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Title: Richard Carvel — Volume 05

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Release date: October 18, 2004 [EBook #5369]

Most recently updated: December 28, 2020

Language: English

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK RICHARD CARVEL — VOLUME 05 ***

Produced by David Widger

RICHARD CARVEL

By Winston Churchill

Volume 5.

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CHAPTER XXVI

THE PART HORATIO PLAYED

The bailiff's business was quickly settled. I heard the heavy doors close at our backs, and drew a deep draught of the air God has made for all His creatures alike. Both the captain and I turned to the windows to wave a farewell to the sad ones we were leaving behind, who gathered about the bars for a last view of us, for strange as it may seem, the mere sight of happiness is often a pleasure for those who are sad. A coach in private arms and livery was in waiting, surrounded by a crowd. They made a lane for us to pass, and stared at the young lady of queenly beauty coming out of the sponging-house until the coachman snapped his whip in their faces and the footman jostled them back. When we were

got in, Dolly and I on the back seat, Comyn told the man to go to Mr. Manners's.

"Oh, no!" I cried, scarce knowing what I said; "no, not there!" For the thought of entering the house in Arlington Street was unbearable.

Both Comyn and Dorothy gazed at me in astonishment.

"And pray, Richard, why not'?" she asked. "Have not your old friends the right to receive you."

It was my Lord who saved me, for I was in agony what to say.

"He is still proud, and won't go to Arlington Street dressed like a bargeman. He must needs plume, Miss Manners."

I glanced anxiously at Dorothy, and saw that she was neither satisfied nor appeased. Well I remembered every turn of her head, and every curve of her lip! In the meantime we were off through Cursitor Street at a gallop, nearly causing the death of a ragged urchin at the corner of Chancery Lane. I had forgotten my eagerness to know whence they had heard of my plight, when some words from Comyn aroused me.

"The carriage is Mr. Horace Walpole's, Richard. He has taken a great fancy to you."

"But I have never so much as clapped eyes upon him!" I exclaimed in perplexity.

"How about his honour with whom you supped at Windsor? how about the landlord you spun by the neck? You should have heard the company laugh when Horry told us that! And Miss Dolly cried out that she was sure it must be Richard, and none other. Is it not so, Miss Manners?"

"Really, my Lord, I can't remember," replied Dolly, looking out of the coach window. "Who put those frightful skulls upon Temple Bar?"

Then the mystery of their coming was clear to me, and the superior gentleman at the Castle Inn had been the fashionable dabbler in arts and letters and architecture of Strawberry Hill, of whom I remembered having heard Dr. Courtenay speak, Horace Walpole. But I was then far too concerned about Dorothy to listen to more. Her face was still turned away from me, and she was silent. I could have cut out my tongue for my blunder. Presently, when we were nearly out of the Strand, she turned upon me abruptly.

"We have not yet heard, Richard," she said, "how you got into such a predicament."

"Indeed, I don't know myself, Dolly. Some scoundrel bribed the captain of the slaver. For I take it Mr. Walpole has told you I was carried off on a slaver, if he recalled that much of the story."

"I don't mean that," answered Dolly, impatiently. "There is something strange about all this. How is it that you were in prison?"

"Mr. Dix, my grandfather's agent, took me for an impostor and would advance me no money," I answered, hard pushed.

But Dorothy had a woman's instinct, which is often the best of understanding. And I was beginning to think that a suspicion was at the bottom of her questions. She gave her head an impatient fling, and, as I feared, appealed to John Paul.

"Perhaps you can tell me, captain, why he did not come to his friends in his trouble."

And despite my signals to him he replied: "In truth, my dear lady, he haunted the place for a sight of you, from the moment he set foot in London."

Comyn laughed, and I felt the blood rise to my face, and kicked John Paul viciously. Dolly retained her self-possession.

"Pho!" says she; "for a sight of me! You seamen are all alike. For a sight of me! And had you not strength enough to lift a knocker, sir, —you who can raise a man from the ground with one hand?"

"'Twas before his tailor had prepared him, madam, and he feared to disgrace you," the captain gravely continued, and I perceived how futile it were to attempt to stop him. "And afterward—"

"And afterward?" repeated Dorothy, leaning forward.

"And afterward he went to Arlington Street with Mr. Dix to seek Mr. Manners, that he might be identified before that gentleman. He encountered Mr. Manners and his Grace of Something."

"Chartersea," put in Comyn, who had been listening eagerly. "Getting out of a coach," said the captain.

"When was this?" demanded Dorothy of me, interrupting him. Her voice was steady, but the colour had left her face.

"About three weeks ago."

"Please be exact, Richard."

"Well, if you must," said I, "the day was Tuesday, and the time about half an hour after two."

She said nothing for a while, trying to put down an agitation which was beginning to show itself in spite of her effort. As for me, I was almost wishing myself back in the sponginghouse.

"Are you sure my father saw you?" she asked presently.

"As clearly as you do now, Dolly," I said.

"But your clothes? He might have gone by you in such."

"I pray that he did, Dorothy," I replied. But I was wholly convinced that Mr. Manners had recognized me.

"And—and what did he say?" she asked.

For she had the rare courage that never shrinks from the truth. I think I have never admired and pitied her as at that moment.

"He said to the footman," I answered, resolved to go through with it now, "'Give the man a shilling.' That was his Grace's suggestion."

My Lord uttered something very near an oath. And she spoke not a word more until I handed her out in Arlington Street. The rest of us were silent, too, Comyn now and again giving me eloquent glances expressive of what he would say if she were not present; the captain watching her with a furtive praise, and he vowed to me afterward she was never so beautiful as when angry, that he loved her as an avenging Diana. But I was uneasy, and when I stood alone with her before the house I begged her not to speak to her father of the episode.

"Nay, he must be cleared of such an imputation, Richard," she answered proudly. "He may have made mistakes, but I feel sure he would never turn you away when you came to him in trouble—you, the grandson of his old friend, Lionel Carvel."

"Why bother over matters that are past and gone? I would have borne an hundred such trials to have you come to me as you came to-day, Dorothy. And I shall surely see you again," I said, trying to speak lightly; "and your mother, to whom you will present my respects, before I sail for America."

She looked up at me, startled.

"Before you sail for America!" she exclaimed, in a tone that made me thrill at once with joy and sadness. "And are you not, then, to see London now you are here?"

"Are you never coming back, Dolly?" I whispered; for I feared Mr. Marmaduke might appear at any moment; "or do you wish to remain in England always?"

For an instant I felt her pressure on my hand, and then she had fled into the house, leaving me standing by the steps looking after her. Comyn's voice aroused me.

"To the Star and Garter!" I heard him command, and on the way to Pall Mall he ceased not to rate Mr. Manners with more vigour than propriety. "I never liked the little cur, d—n him! No one likes him, Richard," he declared. "All the town knows how Chartersea threw a bottle at him, and were it not for his daughter he had long since been put out of White's. Were it not for Miss Dolly I would call him out for this cowardly trick, and then publish him."

"Nay, my Lord, I had held that as my privilege," interrupted the captain, "were it not, as you say, for Miss Manners."

His Lordship shot a glance at John Paul somewhat divided between surprise, resentment, and amusement.

"Now you have seen the daughter, captain, you perceive it is impossible," I hastened to interpose.

"How in the name of lineage did she come to have such a father?" Comyn went on. "I thank Heaven he's not mine. He's not fit to be her lackey. I would sooner twenty times have a profligate like my Lord Sandwich for a parent than a milk and water sop like Manners, who will risk nothing over a crown piece at play or a guinea at Newmarket. By G—, Richard," said his Lordship, bringing his fist against the glass with near force enough to break the pane, "I have a notion why he did not choose to see you that day. Why, he has no more blood than a louse!"

I had come to the guess as soon as he, but I dared not give it voice, nor anything but ridicule. And so we came to the hotel, the red of departing day fading in the sky above the ragged house-line in St. James's Street.

It was a very different reception we got than when we had first come there. You, my dears, who live in this Republic can have no notion of the stir and bustle caused by the arrival of Horace Walpole's carriage at a fashionable hotel, at a time when every innkeeper was versed in the arms of every family of note in the three kingdoms. Our friend the chamberlain was now humility itself, and fairly ran in his eagerness to anticipate Comyn's demands. It was "Yes, my Lord," and "To be sure, your Lordship," every other second, and he seized the first occasion to make me an elaborate apology for his former cold conduct, assuring me that had our honours been pleased to divulge the fact that we had friends in London, such friends as my Lord Comyn and Mr. Walpole, whose great father he had once had the distinction to serve as linkman, all would have been well. And he was desiring me particularly to comprehend that he had been acting under most disagreeable orders when he sent for the bailiff, before I cut him short.

We were soon comfortably installed in our old rooms; Comyn had sent post-haste for Davenport, who chanced to be his own tailor, and for the whole army of auxiliaries indispensable to a gentleman's make-up; and Mr. Dix was notified that his Lordship would receive him at eleven on the following morning, in my rooms. I remembered the faithful Banks with a twinge of gratitude, and sent for him. And John Paul and I, having been duly installed in the clothes made for us, all three of us sat down merrily to such a supper as only the cook of the Star and Garter, who had been chef to the Comte de Maurepas, could prepare. Then I begged Comyn to relate the story of our rescue, which I burned to hear.

"Why, Richard," said he, filling his glass, "had you run afoul any other man in London, save perchance Selwyn, you'd have been drinking the bailiff's triple-diluted for a month to come. I never knew such a brace of fools as he and Horry for getting hold of strange yarns and making them stranger; the wonder was that Horry told this as straight as he did. He has written it to all his friends on the Continent, and had he not been in dock with the gout ever since he reached town, he would have told it at the opera, and at a dozen routs and suppers. Beg pardon, captain," said he, turning to John Paul, "but I think 'twas your peacock coat that saved you both, for it caught Horry's eye through the window, as you got out of the chaise, and down he came as fast as he could hobble.

"Horry had a little dinner to-day in Arlington Street, where he lives, and Miss Dorothy was there. I have told you, Richard, there has been no sensation in town equal to that of your Maryland beauty, since Lady Sarah Lennox. You may have some notion of the old beau Horry can be when he tries, and he is over-fond of Miss Dolly—she puts him in mind of some canvas or other of Sir Peter's. He vowed he had been saving this piece de resistance, as he was pleased to call it, expressly for her, since it had to do somewhat with Maryland. 'What d'ye think I met at Windsor, Miss Manners?' he cries, before we had begun the second course.

"Perhaps a repulse from his Majesty,' says Dolly, promptly.

"Nay,' says Mr. Walpole, making a face, for he hates a laugh at his cost; nothing less than a young American giant, with the attire of Dr. Benjamin Franklin and the manner of the Fauxbourg Saint Germain. But he had a whiff of deer leather about him, and shoulders and back and legs to make his fortune at Hockley in the Hole, had he lived two generations since. And he had with him a strange, Scotch sea-captain, who had rescued him from pirates, bless you, no less. That is, he said he was a sea-captain; but he talked French like a Parisian, and quoted Shakespeare like Mr. Burke or Dr. Johnson. He may have been M. Caron de Beaumarchais, for I never saw him, or a soothsayer, or Cagliostro the magician, for he guessed my name.'

"Guessed your name!' we cried, for the story was out of the ordinary.

"Just that,' answered he, and repeated some damned verse I never heard, with Horatio in it, and made them all laugh."

John Paul and I looked at each other in astonishment, and we, too, laughed heartily. It was indeed an odd coincidence.

His Lordship continued: "'Well, be that as it may,' said Horry, 'he was an able man of sagacity, this sea-captain, and, like many another, had a penchant for being a gentleman. But he was more of an oddity than Hertford's beast of Gevaudan, and was dressed like Salvinio, the monkey my Lord Holland brought back from his last Italian tour.'"

I have laughed over this description since, my dears, and so has John Paul. But at that time I saw nothing funny in it, and winced with him when Comyn repeated it with such brutal unconsciousness. However, young Englishmen of birth and wealth of that day were not apt to consider the feelings of those they deemed below them.

"Come to your story. Comyn," I cut in testily.

But his Lordship missed entirely the cause of my displeasure.

"Listen to him!" he exclaimed good-naturedly. "He will hear of nothing but Miss Dolly. Well, Richard, my lad, you should have seen her as Horry went on to tell that you had been taken from Maryland, with her head forward and her lips parted, and a light in those eyes of hers to make a man fall down and worship. For Mr. Lloyd, or some one in your Colony, had written of your disappearance, and I vow bliss Dorothy has not been the same since. Nor have I been the only one to remark it," said he, waving off my natural protest at such extravagance. "We have talked of you more than once, she and I, and mourned you for dead. But I am off my course again, as we sailors say, captain. Horry was describing how Richard lifted little Goble by one hand and spun all the dignity out of him, when Miss Manners broke in, being able to contain herself no longer.

"'An American, Mr. Walpole, and from Maryland?' she demanded. And the way she said it made them all look at her.

"'Assurement, mademoiselle,' replied Horry, in his cursed French; and perhaps you know him. He would gladden the heart of Frederick of Prussia, for he stands six and three if an inch. I took such a fancy to the lad that I invited him to sup with me, and he gave me back a message fit for Mr. Wilkes to send to his Majesty, as haughty as you choose, that if I desired him I must have his friend in the bargain. You Americans are the very devil for independence, Miss Manners! 'Ods fish, I liked his spirit so much I had his friend, Captain something or other—'and there he stopped, caught by Miss Manners's appearance, for she was very white.

"'The name is Richard Carvel!' she cried.

"'I'll lay a thousand it was!' I shouted, rising in my chair. And the company stared, and Lady Pembroke vowed I had gone mad.

"'Bless me, bless me, here's a romance for certain!' cried Horry; 'it throws my "Castle of Otranto" in the shade' ("that's some damned book he has written," Comyn interjected).

"You may not believe me, Richard, when I say that Miss Dolly ate but little after that, and her colour came and went like the red of a stormy sunset at sea. 'Here's this dog Richard come to spill all our chances,' I swore to myself. The company had been prodigiously entertained by the tale, and clamoured for more, and when Horry had done I told how you had fought me at Annapolis, and had saved my life. But Miss Manners sat very still, biting her lip, and I knew she was sadly vexed that you had not gone to her in Arlington Street. For a woman will reason thus," said his Lordship, winking wisely. "But I more than suspected something to have happened, so I asked Horry to send his fellow Favre over to the Star and Garter to see if you were there, tho' I was of three minds to let you go to the devil. You should have seen her face when he came back to say that you had been for three weeks in a Castle Yard sponging-house! Then Horry said he would lend me his coach, and when it was brought around Miss Manners took our breaths by walking downstairs and into it, nor would she listen to a word of the objections cried by my Lady Pembroke and the rest. You must know there is no stopping the beauty when she has made her mind. And while they were all chattering on the steps I jumped in, and off we drove, and you will be the most talked-of man in London to-morrow. I give you Miss Manners!" cried his Lordship, as he ended.

We all stood to the toast, I with my blood a-tingle and my brain awchirl, so that I scarce knew what I did.

CHAPTER XXVII

IN WHICH I AM SORE TEMPTED

"Who the devil is this John Paul, and what is to become of him?" asked Comyn, as I escorted him downstairs to a chair. "You must give him two hundred pounds, or a thousand, if you like, and let him get out. He can't be coming to the clubs with you."

And he pulled me into the coffee room after him.

"You don't understand the man, Comyn," said I; "he isn't that kind, I tell you. What he has done for me is out of friendship, as he says, and he wouldn't touch a farthing save what I owe him."

"Cursed if he isn't a rum sea-captain," he answered, shrugging his shoulders; "cursed if I ever ran foul of one yet who would refuse a couple of hundred and call quits. What's he to do? Is he to live like a Lord of the Treasury upon a master's savings?"

"Jack," said I, soberly, resolved not to be angry, "I would willingly be cast back in Castle Yard to-night rather than desert him, who might have deserted me twenty times to his advantage. Mr. Carvel has not wealth enough, nor I gratitude enough, to reward him. But if our family can make his fortune, it shall be made. And I am determined to go with him to America by the first packet I can secure."

He clutched my arm with an earnestness to startle me.

"You must not leave England now," he said.

"And why?"

"Because she will marry Chartersea if you do. And take my oath upon it, you alone can save her from that."

"Nonsense!" I exclaimed, but my breath caught sharply.

"Listen, Richard. Mr. Manners's manoeuvres are the talk of the town, and the beast of a duke is forever wining and dining in Arlington Street. At first people ridiculed, now they are giving credit. It is said," he whispered fearfully, "it is said that his Grace has got Mr. Manners in his power,—some question of honour, you understand, which will ruin him,—and that even now the duke is in a position to force the marriage."

He leaned forward and searched me with his keen gray eyes, as tho' watching the effect of the intelligence upon me. I was, indeed, stunned.

"Now, had she refused me fifty times instead of only twice," my Lord continued, "I could not wish her such a fate as that vicious scoundrel. And since she will not have me, I would rather it were you than any man alive. For she loves you, Richard, as surely as the world is turning."

"Oh, no!" I replied passionately; "you are deceived by the old liking she has always had for me since we were children together." I was deeply touched by his friendship. "But tell me how that could affect this marriage with Chartersea. I believe her pride capable of any sacrifice for the family honour."

He made a gesture of impatience that knocked over a candlestick.

"There, curse you, there you are again!" he said, "showing how little you know of women and of their pride. If she were sure that you loved her, she would never marry Chartersea or any one else. She has had near the whole of London at her feet, and toyed with it. Now she has been amusing herself with Charles Fox, but I vow she cares for none of them. Titles, fame, estates, will not move her."

"If she were sure that I loved her!" I repeated, dazed by what he was saying. "How you are talking, Comyn!"

"Just that. Ah, how I know her, Richard! She can be reckless beyond notion. And if it were proved to her that you were in love with Miss Swain, the barrister's daughter, over whom we were said to have fought, she would as soon marry Chartersea, or March, or the devil, to show you how little she cared."

"With Patty Swain!" I exclaimed.

"But if she knew you did not care a rope's end for Patty, Mr. Marmaduke and his reputation might go into exile together," he continued, without heeding. "So much for a woman's pride, I say. The day the

news of your disappearance arrived, Richard, she was starting out with a party to visit Lord Carlisle's seat, Castle Howard. Not a step would she stir, though Mr. Marmaduke whined and coaxed and threatened. And I swear to you she has never been the same since, though few but I know why. I might tell you more, my lad, were it not a breach of confidence."

"Then don't," I said; for I would not let my feelings run.

"Egad, then, I will!" he cried impetuously, "for the end justifies it. You must know that after the letter came from Mr. Lloyd, we thought you dead. I could never get her to speak of you until a fortnight ago. We both had gone with a party to see Wanstead and dine at the Spread Eagle upon the Forest, and I stole her away from the company and led her out under the trees. My God, Richard, how beautiful she was in the wood with the red in her cheeks and the wind blowing her black hair! For the second time I begged her to be Lady Comyn. Fool that I was, I thought she wavered, and my heart beat as it never will again. Then, as she turned away, from her hand slipped a little gold-bound purse, and as I picked it up a clipping from a newspaper fluttered out. 'Pon my soul, it was that very scandalous squib of the Maryland Gazette about our duel! I handed it back with a bow. I dared not look up at her face, but stood with my eyes on the ground, waiting.

"'Lord Comyn,' says she, presently, with a quiver in her voice, 'before I give you a reply you must first answer, on your word as a gentleman, what I ask you.'

"I bowed again.

"'Is it true that Richard Carvel was in love with Miss Swain?' she asked."

"And you said, Comyn," I broke in, unable longer to contain myself, "you said—"

"I said: 'Dorothy, if I were to die to-morrow, I would swear Richard Carvel loved you, and you only.'"

His Lordship had spoken with that lightness which hides only the deepest emotion.

"And she refused you?" I cried. "Oh, surely not for that!"

"And she did well," said my Lord.

I bowed my head on my arms, for I had gone through a great deal that day, and this final example of Comyn's generosity overwhelmed me. Then I felt his hand laid kindly on my shoulder, and I rose up and seized it. His eyes were dim, as were mine.

"And now, will you go to Maryland and be a fool?" asked his Lordship.

I hesitated, sadly torn between duty and inclination. John Paul could, indeed, go to America without me. Next the thought came over me in a flash that my grandfather might be ill, or even dead, and there would be no one to receive the captain. I knew he would never consent to spend the season at the Star and Garter at my expense. And then the image of the man rose before me, of him who had given me all he owned, and gone with me so cheerfully to prison, though he knew me not from the veriest adventurer and impostor. I was undecided no longer.

"I must go, Jack," I said sadly; "as God judges, I must."

He looked at me queerly, as if I were beyond his comprehension, picked up his hat, called out that he would see me in the morning, and was gone.

I went slowly upstairs, threw off my clothes mechanically, and tumbled into bed. The captain had long been asleep. By the exertion of all the will power I could command, I was able gradually to think more and more soberly, and the more I thought, the more absurd, impossible, it seemed that I, a rough provincial not yet of age, should possess the heart of a beauty who had but to choose from the best of all England. An hundred times I went over the scene of poor Comyn's proposal, nay, saw it vividly, as though the whole of it had been acted before me: and as I became calmer, the plainer I perceived that Dorothy, thinking me dead, was willing to let Comyn believe that she had loved me, and had so eased the soreness of her refusal. Perhaps, in truth, a sentiment had sprung up in her breast when she heard of my disappearance, which she mistook for love. But surely the impulse that sent her to Castle Yard was not the same as that Comyn had depicted: it was merely the survival of the fancy of a little girl in a grass-stained frock, who had romped on the lawn at Carvel Hall. I sighed as I remembered the sun and the flowers and the blue Chesapeake, and recalled the very toss of her head when she had said she would marry nothing less than a duke.

Alas, Dolly, perchance it was to be nothing more than a duke! The bloated face and beady eyes and

the broad crooked back I had seen that day in Arlington Street rose before me,—I should know his Grace of Chartersea again were I to meet him in purgatory. Was it, indeed, possible that I could prevent her marriage with this man? I fell asleep, repeating the query, as the dawn was sifting through the blinds.

I awakened late. Banks was already there to dress me, to congratulate me as discreetly as a well-trained servant should; nor did he remind me of the fact that he had offered to lend me money, for which omission I liked him the better. In the parlour I found the captain sipping his chocolate and reading his morning Chronicle, as though all his life he had done nothing else.

"Good morning, captain." And fetching him a lick on the back that nearly upset his bowl, I cried as heartily as I could:

"Egad, if our luck holds, we'll be sailing before the week is out."

But he looked troubled. He hemmed and hawed, and finally broke out into Scotch:

"Indeed, laddie, y'ell no be leaving Miss Dorothy for me."

"What nonsense has Comyn put into your head?" I demanded, with a stitch in my side; I am no more to Miss Manners than—"

"Than John Paul! Faith, y'ell not make me believe that. Ah, Richard," said he, "ye're a sly dog. You and I have been as thick these twa months as men can well live, and never a word out of you of the most sublime creature that walks. I have seen women in many countries, lad, beauties to set thoughts afire and swords a-play,—and 'tis not her beauty alone. She hath a spirit for a queen to covet, and air and carriage, too."

This eloquent harangue left me purple.

"I grant it all, captain. She has but to choose her title and estate."

"Ay, and I have a notion which she'll be choosing."

"The knowledge is worth a thousand pounds at the least," I replied.
"I will lend you the sum, and warrant no lack of takers."

"Now the devil fly off with such temperament! And I had half the encouragement she has given you, I would cast anchor on the spot, and they might hang and quarter me to move me. But I know you well," he exclaimed, his manner changing, "you are making this great sacrifice on my account. And I will not be a drag on your pleasures, Richard, or stand in the way of your prospects."

"Captain Paul," I said, sitting down beside him, "have I deserved this from you? Have I shown a desire to desert you now that my fortunes have changed? I have said that you shall taste of our cheer at Carvel Hall, and have looked forward this long while to the time when I shall take you to my grandfather and say: 'Mr. Carvel, this is he whose courage and charity have restored you to me, and me to you.' And he will have changed mightily if you do not have the best in Maryland. Should you wish to continue on the sea, you shall have the Belle of the Wye, launched last year. 'Tis time Captain Elliott took to his pension."

The captain sighed, and a gleam I did not understand came into his dark eyes.

"I would that God had given me your character and your heart, Richard," he said, "in place of this striving thing I have within me. But 'tis written that a leopard cannot change his spots."

"The passage shall be booked this day," I said.

That morning was an eventful one. Comyn arrived first, dressed in a suit of mauve French cloth that set off his fine figure to great advantage. He regarded me keenly as he entered, as if to discover whether I had changed my mind over night. And I saw he was not in the best of tempers.

"And when do you sail?" he cried. "I have no doubt you have sent out already to get passage."

"I have been trying to persuade Mr. Carvel to remain in London, my Lord," said the captain. "I tell him he is leaving his best interests behind him."

"I fear that for once you have undertaken a task beyond your ability, Captain Paul," was the rather tart reply.

"The captain has a ridiculous idea that he is the cause of my going," I said quickly.

John Paul rose somewhat abruptly, seized his hat and bowed to his Lordship, and in the face of a rain sallied out, remarking that he had as yet seen nothing of the city.

"Jack, you must do me the favour not to talk of this in John Paul's presence," I said, when the door had closed.

"If he doesn't suspect why you are going, he has more stupidity than I gave him credit for," Comyn answered gruffly.

"I fear he does suspect," I said.

His Lordship went to the table and began to write, leaving me to the Chronicle, the pages of which I did not see. Then came Mr. Dix, and such a change I had never beheld in mortal man. In place of the would-be squire I had encountered in Threadneedle Street, here was an unctuous person of business in sober gray; but he still wore the hypocritical smirk with no joy in it. His bow was now all respectful obedience. Comyn acknowledged it with a curt nod.

Mr. Dix began smoothly, where a man of more honesty would have found the going difficult.

"Mr. Carvel," he said, rubbing his hands, "I wish first to express my profound regrets for what has happened."

"Curse your regrets," said Comyn, bluntly. "You come here on business. Mr. Carvel does not stand in need of regrets at present."

"I was but on the safe side of Mr. Carvel's money, my Lord."

"Ay, I'll warrant you are always on the safe side of money," replied Comyn, with a laugh. "What I wish to know, Mr. Dix," he continued, "is whether you are willing to take my word that this is Mr. Richard Carvel, the grandson and heir of Lionel Carvel, Esquire, of Carvel Hall in Maryland?"

"I am your Lordship's most obedient servant," said Mr. Dix.

"Confound you, sir! Can you or can you not answer a simple question?"

Mr. Dix straightened. He may have spoken elsewhere of asserting his dignity.

"I would not presume to doubt your Lordship's word."

"Then, if I were to be personally responsible for such sums as Mr. Carvel may need, I suppose you would be willing to advance them to him."

"Willingly, willingly, my Lord," said Mr. Dix, and added immediately: "Your Lordship will not object to putting that in writing? Merely a matter of form, as your Lordship knows, but we men of affairs are held to a strict accountability."

Comyn made a movement of disgust, took up a pen and wrote out the indorsement.

"There," he said. "You men of affairs will at least never die of starvation."

Mr. Dix took the paper with a low bow, began to shower me with protestations of his fidelity to my grandfather's interests, which were one day to be my own,—he hoped, with me, not soon,—drew from his pocket more than sufficient for my immediate wants, said that I should have more by a trusty messenger, and was going on to clear himself of his former neglect and indifference, when Banks announced:

"His honour, Mr. Manners!"

Comyn and I exchanged glances, and his Lordship gave a low whistle. Nor was the circumstance without its effect upon Mr. Dix. With my knowledge of the character of Dorothy's father I might have foreseen this visit, which came, nevertheless, as a complete surprise. For a moment I hesitated, and then made a motion to show him up. Comyn voiced my decision.

"Why let the little cur stand in the way?" he said; "he counts for nothing."

Mr. Marmaduke was not long in ascending, and tripped into the room as Mr. Dix backed out of it, as gayly as tho' he had never sent me about my business in the street. His clothes, of a cherry cut velvet, were as ever a little beyond the fashion, and he carried something I had never before seen, then used by the extreme dandies in London,—an umbrella.

"What! Richard Carvel! Is it possible?" he screamed in his piping voice. "We mourned you for dead, and here you turn up in London alive and well, and bigger and stronger than ever. Oons! one need not go to Scripture for miracles. I shall write my congratulations to Mr. Carvel this day, sir." And he pushed his fingers into my waistcoat, so that Comyn and I were near to laughing in his face. For it was impossible to be angry with a little coxcomb of such pitiful intelligence.

"Ah, good morning, my Lord. I see your Lordship has risen early in the same good cause, I myself am up two hours before my time. You will pardon the fuss I am making over the lad, Comyn, but his grandfather is my very dear friend, and Richard was brought up with my daughter Dorothy. They were like brother and sister. What, Richard, you will not take my hand! Surely you are not so unreasonable as to hold against me that unfortunate circumstance in Arlington Street! Yes, Dorothy has shocked me. She has told me of it."

Comyn winked at me as I replied:—

"We shan't mention it, Mr. Manners. I have had my three weeks in prison, and perhaps know the world all the better for them."

He held up his umbrella in mock dismay, and stumbled abruptly into a chair. There he sat looking at me, a whimsical uneasiness on his face. "We shall indeed mention it, sir. Three weeks in prison, to think of it! And you would not so much as send me a line. Ah, Richard, pride is a good thing, but I sometimes think we from Maryland have too much of it. We shall indeed speak of the matter. Out of justice to me you must understand how it occurred. You must know that I am deucedly absentminded, and positively lost without my glass. And I had somebody with me, so Dorothy said. Chartersea, I believe. And his Grace made me think you were a cursed beggar. I make a point never to have to do with 'em."

"You are right, Mr. Manners," Comyn cut in dryly; "for I have known them to be so persistently troublesome, when once encouraged, as to interfere seriously with our arrangements."

"Eh!" Mr. Manners ejaculated, and then came to an abrupt pause, while I wondered whether the shot had told. To relieve him I inquired after Mrs. Manners's health.

"Ah, to be sure," he replied, beginning to fumble in his skirts; "London agrees with her remarkably, and she is better than she has been for years. And she is overjoyed at your most wonderful escape, Richard, as are we all."

And he gave me a note. I concealed my eagerness as I took it and broke the seal, to discover that it was not from Dorothy, but from Mrs. Manners herself.

"My dear Richard" (so it ran), "I thank God with your dear Grandfather over y'r Deliverance, & you must bring y'r Deliverer, whom Dorothy describes as Courtly and Gentlemanly despite his Calling, to dine with us this very Day, that we may express to him our Gratitude. I know you are far too Sensible not to come to Arlington Street. I subscribe myself, Richard, y'r sincere Friend,

"MARGARET MANNERS."

There was not so much as a postscript from Dolly, as I had hoped. But the letter was whole-souled, like Mrs. Manners, and breathed the affection she had always had for me. I honoured her the more that she had not attempted to excuse Mr. Manners's conduct.

"You will come, Richard?" cried Mr. Marmaduke, with an attempt at heartiness. "You must come, and the captain, too. For I hear, with regret, that you are not to be long with us."

I caught another significant look from Comyn from between the window curtains. But I accepted for myself, and conditionally for John Paul. Mr. Manners rose to take his leave.

"Dorothy will be glad to see you," he said. "I often think, Richard, that she tires of these generals and King's ministers, and longs for a romp at Wilmot House again. Alas," he sighed, offering us a pinch of snuff (which he said was the famous Number 37), "alas, she has had a deal too much of attention, with his Grace of Chartersea and a dozen others would to marry her. I fear she will go soon," and he sighed again. "Upon my soul I cannot make her out. I'll lay something handsome, my Lord, that the madcap adventure with you after Richard sets the gossips going. One day she is like a schoolgirl, and I blame myself for not taking her mother's advice to send her to Mrs. Terry, at Campden House; and the next, egad, she is as difficult to approach as a crowned head. Well, gentlemen, I give you good day, I have an appointment at White's. I am happy to see you have fallen in good hands, Richard. My Lord, your most obedient!"

"He'll lay something handsome!" said my Lord, when the door had closed behind him.

CHAPTER XXVIII

ARLINGTON STREET

The sun having come out, and John Paul not returning by two,—being ogling, I supposed, the ladies in Hyde Park,—I left him a message and betook myself with as great trepidation as ever to Dorothy's house. The door was opened by the identical footman who had so insolently offered me money, and I think he recognized me, for he backed away as he told me the ladies were not at home. But I had not gone a dozen paces in my disappointment when I heard him running after me, asking if my honour were Mr. Richard Carvel.

"The ladies will see your honour," he said, and conducted me back into the house and up the wide stairs. I had heard that Arlington Street was known as the street of the King's ministers, and I surmised that Mr. Manners had rented this house, and its furniture, from some great man who had gone out of office, plainly a person of means and taste. The hall, like that of many of the great town-houses, was in semi-darkness, but I remarked that the stair railing was of costly iron-work and polished brass; and, as I went up, that the stone niches in the wall were filled with the busts of statesmen, and I recognized among these, that of the great Walpole. A great copper gilt chandelier hung above. But the picture of the drawing-room I was led into, with all its colours, remains in the eye of my mind to this day. It was a large room, the like of which I had never seen in any private residence of the New World, situated in the back of the house. Its balcony overlooked the fresh expanse of the Green Park. Upon its high ceiling floated Venus and the graces, by Zucchi; and the mantel, upon which ticked an antique and curious French clock, was carved marble.

On the gilt panels of the walls were wreaths of red roses. At least a half-dozen tall mirrors, framed in rococos, were placed about, the largest taking the space between the two high windows on the park side. And underneath it stood a gold cabinet, lacquered by Martin's inimitable hand, in the centre of which was set a medallion of porcelain, with the head in dark blue of his Majesty, Charles the First. The chairs and lounges were marquetry,—satin-wood and mahogany,—with seats and backs of blue brocade. The floor was polished to the degree of danger, and on the walls hung a portrait by Van Dycke, another, of a young girl, by Richardson, a landscape by the Dutch artist Ruysdael, and a water-colour by Zaccarelli.

I had lived for four months the roughest of lives, and the room brought before me so sharply the contrast between my estate and the grandeur and elegance in which Dorothy lived, that my spirits fell as I looked about me. In front of me was a vase of flowers, and beside them on the table lay a note "To Miss Manners, in Arlington Street," and sealed with a ducal crest. I was unconsciously turning it over, when something impelled me to look around. There, erect in the doorway, stood Dolly, her eyes so earnestly fixed upon me that I dropped the letter with a start. A faint colour mounted to her crown of black hair.

"And so you have come, Richard," she said. Her voice was low, and tho' there was no anger in it, the tone seemed that of reproach. I wondered whether she thought the less of me for coming.

"Can you blame me for wishing to see you before I leave, Dolly?" I cried, and crossed quickly over to her.

But she drew a step backward.

"Then it is true that you are going," said she, this time with a plain note of coldness.

"I must, Dorothy."

"When?"

"As soon as I can get passage."

She passed me and seated herself on the lounge, leaving me to stand like a lout before her, ashamed of my youth and of the clumsiness of my great body.

"Ah, Richard," she laughed, "confess to your old play mate! I should like to know how many young

men of wealth and family would give up the pleasures of a London season were there not a strong attraction in Maryland."

How I longed to tell her that I would give ten years of my life to remain in England: that duty to John Paul took me home. But I was dumb.

"We should make a macaroni of you to amaze our colony," said Dolly, lightly, as I sat down a great distance away; "to accept my schooling were to double your chances when you return, Richard. You should have cards to everything, and my Lord Comyn or Mr. Fox or some one would introduce you at the clubs. I vow you would be a sensation, with your height and figure. You should meet all the beauties of England, and perchance," she added mischievously, "perchance you might be taking one home with you."

"Nay, Dolly," I answered; "I am not your match in jesting."

"Jesting!" she exclaimed, "I was never more sober. But where is your captain?"

I said that I hoped that John Paul would be there shortly.

"How fanciful he is! And his conversation,—one might think he had acquired the art at Marly or in the Fauxbourg. In truth, he should have been born on the far side of the Channel. And he has the air of the great man," said she, glancing up at me, covertly. "For my part, I prefer a little more bluntness."

I was nettled at the speech. Dorothy had ever been quick to seize upon and ridicule the vulnerable oddities of a character, and she had all the contempt of the great lady for those who tried to scale by pleasing arts. I perceived with regret that she had taken a prejudice.

"There, Dorothy," I cried, "not even you shall talk so of the captain. For you have seen him at his worst. There are not many, I warrant you, born like him a poor gardener's son who rise by character and ability to be a captain at three and twenty. And he will be higher yet. He has never attended any but a parish school, and still has learning to astonish Mr. Walpole, learning which he got under vast difficulties. He is a gentleman, I say, far above many I have known, and he is a man. If you would know a master, you should see him on his own ship. If you would know a gentleman, you have been with me in his mother's cottage." And, warming as I talked, I told her of that saddest of all homecomings to the little cabin under Criffel's height.

Small wonder that I adored Dorothy!

Would that I could paint her moods, that I might describe the strange light in her eyes when I had finished, that I might tell how in an instant she was another woman. She rose impulsively and took a chair at my side, and said:—

"'Tis so I love to hear you speak, Richard, when you uphold the absent. For I feel it is so you must champion me when I am far away. My dear old playmate is ever the same, strong to resent, and seeing ever the best in his friends. Forgive me, Richard, I have been worse than silly. And will you tell me that story of your adventures which I long to learn?"

Ay, that I would. I told it her, and she listened silently, save only now and then a cry of wonder or of sympathy that sounded sweet to my ears,—just as I had dreamed of her listening when I used to pace the deck of the brigantine John, at sea. And when at length I had finished, she sat looking out over the Green Park, as tho' she had forgot my presence.

And so Mrs. Manners came in and found us.

It had ever pleased me to imagine that Dorothy's mother had been in her youth like Dorothy. She had the same tall figure, grace in its every motion, and the same eyes of deep blue, and the generous but well-formed mouth. A man may pity, but cannot conceive the heroism that a woman of such a mould must have gone through who has been married since early girlhood to a man like Mr. Manners. Some women would have been driven quickly to frivolity, and worse, but this one had struggled year after year to maintain an outward serenity to a critical world, and had succeeded, tho' success had cost her dear. Each trial had deepened a line of that face, had done its share to subdue the voice which had once rung like Dorothy's; and in the depths of her eyes lingered a sadness indefinable.

She gazed upon me with that kindness and tenderness I had always received since the days when, younger and more beautiful than now, she was the companion of my mother. And the unbidden shadow of a thought came to me that these two sweet women had had some sadness in common. Many a summer's day I remembered them sewing together in the spring-house, talking in subdued voices which were hushed when I came running in. And lo! the same memory was on Dorothy's mother then,

half expressed as she laid her hands upon my shoulders.

"Poor Elizabeth!" she said,—not to me, nor yet to Dorothy; "I wish that she might have lived to see you now. It is Captain Jack again."

She sighed, and kissed me. And I felt at last that I had come home after many wanderings. We sat down, mother and daughter on the sofa with their fingers locked. She did not speak of Mr. Manners's conduct, or of my stay in the sponging-house. And for this I was thankful.

"I have had a letter from Mr. Lloyd, Richard," she said.

"And my grandfather?" I faltered, a thickness in my throat.

"My dear boy," answered Mrs. Manners, gently, "he thinks you dead. But you have written him?" she added hurriedly.

I nodded. "From Dumfries."

"He will have the letter soon," she said cheerfully. "I thank Heaven I am able to tell you that his health is remarkable under the circumstances. But he will not quit the house, and sees no one except your uncle, who is with him constantly."

It was what I expected. But the confirmation of it brought me to my feet in a torrent of indignation, exclaiming:

"The villain! You tell me he will allow Mr. Carvel to see no one?"

She started forward, laying her hand on my arm, and Dorothy gave a little cry.

"What are you saying, Richard? What are you saying?"

"Mrs. Manners," I answered, collecting myself, "I must tell you that I believe it is Grafton Carvel himself that is responsible for my abduction. He meant that I should be murdered."

Then Dorothy rose, her eyes flashing and her head high.

"He would have murdered you—you, Richard?" she cried, in such a storm of anger as I had never seen her. "Oh, he should hang for the thought of it! I have always suspected Grafton Carvel capable of any crime!"

"Hush, Dorothy," said her mother; "it is not seemly for a young girl to talk so."

"Seemly!" said Dorothy. "If I were a man I would bring him to justice, and it took me a lifetime. Nay, if I were a man and could use a sword—"

"Dorothy! Dorothy!" interrupted Mrs. Manners.

Dorothy sat down, the light lingering in her eyes. She had revealed more of herself in that instant than in all her life before.

"It is a grave charge, Richard," said Mrs. Manners, at length. "And your uncle is a man of the best standing in Annapolis."

"You must remember his behaviour before my mother's marriage, Mrs. Manners."

"I do, I do, Richard," she said sadly. "And I have never trusted him since. I suppose you are not making your accusation without cause?"

"I have cause enough," I answered bitterly.

"And proof?" she added. She should have been the man in her family.

I told her how Harvey had overheard the bits of the plot at Carvel Hall near two years gone; and now that I had begun, I was going through with Mr. Allen's part in the conspiracy, when Dorothy startled us both by crying:

"Oh, there is so much wickedness in the world, I wish I had never been born!"

She flung herself from the room in a passion of tears to shock me. As if in answer to my troubled look, Mrs. Manners said, with a sigh:

"She has not been at all well, lately, Richard. I fear the gayety of this place is too much for her. Indeed, I am sorry we ever left Maryland."

I was greatly disturbed, and thought involuntarily of Comyn's words. Could it be that Mr. Manners was forcing her to marry Chartersea?

"And has Mr. Lloyd said nothing of my uncle?" I asked after a while.

"I will not deny that ugly rumours are afloat," she answered. "Grafton, as you know, is not liked in Annapolis, especially by the Patriot party. But there is not the slightest ground for suspicion. The messenger—"

"Yes?"

"Your uncle denies all knowledge of. He was taken to be the tool of the captain of the slaver, and he disappeared so completely that it was supposed he had escaped to the ship. The story goes that you were seized for a ransom, and killed in the struggle. Your black ran all the way to town, crying the news to those he met on the Circle and in West Street, but by the mercy of God he was stopped by Mr. Swain and some others before he had reached your grandfather. In ten minutes a score of men were galloping out of the Town Gate, Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Singleton ahead. They found your horse dead, and the road through the woods all trampled down, and they spurred after the tracks down to the water's edge. Singleton recalled a slaver, the crew of which had been brawling at the Ship tavern a few nights before. But the storm was so thick they could not see the ship's length out into the river. They started two fast sloops from the town wharves in chase, and your uncle has been moving heaven and earth to obtain some clew of you. He has put notices in the newspapers of Charlestown, Philadelphia, New York, and even Boston, and offered a thousand pounds reward."

CHAPTER XXIX

I MEET A VERY GREAT YOUNG MAN

The French clock had struck four, and I was beginning to fear that, despite my note, the captain's pride forbade his coming to Mr. Manners's house, when in he walked, as tho' 'twere no novelty to have his name announced. And so straight and handsome was he, his dark eye flashing with the self-confidence born in the man, that the look of uneasiness I had detected upon Mrs. Manners's face quickly changed to one of surprise and pleasure. Of course the good lady had anticipated a sea-captain of a far different mould. He kissed her hand with a respectful grace, and then her daughter's, for Dorothy had come back to us, calmer. And I was filled with joy over his fine appearance. Even Dorothy was struck by the change the clothes had made in him. Mrs. Manners thanked him very tactfully for restoring me to them, as she was pleased to put it, to which John Paul modestly replied that he had done no more than another would under the same circumstances. And he soon had them both charmed by his address.

"Why, Richard," said Dorothy's mother aside to me, "surely this cannot be your sea-captain!"

I nodded merrily. But John Paul's greatest triumph was yet to come. For presently Mr. Marmaduke arrived from White's, and when he had greeted me with effusion he levelled his glass at the corner of the room.

"Ahem!" he exclaimed. "Pray, my dear, whom have you invited to-day?" And without awaiting her reply, as was frequently his habit, he turned to me and said: "I had hoped we were to have the pleasure of Captain Paul's company, Richard. For I must have the chance before you go of clasping the hand of your benefactor."

"You shall have the chance, at least, sir," I replied, a fiery exultation in my breast. "Mr. Manners, this is my friend, Captain Paul."

The captain stood up and bowed gravely at the little gentleman's blankly amazed countenance.

"Ahem," said he; "dear me, is it possible!" and advanced a step, but the captain remained immovable. Mr. Marmaduke fumbled for his snuff-box, failed to find it, halted, and began again, for he never was known to lack words for long: "Captain, as one of the oldest friends of Mr. Lionel Carvel, I claim the right to thank you in his name for your gallant conduct. I hear that you are soon to see him, and to

receive his obligations from him in person. You will not find him lacking, sir, I'll warrant."

Such was Mr. Marmaduke's feline ingenuity! I had a retort ready, and I saw that Mrs. Manners, long tried in such occasions, was about to pour oil on the waters. But it was Dorothy who exclaimed:

"What captain! are you, too, going to Maryland?"

John Paul reddened.

"Ay, that he is, Dolly," I cut in hurriedly. "Did you imagine I would let him escape so easily? Henceforth as he has said, he is to be an American."

She flashed at me such a look as might have had a dozen different meanings, and in a trice it was gone again under her dark lashes.

Dinner was got through I know not how. Mr. Manners led the talk, and spoke more than was needful concerning our approaching voyage. He was at great pains to recommend the Virginia packet, which had made the fastest passage from the Capes; and she sailed, as was no doubt most convenient, the Saturday following. I should find her a comfortable vessel, and he would oblige me with a letter to Captain Alsop. Did Captain Paul know him? But the captain was describing West Indian life to Mrs. Manners. Dorothy had little to say; and as for me, I was in no very pleasant humour.

I gave a deaf ear to Mr. Marmaduke's sallies, to speculate on the nature of the disgrace which Chartersea was said to hold over his head. And twenty times, as I looked upon Dolly's beauty, I ground my teeth at the notion of returning home. I have ever been slow of suspicion, but suddenly it struck me sharply that Mr. Manners's tactics must have a deeper significance than I had thought. Why was it that he feared my presence in London?

As we made our way back to the drawing-room, I was hoping for a talk with Dolly (alas! I should not have many more), when I heard a voice which sounded strangely familiar.

"You know, Comyn," it was saying, "you know I should be at the Princess's were I not so completely worn out. I was up near all of last night with Rosette."

Mr. Marmaduke, entering before us, cried:—

"The dear creature! I trust you have had medical attendance, Mr. Walpole."

"Egad!" quoth Horry (for it was he), "I sent Favre to Hampstead to fetch Dr. Pratt, where he was attending some mercer's wife. It seems that Rosette had got into the street and eaten something horrible out of the kennel. I discharged the footman, of course."

"A plague on your dog, Horry," said my Lord, yawning, and was about to add something worse, when he caught sight of Dorothy.

Mr. Walpole bowed over her hand.

"And have you forgotten so soon your Windsor acquaintances, Mr. Walpole?" she asked, laughing.

"Bless me," said Horry, looking very hard at me, "so it is, so it is. Your hand, Mr. Carvel. You have only to remain in London, sir, to discover that your reputation is ready-made. I contributed my mite. For you must know that I am a sort of circulating library of odd news which those devils, the printers, contrive to get sooner or later—Heaven knows how! And Miss Manners herself has completed your fame. Yes, the story of your gallant rescue is in all the clubs to-day. Egad, sir, you come down heads up, like a loaded coin. You will soon be a factor in Change Alley." And glancing slyly at the blushing Dolly, he continued:

"I have been many things, Miss Manners, but never before an instrument of Providence. And so you discovered your rough diamond yesterday, and have polished him in a day. O that Dr. Franklin had profited as well by our London tailors! The rogue never told me, when he was ordering me about in his swan-skin, that he had a friend in Arlington Street, and a reigning beauty. But I like him the better for it."

"And I the worse," said Dolly.

"I perceive that he still retains his body-guard," said Mr. Walpole; "Captain—"

"Paul," said Dolly, seeing that we would not help him out.

"Ah, yes. These young princes from the New World must have their suites. You must bring them both some day to my little castle at Strawberry Hill."

"Unfortunately, Mr. Walpole, Mr. Carvel finds that he must return to America," Mr. Marmaduke interjected. He had been waiting to get in this word.

Comyn nudged me. And I took the opportunity, in the awkward silence that followed, to thank Mr. Walpole for sending his coach after us.

"And pray where did you get your learning?" he demanded abruptly of the captain, in his most patronizing way. "Your talents are wasted at sea, sir. You should try your fortune in London, where you shall be under my protection, sir. They shall not accuse me again of stifling young genius. Stay," he cried, warming with generous enthusiasm, "stay, I have an opening. 'Twas but yesterday Lady Cretherton told me that she stood in need of a tutor for her youngest son, and you shall have the position."

"Pardon me, sir, but I shall not have the position," said John Paul, coolly. And Horry might have heeded the danger signal. I had seen it more than once on board the brigantine John, and knew what was coming.

"Faith, and why not, sir? If I recommend you, why not, sir?"

"Because I shall not take it," he said. "I have my profession, Mr. Walpole, and it is an honourable one. And I would not exchange it, sir, were it in your power to make me a Gibbon or a Hume, or tutor to his Royal Highness, which it is not."

Thus, for the second time, the weapon of the renowned master of Strawberry was knocked from his hand at a single stroke of his strange adversary. I should like to describe John Paul as he made that speech, —for 'twas not so much the speech as the atmosphere of it. Those who heard and saw were stirred with wonder, for Destiny lay bare that instant, just as the powers above are sometimes revealed at a single lightning-bolt. Mr. Walpole made a reply that strove hard to be indifferent; Mr. Marmaduke stuttered, for he was frightened, as little souls are apt to be at such times. But my Lord Comyn, forever natural, forever generous, cried out heartily:—

"Egad, captain, there you are a true sailor! Which would you rather have been, I say, William Shakespeare or Sir Francis?"

"Which would you rather be, Richard," said Dolly to me, under her breath, "Horace Walpole or Captain John Paul? I begin to like your captain better."

Willy nilly, Mr. Walpole was forever doing me a service. Now, in order to ignore the captain more completely, he sat him down to engage Mr. and Mrs. Manners. Comyn was soon hot in an argument with John Paul concerning the seagoing qualities of a certain frigate, every rope and spar of which they seemed to know. And so I stole a few moments with Dorothy.

"You are going to take the captain to Maryland, Richard?" she asked, playing with her fan.

"I intend to get him the Belle of the Tye. 'Tis the least I can do. For I am at my wits' end how to reward him, Dolly. And when are you coming back?" I whispered earnestly, seeing her silent.

"I would that I knew, Richard," she replied, with a certain sadness that went to my heart, as tho' the choice lay beyond her. Then she changed. "Richard, there was more in Mr. Lloyd's letter than mamma told you of. There was ill news of one of your friends."

"News!"

She looked at me fixedly, and then continued, her voice so low that I was forced to bend over:

"Yes. You were not told that Patty Swain fell in a faint when she heard of your disappearance. You were not told that the girl was ill for a week afterwards. Ah, Richard, I fear you are a sad flirt. Nay, you may benefit by the doubt,—perchance you are going home to be married."

You may be sure that this intelligence, from Dorothy's lips, only increased my trouble and perplexity.

"You say that Patty has been ill?"

"Very ill," says she, with her lips tight closed.

"Indeed, I grieve to hear of it," I replied; "but I cannot think that my accident had anything to do with the matter."

"Young ladies do not send their fathers to coffee-houses to prevent duels unless their feelings are engaged," she flung back.

"You have heard the story of that affair, Dorothy. At least enough of it to do me justice."

She was plainly agitated.

"Has Lord Comyn—"

"Lord Comyn has told you the truth," I said; "so much I know."

Alas for the exits and entrances of life! Here comes the footman.

"Mr. Fox," said he, rolling the name, for it was a great one.

Confound Mr. Fox! He might have waited five short minutes.

It was, in truth, none other than that precocious marvel of England who but a year before had taken the breath from the House of Commons, and had sent his fame flying over the Channel and across the wide Atlantic; the talk of London, who set the fashions, cringed not before white hairs, or royalty, or customs, or institutions, and was now, at one and twenty, Junior Lord of the Admiralty—Charles James Fox. His face was dark, forbidding, even harsh—until he smiled. His eyebrows were heavy and shaggy, and his features of a rounded, almost Jewish mould. He put me in mind of the Stuarts, and I was soon to learn that he was descended from them.

As he entered the room I recall remarking that he was possessed of the supremest confidence of any man I had ever met. Mrs. Manners he greeted in one way, Mr. Marmaduke in another, and Mr. Walpole in still another. To Comyn it was "Hello, Jack," as he walked by him. Each, as it were, had been tagged with a particular value.

Chagrined as I was at the interruption, I was struck with admiration. For the smallest actions of these rare men of master passions so compel us. He came to Dorothy, whom he seemed not to have perceived at first, and there passed between them such a look of complete understanding that I suddenly remembered Comyn's speech of the night before, "Now it is Charles Fox." Here, indeed, was the man who might have won her. And yet I did not hate him. Nay, I loved him from the first time he addressed me. It was Dorothy who introduced us.

"I think I have heard of you, Mr. Carvel," he said, making a barely perceptible wink at Comyn.

"And I think I have heard of you, Mr. Fox," I replied.

"The deuce you have, Mr. Carvel!" said he, and laughed. And Comyn laughed, and Dorothy laughed, and I laughed. We were friends from that moment.

"Richard has appeared amongst us like a comet," put in the ubiquitous Mr. Manners, "and, I fear, intends to disappear in like manner."

"And where is the tail of this comet?" demanded Fox, instantly; "for I understood there was a tail."

John Paul was brought up, and the Junior Lord of the Admiralty looked him over from head to toe. And what, my dears, do you think he said to him?

"Have you ever acted, Captain Paul?"

The captain started back in surprise.

"Acted!" he exclaimed; "really, sir, I do not know. I have never been upon the boards."

Mr. Fox vowed that he could act: that he was sure of it, from the captain's appearance.

"And I, too, am sure of it, Mr. Fox," cried Dorothy; clapping her hands. "Persuade him to stay awhile in London, that you may have him at your next theatricals at Holland House. Why, he knows Shakespeare and Pope and—and Chaucer by heart, and Ovid and Horace,—is it not so, Mr. Walpole?"

"Is not what so, my dear young lady?" asked Mr. Walpole, pretending not to have heard.

"There!" exclaimed Dolly, pouting, when the laughter had subsided; "you make believe to care something about me, and yet will not listen to what I say."

I had seen at her feet our own Maryland gallants, the longest of whose reputations stretched barely from the James to the Schuylkill; but here in London men were hanging on her words whose names were familiarly spoken in Paris, and Rome, and Geneva. Not a topic was broached by Mr. Walpole or Mr. Fox, from the remonstrance of the Archbishop against masquerades and the coming marriage of my Lord Albemarle to the rights and wrongs of Mr. Wilkes, but my lady had her say. Mrs. Manners seemed more than content that she should play the hostess, which she did to perfection. She contrived to throw poisoned darts at the owner of Strawberry that started little Mr. Marmaduke to fidgeting in his seat, and he came to the rescue with all the town-talk at his command. He knew little else. Could Mr. Walpole tell him of this club of both sexes just started at Almack's? Mr. Walpole could tell a deal, tho' he took the pains first to explain that he was becoming too old for such frivolous and fashionable society. He could not, for the life of him, say why he was included. But, in spite of Mr. Walpole, John Paul was led out in the paces that best suited him, and finally, to the undisguised delight of Mr. Fox, managed to trip Horry upon an obscure point in Athenian literature. And this broke up the company.

As we took our leave Dorothy and Mr. Fox were talking together with lowered voices.

"I shall see you before I go," I said to her.

She laughed, and glanced at Mr. Fox.

"You are not going, Richard Carvel," said she.

"That you are not, Richard Carvel," said Mr. Fox.

I smiled, rather lamely, I fear, and said good night.

CHAPTER XXX

A CONSPIRACY

"Banks, where is the captain?" I asked, as I entered the parlour the next morning.

"Gone, sir, since seven o'clock," was the reply. "Gone!" I exclaimed; "gone where?"

"Faith, I did not ask his honour, sir."

I thought it strange, but reflected that John Paul was given to whims. Having so little time before him, he had probably gone to see the sights he had missed yesterday: the Pantheon, which was building, an account of which had appeared in all the colonial papers; or the new Blackfriars Bridge; or the Tower; or perhaps to see his Majesty ride out. The wonders of London might go hang, for all I cared. Who would gaze at the King when he might look upon Dorothy! I sighed. I bade Banks dress me in the new suit Davenport had brought that morning, and then sent him off to seek the shipping agent of the Virginia packet to get us a cabin. I would go to Arlington Street as soon as propriety admitted.

But I had scarce finished my chocolate and begun to smoke in a pleasant reverie, when I was startled by the arrival of two gentlemen. One was Comyn, and the other none less than Mr. Charles Fox.

"Now where the devil has your captain flown to?" said my Lord, tossing his whip on the table.

"I believe he must be sight-seeing," I said. "I dare swear he has taken a hackney coach to the Tower."

"To see the liberation of the idol of the people, I'll lay ten guineas. But they say the great Mr. Wilkes is to come out quietly, and wishes no demonstration," said Mr. Fox. "I believe the beggar has some sense, if the—Greek—would only let him have his way. So your captain is a Wilkite, Mr. Carvel?" he demanded.

"I fear you run very fast to conclusions, Mr. Fox," I answered, laughing, tho' I thought his guess was not far from wrong.

"I'll lay you the ten guineas he has been to the Tower," said Mr. Fox, promptly.

"Done, sir," said I.

"Hark ye, Richard," said Comyn, stretching himself in an arm-chair; "we are come to take the wind out of your sails, and leave you without an excuse for going home. And we want your captain, alive or dead. Charles, here, is to give him a commission in his Majesty's Navy."

Then I knew why Dorothy had laughed when I had spoken of seeing her again. Comyn—bless him!—had told her of his little scheme.

"Egad, Charles!" cried his Lordship, "to look at his glum face, one might think we were a couple of Jews who had cornered him."

Alas for the perversity of the heart! Instead of leaping for joy, as no doubt they had both confidently expected, I was both troubled and perplexed by this unlooked-for news. Oak, when bent, is even harder to bend back again. And so it has ever been with me. I had determined, after a bitter struggle, to go to Maryland, and had now become used to that prospect. I was anxious to see my grandfather, and to confront Grafton Carvel with his villany. And there was John Paul. What would he think?

"What ails you, Richard?" Comyn demanded somewhat testily.

"Nothing, Jack," I replied. "I thank you from my heart, and you, Mr. Fox. I know that commissions are not to be had for the asking, and I rejoice with the captain over his good fortune. But, gentlemen," I said soberly, "I had most selfishly hoped that I might be able to do a service to John Paul in return for his charity to me. You offer him something nearer his deserts, something beyond my power to give him."

Fox's eyes kindled.

"You speak like a man, Mr. Carvel," said he. "But you are too modest. Damn it, sir, don't you see that it is you, and no one else, who has procured this commission? Had I not been taken with you, sir, I should scarce have promised it to your friend Comyn, through whose interest you obtain it for your protege."

I remembered what Mr. Fox's enemies said of him, and smiled at the plausible twist he had given the facts.

"No," I said; "no, Mr. Fox; never that. The captain must not think that I wish to be rid of him. I will not stand in the way, though if it is to be offered him, he must comprehend that I had naught to do with the matter. But, sir," I continued curiously, "what do you know of John Paul's abilities as an officer?"

Mr. Fox and Comyn laughed so immoderately as to bring the blood to my face.

"Damme!" cried the Junior Lord, "but you Americans have odd consciences! Do you suppose Rigby was appointed Paymaster of the Forces because of his fitness? Why was North himself made Prime Minister? For his abilities?" And he broke down again. "Ask Jack, here, how he got into the service, and how much seamanship he knows."

"Faith," answered Jack, unblushingly, "Admiral Lord Comyn, my father, wished me to serve awhile. And so I have taken two cruises, delivered some score of commands, and scarce know a supple jack from a can of flip. Cursed if I see the fun of it in these piping times o' peace, so I have given it up, Richard. For Charles says this Falkland business with Spain will blow out of the touch-hole."

I could see little to laugh over. For the very rottenness of the service was due to the miserable and servile Ministry and Parliament of his Majesty, by means of which instruments he was forcing the colonies to the wall. Verily, that was a time when the greatness of England hung in the balance! How little I suspected that the young man then seated beside me, who had cast so unthinkingly his mighty powers on the side of corruption, was to be one of the chief instruments of her salvation! We were to fight George the Third across the seas. He was to wage no less courageous a battle at home, in the King's own capital. And the cause? Yes, the cause was to be the same as that of the Mr. Wilkes he reviled, who obtained his liberty that day.

At length John Paul came in, calling my name. He broke off abruptly at sight of the visitors.

"Now we shall decide," said Mr. Fox. "Captain, I have bet Mr. Carvel ten guineas you have been to the Tower to see Squinting Jack (John Wilkes) get his liberty at last."

The captain looked astonished.

"Anan, then, you have lost, Richard," said he. "For I have been just there."

"And helped, no doubt, to carry off the champion on your shoulders," said Mr. Fox, sarcastically, as I paid the debt.

"Mr. Wilkes knows full well the value of moderation, sir," replied the captain, in the same tone.

"Well, damn the odds!" exclaimed the Junior Lord, laughing. "You may have the magic number tattooed all over your back, for all I care. You shall have the commission."

"The commission?"

"Yes," said Fox, carelessly; "I intend making you a lieutenant, sir, in the Royal Navy."

The moment the words were out I was a-tremble as to how he would take the offer. For he had a certain puzzling pride, which flew hither and thither. But there was surely no comparison between the situations of the master of the Belle of the Wye and an officer in the Royal Navy. There, his talents would make him an admiral, and doubtless give him the social position he secretly coveted. He confounded us all by his answer.

"I thank you, Mr. Fox. But I cannot accept your kindness."

"Slife!" said Fox, "you refuse? And you know what you are doing?"

"I know usually, sir."

Comyn swore. My exclamation had something of relief in it.

"Captain," I said, "I felt that I could not stand in the way of this. It has been my hope that you will come with me, and I have sent this morning after a cabin on the Virginia. You must know that Mr. Fox's offer is his own, and Lord Comyn's."

"I know it well, Richard. I have not lived these three months with you for nothing." His voice seemed to fail him. He drew near me and took my hand. "But did you think I would require of you the sacrifice of leaving London now?"

"It is my pleasure as well as my duty, captain."

"No," he said, "I am not like that. Yesterday I went to the city to see a shipowner whose acquaintance I made when he was a master in the West India trade. He has had some reason to know that I can handle a ship. Never mind what. And he has given me the bark 'Betsy', whose former master is lately dead of the small-pox. Richard, I sail to-morrow."

In Dorothy's coach to Whitehall Stairs, by the grim old palace out of whose window Charles the Martyr had walked to his death. For Dorothy had vowed it was her pleasure to see John Paul off, and who could stand in her way? Surely not Mr. Marmaduke! and Mrs. Manners laughingly acquiesced. Our spirits were such that we might have been some honest mercer's apprentice and his sweetheart away for an outing.

"If we should take a wherry, Richard," said Dolly, "who would know of it? I have longed to be in a wherry ever since I came to London."

The river was smiling as she tripped gayly down to the water, and the red-coated watermen were smiling, too, and nudging one another. But little cared we! Dolly in holiday humour stopped for naught. "Boat, your honour! Boat, boat! To Rotherhithe—Redriff? Two and six apiece, sir." For that intricate puzzle called human nature was solved out of hand by the Thames watermen. Here was a young gentleman who never heard of the Lord Mayor's scale of charges. And what was a shilling to such as he! Intricate puzzle, indeed! Any booby might have read upon the young man's face that secret which is written for all,—high and low, rich and poor alike.

My new lace handkerchief was down upon the seat, lest Dolly soil her bright pink lutestring. She should have worn nothing else but the hue of roses. How the bargemen stared, and the passengers craned their necks, and the longshoremen stopped their work as we shot past them! On her account a barrister on the Temple Stairs was near to letting fall his bag in the water. A lady in a wherry! Where were the whims of the quality to lead them next? Past the tall water-tower and York Stairs, the idlers under the straight row of trees leaning over the high river wall; past Adelphi Terrace, where the great Garrick lived; past the white columns of Somerset House, with its courts and fountains and alleys and architecture of all ages, and its river gate where many a gilded royal barge had lain, and many a fine ambassador had arrived in state over the great highway of England; past the ancient trees in the Temple Gardens. And then under the new Blackfriars Bridge to Southwark, dingy with its docks and

breweries and huddled houses, but forever famous,—the Southwark of Shakespeare and Jonson and Beaumont and Fletcher. And the shelf upon which they stood in the library at Carvel Hall was before my eyes.

"Yes," said Dolly; "and I recall your mother's name written in faded ink upon the fly-leaves."

Ah, London Town, by what subtleties are you tied to the hearts of those born across the sea? That is one of the mysteries of race.

Under the pointed arches of old London Bridge, with its hooded shelters for the weary, to where the massive Tower had frowned for ages upon the foolish river. And then the forest of ships, and the officious throng of little wherries and lighters that pressed around them, seeming to say, "You clumsy giants, how helpless would you be without us!" Soon our own wherry was dodging among them, ships brought hither by the four winds of the seas; many discharging in the stream, some in the docks then beginning to be built, and hugging the huge warehouses. Hides from frozen Russia were piled high beside barrels of sugar and rum from the moist island cane-fields of the Indies, and pipes of wine from the sunny hillsides of France, and big boxes of tea bearing the hall-mark of the mysterious East. Dolly gazed in wonder. And I was commanded to show her a schooner like the Black Moll, and a brigantine like the John.

"And Captain Paul told me you climbed the masts, Richard, and worked like a common seaman. Tell me," says she, pointing at the royal yard of a tall East Indiaman, "did you go as high as that when it was rough?"

And, hugely to the boatman's delight, the minx must needs put her fingers on the hard welts on my hands, and vow she would be a sailor and she were a man. But at length we came to a trim-built bark lying off Redriff Stairs, with the words "Betsy, of London," painted across her stern. In no time at all, Captain Paul was down the gangway ladder and at the water-side, too hand Dorothy out.

"This honour overwhelms me, Miss Manners," he said; "but I know whom to thank for it." And he glanced slyly at me.

Dorothy stepped aboard with the air of Queen Elizabeth come to inspect Lord Howard's flagship.

"Then you will thank me," said she. "Why, I could eat my dinner off your deck, captain! Are all merchantmen so clean?"

John Paul smiled.

"Not all, Miss Manners," he said.

"And you are still sailing at the ebb?" I asked.

"In an hour, Richard, if the wind holds good."

With what pride he showed us over his ship, the sailors gaping at the fine young lady. It had taken him just a day to institute his navy discipline. And Dolly went about exclaiming, and asking an hundred questions, and merrily catechising me upon the run of the ropes. All was order and readiness for dropping down the stream when he led us into his cabin, where he had a bottle of wine and some refreshments laid out against my coming.

"Had I presumed to anticipate your visit, Miss Manners, I should have had something more suitable for a lady," he said. "What, you will not eat, either, Richard?"

I could not, so downcast had I become at the thought of parting. I had sat up half the night before with him in restless argument and indecision, and even when he had left for Rotherhithe, early that morning, my mind had not been made. My conscience had insisted that I should sail with John Paul; that I might never see my deaf grandfather on earth again. I had gone to Arlington Street that morning resolved to say farewell to Dorothy. I will not recount the history of that defeat, my dears. Nay, to this day I know not how she accomplished the matter. Not once had she asked me to remain, or referred to my going. Nor had I spoken of it, weakling that I was. She had come down in the pink lustrous, smiling but pale; and traces of tears in her eyes, I thought. From that moment I knew that I was defeated. It was she herself who had proposed going with me to see the Betsy sail.

"I will drink some Madeira to wish you Godspeed, captain," I said.

"What is the matter with you, Richard?" Dolly cried; "you are as sour as my Lord Sandwich after a bad Newmarket. Why, captain," said she, "I really believe he wants to go, too. The swain pines for his

provincial beauty."

Poor John Paul! He had not yet learned that good society is seldom literal.

"Upon my soul, Miss Manners, there you do him wrong," he retorted, with ludicrous heat; "you, above all, should know for whom he pines."

"He has misled you by praising me. This Richard, despite his frank exterior, is most secretive."

"There you have hit him, Miss Manners," he declared; "there you have hit him! We were together night and day, on the sea and on the road, and, while I poured out my life to him, the rogue never once let fall a hint of the divine Miss Dorothy. 'Twas not till I got to London that I knew of her existence, and then only by a chance. You astonish me. You speak of a young lady in Maryland?"

Dorothy swept aside my protest.

"Captain," says she, gravely, "I leave you to judge. What is your inference, when he fights a duel about a Miss with my Lord Comyn?"

"A duel!" cried the captain, astounded.

"Miss Manners persists in her view of the affair, despite my word to the contrary," I put in rather coldly.

"But a duel!" cried the captain again; "and with Lord Comyn! Miss Manners, I fondly thought I had discovered a constant man, but you make me fear he has had as many flames as I. And yet, Richard," he added meaningly, "I should think shame on my conduct and I had had such a subject for constancy as you."

Dorothy's armour was pierced, and my ill-humour broken down, by this characteristic speech. We both laughed, greatly to his discomfiture.

"You had best go home with him, Richard," said Dolly. "I can find my way back to Arlington Street alone."

"Nay; gallantry forbids his going with me now," answered John Paul; "and I have my sailing orders. But had I known of this, I should never have wasted my breath in persuading him to remain."

"And did he stand in need of much persuasion, captain?" asked Dolly, archly.

Time was pressing, and the owner came aboard, puffing,—a round-faced, vociferous, jolly merchant, who had no sooner got his breath than he lost it again upon catching sight of Dolly.

While the captain was giving the mate his final orders, Mr. Orchardson, for such was his name, regaled us with a part of his life's history. He had been a master himself, and mangled and clipped King George's English as only a true master might.

"I like your own captain better than ever, Richard," whispered Dolly, while Mr. Orchardson relieved himself of his quid over the other side; "how commanding he is! Were I to take passage in the Betsy, I know I should be in love with him long before we got to Norfolk."

I took it upon myself to tell Mr. Orchardson, briefly and clearly as I could, the lamentable story of John Paul's last cruise. For I feared it might sooner or later reach his ears from prejudiced mouths. And I ended by relating how the captain had refused a commission in the navy because he had promised to take the Betsy. This appeared vastly to impress him, and he forgot Dorothy's presence.

"Passion o' my 'eart, Mr. Carvel," cried he, excitedly,

"John Paul's too big a man, an' too good a seaman, to go into the navy without hinfloence. If flag horfocers I roots of is booted haside to rankle like a lump o' salt butter in a gallipot, 'ow will a poor Scotch lieutenant win hadvancement an' he be not o' the King's friends? 'Wilkes an' Liberty,' say I; 'forever,' say I. An' w'en I see 'im goin' to the Tower to be'old the Champion, 'Captain Paul,' says I, 'yere a man arfter my hown 'eart.' My heye, sir, didn't I see 'im, w'n a mere lad, take the John into Kingston 'arbour in the face o' the worst gale I hever seed blowed in the Caribbees? An' I says, 'Bill Horchardson, an' ye Never 'ave ships o' yere own, w'ich I 'ope will be, y'ell know were to look for a marster.' An' I tells 'im that same, Mr. Carvel. I means no disrespect to the dead, sir, but an' John Paul 'ad discharged the Betsy, I'd not 'a' been out twenty barrels or more this day by Thames mudlarks an' scuffle hunters. 'Eave me flat, if 'e'll be two blocks wi' liquor an' dischargin' cargo. An' ye may rest heasy, Mr. Carvel, I'll not do wrong by 'im, neither."

He told me that if I would honour him in Maid Lane, Southwark, I should have as many pounds as I liked of the best tobacco ever cured in Cuba. And so he left me to see that the mate had signed all his lighter bills, shouting to the captain not to forget his cockets at Gravesend. Dolly and I stood silent while the men hove short, singing a jolly song to the step. With a friendly wave the round figure of Mr. Orchardson disappeared over the side, and I knew that the time had come to say farewell. I fumbled in my waistcoat for the repeater I had bought that morning over against Temple Bar, in Fleet Street, and I thrust it into John Paul's hand as he came up.

"Take this in remembrance of what you have suffered so unselfishly for my sake, Captain Paul," I said, my voice breaking. "And whatever befalls you, do not forget that Carvel Hall is your home as well as mine."

He seemed as greatly affected as was I. Tears forced themselves to his eyes as he held the watch, which he opened absently to read the simple inscription I had put there.

"Oh, Dickie lad!" he cried, "I'll be missing ye sair three hours hence, and thinking of ye for months to come in the night watches. But something tells me I'll see ye again."

And he took me in his arms, embracing me with such fervour that there was no doubting the sincerity of his feelings.

"Miss Dorothy," said he, when he was calmer, "I give ye Richard for a leal and a true heart. Few men are born with the gift of keeping the affections warm despite absence, and years, and interest. But have no fear of Richard Carvel."

Dorothy stood a little apart, watching us, her eyes that faraway blue of the deepening skies at twilight.

"Indeed, I have no fear of him, captain," she said gently. Then, with a quick movement, impulsive and womanly, she unpinned a little gold brooch at her throat, and gave it to him, saying: "In token of my gratitude for bringing him back to us."

John Paul raised it to his lips.

"I shall treasure it, Miss Manners, as a memento of the greatest joy of my life. And that has been," gracefully taking her hand and mine, "the bringing you two together again."

Dorothy grew scarlet as she curtseyed. As for me, I could speak never a word. He stepped over the side to hand her into the wherry, and embraced me once again. And as we rowed away he waved his hat in a last good-by from the taffrail. Then the Betsy floated down the Thames.

CHAPTER XXXI

"UPSTAIRS INTO THE WORLD"

It will be difficult, my dears, without bulging this history out of all proportion, to give you a just notion of the society into which I fell after John Paul left London. It was, above all, a gaming society. From that prying and all-powerful God of Chance none, great or small, escaped. Guineas were staked and won upon frugal King George and his beef and barley-water; Charles Fox and his debts; the intrigues of Choiseul and the Du Barry and the sensational marriage of the Due d'Orleans with Madame de Montesson (for your macaroni knew his Paris as well as his London); Lord March and his opera singer; and even the doings of Betty, the apple-woman of St. James's Street, and the beautiful barmaid of Nando's in whom my Lord Thurlow was said to be interested. All these, and much more not to be repeated, were duly set down in the betting-books at White's and Brooks's.

Then the luxury of the life was something to startle a provincial, even tho' he came, as did I, from one of the two most luxurious colonies of the thirteen. Annapolis might be said to be London on a small scale, —but on a very small scale. The historian of the future need look no farther than our houses (if any remain), to be satisfied that we had more than the necessities of existence. The Maryland aristocrat with his town place and his country place was indeed a parallel of the patrician at home. He wore his English clothes, drove and rode his English horses, and his coaches were built in Long Acre. His heavy silver service came from Fleet Street, and his claret and Champagne and Lisbon and Madeira were the best that could be bought or smuggled. His sons were often educated at home, at Eton or Westminster

and Oxford or Cambridge. So would I have been if circumstances had permitted. So was James Fotheringay, the eldest of the family, and later the Dulany boys, and half a dozen others I might mention. And then our ladies! 'Tis but necessary to cite my Aunt Caroline as an extreme dame of fashion, who had her French hairdresser, Piton.

As was my aunt to the Duchess of Kingston, so was Annapolis to London. To depict the life of Mayfair and of St. James's Street during a season about the year of grace 1770 demands a mightier pen than wields the writer of these simple memoirs.

And who was responsible for all this luxury and laxity? Who but the great Mr. Pitt, then the Earl of Chatham, whose wise policy had made Britain the ruler of the world, and rich beyond compare. From all corners of the earth her wealth poured in upon her. Nabob and Caribbee came from East and West to spend their money in the capital. And fortunes near as great were acquired by the City merchants themselves. One by one these were admitted within that charmed circle, whose motto for ages had been "No Trade," to leaven it with their gold. And to keep the pace,—nay, to set it, the nobility and landed gentry were sore pressed. As far back as good Queen Anne, and farther, their ancestors had gamed and tiddled away the acres; and now that John and William, whose forebears had been good tenants for centuries, were setting their faces to Liverpool and Birmingham and Leeds, their cottages were empty. So Lord and Squire went to London to recuperate, and to get their share of the game running. St. James's Street and St. Stephen's became their preserves. My Lord wormed himself into a berth in the Treasury, robbed the country systematically for a dozen of years, and sold the places and reversions under him to the highest bidder. Boroughs were to be had somewhat dearer than a pair of colours. And my Lord spent his spare time—he had plenty of it—in fleecing the pigeons at White's and Almack's. Here there was no honour, even amongst thieves. And young gentlemen were hurried through Eton and Oxford, where they learned to drink and swear and to call a main as well as to play tennis and billiards and to write Latin, and were thrust into Brooks's before they knew the difference in value between a farthing and a banknote: at nineteen they were hardened rake, or accomplished men of the world, or both. Dissipated noblemen of middle age like March and Sandwich, wits and beaux and fine gentlemen like Selwyn and Chesterfield and Walpole, were familiarly called by their first names by youngsters like Fox and Carlisle and Comyn. Difference of age was no difference. Young Lord Carlisle was the intimate of Mr. Selwyn, born thirty years before him.

And whilst I am speaking of intimacies, that short one which sprang up between me and the renowned Charles Fox has always seemed the most unaccountable: not on my part, for I fell a victim to him at once. Pen and paper, brush and canvas, are wholly inadequate to describe the charm of the man. When he desired to please, his conversation and the expression of his face must have moved a temperament of stone itself. None ever had more devoted friends or more ardent admirers. They saw his faults, which he laid bare before them, but they settled his debts again and again, vast sums which he lost at Newmarket and at Brooks's. And not many years after the time of which I now write Lord Carlisle was paying fifteen hundred a year on the sum he had loaned him, cheerfully denying himself the pleasures of London as a consequence.

It was Mr. Fox who discovered for me my lodgings in Dover Street, vowing that I could not be so out of fashion as to live at an inn. The brief history of these rooms, as given by him, was this: "A young cub had owned them, whose mamma had come up from Berkshire on Thursday, beat him soundly on Friday, paid his debts on Saturday, and had taken him back on Sunday to hunt with Sir Henry the rest of his life." Dorothy came one day with her mother and swept through my apartments, commanded all the furniture to be moved about, ordered me to get pictures for the walls, and by one fell decree abolished all the ornaments before the landlady, used as she was to the ways of quality, had time to gasp.

"Why, Richard," says my lady, "you will be wanting no end of pretty things to take back to Maryland when you go. You shall come with me to-morrow to Mr. Josiah Wedgwood's, to choose some of them."

"Dorothy!" says her mother, reprovingly.

"And he must have the Chippendale table I saw yesterday at the exhibition, and chairs to match. And every bachelor should have a punch bowl—Josiah has such a beauty!"

But I am running far ahead. Among the notes with which my table was laden, Banks had found a scrawl. This I made out with difficulty to convey that Mr. Fox was not attending Parliament that day. If Mr. Carvel would do him the honour of calling at his lodging, over Mackie's Italian Warehouse in Piccadilly, at four o'clock, he would take great pleasure in introducing him at Brooks's Club. In those days 'twas far better for a young gentleman of any pretensions to remain at home than go to London and be denied that inner sanctuary,—the younger club at Almack's. Many the rich brewer's son has embittered his life because it was not given him to see more than the front of the house from the far side of Pall Mall. But to be taken there by Charles Fox was an honour falling to few. I made sure that Dolly was at the bottom of it.

Promptly at four I climbed the stairs and knocked at Mr. Fox's door. The Swiss who opened it shook his head dubiously when I asked for his master, and said he had not been at home that day.

"But I had an appointment to meet him," I said, thinking it very strange.

The man's expression changed.

"An appointment, sir! Ah, sir, then you are to step in here." And to my vast astonishment he admitted me into a small room at one side of the entrance. It was bare as poverty, and furnished with benches, and nothing more. On one of these was seated a person with an unmistakable nose and an odour of St. Giles's, who sprang to his feet and then sat down again dejectedly. I also sat down, wondering what it could mean, and debating whether to go or stay.

"Excuse me, your honour," said the person, "but have you seen Mister Fox?"

I said that I, too, was waiting for him, whereat he cast at me a cunning look beyond my comprehension. Surely, I thought, a man of Fox's inherited wealth and position could not be living in such a place! Before the truth and humour of the situation had dawned upon me, I heard a ringing voice without, swearing in most forcible English, and the door was thrown open, admitting a tall young gentleman, as striking as I have ever seen. He paid not the smallest attention to the Jew, who was bowing and muttering behind me.

"Mr. Richard Carvel?" said he, with a merry twinkle in his eye.

I bowed.

"Gad's life, Mr. Carvel, I'm deuced sorry this should have happened. Will you come with me?"

"Excuse me, your honour!" cried the other visitor.

"Now, what the plague, Aaron!" says he; "you wear out the stairs. Come to-morrow, or the day after."

"Ay, 'tis always 'to-morrow' with you fine gentlemen. But I will bring the bailiffs, so help me—"

"Damn 'em!" says the tall young gentleman, as he slammed the door and so shut off the wail. "Damn 'em, they worry Charles to death. If he would only stick to quinz and picquet, and keep clear of the hounds*, he need never go near a broker."

[*"The "hounds," it appears, were the gentlemen of sharp practices at White's and Almack's.—D. C. C.]

"Do you have Jews in America, Mr. Carvel?" Without waiting for an answer, he led me through a parlour, hung with pictures, and bewilderingly furnished with French and Italian things, and Japan and China ware and bronzes, and cups and trophies. "My name is Fitzpatrick, Mr. Carvel, —yours to command, and Charles's. I am his ally for offence and defence. We went to school together," he explained simply.

His manner was so free, and yet so dignified, as to charm me completely. For I heartily despised all that fustian trumpery of the age. Then came a voice from beyond, calling:—

"That you, Carvel? Damn that fellow Eiffel, and did he thrust you into the Jerusalem Chamber?"

"The Jerusalem Chamber!" I exclaimed.

"Where I keep my Israelites," said he; "but, by Gad's life! I think they are one and all descended from Job, and not father Abraham at all. He must have thought me cursed ascetic, eh, Fitz? Did you find the benches hard? I had 'em made hard as the devil. But if they were of stone, I vow the flock could find their own straw to sit on."

"Curse it, Charles," cut in Mr. Fitzpatrick, in some temper, "can't you be serious for once! He would behave this way, Mr. Carvel, if he were being shriven by the Newgate ordinary before a last carting to Tyburn. Charles, Charles, it was Aaron again, and the dog is like to snap at last. He is talking of bailiffs. Take my advice and settle with him. Hold Cavendish off another fortnight and settle with him."

Mr. Fox's reply was partly a laugh, and the rest of it is not to be printed. He did not seem in the least to mind this wholesale disclosure of his somewhat awkward affairs. And he continued to dress, or to be dressed, alternately swearing at his valet and talking to Fitzpatrick and to me.

"You are both of a name," said he. "Let a man but be called Richard, and I seem to take to him. I' faith, I like the hunchback king, and believe our friend Horry Walpole is right in defending him, despite Davie Hume. I vow I shall like you, Mr. Carvel."

I replied that I certainly hoped so.

"Egad, you come well enough recommended," he said, pulling on his breeches. "No, Eiffel, cursed if I go en petit maitre to-day. How does that strike you for a demi saison, Mr. Buckskin? I wore three of 'em through the customs last year, and March's worked olive nightgown tucked under my greatcoat, and near a dozen pairs of shirts and stockings. And each of my servants had on near as much. O Lud, we were amazing-like beef-eaters or blower pigeons. Sorry you won't meet my brother,—he that will have the title. He's out of town."

Going on in this discursory haphazard way while he dressed, he made me feel much at home. For the young dictator—so Mr. Fitzpatrick informed me afterward—either took to you or else he did not, and stood upon no ceremony. After he had chosen a coat with a small pattern and his feet had been thrust into the little red shoes with the high heels, imported by him from France, he sent for a hackney-chaise. And the three of us drove together to Pall Mall. Mr. Brooks was at the door, and bowed from his hips as we entered.

"A dozen vin de Graves, Brooks!" cries Mr. Fox, and ushers me into a dining room, with high curtained windows and painted ceiling, and chandeliers throwing a glitter of light. There, at a long table, surrounded by powdered lackeys, sat a bevy of wits, mostly in blue and silver, with point ruffles, to match Mr. Fox's costume. They greeted my companions uproariously. It was "Here's Charles at last!" "Howdy, Charles!" "Hello, Richard!" and "What have you there? a new Caribbee?" They made way for Mr. Fox at the head of the table, and he took the seat as though it were his right.

"This is Mr. Richard Carvel, gentlemen, of Carvel Hall, in Maryland."

They stirred with interest when my name was called, and most of them turned in their chairs to look at me. I knew well the reason, and felt my face grow hot. Although you may read much of the courtesy of that age, there was a deal of brutal frankness among young men of fashion.

"Egad, Charles, is this he the Beauty rescued from Castle Yard?"

A familiar voice relieved my embarrassment.

"Give the devil his due, Bully. You forget that I had a hand in that."

"Faith, Jack Comyn," retorted the gentleman addressed, "you're already famous for clinging to her skirt."

"But cling to mine, Bully, and we'll all enter the temple together. But I bid you welcome, Richard," said his Lordship; "you come with two of the most delightful vagabonds in the world."

Mr. Fox introduced me in succession to Colonel St. John, known in St. James's Street as the Baptist; to my Lord Bolingbroke, Colonel St. John's brother, who was more familiarly called Bully; to Mr. Fitzpatrick's brother, the Earl of Upper Ossory, who had come up to London, so he said, to see a little Italian dance at the Garden; to Gilly Williams; to Sir Charles Bunbury, who had married Lady Sarah Lennox, Fox's cousin, the beauty who had come so near to being queen of all England; to Mr. Storer, who was at once a Caribbee and a Crichton; to Mr. Uvedale Price. These I remember, but there are more that escape me. Most good-naturedly they drank my health in Charles's vin de grave, at four shillings the bottle; and soon I was astonished to find myself launched upon the story of my adventures, which they had besought me to tell them. When I had done, they pledged me again, and, beginning to feel at home, I pledged them handsomely in return. Then the conversation began. The like of it I have never heard anywhere else in the world. There was a deal that might not be written here, and a deal more that might, to make these pages sparkle. They went through the meetings, of course, and thrashed over the list of horses entered at Ipswich, and York, and Newmarket, and how many were thought to be pulled. Then followed the recent gains and losses of each and every individual of the company. After that there was a roar of merriment over Mr. Storer cracking mottoes with a certain Lady Jane; and how young Lord Stavordale, on a wager, tilted the candles and set fire to the drawing-room at Lady Julia's drum, the day before. Mr. Price told of the rage Topham Beauclerk had got Dr. Johnson into, by setting down a mark for each oyster the sage had eaten, and showing him the count. But Mr. Fox, who was the soul of the club, had the best array of any. He related how he had gone post from Paris to Lyons, to order, among other things, an embroidered canary waistcoat for George Selwyn from Jabot. "' Et quel dessin, monsieur?' 'Beetles and frogs, in green.' 'Escargots! grenouilles!' he cries, with a shriek; 'Et pour Monsieur Selwyn! Monsieur Fox badine!' It came yesterday, by Crawford, and I

sent it to Chesterfield Street in time for George to wear to the Duchess's. He has been twice to Piccadilly after me, and twice here, and swears he will have my heart. And I believe he is now gone to Matson in a funk."

After that they fell upon politics. I knew that Mr. Fox was already near the head of the King's party, and that he had just received a substantial reward at his Majesty's hands; and I went not far to guess that every one of these easy-going, devil-may-care macaronies was a follower or sympathizer with Lord North's policy. But what I heard was a revelation indeed. I have dignified it by calling it politics. All was frankness here amongst friends. There was no attempt made to gloss over ugly transactions with a veneer of morality. For this much I honoured them. But irresistibly there came into my mind the grand and simple characters of our own public men in America, and it made me shudder to think that, while they strove honestly for our rights, this was the type which opposed them. Motives of personal spite and of personal gain were laid bare, and even the barter and sale of offices of trust took place before my very eyes. I was silent, though my tongue burned me, until one of the gentlemen, thinking me neglected, said:

"What a-deuce is to be done with those unruly countrymen of yours, Mr. Carvel? Are they likely to be pacified now that we have taken off all except the tea? You who are of our party must lead a sorry life among them. Tell me, do they really mean to go as far as rebellion?"

The blood rushed to my face.

"It is not a question of tea, sir," I answered hotly; "nor yet of tuppence. It is a question of principle, which means more to Englishmen than life itself. And we are Englishmen."

I believe I spoke louder than I intended, for a silence followed my words. Fox glanced at Comyn, who of all of them at the table was not smiling, and said:

"I thought you came of a loyalist family, Mr. Carvel."

"King George has no more loyal servants than the Americans, Mr. Fox, be they Tory or Whig. And he has but to read our petitions to discover it," I said.

I spoke calmly, but my heart was thumping with excitement and resentment. The apprehension of the untried is apt to be sharp at such moments, and I looked for them to turn their backs upon me for an impertinent provincial. Indeed, I think they would have, all save Comyn, had it not been for Fox himself. He lighted a pipe, smiled, and began easily, quite dispassionately, to address me.

"I wish you would favour us with your point of view, Mr. Carvel," said he; "for, upon my soul, I know little about the subject."

"You know little about the subject, and you in Parliament!"

I cried.

This started them all to laughing. Why, I did not then understand. But I was angry enough.

"Come, let's have it!" said he.

They drew their chairs closer, some wearing that smile of superiority which to us is the Englishman's most maddening trait. I did not stop to think twice, or to remember that I was pitted against the greatest debater in all England. I was to speak that of which I was full, and the heart's argument needs no logic to defend it. If it were my last word, I would pronounce it.

I began by telling them that the Americans had paid their share of the French war, in blood and money, twice over. And I had the figures in my memory. Mr. Fox interrupted. For ten minutes at a space he spoke, and in all my life I have never talked to a man who had the English of King James's Bible, of Shakespeare, and Milton so wholly at his command. And his knowledge of history, his classical citations, confounded me. I forgot myself in wondering how one who had lived so fast had acquired such learning. Afterward, when I tried to recall what he said, I laughed at his surprising ignorance of the question at issue, and wondered where my wits could have gone that I allowed myself to be dazzled and turned aside at every corner. As his speech came faster he twisted fact into fiction and fiction into fact, until I must needs close my mind and bolt the shutters of it, or he had betrayed me into confessing the right of Parliament to quarter troops among us. Though my head swam, I clung doggedly to my text. And that was my salvation. He grew more excited, and they applauded him. In truth, I myself felt near to clapping. And then, as I stared him in the eye, marvelling how a man of such vast power and ability could stand for such rotten practices, the thought came to me (I know not whence) of Saint Paul

the Apostle.

"Mr. Fox," I said, when he had paused, "before God, do you believe what you are saying?"

I saw them smiling at my earnestness and simplicity. Fox seemed surprised, and laughed evasively,—not heartily as was his wont.

"My dear Mr. Carvel," he said, glancing around the circle, political principles are not to be swallowed like religion, but taken rather like medicine, experimentally. If they agree with you, very good. If not, drop them and try others. We are always ready to listen to remedies, here."

"Ay, if they agree with you!" I exclaimed. "But food for one is poison for another. Do you know what you are doing? You are pushing home injustice and tyranny to the millions, for the benefit of the thousands. For is it not true, gentlemen, that the great masses of England are against the measures you impose upon us? Their fight is our fight. They are no longer represented in Parliament; we have never been. Taxation without representation is true of your rotten boroughs as well as of your vast colonies. You are helping the King to crush freedom abroad in order that he may the more easily break it at home. You are committing a crime.

"I tell you we would give up all we own were the glory or honour of England at stake. And yet you call us rebels, and accuse us of meanness and of parsimony. If you wish money, leave the matter to our colonial assemblies, and see how readily you will get it. But if you wish war, persist in trying to grind the spirit from a people who have in them the pride of your own ancestors. Yes, you are estranging the colonies, gentlemen. A greater man than I has warned you"

And with that I rose, believing that I had given them all mortal offence. To my astonishment several got to their feet in front of me, huzzaing, and Comyn and Lord Ossory grasped my hands. And Charles Fox reached out over the corner of the table and pulled me back into my chair.

"Bravo, Richard Carvel!" he cried. "Cursed if I don't love a man who will put up a fight against odds. Who will stand bluff to what he believes, and won't be talked out of his boots. We won't quarrel with any such here, my buckskin, I can tell you."

And that is the simple story, my dears, of the beginning of my friendship with one who may rightly be called the Saint Paul of English politics. He had yet some distance to go, alas, ere he was to begin that sturdy battle for the right for which his countrymen and ours will always bless him. I gave him my hand with a better will than I had ever done anything, and we pressed our fingers numb. And his was not the only hand I clasped. And honest Jack Comyn ordered more wine, that they might drink to a speedy reconciliation with America.

"A pint bumper to Richard Carvel!" said Mr. Fitzpatrick.

I pledged Brooks's Club in another pint. Upon which they swore that I was a good fellow, and that if all American Whigs were like me, all cause of quarrel was at an end. Of this I was not so sure, nor could I see that the question had been settled one way or another. And that night I had reason to thank the Reverend Mr. Allen, for the first and last time in my life, that I could stand a deal of liquor, and yet not roll bottom upward.

The dinner was settled on the Baptist, who paid for it without a murmur. And then we adjourned to the business of the evening. The great drawing-room, lighted by an hundred candles, was filled with gayly dressed macaronies, and the sound of their laughter and voices in contention mingled with the pounding of the packs on the mahogany and the rattle of the dice and the ring of the gold pieces. The sight was dazzling, and the noise distracting. Fox had me under his especial care, and I was presented to young gentlemen who bore names that had been the boast of England through the centuries. Lands their forebears had won by lance and sword, they were squandering away as fast as ever they could. I, too, was known. All had heard the romance of the Beauty and Castle Yard, and some had listened to Horry Walpole tell that foolish story of Goble at Windsor, on which he seemed to set such store. They guessed at my weight. They betted upon it. And they wished to know if I could spin Mr. Brooks, who was scraping his way from table to table. They gave me choice of whist, or picquet, or quinze, or hazard. I was carried away. Nay, I make no excuse. Tho' the times were drinking and gaming ones, I had been brought up that a gentleman should do both in moderation. We mounted, some dozen of us, to the floor above, and passed along to a room of which Fox had the key; and he swung me in on his arm, the others pressing after. And the door was scarce closed and locked again, before they began stripping off their clothes.

To my astonishment, Fox handed me a great frieze coat, which he bade me don, as the others were doing. Some were turning their coats inside out; for luck, said they; and putting on footman's leather guards to save their ruffles. And they gave me a hat with a high crown, and a broad brim to save my

eyes from the candle glare. We were as grotesque a set as ever I laid my eyes upon. But I hasten over the scene; which has long become distasteful to me. I mention it only to show to what heights of folly the young men had gone. I recall a gasp when they told me they played for rouleaux of ten pounds each, but I took out my pocket-book as boldly as tho' I had never played for less, and laid my stake upon the board. Fox lost, again and again; but he treated his ill-luck with such a raillery of contemptuous wit, that we must needs laugh with him. Comyn, too, lost, and at supper excused himself, saying that he had promised his mother, the dowager countess, not to lose more than a quarter's income at a sitting. But I won and won, until the fever of it got into my blood, and as the first faint light of that morning crept into the empty streets, we were still at it, Fox vowing that he never waked up until daylight. That the best things he said in the House came to him at dawn.

CHAPTER XXXII

LADY TANKERVILLE'S DRUM-MAJOR

The rising sun, as he came through the little panes of the windows, etched a picture of that room into my brain. I can see the twisted candles with their wax smearing the sticks, the chairs awry, the tables littered with blackened pipes, and bottles, and spilled wine and tobacco among the dice; and the few that were left of my companions, some with dark lines under their eyes, all pale, but all gay, unconcerned, witty, and cynical; smoothing their ruffles, and brushing the ashes and snuff from the pattern of their waistcoats. As we went downstairs, singing a song Mr. Foote had put upon the stage that week, they were good enough to declare that I should never be permitted to go back to Maryland. That my grandfather should buy me a certain borough, which might be had for six thousand pounds.

The drawing-room made a dismal scene, too, after the riot and disorder of the night. Sleepy servants were cleaning up, but Fox vowed that they should bring us yet another bottle before going home. So down we sat about the famous old round table, Fox fingering the dents the gold had made in the board, and philosophizing; and reciting Orlando Furioso in the Italian, and Herodotus in the original Greek. Suddenly casting his eyes about, they fell upon an ungainly form stretched on a lounge, that made us all start.

"Bully!" he cried; "I'll lay you fifty guineas that Mr. Carvel gets the Beauty, against Chartersea."

This roused me.

"Nay, Mr. Fox, I beg of you," I protested, with all the vehemence I could muster. "Miss Manners must not be writ down in such a way."

For answer he snapped his fingers at the drowsy Brooks, who brought the betting book.

"There!" says he; "and there, and there," turning over the pages; "her name adorns a dozen leaves, my fine buckskin. And it will be well to have some truth about her. Enter the wager, Brooks."

"Hold!" shouts Bolingbroke; "I haven't accepted."

You may be sure I was in an agony over this desecration, which I was so powerless to prevent. But as I was thanking my stars that the matter had blown over with Bolingbroke's rejection, there occurred a most singular thing.

The figure on the lounge, with vast difficulty, sat up. To our amazement we beheld the bloated face of the Duke of Chartersea staring stupidly.

"Damme, Bully, you refushe bet like tha'!" he said. "I'll take doshen of 'em-doshen, egad. Gimme the book, Brooksh. Cursh Fox—lay thousand d—d provinshial never getsh 'er—I know—"

I sat very still, seized with a loathing beyond my power to describe to thich that this was the man Mr. Manners was forcing her to marry. Fox laughed.

"Help his Grace to his coach," he said to two of the footmen.

"Kill fellow firsh!" cried his Grace, with his hand on his sword, and instantly fell over, and went sound asleep.

"His Grace has sent his coach home, your honour," said one of the men, respectfully. "The duke is very quarrelsome, sir."

"Put him in a chair, then," said Charles.

So they fearfully lifted his Grace, who was too far gone to resist, and carried him to a chair. And Mr. Fox bribed the chairmen with two guineas apiece, which he borrowed from me, to set his Grace down amongst the marketwomen at Covent Garden.

The next morning Banks found in my pockets something over seven hundred pounds more than I had had the day before.

I rose late, my head swimming with mains and nicks, and combinations of all the numbers under the dozen; debated whether or no I would go to Arlington Street, and decided that I had not the courage. Comyn settled it by coming in his cabriolet, proposed that we should get the air in the park, dine at the Cocoa Tree, and go afterwards to Lady Tankerville's drum-major, where Dolly would undoubtedly be.

"Now you are here, Richard," said his Lordship, with his accustomed bluntness, "and your sea-captain has relieved your Quixotic conscience, what the deuce do you intend to do?"

"Win a thousand pounds every night at Brooks's, or improve your time and do your duty, and get Miss Manners out of his Grace's clutches? I'll warrant something will come of that matter this morning."

"I hope so," I said shortly.

Comyn looked at me sharply.

"Would you fight him?" he asked.

"If he gave me the chance."

His Lordship whistled. "Egad, then," said he, "I shall want to be there to see. In spite of his pudding-bag shape he handles the sword as well as any man in England. I have crossed with him at Angelo's. And he has a devilish tricky record, Richard."

I said nothing to that.

"Hope you do—kill him," Comyn continued. "He deserves it richly. But that will be a cursed unpleasant way of settling the business, —unpleasant for you, unpleasant for her, and cursed unpleasant for him, too, I suppose. Can't you think of any other way of getting her? Ask Charles to give you a plan of campaign. You haven't any sense, and neither have I."

"Hang you, Jack, I have no hopes of getting her," I replied, for I was out of humour with myself that day. "In spite of what you say, I know she doesn't care a brass farthing to marry me. So let's drop that."

Comyn made a comic gesture of deprecation. I went on: "But I am going to stay here and find out the truth, though it may be a foolish undertaking. And if he is intimidating Mr. Manners—"

"You may count on me, and on Charles," said my Lord, generously; "and there are some others I know of. Gad! You made a dozen of friends and admirers by what you said last night, Richard. And his Grace has a few enemies. You will not lack support."

We dined very comfortably at the Cocoa Tree, where Comyn had made an appointment for me with two as diverting gentlemen as had ever been my lot to meet. My Lord Carlisle was the poet and scholar of the little clique which had been to Eton with Charles Fox, any member of which (so 'twas said) would have died for him. His Lordship, be it remarked in passing, was as lively a poet and scholar as can well be imagined. He had been recently sobered, so Comyn confided; which I afterwards discovered meant married. Charles Fox's word for the same was fallen. And I remembered that Jack had told me it was to visit Lady Carlisle at Castle Howard that Dorothy was going when she heard of my disappearance. Comyn's other guest was Mr. Topham Beauclerk, the macaroni friend of Dr. Johnson. He, too, had been recently married, but appeared no more sobered than his Lordship. Mr. Beauclerk's wife, by the way, was the beautiful Lady Diana Spencer, who had been divorced from Lord Bolingbroke, the Bully I had met the night before. These gentlemen seemed both well acquainted with Miss Manners, and vowed that none but American beauties would ever be the fashion in London more. Then we all drove to Lady Tankerville's drum-major near Chesterfield House.

"You will be wanting a word with her when she comes in," said Comyn, slyly divining. Poor fellow! I fear that I scarcely appreciated his feelings as to Dorothy, or the noble unselfishness of his friendship for me.

We sat aside in a recess of the lower hall, watching the throng as they passed: haughty dowagers, distorted in lead and disfigured in silk and feathers nodding at the ceiling; accomplished beaux of threescore or more, carefully mended for the night by their Frenchmen at home; young ladies in gay brocades with round skirts and stiff, pear-shaped bodices; and youngsters just learning to ogle and to handle their snuff-boxes. One by one their names were sent up and solemnly mouthed by the footman on the landing. At length, when we had all but given her up, Dorothy arrived. A hood of lavender silk heightened the oval of her face, and out from under it crept rebellious wisps of her dark hair. But she was very pale, and I noticed for the first time a worn expression that gave me a twinge of uneasiness. 'Twas then I caught sight of the duke, a surly stamp on his leaden features. And after him danced Mr. Manners. Dolly gave a little cry when she saw me.

"Oh! Richard, I am so glad you are here. I was wondering what had become of you. And Comyn, too." Whispering to me, "Mamma has had a letter from Mrs. Brice; your grandfather has been to walk in the garden."

"And Grafton?"

"She said nothing of your uncle," she replied, with a little shudder at the name; "but wrote that Mr. Carvel was said to be better. So there! your conscience need not trouble you for remaining. I am sure he would wish you to pay a visit home.

"And I have to scold you, sir. You have not been to Arlington Street for three whole days."

It struck me suddenly that her gayety was the same as that she had worn to my birthday party, scarce a year ago.

"Dolly, you are not well!" I said anxiously.

She flung her head saucily for answer. In the meantime his Grace, talking coldly to Comyn, had been looking unutterable thunders at me. I thought of him awaking in the dew at Covent Garden, and could scarce keep from laughing in his face. Mr. Marmaduke squirmed to the front.

"Morning, Richard," he said, with a marked cordiality. "Have you met the Duke of Chartersea? No! Your Grace, this is Mr. Richard Carvel. His family are dear friends of ours in the colonies."

To my great surprise, the duke saluted me quite civilly. But I had the feeling of facing a treacherous bull which would gore me as soon as ever my back was turned. He was always putting me in mind of a bull, with his short neck and heavy, hunched shoulders,—and with the ugly tinge of red in the whites of his eyes.

"Mr. Manners tells me you are to remain awhile in London, Mr. Carvel," he said, in his thick voice.

I took his meaning instantly, and replied in kind.

"Yes, your Grace, I have some business to attend to here."

"Ah," he answered; "then I shall see you again."

"Probably, sir," said I.

His Lordship watched this thrust and parry with an ill-concealed delight. Dorothy's face was impassive, expressionless. As the duke turned to mount the stairs, he stumbled clumsily across a young man coming to pay his respects to Miss Manners, and his Grace went sprawling against the wall.

"Confound you, sir!" he cried.

For the ducal temper was no respecter of presences. Then a title was a title to those born lower, and the young man plainly had a vast honour for a coronet.

"I beg your Grace's pardon," said he.

"Who the deuce is he?" demanded the duke petulantly of Mr. Manners, thereby setting the poor little man all a-tremble.

"Why, why,—" he replied, searching for his spyglass.

For an instant Dolly's eyes shot scorn. Chartersea had clearly seen and heeded that signal before.

"The gentleman is a friend of mine," she said.

Tho' I were put out of the Garden of Eden as a consequence, I itched to have it out with his Grace

then and there. I knew that I was bound to come into collision with him sooner or later. Such, indeed, was my mission in London. But Dorothy led the way upstairs, a spot of colour burning each of her cheeks. The stream of guests had been arrested until the hall was packed, and the curious were peering over the rail above.

"Lord, wasn't she superb!" exclaimed Comyn, exultingly, as we followed. In the drawing-room the buzzing about the card tables was hushed a moment as she went in. But I soon lost sight of her, thanks to Comyn. He drew me on from group to group, and I was duly presented to a score of Lady So-and-sos and honourable misses, most of whom had titles, but little else. Mammams searched their memories, and suddenly discovered that they had heard their parents speak of my grandfather. But, as it was a fair presumption that most colonial gentlemen made a visit home at least once in their lives, I did not allow the dust to get into my eyes. I was invited to dinners, and fairly showered with invitations to balls and drums and garden parties. I was twitted about the Beauty, most often with only a thin coating of amiability covering the spite of the remark. In short, if my head had not been so heavily laden with other matters, it might well have become light under the strain. Had I been ambitious to enter the arena I should have had but little trouble, since eligibility then might be reduced to guineas and another element not moral. I was the only heir of one of the richest men in the colony, vouched for by the Manners and taken up by Mr. Fox and my Lord Comyn. Inquiries are not pushed farther. I could not help seeing the hardness of it all, or refrain from contrasting my situation with that of the penniless outcast I had been but a little time before. The gilded rooms, the hundred yellow candles multiplied by the mirrors, the powder, the perfume, the jewels,—all put me in mind of the poor devils I had left wasting away their lives in Castle Yard. They, too, had had their times of prosperity, their friends who had faded with the first waning of fortune. Some of them had known what it was to be fawned over. And how many of these careless, flitting men of fashion I looked upon could feel the ground firm beneath their feet; or could say with certainty what a change of ministers, or one wild night at White's or Almack's, would bring forth? Verily, one must have seen the under side of life to know the upper!

Presently I was sought out by Mr. Topham Beauclerk, who had heard of the episode below and wished to hear more. He swore at the duke.

"He will be run through some day, and serve him jolly right," said he. "Bet you twenty pounds Charles Fox does it! His Grace knows he has the courage to fight him."

"The courage!" I repeated.

"Yes. Angelo says the duke has diabolical skill. And then he won't fight fair. He killed young Atwater on a foul, you know. Slipped on the wet grass, and Chartersea had him pinned before he caught his guard. But there is Lady Di a-calling, a-calling."

"Do all the women cheat in America too?" asked Topham, as we approached.

I thought of my Aunt Caroline, and laughed.

"Some," I answered.

"They will game, d—n 'em," said Topham, as tho' he had never gamed in his life. "And they will cheat, till a man has to close his eyes to keep from seeing their pretty hands. And they will cry, egad, oh so touchingly, if the luck goes against them in spite of it all. Only last week I had to forgive Mrs Farnham an hundred guineas. She said she'd lost her pin-money twice over, and was like to have wept her eyes out."

Thus primed in Topham's frank terms, I knew what to expect. And I found to my amusement he had not overrun the truth. I lost like a stoic, saw nothing, and discovered the straight road to popularity.

"The dear things expect us to make it up at the clubs," whispered he.

I discovered how he had fallen in love with his wife, Lady Diana, and pitied poor Bolingbroke heartily for having lost her. She was then in her prime,—a beauty, a wit, and a great lady, with a dash of the humanities about her that brought both men and women to her feet.

"You must come to see me, Mr. Carvel," said she. "I wish to talk to you of Dorothy."

"Your Ladyship believes me versed in no other subject?" I asked.

"None other worth the mention," she replied instantly; "Topham tells me you can talk horses, and that mystery of mysteries, American politics. But look at Miss Manners Dow. I'll warrant she is making Sir Charles see to his laurels, and young Stavordale is struck dumb."

I looked up quickly and beheld Dolly surrounded by a circle of admirers.

"Mark the shot strike!" Lady Di continued, between the deals; "that time Chartersea went down. I fancy he is bowled over rather often," she said slyly. "What a brute it is. And they say that that little woman she has for a father imagines a union with the duke will redound to his glory."

"They say," remarked Mrs. Meynel, sitting next me, "that the duke has thumbscrews of some kind on Mr. Manners."

"Miss Manners is able to take care of herself," said Topham.

"'On dit', that she has already refused as many dukes as did her Grace of Argyle," said Mrs. Meynel.

I had lost track of the cards, and knew I was losing prodigiously. But my eyes went back again and again to the group by the doorway, where Dolly was holding court and dispensing justice, and perchance injustice. The circle increased. Ribands, generals whose chests were covered with medals of valour, French noblemen, and foreign ambassadors stopped for a word with the Beauty and passed on their way, some smiling, some reflecting, to make room for others. I overheard from the neighbouring tables a spiteful protest that a young upstart from the colonies should turn Lady Tankerville's drum into a levee. My ears tingled as I listened. But not a feathered parrot in the carping lot of them could deny that Miss Manners had beauty and wit enough to keep them all at bay. Hers was not an English beauty: every line of her face and pose of her body proclaimed her of that noble type of Maryland women, distinctly American, over which many Englishmen before and since have lost their heads and hearts.

"Egad!" exclaimed Mr. Storer, who was looking on; "she's already defeated some of the Treasury Bench, and bless me if she isn't rating North himself."

Half the heads in the room were turned toward Miss Manners, who was exchanging jokes with the Prime Minister of Great Britain. I saw a corpulent man, ludicrously like the King's pictures, with bulging gray eyes that seemed to take in nothing. And this was North, upon whose conduct with the King depended the fate of our America. Good-natured he was, and his laziness was painfully apparent. He had the reputation of going to sleep standing, like a horse.

"But the Beauty contrives to keep him awake," said Storer.

"If you stay among us, Mr. Carvel," said Topham, "she will get you a commissionership for the asking."

"Look," cried Lady Di, "there comes Mr. Fox, the precocious, the irresistible. Were he in the Bible, we should read of him passing the time of day with King Solomon."

"Or instructing Daniel in the art of lion-taming," put in Mrs. Meynel.

There was Mr. Fox in truth, and the Beauty's face lighted up at sight of him. And presently, when Lord North had made his bow and passed on, he was seen to lead her out of the room, leaving her circle to go to pieces, like an empire without a head.

CHAPTER XXXIII

DRURY LANE

After a night spent in making resolutions, I set out for Arlington Street, my heart beating a march, as it had when I went thither on my arrival in London. Such was my excitement that I was near to being run over in Piccadilly like many another country gentleman, and roundly cursed by a wagoner for my stupidity. I had a hollow bigness within me, half of joy, half of pain, that sent me onward with ever increasing steps and a whirling storm of contradictions in my head. Now it was: Dolly loved me in spite of all the great men in England. Why, otherwise, had she come to the sponging-house? Berating myself: had her affection been other than that of a life-long friendship she would not have come an inch. But why had she made me stay in London? Why had she spoken so to Comyn? What interpretation might be put upon a score of little acts of hers that came a-flooding to mind, each a sacred treasure of memory? A lover's interpretation, forsooth. Fie, Richard! what presumption to think that you, a raw lad, should have a chance in such a field! You have yet, by dint of hard knocks and buffets, to learn the world.

By this I had come in sight of her house, and suddenly I trembled like a green horse before a cannon.

My courage ran out so fast that I was soon left without any, and my legs had carried me as far as St. James's Church before I could bring them up. Then I was sure, for the first time, that she did not love me. In front of the church I halted, reflecting that I had not remained in England with any hope of it, but rather to discover the truth about Chartersea's actions, and to save her, if it were possible. I turned back once more, and now got as far as the knocker, and lifted it as a belfry was striking the hour of noon. I think I would have fled again had not the door been immediately opened.

Once more I found myself in the room looking out over the Park, the French windows open to the balcony, the sunlight flowing in with the spring-scented air. On the table was lying a little leather book, stamped with gold,—her prayerbook. Well I remembered it! I opened it, to read: "Dorothy, from her Mother. Annapolis, Christmas, 1768." The sweet vista of the past stretched before my eyes. I saw her, on such a, Mayday as this, walking to St. Anne's under the grand old trees, their budding leaves casting a delicate tracery at her feet. I followed her up the aisle until she disappeared in the high pew, and then I sat beside my grandfather and thought of her, nor listened to a word of Mr. Allen's sermon. Why had they ever taken her to London?

When she came in I sought her face anxiously. She was still pale; and I thought, despite her smile, that a trace of sadness lingered in her eyes.

"At last, sir, you have come," she said severely. "Sit down and give an account of yourself at once. You have been behaving very badly."

"Dorothy—"

"Pray don't 'Dorothy' me, sir. But explain where you have been for this week past."

"But, Dolly—"

"You pretend to have some affection for your old playmate, but you do not trouble yourself to come to see her."

"Indeed, you do me wrong."

"Do you wrong! You prefer to gallivant about town with Comyn and Charles Fox, and with all those wild gentlemen who go to Brooks's. Nay, I have heard of your goings-on. I shall write to Mr. Carvel to-day, and advise him to send for you. And tell him that you won a thousand pounds in one night—"

"It was only seven hundred," I interrupted sheepishly. I thought she smiled faintly.

And will probably lose twenty thousand before you have done. And I shall say to him that you have dared to make bold rebel speeches to a Lord of the Admiralty and to some of the King's supporters. I shall tell your grandfather you are disgracing him."

"Rebel speeches!" I cried.

"Yes, rebel speeches at Almack's. Who ever heard of such a thing! No doubt I shall hear next of your going to a drawing-room and instructing his Majesty how to subdue the colonies. And then, sir, you will be sent to the Tower, and I shan't move a finger to get you out."

"Who told you of this, Dolly?" I demanded.

"Mr. Fox, himself, for one. He thought it so good,—or so bad,—that he took me aside last night at Lady Tankerville's, asked me why I had let you out of Castle Yard, and told me I must manage to curb your tongue. I replied that I had about as much influence with you as I have with Dr. Franklin."

I laughed.

"I saw Fox lead you off," I said.

"Oh, you did, did you!" she retorted. "But you never once came near me yourself, save when I chanced to meet you in the hall, tho' I was there a full three hours."

"How could I!" I exclaimed. "You were surrounded by prime ministers and ambassadors, and Heaven knows how many other great people."

"When you wish to do anything, Richard, you usually find a way."

"Nay," I answered, despairing, "I can never explain anything to you, Dolly. Your tongue is too quick for mine."

"Why didn't you go home with your captain?" she asked mockingly.

"Do you know why I stayed?"

"I suppose because you want to be a gay spark and taste of the pleasures of London. That is, what you men are pleased to call pleasures. I can think of no other season."

"There is another," I said desperately.

"Ah," said Dolly. And in her old aggravating way she got up and stood in the window, looking out over the park. I rose and stood beside her, my very temples throbbing.

"We have no such springs at home," she said. "But oh, I wish I were at Wilmot House to-day!"

"There is another reason," I repeated. My voice sounded far away, like that of another. I saw the colour come into her cheeks again, slowly. The southwest wind, with a whiff of the channel salt in it, blew the curtains at our backs.

"You have a conscience, Richard," she said gently, without turning. "So few of us have."

I was surprised. Nor did I know what to make of that there were so many meanings.

"You are wild," she continued, "and impulsive, as they say your father was. But he was a man I should have honoured. He stood firm beside his friends. He made his enemies fear him. All strong men must have enemies, I suppose. They must make them."

I looked at her, troubled, puzzled, but burning at her praise of Captain Jack.

"Dolly," I cried, "you are not well. Why won't you come back to Maryland?"

She did not reply to that. Then she faced me suddenly.

"Richard, I know now why you insisted upon going back. It was because you would not desert your sea-captain. Comyn and Mr. Fox have told me, and they admire you for it as much as I."

What language is worthy to describe her as she was then in that pose, with her head high, as she was wont to ride over the field after the hounds. Hers was in truth no beauty of stone, but the beauty of force, —of life itself.

"Dorothy," I cried; "Dorothy, I stayed because I love you. There, I have said it again, what has not passed my lips since we were children. What has been in my heart ever since."

I stopped, awed. For she had stepped back, out on the balcony. She hid her head in her hands, and I saw her breast shaken as with sobs. I waited what seemed a day,—a year. Then she raised her face and looked at me through the tears shining in her eyes.

"Richard," she said sadly, "why, why did you ever tell me? Why can we not always be playmates?"

The words I tried to say choked me. I could not speak for sorrow, for very bitterness. And yet I might have known! I dared not look at her again.

"Dear Richard," I heard her say, "God alone understands how it hurts me to give you pain. Had I only foreseen—"

"Had you only foreseen," I said quickly.

"I should never have let you speak."

Her words came steadily, but painfully. And when I raised my eyes she met them bravely.

"You must have seen," I cried. "These years I have loved you, nor could I have hidden it if I had wished. But I have little—to offer you," I went on cruelly, for I knew not what I said; "you who may have English lands and titles for the consenting. I was a fool."

Her tears started again. And at sight of them I was seized with such remorse that I could have bitten my tongue in two.

"Forgive me, Dorothy, if you can," I implored. "I did not mean it. Nor did I presume to think you loved

me. I have adored,—I shall be content to adore from far below. And I stayed,—I stayed that I might save you if a danger threatened."

"Danger!" she exclaimed, catching her breath.

"I will come to the point," I said. "I stayed to save you from the Duke of Chartersea."

She grasped the balcony rail, and I think would have fallen but for my arm. Then she straightened, and only the quiver of her lip marked the effort.

"To save me from the Duke of Chartersea?" she said, so coldly that my conviction was shaken. "Explain yourself, sir."

"You cannot love him!" I cried, amazed.

She flashed upon me a glance I shall never forget.

"Richard Carvel," she said, "you have gone too far. Though you have been my friend all my life, there are some things which even you cannot say to me."

And she left me abruptly and went into the house, her head flung back. And I followed in a tumult of mortification and wounded pride, in such a state of dejection that I wished I had never been born. But hers was a nature of surprises, and impulsive, like my own. Beside the cabinet she turned, calm again, all trace of anger vanished from her face. Drawing a hawthorn sprig from a porcelain vase I had given her, she put it in my hand.

"Let us forget this, Richard," said she; "we have both been very foolish."

Forget, indeed! Unless Heaven had robbed me of reason, had torn the past from me at a single stroke. I could not have forgotten. When I reached my lodgings I sent the anxious Banks about his business and threw myself in a great chair before the window, the chair she had chosen. Strange to say, I had no sensation save numbness. The time must have been about two of the clock: I took no account of it. I recall Banks coming timidly back with the news that two gentlemen had called. I bade him send them away. Would my honour not have Mrs. Marble cook my dinner, and be dressed for Lady Pembroke's ball? I sent him off again, harshly.

After a long while the slamming of a coach door roused me, and I was straightway seized with such an agony of mind that I could have cried aloud. 'Twas like the pain of blood flowing back into a frozen limb. Darkness was fast gathering as I reached the street and began to walk madly. Word by word I rehearsed the scene in the drawing-room over the Park, but I could not think calmly, for the pain of it. Little by little I probed, writhing, until far back in my boyhood I was tearing at the dead roots of that cherished plant, which was the Hope of Her Love. It had grown with my own life, and now with its death to-day I felt that I had lost all that was dear to me. Then, in the midst of this abject self-pity, I was stricken with shame. I thought of Comyn, who had borne the same misfortune as a man should. Had his pain been the less because he had not loved her from childhood? Like Comyn, I resolved to labour for her happiness.

What hour of the night it was I know not when a man touched me on the shoulder, and I came to myself with a start. I was in a narrow street lined by hideous houses, their windows glaring with light. Each seemed a skull, with rays darting from its grinning eye-holes. Within I caught glimpses of debauchery that turned me sick. Ten paces away three women and a man were brawling, the low angry tones of his voice mingling with the screeches of their Billingsgate. Muffled figures were passing and repassing unconcernedly, some entering the houses, others coming out, and a handsome coach, without arms and with a footman in plain livery, lumbered along and stopped farther on. All this I remarked before I took notice of him who had intercepted me, and demanded what he wanted.

"Hey, Bill!" he cried with an oath to a man who stood on the steps opposite; "'ere's a soft un as has put 'is gill in."

The man responded, and behind him came two more of the same feather, and suddenly I found myself surrounded by an ill-smelling crowd of flashy men and tawdry women. They jostled me, and I reached for my sword, to make the discovery that I had forgotten it. Regaining my full senses, I struck the man nearest me a blow that sent him sprawling in the dirt. A blade gleamed under the sickly light of the fish-oil lamp overhead, but a man crashed through from behind and caught the ruffian's sword-arm and flung him back in the kennel.

"The watch!" he cried, "the watch!"

They vanished like rats into their holes at the shout, leaving me standing alone with him. The affair

had come and gone so quickly that I scarce caught my breath.

"Pardon, sir," he said, knuckling, "but I followed you."

It was Banks. For a second time he had given me an affecting example of his faithfulness. I forgot that he was my servant, and I caught his hand and pressed it.

"You have saved my life at the risk of your own," I said; "I shall not forget it."

But Banks had been too well trained to lose sight of his position. He merely tipped his hat again and said imperturbably:

"Best get out of here, your honour. They'll be coming again directly."

"Where are we?" I asked.

"Drury Lane, sir," he replied, giving me just the corner of a glance; "shall I fetch a coach, sir?" No, I preferred to walk. Before we had turned into Long Acre I had seen all of this Sodom of London that it should be given a man to see, if indeed we must behold some of the bestiality of this world. Here alone, in the great city, high and low were met equal. Sin levels rank. The devil makes no choice between my lord and his kitchen wench who has gone astray. Here, in Sodom, painted vice had lain for an hundred years and bred half the crime of a century. How many souls had gone hence in that time to meet their Maker! Some of these brazen creatures who leered at me had known how long ago! —a peaceful home and a mother's love; had been lured in their innocence to this place of horrors, never to leave it until death mercifully overtakes them. Others, having fallen, had been driven hither by a cruel world that shelters all save the helpless, that forgives all save the truly penitent. I shuddered as I thought of Mr. Hogarth's prints, which, in the library in Marlboro' Street at home, had had so little meaning for me. Verily he had painted no worse than the reality. As I strode homeward, my own sorrow subdued by the greater sorrow I had looked upon, the craving I had had to be alone was gone, and I would have locked arms with a turnspit. I called to Banks, who was behind at a respectful distance, and bade him come talk to me. His presence of mind in calling on the watch had made even a greater impression upon me than his bravery. I told him that he should have ten pounds, and an increase of wages. And I asked him where I had gone after leaving Dover Street, and why he had followed me. He answered this latter question first. He had seen gentlemen in the same state, or something like it, before: his Lordship, his late master, after he had fought with Mr. Onslow, of the Guards, and Sir Edward Minturn, when he had lost an inheritance and a reversion at Brooks's, and was forced to give over his engagement to marry the Honourable Miss Swift. "Lord, sir," he said, "but that was a sad case, as set all London agog. And Sir Edward shot hisself at Portsmouth not a se'nnight after."

And he relapsed into silence, no doubt longing to ask the cause of my own affliction. Presently he surprised me by saying:

"And I might make so bold, Mr. Carvel, I would like to tell your honour something."

I nodded. And he hawed awhile and then burst out:

"Your honour must know then that I belongs to the footman's club in Berkeley Square, where I meets all the servants o' quality—"

"Yes," I said, wondering what footman's tale he had to tell.

"And Whipple, he's a hintimate o' mine, sir." He stopped again.

"And who may Whipple be?"

"With submission, sir. Whipple's his Grace o' Chartersea's man—and, you'll forgive me, sir—Whipple owns his Grace is prodigious ugly, an' killed young Mr. Atwater unfair, some think. Whipple says he would give notice had he not promised the old duke—"

"Drat Whipple!" I cried.

"Yes, sir. To be sure, sir. His Grace was in a bloody rage when he found hisself in a fruit bin at Covent Carding. An' two redbreasts had carried him to the round house, sir, afore they discovered his title. An' since his Grace ha' said time an' time afore Whipple, that he'll ha' Mr. Carvel's heart for that, and has called you most disgustin' bad names, sir. An' Whipple he says to me: 'Banks, drop your marster a word, an' you get the chance. His Grace'll speak him fair to's face, but let him look behind him.'"

"I thank you again, Banks. I shall bear in mind your devotion," I replied. "But I had nothing to do with sending the duke to Covent

Garden."

"Ay, sir, so I tells Whipple."

"Pray, how did you know?" I demanded curiously.

"Lord, sir! All the servants at Almack's is friends o' mine," says he.
"But Whipple declares his Grace will be sworn you did it, sir, tho' the Lord Mayor hisself made deposition 'twas not."

"Then mark me, Banks, you are not to talk of this."

"Oh, Lord, no, your honour," he said, as he fell back. But I was not so sure of his discretion as of his loyalty.

And so I was led to perceive that I was not to be the only aggressor in the struggle that was to come. That his Grace did me the honour to look upon me as an obstacle. And that he intended to seize the first opportunity to make way with me, by fair means or foul.

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