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VOLUME V.

CHAPTER LVIII.

Mangez-vous bien, Monsieur?
Oui, et bois encore mieux.
—Mons. de Porceaugnac.

My pamphlet took prodigiously. The authorship was attributed to the most talented member of the Opposition; and though there were many errors in style, and (I now think) many sophisms in the reasoning, yet it carried the end proposed by all ambition of whatever species—and imposed upon the taste of the public.

Sometime afterwards, I was going down the stairs at Almack's, when I heard an altercation, high and grave, at the door of reception. To my surprise, I found Lord Guloseton and a very young man in great wrath; the latter had never been to Almack's before, and had forgotten his ticket. Guloseton, who belonged to a very different set to that of the Almackians, insisted that his word was enough to bear his juvenile companion through. The ticket inspector was irate and obdurate, and having seldom or ever seen Lord Guloseton himself, paid very little respect to his authority.

As I was wrapping myself in my cloak, Guloseton turned to me, for passion makes men open their hearts: too eager for an opportunity of acquiring the epicure's acquaintance, I offered to get his friend admittance in an instant; the offer was delightedly accepted, and I soon procured a small piece of pencilled paper from Lady—, which effectually silenced the Charon, and opened the Stygian via to the Elysium beyond.

Guloseton overwhelmed me with his thanks. I remounted the stairs with him—took every opportunity of ingratiating myself—received an invitation to dinner on the following day, and left Willis's transported at the goodness of my fortune.

At the hour of eight on the ensuing evening, I had just made my entrance into Lord Guloseton's drawing-room. It was a small apartment furnished with great luxury and some taste. A Venus of Titian's was placed over the chimney-piece, in all the gorgeous voluptuousness of her unveiled beauty— the pouting lip, not silent though shut—the eloquent lid drooping over the eye, whose reveille you could so easily imagine—the arms—the limbs— the attitude, so composed, yet so redolent of life—all seemed to indicate that sleep was not forgetfulness, and that the dreams of the goddess were not wholly inharmonious with the waking realities in which it was her gentle prerogative to indulge. On either side, was a picture of the delicate and golden hues of Claude; these were the only landscapes in the room; the remaining pictures were more suitable to the Venus of the luxurious Italian. Here was one of the beauties of Sir Peter Lely; there was an admirable copy of the Hero and Leander. On the table lay the Basia of Johannes Secundus, and a few French works on Gastronomy.

As for the genius loci—you must imagine a middle-sized, middle-aged man, with an air rather of delicate than florid health. But little of the effects of his good cheer were apparent in the external man. His cheeks were neither swollen nor inflated—his person, though not thin, was of no unwieldy obesity—the tip of his nasal organ was, it is true, of a more ruby tinge than the rest, and one carbuncle, of tender age and gentle dyes, diffused its mellow and moonlight influence over the physiognomical scenery—his forehead was high and bald, and the few locks which still rose above it, were carefully and gracefully curled à l'antique: Beneath a pair of grey shaggy brows, (which their noble owner had a strange habit of raising and depressing, according to the nature of his remarks,) rolled two very small, piercing, arch, restless orbs, of a tender green; and the mouth, which was wide and thick-lipped, was expressive of great sensuality, and curved upwards in a perpetual smile.

Such was Lord Guloseton. To my surprise no other guest but myself appeared.

"A new friend," said he, as we descended into the dining-room, "is like a new dish—one must have him all to oneself, thoroughly to enjoy and rightly to understand him."

"A noble precept," said I, with enthusiasm. "Of all vices, indiscriminate hospitality is the most pernicious. It allows us neither conversation nor dinner, and realizing the mythological fable of Tantalus, gives us starvation in the midst of plenty."

"You are right," said Guloseton, solemnly; "I never ask above six persons to dinner, and I never dine out; for a bad dinner, Mr. Pelham, a bad dinner is a most serious—I may add, the most serious calamity."

"Yes," I replied, "for it carries with it no consolation: a buried friend may be replaced—a lost mistress renewed—a slandered character be recovered—even a broken constitution restored; but a dinner, once lost, is irremediable; that day is for ever departed; an appetite once thrown away can never, till the cruel prolixity of the gastric agents is over, be regained. 'Il y a tant de maitresses, (says the admirable Corneille), 'il n'y a qu'un diner.'"

"You speak like an oracle—like the Cook's Oracle, Mr. Pelham: may I send you some soup, it is a la Carmelite? But what are you about to do with that case?"

"It contains" (said I) "my spoon, my knife, and my fork. Nature afflicted me with a propensity, which through these machines I have endeavoured to remedy by art. I eat with too great a rapidity. It is a most unhappy failing, for one often hurries over in one minute, what ought to have afforded the fullest delight for the period of five. It is, indeed, a vice which deadens enjoyment, as well as abbreviates it; it is a shameful waste of the gifts, and a melancholy perversion of the bounty of Providence: my conscience tormented me; but the habit, fatally indulged in early childhood, was not easy to overcome. At last I resolved to construct a spoon of peculiarly shallow dimensions, a fork so small, that it could only raise a certain portion to my mouth, and a knife rendered blunt and jagged, so that it required a proper and just time to carve the goods 'the gods provide me.' My lord, 'the lovely Thais sits beside me' in the form of a bottle of Madeira. Suffer me to take wine with you?"

"With pleasure, my good friend; let us drink to the memory of the Carmelites, to whom we are indebted for this inimitable soup."

"Yes!" I cried. "Let us for once shake off the prejudices of sectarian faith, and do justice to one order of those incomparable men, who, retiring from the cares of an idle and sinful world, gave themselves with undivided zeal and attention to the theory and practice of the profound science of gastronomy. It is reserved for us, my lord, to pay a grateful tribute of memory to those exalted recluses, who, through a long period of barbarism and darkness, preserved, in the solitude of their cloisters, whatever of Roman luxury and classic dainties have come down to this later age. We will drink to the Carmelites at a sect, but we will drink also to the monks as a body. Had we lived in those days, we had been monks ourselves."

"It is singular," answered Lord Guloseton—"(by the by, what think you of this turbot?)—to trace the history of the kitchen; it affords the greatest scope to the philosopher and the moralist. The ancients seemed to have been more mental, more imaginative, than we are in their dishes; they fed their bodies as well as their minds upon delusion: for instance, they esteemed beyond all price the tongues of nightingales, because they tasted the very music of the birds in the organs of their utterance. That is what I call the poetry of gastronomy!"

"Yes," said I, with a sigh, "they certainly had, in some respects, the advantage over us. Who can pore over the suppers of Apicius without the fondest regret? The venerable Ude [Note: Q.—The venerable Bede— Printer's Devil.] implies, that the study has not progressed. 'Cookery (he says, in the first part of his work) possesses but few innovators.'"

"It is with the greatest diffidence," said Guloseton, (his mouth full of truth and turbot,) "that we may dare to differ from so great an authority. Indeed, so high is my veneration for that wise man, that if all the evidence of my sense and reason were on one side, and the dictum of the great Ude upon the other, I should be inclined—I think, I should be determined—to relinquish the former, and adopt the latter." [Note: See the speech of Mr. Brougham in honour of Mr. Fox.]

"Bravo, my lord," cried I, warmly. "'Qu'un Cuisinier est un mortel divin!' Why should we not be proud of our knowledge in cookery? It is the soul of festivity at all times, and to all ages. How many marriages have been the consequence of meeting at dinner? How much good fortune has been the result of a good supper? At what moment of our existence are we happier than at table? There hatred and animosity are lulled to sleep, and pleasure alone reigns. Here the cook, by his skill and attention, anticipates our wishes in the happiest selection of the best dishes and decorations. Here our wants are satisfied, our minds and bodies invigorated, and ourselves qualified for the high delights of love, music, poetry, dancing, and other pleasures; and is he, whose talents have produced these happy effects, to rank no higher in the scale of man than a common servant? [Note: Ude, verbatim.]

"Yes," cries the venerable professor himself, in a virtuous and prophetic paroxysm of indignant merit—"yes, my disciples, if you adopt, and attend to the rules I have laid down, the self-love of mankind will consent at last, that cookery shall rank in the class of the sciences, and its professors deserve the name of artists!" [Note: Ibid.]

"My dear, dear Sir," exclaimed Guloseton, with a kindred glow, "I discover in you a spirit similar to my own. Let us drink long life to the venerable Ude!"

"I pledge you, with all my soul," said I, filling my glass to the brim.

"What a pity," rejoined Guloseton, "that Ude, whose practical science was so perfect, should ever have written, or suffered others to write, the work published under his name; true it is that the opening part which you have so feelingly recited, is composed with a grace, a charm beyond the reach of art; but the instructions are vapid, and frequently so erroneous, as to make me suspect their authenticity; but, after all, cooking is not capable of becoming a written science—it is the philosophy of practice!"

"Ah! by Lucullus," exclaimed I, interrupting my host, "what a visionary bechamelle! Oh, the inimitable sauce; these chickens are indeed worthy of the honour of being dressed. Never, my lord, as long as you live, eat a chicken in the country; excuse a pun, you will have foul fare."

"J'ai toujours redoute la volaille perfide,
Qui brave les efforts d'une dent intrepide;
Souvent par un ami, dans ses champs entraine.
J'ai reconnu le soir le coq infortune
Qui m'avait le matin a l'aurore naissante
Reveille brusquement de sa voix glapissante;
Je l'avais admire dans le sein de la cour,
Avec des yeux jaloux, j'avais vu son amour.
Helas! la malheureux, abjurant sa tendresse,
Exercait a souper sa fureur vengeresse.'

"Pardon the prolixity of my quotation for the sake of its value."

"I do, I do," answered Guloseton, laughing at the humour of the lines: till, suddenly checking himself, he said, "we must be grave, Mr. Pelham, it will never do to laugh. What would become of our digestions?"

"True," said I, relapsing into seriousness; "and if you will allow me one more quotation, you will see what my author adds with regard to any abrupt interruption."

"Defendez que personne au milieu d'un banquet,
Ne vous vienne donner un avis indiscret,
Ecartez ce facheux qui vers vous s'achemine,
Rien ne doit deranger l'honnete homme qui dine."

"Admirable advice," said Guloseton, toying with a filet mignon de poulet. "Do you remember an example in the Bailly of Suffren, who, being in India, was waited upon by a deputation of natives while he was at dinner. 'Tell them,' said he, 'that the Christian religion peremptorily forbids every Christian, while at table, to occupy himself with any earthly subject, except the function of eating.' The deputation retired in the profoundest respect at the exceeding devotion of the French general."

"Well," said I, after we had chuckled gravely and quietly, with the care of our digestion before us, for a few minutes—"well, however good the invention was, the idea is not entirely new, for the Greeks esteemed eating and drinking plentifully, a sort of offering to the gods; and Aristotle explains the very word, THoinai, or feasts, by an etymological exposition, 'that it was thought a duty to the gods to be drunk;' no bad idea of our classical patterns of antiquity. Polypheme, too, in the Cyclops of Euripides, no doubt a very sound theologian, says, his stomach is his only deity; and Xenophon tells us, that as the Athenians exceeded all other people in the number of their gods, so they exceeded them also in the number of their feasts. May I send your lordship an ortolan?"

"Pelham, my boy," said Guloseton, whose eyes began to roll and twinkle with a brilliancy suited to the various liquids which ministered to their rejoicing orbs; "I love you for your classics. Polypheme was a wise fellow, a very wise fellow, and it was a terrible shame in Ulysses to put out his eye. No wonder that the ingenious savage made a deity of his stomach; to what known and visible source, on this earth, was he indebted for a keener enjoyment—a more rapturous and a more constant delight? No wonder he honoured it with his gratitude, and supplied it with his peace-offerings;—let us imitate so great an example:—let us make our digestive receptacles a temple, to which we will consecrate the choicest goods we possess;—let us conceive no pecuniary sacrifice too great, which procures for our altar an acceptable gift;—let us deem it an impiety to hesitate, if a sauce seems extravagant, or an ortolan too dear; and let our last act in this sublunary existence, be a solemn festival in honour of our unceasing benefactor."

"Amen to your creed," said I: "edibulatory Epicurism holds the key to all morality: for do we not see now how sinful it is to yield to an obscene and exaggerated intemperance?—would it not be to the last degree ungrateful to the great source of our enjoyment, to overload it with a weight which would oppress it with languor, or harass it with pain; and finally to drench away the effects of our impiety with some nauseous potation which revolts it, tortures it, convulses, irritates, enfeebles it, through every particle of its system? How wrong in us to give way to anger, jealousy, revenge, or any evil passion; for does not all that affects the mind operate also upon the stomach; and how can we be so vicious, so obdurate, as to forget, for a momentary indulgence, our debt to what you have so justly designated our perpetual benefactor?"

"Right," said Lord Guloseton, "a bumper to the morality of the stomach."

The desert was now on the table. "I have dined well," said Guloseton, stretching his legs with an air of supreme satisfaction; "but—" and here my philosopher sighed deeply—"we cannot dine again till tomorrow! Happy, happy, happy common people, who can eat supper! Would to Heaven, that I might have one boon—perpetual appetite—a digestive Houri, which renewed its virginity every time it was touched. Alas! for the instability of human enjoyment. But now that we have no immediate hope to anticipate, let us cultivate the pleasures of memory. What thought you of the veau a la Dauphine?"

"Pardon me if I hesitate at giving my opinion, till I have corrected my judgment by yours."

"Why, then, I own I was somewhat displeased—disappointed as it were— with that dish; the fact is, veal ought to be killed in its very first infancy; they suffer it to grow to too great an age. It becomes a sort of hobbydehoy, and possesses nothing of veal, but its insipidity, or of beef, but its toughness."

"Yes," said I, "it is only in their veal, that the French surpass us; their other meats want the ruby juices and elastic freshness of ours. Monsieur L—allowed this truth, with a candour worthy of his vast mind. Mon Dieu! what claret!—what a body! and, let me add, what a soul, beneath it! Who would drink wine like this? it is only made to taste. It is like first love—too pure for the eagerness of enjoyment; the rapture it inspires is in a touch, a kiss. It is a pity, my lord, that we do not serve perfumes at dessert: it is their appropriate place. In confectionary (delicate invention of the Sylphs,) we imitate the forms of the rose and the jessamine; why not their odours too? What is nature without its scents?—and as long as they are absent from our desserts, it is in vain that the Bard exclaims, that—

"L'observateur de la belle Nature,

S'extasie en voyant des fleurs en confiture."

"It is an exquisite idea of yours," said Guloseton—"and the next time you dine here, we will have perfumes. Dinner ought to be a reunion of all the senses—

"Gladness to the ear, nerve, heart, and sense."

There was a momentary pause. "My lord," said I, "what a lusty lusciousness in this pear! it is like the style of the old English poets. What think you of the seeming good understanding between Mr. Gaskell and the Whigs?"

"I trouble myself little about it," replied Guloseton, helping himself to some preserves—"politics disturb the digestion."

"Well," thought I, "I must ascertain some point in this man's character easier to handle than his epicurism: all men are vain: let us find out the peculiar vanity of mine host."

"The Tories," said I, "seem to think themselves exceedingly secure; they attach no importance to the neutral members; it was but the other day, Lord—told me that he did not care a straw for Mr.—, notwithstanding he possessed four votes. Heard you ever such arrogance?"

"No, indeed," said Golouston, with a lazy air of indifference—"are you a favourer of the olive?"

"No," said I, "I love it not; it hath an under taste of sourness, and an upper of oil, which do not make harmony to my palate. But, as I was saying, the Whigs, on the contrary, pay the utmost deference to their partizans; and a man of fortune, rank, and parliamentary influence, might have all the power without the trouble of a leader."

"Very likely," said Guloseton, drowsily.

"I must change my battery," thought I; but while I was meditating a new attack, the following note was brought me:—

"For God's sake, Pelham, come out to me: I am waiting in the street to see you; come directly, or it will be too late to render me the service I would ask of you.

"R. Glanville."

I rose instantly. "You must excuse me, Lord Guloseton, I am called suddenly away."

"Ha! ha!" laughed the gourmand; "some tempting viand—post prandia Callirhoe."

"My good lord," said I, not heeding his insinuation—"I leave you with the greatest regret."

"And I part from you with the same; it is a real pleasure to see such a person at dinner."

"Adieu! my host—'Je vais vivre et manger en sage.'"

CHAPTER LIX.

I do defy him, and I spit at him,
Call him a slanderous coward and a villain—
Which to maintain I will allow him odds.
—Shakspeare.

I found Glanville walking before the door with a rapid and uneven step.

"Thank Heaven!" he said, when he saw me—"I have been twice to Mivart's to find you. The second time, I saw your servant, who told me where you were gone. I knew you well enough to be sure of your kindness."

Glanville broke off abruptly: and after a short pause, said, with a quick, low, hurried tone—"The office I wish you to take upon yourself is this:—go immediately to Sir John Tyrrell, with a challenge from me. Ever since I last saw you, I have been hunting out that man, and in vain. He had then left town. He

returned this evening, and quits it to-morrow: you have no time to lose."

"My dear Glanville," said I, "I have no wish to learn any secret you would conceal from me; but forgive me if I ask for some further instructions than those you have afforded me. Upon what plea am I to call out Sir John Tyrrell? and what answer am I to give to any excuses he may create?"

"I have anticipated your reply," said Glanville, with ill-subdued impatience; "you have only to give this paper: it will prevent all discussion. Read it if you will; I have left it unsealed for that purpose."

I cast my eyes over the lines Glanville thrust into my hand; they ran thus:—

"The time has at length come for me to demand the atonement so long delayed. The bearer of this, who is, probably, known to you, will arrange with any person you may appoint, the hour and place of our meeting. He is unacquainted with the grounds of my complaint against you, but he is satisfied of my honour: your second will, I presume, be the same with respect to yours. It is for me only to question the latter, and to declare you solemnly to be void alike of principle and courage, a villain, and a poltroon.

"Reginald Glanville."

"You are my earliest friend," said I, when I had read this soothing epistle; "and I will not flinch from the place you assign me: but I tell you fairly and frankly, that I would sooner cut off my right hand than suffer it to give this note to Sir John Tyrrell."

Glanville made no answer; we walked on till he stopped suddenly, and said, "My carriage is at the corner of the street; you must go instantly; Tyrrell lodges at the Clarendon; you will find me at home on your return."

I pressed his hand, and hurried on my mission. It was, I own, one peculiarly unwelcome and displeasing. In the first place, I did not love to be made a party in a business of the nature of which I was so profoundly ignorant. Besides, Glanville was more dear to me than any one, judging only of my external character, would suppose; and constitutionally indifferent as I am to danger for myself, I trembled like a woman at the peril I was instrumental in bringing upon him. But what weighed upon me far more than either of these reflections, was the recollection of Ellen. Should her brother fall in an engagement in which I was his supposed adviser, with what success could I hope for those feelings from her, which, at present, constituted the tenderest and the brightest of my hopes? In the midst of these disagreeable ideas the carriage stopped at the door of Tyrrel's Hotel.

The waiter said Sir John was in the coffee-room; thither I immediately marched. Seated in the box nearest the fire sat Tyrrell, and two men, of that old-fashioned roue set, whose members indulged in debauchery, as if it were an attribute of manliness, and esteemed it, as long as it were hearty and English, rather a virtue to boast of, than a vice to disown. Tyrrel nodded to me familiarly as I approached him; and I saw, by the half-emptied bottles before him, and the flush of his sallow countenance, that he had not been sparing of his libations. I whispered that I wished to speak to him on a subject of great importance; he rose with much reluctance, and, after swallowing a large tumbler-full of port wine to fortify him for the task, he led the way to a small room, where he seated himself, and asked me, with his usual mixture of bluntness and good-breeding, the nature of my business. I made him no reply: I contented myself with placing Glanville's billet doux in his hand. The room was dimly lighted with a single candle, and the small and capricious fire, near which the gambler was seated, threw its upward light, by starts and intervals, over the strong features and deep lines of his countenance. It would have been a study worthy of Rembrandt.

I drew my chair near him, and half shading my eyes with my hand, sat down in silence to mark the effect the letter would produce. Tyrrel (I imagine) was a man originally of hardy nerves, and had been thrown much in the various situations of life where the disguise of all outward emotion is easily and insensibly taught; but whether his frame had been shattered by his excesses, or that the insulting language of the note touched him to the quick, he seemed perfectly unable to govern his feelings; the lines were written hastily, and the light, as I said before, was faint and imperfect, and he was forced to pause over each word as he proceeded, so that "the iron had full time to enter into his soul."

Passion, however, developed itself differently in him than in Glanville: in the latter, it was a rapid transition of powerful feelings, one angry wave dashing over another; it was the passion of a strong and keenly susceptible mind, to which every sting was a dagger, and which used the force of a giant to dash away the insect which attacked it. In Tyrrell, it was passion acting on a callous mind but a broken frame—his hand trembled violently—his voice faltered—he could scarcely command the muscles which enabled him to speak; but there was no fiery start—no indignant burst—no flashing forth of the soul; in him, it was the body overcoming and paralyzing the mind. In Glanville it was the mind governing and convulsing the body.

"Mr. Pelham," he said at last, after a few preliminary efforts to clear his voice, "this note requires some consideration. I know not at present whom to appoint as my second—will you call upon me early to-morrow?"

"I am sorry," said I, "that my sole instructions were to get an immediate answer from you. Surely either of the gentlemen I saw with you would officiate as your second?"

Tyrrell made no reply for some moments. He was endeavouring to compose himself, and in some measure he succeeded. He raised his head with a haughty air of defiance, and tearing the paper deliberately, though still with uncertain and trembling fingers, he stamped his foot upon the atoms.

"Tell your principal," said he, "that I retort upon him the foul and false words he has uttered against me; that I trample upon his assertions with the same scorn I feel towards himself; and that before this hour to-morrow, I will confront him to death as through life. For the rest, Mr. Pelham, I cannot name my second till the morning; leave me your address, and you shall hear from me before you are stirring. Have you any thing farther with me?"

"Nothing," said I, laying my card on the table, "I have fulfilled the most ungrateful charge ever entrusted to me. I wish you good night."

I re-entered the carriage, and drove to Glanville's. I broke into the room rather abruptly; Glanville was leaning on the table, and gazing intently on a small miniature. A pistol-case lay beside him: one of the pistols in order for use, and the other still unarranged; the room was, as usual, covered with books and papers, and on the costly cushions of the ottoman, lay the large, black dog, which I remembered well as his companion of yore, and which he kept with him constantly, as the only thing in the world whose society he could at all times bear: the animal lay curled up, with its quick, black eye fixed watchfully upon its master, and directly I entered, it uttered, though without moving, a low, warning growl.

Glanville looked up, and in some confusion thrust the picture into a drawer of the table, and asked me my news. I told him word for word what had passed. Glanville set his teeth, and clenched his hand firmly; and then, as if his anger was at once appeased, he suddenly changed the subject and tone of our conversation. He spoke with great cheerfulness and humour, on the various topics of the day; touched upon politics; laughed at Lord Guloseton, and seemed as indifferent and unconscious of the event of the morrow as my peculiar constitution would have rendered myself.

When I rose to depart, for I had too great an interest in him to feel much for the subjects he conversed on, he said, "I shall write one line to my mother, and another to my poor sister; you will deliver them if I fall, for I have sworn that one of us shall not quit the ground alive. I shall be all impatience to know the hour you will arrange with Tyrrell's second. God bless you, and farewell for the present."

CHAPTER LX.

Charge, Chester, charge!
—Marmion.

Though this was one of the first mercantile transactions of my life, I had no doubt about acquitting myself with reputation.
—Vicar of Wakefield.

The next morning I was at breakfast, when a packet was brought me from Tyrrell; it contained a sealed letter to Glanville, and a brief note to myself. The latter I transcribe:—

"My Dear Sir,

"The enclosed letter to Sir Reginald Glanville will explain my reasons for not keeping my pledge: suffice it to state to you, that they are such as wholly to exonerate me, and fairly to satisfy Sir Reginald. It will be useless to call upon me; I leave town before you will receive this. Respect for myself obliges me to add that, although there are circumstances to forbid my meeting Sir Reginald Glanville, there are none to prevent my demanding satisfaction of any one, whoever he may be, who shall deem himself

authorized to call my motives into question,

"I have the honour,

"John Tyrrell."

It was not till I had thrice read this letter that I could credit its contents. From all I had seen of Tyrrell's character, I had no reason to suspect him to be less courageous than the generality of worldly men; and the conclusion of his letter, evidently pointed at myself, should I venture to impugn his conduct, seemed by no means favourable to any suspicion of his cowardice. And yet, when I considered the violent language of Glanville's letter, and Tyrrell's apparent resolution the night before, I scarcely knew to what more honourable motive to attribute his conduct. However, I lost no time in despatching the whole packet to Glanville, with a few lines from myself, saying I should call in an hour.

When I fulfilled this promise, Glanville's servant told me his master had gone out immediately on reading the letters I had sent, and had merely left word that he should not return home the whole day. That night he was to have brought an important motion before the House. A message from him, pleading sudden and alarming illness, devolved this duty upon another member of our party. Lord Dawton was in despair; the motion was lost by a great majority; the papers, the whole of that week, were filled with the most triumphant abuse and ridicule of the Whigs. Never was that unhappy and persecuted party reduced to so low an ebb: never did there seem a fainter probability of their coming into power. They appeared almost annihilated—a mere *nominis umbra*.

On the eighth day from Glanville's disappearance, a sudden event in the cabinet threw the whole country into confusion; the Tories trembled to the very soles of their easy slippers of sinecure and office; the eyes of the public were turned to the Whigs; and chance seemed to effect in an instant that change in their favour, which all their toil, trouble, eloquence, and art, had been unable for so many years to render even a remote probability.

But there was a strong though secret party in the state, which reminded me of the independents in the reign of Charles the First, that, concealed under a general name, worked only for a private end, and made a progress in number and respectability, not the less sure for being but little suspected. Foremost among the leaders of this party was Lord Vincent. Dawton, who knew of their existence, and regarded them with fear and jealousy, considered the struggle rather between them and himself, than any longer between himself and the Tories; and strove, while it was yet time, to reinforce himself by a body of allies, which, should the contest really take place, might be certain of giving him the superiority. The Marquis of Chester was among the most powerful of the neutral noblemen: it was of the greatest importance to gain him to the cause. He was a sturdy, sporting, independent man, who lived chiefly in the country, and turned his ambition rather towards promoting the excellence of quadrupeds, than the bad passions of men. To this personage Lord Dawton implored me to be the bearer of a letter, and to aid, with all the dexterity in my power, the purpose it was intended to effect. It was the most consequential mission yet entrusted to me, and I felt eager to turn my diplomatic energies to so good an account. Accordingly, one bright morning I wrapped myself carefully in my cloak, placed my invaluable person safely in my carriage, and set off to Chester Park, in the county of Suffolk.

CHAPTER LXI.

Hinc Canibus blandis rabies venit
—Virgil Georgics.

I should have mentioned, that the day after I sent Glanville Tyrrell's communication, I received a short and hurried note from the former, saying, that he had left London in pursuit of Tyrrell, and that he would not rest till he had brought him to account. In the hurry of the public events in which I had been of late so actively engaged, my mind had not had leisure to dwell much upon Glanville; but when I was alone in my carriage, that singular being, and the mystery which attended him, forced themselves upon my reflection, in spite of all the importance of my mission.

I was leaning back in my carriage, at (I think) Ware, while they were changing horses, when a voice, strongly associated with my meditations, struck upon my ear. I looked out, and saw Thornton standing in the yard, attired with all his original smartness of boot and breeches: he was employed in smoking a cigar, sipping brandy and water, and exercising his conversational talents in a mixture of slang and joke, addressed to two or three men of his own rank of life, and seemingly his companions. His

brisk eye soon discovered me, and he swaggered to the carriage door with that ineffable assurance of manner which was so peculiarly his own.

"Ah, ah, Mr. Pelham," said he, "going to Newmarket, I suppose? bound there myself—like to be found among my betters. Ha, ha—excuse a pun: what odds on the favourite? What! you won't bet, Mr. Pelham? close and sly at present; well, the silent sow sups up all the broth—eh!"

"I'm not going to Newmarket," I replied: "I never attend races."

"Indeed!" answered Thornton. "Well, if I was as rich as you, I would soon make or spend a fortune on the course. Seen Sir John Tyrrell? No! He is to be there. Nothing can cure him of gambling—what's bred in the bone, Good day, Mr. Pelham—won't keep you any longer—sharp shower coming on. 'The devil will soon be basting his wife with a leg of mutton,' as the proverb says—au plaisir, Mr. Pelham."

And at these words my post-boy started, and released me from my bete noire. I spare my reader an account of my miscellaneous reflections on Thornton, Dawton, Vincent, politics, Glanville, and Ellen, and will land him, without further delay, at Chester Park.

I was ushered through a large oak hall of the reign of James the First, into a room strongly resembling the principal apartment of a club; two or three round tables were covered with newspapers, journals, racing calendars, An enormous fire-place was crowded with men of all ages, I had almost said, of all ranks; but, however various they might appear in their mien and attire, they were wholly of the patrician order. One thing, however, in this room, belied its similitude to the apartment of a club, viz., a number of dogs, that lay in scattered groups upon the floor. Before the windows were several horses, in body-cloths, led or rode to exercise upon a plain in the park, levelled as smooth as a bowling-green at Putney; and stationed at an oriel window, in earnest attention to the scene without, were two men; the tallest of these was Lord Chester. There was a stiffness and inelegance in his address which prepossessed me strongly against him. "*Les manieres que l'on neglige comme de petites choses, sont souvent ce qui fait que les hommes decident de vous en bien ou en mal.*"

[The manners which on neglects as trifles, are often precisely that by which men decide on you favourably of the reverse.]

I had long since, when I was at the University, been introduced to Lord Chester; but I had quite forgotten his person, and he the very circumstance. I said, in a low tone, that I was the bearer of a letter of some importance from our mutual friend, Lord Dawton, and that I should request the honour of a private interview at Lord Chester's first convenience.

His lordship bowed, with an odd mixture of the civility of a jockey and the hauteur of a head groom of the stud, and led the way to a small apartment, which I afterwards discovered he called his own. (I never could make out, by the way, why, in England, the very worst room in the house is always appropriated to the master of it, and dignified by the appellation of "the gentleman's own.") I gave the Newmarket grandee the letter intended for him, and quietly seating myself, awaited the result.

He read it through slowly and silently, and then taking out a huge pocket-book, full of racing bets, horses' ages, jockey opinions, and such like memoranda, he placed it with much solemnity among this dignified company, and then said, with a cold, but would-be courteous air, "My friend, Lord Dawton, says you are entirely in his confidence Mr. Pelham. I hope you will honour me with your company at Chester Park for two or three days, during which time I shall have leisure to reply to Lord Dawton's letter. Will you take some refreshment?"

I answered the first sentence in the affirmative, and the latter in the negative; and Lord Chester thinking it perfectly unnecessary to trouble himself with any further questions or remarks, which the whole jockey club might not hear, took me back into the room we had quitted, and left me to find, or make whatever acquaintance I could. Pampered and spoiled as I was in the most difficult circles of London, I was beyond measure indignant at the cavalier demeanour of this rustic Thane, whom I considered a being as immeasurably beneath me in every thing else, as he really was in antiquity of birth, and, I venture to hope, in cultivation of intellect. I looked round the room, and did not recognize a being of my acquaintance: I seemed literally thrown into a new world: the very language in which the conversation was held, sounded strange to my ear. I had always transgressed my general rule of knowing all men in all grades, in the single respect of sporting characters: they were a species of bipeds, that I would never recognize as belonging to the human race. Alas! I now found the bitter effects of not following my usual maxims. It is a dangerous thing to encourage too great a disdain of one's inferiors: pride must have a fall.

After I had been a whole quarter of an hour in this strange place, my better genius came to my aid. Since I found no society among the two-legged brutes, I turned to the quadrupeds. At one corner of the

room lay a black terrier of the true English breed; at another was a short, sturdy, wirey one, of the Scotch. I soon formed a friendship with each of these canine Pelei, (little bodies with great souls), and then by degrees alluring them from their retreat to the centre of the room, I fairly endeavoured to set them by the ears. Thanks to the national antipathy, I succeeded to my heart's content. The contest soon aroused the other individuals of the genus—up they started from their repose, like Roderic Dhu's merry men, and incontinently flocked to the scene of battle.

"To it," said I; and I took one by the leg and another by the throat, and dashing them against each other, turned all their peevish irascibility at the affront into mutual aggression. In a very few moments, the whole room was a scene of uproarious confusion; the beasts yelled, and bit, and struggled with the most delectable ferocity. To add to the effect, the various owners of the dogs crowded round—some to stimulate, others to appease the fury of the combatants. As for me, I flung myself into an arm chair, and gave way to an excess of merriment, which only enraged the spectators more: many were the glances of anger, many the murmurs of reproach directed against me. Lord Chester himself eyed me with an air of astonished indignation, that redoubled my hilarity: at length, the conflict was assuaged—by dint of blows, and kicks, and remonstrances from their dignified proprietors, the dogs slowly withdrew, one with the loss of half an ear, another with a shoulder put out, a third with a mouth increased by one-half of its natural dimensions.

In short, every one engaged in the conflict bore some token of its severity. I did not wait for the thunder-storm I foresaw: I rose with a nonchalant yaw n of ennui—marched out of the apartment, called a servant—demanded my own room—repaired to it, and immersed the internal faculties of my head in Mignet's History of the Revolution, while Bedos busied himself in its outward embellishment.

CHAPTER LXII.

Noster ludos, spectaverat una,
Luserat in campo, Fortunae filius omnes.
—Horace.

I did not leave my room till the first dinner-bell had ceased a sufficient time to allow me the pleasing hope that I should have but a few moments to wait in the drawing-room, previous to the grand epoch and ceremony of an European day. The manner most natural to me, is one rather open and easy; but I pique myself peculiarly upon a certain (though occasional) air, which keeps impertinence aloof; in fine, I am by no means a person with whom others would lightly take a liberty, or to whom they would readily offer or resent an affront. This day I assumed a double quantum of dignity, in entering a room which I well knew must be filled with my enemies; there were a few women round Lady Chester, and as I always feel reassured by a sight of the dear sex, I walked towards them.

Judge of my delight, when I discovered amongst the group, Lady Harriett Garrett. It is true that I had no particular predilection for that lady, but the sight of a negress I had seen before, I should have hailed with rapture in so desolate and inhospitable a place. If my pleasure at seeing Lady Harriett was great, her's seemed equally so at receiving my salutation. She asked me if I knew Lady Chester—and on my negative reply, immediately introduced me to that personage. I now found myself quite at home; my spirits rose, and I exerted every nerve to be as charming as possible. In youth, to endeavour is to succeed.

I gave a most animated account of the canine battle, interspersed with various sarcasms on the owners of the combatants, which were by no means ill-received either by the marchioness or her companions; and, in fact, when the dinner was announced, they all rose in a mirth, sufficiently unrestrained to be any thing but patrician: for my part, I offered my arm to Lady Harriett, and paid her as many compliments on crossing the suite that led to the dining-room, as would have turned a much wiser head than her ladyship's.

The dinner went off agreeably enough, as long as the women stayed, but the moment they quitted the room, I experienced exactly the same feeling known unto a mother's darling, left for the first time at that strange, cold, comfortless place—ycleped a school.

I was not, however, in a mood to suffer my flowers of oratory to blush unseen. Besides, it was absolutely necessary that I should make a better impression upon my host. I leant, therefore, across the table, and listened eagerly to the various conversations afloat: at last I perceived, on the opposite side,

Sir Lionel Garrett, a personage whom I had not before even inquired after, or thought of. He was busily and noisily employed in discussing the game-laws. Thank Heaven, thought I, I shall be on firm ground there. The general interest of the subject, and the loudness with which it was debated, soon drew all the scattered conversation into one focus.

"What!" said Sir Lionel, in a high voice, to a modest, shrinking youth, probably from Cambridge, who had supported the liberal side of the question—"what! are our interests to be never consulted? Are we to have our only amusement taken away from us? What do you imagine brings country gentlemen to their seats? Do you not know, Sir, the vast importance our residence at our country houses is to the nation? Destroy the game laws, and you destroy our very existence as a people."

'Now,' thought I, 'it is my time.' "Sir Lionel," said I, speaking almost from one end of the table to the other, "I perfectly agree with your sentiments; I am entirely of opinion, first, that it is absolutely necessary for the safety of the nation that game should be preserved; secondly, that if you take away game you take away country gentlemen: no two propositions can be clearer than these; but I do differ from you with respect to the intended alterations. Let us put wholly out of the question, the interests of the poor people, or of society at large: those are minor matters, not worthy of a moment's consideration; let us only see how far our interests as sportsmen will be affected. I think by a very few words I can clearly prove to you, that the proposed alterations will make us much better off than we are at present."

I then entered shortly, yet fully enough, into the nature of the laws as they now stood, and as they were intended to be changed. I first spoke of the two great disadvantages of the present system to country gentlemen; viz. in the number of poachers, and the expense of preserving. Observing that I was generally and attentively listened to, I dwelt upon these two points with much pathetic energy; and having paused till I had got Sir Lionel and one or two of his supporters to confess that it would be highly desirable that these defects should, if possible, be remedied, I proceeded to show how, and in what manner it was possible. I argued, that to effect this possibility, was the exact object of the alterations suggested; I anticipated the objections; I answered them in the form of propositions, as clearly and concisely stated as possible; and as I spoke with great civility and conciliation, and put aside every appearance of care for any human being in the world who was not possessed of a qualification, I perceived at the conclusion of my harangue, that I had made a very favourable impression. That evening completed my triumph: for Lady Chester and Lady Harriett made so good a story of my adventure with the dogs, that the matter passed off as a famous joke, and I was soon considered by the whole knot as a devilish amusing, good-natured, sensible fellow. So true is it that there is no situation which a little tact cannot turn to our own account: manage yourself well, and you may manage all the world.

As for Lord Chester, I soon won his heart by a few feats of horsemanship, and a few extempore inventions respecting the sagacity of dogs. Three days after my arrival we became inseparable; and I made such good use of my time, that in two more, he spoke to me of his friendship for Dawton, and his wish for a dukedom. These motives it was easy enough to unite, and at last he promised me that his answer to my principal should be as acquiescent as I could desire; the morning after this promise commenced the great day at Newmarket.

Our whole party were of course bound to the race-ground, and with great reluctance I was pressed into the service. We were not many miles distant from the course, and Lord Chester mounted me on one of his horses. Our shortest way lay through rather an intricate series of cross roads: and as I was very little interested in the conversation of my companions, I paid more attention to the scenery we passed, than is my customary wont: for I study nature rather in men than fields, and find no landscape afford such variety to the eye, and such subject to the contemplation, as the inequalities of the human heart.

But there were to be fearful circumstances hereafter to stamp forcibly upon my remembrance some traces of the scenery which now courted and arrested my view. The chief characteristics of the country were broad, dreary plains, diversified at times by dark plantations of fir and larch; the road was rough and stony, and here and there a melancholy rivulet, swelled by the first rains of spring, crossed our path, and lost itself in the rank weeds of some inhospitable marsh.

About six miles from Chester Park, to the left of the road, stood an old house with a new face; the brown, time-honoured bricks which composed the fabric, were strongly contrasted by large Venetian windows newly inserted in frames of the most ostentatious white. A smart, green veranda, scarcely finished, ran along the low portico, and formed the termination to two thin rows of meagre and dwarfish sycamores, which did duty for an avenue, and were bounded, on the roadside, by a spruce white gate, and a sprucer lodge, so moderate in its dimensions, that it would scarcely have boiled a turnip: if a rat had got into it, he might have run away with it. The ground was dug in various places, as

if for the purpose of further improvements, and here and there a sickly little tree was carefully hurdled round, and seemed pining its puny heart out at the confinement.

In spite of all these well-judged and well-thriving graces of art, there was such a comfortless and desolate appearance about the place, that it quite froze one to look at it; to be sure, a damp marsh on one side, and the skeleton rafters and beams of an old stable on the other, backed by a few dull and sulky-looking fir trees, might, in some measure, create, or at least considerably add to, the indescribable cheerlessness of the tout ensemble. While I was curiously surveying the various parts of this northern "Delices," and marvelling at the choice of two crows who were slowly walking over the unwholesome ground, instead of making all possible use of the black wings with which Providence had gifted them, I perceived two men on horseback wind round from the back part of the building and proceed in a brisk trot down the avenue. We had not advanced many paces before they overtook us; the foremost of them turned round as he passed me, and pulling up his horse abruptly, discovered to my dismayed view, the features of Mr. Thornton. Nothing abashed by the slightness of my bow, or the grave stares of my lordly companions, who never forgot the dignity of their birth, in spite of the vulgarity of their tastes, Thornton instantly and familiarly accosted me.

"Told you so, Mr. Pelham—silent sow, Sure I should have the pleasure of seeing you, though you kept it so snug. Well, will you bet now? No!—Ah, you're a sly one. Staying here at that nice-looking house—belongs to Dawson, an old friend of mine—shall be happy to introduce you!"

"Sir," said I, abruptly, "you are too good. Permit me to request that you will rejoin your friend Mr. Dawson."

"Oh," said the imperturbable Thornton, "it does not signify; he won't be affronted at my lagging a little. However," (and here he caught my eye, which was assuming a sternness that perhaps little pleased him,) "however, as it gets late, and my mare is none of the best, I'll wish you good morning." With these words Thornton put spurs to his horse and trotted off.

"Who the devil have you got there, Pelham?" said Lord Chester.

"A person," said I, "who picked me up at Paris, and insists on the right of treasure trove to claim me in England. But will you let me ask, in my turn, whom that cheerful mansion we have just left, belongs to?"

"To a Mr. Dawson, whose father was a gentleman farmer who bred horses, a very respectable person, for I made one or two excellent bargains with him. The son was always on the turf, and contracted the worst of its habits. He bears but a very indifferent character, and will probably become a complete blackleg. He married, a short time since, a woman of some fortune, and I suppose it is her taste which has so altered and modernized his house. Come, gentlemen, we are on even ground, shall we trot?"

We proceeded but a few yards before we were again stopped by a precipitous ascent, and as Lord Chester was then earnestly engaged in praising his horse to one of the cavalcade, I had time to remark the spot. At the foot of the hill we were about slowly to ascend, was a broad, uninclosed patch of waste land; a heron, flapping its enormous wings as it rose, directed my attention to a pool overgrown with rushes, and half-sheltered on one side by a decayed tree, which, if one might judge from the breadth and hollowness of its trunk, had been a refuge to the wild bird, and a shelter to the wild cattle, at a time when such were the only intruders upon its hospitality; and when the country, for miles and leagues round, was honoured by as little of man's care and cultivation as was at present the rank waste which still nourished its gnarled and venerable roots. There was something remarkably singular and grotesque in the shape and sinuosity of its naked and spectral branches: two of exceeding length stretched themselves forth, in the very semblance of arms held out in the attitude of supplication; and the bend of the trunk over the desolate pond, the form of the hoary and blasted summit, and the hollow trunk, half riven asunder in the shape of limbs, seemed to favour the gigantic deception. You might have imagined it an antediluvian transformation, or a daughter of the Titan race, preserving in her metamorphosis her attitude of entreaty to the merciless Olympian.

This was the only tree visible; for a turn of the road and the unevenness of the ground, completely veiled the house we had passed, and the few low firs and sycamores which made its only plantations. The sullen pool—its ghost-like guardian—the dreary heath around, the rude features of the country beyond, and the apparent absence of all human habitation, conspired to make a scene of the most dispiriting and striking desolation. I know not how to account for it, but as I gazed around in silence, the whole place appeared to grow over my mind, as one which I had seen, though dimly and drearily, before; and a nameless and unaccountable presentiment of fear and evil sunk like ice into my heart. We ascended the hill, and the rest of the road being of a kind better adapted to expedition, we mended our pace and soon arrived at the goal of our journey.

The race-ground had its customary compliment of knaves and fools—the dupers and the duped. Poor Lady Chester, who had proceeded to the ground by the high road (for the way we had chosen was inaccessible to those who ride in chariots, and whose charioteers are set up in high places,) was driving to and fro, the very picture of cold and discomfort; and the few solitary carriages which honoured the course, looked as miserable as if they were witnessing the funeral of their owner's persons, rather than the peril of their characters and purses.

As we rode along to the betting-post, Sir John Tyrrell passed us: Lord Chester accosted him familiarly, and the baronet joined us. He had been an old votary of the turf in his younger days, and he still preserved all his ancient predilection in its favour.

It seemed that Chester had not met him for many years, and after a short and characteristic conversation of "God bless me, how long since I saw you!—d—d good horse you're on—you look thin—admirable condition—what have you been doing?—grand action—a'n't we behind hand?—famous fore-hand—recollect old Queensberry?—hot in the mouth—gone to the devil— what are the odds?" Lord Chester asked Tyrrell to go home with us. The invitation was readily accepted.

"With impotence of will
We wheel, tho' ghastly shadows interpose
Round us, and round each other."—Shelley.

Now, then, arose the noise, the clatter, the swearing, the lying, the perjury, the cheating, the crowd, the bustle, the hurry, the rush, the heat, the ardour, the impatience, the hope, the terror, the rapture, the agony of the race. Directly the first heat was over, one asked me one thing, one bellowed another; I fled to Lord Chester, he did not heed me. I took refuge with the marchioness; she was as sullen as an east wind could make her. Lady Harriett would talk of nothing but the horses: Sir Lionel would not talk at all. I was in the lowest pit of despondency, and the devils that kept me there were as blue as Lady Chester's nose. Silent, sad, sorrowful, and sulky, I rode away from the crowd, and moralized on its vicious propensities. One grows marvellously honest when the species of cheating before us is not suited to one's self. Fortunately, my better angel reminded me, that about the distance of three miles from the course lived an old college friend, blessed, since we had met, with a parsonage and a wife. I knew his tastes too well to imagine that any allurements of an equestrian nature could have seduced him from the ease of his library and the dignity of his books; and hoping, therefore, that I should find him at home, I turned my horse's head in an opposite direction, and rejoiced at the idea of my escape, bade adieu to the course.

As I cantered across the far end of the heath, my horse started from an object upon the ground; it was a man wrapped from head to foot in a long horseman's cloak, and so well guarded as to the face, from the raw inclemency of the day, that I could not catch even a glimpse of the features, through the hat and neck-shawl which concealed them. The head was turned, with apparent anxiety, towards the distant throng; and imagining the man belonging to the lower orders, with whom I am always familiar, I addressed to him, en passant, some trifling remark on the event of the race. He made no answer. There was something about him which induced me to look back several moments after I had left him behind. He had not moved an atom. There is such a certain uncomfortableness always occasioned to the mind by stillness and mystery united, that even the disguising garb, and motionless silence of the man, innocent as I thought they must have been, impressed themselves disagreeably on my meditations as I rode briskly on.

It is my maxim never to be unpleasantly employed, even in thought, if I can help it; accordingly, I changed the course of my reflection, and amused myself with wondering how matrimony and clerical dignity sat on the indolent shoulders of my old acquaintance.

CHAPTER LXIII.

And as for me, tho' that I can but lite
On bookes for to read I me delight,
And to hem give I faith and full credence;
And in mine heart have hem in reverence,
So heartily that there is game none,
That fro' my bookes maketh me to gone.
—Chaucer.

Christopher Clutterbuck was a common individual of a common order, but little known in this busy and toiling world. I cannot flatter myself that I am about to present to your notice that *rara avis*, a new character—yet there is something interesting, and even unhacknied, in the retired and simple class to which he belongs: and before I proceed to a darker period in my memoirs, I feel a calm and tranquillizing pleasure in the rest which a brief and imperfect delineation of my college companion, affords me. My friend came up to the University with the learning one about to quit the world might, with credit, have boasted of possessing, and the simplicity one about to enter it would have been ashamed to confess. Quiet and shy in his habits and his manners, he was never seen out of the precincts of his apartment, except in obedience to the stated calls of dinner, lectures, and chapel. Then his small and stooping form might be marked, crossing the quadrangle with a hurried step, and cautiously avoiding the smallest blade of the barren grass-plots, which are forbidden ground to the feet of all the lower orders of the collegiate oligarchy. Many were the smiles and the jeers, from the worse natured and better appointed students, who loitered idly along the court, at the rude garb and saturnine appearance of the humble under-graduate; and the calm countenance of the grave, but amiable man, who then bore the honour and onus of mathematical lecturer at our college, would soften into a glance of mingled approbation and pity, as he noted the eagerness which spoke from the wan cheek and emaciated frame of the ablest of his pupils, hurrying—after each legitimate interruption—to the enjoyment of the crabbed characters and worm-worn volumes, which contained for him all the seductions of pleasure, and all the temptations of youth.

It is a melancholy thing, which none but those educated at a college can understand, to see the debilitated frames of the aspirants for academical honours; to mark the prime—the verdure—the glory—the life—of life wasted irrevocably away in a labor ineptiarum, which brings no harvest either to others or themselves. For the poet, the philosopher, the man of science, we can appreciate the recompence if we commiserate the sacrifice; from the darkness of their retreat there goes a light—from the silence of their studies there issues a voice, to illumine or convince. We can imagine them looking from their privations to the far visions of the future, and hugging to their hearts, in the strength of no unnatural vanity, the reward which their labours are certain hereafter to obtain. To those who can anticipate the vast dominions of immortality among men, what boots the sterility of the cabined and petty present? But the mere man of languages and learning—the machine of a memory heavily but unprofitably employed—the Columbus wasting at the galley oar the energies which should have discovered a world—for him there is no day-dream of the future, no grasp at the immortality of fame. Beyond the walls of his narrow room he knows no object; beyond the elucidation of a dead tongue he indulges no ambition; his life is one long school-day of lexicons and grammars—a fabric of ice, cautiously excluded from a single sunbeam—elaborately useless, ingeniously unprofitable; and leaving at the moment it melts away, not a single trace of the space it occupied, or the labour it cost.

At the time I went to the University, my poor collegian had attained all the honours his employment could ever procure him. He had been a Pitt scholar; he was a senior wrangler, and a Fellow of his college. It often happened that I found myself next to him at dinner, and I was struck by his abstinence, and pleased with his modesty, despite of the gaucherie of his manner, and the fashion of his garb. By degrees I insinuated myself into his acquaintance; and, as I had still some love of scholastic lore, I took frequent opportunities of conversing with him upon Horace, and consulting him upon Lucian.

Many a dim twilight have we sat together, reviving each other's recollection, and occasionally relaxing into the grave amusement of capping verses. Then, if by any chance my ingenuity or memory enabled me to puzzle my companion, his good temper would lose itself in a quaint pettishness, or he would cite against me some line of Aristophanes, and ask me, with a raised voice, and arched brow, to give him a fitting answer to that. But if, as was much more frequently the case, he fairly run me down into a pause and confession of inability, he would rub his hands with a strange chuckle, and offer me, in the bounteousness of his heart, to read aloud a Greek Ode of his own, while he treated me "to a dish of tea." There was much in the good man's innocence, and guilelessness of soul, which made me love him, and I did not rest till I had procured him, before I left the University, the living which he now held. Since then, he had married the daughter of a neighbouring clergyman, an event of which he had duly informed me; but, though this great step in the life of "a reading man," had not taken place many months since, I had completely, after a hearty wish for his domestic happiness, consigned it to a dormant place in my recollection.

The house which I now began to approach was small, but comfortable; perhaps there was something triste in the old-fashioned hedges, cut and trimmed with mathematical precision, which surrounded the glebe, as well as in the heavy architecture and dingy bricks of the reverend recluse's habitation. To make amends for this, there was also something peculiarly still and placid about the appearance of the house, which must have suited well the tastes and habits of the owner. A small, formal lawn was adorned with a square fish-pond, bricked round, and covered with the green weepings of four willows, which drooped over it, from their station, at each corner. At the opposite side of this Pierian reservoir,

was a hermitage, or arbour of laurels, shaped in the stiff rusticity of the Dutch school, in the prevalence of which it was probably planted; behind this arbour, the ground, after a slight railing, terminated in an orchard.

The sound I elicited from the gate bell seemed to ring through that retired place with singular shrillness; and I observed at the opposite window, all that bustle of drawing curtains, peeping faces, and hasty retreats, which denote female anxiety and perplexity, at the unexpected approach of a stranger.

After some time the parson's single servant, a middle-aged, slovenly man, in a loose frock, and buff kerseymere nondescripts, opened the gate, and informed me that his master was at home. With a few earnest admonitions to my admittor—who was, like the domestics of many richer men, both groom and valet—respecting the safety of my borrowed horse, I entered the house: the servant did not think it necessary to inquire my name, but threw open the door of the study, with the brief introduction of—"a gentleman, Sir."

Clutterbuck was standing, with his back towards me, upon a pair of library steps, turning over some dusky volumes; and below stood a pale, cadaverous youth, with a set and serious countenance, that bore no small likeness to Clutterbuck himself.

"Mon Dieu," thought I, "he cannot have made such good use of his matrimonial state as to have raised this lanky impression of himself in the space of seven months?" The good man turned round and almost fell off the steps with the nervous shock of beholding me so near him: he descended with precipitation, and shook me so warmly and tightly by the hand, that he brought tears into my eyes, as well as his own.

"Gently, my good friend," said I—"parce precor, or you will force me to say, 'ibimus una ambo, flentes valido connexi foedere.'"

Clutterbuck's eyes watered still more, when he heard the grateful sounds of what to him was the mother tongue. He surveyed me from head to foot with an air of benign and fatherly complacency, and dragging forth from its sullen rest a large arm chair, on whose cushions of rusty horse-hair sat an eternal cloud of classic dust, too sacred to be disturbed, he plumped me down upon it, before I was aware of the cruel hospitality.

"Oh! my nether garments," thought I. "Quantus sudor incrit Bedoso, to restore you to your pristine purity."

"But, whence come you?" said my host, who cherished rather a formal and antiquated method of speech.

"From the Pythian games," said I. "The campus hight Newmarket. Do I see right, or is not yon insignis juvenis marvellously like you? Of a surety he rivals the Titans, if he is only a seven months' child!"

"Now, truly, my worthy friend," answered Clutterbuck, "you indulge in jesting! The boy is my nephew, a goodly child, and a painstaking. I hope he will thrive at our gentle mother. He goes to Trinity next October. Benjamin Jeremiah, my lad, this is my worthy friend and benefactor, of whom I have often spoken; go, and order him of our best—he will partake of our repast!"

"No, really," I began; but Clutterbuck gently placed the hand, whose strength of affection I had already so forcibly experienced, upon my mouth. "Pardon me, my friend," said he. "No stranger should depart till he had broken bread with us, how much more then a friend! Go, Benjamin Jeremiah, and tell your aunt that Mr. Pelham will dine with us; and order, furthermore, that the barrel of oysters sent unto us as a present, by my worthy friend Dr. Swallow'em, be dressed in the fashion that seemeth best; they are a classic dainty, and we shall think of our great masters the ancients whilst we devour them. And—stop, Benjamin Jeremiah, see that we have the wine with the black seal; and—now—go, Benjamin Jeremiah!"

"Well, my old friend," said I, when the door closed upon the sallow and smileless nephew, "how do you love the connubiale jugum? Do you give the same advice as Socrates? I hope, at least, it is not from the same experience."

"Hem!" answered the grave Christopher, in a tone that struck me as somewhat nervous and uneasy, "you are become quite a humourist since we parted. I suppose you have been warming your wit by the lambent fires of Horace and Aristophanes!"

"No," said I, "the living allow those whose toilsome lot it is to mix constantly with them, but little time to study the monuments of the dead. But, in sober earnest, are you as happy as I wish you?"

Clutterbuck looked down for a moment, and then, turning towards the table, laid one hand upon a MS., and pointed with the other to his books. "With this society," said he, "how can I be otherwise?"

I gave him no reply, but put my hand upon his MS. He made a modest and coy effort to detain it, but I knew that writers were like women, and making use of no displeasing force, I possessed myself of the paper.

It was a treatise on the Greek participle. My heart sickened within me; but, as I caught the eager glance of the poor author, I brightened up my countenance into an expression of pleasure, and appeared to read and comment upon the *difficiles nugae* with an interest commensurate to his own. Meanwhile the youth returned. He had much of that delicacy of sentiment which always accompanies mental cultivation, of whatever sort it may be. He went, with a scarlet blush over his thin face, to his uncle, and whispered something in his ear, which, from the angry embarrassment it appeared to occasion, I was at no loss to divine.

"Come," said I, "we are too long acquainted for ceremony. Your *placens uxor*, like all ladies in the same predicament, thinks your invitation a little unadvised; and, in real earnest, I have so long a ride to perform, that I would rather eat your oysters another day!"

"No, no," said Clutterbuck, with greater eagerness than his even temperament was often hurried into betraying—"no, I will go and reason with her myself. 'Wives, obey your husbands,' saith the preacher!" And the quondam senior wrangler almost upset his chair in the perturbation with which he arose from it.

I laid my hand upon him. "Let me go myself," said I, "since you will have me dine with you. 'The sex is ever to a stranger kind,' and I shall probably be more persuasive than you, in despite of your legitimate authority."

So saying, I left the room, with a curiosity more painful than pleasing, to see the collegian's wife. I arrested the man servant, and ordered him to usher and announce me.

I was led instanter into the apartment where I had discovered all the signs of female inquisitiveness, which I have before detailed. There I discovered a small woman, in a robe equally slatternly and fine, with a sharp pointed nose, small, cold, grey eyes, and a complexion high towards the cheek bones, but waxing of a light green before it reached the wide and querulous mouth, which, well I ween, seldom opened to smile upon the unfortunate possessor of her charms. She, like the Rev. Christopher, was not without her companions; a tall meagre woman, of advanced age, and a girl, some years younger than herself, were introduced to me as her mother and sister.

My entree occasioned no little confusion, but I knew well how to remedy that. I held out my hand so cordially to the wife, that I enticed, though with evident reluctance, two bony fingers into my own, which I did not dismiss without a most mollifying and affectionate squeeze; and drawing my chair close towards her, began conversing as familiarly as if I had known the whole triad for years. I declared my joy at seeing my old friend so happily settled—commented on the improvement of his looks—ventured a sly joke at the good effects of matrimony—praised a cat couchant, worked in worsted by the venerable hand of the eldest matron—offered to procure her a real cat of the true Persian breed, black ears four inches long, with a tail like a squirrel's; and then slid, all at once, into the unauthorized invitation of the good man of the house.

"Clutterbuck," said I, "has asked me very warmly to stay dinner; but, before I accepted his offer, I insisted upon coming to see how far it was confirmed by you. Gentlemen, you are aware, my dear Madam, know nothing of these matters, and I never accept a married man's invitation till it has the sanction of his lady: I have an example of that at home. My mother (Lady Frances) is the best-tempered woman in the world: but my father could no more take the liberty (for I may truly call it such) to ask even his oldest friend to dinner, without consulting the mistress of the house, than he could think of flying. No one (says my mother, and she says what is very true,) can tell about the household affairs, but those who have the management of them; and in pursuance of this aphorism, I dare not accept any invitation in this house, except from its mistress."

"Really," said Mrs. Clutterbuck, colouring, with mingled embarrassment and gratification, "you are very considerate and polite, Mr. Pelham: I only wish Mr. Clutterbuck had half your attention to these things; nobody can tell the trouble and inconvenience he puts me to. If I had known, a little time before, that you were coming—but now I fear we have nothing in the house; but if you can partake of our fare, such as it is, Mr. Pelham—"

"Your kindness enchants me," I exclaimed, "and I no longer scruple to confess the pleasure I have in accepting my old friend's offer."

This affair being settled, I continued to converse for some minutes with as much vivacity as I could summon to my aid, and when I went once more to the library, it was with the comfortable impression of having left those as friends, whom I had visited as foes.

The dinner hour was four, and till it came, Clutterbuck and I amused ourselves "in commune wise and sage." There was something high in the sentiments and generous in the feelings of this man, which made me the more regret the bias of mind which rendered them so unavailing. At college he had never (*illis dissimilis in nostro tempore natis*) cringed to the possessors of clerical power. In the duties of his station, as dean of the college, he was equally strict to the black cap and the lordly hat. Nay, when one of his private pupils, whose father was possessed of more church preferment than any nobleman in the peerage, disobeyed his repeated summons, and constantly neglected to attend his instructions, he sent for him, resigned his tuition, and refused any longer to accept a salary which the negligence of his pupil would not allow him to requite. In his clerical tenets he was high: in his judgment of others he was mild. His knowledge of the liberty of Greece was not drawn from the ignorant historian of her republics; [Note: It is really a disgrace to the University, that any of its colleges should accept as a reference, or even tolerate as an author, the presumptuous bigot who has bequeathed to us, in his *History of Greece*, the masterpiece of a declaimer without energy, and of a pedant without learning.] nor did he find in the contemplative mildness and gentle philosophy of the ancients, nothing but a sanction for modern bigotry and existing abuses.

It was a remarkable trait in his conversation, that though he indulged in many references to the old authors, and allusions to classic customs, he never deviated into the innumerable quotations with which his memory was stored. No words, in spite of all the quaintness and antiquity of his dialect, purely Latin or Greek, ever escaped his lips, except in our engagements at capping verses, or when he was allured into accepting a challenge of learning from some of its pretenders; then, indeed, he could pour forth such a torrent of authorities as effectually silenced his opponent; but these contests were rarely entered into, and these triumphs moderately indulged. Yet he loved the use of quotations in others, and I knew the greatest pleasure I could give him was in the frequent use of them. Perhaps he thought it would seem like an empty parade of learning in one who so confessedly possessed it, to deal in the strange words of another tongue, and consequently rejected them, while, with an innocent inconsistency, characteristic of the man, it never occurred to him that there was any thing, either in the quaintness of his dialect or the occupations of his leisure, which might subject him to the same imputation of pedantry.

And yet, at times, when he warmed in his subject, there was a tone in his language as well as sentiment, which might not be improperly termed eloquent; and the real modesty and quiet enthusiasm of his nature, took away from the impression he made, the feeling of pomposity and affectation with which otherwise he might have inspired you.

"You have a calm and quiet habitation here," said I; "the very rooks seem to have something lulling in that venerable caw which it always does me such good to hear."

"Yes," answered Clutterbuck, "I own that there is much that is grateful to the temper of my mind in this retired spot. I fancy that I can the better give myself up to the contemplation which makes, as it were, my intellectual element and food. And yet I dare say that in this (as in all other things) I do strongly err; for I remember that during my only sojourn in London, I was wont to feel the sound of wheels and of the throng of steps shake the windows of my lodging in the Strand, as if it were but a warning to recal my mind more closely to its studies—of a verity that noisy evidence of man's labour reminded me how little the great interests of this rolling world were to me, and the feeling of solitude amongst the crowds without, made me cling more fondly to the company I found within. For it seems that the mind is ever addicted to contraries, and that when it be transplanted into a soil where all its neighbours do produce a certain fruit, it doth, from a strange perversity, bring forth one of a different sort. You would little believe, my honoured friend, that in this lonely seclusion, I cannot at all times prohibit my thoughts from wandering to that gay world of London, which, during my tarry therein, occupied them in so partial a degree. You smile, my friend, nevertheless it is true; and when you reflect that I dwelt in the western department of the metropolis, near unto the noble mansion of Somerset House, and consequently in the very centre of what the idle call Fashion, you will not be so surprised at the occasional migration of my thoughts."

Here the worthy Clutterbuck paused and sighed slightly. "Do you farm or cultivate your garden," said I; "they are no ignoble nor unclassical employments?"

"Unhappily," answered Clutterbuck, "I am inclined to neither; my chest pains me with a sharp and piercing pang when I attempt to stoop, and my respiration is short and asthmatic; and, in truth, I seldom love to stir from my books and papers. I go with Pliny to his garden, and with Virgil to his farm; those mental excursions are the sole ones I indulge in; and when I think of my appetite for application,

and my love of idleness, I am tempted to wax proud of the propensities which reverse the censure of Tacitus on our German ancestors, and incline so fondly to quiet, while they turn so restlessly from sloth."

Here the speaker was interrupted by a long, low, dry cough, which penetrated me to the heart. 'Alas!' thought I, as I heard it, and looked upon my poor friend's hectic and hollow cheek, 'it is not only his mind that will be the victim to the fatality of his studies.'

It was some moments before I renewed the conversation, and I had scarcely done so before I was interrupted by the entrance of Benjamin Jeremiah, with a message from his aunt that dinner would be ready in a few minutes. Another long whisper to Christopher succeeded. The *ci-devant* fellow of Trinity looked down at his garments with a perplexed air. I saw at once that he had received a hint on the propriety of a change of raiment. To give him due leisure for this, I asked the youth to shew me a room in which I might perform the usual ablutions previous to dinner, and followed him upstairs to a comfortless sort of dressing-room, without a fire-place, where I found a yellow ware jug and basin, and a towel, of so coarse a huckaback, that I did not dare adventure its rough texture next my complexion—my skin is not made for such rude fellowship. While I was tenderly and daintily anointing my hands with some hard water, of no Blandusian spring, and that vile composition entitled Windsor soap, I heard the difficult breathing of poor Clutterbuck on the stairs, and soon after he entered the adjacent room. Two minutes more, and his servant joined him, for I heard the rough voice of the domestic say, "There is no more of the wine with the black seal left, Sir!"

"No more, good Dixon; you mistake grievously. I had two dozen not a week since."

"Don't know, I'm sure, Sir!" answered Dixon, with a careless and half impertinent accent; "but there are great things, like alligators, in the cellar, which break all the bottles!"

"Alligators in my cellar!" said the astonished Clutterbuck.

"Yes, Sir—at least a venomous sort of reptile like them, which the people about here call efts!"

"What!" said Clutterbuck, innocently, and evidently not seeing the irony of his own question; "What! have the efts broken two dozen bottles in a week? Of an exceeding surety, it is strange that a little creature of the lizard species should be so destructive—perchance they have an antipathy to the vinous smell; I will confer with my learned friend, Dr. Dissectall, touching their strength and habits. Bring up some of the port, then, good Dixon."

"Yes, Sir. All the corn is out; I had none for the gentleman's horse."

"Why, Dixon, my memory fails me strangely, or I paid you the sum of four pounds odd shillings for corn on Friday last."

"Yes, Sir: but your cow and the chickens eat so much, and then blind Dobbin has four feeds a day, and Farmer Johnson always puts his horse in our stable, and Mrs. Clutterbuck and the ladies fed the jackass the other day in the hired donkeychaise; besides, the rats and mice are always at it."

"It is a marvel unto me," answered Clutterbuck, "how detrimental the vermin race are; they seem to have noted my poor possessions as their especial prey; remind me that I write to Dr. Dissectall tomorrow, good Dixon."

"Yes, Sir, and now I think of it—" but here Mr. Dixon was cut short in his items, by the entrance of a third person, who proved to be Mrs. Clutterbuck.

"What, not dressed yet, Mr. Clutterbuck; what a dawdler you are!—and do look—was ever woman so used? you have wiped your razor upon my nightcap— you dirty, slovenly—"

"I crave you many pardons; I own my error!" said Clutterbuck, in a nervous tone of interruption.

"Error, indeed!" cried Mrs. Clutterbuck, in a sharp, overstretched, querulous falsetto, suited to the occasion: "but this is always the case— I am sure, my poor temper is tried to the utmost—and Lord help thee, idiot! you have thrust those spindle legs of yours into your coat-sleeves instead of your breeches!"

"Of a truth, good wife, your eyes are more discerning than mine; and my legs, which are, as you say, somewhat thin, have indued themselves in what appertaineth not unto them; but for all that, Dorothea, I am not deserving of the epithet of idiot, with which you have been pleased to favour me; although my humble faculties are indeed of no eminent or surpassing order—"

"Pooh! pooh! Mr. Clutterbuck, I am sure, I don't know what else you are, muddling your head all day with those good-for-nothing books. And now do tell me, how you could think of asking Mr. Pelham to

dinner, when you knew we had nothing in the world but hashed mutton and an apple pudding? Is that the way, Sir, you disgrace your wife, after her condescension in marrying you?"

"Really," answered the patient Clutterbuck, "I was forgetful of those matters; but my friend cares as little as myself, about the grosser tastes of the table; and the feast of intellectual converse is all that he desires in his brief sojourn beneath our roof."

"Feast of fiddlesticks, Mr. Clutterbuck! did ever man talk such nonsense?"

"Besides," rejoined the master of the house, unheeding this interruption, "we have a luxury even of the palate, than which there are none more delicate, and unto which he, as well as myself, is, I know, somewhat unphilosophically given; I speak of the oysters, sent here by our good friend, Dr. Swallow'em."

"What do you mean, Mr. Clutterbuck? My poor mother and I had those oysters last night for our supper. I am sure she as well as my sister are almost starved; but you are always wanting to be pampered up above us all."

"Nay, nay," answered Clutterbuck, "you know you accuse me wrongfully, Dorothea; but now I think of it, would it not be better to modulate the tone of our conversation, seeing that our guest, (a circumstance which until now quite escaped my recollection,) was shown into the next room, for the purpose of washing his hands, the which, from their notable cleanliness, seemed to me wholly unnecessary. I would not have him overhear you, Dorothea, lest his kind heart should imagine me less happy than—than it wishes me."

"Good God, Mr. Clutterbuck!" were the only words I heard farther: and with tears in my eyes, and a suffocating feeling in my throat, for the matrimonial situation of my unfortunate friend, I descended into the drawing-room. The only one yet there, was the pale nephew; he was bending painfully over a book; I took it from him, it was "Bentley upon Phalaris." I could scarcely refrain from throwing it into the fire—another victim, thought I—oh, the curse of an English education! By and by, down came the mother and the sister, then Clutterbuck, and lastly, bedizened out with gewgaws and trumpery—the wife. Born and nurtured as I was in the art of the *volto sciolto pensieri stretti*, I had seldom found a more arduous task of dissimulation than that which I experienced now. However, the hope to benefit my friend's situation assisted me; the best way, I thought, of obtaining him more respect from his wife, would be by showing her the respect he meets with from others: accordingly, I sat down by her, and having first conciliated her attention by some of that coin, termed compliments, in which there is no counterfeit that does not have the universal effect of real, I spoke with the most profound veneration of the talents and learning of Clutterbuck—I dilated upon the high reputation he enjoyed—upon the general esteem in which he was held—upon the kindness of his heart—the sincerity of his modesty—the integrity of his honour—in short, whatever I thought likely to affect her; most of all, I insisted upon the high panegyrics bestowed upon him, by Lord this, and the Earl that, and wound up, with adding that I was certain he would die a bishop. My eloquence had its effect; all dinner time, Mrs. Clutterbuck treated her husband with even striking consideration: my words seemed to have gifted her with a new light, and to have wrought a thorough transformation in her view of her lord and master's character. Who knows not the truth, that we have dim and short-sighted eyes to estimate the nature of our own kin, and that we borrow the spectacles which alone enable us to discern their merits or their failings from the opinion of strangers! It may be readily supposed that the dinner did not pass without its share of the ludicrous—that the waiter and the dishes, the family and the host, would have afforded ample materials no less for the student of nature in Hogarth, than of caricature in Bunbury; but I was too seriously occupied in pursuing my object, and marking its success, to have time even for a smile. Ah! if ever you would allure your son to diplomacy, show him how subservient he may make it to benevolence.

When the women had retired, we drew our chairs near to each other, and laying down my watch on the table, as I looked out upon the declining day, I said, "Let us make the best of our time, I can only linger here one half hour longer."

"And how, my friend," said Clutterbuck, "shall we learn the method of making the best use of time? there, whether it be in the larger segments, or the petty subdivisions of our life, rests the great enigma of our being. Who is there that has ever exclaimed—(pardon my pedantry, I am for once driven into Greek)—Euzexa! to this most difficult of the sciences?"

"Come," said I, "it is not for you, the favoured scholar—the honoured academician—whose hours are never idly employed, to ask this question!"

"Your friendship makes too flattering the acumen of your judgment," answered the modest Clutterbuck. "It has indeed been my lot to cultivate the fields of truth, as transmitted unto our hands by

the wise men of old; and I have much to be thankful for, that I have, in the employ, been neither curtailed in my leisure, nor abased in my independence—the two great goods of a calm and meditative mind; yet are there moments in which I am led to doubt of the wisdom of my pursuits: and when, with a feverish and shaking hand, I put aside the books which have detained me from my rest till the morning hour, and repair unto a couch often baffled of slumber by the pains and discomforts of this worn and feeble frame, I almost wish I could purchase the rude health of the peasant by the exchange of an idle and imperfect learning for the ignorance, content with the narrow world it possesses, because unconscious of the limitless creation beyond. Yet, my dear and esteemed friend, there is a dignified and tranquillizing philosophy in the writings of the ancients which ought to teach me a better condition of mind; and when I have risen from the lofty, albeit, somewhat melancholy strain, which swells through the essays of the graceful and tender Cicero, I have indeed felt a momentary satisfaction at my studies, and an elation even at the petty success with which I have cherished them. But these are brief and fleeting moments, and deserve chastisement for their pride. There is one thing, my Pelham, which has grieved me bitterly of late, and that is, that in the earnest attention which it is the—perhaps fastidious—custom of our University, to pay to the minutiae of classic lore, I do now oftentimes lose the spirit and beauty of the general bearing; nay, I derive a far greater pleasure from the ingenious amendment of a perverted text, than from all the turn and thought of the sense itself: while I am straightening a crooked nail in the wine-cask, I suffer the wine to evaporate; but to this I am somewhat reconciled, when I reflect that it was also the misfortune of the great Porson, and the elaborate Parr, men with whom I blush to find myself included in the same sentence."

"My friend," said I, "I wish neither to wound your modesty, nor to impugn your pursuits; but think you not that it would be better, both for men and for yourself, that, while you are yet in the vigour of your age and reason, you occupy your ingenuity and application in some more useful and lofty work, than that which you suffered me to glance at in your library; and moreover, as the great object of him who would perfect his mind, is first to strengthen the faculties of his body, would it not be prudent in you to lessen for a time your devotion to books; to exercise yourself in the fresh air—to relax the bow, by loosing the string; to mix more with the living, and impart to men in conversation, as well as in writing, whatever the incessant labour of many years may have hoarded? Come, if not to town, at least to its vicinity; the profits of your living, if even tolerably managed, will enable you to do so without inconvenience. Leave your books to their shelves, and your flock to their curate, and—you shake your head—do I displease you?"

"No, no, my kind and generous adviser—but as the twig was set, the tree must grow. I have not been without that ambition which, however vain and sinful, is the first passion to enter the wayward and tossing vessel of our soul, and the last to leave its stranded and shattered wreck; but mine found and attained its object at an age, when in others it is, as yet, a vague and unsettled feeling; and it feeds now rather upon the recollections of what has been, than ventures forward on a sea of untried and strange expectation. As for my studies! how can you, who have, and in no moderate draught, drank of the old stream of Castaly, how can you ask me now to change them? Are not the ancients my food, my aliment, my solace in sorrow—my sympathizers, my very benefactors, in joy? Take them away from me, and you take away the very winds which purify and give motion to the obscure and silent current of my life. Besides, my Pelham, it cannot have escaped your observation, that there is little in my present state which promises a long increase of days: the few that remain to me must glide away like their predecessors; and whatever be the infirmities of my body, and the little harassments which, I am led to suspect, do occasionally molest the most fortunate, who link themselves unto the unstable and fluctuating part of creation, which we term women, more especially in an hymeneal capacity—whatever these may be, I have my refuge and my comforter in the golden-souled and dreaming Plato, and the sententious wisdom of the less imaginative Seneca. Nor, when I am reminded of my approaching dissolution by the symptoms which do mostly at the midnight hour press themselves upon me, is there a small and inglorious pleasure in the hope that I may meet hereafter, in those islands of the blest which they dimly dreamt of, but which are opened unto my vision, without a cloud, or mist, or shadow of uncertainty and doubt, with those bright spirits which we do now converse with so imperfectly; that I may catch from the very lips of Homer the unclouded gorgeousness of fiction, and from the accents of Archimedes, the unadulterated calculations of truth."

Clutterbuck ceased, and the glow of his enthusiasm diffused itself over his sunken eye and consumptive cheek. The boy, who had sat apart, and silent, during our discourse, laid his head upon the table, and sobbed audibly; and I rose, deeply affected, to offer to one for whom they were, indeed, unavailing, the wishes and blessing of an eager, but not hardened disciple of the world. We parted: on this earth we can never meet again. The light has wasted itself away beneath the bushel. It will be six weeks to-morrow since the meek and noble-minded academician breathed his last.

CHAPTER LXIV.

'Tis but a single murder.
—Lillo: Fatal Curiosity.

It was in a melancholy and thoughtful mood that I rode away from the parsonage. Numerous and hearty were the maledictions I bestowed upon a system of education which, while it was so ineffective with the many, was so pernicious to the few. Miserable delusion (thought I), that encourages the ruin of health and the perversion of intellect by studies that are as unprofitable to the world as they are destructive to the possessor—that incapacitate him for public, and unfit him for private life—and that, while they expose him to the ridicule of strangers, render him the victim of his wife, and the prey of his domestic.

Busied in such reflections, I rode quickly on till I found myself once more on the heath. I looked anxiously round for the conspicuous equipage of Lady Chester, but in vain—the ground was thin—nearly all the higher orders had retired—the common people, grouped together, and clamouring noisily, were withdrawing: and the shrill voices of the itinerant hawkers of cards and bills had at length subsided into silence. I rode over the ground, in the hope of finding some solitary straggler of our party. Alas! there was not one; and, with much reluctance at, and distaste to, my lonely retreat, I turned in a homeward direction from the course.

The evening had already set in, but there was a moon in the cold grey sky, that I could almost have thanked in a sonnet for a light which I felt was never more welcomingly dispensed, when I thought of the cross roads and dreary country I had to pass before I reached the longed for haven of Chester Park. After I had left the direct road, the wind, which had before been piercingly keen, fell, and I perceived a dark cloud behind, which began slowly to overtake my steps. I care little, in general, for the discomfort of a shower; yet, as when we are in one misfortune we always exaggerate the consequence of a new one, I looked upon my dark pursuer with a very impatient and petulant frown, and set my horse on a trot, much more suitable to my inclination than his own. Indeed, he seemed fully alive to the cornless state of the parson's stable, and evinced his sense of the circumstance by a very languid mode of progression, and a constant attempt, whenever his pace abated, and I suffered the rein to slumber upon his neck, to crop the rank grass that sprung up on either side of our road. I had proceeded about three miles on my way, when I heard the clatter of hoofs behind me. My even pace soon suffered me to be overtaken, and, as the stranger checked his horse when he was nearly by my side, I turned towards him, and beheld Sir John Tyrrell.

"Well," said he, "this is really fortunate—for I began to fear I should have my ride, this cold evening, entirely to myself."

"I imagined that you had long reached Chester Park by this time," said I.
"Did not you leave the course with our party?"

"No," answered Tyrrell, "I had business, at Newmarket, with a rascally fellow of the name of Dawson. He lost to me rather a considerable wager, and asked me to come to the town with him after the race, in order to pay me. As he said he lived on the direct road to Chester Park, and would direct and even accompany me, through all the difficult part of the ride, I the less regretted not joining Chester and his party; and you know, Pelham, that when pleasure pulls one way, and money another, it is all over with the first. Well—to return to my rascal—would you believe, that when we got to Newmarket, he left me at the inn, in order, he said, to fetch the money; and after having kept me in a cold room, with a smoky chimney, for more than an hour, without making his appearance, I sallied out into the town, and found Mr. Dawson quietly seated in a hell with that scoundrel Thornton, whom I did not conceive, till then, he was acquainted with. It seems that he was to win, at hazard, sufficient to pay his wager. You may fancy my anger, and the consequent increase to it, when he rose from the table, approached me, expressed his sorrow, d—d his ill luck, and informed me that he could not pay me for three months. You know that I could not ride home with such a fellow—he might have robbed me by the way—so I returned to my inn—dined—ordered my horse, set off—en cavalier seul—inquired my way of every passenger I passed, and after innumerable misdirections—here I am."

"I cannot sympathise with you," said I, "since I am benefitted by your misfortunes. But do you think it very necessary to trot so fast? I fear my horse can scarcely keep up with yours."

Tyrrell cast an impatient glance at my panting steed. "It is cursed unlucky you should be so badly mounted, and we shall have a pelting shower presently."

In complaisance to Tyrrell, I endeavoured to accelerate my steed. The roads were rough and stony,

and I had scarcely got the tired animal into a sharper trot, before—whether or no by some wrench among the deep ruts and flinty causeway—he fell suddenly lame. The impetuosity of Tyrrell broke out in oaths, and we both dismounted to examine the cause of my horse's hurt, in the hope that it might only be the intrusion of some pebble between the shoe and the hoof. While we were yet investigating the cause of our misfortune, two men on horseback overtook us. Tyrrell looked up. "By Heaven," said he, in a low tone, "it's that dog Dawson, and his worthy coadjutor, Tom Thornton."

"What's the matter, gentlemen?" cried the bluff voice of the latter. "Can I be of any assistance?" and without waiting our reply, he dismounted, and came up to us. He had no sooner felt the horse's leg, than he assured us it was a most severe strain, and that the utmost I could effect would be to walk the brute gently home.

As Tyrrell broke out into impatient violence at this speech, the sharper looked up at him with an expression of countenance I by no means liked; but in a very civil, and even respectful tone, said, "If you want, Sir John, to reach Chester Park sooner than Mr. Pelham can possibly do, suppose you ride on with us, I will put you in the direct road before I quit you." (Good breeding, thought I, to propose leaving me to find my own way through this labyrinth of ruts and stones!) However, Tyrrell, who was in a vile humour, in no very courteous manner, refused the offer, and added that he should continue with me as long as he could, and did not doubt that when he left me he should be able to find his own way. Thornton pressed the invitation still closer, and even offered, sotto voce, to send Dawson on before, should the baronet object to his company.

"Pray, Sir," said Tyrrell, "leave me alone, and busy yourself about your own affairs." After so tart a reply, Thornton thought it useless to say more; he remounted, and with a silent and swaggering nod of familiarity, soon rode away with his companion.

"I am sorry," said I, as we were slowly proceeding, "that you rejected Thornton's offer."

"Why, to say truth," answered Tyrrell, "I have so very bad an opinion of him, that I was almost afraid to trust myself in his company on so dreary a road. I have nearly (and he knows it), to the amount of two thousand pounds about me; for I was very fortunate in my betting-book today."

"I know nothing about racing regulations," said I; "but I thought one never paid sums of that amount upon the ground?"

"Ah!" answered Tyrrell, "but I won this sum, which is L1,800., of a country squire from Norfolk, who said he did not know when he should see me again, and insisted on paying me on the spot: 'faith I was not nice in the matter. Thornton was standing by at the time, and I did not half like the turn of his eye when he saw me put it up. Do you know, too," continued Tyrrell, after a pause, "that I have had a d—d fellow dodging me all day, and yesterday too; wherever I go, I am sure to see him. He seems constantly, though distantly, to follow me; and what is worse, he wraps himself up so well, and keeps at so cautious a distance, that I can never catch a glimpse of his face."

I know not why, but at that moment the recollection of the muffled figure I had seen upon the course, flashed upon me.

"Does he wear a long horseman's cloak?" said I.

"He does," answered Tyrrell, in surprise: "have you observed him?"

"I saw such a person on the race ground," replied I; "but only for an instant!"

Farther conversation was suspended by a few heavy drops which fell upon us; the cloud had passed over the moon, and was hastening rapidly and loweringly over our heads. Tyrrell was neither of an age, a frame, nor a temper, to be so indifferent to a hearty wetting as myself.

"God!" he cried, "you must put on that beast of your's—I can't get wet, for all the horses in the world."

I was not much pleased with the dictatorial tone of this remark. "It is impossible," said I, "especially as the horse is not my own, and seems considerably lamer than at first; but let me not detain you."

"Well!" cried Tyrrell, in a raised and angry voice, which pleased me still less than his former remark; "but how am I to find my way, if I leave you?"

"Keep straight on," said I, "for a mile farther, then a sign-post will direct you to the left; after a short time, you will have a steep hill to descend, at the bottom of which is a large pool, and a singularly shaped tree; then keep straight on, till you pass a house belonging to Mr. Dawson—"

"Come, come, Pelham, make haste!" exclaimed Tyrrell, impatiently, as the rain began now to descend fast and heavy.

"When you have passed that house," I resumed coolly, rather enjoying his petulance, "you must bear to the right for six miles, and you will be at Chester Park in less than an hour."

Tyrrell made no reply, but put spurs to his horse. The pattering rain and the angry heavens soon drowned the last echoes of the receding hoofclang.

For myself, I looked in vain for a tree; not even a shrub was to be found; the fields lay bare on either side, with no other partition but a dead hedge, and a deep dyke. "Patientia fit melius," thought I, as Horace said, and Vincent would say; and in order to divert my thoughts from my situation, I turned them towards my diplomatic success with Lord Chester. Presently, for I think scarcely five minutes had elapsed since Tyrrell's departure, a horseman passed me at a sharp pace; the moon was hid by the dense cloud, and the night, though not wholly dark, was dim and obscured, so that I could only catch the outline of the flitting figure. A thrill of fear crept over me, when I saw that it was enveloped in a horseman's cloak. I soon rallied—"There are more cloaks in the world than one," said I to myself; "besides, even if it be Tyrrell's dodger, as he calls him, the baronet is better mounted than any highwayman since the days of Du Val; and is, moreover, strong enough and cunning enough to take admirable care of himself." With this reflection I dismissed the occurrence from my thoughts, and once more returned to self-congratulations upon my own incomparable genius. "I shall now," I thought, "have well earned my seat in parliament; Dawton will indisputably be, if not the prime, the principal minister in rank and influence. He cannot fail to promote me for his own sake, as well as mine; and when I have once fairly got my legs in St. Stephen's, I shall soon have my hands in office: 'power,' says some one, 'is a snake that when it once finds a hole into which it can introduce its head, soon manages to wriggle in the rest of its body.'" With such meditations I endeavoured to beguile the time and cheat myself into forgetfulness of the lameness of my horse, and the dripping wetness of his rider. At last the storm began sullenly to subside: one impetuous torrent, ten-fold more violent than those that had preceded it, was followed by a momentary stillness, which was again broken by a short relapse of a less formidable severity, and the moment it ceased, the beautiful moon broke out, the cloud rolled heavily away, and the sky shone forth, as fair and smiling as Lady—at a ball, after she has been beating her husband at home.

But at that instant, or perhaps a second before the storm ceased, I thought I heard the sound of a human cry. I paused, and my heart stood still—I could have heard a gnat hum: the sound was not repeated; my ear caught nothing but the plashing of the rain drops from the dead hedges, and the murmur of the swollen dykes, as the waters pent within them rolled hurriedly on. By and by, an owl came suddenly from behind me, and screamed as it flapped across my path; that, too, went rapidly away: and with a smile, at what I deemed my own fancy, I renewed my journey. I soon came to the precipitous descent I have before mentioned; I dismounted, for safety, from my drooping and jaded horse, and led him down the hill. At a distance beyond I saw something dark moving on the grass which bordered the road; as I advanced, it started forth from the shadow, and fled rapidly before me, in the moonshine—it was a riderless horse. A chilling foreboding seized me: I looked round for some weapon, such as the hedge might afford; and finding a strong stick of tolerable weight and thickness, I proceeded more cautiously, but more fearlessly than before. As I wound down the hill, the moonlight fell full upon the remarkable and lonely tree I had observed in the morning. Bare, wan, and giant-like, as it rose amidst the surrounding waste, it borrowed even a more startling and ghostly appearance from the cold and lifeless moonbeams which fell around and upon it like a shroud. The retreating animal I had driven before me, paused by this tree. I hastened my steps, as if by an involuntary impulse, as well as the enfeebled animal I was leading would allow me, and discovered a horseman galloping across the waste at full speed. The ground over which he passed was steeped in the moonshine, and I saw the long and disguising cloak, in which he was developed, as clearly as by the light of day. I paused: and as I was following him with my looks, my eye fell upon some obscure object by the left side of the pool. I threw my horse's rein over the hedge, and firmly grasping my stick, hastened to the spot. As I approached the object, I perceived that it was a human figure; it was lying still and motionless; the limbs were half immersed in the water—the face was turned upwards—the side and throat were wet with a deep red stain—it was of blood; the thin, dark hairs of the head, were clotted together over a frightful and disfiguring contusion. I bent over the face in a shuddering and freezing silence. It was the countenance of Sir John Tyrrell!

CHAPTER LXV.

Marry, he was dead—
And the right valiant Barlquo walked too late,
Whom, you may say, if it please you, Fleance killed,
For Fleance fled!
—Macbeth.

It is a fearful thing, even to the hardiest nerves, to find ourselves suddenly alone with the dead. How much more so, if we have, but a breathing interval before, moved and conversed with the warm and living likeness of the motionless clay before us!

And this was the man from whom I had parted in coldness—almost in anger—at a word—a breath! I took up the heavy hand—it fell from my grasp, and as it did so, I thought a change passed over the livid countenance. I was deceived; it was but a light cloud flitting over the moon;—it rolled away, and the placid and guiltless light shone over that scene of dread and blood, making more wild and chilling the eternal contrast of earth and heaven—man and his Maker—passion and immutability—dust and immortality.

But that was not a moment for reflection—a thousand thoughts hurried upon me, and departed as swift and confusedly as they came. My mind seemed a jarring and benighted chaos of the faculties which were its elements; and I had stood several minutes over the corpse before, by a vigorous effort, I shook off the stupor that possessed me, and began to think of the course that it now behoved me to pursue.

The house I had noted in the morning was, I knew, within a few minutes' walk of the spot; but it belonged to Dawson, upon whom the first weight of my suspicions rested. I called to mind the disreputable character of that man, and the still more daring and hardened one of his companion Thornton. I remembered the reluctance of the deceased to accompany them, and the well-grounded reason he assigned; and my suspicions amounting to certainty, I resolved rather to proceed to Chester Park, and there give the alarm, than to run the unnecessary risk of interrupting the murderers in the very lair of their retreat. And yet, thought I, as I turned slowly away, how, if they were the villains, is the appearance and flight of the disguised horseman to be accounted for?

Then flashed upon my recollection all that Tyrrell had said of the dogged pursuit of that mysterious person, and the circumstance of his having passed me upon the road so immediately after Tyrrell had quitted me. These reflections (associated with a name I did not dare breathe even to myself, although I could not suppress a suspicion which accounted at once for the pursuit, and even for the deed,) made me waver in, and almost renounce my former condemnation of Thornton and his friend: and by the time I reached the white gate and dwarfish avenue which led to Dawson's house, I resolved, at all events, to halt at the solitary mansion, and mark the effect my information would cause.

A momentary fear for my own safety came across me, but was as instantly dismissed;—for even supposing the friends were guilty, still it would be no object to them to extend their remorseless villany to me; and I knew that I could sufficiently command my own thoughts to prevent any suspicion I might form, from mounting to my countenance, or discovering itself in my manner.

There was a light in the upper story; it burned still and motionless. How holy seemed the tranquillity of life, to the forced and fearful silence of the death scene I had just witnessed! I rung twice at the door—no one came to answer my summons, but the light in the upper window moved hurriedly to and fro.

"They are coming," said I to myself. No such thing—the casement above was opened—I looked up, and discovered, to my infinite comfort and delight, a blunderbuss protruded eight inches out of the window in a direct line with my head; I receded close to the wall with no common precipitation.

"Get away, you rascal," said a gruff, but trembling voice, "or I'll blow your brains out."

"My good Sir," I replied, still keeping my situation, "I come on urgent business, either to Mr. Thornton or Mr. Dawson; and you had better, therefore, if the delay is not very inconvenient, defer the honour you offer me, till I have delivered my message."

"Master, and 'Squire Thornton are not returned from Newmarket, and we cannot let any one in till they come home," replied the voice, in a tone somewhat mollified by my rational remonstrance; and while I was deliberating what rejoinder to make, a rough, red head, like Liston's, in a farce, poked itself cautiously out under cover of the blunderbuss, and seemed to reconnoitre my horse and myself. Presently another head, but attired in the more civilized gear of a cap and flowers, peeped over the first person's left shoulder; the view appeared to reassure them.

"Sir," said the female, "my husband and Mr. Thornton are not returned; and we have been so much alarmed of late, by an attack on the house, that I cannot admit any one till their return."

"Madam," I replied, reverently doffing my hat, "I do not like to alarm you by mentioning the information I should have given to Mr. Dawson; only oblige me by telling them, on their return, to look beside the pool on the common; they will then do as best pleases them."

Upon this speech, which certainly was of no agreeable tendency, the blunderbuss palpitated so violently, that I thought it highly imprudent to tarry any longer in so immediate a vicinity; accordingly, I made the best of my way out of the avenue, and once more resumed my road to Chester Park.

I arrived there at length; the gentlemen were still in the dining-room. I sent out for Lord Chester, and communicated the scene I had witnessed, and the cause of my delay.

"What, Brown Bob lamed?" said he, "and Tyrrell—poor—poor fellow, how shocking! we must send instantly. Here, John! Tom! Wilson!" and his lordship shouted and rung the bell in an indescribable agitation.

The under butler appeared, and Lord Chester began—"My head groom—Sir John Tyrrell is murdered—violent sprain in off leg—send lights with Mr. Pelham—poor gentleman—an express instantly to Dr. Physicon—Mr. Pelham will tell you all—Brown Bob—his throat cut from ear to ear—what shall be done?" and with this coherent and explanatory harangue, the marquis sunk down in his chair in a sort of hysteria.

The under butler looked at him in suspicious bewilderment. "Come," said I, "I will explain what his lordship means:" and, taking the man out of the room, I gave him, in brief, the necessary particulars. I ordered a fresh horse for myself, and four horsemen to accompany me. While these were preparing, the news was rapidly spreading, and I was soon surrounded by the whole house. Many of the men wished to accompany me; and Lord Chester, who had at last recovered from his stupor, insisted upon heading the search. We set off, to the number of fourteen, and soon arrived at Dawson's house: the light in the upper room was still burning. We rang, and after a brief pause, Thornton himself opened the door to us. He looked pale and agitated.

"How shocking!" he said directly—"we are only just returned from the spot."

"Accompany us, Mr. Thornton," said I, sternly; and fixing my eye upon him—

"Certainly," was his immediate answer, without testifying any confusion—"I will fetch my hat." He went into the house for a moment.

"Do you suspect these people?" whispered Lord Chester.

"Not suspect," said I, "but doubt."

We proceeded down the avenue: "Where is Mr. Dawson?" said I to Thornton.

"Oh, within!" answered Thornton.

"Shall I fetch him?"

"Do," was my brief reply.

Thornton was absent some minutes; when he re-appeared, Dawson was following him. "Poor fellow," said he to me in a low tone—"he was so shocked by the sight, that he is still all in a panic; besides, as you will see, he is half drunk still."

I made no answer, but looked narrowly at Dawson; he was evidently, as Thornton said, greatly intoxicated: his eyes swam, and his feet staggered as he approached us; yet, through all the natural effects of drunkenness, he seemed nervous and frightened. This, however, might be the natural, and consequently innocent effect, of the mere sight of an object so full of horror; and, accordingly, I laid little stress upon it.

We reached the fatal spot: the body seemed perfectly unmoved. "Why," said I, apart to Thornton, while all the rest were crowding fearfully round the corpse—"why did you not take the body within?"

"I was going to return here with our servant for that purpose," answered the gambler; "for poor Dawson was both too drunk and too nervous to give me any assistance."

"And how came it," I rejoined, eyeing him searchingly, "that you and your friend had not returned home when I called there, although you had both long since passed me on the road, and I had never overtaken you?"

Thornton, without any hesitation, replied—"because, during the violence of the shower, we cut across

the fields to an old shed, which we recollected, and we remained there till the rain had ceased."

"They are probably innocent," thought I—and I turned to look once more at the body which our companions had now raised. There was upon the head a strong contusion, as if inflicted by some blunt and heavy instrument. The fingers of the right hand were deeply gashed, and one of them almost dissevered: the unfortunate man had, in all probability, grasped the sharp weapon from which his other wounds proceeded; these were one wide cut along the throat, and another in the side; either of them would have occasioned his death.

In loosening the clothes another wound was discovered, but apparently of a less fatal nature; and in lifting the body, the broken blade of a long sharp instrument, like a case-knife, was discovered. It was the opinion of the surgeon, who afterwards examined the body, that the blade had been broken by coming in contact with one of the rib bones; and it was by this that he accounted for the slightness of the last mentioned wound. I looked carefully among the fern and long grass, to see if I could discover any other token of the murderer: Thornton assisted me. At the distance of some feet from the body, I thought I perceived something glitter. I hastened to the place, and picked up a miniature. I was just going to cry out, when Thornton whispered—"Hush! I know the picture; it is as I suspected."

An icy thrill ran through my very heart. With a desperate but trembling hand, I cleansed from the picture the blood, in which, notwithstanding its distance from the corpse, the greater part of it was bathed. I looked upon the features; they were those of a young and singularly beautiful female. I recognized them not: I turned to the other side of the miniature; upon it were braided two locks of hair—one was the long, dark ringlet of a woman, the other was of a light auburn. Beneath were four letters. I looked eagerly at them. "My eyes are dim," said I, in a low tone to Thornton, "I cannot trace the initials."

"But I can," replied he, in the same whispered key, but with a savage exultation, which made my heart stand still—"they are G. D., R. G.; they are the initials of Gertrude Douglas and Reginald Glanville."

I looked up at the speaker—our eyes met—I grasped his hand vehemently. He understood me. "Put it up," said he; "we will keep the secret." All this, so long in the recital, passed in the rapidity of a moment.

"Have you found any thing there, Pelham?" shouted one of our companions.

"No!" cried I, thrusting the miniature in my bosom, and turning unconcernedly away.

We carried the corpse to Dawson's house. The poor wife was in fits. We heard her scream as we laid the body upon a table in the parlour.

"What more can be done?" said Lord Chester.

"Nothing," was the general answer. No excitement makes the English people insensible to the chance of catching cold!

"Let us go home, then, and send to the nearest magistrate," exclaimed our host: and this proposal required no repetition.

On our way, Chester said to me, "That fellow Dawson looked devilish uneasy—don't you still suspect him and his friend?"

"I do not!" answered I, emphatically.

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