled shelves from the gaze of his aristocratic guests, they were clothed in the manner related; which my unhappy head, by some misfortune, displaced, and thus brought on a calamity scarcely less

afflicting to him than to myself. I should scarcely have stopped to mention this here, were it not that Mary Anne's gentle nursing of me in my misery went far to complete what her fascination had begun; and although she could not help laughing at the occurrence, I forgave her readily for her kindness.

"Remember," said I, trying to ogle through a black eye, painted by the angle of a register grate—"remember, Mary Anne, I am to see you home."

"Oh! dear, sir, sure I don't know how you can manage it—"

Here Mark Anthony's entrance cut short this speech, for he came to declare that some of the officers had taken his coach, and was, as might be supposed, in a towering passion.

"If, sir," said I, with an air of the most balmy courtesy—"If I can be of any use in assisting you to see your friends home—"

"Ah! then, ye'r a nice looking article to see ladies home. I wish you seen yourself this minute," said he.

As I felt it would be no breach of the unities—time, place, and every thing considered—to smash his skull, I should certainly have proceeded to do so, had not a look of the most imploring kind from Mary Anne restrained me. By this time, he had taken her under the arm, and was leading her away. I stood irresolute, till a glance from my charmer caught me; when I rallied at once, and followed them down stairs. Here the scene was the full as amusing as above; the cloaking, shawling, shoeing, , of the ladies being certainly as mirth-moving a process as I should wish to see. Here were mothers trying to collect their daughters, as a hen her chickens, and as in that case, the pursuit of one usually lost all the others; testy papas swearing, lovers leering, as they twisted the boas round the fair throats of their sweethearts; vows of love, mingling with lamentations for a lost slipper, or a stray mantle. Sometimes the candles were extinguished, and the melee became greater, till the order and light were restored together. Meanwhile, each of our fellows had secured his fair one, save myself, and I was exposed to no small ridicule for my want of savoir faire. Nettled at this, I made a plunge to the corner of the room, where Mary Anne was shawling; I recognized her pink sash, threw her cloak over her shoulders, and at the very moment that Mark Anthony drew his wife's arm within his, I performed the same by my friend, and followed them to the door. Here, the grim brother-in-law turned round to take Mary Anne's arm, and seeing her with me, merely gave a kind of hoarse chuckle, and muttered, "Very well, sir: upon my conscience you will have it, I see." During this brief interval, so occupied was I in watching him, that I never once looked in my fair friend's face; but the gentle squeeze of her arm, as she leaned upon me, assured me that I had her approval of what I was doing.

What were the precise train of my thoughts, and what the subjects of conversation between us, I am unfortunately now unable to recollect. It is sufficient to remember, that I could not believe five minutes had elapsed, when we arrived at York-street. "Then you confess you love me," said I, as I squeezed her arm to my side.

"Then, by this kiss," said I, "I swear, never to relinquish."—

What I was about to add, I am sure I know not; but true it is, that a certain smacking noise here attracted Mr. Mark Anthony's attention, who started round, looked as full in the face, and then gravely added, "Enough is as good as a feast. I wish you pleasant drames, Mr. Larry Kar, if that's your name; and you'll hear from me in the morning."

"I intend it," said I. "Good night, dearest; think of—" The slam of the street door in my face spoiled the peroration, and I turned towards home.

By the time I reached the barracks, the united effects of the champagne, sherry, and Sheffield iron, had, in a good measure subsided, and my head had become sufficiently clear to permit a slight retrospect of the evening's amusement.

From two illusions I was at least awakened:—First, the high sheriff's ball was not the most accurate representation of high society; secondly, I was not deeply enamoured of Mary Anne Moriarty. Strange as it may seem, and how little soever the apparent connexion between those two facts, the truth of one had a considerable influence in deciding the other. N'importe, said I, the thing is over; it was rather good fun, too, upon the whole—saving the "chute des casseroles;" and as to the lady, she must have seen it was a joke as well as myself. At least, so I am decided it shall be; and as there was no witness to our conversation, the thing is easily got out of.

The following day, as I was dressing to ride out, my servant announced no less a person than Mr. Mark Anthony Fitzpatrick, who said "that he came upon a little business, and must see me immediately."

Mr. Fitzpatrick, upon being announced, speedily opened his negotiation by asking in very terse and unequivocal phrase, my intentions regarding his sister-in-law. After professing the most perfect astonishment at the question, and its possible import, I replied, that she was a most charming person, with whom I intended to have nothing whatever to do.

"And maybe you never proposed for her at the ball last night?"

"Propose for a lady at a ball the first time I ever met her!"

"Just so. Can you carry your memory so far back? or, perhaps I had better refresh it;" and he

here repeated the whole substance of my conversation on the way homeward, sometimes in the very words I used.

"But, my dear sir, the young lady could never have supposed I used such language as this you have repeated?"

"So, then, you intend to break off? Well, then, it's right to tell you that you're in a very ugly scrape, for it was my wife you took home last night—not Miss Moriarty; and I leave you to choose at your leisure whether you'd rather be defendant in a suit for breach of promise or seduction; and, upon my conscience, I think it's civil in me to give you a choice."

What a pretty disclosure was here! So that while I was imaging myself squeezing the hand and winning the heart of the fair Mary Anne, I was merely making a case of strong evidence for a jury, that might expose me to the world, and half ruin me in damages. There was but one course open—to make a fight for it; and, from what I saw of my friend Mark Anthony, this did not seem difficult.

I accordingly assumed a high tone—laughed at the entire affair—said it was a "way we had in the army"—that "we never meant any thing by it,"

In a few minutes I perceived the bait was taking. Mr. Fitzpatrick's west country blood was up: all thought of the legal resource was abandoned; and he flung out of the room to find a friend, I having given him the name of "one of ours" as mine upon the occasion.

Very little time was lost, for before three o'clock that afternoon a meeting was fixed for the following morning at the North Bull; and I had the satisfaction of hearing that I only escaped the malignant eloquence of Holmes in the King's Bench, to be "blazed" at by the best shot on the western circuit. The thought was no way agreeable, and I indemnified myself for the scrape by a very satisfactory anathema upon the high sheriff and his ball, and his confounded sauceness; for to the lady's sympathy for my sufferings I attributed much of my folly.

At eight the next morning I found myself standing with Curzon and the doctor upon that bleak portion of her majesty's dominion they term the North Bull, waiting in a chilly rain, and a raw fog, till it pleased Mark Anthony Fitzpatrick, to come and shoot me—such being the precise terms of our combat, in the opinion of all parties.

The time, however, passed on, and half-past eight, three quarters, and at last nine o'clock, without his appearing; when, just as Curzon had resolved upon our leaving the ground, a hack jaunting-car was seen driving at full speed along the road near us. It came nearer and at length drew up; two men leaped off and came towards us; one of whom, as he came forward, took off his hat politely, and introduced himself as Mr. O'Gorman, the fighting friend of Mark Anthony.

"It's a mighty unpleasant business I'm come upon, gentlemen," said he, "Mr. Fitzpatrick has been unavoidably prevented from having the happiness to meet you this morning—"

"Then you can't expect us, sir, to dance attendance upon him here to-morrow," said Curzon, interrupting.

"By no manner of means," replied the other, placidly; "for it would be equally inconvenient for him to be here then. But I have only to say, maybe you'd have the kindness to waive all etiquette, and let me stand in his place."

"Certainly and decidedly not," said Curzon. "Waive etiquette!—why, sir, we have no quarrel with you; never saw you before."

"Well, now, isn't this hard?" said Mr. O'Gorman, addressing his friend, who stood by with a pistol-case under his arm; "but I told Mark that I was sure they'd be standing upon punctilio, for they were English. Well, sir," said he, turning towards Curzon, "there's but one way to arrange it now, that I see. Mr. Fitzpatrick, you must know, was arrested this morning for a trifle of L140. If you or your friend there, will join us in the bail we can get him out, and he'll fight you in the morning to your satisfaction."

When the astonishment this proposal had created subsided, we assured Mr. O'Gorman that we were noways disposed to pay such a price for our amusement—a fact that seemed considerably to surprise both him and his friend—and adding, that to Mr. Fitzpatrick personally, we should feel bound to hold ourselves pledged at a future period, we left the ground, Curzon laughing heartily at the original expedient thus suggested, and I inwardly pronounced a most glowing eulogy on the law of imprisonment for debt.

Before Mr. Fitzpatrick obtained the benefit of the act, we were ordered abroad, and I have never since heard of him.

CHAPTER XL.

THE TWO LETTERS.

From the digression of the last chapter I was recalled by the sight of the two letters which lay during my reverie unopened before me. I first broke the seal of Lady Callonby's epistle, which ran thus:

"Munich, La Croix Blanche,

"My dear Mr. Lorrequer—I have just heard from Kilkee, that you are at length about to pay us your long promised visit, and write these few lines to beg that before leaving Paris you will kindly execute for me the commissions of which I enclose a formidable list, or at least as many of them as you can conveniently accomplish. Our stay here now will be short, that it will require all your despatch to overtake us before reaching Milan, Lady Jane's health requiring an immediate change of climate. Our present plans are, to winter in Italy, although such will interfere considerably with Lord Callonby, who is pressed much by his friends to accept office. However, all this and our other gossip I reserve for our meeting. Meanwhile, adieu, and if any of my tasks bore you, omit them at once, except the white roses and the Brussels veil, which Lady Jane is most anxious for.

"Sincerely yours,
"Charlotte Callonby."

How much did these few and apparently common-place lines convey to me? First, my visit was not only expected, but actually looked forward to, canvassed—perhaps I might almost whisper to myself the flattery—wished for. Again, Lady Jane's health was spoken of as precarious, less actual illness—I said to myself—than mere delicacy requiring the bluer sky and warmer airs of Italy. Perhaps her spirits were affected—some mental malady—some ill-placed passion—*que sais je?* In fact my brain run on so fast in its devisings, that by a quick process, less logical than pleasing, I satisfied myself that the lovely Lady Jane Callonby was actually in love, with whom let the reader guess at. And Lord Callonby too, about to join the ministry—well, all the better to have one's father-in-law in power—promotion is so cursed slow now a-days. And lastly, the sly allusion to the commissions—the mechancete of introducing her name to interest me. With such materials as these to build upon, frail as they may seem to others, I found no difficulty in regarding myself as the dear friend of the family, and the acknowledged suitor of Lady Jane.

In the midst, however, of all my self-gratulation, my eye fell upon the letter of Emily Bingham, and I suddenly remembered how fatal to all such happy anticipations it might prove. I tore it open in passionate haste and read—

"My dear Mr. Lorrequer—As from the interview we have had this morning I am inclined to believe that I have gained your affections, I think that I should ill requite such a state of your feeling for me, were I to conceal that I cannot return you mine—in fact they are not mine to bestow. This frank avowal, whatever pain it may have cost me, I think I owe to you to make. You will perhaps say, the confession should have been earlier; to which I reply, it should have been so, had I known, or even guessed at the nature of your feelings for me. For—and I write it in all truth, and perfect respect for you—I only saw in your attentions the flirting habits of a man of the world, with a very uninformed and ignorant girl of eighteen, with whom as it was his amusement to travel, he deemed it worth his while to talk. I now see, and bitterly regret my error, yet deem it better to make this painful confession than suffer you to remain in a delusion which may involve your happiness in the wreck of mine. I am most faithfully your friend,

"Emily Bingham."

What a charming girl she is, I cried, as I finished the letter; how full of true feeling, how honourably, how straight-forward: and yet it is devilish strange how cunningly she played her part—and it seems now that I never did touch her affections; Master Harry, I begin to fear you are not altogether the awful lady-killer you have been thinking. Thus did I meditate upon this singular note—my delight at being once more "free" mingling with some chagrin that I was jockeyed, and by a young miss of eighteen, too. Confoundedly disagreeable if the mess knew it, thought I. Per Baccho—how they would quiz upon my difficulty to break off a match, when the lady was only anxious to get rid of me.

This affair must never come to their ears, or I am ruined; and now, the sooner all negotiations are concluded the better. I must obtain a meeting with Emily. Acknowledge the truth and justice of all her views, express my deep regret at the issue of the affair, slyly hint that I have been merely playing her own game back upon her; for it would be the devil to let her go off with the

idea that she had singed me, yet never caught fire herself; so that we both shall draw stakes, and part friends.

This valiant resolution taken, I wrote a very short note, begging an interview, and proceeded to make as formidable a toilet as I could for the forthcoming meeting; before I had concluded which, a verbal answer by her maid informed me, that "Miss Bingham was alone, and ready to receive me."

As I took my way along the corridor, I could not help feeling that among all my singular scrapes and embarrassing situations through life, my present mission was certainly not the least—the difficulty, such as it was, being considerably increased by my own confounded "amour propre," that would not leave me satisfied with obtaining my liberty, if I could not insist upon coming off scathless also. In fact, I was not content to evacuate the fortress, if I were not to march out with all the honours of war. This feeling I neither attempt to palliate nor defend, I merely chronicle it as, are too many of these confessions, a matter of truth, yet not the less a subject for sorrow.

My hand was upon the lock of the door. I stopped, hesitated, and listened. I certainly heard something. Yes, it is too true—she is sobbing. What a total overthrow to all my selfish resolves, all my egotistical plans, did that slight cadence give. She was crying—her tears for the bitter pain she concluded I was suffering—mingling doubtless with sorrow for her own sources of grief—for it was clear to me that whoever may have been my favoured rival, the attachment was either unknown to, or unsanctioned by the mother. I wished I had not listened; all my determinations were completely routed and as I opened the door I felt my heart beating almost audibly against my side.

In a subdued half-light—tempered through the rose-coloured curtains, with a small sevres cup of newly-plucked moss-roses upon the table—sat, or rather leaned, Emily Bingham, her face buried in her hands as I entered. She did not hear my approach, so that I had above a minute to admire the graceful character of her head, and the fine undulating curve of her neck and shoulders, before I spoke.

"Miss Bingham," said I—

She started—looked up—her dark blue eyes, brilliant though tearful, were fixed upon me for a second, as if searching my very inmost thoughts. She held out her hand, and turning her head aside, made room for me on the sofa beside her. Strange girl, thought I, that in the very moment of breaking with a man for ever, puts on her most fascinating toilette—arrays herself in her most bewitching manner, and gives him a reception only calculated to turn his head, and render him ten times more in love than ever. Her hand, which remained still in mine, was burning as if in fever, and the convulsive movement of her neck and shoulders showed me how much this meeting cost her. We were both silent, till at length, feeling that any chance interruption might leave us as far as ever from understanding each other, I resolved to begin.

"My dear, dear Emily," I said, "do not I entreat of you add to the misery I am this moment enduring by letting me see you thus. Whatever your wrongs towards me, this is far too heavy a retribution. My object was never to make you wretched, if I am not to obtain the bliss, to strive and make you happy."

"Oh, Harry"—this was the first time she had ever so called me—"how like you, to think of me—of me, at such a time, as if I was not the cause of all our present unhappiness—but not wilfully, not intentionally. Oh, no, no—your attentions—the flattery of your notice, took me at once, and, in the gratification of my self-esteem, I forgot all else. I heard, too, that you were engaged to another, and believing, as I did, that you were trifling with my affections, I spared no effort to win your's. I confess it, I wished this with all my soul."

"And now," said I, "that you have gained them"—Here was a pretty sequel to my well matured plans!—"And now Emily"—

"But have I really done so?" said she, hurriedly turning round and fixing her large full eyes upon me, while one of her hands played convulsively through my hair—"have I your heart? your whole heart?"

"Can you doubt it, dearest," said I, passionately pressing her to my bosom; and at the same time muttering, "What the devil's in the wind now; we are surely not going to patch up our separation, and make love in earnest."

There she lay, her head upon my shoulder, her long, brown, waving ringlets falling loosely across my face and on my bosom, her hand in mine. What were her thoughts I cannot guess—mine, God forgive me, were a fervent wish either for her mother's appearance, or that the hotel would suddenly take fire, or some other extensive calamity arise to put the finishing stroke to this embarrassing situation.

None of these, however, were destined to occur; and Emily lay still and motionless as she was, scarce seeming to breathe, and pale as death. What can this mean, said I, surely this is not the usual way to treat with a rejected suitor; if it be, why then, by Jupiter the successful one must have rather the worst of it—and I fervently hope that Lady Jane be not at this moment giving his conge to some disappointed swain. She slowly raised her long, black fringed eyelids, and looked into my face, with an expression at once so tender and so plaintive, that I felt a struggle within myself whether to press her to my heart, or—what the deuce was the alternative. I hope my

reader knows, for I really do not. And after all, thought I, if we are to marry, I am only anticipating a little; and if not, why then a "chaste salute," as Winifred Jenkins calls it, she'll be none the worse for. Acting at once upon this resolve, I leaned downwards, and passing back her ringlets from her now flushed cheek, I was startled by my name, which I heard called several times in the corridor. The door at the same instant was burst suddenly open, and Trevanion appeared.

"Harry, Harry Lorrequer," cried he, as he entered; then suddenly checking himself, added "a thousand, ten thousand pardons. But—"

"But what," cried I passionately, forgetting all save the situation of poor Emily at the moment, "what can justify—"

"Nothing certainly can justify such an intrusion," said Trevanion, finishing my sentence for me, "except the very near danger you run this moment in being arrested. O'Leary's imprudence has compromised your safety, and you must leave Paris within an hour."

"Oh, Mr. Trevanion," said Emily, who by this time had regained a more befitting attitude, "pray speak out; what is it? is Harry—is Mr. Lorrequer, I mean, in any danger?"

"Nothing of consequence, Miss Bingham, if he only act with prudence, and be guided by his friends. Lorrequer, you will find me in your apartments in half an hour—till then, adieu."

While Emily poured forth question after question, as to the nature and extent of my present difficulty, I could not help thinking of the tact by which Trevanion escaped, leaving me to make my adieux to Emily as best I might—for I saw in a glance that I must leave Paris at once. I, therefore, briefly gave her to understand the affair at the salon—which I suspected to be the cause of the threatened arrest—and was about to profess my unaltered and unalterable attachment, when she suddenly stopped me.

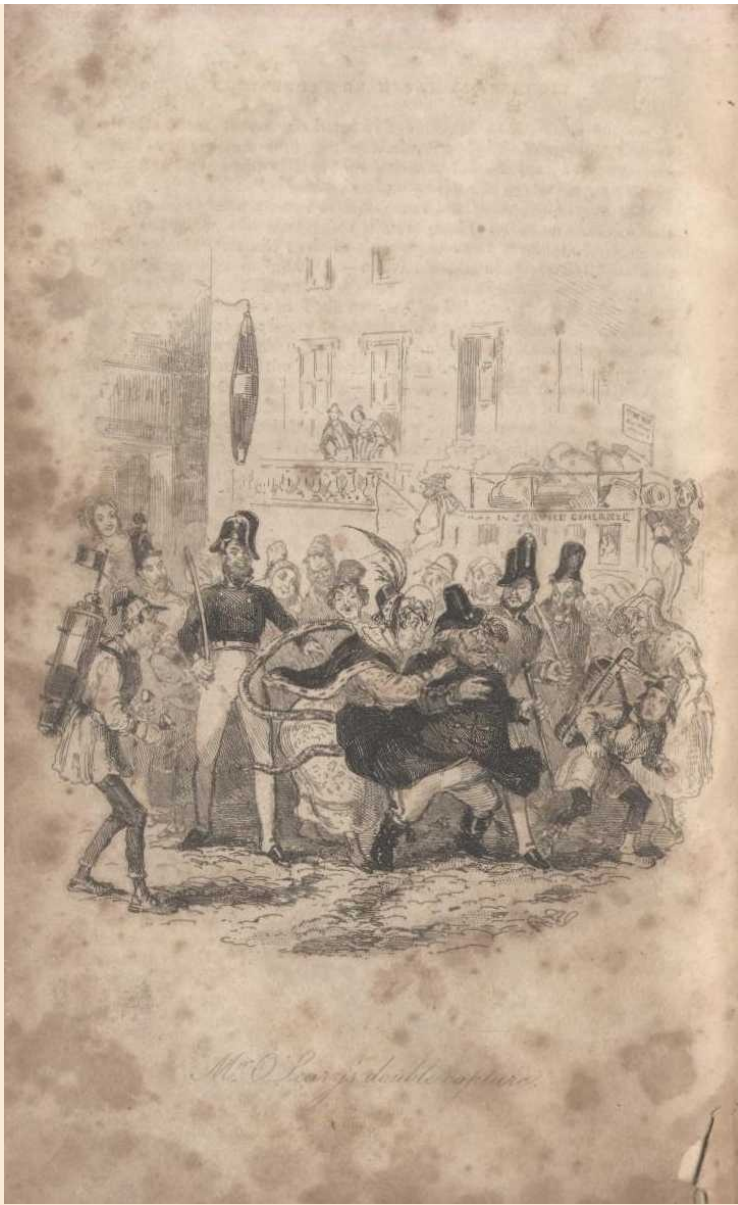
"No, Mr. Lorrequer, no. All is over between us. We must never meet again—never. We have been both playing a part. Good by—good by: do not altogether forget me—and once more, Harry good by."

What I might have said, thought, or done, I know not; but the arrival of Mrs. Bingham's carriage at the door left no time for any thing but escape. So, once more pressing her hand firmly to my lips, I said—"au revoir, Emily, au revoir, not good by," and rushing from the room, regained my own, just as Mrs. Bingham reached the corridor.

CHAPTER XLI.

MR. O'LEARY'S CAPTURE.

Mr. O'Leary's Double Capture



Does she really care for me? was my first question to myself as I left the room. Is this story about pre-engaged affections merely a got up thing, to try the force of my attachment for her? for, if not, her conduct is most inexplicable; and great as my experience has been in such affairs, I avow myself out maneuvered. While I thought over this difficulty, Trevanion came up, and in a few words, informed me more fully upon what he hinted at before. It appeared that O'Leary, much more alive to the imperative necessity of avoiding detection by his sposa, than of involving himself with the police, had thrown out most dark and mysterious hints in the hotel as to the reason of his residence at Paris; fully impressed with the idea that, to be a good Pole, he need only talk "revolutionary;" devote to the powers below, all kings, czars, and kaisers; weep over the wrongs of his nation; wear rather seedy habiliments, and smoke profusely. The latter were with him easy conditions, and he so completely acted the former to the life, that he had been that morning arrested in the Tuilleries gardens, under several treasonable charges—among others, the conspiracy, with some of his compatriots to murder the minister of war.

However laughable such an accusation against poor O'Leary, one circumstance rendered the matter any thing but ludicrous. Although he must come off free of this grave offence, yet, the salon transaction would necessarily now become known; I should be immediately involved, and my departure from Paris prevented.

"So," said Trevanion, as he briefly laid before me the difficulty of my position, "you may perceive that however strongly your affections may be engaged in a certain quarter, it is quite as well to think of leaving Paris without delay. O'Leary's arrest will be followed by yours, depend upon it; and once under the surveillance of the police, escape is impossible."

"But, seriously, Trevanion," said I, nettled at the tone of raillery he spoke in, "you must see that there is nothing whatever in that business. I was merely taking my farewell of the fair Emily. Her affections have been long since engaged, and I—"

"Only endeavouring to support her in her attachment to the more favoured rival. Is it not so?"

"Come, no quizzing. Faith I began to feel very uncomfortable about parting with her, the moment that I discovered that I must do so."

"So I guessed," said Trevanion, with a dry look, "from the interesting scene I so abruptly trespassed upon. But you are right; a little bit of tendresse is never misplaced, so long as the object is young, pretty, and still more than all, disposed for it."

"Quite out; perfectly mistaken, believe me. Emily not only never cared for me; but she has gone far enough to tell me so."

"Then, from all I know of such matters," replied he, "you were both in a very fair way to repair that mistake on her part. But hark! what is this?" A tremendous noise in the street here interrupted our colloquy, and on opening the window, a strange scene presented itself to our eyes. In the middle of a dense mass of moving rabble, shouting, yelling, and screaming, with all their might, were two gens d'armes with a prisoner between them. The unhappy man was followed by a rather well-dressed, middle-aged looking woman, who appeared to be desirous of bestowing the most covam publico endearments upon the culprit, whom a second glance showed us was O'Leary.

"I tell you, my dear madam, you are mistaken," said O'Leary, addressing her with great sternness of manner and voice.

"Mistaken! Never, never. How could I ever be mistaken in that dear voice, those lovely eyes, that sweet little nose?"

"Take her away; she's deranged," said O'Leary to the gens d'armes. "Sure, if I'm a Pole, that's enough of misfortune."

"I'll follow him to the end of the earth, I will."

"I'm going to the galleys, God be praised," said O'Leary.

"To the galleys—to the guillotine—any where," responded she, throwing herself upon his neck, much less, as it seemed, to his gratification, than that of the mob, who laughed and shouted most uproariously.

"Mrs. Ram, ain't you ashamed?"

"He calls me by my name," said she, "and he attempts to disown me. Ha! ha! ha! ha!" and immediately fell off into a strong paroxysm of kicking, and pinching, and punching the bystanders, a malady well known under the name of hysterics; but being little more than a privileged mode, among certain ladies, of paying off some scores, which it is not thought decent to do in their more sober moments.

"Lead me away—anywhere—convict me of what you like," said he, "but don't let her follow me."

The gens d'armes, who little comprehended the nature of the scene before them, were not sorry to anticipate a renewal of it on Mrs. Ram's recovery, and accordingly seized the opportunity to march on with O'Leary, who turned the corner of the Rue Rivoli, under a shower of "meurtriers" and "sclerats" from the mob, that fell fortunately most unconsciously upon his ears.

The possibility of figuring in such a procession contributed much to the force of Trevanion's reasonings, and I resolved to leave Paris at once.

"Promise me, then, to involve yourself in no more scrapes for half-an-hour. Pack every thing you shall want with you, and, by seven o'clock, I shall be here with your passport and all ready for a start."

With a beating brain, and in a whirlwind of conflicting thoughts, I threw my clothes hither and thither into my trunk; Lady Jane and Emily both flitting every instant before my imagination, and frequently an irresolution to proceed stopping all my preparations for departure, I sat down musing upon a chair, and half determined to stay where I was, *coute qui coute*. Finally, the possibility of exposure in a trial, had its weight. I continued my occupation till the last coat was folded, and the lock turned, when I seated myself opposite my luggage, and waited impatiently for my friend's return.

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