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PART IX.

CHAPTER I.

And my father pushed aside his books.

O young reader, whoever thou art,—or reader at least who hast been young,—canst thou not remember some time when, with thy wild troubles and sorrows as yet borne in secret, thou hast come back from that hard, stern world which opens on thee when thou puttest thy foot out of the threshold of home,—come back to the four quiet walls wherein thine elders sit in peace,—and seen, with a sort of sad amaze, how calm and undisturbed all is there? That generation which has gone before thee in the path of the passions,—the generation of thy parents (not so many years, perchance, remote from thine own),—how immovably far off, in its still repose, it seems from thy turbulent youth! It has in it a stillness as of a classic age, antique as the statues of the Greeks. That tranquil monotony of routine into which those lives that preceded thee have merged; the occupations that they have found sufficing for their happiness, by the fireside, in the arm-chair and corner appropriated to each,—how strangely they contrast thine own feverish excitement! And they make room for thee, and bid thee welcome, and then resettle to their hushed pursuits as if nothing had happened! Nothing had happened! while in thy heart, perhaps, the whole world seems to have shot from its axis, all the elements to be at war! And you sit down, crushed by that quiet happiness which you can share no more, and smile mechanically, and look into the fire; and, ten to one, you say nothing till the time comes for bed, and you take up your candle and creep miserably to your lonely room.

Now, it in a stage-coach in the depth of winter, when three passengers are warm and snug, a fourth,

all besnowed and frozen, descends from the outside and takes place amongst them, straightway all the three passengers shift their places, uneasily pull up their cloak collars, re- arrange their "comforters," feel indignantly a sensible loss of caloric: the intruder has at least made a sensation. But if you had all the snows of the Grampians in your heart, you might enter unnoticed; take care not to tread on the toes of your opposite neighbor, and not a soul is disturbed, not a "comforter" stirs an inch. I had not slept a wink, I had not even lain down all that night,—the night in which I had said farewell to Fanny Trevanion; and the next morning, when the sun rose, I wandered out,—where I know not: I have a dim recollection of long, gray, solitary streets; of the river, that seemed flowing in dull, sullen silence, away, far away, into some invisible eternity; trees and turf, and the gay voices of children. I must have gone from one end of the great Babel to the other; for my memory only became clear and distinct when I knocked, somewhere before noon, at the door of my father's house, and, passing heavily up the stairs, came into the drawing-room, which was the rendezvous of the little family; for since we had been in London, my father had ceased to have his study apart, and contented himself with what he called "a corner,"—a corner wide enough to contain two tables and a dumb-waiter, with chairs a discretion all littered with books. On the opposite side of this capacious corner sat my uncle, now nearly convalescent, and he was jotting down, in his stiff, military hand, certain figures in a little red account-book; for you know already that my Uncle Roland was, in his expenses, the most methodical of men.

My father's face was more benign than usual, for before him lay a proof,—the first proof of his first work—his one work—the Great Book! Yes! it had positively found a press. And the first proof of your first work—ask any author what that is! My mother was out, with the faithful Mrs. Primmins, shopping or marketing, no doubt; so, while the brothers were thus engaged, it was natural that my entrance should not make as much noise as if it had been a bomb, or a singer, or a clap of thunder, or the last "great novel of the season," or anything else that made a noise in those days. For what makes a noise now,—now, when the most astonishing thing of all is our easy familiarity with things astounding; when we say, listlessly, "Another revolution at Paris," or, "By the by, there is the deuce to do at Vienna!" when De Joinville is catching fish in the ponds at Claremont, and you hardly turn back to look at Metternich on the pier at Brighton!

My uncle nodded and growled indistinctly; my father put aside his books,—"you have told us that already."

Sir, you are very much mistaken; it was not then that he put aside his books, for he was not then engaged in them,—he was reading his proof. And he smiled, and pointed to it (the proof I mean) pathetically, and with a kind of humor, as much as to say: "What can you expect, Pisistratus? My new baby in short clothes—or long primer, which is all the same thing!"

I took a chair between the two, and looked first at one, then at the other. Heaven forgive me!—I felt a rebellious, ungrateful spite against both. The bitterness of my soul must have been deep indeed to have overflowed in that direction, but it did. The grief of youth is an abominable egotist, and that is the truth. I got up from my chair and walked towards the window; it was open, and outside the window was Mrs. Primmins's canary, in its cage. London air had agreed with it, and it was singing lustily. Now, when the canary saw me standing opposite to its cage, and regarding it seriously, and, I have no doubt, with a very sombre aspect, the creature stopped short, and hung its head on one side, looking at me obliquely and suspiciously. Finding that I did it no harm, it began to hazard a few broken notes, timidly and interrogatively, as it were, pausing between each; and at length, as I made no reply, it evidently thought it had solved the doubt, and ascertained that I was more to be pitied than feared,—for it stole gradually into so soft and silvery a strain that, I verily believe, it did it on purpose to comfort me!—me, its old friend, whom it had unjustly suspected. Never did any music touch me so home as did that long, plaintive cadence. And when the bird ceased, it perched itself close to the bars of the cage, and looked at me steadily with its bright, intelligent eyes. I felt mine water, and I turned back and stood in the centre of the room, irresolute what to do, where to go. My father had done with the proof, and was deep in his folios. Roland had clasped his red account-book, restored it to his pocket, wiped his pen carefully, and now watched me from under his great beetle-brows. Suddenly he rose, and stamping on the hearth with his cork leg, exclaimed, "Look up from those cursed books, brother Austin! What is there in your son's face? Construe that, if you can!"

CHAPTER II.

And my father pushed aside his books and rose hastily. He took off his spectacles and rubbed them mechanically, but he said nothing, and my uncle, staring at him for a moment, in surprise at his silence,

burst out,—

"Oh! I see; he has been getting into some scrape, and you are angry. Fie! young blood will have its way, Austin, it will. I don't blame that; it is only when—Come here, Sisty. Zounds! man, come here."

My father gently brushed off the Captain's hand, and advancing towards me, opened his arms. The next moment I was sobbing on his breast.

"But what is the matter?" cried Captain Roland. "Will nobody say what is the matter? Money, I suppose, money, you confounded extravagant young dog. Luckily you have got an uncle who has more than he knows what to do with. How much? Fifty?—a hundred?—two hundred? How can I write the check if you'll not speak?"

"Hush, brother! it is no money you can give that will set this right. My poor boy! Have I guessed truly? Did I guess truly the other evening when—"

"Yes, sir, yes! I have been so wretched. But I am better now,—I can tell you all."

My uncle moved slowly towards the door; his fine sense of delicacy made him think that even he was out of place in the confidence between son and father.

"No, uncle," I said, holding out my hand to him, "stay. You too can advise me,—strengthen me. I have kept my honor yet; help me to keep it still."

At the sound of the word "honor," Captain Roland stood mute, and raised his head quickly.

So I told all,—incoherently enough at first, but clearly and manfully as I went on. Now I know that it is not the custom of lovers to confide in fathers and uncles. Judging by those mirrors of life, plays and novels, they choose better,—valets and chambermaids, and friends whom they have picked up in the street, as I had picked up poor Francis Vivian: to these they make clean breasts of their troubles. But fathers and uncles,—to them they are close, impregnable, "buttoned to the chin." The Caxtons were an eccentric family, and never did anything like other people. When I had ended, I lifted up my eyes and said pleadingly, "Now tell me, is there no hope—none?"

"Why should there be none?" cried Captain Roland, hastily—"the De Caxtons are as good a family as the Trevanions; and as for yourself, all I will say is, that the young lady might choose worse for her own happiness."

I wrung my uncle's hand, and turned to my father in anxious fear, for I knew that, in spite of his secluded habits, few men ever formed a sounder judgment on worldly matters, when he was fairly drawn to look at them. A thing wonderful is that plain wisdom which scholars and poets often have for others, though they rarely deign to use it for themselves. And how on earth do they get at it? I looked at my father, and the vague hope Roland had excited fell as I looked.

"Brother," said he, slowly, and shaking his head, "the world, which gives codes and laws to those who live in it, does not care much for a pedigree, unless it goes with a title-deed to estates."

"Trevanion was not richer than Pisistratus when he married Lady Ellinor," said my uncle.

"True, but Lady Ellinor was not then an heiress; and her father viewed these matters as no other peer in England perhaps would. As for Trevanion himself, I dare say he has no prejudices about station, but he is strong in common-sense. He values himself on being a practical man. It would be folly to talk to him of love, and the affections of youth. He would see in the son of Austin Caxton, living on the interest of some fifteen or sixteen thousand pounds, such a match for his daughter as no prudent man in his position could approve. And as for Lady Ellinor—"

"She owes us much, Austin!" exclaimed Roland, his face darkening.

"Lady Ellinor is now what, if we had known her better, she promised always to be,—the ambitious, brilliant, scheming woman of the world. Is it not so, Pisistratus?"

I said nothing,—I felt too much.

"And does the girl like you? But I think it is clear she does!" exclaimed Roland. "Fate, fate; it has been a fatal family to us! Zounds! Austin, it was your fault. Why did you let him go there?"

"My son is now a man,—at least in heart, if not in years can man be shut from danger and trial? They found me in the old parsonage, brother!" said my father, mildly.

My uncle walked, or rather stumped, three times up and down the room; and he then stopped short, folded his arms, and came to a decision,—

"If the girl likes you, your duty is doubly clear: you can't take advantage of it. You have done right to leave the house, for the temptation might be too strong."

"But what excuse shall I make to Mr. Trevanion?" said I, feebly; "what story can I invent? So careless as he is while he trusts, so penetrating if he once suspects, he will see through all my subterfuges, and —and—"

"It is as plain as a pikestaff," said my uncle, abruptly, "and there need be no subterfuge in the matter. 'I must leave you, Mr. Trevanion.' 'Why?' says he. 'Don't ask me.' He insists. 'Well then, sir, if you must know, I love your daughter. I have nothing, she is a great heiress. You will not approve of that love, and therefore I leave you!' That is the course that becomes an English gentleman. Eh, Austin?"

"You are never wrong when your instincts speak, Roland," said my father.
"Can you say this, Pisistratus, or shall I say it for you?"

"Let him say it himself," said Roland, "and let him judge himself of the answer. He is young, he is clever, he may make a figure in the world. Trevanion may answer, 'Win the lady after you have won the laurel, like the knights of old.' At all events you will hear the worst."

"I will go," said I, firmly; and I took my hat and left the room. As I was passing the landing-place, a light step stole down the upper flight of stairs, and a little hand seized my own. I turned quickly, and met the full, dark, seriously sweet eyes of my cousin Blanche.

"Don't go away yet, Sisty," said she, coaxingly. "I have been waiting for you, for I heard your voice, and did not like to come in and disturb you."

"And why did you wait for me, my little Blanche?"

"Why! only to see you. But your eyes are red. Oh, cousin!" and before I was aware of her childish impulse, she had sprung to my neck and kissed me. Now Blanche was not like most children, and was very sparing of her caresses. So it was out of the deeps of a kind heart that that kiss came. I returned it without a word; and putting her down gently, descended the stairs, and was in the streets. But I had not got far before I heard my father's voice; and he came up, and hooking his arm into mine, said, "Are there not two of us that suffer? Let us be together!" I pressed his arm, and we walked on in silence. But when we were near Trevanion's house, I said hesitatingly, "Would it not be better, sir, that I went in alone? If there is to be an explanation between Mr. Trevanion and myself, would it not seem as if your presence implied either a request to him that would lower us both, or a doubt of me that—"

"You will go in alone, of course; I will wait for you—"

"Not in the streets—oh, no! father," cried I, touched inexpressibly. For all this was so unlike my father's habits that I felt remorse to have so communicated my young griefs to the calm dignity of his serene life.

"My son, you do not know how I love you; I have only known it myself lately. Look you, I am living in you now, my first-born; not in my other son,—the Great Book: I must have my way. Go in; that is the door, is it riot?"

I pressed my father's hand, and I felt then, that while that hand could reply to mine, even the loss of Fanny Trevanion could not leave the world a blank. How much we have before us in life, while we retain our parents! How much to strive and to hope for! what a motive in the conquest of our sorrow, that they may not sorrow with us!

CHAPTER III.

I entered Trevanion's study. It was an hour in which he was rarely at home, but I had not thought of that; and I saw without surprise that, contrary to his custom, he was in his arm-chair, reading one of his favorite classic authors, instead of being in some committee-room of the House of Commons.

"A pretty fellow you are," said he, looking up, "to leave me all the morning, without rhyme or reason!

And my committee is postponed,— chairman ill. People who get ill should not go into the House of Commons. So here I am looking into Propertius: Parr is right; not so elegant a writer as Tibullus. But what the deuce are you about?—why don't you sit down? Humph! you look grave; you have something to say,— say it!"

And, putting down Propertius, the acute, sharp face of Trevanion instantly became earnest and attentive.

"My dear Mr. Trevanion," said I, with as much steadiness as I could assume, "you have been most kind to me; and out of my own family there is no man I love and respect more."

Trevanion.—"Humph! What's all this? [In an undertone]—Am I going to be taken in?"

Pisistratus.—"Do not think me ungrateful, then, when I say I come to resign my office,—to leave the house where I have been so happy"

Trevanion.—"Leave the house! Pooh! I have over-tasked you. I will be more merciful in future. You must forgive a political economist; it is the fault of my sect to look upon men as machines."

Pisistratus (smiling faintly).—"No, indeed; that is not it! I have nothing to complain of, nothing I could wish altered; could I stay."

Trevanion (examining me thoughtfully).—"And does your father approve of your leaving me thus?"

Pisistratus.—"Yes, fully."

Trevanion (musing a moment).—"I see, he would send you to the University, make you a book-worm like himself. Pooh! that will not do; you will never become wholly a man of books,—it is not in you. Young man, though I may seem careless, I read characters, when I please it, pretty quickly. You do wrong to leave me; you are made for the great world,—I can open to you a high career. I wish to do so! Lady Ellinor wishes it,—nay, insists on it,—for your father's sake as well as yours. I never ask a favor from ministers, and I never will. But" (here Trevanion rose suddenly, and with an erect mien and a quick gesture of his arm he added)—"but a minister can dispose as he pleases of his patronage. Look you, it is a secret yet, and I trust to your honor. But before the year is out, I must be in the Cabinet. Stay with me; I guarantee your fortunes,—three months ago I would not have said that. By and by I will open Parliament for you,—you are not of age yet; work till then. And now sit down and write my letters, —a sad arrear!"

"My dear, dear Mr. Trevanion!" said I, so affected that I could scarcely speak, and seizing his hand, which I pressed between both mine, "I dare not thank you,—I cannot! But you don't know my heart: it is not ambition. No! if I could but stay here on the same terms forever— here," looking ruefully on that spot where Fanny had stood the night before. "But it is impossible! If you knew all, you would be the first to bid me go!"

"You are in debt," said the man of the world, coldly. "Bad, very bad— still—"

"No, sir; no! worse."

"Hardly possible to be worse, young man—hardly! But, just as you— will; you leave me, and will not say why. Goodby. Why do you linger? Shake hands, and go!"

"I cannot leave you thus; I—I—sir, the truth shall out. I am rash and mad enough not to see Miss Trevanion without forgetting that I am poor, and—"

"Ha!" interrupted Trevanion, softly, and growing pale, "this is a misfortune, indeed! And I, who talked of reading characters! Truly, truly, we would-be practical men are fools—fools! And you have made love to my daughter!"

"Sir? Mr. Trevanion!—no—never, never so base! In your house, trusted by you,—how could you think it? I dared, it, may be, to love,—at all events, to feel that I could not be insensible to a temptation too strong for me. But to say it to your heiress,—to ask love in return: I would as soon have broken open your desk! Frankly I tell you my folly: it is a folly, not a disgrace."

Trevanion came up to me abruptly as I leaned against the bookcase, and, grasping my hand with a cordial kindness, said, "Pardon me! You have behaved as your father's son should I envy him such a son! Now, listen to me: I cannot give you my daughter—"

"Believe me, sir; I never—"

"Tut, listen! I cannot give you my daughter. I say nothing of inequality,—all gentlemen are equal; and

if not, any impertinent affectation of superiority, in such a case, would come ill from one who owes his own fortune to his wife! But, as it is, I have a stake in the world, won not by fortune only, but the labor of a life, the suppression of half my nature,—the drudging, squaring, taming down all that made the glory and joy of my youth,—to be that hard, matter-of-fact thing which the English world expect in a statesman! This station has gradually opened into its natural result,—power! I tell you I shall soon have high office in the administration; I hope to render great services to England,—for we English politicians, whatever the mob and the Press say of us, are not selfish place-hunters. I refused office, as high as I look for now, ten years ago. We believe in our opinions, and we hail the power that may carry them into effect. In this cabinet I shall have enemies. Oh, don't think we leave jealousy behind us, at the doors of Downing Street! I shall be one of a minority. I know well what must happen: like all men in power, I must strengthen myself by other heads and hands than my own. My daughter shall bring to me the alliance of that house in England which is most necessary to me. My life falls to the ground, like a child's pyramid of cards, if I waste—I do not say on you, but on men of ten times your fortune (whatever that be)—the means of strength which are at my disposal in the hand of Fanny Trevanion. To this end I have looked, but to this end her mother has schemed; for these household matters are within a man's hopes, but belong to a woman's policy. So much for us. But to you, my dear and frank and high-souled young friend; to you, if I were not Fanny's father, if I were your nearest relation, and Fanny could be had for the asking, with all her princely dower (for it is princely),—to you I should say, fly from a load upon the heart, on the genius, the energy, the pride, and the spirit, which not one man in ten thousand can bear; fly from the curse of owing everything to a wife! It is a reversal of all natural position, it is a blow to all the manhood within us. You know not what it is; I do! My wife's fortune came not till after marriage,—so far, so well; it saved my reputation from the charge of fortune-hunting. But, I tell you fairly, that if it had never come at all, I should be a prouder and a greater and a happier man than I have ever been, or ever can be, with all its advantages: it has been a millstone round my neck. And yet Ellinor has never breathed a word that could wound my pride. Would her daughter be as forbearing? Much as I love Fanny, I doubt if she has the great heart of her mother. You look incredulous,—naturally. Oh, you think I shall sacrifice my child's happiness to a politician's ambition. Folly of youth! Fanny would be wretched with you. She might not think so now; she would five years hence! Fanny will make an admirable duchess, countess, great lady; but wife to a man who owes all to her! No, no; don't dream it! I shall not sacrifice her happiness, depend on it. I speak plainly, as man to man, —man of the world to a man just entering it,—but still man to man! What say you?"

"I will think over all you tell me. I know that you are speaking to me most generously,—as a father would. Now let me go, and may God keep you and yours!"

"Go,—I return your blessing; go! I don't insult you now with offers of service; but remember, you have a right to command them,—in all ways, in all times. Stop! take this comfort away with you,—a sorry comfort now, a great one hereafter. In a position that might have moved anger, scorn, pity, you have made a barren-hearted man honor and admire you. You, a boy, have made me, with my gray hairs, think better of the whole world; tell your father that."

I closed the door and stole out softly, softly. But when I got into the hall, Fanny suddenly opened the door of the breakfast parlor, and seemed, by her look, her gesture, to invite me in. Her face was very pale, and there were traces of tears on the heavy lids.

I stood still a moment, and my heart beat violently. I then muttered something inarticulately, and, bowing low, hastened to the door.

I thought, but my ears might deceive me, that I heard my name pronounced; but fortunately the tall porter started from his newspaper and his leathern chair, and the entrance stood open. I joined my father.

"It's all over," said I, with a resolute smile. "And now, my dear father, I feel how grateful I should be for all that your lessons—your life—have taught me; for, believe me, I am not unhappy."

CHAPTER IV.

We came back to my father's house, and on the stairs we met my mother, whom Roland's grave looks and her Austin's strange absence had alarmed. My father quietly led the way to a little room which my mother had appropriated to Blanche and herself, and then, placing my hand in that which had helped his own steps from the stony path down the quiet vales of life, he said to me: "Nature gives you here

the soother;" and so saying, he left the room.

And it was true, O my mother! that in thy simple, loving breast nature did place the deep wells of comfort! We come to men for philosophy,—to women for consolation. And the thousand weaknesses and regrets, the sharp sands of the minutiae that make up sorrow,—all these, which I could have betrayed to no man (not even to him, the dearest and tenderest of all men), I showed without shame to thee! And thy tears, that fell on my cheek, had the balm of Araby; and my heart at length lay lulled and soothed under thy moist, gentle eyes.

I made an effort, and joined the little circle at dinner; and I felt grateful that no violent attempt was made to raise my spirits,—nothing but affection, more subdued and soft and tranquil. Even little Blanche, as if by the intuition of sympathy, ceased her babble, and seemed to hush her footstep as she crept to my side. But after dinner, when we had reassembled in the drawing-room, and the lights shone bright, and the curtains were let down, and only the quick roll of some passing wheels reminded us that there was a world without, my father began to talk. He had laid aside all his work, the younger but less perishable child was forgotten, and my father began to talk.

"It is," said he, musingly, "a well-known thing that particular drugs or herbs suit the body according to its particular diseases. When we are ill, we don't open our medicine-chest at random, and take out any powder or phial that comes to hand. The skilful doctor is he who adjusts the dose to the malady."

"Of that there can be no doubt," quoth Captain Roland. "I remember a notable instance of the justice of what you say. When I was in Spain, both my horse and I fell ill at the same time: a dose was sent for each; and by some infernal mistake, I swallowed the horse's physic, and the horse, poor thing, swallowed mine!"

"And what was the result?" asked my father.

"The horse died!" answered Roland, mournfully, "a valuable beast, bright bay, with a star!"

"And you?"

"Why, the doctor said it ought to have killed me; but it took a great deal more than a paltry bottle of physic to kill a man in my regiment."

"Nevertheless, we arrive at the same conclusion," pursued my father,—" I with my theory, you with your experience,—that the physic we take must not be chosen haphazard, and that a mistake in the bottle may kill a horse. But when we come to the medicine for the mind, how little do we think of the golden rule which common-sense applies to the body!"

"Anan," said the Captain, "what medicine is there for the mind? Shakspeare has said something on that subject, which, if I recollect right, implies that there is no ministering to a mind diseased."

"I think not, brother; he only said physic (meaning boluses and black draughts) would not do it. And Shakspeare was the last man to find fault with his own art; for, verily, he has been a great physician to the mind."

"Ah! I take you now, brother,—books again! So you think when a man breaks his heart or loses his fortune or his daughter (Blanche, child, come here), that you have only to clap a plaster of print on the sore place, and all is well. I wish you would find me such a cure."

"Will you try it?"

"If it is not Greek," said my uncle.

CHAPTER V.

My Father's Crotchet On The Hygienic Chemistry Of Books.

"If," said my father,—and here his hand was deep in his waistcoat,—"if we accept the authority of Diodorus as to the inscription on the great Egyptian library—and I don't see why Diodorus should not be as near the mark as any one else?" added my father interrogatively, turning round.

My mother thought herself the person addressed, and nodded her gracious assent to the authority of

Diodorus. His opinion thus fortified, my father continued,—"If, I say, we accept the authority of Diodorus, the inscription on the Egyptian library was: 'The Medicine of the Mind.' Now, that phrase has become notoriously trite and hackneyed, and people repeat vaguely that books are the medicine of the mind. Yes; but to apply the medicine is the thing!"

"So you have told us at least twice before, brother," quoth the Captain, bluffly. "And what Diodorus has to do with it, I know no more than the man of the moon."

"I shall never get on at this rate," said my father, in a tone between reproach and entreaty.

"Be good children, Roland and Blanche both," said my mother, stopping from her work and holding up her needle threateningly,—and indeed inflicting a slight puncture upon the Captain's shoulder.

"'Rem acu tetigisti,' my dear," said my father, borrowing Cicero's pun on the occasion. (1) "And now we shall go upon velvet. I say, then, that books, taken indiscriminately, are no cure to the diseases and afflictions of the mind. There is a world of science necessary in the taking them. I have known some people in great sorrow fly to a novel, or the last light book in fashion. One might as well take a rose-draught for the plague! Light reading does not do when the heart is really heavy. I am told that Goethe, when he lost his son, took to study a science that was new to him. Ah! Goethe was a physician who knew what he was about. In a great grief like that you cannot tickle and divert the mind, you must wrench it away, abstract, absorb,—bury it in an abyss, hurry it into a labyrinth. Therefore, for the irremediable sorrows of middle life and old age I recommend a strict chronic course of science and hard reasoning,—counter-irritation. Bring the brain to act upon the heart! If science is too much against the grain (for we have not all got mathematical heads), something in the reach of the humblest understanding, but sufficiently searching to the highest,—a new language, Greek, Arabic, Scandinavian, Chinese, or Welsh! For the loss of fortune, the dose should be applied less directly to the understanding,—I would administer something elegant and cordial. For as the heart is crushed and lacerated by a loss in the affections, so it is rather the head that aches and suffers by the loss of money. Here we find the higher class of poets a very valuable remedy. For observe that poets of the grander and more comprehensive kind of genius have in them two separate men, quite distinct from each other, —the imaginative man, and the practical, circumstantial man; and it is the happy mixture of these that suits diseases of the mind, half imaginative and half practical. There is Homer, now lost with the gods, now at home with the homeliest, the very 'poet of circumstance,' as Gray has finely called him; and yet with imagination enough to seduce and coax the dullest into forgetting, for a while, that little spot on his desk which his banker's book can cover. There is Virgil, far below him, indeed,—`Virgil the wise, Whose verse walks highest, but not flies,' as Cowley expresses it. But Virgil still has genius enough to be two men,—to lead you into the fields, not only to listen to the pastoral reed and to hear the bees hum, but to note how you can make the most of the glebe and the vineyard. There is Horace, charming man of the world, who will condole with you feelingly on the loss of your fortune, and by no means undervalue the good things of this life, but who will yet show you that a man may be happy with a vile modicum or parva rura. There is Shakspeare, who, above all poets, is the mysterious dual of hard sense and empyreal fancy,—and a great many more, whom I need not name, but who, if you take to them gently and quietly, will not, like your mere philosopher, your unreasonable Stoic, tell you that you have lost nothing, but who will insensibly steal you out of this world, with its losses and crosses, and slip you into another world before you know where you are!—a world where you are just as welcome, though you carry no more earth of your lost acres with you than covers the sole of your shoe. Then, for hypochondria and satiety, what is better than a brisk alterative course of travels,—especially early, out-of-the-way, marvellous, legendary travels! How they freshen up the spirits! How they take you out of the humdrum yawning state you are in. See, with Herodotus, young Greece spring up into life, or note with him how already the wondrous old Orient world is crumbling into giant decay; or go with Carpini and Rubruquis to Tartary, meet 'the carts of Zagathai laden with houses, and think that a great city is travelling towards you.' (2) 'Gaze on that vast wild empire of the Tartar, where the descendants of Jenghis 'multiply and disperse over the immense waste desert, which is as boundless as the ocean.' Sail with the early Northern discoverers, and penetrate to the heart of winter, among sea- serpents and bears and tusked morses with the faces of men. Then, what think you of Columbus, and the stern soul of Cortes, and the kingdom of Mexico, and the strange gold city of the Peruvians, with that audacious brute Pizarro; and the Polynesians, just for all the world like the Ancient Britons; and the American Indians and the South-sea Islanders? How petulant and young and adventurous and frisky your hypochondriac must get upon a regimen like that! Then, for that vice of the mind which I call sectarianism,—not in the religious sense of the word, but little, narrow prejudices, that make you hate your next-door neighbor because he has his eggs roasted when you have yours boiled; and gossipping and prying into people's affairs, and backbiting, and thinking heaven and earth are coming together if some broom touch a cobweb that you have let grow over the window-sill of your brains what like a large and generous, mildly aperient (I beg your pardon, my dear) course of history! How it clears away all the fumes of the head,— better than the hellebore with which the old leeches of the Middle Ages

purged the cerebellum! There, amidst all that great whirl and sturmbad (storm-bath), as the Germans say, of kingdoms and empires, and races and ages, how your mind enlarges beyond that little feverish animosity to John Styles, or that unfortunate prepossession of yours that all the world is interested in your grievances against Tom Stokes and his wife!

"I can only touch, you see, on a few ingredients in this magnificent pharmacy; its resources are boundless, but require the nicest discretion. I remember to have cured a disconsolate widower, who obstinately refused every other medicament, by a strict course of geology. I dipped him deep into gneiss and mica schist. Amidst the first strata I suffered the watery action to expend itself upon cooling, crystallized masses; and by the time I had got him into the tertiary period, amongst the transition chalks of Maestricht and the conchiferous marls of Gosau, he was ready for a new wife. Kitty, my dear, it is no laughing matter! I made no less notable a cure of a young scholar at Cambridge who was meant for the church, when he suddenly caught a cold fit of freethinking, with great shiverings, from wading out of his depth in Spinoza. None of the divines, whom I first tried, did him the least good in that state; so I turned over a new leaf, and doctored him gently upon the chapters of faith in Abraham Tucker's book (you should read it, Sisty); then I threw in strong doses of Fichte; after that I put him on the Scotch inetaphy sicians, with plunge-baths into certain German transcendentalists; and having convinced him that faith is not an unphilosophical state of mind, and that he might believe without compromising his understanding,—for he was mightily conceited on that score,—I threw in my divines, which he was now fit to digest; and his theological constitution, since then, has become so robust that he has eaten up two livings and a deanery! In fact, I have a plan for a library that, instead of heading its compartments, 'Philology, Natural Science, Poetry,' etc., one shall head them according to the diseases for which they are severally good, bodily and mental,—up from a dire calamity or the pangs of the gout, down to a fit of the spleen or a slight catarrh; for which last your light reading comes in with a whey- posset and barley-water. But," continued my father, more gravely, "when some one sorrow, that is yet reparable, gets hold of your mind like a monomania; when you think because Heaven has denied you this or that on which you had set your heart that all your life must be a blank,—oh! then diet yourself well on biography, the biography of good and great men. See how little a space one sorrow really makes in life. See scarce a page, perhaps, given to some grief similar to your own; and how triumphantly the life sails on beyond it! You thought the wing was broken! Tut, tut, it was but a bruised feather! See what life leaves behind it when all is done!—a summary of positive facts far out of the region of sorrow and suffering, linking themselves with the being of the world. Yes, biography is the medicine here! Roland, you said you would try my prescription,—here it is;" and my father took up a book and reached it to the Captain.

My uncle looked over it,—"Life of the Reverend Robert Hall."

"Brother, he was a Dissenter; and, thank Heaven! I am a Church-and-
State man to the backbone!"

"Robert Hall was a brave man and a true soldier under the Great
Commander," said my father, artfully.

The Captain mechanically carried his forefinger to his forehead in military fashion, and saluted the book respectfully.

"I have another copy for you, Pisistratus,—that is mine which I have lent Roland. This, which I bought for you to-day, you will keep."

"Thank you, sir," said I listlessly, not seeing what great good the "Life of Robert Hall" could do me, or why the same medicine should suit the old weather-beaten uncle and the nephew yet in his teens.

"I have said nothing," resumed my father, slightly bowing his broad temples, "of the Book of books, for that is the lignum vitm, the cardinal medicine for all. These are but the subsidiaries; for as you may remember, my dear Kitty, that I have said before,—we can never keep the system quite right unless we place just in the centre of the great ganglionic system, whence the nerves carry its influence gently and smoothly through the whole frame, The Saffron Bag!"

(1) Cicero's joke on a senator who was the son of a tailor: "Thou hast touched the thing sharply" (or with a needle, acu).

(2) Rubruquis, sect. xii.

CHAPTER VI.

After breakfast the next morning I took my hat to go out. when my father, looking at me, and seeing by my countenance that I had not slept, said gently,—

"My dear Pisistratus, you have not tried my medicine yet."

"What medicine, sir?"

"Robert Hall."

"No, indeed, not yet," said I, smiling.

"Do so, my son, before you go out; depend on it you will enjoy your walk more."

I confess that it was with some reluctance I obeyed. I went back to my own room and sat resolutely down to my task. Are there any of you, my readers, who have not read the "Life of Robert Hall?" If so, in the words of the great Captain Cuttle, "When found, make a note of it." Never mind what your theological opinion is,—Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Baptist, Paedobaptist, Independent, Quaker, Unitarian, Philosopher, Freethinker,—send for Robert Hall! Yea, if there exists yet on earth descendants of the arch-heretics which made such a noise in their day,—men who believe, with Saturninus, that the world was made by seven angels; or with Basilides, that there are as many heavens as there are days in the year; or with the Nicolaitanes, that men ought to have their wives in common (plenty of that sect still, especially in the Red Republic); or with their successors, the Gnostics, who believed in Jaldaboath; or with the Carpacratians, that the world was made by the devil; or with the Cerinthians and Ebionites and Nazarites (which last discovered that the name of Noah's wife was Ouria, and that she set the ark on fire); or with the Valentinians, who taught that there were thirty AEones, ages or worlds, born out of Profundity (Bathos), male, and Silence, female; or with the Marcites, Colarbasii, and Heracleonites (who still kept up that bother about AEones, Mr. Profundity and Mrs. Silence); or with the Ophites, who are said to have worshipped the serpent; or the Cainites, who ingeniously found out a reason for honoring Judas, because he foresaw what good would come to men by betraying our Saviour; or with the Sethites, who made Seth a part of the divine substance; or with the Archonticks, Ascothyctae, Cerdonians, Marcionites, the disciples of Apelles, and Severus (the last was a teetotaller, and said wine was begot by Satan!), or of Tatian, who thought all the descendants of Adam were irretrievably damned except themselves (some of those Tatiani are certainly extant!), or the Cataphrygians, who were also called Tascodragitae, because they thrust their forefingers up their nostrils to show their devotion; or the Pepuzians, Quintilians, and Artotyrites; or—But no matter. If I go through all the follies of men in search of the truth, I shall never get to the end of my chapter or back to Robert Hall; whatever, then, thou art, orthodox or heterodox, send for the "Life of Robert Hall." It is the life of a man that it does good to manhood itself to contemplate.

I had finished the biography, which is not long, and was musing over it, when I heard the Captain's cork-leg upon the stairs. I opened the door for him, and he entered, book in hand, as I also, book in hand, stood ready to receive him.

"Well, sir," said Roland, seating himself, "has the prescription done you any good?"

"Yes, uncle,—great."

And me too. By Jupiter, Sisty, that same Hall was a fine fellow! I wonder if the medicine has gone through the same channels in both? Tell me, first, how it has affected you."

"Imprimis, then, my dear uncle, I fancy that a book like this must do good to all who live in the world in the ordinary manner, by admitting us into a circle of life of which I suspect we think but little. Here is a man connecting himself directly with a heavenly purpose, and cultivating considerable faculties to that one end; seeking to accomplish his soul as far as he can, that he may do most good on earth, and take a higher existence up to heaven; a man intent upon a sublime and spiritual duty: in short, living as it were in it, and so filled with the consciousness of immortality, and so strong in the link between God and man, that, without any affected stoicism, without being insensible to pain,—rather, perhaps, from a nervous temperament, acutely feeling it,—he yet has a happiness wholly independent of it. It is impossible not to be thrilled with an admiration that elevates while it awes you, in reading that solemn 'Dedication of himself to God.' This offering of 'soul and body, time, health, reputation, talents,' to the divine and invisible Principle of Good, calls us suddenly to contemplate the selfishness of our own views and hopes, and awakens us from the egotism that exacts all and resigns nothing.

"But this book has mostly struck upon the chord in my own heart in that characteristic which my

father indicated as belonging to all biography. Here is a life of remarkable fulness, great study, great thought, and great action; and yet," said I, coloring, "how small a place those feelings which have tyrannized over me and made all else seem blank and void, hold in that life! It is not as if the man were a cold and hard ascetic it is easy to see in him, not only remarkable tenderness and warm affections, but strong self-will, and the passion of all vigorous natures. Yes; I understand better now what existence in a true man should be."

"All that is very well said," quoth the Captain, "but it did not strike me. What I have seen in this book is courage. Here is a poor creature rolling on the carpet with agony; from childhood to death tortured by a mysterious incurable malady,—a malady that is described as 'an internal apparatus of torture;' and who does, by his heroism, more than bear it, —he puts it out of power to affect him; and though (here is the passage) 'his appointment by day and by night was incessant pain, yet high enjoyment was, notwithstanding, the law of his existence.' Robert Hall reads me a lesson,—me, an old soldier, who thought myself above taking lessons,—in courage, at least. And as I came to that passage when, in the sharp paroxysms before death, he says, 'I have not complained, have I, sir? And I won't complain!'—when I came to that passage I started up and cried, 'Roland de Caxton, thou hast been a coward! and an thou hadst had thy deserts, thou hadst been cashiered, broken, and drummed out of the regiment long ago!'"

"After all, then, my father was not so wrong,—he placed his guns right, and fired a good shot."

"He must have been from six to nine degrees above the crest of the parapet," said my uncle, thoughtfully,—"which, I take it, is the best elevation, both for shot and shells in enfilading a work."

"What say you then, Captain,—up with our knapsacks, and on with the march?"

"Right about—face!" cried my uncle, as erect as a column.

"No looking back, if we can help it."

"Full in the front of the enemy. 'Up, Guards, and at 'em!'"

"'England expects every man to do his duty!'"

"Cypress or laurel!" cried my uncle, waving the book over his head.

CHAPTER VII.

I went out, and to see Francis Vivian; for on leaving Mr. Trevanion I was not without anxiety for my new friend's future provision. But Vivian was from home, and I strolled from his lodgings into the suburbs on the other side of the river, and began to meditate seriously on the best course now to pursue. In quitting my present occupations I resigned prospects far more brilliant and fortunes far more rapid than I could ever hope to realize in any other entrance into life. But I felt the necessity, if I desired to keep steadfast to that more healthful frame of mind I had obtained, of some manly and continuous labor, some earnest employment. My thoughts flew back to the university; and the quiet of its cloisters—which, until I had been blinded by the glare of the London world, and grief had somewhat dulled the edge of my quick desires and hopes, had seemed to me cheerless and unfaltering—took an inviting aspect. It presented what I needed most,—a new scene, a new arena, a partial return into boyhood; repose for passions prematurely raised; activity for the reasoning powers in fresh directions. I had not lost my time in London: I had kept up, if not studies purely classical, at least the habits of application; I had sharpened my general comprehension and augmented my resources. Accordingly, when I returned home, I resolved to speak to my father. But I found he had forestalled me; and on entering, my mother drew me upstairs into, her room, with a smile kindled by my smile, and told me that she and her Austin had been thinking that it was best that I should leave London as soon as possible; that my father found he could now dispense with the library of the Museum for some months; that the time for which they had taken their lodgings would be up in a few days: that the summer was far advanced, town odious, the country beautiful,—in a word, we were to go home. There I could prepare myself for Cambridge till the long vacation was over; and, my mother added hesitatingly, and with a prefatory caution to spare my health, that my father, whose income could ill afford the requisite allowance to me, counted on my soon lightening his burden by getting a scholarship. I felt how much provident kindness there was in all this,—even in that hint of a scholarship, which was meant to rouse my faculties and spur me, by affectionate incentives, to a new ambition. I was not less delighted than

grateful.

"But poor Roland," said I, "and little Blanche,—will they come with us?"

"I fear not," said my mother; "for Roland is anxious to get back to his tower, and in a day or two he will be well enough to move."

"Do you not think, my dear mother, that, somehow or other, this lost son of his had something to do with Roland's illness,—that the illness was as much mental as physical?"

"I have no doubt of it, Sisty. What a sad, bad heart that young man must have!"

"My uncle seems to have abandoned all hope of finding him in London; otherwise, ill as he has been, I am sure we could not have kept him at home. So he goes back to the old tower. Poor man, he must be dull enough there! We must contrive to pay him a visit. Does Blanche ever speak of her brother?"

"No; for it seems they were not brought up much together,—at all events, she does not remember him. How lovely she is! Her mother must surely have been very handsome."

"She is a pretty child, certainly, though in a strange style of beauty, —such immense eyes!—and affectionate, and loves Roland as she ought."

And here the conversation dropped.

Our plans being thus decided, it was necessary that I should lose no time in seeing Vivian and making some arrangement for the future. His manner had lost so much of its abruptness that I thought I could venture to recommend him personally to Trevanion; and I knew, after what had passed, that Trevanion would make a point to oblige me. I resolved to consult my father about it. As yet I had either never found or never made the opportunity to talk to my father on the subject, he had been so occupied; and if he had proposed to see my new friend, what answer could I have made, in the teeth of Vivian's cynic objections? However, as we were now going away, that last consideration ceased to be of importance; and, for the first, the student had not yet entirely settled back to his books. I therefore watched the time when my father walked down to the Museum, and, slipping my arm in his, I told him, briefly and rapidly, as we went along, how I had formed this strange acquaintance, and how I was now situated. The story did not interest my father quite so much as I expected, and he did not understand all the complexities of Vivian's character,—how could he?—for he answered briefly, "I should think that, for a young man apparently without a sixpence, and whose education seems so imperfect, any resource in Trevanion must be most temporary and uncertain. Speak to your Uncle Jack: he can find him some place, I have no doubt,—perhaps a readership in a printer's office, or a reporter's place on some journal, if he is fit for it. But if you want to steady him, let it be something regular."

Therewith my father dismissed the matter and vanished through the gates of the Museum. Readership to a printer, reportership on a journal, for a young gentleman with the high notions and arrogant vanity of Francis Vivian,—his ambition already soaring far beyond kid gloves and a cabriolet! The idea was hopeless; and, perplexed and doubtful, I took my way to Vivian's lodgings. I found him at home and unemployed, standing by his window with folded arms, and in a state of such revery that he was not aware of my entrance till I had touched him on the shoulder.

"Ha!" said he then, with one of his short, quick, impatient sighs, "I thought you had given me up and forgotten me; but you look pale and harassed. I could almost think you had grown thinner within the last few days."

"Oh! never mind me, Vivian; I have come to speak of yourself. I have left Trevanion; it is settled that I should go to the University, and we all quit town in a few days."

"In a few days!—all! Who are 'all'?"

"My family,—father, mother, uncle, cousin, and myself. But, my dear fellow, now let us think seriously what is best to be done for you. I can present you to Trevanion."

"Ha!"

"But Trevanion is a hard, though an excellent man, and, moreover, as he is always changing the subjects that engross him, in a month or so he may have nothing to give you. You said you would work, —will you consent not to complain if the work cannot be done in kid gloves? Young men who have—risen high in the world have begun, it is well known, as reporters to the press. It is a situation of respectability, and in request, and not easy to obtain, I fancy; but still—"

Vivian interrupted me hastily.

"Thank you a thousand times! But what you say confirms a resolution I had taken before you came. I shall make it up with my family and return home."

"Oh, I am so really glad. How wise in you!"

Vivian turned away his head abruptly.

"Your pictures of family life and domestic peace, you see," he said, "seduced me more than you thought. When do you leave town?"

"Why, I believe, early next week."

"So soon," said Vivian, thoughtfully. "Well, perhaps I may ask you yet to introduce me to Mr. Trevanion; for who knows?—my family and I may fall out again. But I will consider. I think I have heard you say that this Trevanion is a very old friend of your father's or uncle's?"

"He, or rather Lady Ellinor, is an old friend of both."

"And therefore would listen to your recommendations of me. But perhaps I may not need them. So you have left—left of your own accord—a situation that seemed more enjoyable, I should think, than rooms in a college. Left, why did you leave?"

And Vivian fixed his bright eyes full and piercingly on mine.

"It was only for a time, for a trial, that I was there," said I, evasively; "out at nurse, as it were, till the Alma Mater opened her arms,—alma indeed she ought to be to my father's son."

Vivian looked unsatisfied with my explanation, but did not question me further. He himself was the first to turn the conversation, and he did this with more affectionate cordiality than was common to him. He inquired into our general plans, into the probabilities of our return to town, and drew from me a description of our rural Tusculum. He was quiet and subdued; and once or twice I thought there was a moisture in those luminous eyes. We parted with more of the unreserve and fondness of youthful friendship—at least on my part, and seemingly on his—than had yet endeared our singular intimacy; for the cement of cordial attachment had been wanting to an intercourse in which one party refused all confidence, and the other mingled distrust and fear with keen interest and compassionate admiration.

That evening, before lights were brought in, my father, turning to me, abruptly asked if I had seen my friend, and what he was about to do.

"He thinks of returning to his family," said I.

Roland, who had seemed dozing, winced uneasily.

"Who returns to his family?" asked the Captain.

"Why, you must know," said my father, "that Sisty has fished up a friend of whom he can give no account that would satisfy a policeman, and whose fortunes he thinks himself under the necessity of protecting. You are very lucky that he has not picked your pockets, Sisty; but I dare say he has. What's his name?"

"Vivian," said I,—"Francis Vivian."

"A good name and a Cornish," said my father. "Some derive it from the Romans,—Vivianus; others from a Celtic word which means—"

"Vivian!" interrupted Roland. "Vivian!—I wonder if it be the son of Colonel Vivian."

"He is certainly a gentleman's son," said I; "but he never told me what his family and connections were."

"Vivian," repeated my uncle,—"poor Colonel Vivian! So the young man is going to his father. I have no doubt it is the same. Ah!—"

"What do you know of Colonel Vivian or his son?" said I. "Pray, tell me; I am so interested in this young man."

"I know nothing of either, except by gossip," said my uncle, moodily. "I did hear that Colonel Vivian, an excellent officer and honorable man, had been in—in—" (Roland's voice faltered) "in great grief about his son, whom, a mere boy, he had prevented from some improper marriage, and who had run

away and left him,—it was supposed for America. The story affected me at the time," added my uncle, trying to speak calmly.

We were all silent, for we felt why Roland was so disturbed, and why Colonel Vivian's grief should have touched him home. Similarity in affliction makes us brothers even to the unknown.

"You say he is going home to his family,—I am heartily glad of it!" said the envying old soldier, gallantly.

The lights came in then, and two minutes after, Uncle Roland and I were nestled close to each other, side by side; and I was reading over his shoulder, and his finger was silently resting on that passage that had so struck him: "I have not complained, have I, sir? And I won't complain!"

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