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VOLUME VII.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

Si ad honestatem nati sumus ea aut sola expetenda est, aut certe omni pondere gravior est habenda quam reliqua omnia.
—Tully.

Cas. Brutus, I do observe you now of late:
I have not from your eyes that gentleness,
And shew of love as I was wont to have.
—Julius Caesar.

I rose at my usual early hour; sleep had tended to calm, and, I hope, also, to better my feelings. I had now leisure to reflect, that I had not embraced my party from any private or interested motive; it was not, therefore, from a private or interested motive that I was justified in deserting it. Our passions are terrible sophists! When Vincent had told me, the day before, that it was from men, not measures, that I was to change, and that such a change could scarcely deserve the name, my heart adopted the assertion, and fancied it into truth.

I now began to perceive the delusion; were government as mechanically perfect as it has never yet been (but as I trust it may yet be), it would signify little who were the mere machines that regulated its springs: but in a constitution like ours, the chief character of which—pardon me, ye De Lolmites—is its uncertainty; where men invariably make the measures square to the dimensions of their own talent or desire; and where, reversing the maxim of the tailor, the measures so rarely make the men; it required no penetration to see how dangerous it was to entrust to the aristocratic prejudice of Lincoln, or the vehement imbecility of Lesborough, the execution of the very same measures which might safely be committed to the plain sense of Dawton, and, above all, to the great and various talents of his coadjutors. But what made the vital difference between the two parties was less in the leaders than the

body. In the Dawton faction, the best, the purest, the wisest of the day were enrolled; they took upon themselves the origin of all the active measures, and Lord Dawton was the mere channel through which those measures flowed; the plain, the unpretending, and somewhat feeble character of Lord Dawton's mind, readily conceded to the abler components of his party, the authority it was so desirable that they should exert. In Vincent's party, with the exception of himself, there was scarcely an individual with the honesty requisite for loving the projects they affected to propose, or the talents that were necessary for carrying them into effect, even were their wishes sincere; nor were either the haughty Lincoln, or his noisy and overbearing companion, Lesborough, at all of a temper to suffer that quiet, yet powerful interference of others, to which Dawton unhesitatingly submitted.

I was the more resolved to do all possible justice to Dawton's party, from the inclination I naturally had to lean towards the other; and in all matters, where private pique or self-interest can possibly penetrate, it has ever been the object of my maturer consideration to direct my particular attention to that side of the question which such undue partizans are the least likely to espouse. While I was gradually, but clearly, feeling my way to a decision, I received the following note from Guloseton:—

"I said nothing to you last night of what is now to be the subject of my letter, lest you should suppose it arose rather from the heat of an extempore conviviality, than its real source, viz. a sincere esteem for your mind, a sincere affection for your heart, and a sincere sympathy in your resentment and your interest.

"They tell me that Lord Dawton's triumph or discomfiture rests entirely upon the success of the motion upon—, brought before the House of Commons, on the—. I care, you know, very little for my own part, which way this question is decided; do not think, therefore, that I make any sacrifice when I request you to suffer me to follow your advice in the disposal of my four votes. I imagine, of course, that you would wish them to adopt the contrary side to Lord Dawton; and upon receiving a line from you to that effect, they shall be empowered to do so.

"Pray, oblige me also by taking the merit of this measure upon yourself, and saying (wherever it may be useful to you), how entirely, both the voters and their influence are at your disposal. I trust we shall yet play the Bel to this Dragon, and fell him from his high places.

"Pity me, my dear friend; I dine out to-day, and feel already, by an intuitive shudder, that the soup will be cold, and the sherry hot. Adieu.

"Ever your's,

"Guloseton."

Now, then, my triumph, my vanity, and my revenge might be fully gratified. I had before me a golden opportunity of displaying my own power, and of humbling that of the minister. My heart swelled high at the thought. Let it be forgiven me, if, for a single moment, my previous calculations and morality vanished from my mind, and I saw only the offer of Vincent, and the generosity of Guloseton. But I checked the risings of my heart, and compelled my proud spirit to obedience.

I placed Guloseton's letter before me, and as I read it once more in order to reply to it, the disinterested kindness and delicacy of one, whom I had long, in the injustice of my thoughts, censured as selfish, came over me so forcibly, and contrasted so deeply with the hollowness of friends more sounding, alike in their profession and their creeds, that the tears streamed fast and gushingly from my eyes.

A thousand misfortunes are less affecting than a single kindness.

I wrote, in answer, a warm and earnest letter of thanks for an offer, the judicious kindness of which penetrated me to the soul. I detailed, at some length, the reasons which induced me to the decision I had taken; I sketched also the nature of the very important motion about to be brought before the House, and deduced from that sketch the impossibility of conscientiously opposing Lord Dawton's party in the debate. I concluded with repeating the expressions my gratitude suggested, and after declining all interference with Lord Guloseton's votes, ventured to add, that had I interfered, it would have been in support of Dawton; not as a man, but a minister—not as an individual friend, but a public servant.

I had just despatched this letter, when Vincent entered: I acquainted him, though in the most respectful and friendly terms, with my determination. He seemed greatly disappointed, and endeavoured to shake my resolution; finding this was in vain, he appeared at last satisfied, and even affected with my reasons. When we parted, it was with a promise, confirmed by both, that no public variance should ever again alter our private opinions of each other.

When I was once more alone, and saw myself brought back to the very foot of the ladder I had so far

and so fortunately climbed; when I saw that, in rejecting all the overtures of my friends, I was left utterly solitary and unaided among my foes—when I looked beyond and saw no faint loophole of hope, no single stepping-stone on which to recommence my broken, but unwearied career—perhaps one pang of regret and repentance, at my determination, came across me: but there is something marvellously restorative in a good conscience, and one soon learns to look with hope to the future, when one can feel justified in turning with pride to the past.

My horse came to the door at my usual hour for riding: with what gladness I sprung upon his back, felt the free wind freshening over my fevered cheek, and turned my rein towards the green lanes that border the great city on its western side. I know few counsellors more exhilarating than a spirited horse. I do not wonder that the Roman emperor made a consul of his steed. On horseback I always best feel my powers, and survey my resources; on horseback, I always originate my noblest schemes, and plan their ablest execution. Give me but a light rein, and a free bound, and I am Cicero—Cato—Caesar; dismount me, and I become a mere clod of the earth which you condemn me to touch; fire, energy, etheriality have departed; I am the soil without the sun—the cask without the wine—the garments without the man.

I returned home with increased spirits and collected thoughts; I urged my mind from my own situation, and suffered it to rest upon what Lady Roseville had told me of Reginald Glanville's interference in my behalf. That extraordinary man still continued powerfully to excite my interest; nor could I dwell, without some yearning of the kindlier affections, upon his unsolicited, and, but for Lady Roseville's communication, unknown exertions in my cause. Although the officers of justice were still actively employed in the pursuit of Tyrrell's murderer, and although the newspapers were still full of speculations on their indifferent success, public curiosity had begun to flag upon the inquiry. I had, once or twice, been in Glanville's company when the murder was brought upon the tapis, and narrowly examined his behaviour upon a subject which touched him so fearfully. I could not, however, note any extraordinary confusion or change in his countenance; perhaps the pale cheek grew somewhat paler, the dreaming eye more abstracted, and the absent spirit more wandering than before; but many other causes than guilt, could account for signs so doubtful and minute.

"You shall soon know all," the last words which he had addressed to me, yet rang in my ears, and most intensely did I anticipate the fulfilment of this promise. My hopes too—those flatterers, so often the pleasing antitheses of reason, whispered that this was not the pledge of a guilty man; and yet he had said to Lady Roseville, that he did not wonder at my estrangement from him: such words seemed to require a less favourable construction than those he had addressed to me; and, in making this mental remark, another, of no flattering nature to Glanville's disinterestedness, suggested itself; might not his interference for me with Lord Dawton, arise rather from policy than friendship; might it not occur to him, if, as I surmised, he was acquainted with my suspicions, and acknowledged their dreadful justice, that it would be advisable to propitiate my silence? Such were among the thousand thoughts which flashed across me, and left my speculations in debate and doubt.

Nor did my reflections pass unnoticed the nature of Lady Roseville's affection for Glanville. From the seeming coldness and austerity of Sir Reginald's temperament, it was likely that this was innocent, at least in act; and there was also something guileless in the manner in which she appeared rather to exult in, than to conceal, her attachment. True that she was bound to no ties; she had neither husband nor children, for whose sake love became a crime: free and unfettered, if she gave her heart to Glanville, it was also allowable to render the gift lawful and perpetual by the blessing of the church.

Alas! how little can woman, shut up in her narrow and limited circle of duties, know of the wandering life and various actions of her lover. Little, indeed, could Lady Roseville, when, in the heat of her enthusiasm, she spoke of the lofty and generous character of Glanville, dream of the foul and dastardly crime of which he was more than suspected; nor, while it was, perhaps, her fondest wish to ally herself to his destiny, could her wildest fancies anticipate the felon's fate, which, if death came not in an hastier and kinder shape, must sooner or later await him.

Of Thornton, I had neither seen nor heard aught since my departure from Lord Chester's; that reprieve was, however, shortly to expire. I had scarcely got into Oxford-street, in my way homeward, when I perceived him crossing the street with another man. I turned round to scrutinize the features of his companion, and, in spite of a great change of dress, a huge pair of false whiskers, and an artificial appearance of increased age, my habit of observing countenances enabled me to recognize, on the instant, my intellectual and virtuous friend, Mr. Job Jonson. They disappeared in a shop, nor did I think it worth while further to observe them, though I still bore a remiscetory spite against Mr. Job Jonson, which I was fully resolved to wreak, at the first favourable opportunity.

I passed by Lady Roseville's door. Though the hour was late, and I had, therefore, but a slight chance of finding her at home, yet I thought the chance worth the trouble of inquiry. To my agreeable surprise,

I was admitted: no one was in the drawing-room. The servant said, Lady Roseville was at that moment engaged, but would very shortly see me, and begged I would wait.

Agitated as I was by various reflections, I walked (in the restlessness of my mood) to and fro the spacious rooms which formed Lady Roseville's apartments of reception. At the far end was a small boudoir, where none but the goddess's favoured few were admitted. As I approached towards it, I heard voices, and the next moment recognised the deep tones of Glanville. I turned hastily away, lest I should overhear the discourse; but I had scarcely got three steps, when the convulsed sound of a woman's sob came upon my ear. Shortly afterwards, steps descended the stairs, and the street door opened.

The minutes rolled on, and I became impatient. The servant re-entered— Lady Roseville was so suddenly and seriously indisposed, that she was unable to see me. I left the house, and, full of bewildered conjectures, returned to my apartments.

The next day was one of the most important in my life. I was standing wistfully by my fireplace, listening to a broken-winded hurdy-gurdy, with the most mournful attention, stationed opposite to my window, when Bedos announced Sir Reginald Glanville. It so happened, that I had that morning taken the miniature I had found in the fatal field, from the secret place in which I usually kept it, in order more closely to examine it, lest any more convincing proof of its owner, than the initials and Thornton's interpretation, might be discovered by a minuter investigation.

The picture was lying on the table when Glanville entered: my first impulse was to seize and secrete it; my second to suffer it to remain, and to watch the effect the sight of it might produce. In following the latter, I thought it, however, as well to choose my own time for discovering the miniature; and as I moved to the table, I threw my handkerchief carelessly over it. Glanville came up to me at once, and his countenance, usually close and reserved in its expression, assumed a franker and bolder aspect.

"You have lately changed towards me," he said:—"mindful of our former friendship, I have come to demand the reason."

"Can Sir Reginald Glanville's memory," answered I, "supply him with no probable cause?"

"It can," replied Glanville, "but I would not trust only to that. Sit down, Pelham, and listen to me. I can read your thoughts, and I might affect to despise their import—perhaps two years since I should—at present I can pity and excuse them. I have come to you now, in the love and confidence of our early days, to claim, as then, your good opinion and esteem. If you require any explanation at my hands, it shall be given. My days are approaching their end. I have made up my accounts with others—I would do so with you. I confess, that I would fain leave behind me in your breast, the same affectionate remembrance I might heretofore have claimed, and which, whatever be your suspicions, I have done nothing to forfeit. I have, moreover, a dearer interest than my own to consult in this wish—you colour, Pelham—you know to whom I allude; for my sister's sake, if not for my own, you will hear me."

Glanville paused for a moment. I raised the handkerchief from the miniature—I pushed the latter towards him—"Do you remember this?" said I, in a low tone.

With a wild cry, which thrilled through my heart, Glanville sprung forward and seized it. He gazed eagerly and intensely upon it, and his cheek flushed—his eyes sparkled—his breast heaved. The next moment he fell back in his chair, in one of the half swoons, to which, upon any sudden and violent emotion, the debilitating effects of his disease subjected him.

Before I could come to his assistance he had recovered. He looked wildly and fiercely upon me. "Speak," he cried, "speak—where got you this— where?—answer, for mercy's sake!"

"Recollect yourself," said I, sternly. "I found that token of your presence upon the spot where Tyrrell was murdered."

"True, true," said Glanville, slowly, and in an absent and abstracted tone. He ceased abruptly, and covered his face with his hands; from this attitude he started with some sudden impulse.

"And tell me," he said, in a low, inward, exulting tone, "was it—was it red with the blood of the murdered man?"

"Wretch!" I exclaimed, "do you glory in your guilt?"

"Hold!" said Glanville, rising, with an altered and haughty air; "it is not to your accusations that I am now to listen: if you are yet desirous of weighing their justice before you decide upon them, you will have the opportunity: I shall be at home at ten this night; come to me, and you shall know all. At present, the sight of this picture has unnerved me. Shall I see you?"

I made no other rejoinder than the brief expression of my assent, and Glanville instantly left the room.

During the whole of that day, my mind was wrought up into a state of feverish and preternatural excitation. I could not remain in the same spot for an instant; my pulse beat with the irregularity of delirium. For the last hour I placed my watch before me, and kept my eyes constantly fixed upon it. Should any one think this exaggerated, let him remember, that it was not only Glanville's confession that I was to hear; my own fate, my future connection with Ellen, rested upon the story of that night. For myself, when I called to mind Glanville's acknowledgment of the picture, and his slow and involuntary remembrance of the spot where it was found, I scarcely allowed my temper, sanguine as it was, to hope.

Some minutes before the hour of ten I repaired to Glanville's house. He was alone—the picture was before him.

I drew my chair towards him in silence, and accidentally lifting up my eyes, encountered the opposite mirror. I started at my own face; the intensity and fearfulness of my interest had rendered it even more hueless than that of my companion.

There was a pause for some moments, at the end of which Glanville thus began.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

I do but hide
Under these words, like embers, every spark
Of that which has consumed me. Quick and dark
The grave is yawning;—as its roof shall cover
My limbs with dust and worms, under and over,
So let oblivion hide this grief.
Julian and Maddalo.

With thee, the very future fled,
I stand amid the past alone;
A tomb which still shall guard the dead
Tho' every earthlier trace be flown,
A tomb o'er which the weeds that love
Decay—their wild luxuriance wreath!
The cold and callous stone above—
And only thou and death beneath.
From Unpublished Poems by _____.

THE HISTORY OF SIR REGINALD GLANVILLE.

"You remember my character at school—the difficulty with which you drew me from the visionary and abstracted loneliness which, even at that time, was more consonant to my taste, than all the sports and society resorted to by other boys—and the deep, and, to you, inexplicable delight with which I returned to my reveries and solitude again. That character has continued through life the same; circumstances have strengthened, not altered it. So has it been with you; the temper, the habits, the tastes, so strongly contrasted with mine in boyhood, have lost nothing of that contrast. Your ardour for the various ambition of life is still the antipodes to my indifference; your daring, restless, thoughtful, resolution in the pursuit, still shames my indolence and abstraction. You are still the votary of the world, but will become its conqueror—I its fugitive—and shall die its victim.

"After we parted at school, I went for a short time to a tutor's in—shire. Of this place I soon grew weary; and my father's death leaving me in a great measure at my own disposal, I lost no time in leaving it. I was seized with that mania for travel common enough to all persons of my youth and disposition. My mother allowed me an almost unlimited command over the fortune hereafter to be my own; and, yielding to my wishes, rather than her fears, she suffered me, at the age of eighteen, to set out for the Continent alone. Perhaps the quiet and reserve of my character made her think me less exposed to the dangers of youth, than if I had been of a more active and versatile temper. This is no uncommon mistake; a serious and contemplative disposition is, however, often the worst formed to

acquire readily the knowledge of the world, and always the most calculated to suffer deeply from the experience.

"I took up my residence for some time at Spa. It is, you know, perhaps, a place dull enough to make gambling the only amusement; every one played— and I did not escape the contagion; nor did I wish it: for, like the minister Godolphin, I loved gaming for its own sake, because it was a substitute for conversation. This habit brought me acquainted with Mr. Tyrrell, who was then staying at Spa; he had not, at that time, quite dissipated his fortune, but was daily progressing to so desirable a consummation. A gambler's acquaintance is readily made, and easily kept, provided you gamble too.

"We became as intimate as the reserve of my habits ever suffered me to become with any one, but you. He was many years older than me—had seen a great deal of the world—had mixed much in its best societies, and, at that time, whatever was the grossierete of his mind, had little of the coarseness of manner which very soon afterwards distinguished him; evil communication works rapidly in its results. Our acquaintance was, therefore, natural enough, especially when it is considered that my purse was entirely at his disposal—for borrowing is twice blessed, in him that takes and him that gives—the receiver becomes complaisant and conceding, and the lender thinks favourably of one he has obliged.

"We parted at Spa, under a mutual promise to write. I forget if this promise was kept—probably not; we were not, however, the worse friends for being bad correspondents. I continued my travels for about another year; I then returned to England, the same melancholy and dreaming enthusiast as before. It is true that we are the creatures of circumstances; but circumstances are also, in a great measure, the creatures of us. I mean, they receive their colour from the previous bent of our own minds; what raises one would depress another, and what vitiates my neighbour might correct me. Thus the experience of the world makes some persons more worldly—others more abstracted, and the indulgence of the senses becomes a violence to one mind, and a second nature to another. As for me, I had tasted all the pleasures youth and opulence can purchase, and was more averse to them than ever. I had mixed with many varieties of men—I was still more rivetted to the monotony of self.

"I cannot hope, while I mention these peculiarities, that I am a very uncommon character; I believe the present age has produced many such. Some time hence, it will be a curious inquiry to ascertain the causes of that acute and sensitive morbidity of mind, which has been, and still is, so epidemic a disease. You know me well enough to believe, that I am not fond of the cant of assuming an artificial character, or of creating a fictitious interest; and I am far from wishing to impose upon you a malady of constitution for a dignity of mind. You must pardon my prolixity. I own that it is very painful to me to come to the main part of my confessions, and I am endeavouring to prepare myself by lingering over the prelude."

Glanville paused here for a few moments. In spite of the sententious coolness with which he pretended to speak, I saw that he was powerfully and painfully affected.

"Well," he continued, "to resume the thread of my narrative; after I had stayed some weeks with my mother and sister, I took advantage of their departure for the continent, and resolved to make a tour through England. Rich people, and I have always been very rich, get exceedingly tired of the embarrassment of their riches. I seized with delight at the idea of travelling without carriages and servants; I took merely a favourite horse, and the black dog, poor Terror, which you see now at my feet.

"The day I commenced this plan was to me the epoch of a new and terrible existence. However, you must pardon me if I am not here sufficiently diffuse. Suffice it, that I became acquainted with a being whom, for the first and only time in my life, I loved! This miniature attempts to express her likeness; the initials at the back, interwoven with my own, are hers."

"Yes," said I, incautiously, "they are the initials of Gertrude Douglas."

"What!" cried Glanville, in a loud tone, which he instantly checked, and continued in an indrawn, muttered whisper: "How long is it since I heard that name! and now—now—" he broke off abruptly, and then said, with a calmer voice, "I know not how you have learnt her name; perhaps you will explain?"

"From Thornton," said I.

"And has he told you more?" cried Glanville, as if gasping for breath— the "history—the dreadful—"

"Not a word," said I, hastily; "he was with me when I found the picture, and he explained the initials."

"It is well!" answered Glanville, recovering himself; "you will see presently if I have reason to love that those foul and sordid lips should profane the story I am about to relate. Gertrude was an only daughter; though of gentle blood, she was no match for me, either in rank or fortune. Did I say just now that the world had not altered me? See my folly; one year before I saw her, and I should not have

thought her, but myself honoured by a marriage;—twelve little months had sufficed to—God forgive me! I took advantage of her love—her youth—her innocence—she fled with me—but not to the altar!"

Again Glanville paused, and again, by a violent effort, conquered his emotion, and proceeded:

"Never let vice be done by halves—never let a man invest all his purer affections in the woman he ruins—never let him cherish the kindness, if he gratifies the selfishness, of his heart. A profligate, who really loves his victim, is one of the most wretched of beings. In spite of my successful and triumphant passion—in spite of the delirium of the first intoxication of possession, and of the better and deeper delight of a reciprocity of thought—feeling, sympathy, for the first time, found;—in the midst of all the luxuries my wealth could produce, and of the voluptuous and spring-like hues with which youth, health, and first love, clothe the earth which the loved one treads, and the air which she inhales: in spite of these, in spite of all, I was any thing but happy. If Gertrude's cheek seemed a shade more pale, or her eye less bright, I remembered the sacrifice she had made me, and believed that she felt it too. It was in vain, that, with a tender and generous devotion—never found but in woman—she assured me that my love was a recompense for all; the more touching was her tenderness, the more poignant my remorse. I never loved but her; I have never, therefore, entered into the common- place of passion, and I cannot, even to this day, look upon her sex as ours do in general. I thought, I think so still, that ingratitude to a woman is often a more odious offence—I am sure it contains a more painful penalty—than ingratitude to a man. But enough of this; if you know me, you can penetrate the nature of my feelings—if not, it is in vain to expect your sympathy.

"I never loved living long in one place. We travelled over the greater part of England and France. What must be the enchantment of love, when accompanied with innocence and joy, when, even in sin, in remorse, in grief, it brings us a rapture to which all other things are tame. Oh! those were moments steeped in the very elixir of life; overflowing with the hoarded fondness and sympathies of hearts too full for words, and yet too agitated for silence, when we journeyed alone, and at night, and as the shadows and stillness of the waning hours gathered round us, drew closer to each other, and concentrated this breathing world in the deep and embracing sentiment of our mutual love! It was then that I laid my burning temples on her bosom, and felt, while my hand clasped her's, that my visions were realized, and my wandering spirit had sunk unto its rest.

"I remember well that, one night, we were travelling through one of the most beautiful parts of England it was in the very height and flush of summer, and the moon (what scene of love—whether in reality, or romance- -has any thing of tenderness, or passion, or divinity, where her light is not!) filled the intense skies of June with her presence, and cast a sadder and paler beauty over Gertrude's cheek. She was always of a melancholy and despondent temper; perhaps, for that reason, she was more congenial to my own; and when I gazed upon her that night, I was not surprised to see her eyes filled with tears. "You will laugh at me," she said, as I kissed them off, and inquired into the cause; "but I feel a presentiment that I cannot shake off; it tells me that you will travel this road again before many months are past, and that I shall not be with you, perhaps not upon the earth." She was right in all her foreboding, but the suggestion of her death;—that came later.

"We took up our residence for some time at a beautiful situation, a short distance from a small watering place. Here, to my great surprise, I met with Tyrrell. He had come there partly to see a relation from whom he had some expectations, and partly to recruit his health, which was much broken by his irregularities and excesses. I could not refuse to renew my old acquaintance with him, and, indeed, I thought him too much of a man of the world, and of society, to feel with him that particular delicacy, in regard to Gertrude, which made me in general shun all intercourse with my former friends. He was in great pecuniary embarrassment—much more deeply so than I then imagined; for I believed the embarrassment to be only temporary. However, my purse was then, as before, at his disposal, and he did not scruple to avail himself very largely of my offers. He came frequently to our house; and poor Gertrude, who thought I had, for her sake, made a real sacrifice in renouncing my acquaintance, endeavoured to conquer her usual diffidence, and that more painful feeling than diffidence, natural to her station, and even to affect a pleasure in the society of my friend, which she was very far from feeling.

"I was detained at—for several weeks by Gertrude's confinement. The child—happy being!—died a week after its birth. Gertrude was still in bed, and unable to leave it, when I received a letter from Ellen, to say, that my mother was then staying at Toulouse, and dangerously ill; if I wished once more to see her, Ellen besought me to lose no time in setting off for the continent. You may imagine my situation, or rather you cannot, for you cannot conceive the smallest particle of that intense love I bore to Gertrude. To you—to any other man, it might seem no extraordinary hardship to leave her even for an uncertain period—to me it was like tearing away the very life from my heart.

"I procured her a sort of half companion, and half nurse; I provided for her every thing that the most

anxious and fearful love could suggest; and with a mind full of forebodings too darkly to be realized hereafter, I hastened to the nearest seaport, and set sail for France.

"When I arrived at Toulouse my mother was much better, but still in a very uncertain and dangerous state of health. I stayed with her for more than a month, during which time every post brought me a line from Gertrude, and bore back a message from 'my heart to her's' in return. This was no mean consolation, more especially when each letter spoke of increasing health and strength. At the month's end, I was preparing to return—my mother was slowly recovering, and I no longer had any fears on her account; but, there are links in our destiny fearfully interwoven with each other, and ending only in the anguish of our ultimate doom. The day before that fixed for my departure, I had been into a house where an epidemic disease raged; that night I complained of oppressive and deadly illness—before morning I was in a high fever.

"During the time I was sensible of my state, I wrote constantly to Gertrude, and carefully concealed my illness; but for several days I was delirious. When I recovered I called eagerly for my letters—there were none—none! I could not believe I was yet awake; but days still passed on, and not a line from England—from Gertrude. The instant I was able, I insisted upon putting horses to my carriage; I could bear no longer the torture of my suspense. By the most rapid journeys my debility would allow me to bear, I arrived in England. I travelled down to—by the same road that I had gone over with her; the words of her foreboding, at that time, sunk like ice into my heart, 'You will travel this road again before many months are past, and I shall not be with you: perhaps, I shall not be upon the earth.' At that thought I could have called unto the grave to open for me. Her unaccountable and lengthened silence, in spite of all the urgency and entreaties of my letters for a reply, filled me with presentiments the most fearful. Oh, God—oh, God, they were nothing to the truth!

"At last I arrived at—; my carriage stopped at the very house—my whole frame was perfectly frozen with dread—I trembled from limb to limb—the ice of a thousand winters seemed curdling through my blood. The bell rung—once, twice—no answer. I would have leaped out of the carriage—I would have forced an entrance, but I was unable to move. A man fettered and spell-bound by an incubus, is less helpless than I was. At last, an old female I had never seen before, appeared.

"'Where is she? How!' I could utter no more—my eyes were fixed upon the inquisitive and frightened countenance opposite to my own. Those eyes, I thought, might have said all that my lips could not; I was deceived—the old woman understood me no more than I did her; another person appeared—I recognized the face—it was that of a girl, who had been one of our attendants. Will you believe, that at that sight, the sight of one I had seen before, and could associate with the remembrance of the breathing, the living, the present Gertrude, a thrill of joy flashed across me—my fears seemed to vanish—my spell to cease?

"I sprung from the carriage; I caught the girl by the robe. 'Your mistress,' said I, 'your mistress—she is well—she is alive—speak, speak?' The girl shrieked out; my eagerness, and, perhaps, my emaciated and altered appearance, terrified her; but she had the strong nerves of youth, and was soon re-assured. She requested me to step in, and she would tell me all. My wife (Gertrude always went by that name), was alive, and, she believed, well, but she had left that place some weeks since. Trembling, and still fearful, but, comparatively, in Heaven, to my former agony, I followed the girl and the old woman into the house.

"The former got me some water. 'Now,' said I, when I had drunk a long and hearty draught, 'I am ready to hear all—my wife has left this house, you say—for what place?' The girl hesitated and looked down; the old woman, who was somewhat deaf, and did not rightly understand my questions, or the nature of the personal interest I had in the reply, answered,—'What does the gentleman want? the poor young lady who was last here? Lord help her!'

"'What of her?' I called out, in a new alarm. 'What of her? Where has she gone? Who took her away?'

"'Who took her?' mumbled the old woman, fretful at my impatient tone; 'Who took her? why, the mad doctor, to be sure!'

"I heard no more; my frame could support no longer the agonies my mind had undergone; I fell lifeless on the ground.

"When I recovered, it was in the dead of night. I was in bed, the old woman and the girl were at my side. I rose slowly and calmly. You know, all men who have ever suffered much, know the strange anomalies of despair—the quiet of our veriest anguish. Deceived by my bearing, I learned, by degrees, from my attendants, that Gertrude had some weeks since betrayed sudden symptoms of insanity; that these, in a very few hours, arose to an alarming pitch.—From some reason the woman could not explain, she had, a short time before, discarded the companion I had left with her; she was, therefore,

alone among servants. They sent for the ignorant practitioners of the place; they tried their nostrums without success; her madness increased; her attendants, with that superstitious horror of insanity, common to the lower classes, became more and more violently alarmed; the landlady insisted on her removal; and—and—I told you, Peham—I told you—they sent her away—sent her to a madhouse! All this I listened to!—all!—aye, and patiently! I noted down the address of her present abode; it was about the distance of twenty miles from—. I ordered fresh horses and set off immediately.

"I arrived there at day-break. It was a large, old house, which, like a French hotel, seemed to have no visible door; dark and gloomy, the pile appeared worthy of the purpose to which it was devoted. It was a long time before we aroused any one to answer our call; at length, I was ushered into a small parlour—how minutely I remember every article in the room; what varieties there are in the extreme passions! sometimes the same feeling will deaden all the senses—sometimes render them a hundred fold more acute!—

"At last, a man of a smiling and rosy aspect appeared. He pointed to a chair—rubbed his hands—and begged me to unfold my business; few words sufficed to do that. I requested to see his patient; I demanded by what authority she had been put under his care. The man's face altered. He was but little pleased with the nature of my visit. 'The lady,' he said, coolly, 'had been entrusted to his care, with an adequate remuneration, by Mr. Tyrrell; without that gentleman's permission he could not think even of suffering me to see her. I controlled my passion; I knew something, if not of the nature of private mad-houses, at least of that of mankind. I claimed his patient as my wife; I expressed myself obliged by his care, and begged his acceptance of a further remuneration, which I tendered, and which was eagerly accepted. The way was now cleared—there is no hell to which a golden branch will not win your admittance.

"The man detained me no longer; he hastened to lead the way. We passed through various long passages; sometimes the low moan of pain and weakness came upon my ear—sometimes the confused murmur of the idiot's drivelling soliloquy. From one passage, at right angles with the one through which we proceeded, came a fierce and thrilling shriek; it sunk at once into silence—perhaps by the lash!

"We were now in a different department of the building—all was silence—hushed deep—breathless: this seemed to me more awful than the terrible sounds I had just heard. My guide went slowly on, sometimes breaking the stillness of the dim gallery by the jingle of his keys—sometimes by a muttered panegyric on himself and his humanity. I neither heeded nor answered him.

"We read in the annals of the Inquisition, of every limb, nerve, sinew of the victim, being so nicely and accurately strained to their utmost, that the frame would not bear the additional screwing of a single hair breadth. Such seemed my state. We came to a small door, at the right hand; it was the last but one in the passage. We paused before it. 'Stop,' said I, 'for one moment:' and I was so faint and sick at heart, that I leaned against the wall to recover myself, before I let him open the door: when he did, it was a greater relief than I can express, to see that all was utterly dark. 'Wait, Sir,' said the guide, as he entered; and a sullen noise told me that he was unbarring the heavy shutter.

"Slowly the grey cold light of the morning broke in: a dark figure was stretched upon a wretched bed, at the far end of the room. She raised herself at the sound. She turned her face towards me; I did not fall, nor faint, nor shriek; I stood motionless, as if fixed into stone; and yet it was Gertrude upon whom I gazed! Oh, Heaven! who but myself could have recognized her? Her cheek was as the cheek of the dead—the hueless skin clung to the bone—the eye was dull and glassy for one moment, the next it became terribly and preternaturally bright—but not with the ray of intellect, or consciousness, or recognition. She looked long and hard at me; a voice, hollow and broken, but which still penetrated my heart, came forth through the wan lips, that scarcely moved with the exertion. 'I am very cold,' it said—'but if I complain, you will beat me.' She fell down again upon the bed, and hid her face.

"My guide, who was leaning carelessly by the window, turned to me with a sort of smirk—"This is her way, Sir,' he said; 'her madness is of a very singular description: we have not, as yet, been able to discover how far it extends; sometimes she seems conscious of the past, sometimes utterly oblivious of every thing: for days she is perfectly silent, or, at least, says nothing more than you have just heard; but, at times, she raves so violently, that—that—but I never use force where it can be helped.'

"I looked at the man, but I could not answer, unless I had torn him to pieces on the spot. I turned away hastily from the room; but I did not quit the house without Gertrude—I placed her in the carriage, by my side—notwithstanding all the protestations and fears of the keeper: these were readily silenced by the sum I gave him; it was large enough to have liberated half his household. In fact, I gathered from his conversation, that Tyrrell had spoken of Gertrude as an unhappy female whom he himself had seduced, and would now be rid of. I thank you, Pelham, for that frown, but keep your indignation till a fitter season for it.

"I took my victim, for I then regarded her as such, to a secluded and lonely spot: I procured for her whatever advice England could afford; all was in vain. Night and day I was by her side, but she never, for a moment, seemed to recollect me: yet were there times of fierce and overpowering delirium, when my name was uttered in the transport of the most passionate enthusiasm—when my features as absent, though not present, were recalled and dwelt upon with all the minuteness of the most faithful detail; and I knelt by her in all those moments, when no other human being was near, and clasped her wan hand, and wiped the dew from her forehead, and gazed upon her convulsed and changing face, and called upon her in a voice which could once have allayed her wildest emotions; and had the agony of seeing her eye dwell upon me with the most estranged indifference and the most vehement and fearful aversion. But ever and anon, she uttered words which chilled the very marrow of my bones; words which I would not, dared not believe, had any meaning or method in their madness—but which entered into my own brain, and preyed there like the devouring of a fire. There was a truth in those ravings—a reason in that incoherence—and my cup was not yet full.

"At last, one physician, who appeared to me to have more knowledge than the rest of the mysterious workings of her dreadful disease, advised me to take her to the scenes of her first childhood: 'Those scenes,' said he, justly, 'are in all stages of life, the most fondly remembered; and I have noted, that in many cases of insanity, places are easier recalled than persons: perhaps, if we can once awaken one link in the chain, it will communicate to the rest.'

"I took this advice, and set off to Norfolk. Her early home was not many miles distant from the churchyard where you once met me, and in that churchyard her mother was buried. She had died before Gertrude's flight; the father's death had followed it: perhaps my sufferings were a just retribution. The house had gone into other hands, and I had no difficulty in engaging it. Thank Heaven, I was spared the pain of seeing any of Gertrude's relations.

"It was night when we moved to the house. I had placed within the room where she used to sleep, all the furniture and books, with which it appeared, from my inquiries, to have been formerly filled. We laid her in the bed that had held that faded and altered form, in its freshest and purest years. I shrouded myself in one corner of the room, and counted the dull minutes till the daylight dawned. I pass over the detail of my recital—the experiment partially succeeded—would to God that it had not! would that she had gone down to her grave with her dreadful secret unrevealed! would—but—"

Here Glanville's voice failed him, and there was a brief silence before he recommenced.

"Gertrude now had many lucid intervals; but these my presence were always sufficient to change into a delirious raving, even more incoherent than her insanity had ever yet been. She would fly from me with the most fearful cries, bury her face in her hands, and seem like one oppressed and haunted by a supernatural visitation, as long as I remained in the room; the moment I left her, she began, though slowly, to recover.

"This was to me the bitterest affliction of all—to be forbidden to nurse, to cherish, to tend her, was like taking from me my last hope! But little can the thoughtless or the worldly dream of the depths of a real love; I used to wait all day by her door, and it was luxury enough to me to catch her accents or hear her move, or sigh, or even weep; and all night, when she could not know of my presence, I used to lie down by her bedside; and when I sank into a short and convulsed sleep, I saw her once more, in my brief and fleeting dreams, in all the devoted love, and glowing beauty, which had once constituted the whole of my happiness, and my world.

"One day I had been called from my post by her door. They came to me hastily—she was in strong convulsions. I flew up stairs, and supported her in my arms till the fits had ceased: we then placed her in bed; she never rose from it again; but on that bed of death, the words, as well as the cause, of her former insanity, were explained—the mystery was unravelled.

"It was a still and breathless night. The moon, which was at its decrease, came through the half-closed shutters, and beneath its solemn and eternal light, she yielded to my entreaties, and revealed all. The man—my friend—Tyrrell—had polluted her ear with his addresses, and when forbidden the house, had bribed the woman I had left with her, to convey his letters—she was discharged—but Tyrrell was no ordinary villain; he entered the house one evening, when no one but Gertrude was there—Come near me, Pelham—nearer—bend down your ear—he used force, violence! That night Gertrude's senses deserted her—you know the rest.

"The moment that I gathered, from Gertrude's broken sentences, their meaning, that moment the demon entered into my soul. All human feelings seemed to fly from my heart; it shrunk into one burning, and thirsty, and fiery want—that was for revenge. I would have sprung from the bedside, but Gertrude's hand clung to me, and detained me; the damp, chill grasp, grew colder and colder—it

ceased—the hand fell—I turned—one slight, but awful shudder, went over that face, made yet more wan, by the light of the waning and ghastly moon—one convulsion shook the limbs—one murmur passed the falling and hueless lips. I cannot tell you the rest— you know—you can guess it.

"That day week we buried her in the lonely churchyard—where she had, in her lucid moments, wished to lie—by the side of her mother."

CHAPTER LXXV.

I BREATHED,
But not the breath of human life;
A serpent round my heart was wreathed,
And stung my very thought to strife.
—The Giaour.

"Thank Heaven, the most painful part of my story is at an end. You will now be able to account for our meeting in the church-yard at _____. I secured myself a lodging at a cottage not far from the spot which held Gertrude's remains. Night after night I wandered to that lonely place, and longed for a couch beside the sleeper, whom I mourned in the selfishness of my soul. I prostrated myself on the mound; I humbled myself to tears. In the overflowing anguish of my heart I forgot all that had aroused its stormier passions into life. Revenge, hatred,—all vanished. I lifted up my face to the tender heavens: I called aloud to the silent and placid air; and when I turned again to the unconscious mound, I thought of nothing but the sweetness of our early love and the bitterness of her early death. It was in such moments that your footstep broke upon my grief: the instant others had seen me,—other eyes had penetrated the sanctity of my regret,—from that instant, whatever was more soft and holy in the passions and darkness of my mind seemed to vanish away like a scroll. I again returned to the intense and withering remembrance which was henceforward to make the very key and pivot of my existence. I again recalled the last night of Gertrude's life; I again shuddered at the low murmured sounds, whose dreadful sense broke slowly upon my soul. I again felt the cold-cold, slimy grasp of those wan and dying fingers; and I again nerved my heart to an iron strength, and vowed deep, deep-rooted, endless, implacable revenge.

"The morning after the night you saw me, I left my abode. I went to London, and attempted to methodize my plans of vengeance. The first thing to discover was Tyrrell's present residence. By accident I heard he was at Paris, and, within two hours of receiving the intelligence, I set off for that city. On arriving there, the habits of the gambler soon discovered him to my search. I saw him one night at a hell. He was evidently in distressed circumstances, and the fortune of the table was against him. Unperceived by him, I feasted my eyes on his changing countenance, as those deadly and wearing transitions of feeling, only to be produced by the gaming-table, passed over it. While I gazed upon him, a thought of more exquisite and refined revenge than had yet occurred to me flashed upon my mind. Occupied with the ideas it gave rise to, I went into the adjoining room, which was quite empty. There I seated myself, and endeavoured to develop more fully the rude and imperfect outline of my scheme.

"The arch tempter favoured me with a trusty coadjutor in my designs. I was lost in a reverie, when I heard myself accosted by name. I looked up, and beheld a man whom I had often seen with Tyrrell, both at Spa and (the watering place, where, with Gertrude, I had met Tyrrell). He was a person of low birth and character; but esteemed, from his love of coarse humour and vulgar enterprise, a man of infinite parts—a sort of Yorick— by the set most congenial to Tyrrell's tastes. By this undue reputation, and the levelling habit of gaming, to which he was addicted, he was raised, in certain societies, much above his proper rank: need I say that this man was Thornton? I was but slightly acquainted with him; however, he accosted me cordially, and endeavoured to draw me into conversation.

"'Have you seen Tyrrell?' said he, 'he is at it again; what's bred in the bone, you know, etc.' I turned pale with the mention of Tyrrell's name, and replied very laconically, to what purpose I forget. 'Ah! ah!' rejoined Thornton, eyeing me with an air of impertinent familiarity, 'I see you have not forgiven him; he played you but a shabby trick at ____; seduced your mistress, or something of that sort; he told me all about it: pray, how is the poor girl now?'

"I made no reply; I sank down and gasped for breath. All I had suffered seemed nothing to the indignity I then endured. She—she—who had once been my pride—my honour—life—to be thus spoken of—and—. I could not pursue the idea. I rose hastily, looked at Thornton with a glance which might

have abashed a man less shameless and callous than himself, and left the room.

"That night, as I tossed restless and feverish on my bed of thorns, I saw how useful Thornton might be to me in the prosecution of the scheme I had entered into; and the next morning I sought him out, and purchased (no very difficult matter) both his secrecy and his assistance. My plan of vengeance, to one who had seen and observed less of the varieties of human nature than you have done, might seem far-fetched and unnatural; for while the superficial are ready to allow eccentricity as natural in the coolness of ordinary life, they never suppose it can exist in the heat of the passions,—as if, in such moments, anything was ever considered absurd in the means which was favourable to the end. Were the secrets of one passionate and irregulated heart laid bare, there would be more romance in them than in all the fables which we turn from with incredulity and disdain, as exaggerated and overdrawn.

"Among the thousand schemes for retribution which had chased each other across my mind, the death of my victim was only the ulterior object. Death, indeed—the pang of one moment—appeared to me but very feeble justice for the life of lingering and restless anguish to which his treachery had condemned me; but my penance, my doom, I could have forgiven: it was the fate of a more innocent and injured being which irritated the sting and fed the venom of my revenge. That revenge no ordinary punishment could appease. If fanaticism can only be satisfied by the rack and the flames, you may readily conceive a like unappeasable fury in a hatred so deadly, so concentrated, and so just as mine; and if fanaticism persuades itself into a virtue, so also did my hatred.

"The scheme which I resolved upon was to attach Tyrrell more and more to the gaming-table, to be present at his infatuation, to feast my eyes upon the feverish intensity of his suspense; to reduce him, step by step, to the lowest abyss of poverty; to glut my soul with the abjectness and humiliation of his penury; to strip him of all aid, consolation, sympathy, and friendship; to follow him, unseen, to his wretched and squalid home; to mark the struggles of the craving nature with the loathing pride; and, finally, to watch the frame wear, the eye sink, the lip grow livid, and all the terrible and torturing progress of gnawing want to utter starvation. Then, in that last state, but not before, I might reveal myself; stand by the hopeless and succourless bed of death; shriek out in the dizzy ear a name, which could treble the horrors of remembrance; snatch from the struggling and agonizing conscience the last plank, the last straw, to which, in its madness, it could cling, and blacken the shadows of departing life, by opening to the shuddering sense the threshold of an impatient and yawning hell.

"Hurried away by the unhallowed fever of these projects, I thought of nothing but their accomplishment. I employed Thornton, who still maintained his intimacy with Tyrrell, to decoy him more and more to the gambling-house; and, as the unequal chances of the public table were not rapid enough in their termination to consummate the ruin even of an impetuous and vehement gamester like Tyrrell so soon as my impatience desired, Thornton took every opportunity of engaging him in private play, and accelerating my object by the unlawful arts of which he was master. My enemy was every day approaching the farthest verge of ruin; near relations he had none,—all his distant ones he had disobliged; all his friends, and even his acquaintance, he had fatigued by his importunity or disgusted by his conduct. In the whole world there seemed not a being who would stretch forth a helping hand to save him from the total and penniless beggary to which he was hopelessly advancing. Out of the wrecks of his former property and the generosity of former friends, whatever he had already wrung had been immediately staked at the gaming-house and as immediately lost.

"Perhaps this would not so soon have been the case, if Thornton had not artfully fed and sustained his expectations. He had been long employed by Tyrrell in a professional capacity, and he knew well all the gamester's domestic affairs: and when he promised, should things come to the worst, to find some expedient to restore them, Tyrrell easily adopted so flattering a belief.

"Meanwhile I had taken the name and disguise under favour of which you met me at Paris, and Thornton had introduced me to Tyrrell as a young Englishman of great wealth and still greater inexperience. The gambler grasped eagerly at an acquaintance which Thornton readily persuaded him he could turn to such account; and I had thus every facility of marking, day by day, how my plot thickened and my vengeance hastened to its triumph.

"This was not all. I said there was not in the wide world a being who would have saved Tyrrell from the fate he deserved and was approaching. I forgot, there was one who still clung to him with affection, and for whom he still seemed to harbour the better and purer feelings of less degraded and guilty times. This person (you will guess readily it was a woman) I made it my especial business and care to wean away from my prey; I would not suffer him a consolation he had denied to me. I used all the arts of seduction to obtain the transfer of her affections. Whatever promises and vows—whether of love or wealth—could effect were tried; nor, at last, without success: I triumphed. The woman became my slave. It was she who, whenever Tyrrell faltered in his course to destruction, combated his scruples and urged on his reluctance; it was she who informed me minutely of his pitiful finances, and assisted, to

her utmost, in expediting their decay. The still more bitter treachery of deserting him in his veriest want I reserved till the fittest occasion, and contemplated with a savage delight.

"I was embarrassed in my scheme by two circumstances: first, Thornton's acquaintance with you; and, secondly, Tyrrell's receipt (some time afterwards) of a very unexpected sum of two hundred pounds, in return for renouncing all further and possible claim on the purchasers of his estate. To the former, so far as it might interfere with my plans or lead to my detection, you must pardon me for having put a speedy termination: the latter threw me into great consternation; for Tyrrell's first idea was to renounce the gaming-table, and endeavour to live upon the trifling pittance he had acquired as long as the utmost economy would permit.

"This idea Margaret, the woman I spoke of, according to my instructions, so artfully and successfully combated that Tyrrell yielded to his natural inclination, and returned once more to the infatuation of his favourite pursuit. However, I had become restlessly impatient for the conclusion to this prefatory part of my revenge; and, accordingly, Thornton and myself arranged that Tyrrell should be persuaded by the former to risk all, even to his very last farthing, in a private game with me. Tyrrell, who believed he should readily recruit himself by my unskilfulness in the game, fell easily into the snare; and on the second night of our engagement, he not only had lost the whole of his remaining pittance, but had signed bonds owing to a debt of far greater amount than he, at that time, could ever even have dreamt of possessing.

"Flushed, heated, almost maddened with my triumph, I yielded to the exultation of the moment. I did not know you were so near,—I discovered myself,—you remember the scene. I went joyfully home: and for the first time since Gertrude's death I was happy; but there I imagined my vengeance only would begin; I revelled in the burning hope of marking the hunger and extremity that must ensue. The next day, when Tyrrell turned round, in his despair, for one momentary word of comfort from the lips to which he believed, in the fond credulity of his heart, falsehood and treachery never came, his last earthly friend taunted and deserted him. Mark me, Pelham: I was by and heard her! "But here my power of retribution was to close: from the thirst still unslaked and unappeased, the cup was abruptly snatched. Tyrrell disappeared; no one knew whither. I set Thornton's inquiries at work. A week afterwards he brought me word that Tyrrell had died in extreme want, and from very despair. Will you credit that, at hearing this news, my first sensations were only rage and disappointment? True, he had died, died in all the misery my heart could wish, but I had not seen him die; and the death-bed seemed to me robbed of its bitterest pang.

"I know not to this day, though I have often questioned him, what interest Thornton had in deceiving me by this tale: for my own part, I believe that he himself was deceived; certain it is (for I inquired), that a person very much answering to Tyrrell's description had perished in the state Thornton mentioned; and this might, therefore, in all probability, have misled him.

"I left Paris, and returned, through Normandy, to England (where I remained some weeks); there we again met: but I think we did not meet till I had been persecuted by the insolence and importunity of Thornton. The tools of our passions cut both ways: like the monarch who employed strange beasts in his army, we find our treacherous allies less destructive to others than ourselves. But I was not of a temper to brook the tauntings or the encroachment of my own creature: it had been with but an ill grace that I had endured his familiarity, when I absolutely required his services; much less could I suffer his intrusion when those services,—services not of love, but hire, were no longer necessary. Thornton, like all persons of his stamp, had a low pride, which I was constantly offending. He had mixed with men more than my equals in rank on a familiar footing, and he could ill brook the hauteur with which my disgust at his character absolutely constrained me to treat him. It is true that the profuseness of my liberality was such that the mean wretch stomached affronts for which he was so largely paid; but, with the cunning and malicious spite natural to him, he knew well how to repay them in kind. While he assisted, he affected to ridicule, my revenge; and though he soon saw that he durst not, for his very life, breathe a syllable openly against Gertrude or her memory, yet he contrived, by general remarks and covert insinuations, to gall me to the very quick and in the very tenderest point. Thus a deep and cordial antipathy to each other arose and grew and strengthened, till, I believe, like the fiends in hell, our mutual hatred became our common punishment.

"No sooner had I returned to England than I found him here awaiting my arrival. He favoured me with frequent visits and requests for money. Although not possessed of any secret really important affecting my character, he knew well that he was possessed of one important to my quiet; and he availed himself to the utmost of my strong and deep aversion even to the most delicate recurrence to my love to Gertrude and its unhallowed and disastrous termination. At length, however, he wearied me. I found that he was sinking into the very dregs and refuse of society, and I could not longer brook the idea of enduring his familiarity and feeding his vices.

"I pass over any detail of my own feelings, as well as my outward and worldly history. Over my mind a great change had passed: I was no longer torn by violent and contending passions; upon the tumultuous sea a dead and heavy torpor had fallen; the very winds, necessary for health, had ceased:—"I slept on the abyss without a surge."

"One violent and engrossing passion is among the worst of all immoralities, for it leaves the mind too stagnant and exhausted for those activities and energies which constitute our real duties. However, now that the tyrant feeling of my mind was removed, I endeavoured to shake off the apathy it had produced, and return to the various occupations and businesses of life. Whatever could divert me from my own dark memories, or give a momentary motion to the stagnation of my mind, I grasped at with the fondness and eagerness of a child. Thus, you found me surrounding myself with luxuries which palled upon my taste the instant that their novelty had passed: now striving for the vanity of literary fame; now, for the emptier baubles which riches could procure. At one time I shrouded myself in my closet, and brooded over the dogmas of the learned and the errors of the wise; at another, I plunged into the more engrossing and active pursuits of the living crowd which rolled around me,—and flattered my heart, that amid the applause of senators and the whirlpool of affairs, I could lull to rest the voices of the past and the spectre of the dead.

"Whether these hopes were effectual, and the struggle not in vain, this haggard and wasting form, drooping day by day into the grave, can declare; but I said I would not dwell long upon this part of my history, nor is it necessary. Of one thing only, not connected with the main part of my confessions, it is right, for the sake of one tender and guiltless being, that I should speak.

"In the cold and friendless world with which I mixed, there was a heart which had years ago given itself wholly up to me. At that time I was ignorant of the gift I so little deserved, or (for it was before I knew Gertrude) I might have returned it, and been saved years of crime and anguish. Since then, the person I allude to had married, and, by the death of her husband, was once more free. Intimate with my family, and more especially with my sister, she now met me constantly; her compassion for the change she perceived in me, both in mind and person, was stronger than even her reserve, and this is the only reason why I speak of an attachment which ought otherwise to be concealed: I believe that you already understand to whom I allude, and since you have discovered her weakness, it is right that you should know also her virtue; it is right that you should learn that it was not in her the fantasy or passion of a moment, but a long and secreted love; that you should learn that it was her pity, and no unfeminine disregard to opinion, which betrayed her into imprudence; and that she is, at this moment, innocent of everything but the folly of loving me.

"I pass on to the time when I discovered that I had been either intentionally or unconsciously deceived, and that my enemy yet lived! lived in honour, prosperity, and the world's blessings. The information was like removing a barrier from a stream hitherto pent into quiet and restraint. All the stormy thoughts, feelings, and passions so long at rest rushed again into a terrible and tumultuous action. The newly-formed stratum of my mind was swept away; everything seemed a wreck, a chaos, a convulsion of jarring elements; but this is a trite and tame description of my feelings; words would be but commonplace to express the revulsion which I experienced: yet, amidst all, there was one paramount and presiding thought, to which the rest were as atoms in the heap,—the awakened thought of vengeance!—but how was it to be gratified?

"Placed as Tyrrell now was in the scale of society, every method of retribution but the one formerly rejected seemed at an end. To that one, therefore, weak and merciful as it appeared to me, I resorted; you took my challenge to Tyrrell; you remember his behaviour: Conscience doth indeed make cowards of us all! The letter enclosed to me in his to you contained only the commonplace argument urged so often by those who have injured us; namely, the reluctance at attempting our life after having ruined our happiness. When I found that he had left London my rage knew no bounds: I was absolutely frantic with indignation; the earth reeled before my eyes; I was almost suffocated by the violence—the whirlpool— of my emotions. I gave myself no time to think,—I left town in pursuit of my foe.

"I found that—still addicted, though, I believed, not so madly as before, to the old amusements—he was in the neighbourhood of Newmarket, awaiting the races shortly to ensue. No sooner did I find his address than I wrote him another challenge, still more forcibly and insultingly worded than the one you took. In this I said that his refusal was of no avail; that I had sworn that my vengeance should overtake him; and that sooner or later, in the face of heaven and despite of hell, my oath should be fulfilled. Remember those words, Pelham, I shall refer to them hereafter.

"Tyrrell's reply was short and contemptuous: he affected to treat me as a madman. Perhaps (and I confess that the incoherence of my letter authorized such suspicion) he believed I really was one. He concluded by saying that if he received more of my letters, he should shelter himself from my aggressions by the protection of the law.

"On receiving this reply, a stern, sullen, iron spirit entered into my bosom. I betrayed no external mark of passion; I sat down in silence; I placed the letter and Gertrude's picture before me. There, still and motionless, I remained for hours. I remember well I was awakened from my gloomy revery by the clock, as it struck the first hour of the morning. At that lone and ominous sound, the associations of romance and dread which the fables of our childhood connect with it rushed coldly and fearfully into my mind: the damp dews broke out upon my forehead and the blood curdled in my limbs. In that moment I knelt down and vowed a frantic and deadly oath—the words of which I would not now dare to repeat—that before three days expired, hell should no longer be cheated of its prey. I rose,—I flung myself on my bed, and slept.

"The next day I left my abode. I purchased a strong and swift horse; and, disguising myself from head to foot in a long horseman's cloak, I set off alone, locking in my heart the calm and cold conviction that my oath should be kept. I placed, concealed in my dress, two pistols; my intention was to follow Tyrrell wherever he went, till we could find ourselves alone, and without the chance of intrusion. It was then my determination to force him into a contest, and that no trembling of the hand, no error of the swimming sight, might betray my purpose, to place us foot to foot, and the mouth of each pistol almost to the very temple of each antagonist. Nor was I deterred for a moment from this resolution by the knowledge that my own death must be as certain as my victim's. On the contrary, I looked forward to dying thus, and so baffling the more lingering, but not less sure, disease which was daily wasting me away, with the same fierce, yet not unquiet delight with which men have rushed into battle, and sought out a death less bitter to them than life.

"For two days, though I each day saw Tyrrell, fate threw into my way no opportunity of executing my design. The morning of the third came,— Tyrrell was on the race-ground; sure that he would remain there for some hours, I put up my wearied horse in the town, and, seating myself in an obscure corner of the course, was contented with watching, as the serpent does his victim, the distant motions of my enemy. Perhaps you can recollect passing a man seated on the ground and robed in a horseman's cloak. I need not tell you that it was I whom you passed and accosted. I saw you ride by me; but the moment you were gone I forgot the occurrence. I looked upon the rolling and distant crowd as a child views the figures of the phantasmagoria, scarcely knowing if my eyes deceived me, feeling impressed with some stupefying and ghastly sensation of dread, and cherishing the conviction that my life was not as the life of the creatures that passed before me.

"The day waned: I went back for my horse; I returned to the course, and, keeping at a distance as little suspicious as possible, followed the motions of Tyrrell. He went back to the town, rested there, repaired to a gaming-table, stayed in it a short time, returned to his inn, and ordered his horse.

"In all these motions I followed the object of my pursuit; and my heart bounded with joy when I at last saw him set out alone and in the advancing twilight. I followed him till he left the main road. Now, I thought, was my time. I redoubled my pace, and had nearly reached him, when some horsemen appearing, constrained me again to slacken my pace. Various other similar interruptions occurred to delay my plot. At length all was undisturbed. I spurred my horse, and was nearly on the heels of my enemy, when I perceived him join another man: this was you; I clenched my teeth and drew my breath, as I once more retreated to a distance. In a short time two men passed me, and I found that, owing to some accident on the road, they stopped to assist you. It appears, by your evidence on a subsequent event, that these men were Thornton and his friend Dawson; at the time they passed too rapidly, and I was too much occupied in my own dark thoughts, to observe them: still I kept up to you and Tyrrell, sometimes catching the outlines of your figures through the moon, light, at others (with the acute sense of anxiety), only just distinguishing the clang of your horses' hoofs on the stony ground. At last a heavy shower came on: imagine my joy when Tyrrell left you and rode off alone!

"I passed you, and followed my enemy as fast as my horse would permit; but it was not equal to Tyrrell's, which was almost at its full speed. However, I came, at last, to a very steep and almost precipitous descent. I was forced to ride slowly and cautiously; this, however, I the less regarded, from my conviction that Tyrrell must be obliged to use the same precaution. My hand was on my pistol with a grasp of premeditated revenge, when a shrill, sharp, solitary cry broke on my ear.

"No sound followed: all was silence. I was just approaching towards the close of the descent, when a horse without its rider passed me. The shower had ceased, and the moon broke from the cloud some minutes before; by its light I recognized the horse rode by Tyrrell; perhaps, I thought, it has thrown its master, and my victim will now be utterly in my power. I pushed hastily forward in spite of the hill, not yet wholly passed. I came to a spot of singular desolation: it was a broad patch of waste land, a pool of water was on the right, and a remarkable and withered tree hung over it. I looked round, but saw nothing of life stirring. A dark and imperfectly developed object lay by the side of the pond; I pressed forward: merciful God! my enemy had escaped my hand, and lay in the stillness of death before me!"

"What!" I exclaimed, interrupting Glanville, for I could contain myself no longer, "it was not by you then that Tyrrell fell?" With these words, I grasped his hand; and, excited as I had been by my painful and wrought-up interest in his recital, I burst into tears of gratitude and joy. Reginald Glanville was innocent: Ellen was not the sister of an assassin!

After a short pause, Glanville continued:

"I gazed upon the upward and distorted face, in a deep and sickening silence; an awe, dark and undefined, crept over my heart: I stood beneath the solemn and sacred heavens, and felt that the hand of God was upon me; that a mysterious and fearful edict had gone forth; that my headlong and unholy wrath had, in the very midst of its fury, been checked, as if but the idle anger of a child; that the plan I had laid in the foolish wisdom of my heart had been traced, step by step, by an all-seeing eye, and baffled in the moment of its fancied success by an inscrutable and awful doom. I had wished the death of my enemy: lo! my wish was accomplished, —how, I neither knew nor guessed; there, a still and senseless clod of earth, without power of offence or injury, he lay beneath my feet: it seemed as if, in the moment of my uplifted arm, the Divine Avenger had asserted His prerogative,—as if the angel which had smitten the Assyrian had again swept forth, though against a meaner victim; and while he punished the guilt of a human criminal, had set an eternal barrier to the vengeance of a human foe!

"I dismounted from my horse, and bent over the murdered man. I drew from my bosom the miniature, which never forsook me, and bathed the lifeless resemblance of Gertrude in the blood of her betrayer. Scarcely had I done so, before my ear caught the sound of steps; hastily I thrust, as I thought, the miniature in my bosom, remounted, and rode hurriedly away. At that hour, and for many which succeeded to it, I believe that all sense was suspended. I was like a man haunted by a dream, and wandering under its influence! or as one whom a spectre pursues, and for whose eye the breathing and busy world is but as a land of unreal forms and flitting shadows, teeming with the monsters of darkness and the terrors of the tomb.

"It was not till the next day that I missed the picture. I returned to the spot; searched it carefully, but in vain; the miniature could not be found: I returned to town, and shortly afterwards the newspapers informed me of what had subsequently occurred. I saw, with dismay, that all appearances pointed to me as the criminal, and that the officers of justice were at that moment tracing the clew which my cloak and the color of my horse afforded them. My mysterious pursuit of Tyrrell, the disguise I had assumed, the circumstance of my passing you on the road and of my flight when you approached, all spoke volumes against me. A stronger evidence yet remained, and it was reserved for Thornton to indicate it; at this moment my life is in his hands. Shortly after my return to town, he forced his way into my room, shut the door, bolted it, and, the moment we were alone, said, with a savage and fiendish grin of exultation and defiance, 'Sir Reginald Glanville, you have many a time and oft insulted me with your pride, and more with your gifts: now it is my time to insult and triumph over you; know that one word of mine could sentence you to the gibbet.'

"He then minutely summed up the evidence against me, and drew from his pocket the threatening letter I had last written to Tyrrell. You remember that therein I said my vengeance was sworn against him, and that, sooner or later, it should overtake him. 'Couple,' said Thornton, coldly, as he replaced the letter in his pocket,—'couple these words with the evidence already against you, and I would not buy your life at a farthing's value.'

"How Thornton came by this paper, so important to my safety, I know not: but when he read it I was startled by the danger it brought upon me; one glance sufficed to show me that I was utterly at the mercy of the villain who stood before me; he saw and enjoyed my struggles.

"'Now,' said he, 'we know each other: at present I want a thousand pounds; you will not refuse it me, I am sure; when it is gone, I shall call again; till then you can do without me.' I flung him a check for the money, and he departed.

"You may conceive the mortification I endured in this sacrifice of pride to prudence; but those were no ordinary motives which induced me to submit to it. Fast approaching to the grave, it mattered to me but little whether a violent death should shorten a life to which a limit was already set, and which I was far from being anxious to retain: but I could not endure the thought of bringing upon my mother and my sister the wretchedness and shame which the mere suspicion of a crime so enormous would occasion them; and when my eye caught all the circumstances arrayed against me, my pride seemed to suffer a less mortification even in the course I adopted than in the thought of the felon's gaol and the criminal's trial,—the hoots and execrations of the mob, and the death and ignominious remembrance of the murderer.

"Stronger than either of these motives was my shrinking and loathing aversion to whatever seemed likely to unrip the secret history of the past. I sickened at the thought of Gertrude's name and fate

being bared to the vulgar eye, and exposed to the comment, the strictures, the ridicule of the gaping and curious public. It seemed to me, therefore, but a very poor exertion of philosophy to conquer my feelings of humiliation at Thornton's insolence and triumph, and to console myself with the reflection that a few months must rid me alike of his exactions and my life.

"But, of late, Thornton's persecutions and demands have risen to such a height that I have been scarcely able to restrain my indignation and control myself into compliance. The struggle is too powerful for my frame: it is rapidly bringing on the fiercest and the last contest I shall suffer, before 'the wicked shall cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest.' Some days since I came to a resolution, which I am now about to execute: it is to leave this country and take refuge on the Continent. There I shall screen myself from Thornton's pursuit and the danger which it entails upon me; and there, unknown and undisturbed, I shall await the termination of my disease.

"But two duties remained to me to fulfil before I departed; I have now discharged them both. One was due to the warmhearted and noble being who honoured me with her interest and affection,—the other to you. I went yesterday to the former; I sketched the outline of that history which I have detailed to you. I showed her the waste of my barren heart, and spoke to her of the disease which was wearing me away. How beautiful is the love of woman! She would have followed me over the world,—received my last sigh, and seen me to the rest I shall find at length; and this without a hope, or thought of recompense, even from the worthlessness of my love.

"But enough!—of her my farewell has been taken. Your suspicions I have seen and forgiven; for they were natural: it was due to me to remove them; the pressure of your hand tells me that I have done so; but I had another reason for my confessions. I have worn away the romance of my heart, and I have now no indulgence for the little delicacies and petty scruples which often stand in the way of our real happiness. I have marked your former addresses to Ellen, and, I confess, with great joy; for I know, amidst all your worldly ambition and the encrusted artificiality of your exterior, how warm and generous is your real heart,—how noble and intellectual is your real mind: and were my sister tenfold more perfect than I believe her, I do not desire to find on earth one more deserving of her than yourself. I have remarked your late estrangement from Ellen; and while I guessed, I felt that, however painful to me, I ought to remove, the cause: she loves you—though perhaps you know it not—much and truly; and since my earlier life has been passed in a selfish inactivity, I would fain let it close with the reflection of having served two beings whom I prize so dearly, and the hope that their happiness will commence with my death.

"And now, Pelham, I have done; I am weak and exhausted, and cannot bear more—even of your society, now. Think over what I have last said, and let me see you again to-morrow: on the day after, I leave England forever."

CHAPTER LXXVI.

But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not,
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?
—P. B. Shelley.

It was not with a light heart—for I loved Glanville too well, not to be powerfully affected by his history and approaching fate—but with a chastised and sober joy, that I now beheld my friend innocent of the guilt my suspicions had accused him of, and the only obstacle to my marriage with his sister removed. True it was that the sword yet hung over his head, and that while he lived, there could be no rational assurance of his safety from the disgrace and death of the felon. In the world's eye, therefore, the barrier to my union with Ellen would have been far from being wholly removed; but, at that moment, my disappointments had disgusted me with the world, and I turned with a double yearning of heart to her whose pure and holy love could be at once my recompense and retreat.

Nor was this selfish consideration my only motive in the conduct I was resolved to adopt; on the contrary, it was scarcely more prominent in my mind, than those derived from giving to a friend who

was now dearer to me than ever, his only consolation on this earth, and to Ellen, the safest protection, in case of any danger to her brother. With these, it is true, were mingled feelings which, in happier circumstances, might have been those of transport at a bright and successful termination to a deep and devoted love; but these I had, while Glanville's very life was so doubtful, little right to indulge, and I checked them as soon as they arose.

After a sleepless night, I repaired to Lady Glanville's house. It was long since I had been there, and the servant who admitted me, seemed somewhat surprised at the earliness of my visit. I desired to see the mother, and waited in the parlour till she came. I made but a scanty exordium to my speech. In very few words I expressed my love to Ellen, and besought her mediation in my behalf; nor did I think it would be a slight consideration in my favour, with the fond mother, to mention Glanville's concurrence with my suit.

"Ellen is up stairs in the drawing-room," said Lady Glanville. "I will go and prepare her to receive you—if you have her consent, you have mine."

"Will you suffer me, then," said I, "to forestal you? Forgive my impatience, and let me see her before you do."

Lady Glanville was a woman of the good old school, and stood somewhat upon forms and ceremonies. I did not, therefore, await the answer, which I foresaw might not be favourable to my success, but with my customary assurance, left the room, and hastened up stairs. I entered the drawing-room, and shut the door. Ellen was at the far end; and as I entered with a light step, she did not perceive me till I was close by.

She started when she saw me; and her cheek, before very pale, deepened into crimson. "Good Heavens! is it you," she said, falteringly "I—I thought—but—but—excuse me for an instant, I will call my mother."

"Stay for one instant, I beseech you—it is from your mother that I come—she has referred me to you." And with a trembling and hurried voice, for all my usual boldness forsook me, I poured forth, in rapid and burning words, the history of my secret and hoarded love—its doubts, fears, and hopes.

Ellen sunk back on her chair, overpowered and silent by her feelings, and the vehemence of my own. I knelt, and took her hand; I covered it with my kisses—it was not withdrawn from them. I raised my eyes, and beheld in her's all that my heart had hoped, but did not dare to pourtray.

"You—you," said she—when at last she found words—"I imagined that you only thought of ambition and the world—I could not have dreamt of this." She ceased, blushing and embarrassed.

"It is true," said I, "that you had a right to think so, for, till this moment, I have never opened to you even a glimpse of my veiled heart, and its secret and wild desires; but, do you think that my love was the less a treasure, because it was hidden? or the less deep, because it was cherished at the bottom of my soul? No—no; believe me that love was not to be mingled with the ordinary objects of life—it was too pure to be profaned by the levities and follies which are all of my nature that I have permitted myself to develope to the world. Do not imagine, that, because I have seemed an idler with the idle—selfish with the interested—and cold, and vain, and frivolous, with those to whom such qualities were both a passport and a virtue; do not imagine that I have concealed within me nothing more worthy of you and of myself; my very love for you shews, that I am wiser and better than I have seemed. Speak to me, Ellen—may I call you by that name—one word—one syllable! speak to me, and tell me that you have read my heart, and that you will not reject it!"

There came no answer from those dear lips; but their soft and tender smile told me that I might hope. That hour I still recall and bless! that hour was the happiest of my life.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

A thousand crowns, or else lay down your head. —2nd Part of Henry VI.

From Ellen, I hastened to the house of Sir Reginald. The hall was in all the confusion of approaching departure. I sprang over the paraphernalia of books and boxes which obstructed my way, and bounded

up the stairs. Glanville was, as usual, alone: his countenance was less pale than it had been lately, and when I saw it brighten as I approached, I hoped, in the new happiness of my heart, that he might baffle both his enemy and his disease.

I told him all that had just occurred between Ellen and myself. "And now," said I, as I clasped his hand, "I have a proposal to make, to which you must accede: let me accompany you abroad; I will go with you to whatever corner of the world you may select. We will plan together every possible method of concealing our retreat. Upon the past I will never speak to you. In your hours of solitude I will never disturb you by an unwelcome and ill-timed sympathy. I will tend upon you, watch over you, bear with you, with more than the love and tenderness of a brother. You shall see me only when you wish it. Your loneliness shall never be invaded. When you get better, as I presage you will, I will leave you to come back to England, and provide for the worst, by ensuring your sister a protector. I will then return to you alone, that your seclusion may not be endangered by the knowledge, even of Ellen, and you shall have me by your side till—till—"

"The last!" interrupted Glanville. "Too—too generous Pelham, I feel— these tears (the first I have shed for a long, long time) tell you, that I feel to the heart—your friendship and disinterested attachment; but the moment your love for Ellen has become successful, I will not tear you from its enjoyment. Believe me, all that I could derive from your society, could not afford me half the happiness I should have in knowing that you and Ellen were blest in each other. No—no, my solitude will, at that reflection, be deprived of its sting. You shall hear from me once again; my letter shall contain a request, and your executing that last favour must console and satisfy the kindness of your heart. For myself, I shall die as I have lived—alone. All fellowship with my griefs would seem to me strange and unwelcome."

I would not suffer Glanville to proceed. I interrupted him with fresh arguments and entreaties, to which he seemed at last to submit, and I was in the firm hope of having conquered his determination, when we were startled by a sudden and violent noise in the hall.

"It is Thornton," said Glanville, calmly. "I told them not to admit him, and he is forcing his way."

Scarcely had Sir Reginald said this, before Thornton burst abruptly into the room.

Although it was scarcely noon, he was more than half intoxicated, and his eyes swam in his head with a maudlin expression of triumph and insolence, as he rolled towards us.

"Oh, oh! Sir Reginald," he said, "thought of giving me the slip, eh? Your d—d servants said you were out; but I soon silenced them. 'Egad I made them as nimble as cows in a cage—I have not learnt the use of my fists for nothing. So, you're going abroad to-morrow; without my leave, too— pretty good joke that, indeed. Come, come, my brave fellow, you need not scowl at me in that way. Why, you look as surly as a butcher's dog with a broken head."

Glanville, who was lived with ill-suppressed rage, rose haughtily.

"Mr. Thornton," he said, in a calm voice, although he was trembling in his extreme passion, from head to foot, "I am not now prepared to submit to your insolence and intrusion. You will leave this room instantly. If you have any further demands upon me, I will hear them to-night at any hour you please to appoint."

"No, no, my fine fellow," said Thornton, with a coarse chuckle; "you have as much wit as three folks, two fools, and a madman; but you won't do me, for all that. The instant my back is turned, your's will be turned too; and by the time I call again, your honour will be half way to Calais. But—bless my stars, Mr. Pelham, is that you? I really did not see you before; I suppose you are not in the secret?"

"I have no secrets from Mr. Pelham," said Glanville; "nor do I care if you discuss the whole of your nefarious transactions with me in his presence. Since you doubt my word, it is beneath my dignity to vindicate it, and your business can as well be dispatched now, as hereafter. You have heard rightly, that I intend leaving England to-morrow; and now, Sir, what is your will?"

"By G—d, Sir Reginald Glanville!" exclaimed Thornton, who seemed stung to the quick by Glanville's contemptuous coldness, "you shall not leave England without my leave. Ay, you may frown, but I say you shall not; nay, you shall not budge a foot from this very room unless I cry, 'Be it so!'"

Glanville could no longer restrain himself. He would have sprung towards Thornton, but I seized and arrested him. I read, in the malignant and incensed countenance of his persecutor, all the danger to which a single imprudence would have exposed him, and I trembled for his safety.

I whispered, as I forced him again to his seat, "Leave me alone to settle with this man, and I will

endeavour to free you from him." I did not tarry for his answer; but turning to Thornton, said to him coolly but civilly: "Sir Reginald Glanville has acquainted me with the nature of your very extraordinary demands upon him. Did he adopt my advice, he would immediately place the affair in the hands of his legal advisers. His ill health, however, his anxiety to leave England, and his wish to sacrifice almost every thing to quiet, induce him, rather than take this alternative, to silence your importunities, by acceding to claims, however illegal and unjust. If, therefore, you now favour Sir Reginald with your visit, for the purpose of making a demand previous to his quitting England, and which, consequently, will be the last to which he will concede, you will have the goodness to name the amount of your claim, and should it be reasonable, I think Sir Reginald will authorize me to say, that it shall be granted."

"Well, now!" cried Thornton, "that's what I call talking like a sensible man; and though I am not fond of speaking to a third person, when the principal is present, yet as you have always been very civil to me, I have no objection to treating with you. Please to give Sir Reginald this paper: if he will but take the trouble to sign it, he may go to the Falls of Niagara for me! I won't interrupt him—so he had better put pen to paper, and get rid of me at once, for I know I am as welcome as snow in harvest."

I took the paper, which was folded up, and gave it to Glanville, who leant back on his chair, half-exhausted by his rage. He glanced his eye over it, and then tore it into a thousand pieces, and trampled it beneath his feet: "Go!" exclaimed he, "go, rascal, and do your worst! I will not make myself a beggar to enrich you. My whole fortune would but answer this demand."

"Do as you please, Sir Reginald," answered Thornton, grinning, "do as you please. It's not a long walk from hence to Bow-street, nor a long swing from Newgate to the gallows; do as you please, Sir Reginald, do as you please!" and the villain flung himself at full length on the costly ottoman, and eyed Glanville's countenance with an easy and malicious effrontery, which seemed to say, "I know you will struggle, but you cannot help yourself."

I took Glanville aside: "My dear friend," said I, "believe me, that I share your indignation to the utmost; but we must do any thing rather than incense this wretch: what is his demand?"

"I speak literally," replied Glanville, "when I say, that it covers nearly the whole of my fortune; for my habits of extravagance have very much curtailed my means: it is the exact sum I had set apart, for a marriage gift to my sister, in addition to her own fortune."

"Then," said I, "you shall give it him; your sister has no longer any necessity for a portion: her marriage with me prevents that—and with regard to yourself, your wants are not many—such as it is, you can share my fortune."

"No—no—no!" cried Glanville; and his generous nature lashing him into fresh rage, he broke from my grasp, and moved menacingly to Thornton. That person still lay on the ottoman, regarding us with an air half contemptuous, half exulting.

"Leave the room instantly," said Glanville, "or you will repent it!"

"What! another murder, Sir Reginald!" said Thornton. "No, I am not a sparrow, to have my neck wrenched by a woman's hand like your's. Give me my demand—sign the paper, and I will leave you for ever and a day."

"I will commit no such folly," answered Glanville. "If you will accept five thousand pounds, you shall have that sum; but were the rope on my neck, you should not wring from me a farthing more!"

"Five thousand!" repeated Thornton; "a mere drop—a child's toy—why, you are playing with me, Sir Reginald—nay, I am a reasonable man, and will abate a trifle or so of my just claims, but you must not take advantage of my good nature. Make me snug and easy for life—let me keep a brace of hunters—a cosey box—a bit of land to it, and a girl after my own heart, and I'll say quits with you. Now, Mr. Pelham, who is a long-headed gentleman, and does not spit on his own blanket, knows well enough that one can't do all this for five thousand pounds; make it a thousand a year—that is, give me a cool twenty thousand—and I won't exact another sous. Egad, this drinking makes one deuced thirsty—Mr. Pelham, just reach me that glass of water—I hear bees in my head!"

Seeing that I did not stir, Thornton rose, with an oath against pride; and swaggering towards the table, took up a tumbler of water, which happened accidentally to be there: close by it was the picture of the ill-fated Gertrude. The gambler, who was evidently so intoxicated as to be scarcely conscious of his motions or words (otherwise, in all probability, he would, to borrow from himself a proverb illustrative of his profession, have played his cards better) took up the portrait.

Glanville saw the action, and was by his side in an instant. "Touch it not with your accursed hands!" he cried, in an ungovernable fury. "Leave your hold this instant, or I will dash you to pieces!"

Thornton kept a firm gripe of the picture. "Here's a to-do!" said he tauntingly: "was there ever such work about a poor—(using a word too coarse for repetition) before?"

The word had scarcely passed his lips, when he was stretched at his full length upon the ground. Nor did Glanville stop there. With all the strength of his nervous and Herculean frame, fully requited for the debility of disease by the fury of the moment, he seized the gamester as if he had been an infant, and dragged him to the door: the next moment I heard his heavy frame rolling down the stairs with no decorous slowness of descent.

Glanville re-appeared. "Good God!" I cried, "what have you done?" But he was too lost in his still unappeased rage to heed me. He leaned, panting and breathless, against the wall, with clenched teeth, and a flashing eye, rendered more terribly bright by the feverish lustre natural to his disease.

Presently I heard Thornton re-ascend the stairs: he opened the door, and entered but one pace. Never did human face wear a more fiendish expression of malevolence and wrath. "Sir Reginald Glanville," he said, "I thank you heartily. He must have iron nails who scratches a bear. You have sent me a challenge, and the hangman shall bring you my answer. Good day, Sir Reginald—good day, Mr. Pelham;" and so saying, he shut the door, and rapidly descending the stairs, was out of the house in an instant.

"There is no time to be lost," said I, "order post horses to your carriage, and be gone instantly."

"You are wrong," replied Glanville, slowly recovering himself. "I must not fly; it would be worse than useless; it would seem the strongest argument against me. Remember that if Thornton has really gone to inform against me, the officers of justice would arrest me long before I reached Calais; or even if I did elude their pursuit so far, I should be as much in their power in France as in England: but to tell you the truth, I do not think Thornton will inform. Money, to a temper like his, is a stronger temptation than revenge; and, before he has been three minutes in the air, he will perceive the folly of losing the golden harvest he may yet make of me for the sake of a momentary passion. No—my best plan will be to wait here till to-morrow, as I originally intended. In the meanwhile he will, in all probability, pay me another visit, and I will make a compromise with his demands."

Despite of my fears, I could not but see the justice of these observations, the more especially as a still stronger argument than any urged by Glanville, forced itself on my mind; this was my internal conviction, that Thornton himself was guilty of the murder of Tyrrell, and that, therefore, he would, for his own sake, avoid the new and particularizing scrutiny into that dreadful event, which his accusation of Glanville would necessarily occasion.

Both of us were wrong. Villains have passions as well as honest men; and they will, therefore, forfeit their own interest in obedience to those passions, while the calculations of prudence invariably suppose, that that interest is their only rule. [Note: I mean "interest" in the general, not the utilitarian, signification of the word.]

Glanville was so enfeebled by his late excitation, that he besought me once more to leave him to himself. I did so, under a promise, that he would admit me again in the evening; for notwithstanding my persuasion that Thornton would not put his threats into execution, I could not conquer a latent foreboding of dread and evil.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

Away with him to prison—where is the provost?
—Measure for Measure.

I returned home, perplexed by a thousand contradictory thoughts upon the scene I had just witnessed; the more I reflected, the more I regretted the fatality of the circumstances, that had tempted Glanville to accede to Thornton's demand; true it was, that Thornton's self-regard might be deemed a sufficient guarantee for his concealment of such extortionate transactions: moreover, it was difficult to say, when the formidable array of appearances against Glanville was considered, whether any other line of conduct than that which he had adopted, could, with any safety, have been pursued.

His feelings too, with regard to the unfortunate Gertrude, I could fully enter into, and sympathize with: but, in spite of all these considerations, it was with an inexpressible aversion that I contemplated

the idea of that tacit confession of guilt, which his compliance with Thornton's exactions so unhappily implied; it was, therefore, a thought of some satisfaction, that my rash and hasty advice, of a still further concession to those extortions, had not been acceded to. My present intention was, in the event of Glanville's persevering to reject my offer of accompanying him, to remain in England, for the purpose of sifting the murder, nor did I despair of accomplishing this most desirable end, through the means of Dawson; for there was but little doubt in my own mind that Thornton and himself were the murderers, and I hoped that address or intimidation might win a confession from Dawson, although it might probably be unavailing with his hardened and crafty associate.

Occupied with these thoughts, I endeavoured to while away the hours till the evening summoned me once more to the principal object of my reflections. Directly Glanville's door was opened, I saw by one glance, that I had come too late; the whole house was in confusion; several of the servants were in the hall, conferring with each other, with that mingled mystery and agitation which always accompany the fears and conjectures of the lower classes. I took aside the valet, who had lived with Glanville for some years, and who was remarkably attached to his master, and learnt, that somewhat more than an hour before. Mr. Thornton had returned to the house accompanied by three men of very suspicious appearance. "In short, Sir," said the man, lowering his voice to a whisper, "I knew one of them by sight; he was Mr. S., the Bowstreet officer; with these men, Sir Reginald left the house, merely saying, in his usual quiet manner, that he did not know when he should return."

I concealed my perturbation, and endeavoured, as far as I was able, to quiet the evident apprehensions of the servant. "At all events, Seymour," said I, "I know that I may trust you sufficiently, to warn you against mentioning the circumstance any farther; above all, let me beg of you to stop the mouths of those idle loiterers in the hall—and, be sure, that you do not give any unnecessary alarm to Lady and Miss Glanville."

The poor man promised, with tears in his eyes, that he would obey my injunctions; and with a calm face, but a sickening heart, I turned away from the house. I knew not where to direct my wanderings; fortunately, I recollected that I should, in all probability, be among the first witnesses summoned on Glanville's examination, and that, perhaps, by the time I reached home, I might already receive an intimation to that effect; accordingly, I retraced my steps, and, on re-entering my hotel, was told by the waiter, with a mysterious air, that a gentleman was waiting to see me. Seated by the window in my room, and wiping his forehead with a red silk pocket-handkerchief, was a short, thickset man, with a fiery and rugose complexion, not altogether unlike the aspect of a mulberry; from underneath a pair of shaggy brows, peeped two singularly small eyes, which made ample amends by their fire, for their deficiency in size—they were black, brisk, and somewhat fierce in their expression; a nose, of that shape, vulgarly termed bottle, formed the "arch sublime," the bridge, the twilight as it were, between the purple sun-set of one cheek, and the glowing sun-rise of the other. His mouth was small, and drawn up on each corner, like a purse—there was something sour and crabbed about it; if it was like a purse, it was the purse of a miser: a fair round chin had not been condemned to single blessedness—on the contrary, it was like a farmer's pillion, and carried double; on either side of a very low forehead, hedged round by closely mowed bristles, of a dingy black, were two enormous ears, of the same intensely rubicund colour as that inflamed pendant of flesh which adorns the throat of an enraged turkey-cock; ears so large, and so red, I never beheld before— they were something preposterous.

This enchanting figure, which was attired in a sober suit of leaden black, relieved by a long, gold watch-chain, and a plentiful decoration of seals, rose at my entrance, with a solemn grunt, and a still more solemn bow. I shut the door carefully, and asked him his business:—as I had foreseen, it was a request from the magistrate at—, to attend a private examination on the ensuing day.

"Sad thing, Sir, sad thing," said Mr.—, "it would be quite shocking to hang a gentleman of Sir Reginald Glanville's quality—so distinguished an orator too; sad thing, Sir,—very sad thing."

"Oh!" said I, quietly, "there is not a doubt as to Sir Reginald's innocence of the crime laid to him; and, probably, Mr.—, I may call in your assistance to-morrow, to ascertain the real murderers—I think I am possessed of some clue."

Mr.—pricked up his ears—those enormous ears. "Sir," he said, "I shall be happy to accompany you—very happy; give me the clue you speak of, and I will soon find the villains. Horrid thing, Sir, murder—very horrid. It's too hard that a gentleman cannot take his ride home from a race, or a merry-making, but he must have his throat cut from ear to ear—ear to ear, Sir;" and with these words, the speaker's own auricular protuberances seemed to glow, as if in conscious horror, with a double carnation.

"Very true, Mr.—!" said I; "say I will certainly attend the examination—till then, good bye!" At this hint, my fiery faced friend made me a low bow, and blazed out of the room, like the ghost of a kitchen fire.

Left to myself, I revolved, earnestly and anxiously, every thing that could tend to diminish the appearances against Glanville, and direct suspicion to that quarter where I was confident the guilt rested. In this endeavour I passed the time till morning, when I fell into an uneasy slumber, which lasted some hours; when I awoke, it was almost time to attend the magistrate's appointment. I dressed hastily, and soon found myself in the room of inquisition.

It is impossible to conceive a more courteous, and, yet, more equitable man, than the magistrate whom I had the honour of attending. He spoke with great feeling on the subject for which I was summoned—owned to me, that Thornton's statement was very clear and forcible—trusted that my evidence would contradict an account which he was very loth to believe; and then proceeded to the question. I saw, with an agony which I can scarcely express, that all my answers made powerfully against the cause I endeavoured to support. I was obliged to own, that a man on horseback passed me soon after Tyrrell had quitted me; that, on coming to the spot where the deceased was found, I saw this same horseman on the very place; that I believed, nay, that I was sure (how could I evade this), that that man was Sir Reginald Glanville.

Farther evidence, Thornton had already offered to adduce. He could prove, that the said horseman had been mounted on a grey horse, sold to a person answering exactly to the description of Sir Reginald Glanville; moreover, that that horse was yet in the stables of the prisoner. He produced a letter, which, he said, he had found upon the person of the deceased, signed by Sir Reginald Glanville, and containing the most deadly threats against his life; and, to crown all, he called upon me to witness, that we had both discovered upon the spot where the murder was committed, a picture belonging to the prisoner, since restored to him, and now in his possession.

At the close of this examination, the worthy magistrate shook his head, in evident distress! "I have known Sir Reginald Glanville personally," said he: "in private as in public life, I have always thought him the most upright and honourable of men. I feel the greatest pain in saying, that it will be my duty fully to commit him for trial."

I interrupted the magistrate; I demanded that Dawson should be produced: "I have already," said he, "inquired of Thornton respecting that person, whose testimony is of evident importance; he tells me, that Dawson has left the country, and can give me no clue to his address."

"He lies!" cried I, in the abrupt anguish of my heart; "his associate shall be produced. Hear me: I have been, next to Thornton, the chief witness against the prisoner, and when I swear to you, that, in spite of all appearances, I most solemnly believe in his innocence, you may rely on my assurance, that there are circumstances in his favour, which have not yet been considered, but which I will pledge myself hereafter to adduce." I then related to the private ear of the magistrate, my firm conviction of the guilt of the accuser himself. I dwelt forcibly upon the circumstance of Tyrrell's having mentioned to me, that Thornton was aware of the large sum he had on his person, and of the strange disappearance of that sum, when his body was examined in the fatal field. After noting how impossible it was that Glanville could have stolen this money; I insisted strongly on the distressed circumstances—the dissolute habits, and the hardened character of Thornton—I recalled to the mind of the magistrate, the singularity of Thornton's absence from home when I called there, and the doubtful nature of his excuse: much more I said, but all equally in vain. The only point where I was successful, was in pressing for a delay, which was granted to the passionate manner in which I expressed my persuasion that I could confirm my suspicions by much stronger data before the reprieve expired.

"It is very true," said the righteous magistrate, "that there are appearances somewhat against the witness; but certainly not tantamount to any thing above a slight suspicion. If, however, you positively think you can ascertain any facts, to elucidate this mysterious crime, and point the inquiries of justice to another quarter, I will so far strain the question, as to remand the prisoner to another day—let us say the day after tomorrow. If nothing important can before then be found in his favour, he must be committed for trial."

CHAPTER LXXIX.

Nihil est furacius illo
Non fuit Autolyçi tam piccata manus.
—Martial.

When I left the magistrate, I knew not whither my next step should tend. There was, however, no time to indulge the idle stupor, which Glanville's situation at first occasioned; with a violent effort, I shook it off, and bent all my mind to discover the best method to avail myself, to the utmost, of the short reprieve I had succeeded in obtaining; at length, one of those sudden thoughts which, from their suddenness appear more brilliant than they really are, flashed upon my mind. I remembered the accomplished character of Mr. Job Jonson, and the circumstance of my having seen him in company with Thornton. Now, although it was not very likely that Thornton should have made Mr. Jonson his confidant, in any of those affairs which it was so essentially his advantage to confine exclusively to himself; yet the acuteness and penetration visible in the character of the worthy Job, might not have lain so fallow during his companionship with Thornton, but that it might have made some discoveries which would considerably assist me in my researches; besides, as it is literally true in the systematized roguery of London, that "birds of a feather flock together," it was by no means unlikely that the honest Job might be honoured with the friendship of Mr. Dawson, as well as the company of Mr. Thornton; in which case I looked forward with greater confidence to the detection of the notable pair.

I could not, however, conceal from myself, that this was but a very unstable and ill-linked chain of reasoning, and there were moments, when the appearances against Glanville wore so close a semblance of truth, that all my friendship could scarcely drive from my mind an intrusive suspicion that he might have deceived me, and that the accusation might not be groundless.

This unwelcome idea did not, however, at all lessen the rapidity with which I hastened towards the memorable gin shop, where I had whilom met Mr. Gordon—there I hoped to find either the address of that gentleman, or of the "Club," to which he had taken me, in company with Tringle and Dartmore: either at this said club, or of that said gentleman, I thought it not unlikely that I might hear some tidings of the person of Mr. Job Jonson—if not, I was resolved to return to the office, and employ Mr.—my mulberry-cheeked acquaintance of the last night, in a search after the holy Job.

Fate saved me a world of trouble; as I was hastily walking onwards, I happened to turn my eyes on the opposite side of the way, and discovered a man dressed, in what the newspapers term, the very height of the fashion, namely, in the most ostentatious attire that ever flaunted at Margate, or blazoned in the Palais Royale. The nether garments of this petit maitre, consisted of a pair of blue tight pantaloons, profusely braided, and terminating in Hessian boots, adorned with brass spurs of the most burnished resplendency; a black velvet waistcoat, studded with gold stars, was backed by a green frock coat, covered, notwithstanding the heat of the weather, with fur, and frogged and cordonne with the most lordly indifference, both as to taste and expense: a small French hat, which might not have been much too large for my Lord of P—, was set jauntily in the centre of a system of long black curls, which my eye, long accustomed to penetrate the arcana of habilatory art, discovered at once to be a wig. A fierce black mustacheo, very much curled, wandered lovingly from the upper lip, towards the eyes, which had an unfortunate prepossession for eccentricity in their direction. To complete the picture, we must suppose some colouring—and this consisted in a very nice and delicate touch of the rouge pot, which could not be called by so harsh a term as paint; say, rather that it was a tinge.

No sooner had I set my eyes upon this figure, than I crossed over to the side of the way which it was adorning, and followed its motions at a respectful but observant distance.

At length my freluquet marched into a jeweller's shop in Oxford-street; with a careless air, I affected, two minutes afterwards, to saunter into the same shop; the shopman was shewing his bijouterie to him of the Hessians with the greatest respect; and, beguiled by the splendour of the wig and waistcoat, turned me over to his apprentice—another time, I might have been indignant at perceiving that the air noble, on which I piqued myself far more than all other gifts of nature, personal or mental, was by no means so universally acknowledged as I had vainly imagined—at that moment I was too occupied to think of my insulted dignity. While I was pretending to appear wholly engrossed with some seals, I kept a vigilant eye on my superb fellow customer: at last, I saw him secrete a diamond ring, and thrust it, by a singular movement of the fore finger, up the fur cuff of his capacious sleeve; presently, some other article of minute size disappeared in the like manner.

The gentleman then rose, expressed himself very well satisfied by the great taste of the jeweller, said he should look in again on Saturday, when he hoped the set he had ordered would be completed, and gravely took his departure amidst the prodigal bows of the shopman and his helpmates; meanwhile, I bought a seal of small value, paid for it, and followed my old acquaintance, for the reader has doubtless discovered, long before this, that the gentleman was no other than Mr. Job Jonson.

Slowly and struttingly did the man of two virtues perform the whole pilgrimage of Oxford-street. He stopped at Cumberland-gate, and, looking round, with an air of gentlemanlike indecision, seemed to

consider whether or not he should join the loungers in the park: fortunately for that well bred set, his doubts terminated in their favour, and Mr. Job Jonson entered the park. Every one happened to be thronging to Kensington Gardens, and the man of two virtues accordingly cut across the park, as the shortest, but the least frequented way thither, in order to confer upon them the dangerous honour of his company.

Directly I perceived that there were but few persons in the immediate locality to observe me, and that those consisted of a tall guardsman and his wife, a family of young children, with their nursery-maid, and a debilitated East India captain; walking for the sake of his liver, I overtook the incomparable Job, made him a low bow, and thus reverently accosted him—

"Mr. Jonson, I am delighted once more to meet you—suffer me to remind you of the very pleasant morning I passed with you in the neighbourhood of Hampton Court. I perceive, by your mustachios and military dress, that you have entered the army since that day; I congratulate the British troops on such an admirable acquisition."

Mr. Jonson's assurance forsook him for a moment, but he lost no time in regaining a quality which was so natural to his character. He assumed a fierce look, and relevant sa moustache sourit amerement, like Voltaire's governor [Note: Don Fernand d'Ibarra in the "Candide"]—"D—n your eyes, Sir," he cried, "do you mean to insult me? I know none of your Mr. Jonsons, and I never set my eyes upon you before."

"Lookye, my dear Mr. Job Jonson," replied I, "as I can prove not only all I say, but much more that I shall not say—such as your little mistakes just now, at the jeweller's shop in Oxford-street, perhaps it would be better for you not to oblige me to create a mob, and give you in charge— pardon my abruptness of speech—to a constable!—Surely there will be no need of such a disagreeable occurrence, when I assure you, in the first place, that I perfectly forgive you for ridding me of the unnecessary comforts of a pocket-book and handkerchief, the unphilosophical appendage of a purse, and the effeminate gage d'amour of a gold bracelet; nor is this all—it is perfectly indifferent to me, whether you levy contributions on jewellers or gentlemen, and I am very far from wishing to intrude upon your harmless occupations, or to interfere with your innocent amusements. I see, Mr. Jonson, that you are beginning to understand me; let me facilitate so desirable an end by an additional information, that, since it is preceded with a promise to open my purse, may tend somewhat to open your heart; I am, at this moment, in great want of your assistance—favour me with it, and I will pay you to your soul's content. Are we friends now, Mr. Job Jonson?"

My old friend burst out into a loud laugh. "Well, Sir, I must say that your frankness enchants me. I can no longer dissemble with you; indeed, I perceive, it would be useless; besides, I always adored candour—it is my favourite virtue. Tell me how I can help you, and you may command my services."

"One word," said I: "will you be open and ingenuous with me? I shall ask you certain questions, not in the least affecting your own safety, but to which, if you would serve me, you must give me (and since candour is your favourite virtue, this will be no difficult task) your most candid replies. To strengthen you in so righteous a course, know also, that the said replies will come verbatim before a court of law, and that, therefore, it will be a matter of prudence to shape them as closely to the truth as your inclinations will allow. To counterbalance this information, which, I own, is not very inviting, I repeat, that the questions asked you will be wholly foreign to your own affairs, and that, should you prove of that assistance to me which I anticipate, I will so testify my gratitude as to place you beyond the necessity of pillaging rural young gentlemen and credulous shopkeepers for the future;—all your present pursuits need only be carried on for your private amusement."

"I repeat, that you may command me," returned Mr. Jonson, gracefully putting his hand to his heart.

"Pray, then," said I, "to come at once to the point, how long have you been acquainted with Mr. Thomas Thornton?"

"For some months only," returned Job, without the least embarrassment.

"And Mr. Dawson?" said I.

A slight change came over Jonson's countenance: he hesitated. "Excuse me, Sir," said he; "but I am, really, perfectly unacquainted with you, and I may be falling into some trap of the law, of which, Heaven knows, I am as ignorant as a babe unborn."

I saw the knavish justice of this remark; and in my predominating zeal to serve Glanville, I looked upon the inconvenience of discovering myself to a pickpocket and sharper, as a consideration not worth attending to. In order, therefore, to remove his doubts, and, at the same time, to have a more secret and undisturbed place for our conference, I proposed to him to accompany me home; at first, Mr.

Jonson demurred, but I soon half persuaded and half intimidated him into compliance.

Not particularly liking to be publicly seen with a person of his splendid description and celebrated character, I made him walk before me to Mivart's, and I followed him closely, never turning my eye, either to the right or the left, lest he should endeavour to escape me. There was no fear of this, for Mr. Jonson was both a bold and a crafty man, and it required, perhaps, but little of his penetration to discover that I was no officer nor informer, and that my communication had been of a nature likely enough to terminate in his advantage; there was, therefore, but little need of his courage in accompanying me to my hotel.

There were a good many foreigners of rank at Mivart's, and the waiters took my companion for an ambassador at least:—he received their homage with the mingled dignity and condescension natural to so great a man.

As the day was now far advanced, I deemed it but hospitable to offer Mr. Job Jonson some edible refreshment. With the frankness on which he so justly valued himself, he accepted my proposal. I ordered some cold meat, and two bottles of wine; and, mindful of old maxims, deferred my business till his repast was over. I conversed with him merely upon ordinary topics, and, at another time, should have been much amused by the singular mixture of impudence and shrewdness which formed the stratum of his character.

At length his appetite was satisfied, and one of the bottles emptied; with the other before him, his body easily reclining on my library chair, his eyes apparently cast downwards, but ever and anon glancing up at my countenance with a searching and curious look, Mr. Job Jonson prepared himself for our conference; accordingly I began.

"You say that you are acquainted with Mr. Dawson; where is he at present?"

"I don't know," answered Jonson, laconically.

"Come," said I, "no trifling—if you do not know, you can learn."

"Possibly I can, in the course of time," rejoined honest Job.

"If you cannot tell me his residence at once," said I, "our conference is at an end; that is a leading feature in my inquiries."

Jonson paused before he replied—"You have spoken to me frankly, let us do nothing by halves—tell me, at once, the nature of the service I can do you, and the amount of my reward, and then you shall have my answer. With respect to Dawson, I will confess to you, that I did once know him well, and that we have done many a mad prank together, which I should not like the bugaboos and bulkies to know; you will, therefore, see that I am naturally reluctant to tell you any thing about him, unless your honour will inform me of the why and the wherefore."

I was somewhat startled by this speech, and by the shrewd, cunning eye which dwelt upon me, as it was uttered; but, however, I was by no means sure, that acceding to his proposal would not be my readiest and wisest way to the object I had in view. Nevertheless, there were some preliminary questions to be got over first: perhaps Dawson might be too dear a friend to the candid Job, for the latter to endanger his safety; or perhaps, (and this was more probable,) Jonson might be perfectly ignorant of any thing likely to aid me: in this case my communication would be useless; accordingly I said, after a short consideration—

"Patience, my dear Mr. Jonson—patience, you shall know all in good time; meanwhile I must—even for Dawson's sake—question you blindfold. What, now, if your poor friend Dawson were in imminent danger, and that you might have the power to save him, would you not do all you could?"

The small, coarse features of Mr. Job, grew blank, with a curious sort of disappointment: "Is that all?" said he. "No! unless I were well paid for my pains in his behalf, he might go to Botany Bay, for all I care."

"What!" I cried, in a tone of reproach, "is this your friendship? I thought, just now, that you said Dawson had been an old and firm associate of yours."

"An old one, your honour; but not a firm one. A short time ago, I was in great distress, and he and Thornton had, God knows how! about two thousand pounds between them; but I could not worm a stiver out of Dawson—that gripe-all, Thornton, got it all from him."

"Two thousand pounds!" said I, in a calm voice, though my heart beat violently; "that's a great sum for a poor fellow like Dawson. How long ago is it since he had it?"

"About two or three months," answered Jonson.

"Pray, have you seen much of Dawson lately?" I asked.

"I have," replied Jonson.

"Indeed!" said I. "I thought you told me, just now, that you were unacquainted with his residence?"

"So I am," replied Jonson, coldly, "it is not at his own house that I ever see him."

I was silent, for I was now rapidly and minutely weighing the benefits and disadvantages of trusting Jonson as he had desired me to do.

To reduce the question to the simplest form of logic, he had either the power of assisting my investigation, or he had not: if not, neither could he much impede it, and therefore, it mattered little whether he was in my confidence or not; if he had the power, the doubt was, whether it would be better for me to benefit by it openly, or by stratagem; that is— whether it were wiser to state the whole case to him, or continue to gain whatever I was able by dint of a blind examination. Now, the disadvantage of candour was, that if it were his wish to screen Dawson and his friend, he would be prepared to do so, and even to put them on their guard against my suspicions; but the indifference he had testified with regard to Dawson seemed to render this probability very small. The benefits of candour were more prominent: Job would then be fully aware that his own safety was not at stake; and should I make it more his interest to serve the innocent than the guilty, I should have the entire advantage, not only of any actual information he might possess, but of his skill and shrewdness in providing additional proof, or at least suggesting advantageous hints. Moreover, in spite of my vanity and opinion of my own penetration, I could not but confess, that it was unlikely that my cross-examination should be very successful with so old and experienced a sinner as Mr. Jonson. "Set a thief to catch a thief," is among the wisest of wise sayings, and accordingly I resolved in favour of a disclosure.

Drawing my chair close to Jonson's, fixing my eye upon his countenance, and throwing into my own the most open, yet earnest expression I could summon, I briefly proceeded to sketch Glanville's situation (only concealing his name), and Thornton's charges. I mentioned my own suspicions of the accuser, and my desire of discovering Dawson, whom Thornton appeared to me artfully to secrete. Lastly, I concluded, with a solemn promise, that if my listener could, by any zeal, exertion, knowledge, or contrivance of his own, procure the detection of the men, whom I was convinced were the murderers, a pension of three hundred pounds a-year should be immediately settled upon him.

During my communication, the patient Job sat mute and still, fixing his eyes on the ground, and only betraying, by an occasional elevation of the brows, that he took the slightest interest in the tale: when, however, I touched upon the peroration, which so tenderly concluded with the mention of three hundred pounds a-year, a visible change came over the countenance of Mr. Jonson. He rubbed his hands with an air of great content, and one sudden smile broke over his features, and almost buried his eyes amid the intricate host of wrinkles it called forth: the smile vanished as rapidly as it came, and Mr. Job turned round to me with a solemn and sedate aspect.

"Well, your honour," said he, "I'm glad you've told me all; we must see what can be done. As for Thornton, I'm afraid we shan't make much out of him, for he's an old offender, whose conscience is as hard as a brick-bat; but, of Dawson, I hope better things. However, you must let me go now, for this is a matter that requires a vast deal of private consideration. I shall call upon you tomorrow, Sir, before ten o'clock, since you say matters are so pressing; and, I trust, you will then see that you have no reason to repent of the confidence you have placed in a man of honour."

So saying, Mr. Job Jonson emptied the remainder of the bottle into his tumbler, held it up to the light with the gusto of a connoisseur, and concluded his potations with a hearty smack of the lips, followed by a long sigh.

"Ah, your honour!" said he, "good wine is a marvellous whetter of the intellect; but your true philosopher is always moderate: for my part, I never exceed my two bottles."

And with these words, this true philosopher took his departure.

No sooner was I freed from his presence, than my thoughts flew to Ellen: I had neither been able to call nor write the whole of the day; and I was painfully fearful, lest my precautions with Sir Reginald's valet had been frustrated, and the alarm of his imprisonment reached her and Lady Glanville. Harassed by this fear, I disregarded the lateness of the hour, and immediately repaired to Berkeley-square.

Lady and Miss Glanville were alone and at dinner: the servant spoke with his usual unconcern—"They are quite well?" said I, relieved, but still anxious: and the servant replying in the affirmative, I again

returned home, and wrote a long, and, I hope, consoling letter to Sir Reginald.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PELHAM — VOLUME 07 ***

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