FUN-JOTTINGS;

OR,

LAUGHS I HAVE TAKEN A PEN TO

BY

N. PARKER WILLIS.

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PREFACE.

We do not expect the world to receive our smiles with the instant sympathy and trust which we expect for our tears. A smile may pardonably be thought a caprice of one's own. We write, therefore, with correspondent carelessness or digressiveness, upon incidents that, in passing, have merely amused us—quite prepared to find that they are not so amusing (at second-hand) to others.

It would be startling to the reader, sometimes, to know how much truth there is in "fiction." Things that could never else be told, are hidden in story. And every circumstance of the narrative may be pure invention, while the secret is still told—the soul's thirst for revealing it, fully satisfied. After reading a novel once, for the story, it is often a charming leisure task to go over it thoughtfully, again, picking out the hidden thread of feeling or experience, upon which its pearls are strung.

To value or merit in the sketches which follow, the author makes no definite pretension. They record, under more or less of disguise, turns of event or of character, which have amused him. In re-compiling his past writings into volumes, these lighter ones have been laid aside, and they are now trusted to take their chance by themselves, appealing to whatever indulgence may be in store, in the reader's mind, for a working-pen at play.

Idlewild, *July, 1853*.

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FROM SARATOGA.

FUN JOTTINGS

LARKS IN VACATION.

CHAPTER I.

DRIVING STANHOPE PRO TEM.

In the edge of a June evening in the summer vacation of 1827, I was set down by the coach at the gate of my friend Horace Van Pelt's paternal mansion—a large, old-fashioned, comfortable Dutch house, clinging to the side of one of the most romantic dells on the North river. In the absence of his whole family on the summer excursion to the falls and lakes (taken by almost every "well-to-do" citizen of the United States), Horace was emperor of the long-descended, and as progressively enriched domain of one of the earliest Dutch settlers—a brief authority which he exercised more particularly over an extensive stud, and bins number one and two.

The west was piled with gold castles, breaking up the horizon with their burnished pinnacles and turrets, the fragrant dampness of the thunder-shower that had followed the heat of noon was in the air, and in a low room, whose floor opened out so exactly upon the shaven sward, that a blind man would not have known when he passed from the heavily-piled carpet to the grass, I found Horace sitting over his olives and claret, having waited dinner for me till five (long beyond the latest American hour), and in despair of my arrival, having dined without me. The old black cook was too happy to vary her vocation by getting a second dinner; and when I had appeased my appetite, and overtaken my friend in his claret, we sat with the moonlight breaking across a vine at our feet, and coffee worthy of a filagree cup in the Bezestien, and debated, amid a true *embarras des richesses*, our plans for the next week's amusement.

The seven days wore on, merrily at first, but each succeeding one growing less merry than the last. By the fifth eve of my sojourn, we had exhausted variety. All sorts of headaches and megrims in the morning, all sorts of birds, beasts, and fishes, for dinner, all sorts of accidents in all sorts of vehicles, left us on the seventh day out of sorts altogether. We were two discontented Rasselases in the Happy Valley. Rejoicing as we were in vacation, it would have been a relief to have had a recitation to read up, or a prayer-bell to mark the time. Two idle sophomores in a rambling, lonely old mansion, were, we discovered, a very insufficient *dramatis personæ* for the scene.

It was Saturday night. A violent clap of thunder had interrupted some daring theory of Van Pelt's on the rising of champagne-bubbles, and there we sat, mum and melancholy, two sated Sybarites, silent an hour by the clock. The mahogany was bare between us. Any number of glasses and bottles stood in their lees about the table; the thrice-fished juice of an olive-dish and a solitary cigar in a silver case had been thrust aside in a warm argument, and, in his father's sacred gout-chair, buried to the eyes in his loosened cravat, one leg on the table, and one somewhere in the neighborhood of my own, sat Van Pelt, the *eidolon* of exhausted amusement.

"Phil!" said he, starting suddenly to an erect position, "a thought strikes me!"

I dropped the claret-cork, from which I was at the moment trying to efface the "Margaux" brand, and sat in silent expectation. I had thought his brains as well evaporated as the last bottle of champagne.

He rested his elbows on the table, and set his chin between his two palms.

"I'll resign the keys of this mournful old den to the butler, and we'll go to Saratoga for a week. What say?"

"It would be a reprieve from death by inanition," I answered, "but, as the rhetorical professor would phrase it, amplify your meaning, young gentleman."

"Thus: To-morrow is Sunday. We will sleep till Monday morning to purge our brains of these cloudy vapors, and restore the freshness of our complexions. If a fair day, you shall start alone in the stanhope, and on Monday night sleep in classic quarters at Titus's in Troy."

"And you," I interrupted, rather astonished at his arrangement for one.

Horace laid his hand on his pocket with a look of embarrassed care.

"I will overtake you with the bay colts in the drosky, but I must first go to Albany. The circulating medium—"

"I understand."

II.

We met on Monday morning in the breakfast-room in mutual spirits. The sun was two hours high, the birds in the trees were wild with the beauty and elasticity of the day, the dew glistened on every bough, and the whole scene, over river and hill, was a heaven of natural delight. As we finished our breakfast, the light spattering of a horse's feet up the avenue, and the airy whirl of quick-following wheels, announced the stanhope. It was in beautiful order, and what would have been termed on any pave in the world a tasteful turn-out. Light cream-colored body, black wheels and shafts, drab lining edged with green, dead-black harness, light as that on the panthers of Bacchus—it was the last style of thing you would have looked for at the "stoup" of a Dutch homestead. And Tempest! I think I see him now!—his small inquisitive ears, arched neck, eager eye, and fine, thin nostril—his dainty feet flung out with the grace of a flaunted riband—his true and majestic action and his spirited champ of the bit, nibbling at the tight rein with the exciting pull of a hooked trout—how evenly he drew!—how insensibly the compact stanhope, just touching his iron-gray tail, bowled along on the road after him!

Horace was behind with the drosky and black boy, and with a parting nod at the gate, I turned northward, and Tempest took the road in beautiful style. I do not remember to have been ever so elated. I was always of the Cyrenaic philosophy that "happiness is motion," and the bland vitality of the air had refined my senses. The delightful *feel* of the reins thrilled me to the shoulder. Driving is like any other appetite, dependant for the delicacy of its enjoyment on the system, and a day's temperate abstinence, long sleep, and the glorious perfection of the morning, had put my nerves "in condition." I felt the air as I rushed through. The power of the horse was added to my consciousness of enjoyment, and if you can imagine a centaur with a harness and stanhope added to his living body, I felt the triple enjoyment of animal exercise which would then be his.

It is delightful driving on the Hudson. The road is very fair beneath your wheels, the river courses away under the bold shore with the majesty inseparable from its mighty flood, and the constant change of outline in its banks, gives you, as you proceed, a constant variety of pictures, from the loveliest to the most sublime. The eagle's nest above you at one moment, a sunny and fertile farm below you at the next—rocks, trees, and waterfalls, wedded and clustered as, it seems to me, they are nowhere else done so picturesquely—it is a noble river, the Hudson! And every few minutes,

while you gaze down upon the broad waters spreading from hill to hill like a round lake, a gayly-painted steamer with her fringed and white awnings and streaming flag, shoots out as if from a sudden cleft in the rock, and draws across it her track of foam.

Well—I bowled along. Ten o'clock brought me to a snug Dutch tavern, where I sponged Tempest's mouth and nostrils, lunched, and was stared at by the natives, and continuing my journey, at one I loosed rein and dashed into the pretty village of ——, Tempest in a foam, and himself and his extempore master creating a great sensation in a crowd of people, who stood in the shade of the verandah of the hotel, as if that asylum for the weary traveller had been a shop for the sale of gentlemen in shirt-sleeves.

Tempest was taken round to the "barn," and I ordered rather an elaborate dinner, designing still to go on some ten miles in the cool of the evening, and having, of course, some mortal hours upon my hands. The cook had probably never heard of more than three dishes in her life, but those three were garnished with all manner of herbs, and sent up in the best china as a warranty for an unusual bill, and what with coffee, a small glass of new rum as an apology for a *chasse café*, and a nap in a straight-backed chair, I killed the enemy to my satisfaction till the shadows of the poplars lengthened across the barnyard.

I was awoke by Tempest, prancing round to the door in undiminished spirits; and as I had begun the day *en grand seigneur*, I did not object to the bill, which considerably exceeded the outside of my calculation, but giving the landlord a twenty-dollar note received the change unquestioned, doubled the usual fee to the ostler, and let Tempest off with a bend forward which served at the same time for a gracious bow to the spectators. So remarkable a coxcomb had probably not been seen in the village since the passing of Cornwallis's army.

The day was still hot, and as I got into the open country, I drew rein and paced quietly up hill and down, picking the road delicately, and in a humor of thoughtful contentment, trying my skill in keeping the edges of the green sod as it leaned in and out from the walls and ditches. With the long whip I now and then touched the wing of a sulphur butterfly hovering over a pool, and now and then I stopped and gathered a violet from the unsunned edge of the wood.

I had proceeded three or four miles in this way, when I was overtaken by three stout fellows, galloping at speed, who rode past and faced round with a peremptory order to me to stop. A formidable pitchfork in the hand of each horseman left me no alternative. I made up my mind immediately to be

robbed quietly of my own personals, but to show fight, if necessary, for Tempest and the stanhope.

"Well, gentlemen," said I, coaxing my impatient horse, who had been rather excited by the clatter of hoofs behind him, "what is the meaning of this?"

Before I could get an answer, one of the fellows had dismounted and given his bridle to another, and coming round to the left side, he sprang suddenly into the stanhope. I received him as he rose with a well-placed thrust of my heel which sent him back into the road, and with a chirrup to Tempest, I dashed through the phalanx, and took the road at a top speed. The short lash once waved round the small ears before me, there was no stopping in a hurry, and away sped the gallant gray, and fast behind followed my friends in their short sleeves, all in a lathering gallop. A couple of miles was the work of no time, Tempest laying his legs to it as if the stanhope had been a cobweb at his heels; but at the end of that distance there came a sharp descent to a mill-stream, and I just remember an unavoidable milestone and a jerk over a wall, and the next minute, it seemed to me, I was in the room where I had dined, with my hands tied, and a hundred people about me. My cool white waistcoat was matted with mud, and my left temple was, by the glass opposite me, both bloody and begrimed.

The opening of my eyes was a signal for a closer gathering around me, and between exhaustion and the close air I was half suffocated. I was soon made to understand that I was a prisoner, and that the three white-frocked highwaymen, as I took them to be, were among the spectators. On a polite application to the landlord, who, I found out, was a justice of the peace as well, I was informed that he had made out my mittimus as a counterfeiter, and that the *spurious note* I had passed upon him for my dinner was safe in his possession! He pointed at the same time to a placard newly stuck against the wall, offering a reward for the apprehension of a notorious practiser of my supposed craft, to the description of whose person I answered, to the satisfaction of all present.

Quite too indignant to remonstrate, I seated myself in the chair considerately offered me by the waiter, and listening to the whispers of the persons who were still permitted to throng the room, I discovered, what might have struck me before, that the initials on the panel of the stanhope and the handle of the whip had been compared with the card pasted in the bottom of my hat, and the want of correspondence was taken as decided corroboration. It was remarked also by a bystander that I was quite too much of a dash for an honest man, and that he had suspected me from first seeing

me drive into the village! I was sufficiently humbled by this time to make an inward vow never again to take airs upon myself if I escaped the county jail.

The justice meanwhile had made out my orders, and a horse and cart had been provided to take me to the next town. I endeavored to get speech of his worship as I was marched out of the inn parlor, but the crowd pressed close upon my heels and the dignitary-landlord seemed anxious to rid his house of me. I had no papers, and no proofs of my character, and assertion went for nothing. Besides, I was muddy, and my hat was broken in on one side, proofs of villany which appeal to the commonest understanding.

I begged for a little straw in the bottom of the cart, and had made myself as comfortable as my two rustic constables thought fitting for a culprit, when the vehicle was quickly ordered from the door to make way for a carriage coming at a dashing pace up the road. It was Van Pelt in his drosky.

Horace was well known on the road, and the stanhope had already been recognized as his. By this time it was deep in the twilight, and though he was instantly known by the landlord, he might be excused for not so readily identifying the person of his friend in the damaged gentleman in the straw.

"Ay, ay! I see you don't know him," said the landlord, while Van Pelt surveyed me rather coldly; "on with him, constables! he would have us believe you knew him, sir! Walk in, Mr. Van Pelt! Ostler, look to Mr. Van Pelt's horses! Walk in, sir!"

"Stop!" I cried out in a voice of thunder, seeing that Horace really had not looked at me. "Van Pelt! stop, I say!"

The driver of the cart seemed more impressed by the energy of my cries than my friends the constables, and pulled up his horse. Some one in the crowd cried out that I should have a hearing or he would "wallup the comitatus," and the justice, called back by this expression of an opinion from the sovereign people, requested his new guest to look at the prisoner.

I was preparing to have my hands untied, yet feeling so indignant at Van Pelt for not having recognized me that I would not look at him, when, to my surprise, the horse started off once more, and looking back, I saw my friend patting the neck of his near horse, evidently not having thought it worth his while to take any notice of the justice's observation. Choking with rage, I flung myself down upon the straw, and jolted on without further remonstrance to the county town.

I had been incarcerated an hour, when Van Pelt's voice, half angry with the turnkey and half ready to burst into a laugh, resounded outside. He had not heard a word spoken by the officious landlord, till after the cart had been some time gone. Even then, believing it to be a cock-and-bull story, he had

quietly dined, and it was only on going into the yard to see after his horses that he recognized the *debris* of his stanhope.

The landlord's apologies, when we returned to the inn, were more amusing to Van Pelt than consolatory to Philip Slingsby.

CHAPTER II.

SARATOGA SPRINGS.

It was about seven o'clock of a hot evening when Van Pelt's exhausted horses toiled out from the Pine Forest, and stood, fetlock deep in sand, on the brow of the small hill overlooking the mushroom village of Saratoga. One or two straggling horsemen were returning late from their afternoon ride, and looked at us, as they passed on their fresher hacks, with the curiosity which attaches to new-comers in a watering-place; here and there a genuine invalid, who had come to the waters for life, not for pleasure, took advantage of the coolness of the hour and crept down the footpath to the Spring; and as Horace encouraged his flagging cattle into a trot to bring up gallantly at the door of "Congress Hall," the great bell of that vast caravanserai resounded through the dusty air, and by the shuffling of a thousand feet, audible as we approached, we knew that the fashionable world of Saratoga were rushing down, *en masse*, "*to tea*."

Having driven through a sand-cloud for the preceding three hours, and, to say nothing of myself, Van Pelt being a man, who, in his character as the most considerable beau of the University, calculated his first impression, it was not thought advisable to encounter, uncleansed, the tide of fashion at that moment streaming through the hall. We drove round to the side-door, and gained our pigeon-hole quarters under cover of the back-staircase.

The bachelors' wing of Congress Hall is a long, unsightly, wooden barrack, divided into chambers six feet by four, and of an airiness of partition which enables the occupant to converse with his neighbor three rooms off, with the ease of clerks calling out entries to the leger across the desks of a counting-house. The clatter of knives and plates came up to our ears in a confused murmur, and Van Pelt having refused to dine at the only inn upon the route, for some reason best known to himself, I commenced the progress of a long toilet with an appetite not rendered patient by the sounds of cheer below.

I had washed the dust out of my eyes and mouth, and overcome with heat and hunger, I knotted a cool cravat loosely round my neck, and sat

down in the *one* chair.

"Van Pelt!" I shouted.

"Well, Phil?"

"Are you dressed?"

"Dressed! I am as pinguid as a *pate foie gras*—greased to the eyelids in cold cream!"

I took up the sixpenny glass and looked at my own newly-washed physiognomy. From the temples to the chin it was one unmitigated red—burned to a blister with the sun! I had been obliged to deluge my head like a mop to get out the dust, and not naturally remarkable for my good looks, I could, much worse than Van Pelt, afford these startling additions to my disadvantages. Hunger is a subtle excuse-finder, however, and, remembering there were five hundred people in this formidable crowd, and all busy with satisfying their hunger, I trusted to escape observation, and determined to "go down to tea." With the just-named number of guests, it will easily be understood why it is impossible to obtain a meal at Congress Hall out of the stated time and place.

In a white roundabout, a checked cravat, my hair plastered over my eyes *a la Mawworm*, and a face like the sign of the "Rising Sun," I stopped at Van Pelt's door.

"The most hideous figure my eyes ever looked upon!" was his first consolatory observation.

"Handsome or hideous," I answered, "I'll not starve! So here goes for some bread and butter!" and leaving him to his "appliances," I descended to the immense hall which serves the comers to Saratoga, for dining, dancing and breakfasting, and in wet weather, between meals, for shuttlecock and promenading.

Two interminable tables extended down the hall, filled by all the beauty and fashion of the United States. Luckily, I thought, for me, there are distinctions in this republic of dissipation, and the upper end is reserved for those who have servants to turn down the chairs and stand over them. The end of the tables nearest the door, consequently, is occupied by those whose opinion of my appearance is not without appeal, if they trouble their heads about it at all, and I may glide in in my white roundabout (permitted in this sultry weather), and retrieve exhausted nature in obscurity.

An empty chair stood between an old gentleman and a very plain young lady, and seeing no remembered faces opposite, I glided to the place, and was soon lost to apprehension in the abysm of a cold pie. The table was covered with meats, berries, bottles of chalybeate water, tea appurtenances,

jams, jellies, and radishes, and, but for the absence of the roast, you might have doubted whether the meal was breakfast or dinner, lunch or supper. Happy country! in which any one of the four meals may serve a hungry man for all.

The pigeon-pie stood, at last, well quarried before me, the *debris* of the excavation heaped upon my plate; and, appetite appeased, and made bold by my half hour's obscurity, I leaned forward and perused with curious attention the long line of faces on the opposite side of the table, to some of whom, doubtless, I was to be indebted for the pleasures of the coming fortnight.

My eyes were fixed on the features of a talkative woman, just above, and I had quite forgotten the fact of my dishabille of complexion and dress, when two persons entered who made considerable stir among the servants, and eventually were seated directly opposite me.

"We loitered too long at Barhydt's," said one of the most beautiful women I had ever seen, as she pulled her chair nearer to the table and looked around her with a glance of disapproval.

In following her eyes to see who was so happy as to sympathize with such a divine creature even in the loss of a place at table, I met the fixed and astonished gaze of my most intimate friend at the University.

"Ellerton!"

"Slingsby!"

Overjoyed at meeting him, I stretched both hands across the narrow table, and had shaken his arms nearly off his shoulders, and asked him a dozen questions, before I became conscious that a pair of large wondering eyes were coldly taking an inventory of my person and features. Van Pelt's unflattering exclamation upon my appearance at his door, flashed across my mind like a thunderstroke, and coloring through my burned skin to the temples, I bowed and stammered I know not what, as Ellerton introduced me to his sister!

To enter fully into my distress, you should be apprized that a correspondence arising from my long and constant intimacy with Tom Ellerton, had been carried on for a year between me and his sister, and that, being constantly in the habit of yielding to me in matters of taste, he had, I well knew, so exaggerated to her my personal qualities, dress, and manners, that she could not in any case fail to be disappointed in seeing me. Believing her to be at that moment two thousand miles off in Alabama, and never having hoped for the pleasure of seeing her at all, I had foolishly suffered this good-natured exaggeration to go on, pleased with seeing the reflex of

his praises in her letters, and Heaven knows, little anticipating the disastrous interview upon which my accursed star would precipitate me! As I went over, mentally, the particulars of my unbecomingness, and saw Miss Ellerton's eyes resting inquisitively and furtively on the mountain of pigeon bones lifting their well picked pyramid to my chin, I wished myself an ink-fish at the bottom of the sea.

Three minutes after, I burst into Van Pelt's room, tearing my hair and abusing Tom Ellerton's good nature, and my friend's headless drosky, in alternate breaths. Without disturbing the subsiding blood in his own face by entering into my violence, Horace coolly asked me what the devil was the matter?

I told him.

"Lie down here!" said Van Pelt, who was a small Napoleon in such trying extremities; "lie down on the bed, and anoint your phiz with this unguent. I see good luck for you in this accident, and you have only to follow my instructions. Phil Slingsby, sun-burnt, in a white roundabout, and Phil Slingsby, pale and well dressed, are as different as this potted cream and a dancing cow. You shall see what a little drama I'll work out for you!"

I laid down on my back, and Horace kindly anointed me from the trachea to the forelock, and from ear to ear.

"Egad," said he, warming with his study of his proposed plot, as he slid his fore-fingers over the bridge of my nose, "every circumstance tells for us. Tall man as you are, you are as short-*bodied* as a monkey (no offence, Phil!); and when you sit at table, you are rather an under-sized gentleman. I have been astonished every day these three years, at seeing you rise after dinner in Commons' Hall. A thousand to one, Fanny Ellerton thinks you a stumpy man."

"And then, Phil," he continued, with a patronizing tone, "you have studied minute philosophy to little purpose if you do not know that the first step in winning a woman to whom you have been overpraised, is to disenchant her at all hazards, on your first interview. You will never rise above the ideal she has formed, and to sink below it gradually, or to remain stationary, is not to thrive in your wooing."

Leaving me this precocious wisdom to digest, Horace descended to the foot of the garden to take a warm bath, and overcome with fatigue, and the recumbent posture, I soon fell asleep and dreamed of the great blue eyes of Fanny Ellerton.

II.

The soaring of the octave flute in “Hail Columbia,” with which the band was patriotically opening the ball, woke me from the midst of a long apologetic letter to my friend’s sister, and I found Van Pelt’s black boy Juba waiting patiently at the bedside with curling-tongs and Cologne-water, ordered to superintend my toilet by his master, who had gone early to the drawing-room to pay his respects to Miss Ellerton. With the cold cream disappeared entirely from my face the uncomfortable redness to which I had been a martyr, and, thanks to my ebony *coiffeur*, my straight and plastered locks soon grew as different to their “umquhile guise” as Hyperion’s to a satyr’s. Having appeared to the eyes of the lady, in whose favor I hoped to prosper, in red and white (red phiz and white jacket), I trusted that in white and black (black suit and pale viznomy), I should look quite another person. Juba was pleased to show his ivory in a complimentary smile at my transformation, and I descended to the drawing-room, on the best terms with the coxcomb in my bosom.

Horace met me at the door.

“*Proteus redivivus!*” was his exclamation. “Your new name is Wrongham. You are a gentle senior, instead of a bedeviled sophomore, and your cue is to be poetical. She will never think again of the monster in the white jacket, and I have prepared her for the acquaintance of a new friend, whom I have just described to you.”

I took his arm, and with the courage of a man in a mask, went through another presentation to Miss Ellerton. Her brother had been let into the secret by Van Pelt, and received me with great ceremony as his college superior; and, as there was no other person at the Springs who knew Mr. Slingsby, Mr. Wrongham was likely to have an undisturbed reign of it. Miss Ellerton looked hard at me for a moment, but the gravity with which I was presented and received, dissipated a doubt if one had arisen in her mind, and she took my arm to go to the ball-room, with an undisturbed belief in my assumed name and character.

I commenced the acquaintance of the fair Alabamian with great advantages. Received as a perfect stranger, I possessed, from long correspondence with her, the most minute knowledge of the springs of her character, and of her favorite reading and pursuits, and, with the little knowledge of the world which she had gained on a plantation, she was not likely to penetrate my game from my playing it too freely. Her confidence was immediately won by the readiness with which I entered into her enthusiasm and anticipated her thoughts; and before the first quadrille was well over, she had evidently made up her mind that she had never in her life

met one who so well "understood her." Oh! how much women include in that apparently indefinite expression, "*He understands me!*"

The colonnade of Congress Hall is a long promenade laced in with vines and columns, on the same level with the vast ball-room and drawing-room, and (the light of heaven not being taxed at Saratoga) opening at every three steps by a long window into the carpeted floors. When the rooms within are lit in a summer's night, that cool and airy colonnade is thronged by truants from the dance, and collectively by all who have anything to express that is meant for one ear only. The mineral waters of Saratoga are no less celebrated as a soporific for chaperons than as a tonic for the dyspeptic, and while the female Argus dozes in the drawing-room, the fair Io and her Jupiter (represented in this case, we will say, by Miss Ellerton and myself) range at liberty in the fertile fields of flirtation.

I had easily put Miss Ellerton in surprised good humor with herself and me during the first quadrille, and with a freedom based partly upon my certainty of pleasing her, partly on the peculiar manners of the place, I coolly requested that she would continue to dance with me for the rest of the evening.

"One unhappy quadrille excepted," she replied, with a look meant to be mournful.

"May I ask with whom?"

"Oh, he has not asked me yet; but my brother has bound me over to be civil to him—a spectre, Mr. Wrongham! a positive spectre."

"How denominated?" I inquired, with a forced indifference, for I had a presentiment I should hear my own name.

"Slingsby—Mr. Philip Slingsby—Tom's fidus Achates, and a proposed lover of my own. But you don't seem surprised."

"Surprised! E-hem! I know the gentleman!"

"Then did you ever see such a monster! Tom told me he was another Hyperion. He half admitted it himself, indeed; for to tell you a secret, I have corresponded with him a year!"

"Giddy Miss Fanny Ellerton!—and never saw him!"

"Never till to-night! He sat at supper in a white jacket and red face, with a pile of bones upon his plate like an Indian tumulus."

"And your brother introduced you?"

"Ah, you were at table! Well, did you ever see in your travels, a man so unpleasantly hideous?"

"Fanny!" said her brother, coming up at the moment, "Slingsby presents his apologies to you for not joining your *cordon* to-night—but he's gone to bed with a head-ache."

"Indigestion, I dare say," said the young lady. "Never mind, Tom, I'll break my heart when I have leisure. And now, Mr. Wrongham, since the spectre walks not forth to-night, I am yours for a cool hour on the colonnade."

Vegetation is rapid in Alabama, and love is a weed that thrives in the soil of the tropics. We discoursed of the lost Pleiad and the Berlin bracelets, of the five hundred people about us, and the feasibility of boiling a pot on five hundred a year—the unmatrimonial sum total of my paternal allowance. She had as many negroes as I had dollars, I well knew, but it was my cue to seem disinterested.

"And where do you mean to live, when you marry, Mr. Wrongham?" asked Miss Ellerton, at the two hundredth turn on the colonnade.

"Would you like to live in Italy?" I asked again, as if I had not heard her.

"Do you mean that as a *sequitur* to my question, Mr. Wrongham?" said she, half stopping in her walk; and though the sentence was commenced playfully, dropping her voice at the last word, with something, I thought, very like emotion.

I drew her off the colonnade to the small garden between the house and the spring, and in a giddy dream of fear and surprise at my own rashness and success, I made, and won from her, a frank avowal of preference.

Matches have been made more suddenly.

III.

Miss Ellerton sat in the music-room the next morning after breakfast, preventing pauses in a rather interesting conversation, by a running accompaniment upon the guitar. A single gold thread formed a fillet about her temples, and from beneath it, in clouds of silken ringlets, floated the softest raven hair that ever grew enamored of an ivory shoulder. Hers was a skin that seemed woven of the lily-white, but opaque fibre of the magnolia, yet of that side of its cup turned toward the fading sunset. There is no term in painting, because there is no touch of pencil or color that could express the vanishing and impalpable breath that assured the healthiness of so pale a cheek. She was slight, as all southern women are in America, and of a flexible and luxurious gracefulness equalled by nothing but the movings of a smoke-curl. Without the elastic nerve remarkable in the motions of Taglioni, she appeared, like her, to be born with a lighter specific gravity than her

fellow-creatures. If she had floated away upon some chance breeze you would only have been surprised upon reflection.

"I am afraid you are too fond of society," said Miss Ellerton, as Juba came in hesitatingly and delivered her a note in the handwriting of an old correspondent. She turned pale on seeing the superscription, and crushed the note up in her hand, unread. I was not sorry to defer the *dénouement* of my little drama, and taking up the remark which she seemed disposed to forget, I referred her to a scrap-book of Van Pelt's, which she had brought home with her, containing some verses of my own, copied (by good luck) in that sentimental sophomore's own hand.

"Are these yours, really and really?" she asked, looking pryingly into my face, and showing me my own verses, against which she had already run a pencil line of approbation.

"*Peccavi!*" I answered. "But will you make me in love with my offspring by reading them in your own voice."

They were some lines written in a balcony at daybreak, while a ball was still going on within, and contained an allusion (which I had quite overlooked) to some one of my ever-changing admirations. As well as I remember they ran thus:—

Morn in the east! How coldly fair
It breaks upon my fevered eye!
How chides the calm and dewy air!
How chides the pure and pearly sky!
The stars melt in a brighter fire,
The dew in sunshine leaves the flowers;
They from their watch, *in light* retire,
While we *in sadness* pass from ours!

I turn from the rebuking morn,
The cold gray sky and fading star,
And listen to the harp and horn,
And see the waltzers near and far:
The lamps and flowers are bright as yet,
And lips beneath more bright than they—
How can a scene so fair beget
The mournful thoughts we bear away.

'Tis something that thou art not here
Sweet lover of my lightest word!
'Tis something that my mother's tear
By these forgetful hours is stirred!
But I have long a loiterer been
In haunts where Joy is said to be,
And though with Peace I enter in,
The nymph comes never forth with me!

"And who was this 'sweet lover,' Mr. Wrongham? I should know, I think, before I go farther with so expeditious a gentleman."

"As Shelley says of his ideal mistress—

'I loved—oh, no! I mean not one of ye,
Or any earthly one—though ye are fair!'

It was but an apostrophe to the presentiment of that which I have found, dear Miss Ellerton! But will you read that ill-treated billet-doux, and remember that Juba stands with the patience of an ebon statue waiting for an answer?"

I knew the contents of the letter, and I watched the expression of her face, as she read it, with no little interest. Her temples flushed, and her delicate lips gradually curled into an expression of anger and scorn, and

having finished the perusal of it, she put it into my hand, and asked me if so impertinent a production deserved an answer.

I began to fear that the *eclaircissement* would not leave me on the sunny side of the lady's favor, and felt the need of the moment's reflection given me while running my eye over the letter.

"Mr. Slingsby," said I, with the deliberation of an attorney, "has been some time in correspondence with you?"

"Yes."

"And, from his letters and your brother's commendations, you had formed a high opinion of his character, and had expressed as much in your letters?"

"Yes—perhaps I did."

"And from this paper intimacy he conceives himself sufficiently acquainted with you to request leave to pay his addresses?"

A dignified bow put a stop to my catechism.

"Dear Miss Ellerton!" I said, "this is scarcely a question upon which I ought to speak, but by putting this letter into my hand, you seemed to ask my opinion."

"I did—I do," said the lovely girl, taking my hand, and looking appealingly into my face; "answer it for me! I have done wrong in encouraging that foolish correspondence, and I owe perhaps to this forward man a kinder reply than my first feeling would have dictated. Decide for me—write for me—relieve me from the first burden that has lain on my heart since——"

She burst into tears, and my dread of an explanation increased.

"Will you follow my advice implicitly?" I asked.

"Yes—oh, yes!"

"You promise?"

"Indeed, indeed!"

"Well, then, listen to me! However painful the task, I must tell you that the encouragement you have given Mr. Slingsby, the admiration you have expressed in your letters of his talents and acquirements, and the confidence you have reposed in him respecting yourself, warrant him in claiming as a right, a fair trial of his attractions. You have known and approved Mr. Slingsby's mind for years—you know me but for a few hours. You saw him under the most unfavorable auspices (for I know him intimately), and I feel bound in justice to assure you that you will like him much better upon acquaintance."

Miss Ellerton had gradually drawn herself up during this splendid speech, and sat at last as erect and as cold as Agrippina upon her marble chair.

"Will you allow me to send Mr. Slingsby to you," I continued, rising —"and suffer him to plead his own cause?"

"If you will call my brother, Mr. Wrongham, I shall feel obliged to you," said Miss Ellerton.

I left the room, and hurrying to my chamber, dipped my head into a basin of water, and plastered my long locks over my eyes, slipped on a white roundabout, and tied around my neck the identical checked cravat in which I had made such an unfavorable impression on the first day of my arrival. Tom Ellerton was soon found, and easily agreed to go before and announce me by my proper name to his sister; and treading closely on his heels, I followed to the door of the music-room.

"Ah, Ellen!" said he, without giving her time for a scene, "I was looking for you. Slingsby is better, and will pay his respects to you presently. And, I say—you will treat him well, Ellen, and—and, don't flirt with Wrongham the way you did last night! Slingsby's a devilish sight better fellow. Oh, here he is!"

As I stepped over the threshold, Miss Ellerton gave me just enough of a look to assure herself that it was the identical monster she had seen at the tea-table, and not deigning me another glance, immediately commenced talking violently to her brother on the state of the weather. Tom bore it for a moment or two with remarkable gravity, but at my first attempt to join in the conversation, my voice was lost in an explosion of laughter which would have been the death of a gentleman with a full habit.

Indignant and astonished, Miss Ellerton rose to her full height, and slowly turned to me.

"*Peccavi!*" said I, crossing my hands on my bosom, and looking up penitently to her face.

She ran to me, and seized my hand, but recovered herself instantly, and the next moment was gone from the room.

Whether from wounded pride at having been the subject of a mystification, or whether from that female caprice by which most men suffer at one period or other of their bachelor lives, I know not—but I never could bring Miss Ellerton again to the same interesting crisis with which she ended her intimacy with Mr. Wrongham. She proffered to forgive me, and talked laughingly enough of our old correspondence; but whenever I grew tender, she referred me to the "sweet lover," mentioned in my verses in the

balcony, and looked around for Van Pelt. That accomplished beau, on observing my discomfiture, began to find out Miss Ellerton's graces without the aid of his quizzing-glass, and I soon found it necessary to yield the *pas* altogether. She has since become Mrs. Van Pelt, and when I last heard from her was "as well as could be expected."

CHAPTER III.

MRS. CAPTAIN THOMPSON.

THE last of August came sweltering in, hot, dusty, and faint, and the most indefatigable belles of Saratoga began to show symptoms of weariness. The stars disappeared gradually from the ball-room; the bar-keeper grew thin under the thickening accounts for lemonades; the fat fellow in the black band, who "vexed" the bassoon, had blown himself from the girth of Falstaff to an "eagle's talon in the waist;" papas began to be waylaid in their morning walks by young gentlemen with propositions; and stage-coaches that came *in* with their baggageless tails in the air, and the driver's weight pressing the foot-board upon the astonished backs of his wheelers, went *out* with the trim of a Venetian gondola—the driver's up-hoisted figure answering to the curved proboscis of that stern-laden craft.

The vocation of tin-tumblers and water-dippers was gone. The fashionable world (*brazen* in its general habit) had drank its fill of the ferrugineous waters. Mammas thanked Heaven for the conclusion of the chaperon's summer solstice; and those who came to bet, and those who came to marry, "made up their books," and walked off (if they had won) with their winnings.

Having taken a less cordial farewell of Van Pelt than I might have done had not Miss Ellerton been hanging confidingly on his arm, I followed my baggage to the door, where that small epitome of the inheritance of the prince of darkness, an American stage-coach, awaited me as its ninth inside passenger. As the last person picked up, I knew very well the seat to which I was destined, and drawing a final cool breath in the breezy colonnade, I summoned resolution and abandoned myself to the tender mercies of the driver.

The "ray of contempt" that "will pierce through the shell of the tortoise," is a shaft from the horn of a new moon in comparison with the beating of an American sun through the top of a stage-coach. This "accommodation" as it is sometimes bitterly called, not being intended to carry outside passengers,

has a top as thin as your grandmother's umbrella, black, porous, and cracked; and while intended for a protection from the heat, it just suffices to collect the sun's rays with an incredible power and sultriness, and exclude the air that makes it sufferable to the beasts of the field. Of the nine places inside this "dilly," the four seats in the corners are so far preferable that the occupant has the outer side of his body exempt from a perspirative application of human flesh (the thermometer at 100 degrees of Fahrenheit), while, of the three middle places on the three seats, the man in the centre of the coach, with no support for his back, yet buried to the chin in men, women, and children, is at the ninth and lowest degree of human suffering. I left Saratoga in such a state of happiness as you might suppose for a gentleman, who, besides fulfilling this latter category, had been previously unhappy in his love.

I was dressed in a white roundabout and trowsers of the same, a straw hat, thread stockings, and pumps, and was so far a blessing to my neighbors that I *looked* cool. Directly behind me, occupying the middle of the back seat, sat a young woman with a *gratis* passenger in her lap (who, of course, did not count among the nine), in the shape of a fat and a very hot child of three years of age, whom she called John, Jacky, Johnny, Jocket, Jacket, and the other endearing diminutives of the namesakes of the great apostle. Like the saint who had been selected for his patron, he was a "voice crying in the wilderness." This little gentleman was exceedingly unpopular with his two neighbors at the windows, and his incursions upon their legs and shoulders in his occasional forays for fresh air, ended in his being forbidden to look out at either window, and plied largely with gingerbread to content him with the warm lap of his mother. Though I had no eyes in the back of my straw hat, I conceived very well the state in which a compost of soft gingerbread, tears, and perspiration, would soon leave the two unscrupulous hands behind me; and as the jolts of the coach frequently threw me back upon the knees of his mother, I could not consistently complain of the familiar use made of my roundabout and shoulders in Master John's constant changes of position. I vowed my jacket to the first river, the moment I could make sure that the soft gingerbread was exhausted—but I kept my temper.

How an American Jehu gets his team over ten miles in the hour, through all the variety of sand, ruts, clay-pits, and stump-thickets, is a problem that can only be resolved by riding beside him on the box. In the usual time we arrived at the pretty village of Troy, some thirty miles from Saratoga; and here, having exchanged my bedaubed jacket for a clean one, I freely forgave little Pickle his freedoms, for I hoped never to set eyes on him again during his natural life. I was going eastward by another coach.

Having eaten a salad for my dinner, and drank a bottle of iced claret, I stepped forth in my "blanched and lavendered" jacket to take my place in the other coach, trusting Providence not to afflict me twice in the same day with the evil I had just escaped, and feeling, on the whole, reconciled to my troubled dividend of eternity. I got up the steps of the coach with as much alacrity as the state of the thermometer would permit, and was about drawing my legs after me upon the forward seat, when a clammy hand caught me unceremoniously by the shirt-collar, and the voice I was just beginning to forget cried out with a chuckle, "*Dada!*"

"Madam!" I said, picking off the gingerbread from my shirt as the coach rolled down the street, "I had hoped that your infernal child——"

I stopped in the middle of the sentence, for a pair of large blue eyes were looking wonderingly into mine, and for the first time I observed that the mother of this familiar nuisance was one of the prettiest women I had seen since I had become susceptible to the charms of the sex.

"Are you going to Boston, sir?" she inquired, with a half timid smile, as if, in that case, she appealed to me for protection on the road.

"Yes, madam!" I answered, taking little Jocket's pasty hand into mine, affectionately, as I returned her hesitating look; "may I hope for your society so far?"

My fresh white waistcoat was soon embossed with a dingy yellow, where my enterprising fellow-passenger had thrust his sticky fist into the pockets, and my sham shirt-bosom was reduced incontinently to the complexion of a painter's rag after doing a sunset in gamboge. I saw everything, however, through the blue eyes of his mother, and was soon on such pleasant terms with Master John, that, at one of the stopping-places, I inveigled him out of the coach and dropped him accidentally into the horse-trough, contriving to scrub him passably clean before he could recover breath enough for an outcry. I had already thrown the residuum of his gingerbread out of the window, so that his familiarities for the rest of the day were, at least, less adhesive.

We dropped one or two way-passengers at Lebanon, and I was left in the coach with Mrs. Captain and Master John Thompson, in both whose favors I made a progress that (I may as well depone) considerably restored my spirits —laid flat by my unthrift wooing at Saratoga. If a fly hath but alit on my nose when my self-esteem hath been thus at a discount, I have soothed myself with the fancy that it preferred me—a drowning vanity will so catch at a straw!

As we bowled along through some of the loveliest scenery of Massachusetts, my companion (now become my charge) let me a little into her history, and at the same time, by those shades of insinuation of which women so instinctively know the uses, gave me perfectly to comprehend that I might as well economize my tenderness. The father of the riotous young gentleman who had made so free with my valencia waistcoat and linen roundabouts, had the exclusive copyhold of her affections. He had been three years at sea (I think I said before), and she was hastening to show him the pledge of their affections—come into the world since the good brig Dolly made her last clearance from Boston bay.

I was equally attentive to Mrs. Thompson after this illumination, though I was, perhaps, a shade less enamored of the interesting freedoms of Master John. One's taste for children depends so much upon one's love for their mothers!

It was twelve o'clock at night when the coach rattled in upon the pavements of Boston. Mrs. Thompson had expressed so much impatience during the last few miles, and seemed to shrink so sensitively from being left to herself in a strange city, that I offered my services till she should find herself in better hands, and, as a briefer way of disposing of her, had bribed the coachman, who was in a hurry with the mail, to turn a little out of his way, and leave her at her husband's hotel.

We drew up with a prodigious clatter, accordingly, at the Marlborough hotel, where, no coach being expected, the boots and bar-keeper were not immediately forthcoming. After a rap "to wake the dead," I set about assisting the impatient driver in getting off the lady's trunks and boxes, and they stood in a large pyramid on the sidewalk when the door was opened. A man in his shirt, three parts asleep, held a flaring candle over his head, and looked through the half-opened door.

"Is Captain Thompson up?" I asked rather brusquely, irritated at the sour visage of the bar-keeper.

"Captain Thompson, sir!"

"Captain Thompson, sir!!" I repeated my words with a voice that sent him three paces back into the hall.

"No, sir," he said at last, slipping one leg into his trowsers, which had hitherto been under his arm.

"Then wake him immediately, and tell him Mrs. Thompson is arrived." Here's a husband, thought I, as I heard something between a sob and a complaint issue from the coach-window at the bar-keeper's intelligence. To

go to bed when he expected his wife and child, and after three years' separation! She might as well have made a parenthesis in her constancy!

"Have you called the captain?" I asked, as I set Master John upon the steps, and observed the man still standing with the candle in his hand, grinning from ear to ear.

"No, sir," said the man.

"No!" I thundered, "and what in the devil's name is the reason?"

"Boots!" he cried out in reply, "show this gentleman 'forty-one.' Them may wake Captain Thompson as likes! *I* never hear*n* of no Mrs. Thompson!"

Rejecting an ungenerous suspicion that flashed across my mind, and informing the bar-keeper *en passant*, that he was a brute and a donkey, I sprang up the staircase after a boy, and quite out of breath, arrived at a long gallery of bachelors' rooms on the fifth floor. The boy pointed to a door at the end of the gallery, and retreated to the banisters as if to escape the blowing up of a petard.

Rat-a-tat-tat

"Come in!" thundered a voice like a hailing trumpet. I took the lamp from the boy, and opened the door. On a narrow bed well tucked up, lay a most formidable looking individual, with a face glowing with carbuncles, a pair of deep-set eyes inflamed and fiery, and hair and eyebrows of glaring red, mixed slightly with gray; while outside the bed lay a hairy arm, with a fist like the end of the club of Hercules. His head tied loosely in a black silk handkerchief, and on the light-stand stood a tumbler of brandy-and-water.

"What do you want?" he thundered again, as I stepped over the threshold and lifted my hat, struck speechless for a moment with this unexpected apparition.

"Have I the pleasure," I asked, in a hesitating voice, "to address Captain Thompson?"

"That's my name!"

"Ah! then, captain, I have the pleasure to inform you that Mrs. Thompson and little John are arrived. They are at the door at this moment."

A change in the expression of Captain Thompson's face checked my information in the middle, and as I took a step backward, he raised himself on his elbow, and looked at me in a way that did not diminish my embarrassment.

"I'll tell you what, Mr. Milk-and-water," said he, with an emphasis on every word like the descent of a sledge-hammer; "if you're not out of this

room in two seconds with your 'Mrs. Thompson and little John,' I'll slam you through that window, or the devil take me!"

I reflected as I took another step backward, that if I were thrown down to Mrs. Thompson from a fifth story window I should not be in a state to render her the assistance she required, and remarking with an ill-feigned gayety to Captain Thompson that so decided a measure would not be necessary, I backed expeditiously over the threshold. As I was closing his door, I heard the gulp of his brandy-and-water, and the next instant the empty glass whizzed past my retreating head, and was shattered to pieces on the wall behind me.

I gave the "boots" a cuff for an untimely roar of laughter as I reached the staircase, and descended, very much discomfited and embarrassed, to Mrs. Thompson. My delay had thrown that lady into a very moving state of unhappiness. Her tears were glistening in the light of the street lamp, and Master John was pulling away unheeded at her stomacher and crying as if he would split his diaphragm. What to do? I would have offered to take her to my paternal roof till the mystery could be cleared up—but I had been absent two years, and to arrive at midnight with a woman and a young child, and such an improbable story—I did not think my reputation at home would bear me out. The coachman, too, began to swear and make demonstrations of leaving us in the street, and it was necessary to decide.

"Shove the baggage inside the coach," I said at last, "and drive on. Don't be unhappy, Mrs. Thompson! Jocket, stop crying, you villain! I'll see that you are comfortably disposed of for the night where the coach stops, madam, and to-morrow I'll try a little reason with Captain Thompson." How the devil can she love such a volcanic specimen! I muttered to myself, dodging instinctively at the bare remembrance of the glass of brandy-and-water.

The coachman made up for lost time, and we rattled over the pavements at a rate that made Jocket's hullybaloo quite inaudible. As we passed the door of my own home, I wondered what would be the impression of my respectable parent, could he see me whisking by, after midnight, with a rejected woman and her progeny upon my hands; but smothering the unworthy doubt that re-arose in my mind, touching the legitimacy of Master John, I inwardly vowed that I would see Mrs. Thompson at all risks fairly out of her *imbroglio*.

We pulled up with a noise like the discharge of a load of paving-stones, and I was about saying something both affectionate and consolatory to my weeping charge, when a tall handsome fellow, with a face as brown as a berry, sprang to the coach-door and seized her in his arms! A shower of

kisses and tender epithets left me not a moment in doubt. There was *another Captain Thompson*!

He had not been able to get rooms at the Marlborough, as he had anticipated when he wrote, and presuming that the mail would come first to the post-office, he had waited for her there.

As I was passing the Marlborough a week or two afterward, I stopped to inquire about Captain Thompson. I found that he was an old West India captain, who had lived there between his cruises for twenty years more or less, and had generally been supposed a bachelor. He had suddenly gone to sea, the landlord told me, smiling at the same time, as if thereby hung a tale if he chose to tell it.

"The fact is," said Boniface, when I pushed him a little on the subject, "he was *skeared* off."

"What scared him?" I asked very innocently.

"A wife and child from some foreign port!" he answered laughing as if he would burst his waistband, and taking me into the back parlor to tell me the particulars.

MEENA DIMITY;

OR, WHY MR. BROWN CRASH TOOK THE TOUR.

FASHION is arbitrary, we all know. What it was that originally gave Sassafras street the right to despise Pepperidge street, the oldest inhabitant of the village of Slimford could not positively say. The courthouse and jail were in Sassafras street; but the orthodox church and female seminary were in Pepperidge street.

Two directors of the Slimford bank lived in Sassafras street—two in Pepperidge street. The Dyaper family lived in Sassafras street—the Dimity family in Pepperidge street; and the fathers of the Dyaper girls and the Dimity girls were worth about the same money, and had both made it in the lumber line. There was no difference to speak of in their respective mode of living—none in the education of the girls—none in the family gravestones or church-pews. Yet, deny it who liked, the Dyapers were the aristocracy of Slimford.

It may be a prejudice, but I am inclined to think there is always something in a nose. (I am about to mention a trifle, but trifles are the beginning of most things, and I would account for the pride paramount of the Dyapers, if it is in any way possible.) The most stylish of the Miss Dyapers—Harriet Dyaper—had a nose like his grace the Duke of Wellington. Neither her father nor mother had such a feature; but there was a foreign umbrella in the family with exactly the same shaped nose on the ivory handle. Old Dyaper had once kept a tavern, and he had taken this umbrella from a stranger for a night's lodging. But that is neither here nor there. To the nose of Harriet Dyaper, resistlessly and instinctively, the Dimity girls had knocked under at school. There was authority for it; for the American eagle had such a nose, and the Duke of Wellington had such a nose; and when, to these two warlike instances, was added the nose of Harriet Dyaper, the tripod stood firm. Am I visionary in believing that the authority introduced into that village by a foreigner's umbrella (so unaccountable is fate) gave the dynasty to the Dyapers?

I have mentioned but two families—one in each of the two principal streets of Slimford. Having a little story to tell, I cannot afford to distract my narrative with unnecessary "asides;" and I must not only omit all description

of the other Sassafrasers and Pepperidgers, but I must leave to your imagination several Miss Dyapers and several Miss Dimitys—Harriet Dyaper and Meena Dimity being the two exclusive objects of my hero's Sunday and evening attentions.

For eleven months in the year, the loves of the ladies of Slimford were presided over by indigenous Cupids. Brown Crash and the other boys of the village had the Dyapers and the Dimitys for that respective period to themselves. The remaining month, when their sun of favor was eclipsed, was during the falling of the leaf, when the "drummers" came up to dun. The townish clerks of the drygoods merchants were too much for the provincials.

Brown Crash knocked under and sulked, owing, as he said, to the melancholy depression accompanying the fall of the deciduous vegetation. But I have not yet introduced you to my hero.

Brown Crash was the Slimford stage-agent. He was the son of a retired watch-maker, and had been laughed at in his boyhood for what they called his "airs." He loved, even as a lad, to be at the tavern when the stage came in, and help out the ladies. With instinctive leisureliness he pulled off his cap as soon after the "whoa-hup" as was necessary (and no sooner), and asked the ladies if they would "alight and take dinner," with a seductive smile which began, as the landlord said, "to pay." Hence his promotion. At sixteen he was nominated stage-agent, and thenceforward was the most conspicuous man in the village; for "man" he was, if speech and gait go for anything.

But we must minister a moment to the reader's inner sense; for we do not write altogether for Slimford comprehension. Brown Crash had something in his composition "above the vulgar." If men's qualities were mixed like salads, and I were giving a "recipe for Brown Crashes," in Mrs. Glass's style, I should say his two principal ingredients were a dictionary and a dunghill cock—for his language was as ornate as his style of ambulation was deliberate and imposing. What Brown Crash would have been, born Right Honorable, I leave (with the smaller Dyapers and Dimitys) to the reader's fancy. My object is to show what he *was—minus* patrician nurture and valuation. Words, with Brown Crash, were susceptible of being dirtied by use. He liked a clean towel—he preferred an unused phrase. But here stopped his peculiarities. Below the epidermis he was like other men, subject to like tastes and passions. And if he expressed his loves and hates with grandiloquent imagery, they were the honest loves and hates of a week-day world—no finer nor flimsier for their bedecked plumage.

To use his own phrase, Brown frequented but two ladies in Slimford—Miss Harriet Dyaper and Miss Meena Dimity. The first we have described in

describing her nose, for her remainder was comparatively inconsiderable. The latter was "a love," and of course had nothing peculiar about her. She was a lamp—nothing till lighted. She was a mantle—nothing, except as worn by the owner. She was a mirror—blank and unconscious till something came to be reflected. She was anything, *loved—unloved*, nothing! And this (it is our opinion after half a life) is the most delicious and adorable variety of woman that has been spared to us from the museum of specimen angels. (A remark of Brown Crash's, by the way, of which he may as well have the credit.)

Now Mr. Crash had an ambitious weakness for the best society, and he liked to appear intimate with the Dyapers. But in Meena Dimity there was a secret charm which made him wish she was an ever-to-be-handed-out lady-stage-passenger. He could have given her a hand, and brought in her umbrella, and bandbox, all day long. In his hours of pride he thought of the Dyapers. In his hours of affection of Meena Dimity. But the Dyapers looked down upon the Dimitys; and to play his card delicately between Harriet and Meena, took all the diplomacy of Brown Crash. The unconscious Meena *would* walk up Sassafras street when she had his arm, and the scornful Harriet, *would* be there with her nose over the front gate to sneer at them. He managed as well as he could. He went on light evenings to the Dyapers—on dark evenings to the Dimitys. He took town-walks with the Dyapers—country walks with the Dimitys. But his acquaintance with the Dyapers hung by the eyelids. Harriet liked him; for he was the only beau in Slimford whose manners were not belittled beside her nose. But her acquaintance with him was a condescension, and he well knew that he could not "hold her by the nose" if she were offended. Oh no! Though their respective progenitors were of no very unequal rank—though a horologist and a "boss lumberman" might abstractly be equals—the Dyapers had the power! *Yes*—they could lift him to themselves, or dash him down to the Dimitys; and all Slimford would agree, in the latter case, that he was a "slab" and a "small potato!"

But a change came o'er the spirit of Brown Crash's dream! The drummers were lording it in Slimford, and Brown, reduced to Meena Dimity (for he was too proud to play second fiddle to a town dandy), was walking with her on a dark night past the Dyapers. The Dyapers were hanging over the gate, unluckily, and their Pearl-street admirers sitting on the top rail of the fence.

"Who is it?" said a strange voice.

The reply, sent upward from a scornfully projecting under lip, rebounded in echoes from the tense nose of Miss Dyaper.

"*A* Mr. Crash, and a girl from the back street!"

It was enough. A hot spot on his cheek, a warm rim round his eyes, a pimply pricking in his skin, and it was all over! His vow was made. He coldly bid Meena good night at her father's door, and went home and counted his money. And from that hour, without regard to sex, he secretly accepted shillings from gratified travellers, and "stood treat" no more. * * *

Saratoga was crowded with the dispersed nuclei of the metropolises. Fashion, wealth, and beauty, were there. Brown Crash was there, on his return from a tour to Niagara and the lakes.

"Brown Crash, Esq" was one of the notabilities of Congress Hall. Here and there a dandy "could not quite make him out," but there was evidently something uncommon about him. The ladies thought him "of the old school of politeness," and the politicians thought he had the air of one used to influence in his county. His language was certainly very choice and peculiar, and his gait was conscious dignity itself. He must have been carefully educated; yet his manners were popular, and he was particularly courteous on a first introduction. The elegance and ease with which he helped the ladies out of their carriages were particularly remarked, and a shrewd observer said of him, that "*that* point of high breeding was only acquired by daily habit. He must have been brought up where there were carriages and ladies." A member of Congress, who expected to run for governor, inquired his county, and took wine with him. His name was mentioned by the letter-writers from the springs. Brown Crash was in his perihelion!

The season leaned to it's close, and the following paragraph appeared in the New York American:—

"*Fashionable Intelligence.*—The company at the Springs is breaking up. We understand that the Vice-President and Brown Crash, Esq., have already left for their respective residences. The latter gentleman, it is understood, has formed a matrimonial engagement with a family of wealth and distinction from the south. We trust that these interesting bonds, binding together the leading families of the far-divided extremities of our country, may tend to strengthen the tenacity of the great American Union!"

* * * * * *

It was not surprising that the class in Slimford who knew everything—the milliners, to wit—moralized somewhat bitterly on Mr. Crash's devotion to the Dyapers after his return, and his consequent slight to Meena Dimity. "If that was the effect of fashion and distinction on the heart, Mr. Crash was welcome to his honors! Let him marry Miss Dyaper, and they wished him much joy of her nose; but they would never believe that he had not

ruthlessly broken the heart of Meena Dimity, and he ought to be ashamed of himself, if there was any shame in such a dandy."

But the milliners, though powerful people in their own way, could little affect the momentum of Brown Crash's glories. The paragraph from the "American" had been copied into the "Slimford Advertiser," and the eyes of Sassafras street and Pepperidge street were alike opened. They had undervalued their indigenous "prophet." They had misinterpreted and misread the stamp of his superiority. He had been obliged to go from them to be recognized. But he was returned. He was there to have reparation made—justice done. And now, what office would he like, from Assessor to Pathmaster, and would he be good enough to name it before the next town-meeting? Brown Crash was king of Slimford!

And Harriet Dyaper! The scorn from her lip had gone, like, the blue from a radish! Notes for "B. Crash, Esq.," showered from Sassafras street—bouquets from old Dyaper's front yard glided to him *per* black boy—no end to the endearing attentions, undisguised and unequivocal. Brown Crash and Harriet Dyaper were engaged, if having the front parlor entirely given up to them of an evening meant anything—if his being expected every night to tea meant anything—if his devoted (though she thought rather cold) attentions meant anything.

They didn't mean anything! They all didn't mean anything! What does the orthodox minister do, the third Sunday after Brown Crash's return, but read the banns of matrimony between that faithless man and Meena Dimity!

But this was not to be endured. Harriet Dyaper had a cousin who was a "strapper." He was boss of a sawmill in the next county, and he must be sent for.

He was sent for.

* * * * * *

The fight was over. Boss Dyaper had undertaken to flog Brown Crash, but it was a drawn battle—for the combatants had been pulled apart by their coat-tails. They stepped into the bar-room and stood recovering their breath. The people of Slimford crowded in, and wanted to have the matter talked over. Boss Dyaper bolted out his grievance.

"Gentlemen!" said Brown Crash, with one of his irresistible come-to-dinner smiles, "I am culpable, perhaps, in the minutiæ of this business—justifiable, I trust you will say, in the general scope and tendency. You, all of you, probably, had mothers, and some of you have wives and sisters; and your 'silver cord' naturally sympathizes with a worsted woman. But gentlemen, you are republicans! You, all of you, are the rulers of a country

very large indeed; and you are not limited in your views to one woman, nor to a thousand women—to one mile nor to a thousand miles. You generalize! you go for magnificent principles, gentlemen! You scorn high-and-mightiness, and supercilious aristocracy!"

"Hurra for Mr. Crash!" cried a stage-driver from the outside.

"Well, gentlemen! In what I have done, I have deserved well of a republican country! True—it has been my misfortune to roll my Juggernaut of principle over the sensibilities of that gentleman's respectable female relative. But, gentlemen, she offended, remidilessly and grossly, one of the sovereign people! She scorned one of earth's fairest daughters, who lives in a back street! Gentlemen, you know that pride tripped up Lucifer! Shall a tiptop angel fall for it, and a young woman who is nothing particular be left scornfully standing? Shall Miss Dyaper have more privileges than Lucifer? I appreciate your indignant negative!

"But, gentlemen, I am free to confess, I had also my republican private end. You know my early history. You have witnessed my struggles to be respected by my honorable contemporaries. If it be my weakness to be sensitive to the finger of scorn, be it so. You will know how to pardon me. But I will be brief. At a particular crisis of my acquaintance with Miss Dyaper, I found it expedient to transfer my untrammelled tendernesses to Pepperidge street. My heart had long been in Pepperidge street. But, gentlemen, to have done it without removing from before my eyes the contumelious finger of the scorn of Sassafras street, was beyond my capabilities of endurance. In justice to my present 'future,' gentlemen, I felt that I must remove 'sour grapes' from my escutcheon—that I must soar to a point, whence swooping proudly to Meena Dimity, I should pass the Dyapers in descending!

(Cheers and murmurs.)

"Gentlemen and friends! This world is all a fleeting show. The bell has rung, and I keep you from your suppers. Briefly. I found the means to travel and test the ring of my metal among unprejudiced strangers. I wished to achieve distinction and return to my birthplace; but for what? Do me justice, gentlemen. Not to lord it in Sassafras street. Not to carry off a Dyaper with triumphant elation! Not to pounce on your aristocratic No. 1, and link my destiny with the disdainful Dyapers! No! But to choose where I liked, and have the credit of liking it! To have Slimford believe that if I preferred their No. 2, it was because I liked it better than No. 1. Gentlemen, I am a republican! I may find my congenial spirit among the wealthy—I may find it among the humble. But I want the liberty to choose. And I have achieved it, I trust you will permit me the liberty to say. Having been honored by the

dignitaries of a metropolis—having consorted with a candidate for gubernatorial distinction—having been recorded in a public journal as a companion of the Vice-President of this free and happy country—you will believe me when I declare that I prefer Pepperidge street to Sassafras—you will credit my sincerity, when, having been approved by the Dyaper's betters, I give them the go-by for the Dimitys! Gentlemen, I have done."

The reader will not be surprised to learn that Mr. Brown Crash is now a prominent member of the legislature, and an excessive aristocrat—Pepperidge street and very democratic speeches to the contrary notwithstanding.

MRS. PASSABLE TROTT.

"Je suis comme vous. Je n'aime pas que les autres soient heureux."

THE temerity with which I hovered on the brink of matrimony when a very young man could only be appreciated by a fatuitous credulity. The number of very fat mothers of very plain families who can point me out to their respective offspring as their once imminent papa, is ludicrously improbable. The truth was that I had a powerful imagination in my early youth, and no "realizing sense." A coral necklace, warm from the wearer—a shoe with a little round stain in the sole—anything flannel—a bitten rosebud with the mark of a tooth upon it—a rose, a glove, a thimble—either of these was agony, ecstasy! To anything with curls and skirts, and especially if encircled by a sky-blue sash, my heart was as prodigal as a Croton hydrant. Ah me!

But, of all my short eternal attachments, Fidelia Balch (since Mrs. P. Trott) was the kindest and fairest. Faithless of course she was, since my name does not begin with a T.—but if she did not continue to love me—P. Trott or no P. Trott—she was shockingly forsworn, as can be proved by several stars, usually considered very attentive listeners. I rather pitied poor Trott—for I knew

"Her heart—it was another's,"

and he was rich and forty-odd. But they seemed to live very harmoniously, and if I availed myself of such little consolations as fell in my way, it was the result of philosophy. I never forgot the faithless Fidelia.

This is to be a disembowelled narrative, dear reader—skipping from the maidenhood of my heroine to her widowhood, fifteen years—yet I would have you supply here and there a betweenity. My own sufferings at seeing my adored Fidelia go daily into another man's house and shut the door after her, you can easily conceive. Though not in the habit of rebelling against human institutions, it *did* seem to me that the marriage ceremony had no business to give old Trott quite so much for his money. But the aggravating part of it was to come! Mrs. P. Trott grew prettier every day, and of course three hundred and sixty-five noticeable degrees prettier every year! She

seemed incapable of, or not liable to, wear and tear; and probably old Trott was a man, indoors, of very even behavior. And, it should be said, too, in explanation, that, as Miss Balch, Fidelia was a shade too fat for her model. She embellished as her dimples grew shallower. Trifle by trifle, like the progress of a statue, the superfluity fell away from nature's original Miss Balch (as designed in Heaven), and when old Passable died (and no one knew what that P. stood for, till it was betrayed by the indiscreet plate on his coffin) Mrs. Trott, thirty-three years old, was at her maximum of beauty. Plump, taper, transparently fair, with an arm like a high-conditioned Venus, and a neck set on like the swell of a French horn, she was consumedly good-looking. When I saw in the paper, "Died, Mr. P. Trott," I went out and walked past the house, with overpowering emotions. Thanks to a great many refusals, *I* had been faithful! *I* could bring her the same heart, unused and undamaged, which I had offered her before! *I* could generously overlook Mr. Trott's temporary occupation (since he had left us his money!)—and when her mourning should be over—the very day—the very hour—her first love should be ready for her, good as new!

I have said nothing of any evidences of continued attachment on the part of Mrs. Trott. She was a discreet person and not likely to compromise Mr. P. Trott till she knew the strength of his constitution. But there was one evidence of lingering preference, which I built upon like a rock. I had not visited her during these fifteen years. Trott liked me not—you can guess why! But I had a nephew, five years old when Miss Balch was my "privately engaged," and as like me, that boy, as could be copied by nature. He was our unsuspecting messenger of love, going to play in old Balch's garden when I was forbidden the house, unconscious of the billet-doux in the pocket of his pinafore; and to this boy, after our separation, seemed Fidelia to cling. He grew up to a youth of mind and manners, and still she cherished him. He all but lived at old Trott's, petted and made much of—her constant companion—reading, walking, riding—indeed, when home from college, her sole society. Are you surprised that, in all this, there was a tenderness of reminiscence that touched and assured me? Ah—

"On revient toujours
A ses premiers amours!"

I thought it delicate, and best, to let silence do its work during that year of mourning. I did not whisper even to my nephew Bob the secret of my happiness. I left one card of condolence after old Trott's funeral, and lived private, counting the hours. The slowest kind of eternity it appeared!

The morning never seemed to me to break with so much difficulty and reluctance as on the anniversary of the demise of Mr. Passable Trott—June 2, 1840. Time is a comparative thing, I well know, but the minutes seemed to stick, on that interminable morning. I began to dress for breakfast at four—but details are tiresome. Let me assure you that twelve o'clock, A. M., *did* arrive! The clocks struck it, and the shadows verified it.

I could not have borne an accidental "not at home," and I resolved not to run the risk of it. Lovers, besides, are not tied to knockers and ceremony. I bribed the gardener. Fidelia's boudoir, I knew, opened upon the lawn, and it seemed more like love to walk in. She knew—I knew—Fate and circumstance knew and had ordained—that that morning was to be shoved up, joined on, and dovetailed to our last separation. The time between was to be a blank. Of course she expected me.

The garden door was ajar—as paid for. I entered, traversed the vegetable beds, tripped through the flower-walk, and—oh bliss!—the window was open! I could just see the Egyptian urn on its pedestal of sphinxes, into which I knew (per Bob) she threw all her fading roses. I glided near. I looked in at the window.

Ah, that picture! She sat with her back to me—her arm—that arm of rosy alabaster—thrown carelessly over her chair—her egg-shell chin resting on her other thumb and forefinger—her eyelids sweeping her cheek—and a white—yes! a white bow in her hair. And her dress was of snowy lawn—white, bridal white! Adieu, old Passable Trott!

I wiped my eyes and looked again. Old Trott's portrait hung on the wall, but that was nothing. Her guitar lay on the table, and—did I see aright?—a miniature just beside it! Perhaps of old Trott—taken out for the last time. Well—well! He was a very respectable man, and had been very kind to her, most likely.

"E-hem!" said I, stepping over the sill, "Fidelia!"

She started and turned, and certainly looked surprised.

"Mr. G——!" said she.

"It is long since we parted!" I said, helping myself to a chair.

"Quite long!" said Fidelia.

"So long that you have forgotten the name of G——?" I asked, tremulously.

"Oh no!" she replied, covering up the miniature on the table by a careless movement of her scarf.

"And may I hope that *that* name has not grown distasteful to you?" I summoned courage to say.

"N——no! I do not know that it has, Mr. G——!"

The blood returned to my fainting heart! I felt as in days of yore.

"Fidelia!" said I, "let me not waste the precious moments. You loved me at twenty—may I hope that I may stand to you in a nearer relation! May I venture to think that our family is not unworthy of a union with the Balches? —that, as Mrs. G——, you could be happy?"

Fidelia looked—hesitated—took up the miniature, and clasped it to her breast.

"Do I understand you rightly, Mr. G——!" she tremulously exclaimed. "But I think I do! I remember well what you were at twenty! This picture is like what you were then—with differences, it is true, but still like! Dear picture!" she exclaimed again, kissing it with rapture.

(How could she have got my miniature?—but no matter—taken by stealth, I presume. Sweet and eager anticipation!)

"And Robert has returned from college, then?" she said, inquiringly.

"Not that I know of," said I.

"Indeed!—then he has written to you!"

"Not recently!"

"Ah, poor boy! he anticipated! Well, Mr. G——! I will not affect to be coy where my heart has been so long interested."

(I stood ready to clasp her to my bosom.)

"Tell Robert my mourning is over—tell him his name" (the name of G ——, of course) "is the music of my life, and that I will marry whenever he pleases!"

A horrid suspicion crossed my mind.

"Pardon me!" said I; "*whenever he pleases*, did you say? Why, particularly, *when he pleases*?"

"La! his not being of age is no impediment, I hope!" said Mrs. Trott, with some surprise. "Look at his miniature, Mr. G——! It has a boyish look, it's true—but so had you—at twenty!"

Hope sank within me! I would have given worlds to be away. The truth was apparent to me—perfectly apparent. She loved that boy Bob—that child —that mere child—and meant to marry him! Yet how could it be possible! I might be—yes—I must be, mistaken. Fidelia Balch—who was a woman when he was an urchin in petticoats! she to think of marrying that boy! I

wronged her—oh I wronged her! But, worst come to the worst, there was no harm in having it perfectly understood.

"Pardon me!" said I, putting on a look as if I expected a shout of laughter for the mere supposition, "I should gather—(categorically, mind you!—only categorically)—I should gather from what you said just now—(had I been a third person listening, that is to say—with no knowledge of the parties)—I should really have gathered that Bob—little Bob—was the happy man, and not I! Now don't laugh at me!"

"*You* the happy man!—Oh, Mr. G——! you are joking! Oh no! pardon me if I have unintentionally misled you—but if I marry again, Mr. G——, *it will be a young man!!!* In short, not to mince the matter, Mr. G——, your nephew is to become my husband (nothing unforeseen turning up) in the course of the next week! We shall have the pleasure of seeing you at the wedding, of course! Oh no! *You!* I should fancy that no woman would make *two* unequal marriages, Mr. G——. Good morning, Mr. G——!"

I was left alone, and to return as I pleased, by the vegetable garden or the front door. I chose the latter, being somewhat piqued as well as inexpressibly grieved and disappointed. But philosophy came to my aid, and I soon fell into a mood of speculation.

"Fidelia is constant!" said I to myself—"constant, after all! She made up her mouth for me at twenty. But I did not *stay twenty!* Oh no! I, unadvisedly, and without preparatively cultivating her taste for thirty-five, became thirty-five. And now what was she to do? Her taste was not at all embarked in Passable Trott, and it stayed just as it was—waiting to be called up and used. She locks it up decently till old Trott dies, and then reproduces—what? Why, just what she locked up—a taste for a young man at twenty—and just such a young man as she loved when she was twenty! Bob—of course! Bob is like me—Bob is twenty! Be Bob her husband!"

But I cannot say I quite like such constancy!

THE SPIRIT-LOVE OF "IONE S——."

(SINCE DISCOVERED TO BE MISS JONES.)

NOT long ago, but before poetry and pin-money were discovered to be cause and effect, Miss Phebe Jane Jones was one of the most charming contributors to a certain periodical now gone over "Lethe's wharf." Her signature was "Ione S——!" a neat anagram, out of which few would have picked the monosyllable engraved upon her father's brass knocker. She wrote mostly in verse; but her prose, of which you will presently see a specimen or two, was her better vein—as being more easily embroidered, and not cramped with the inexorable fetters of rhyme. Miss Jones abandoned authorship before the New Mirror was established, or she would, doubtless, have been one of its *paid* contributors—as much ("we" flatter ourselves) as could well be said of her abilities.

The beauty of hectics and hollow chests has been written out of fashion; so I may venture upon the simple imagery of truth and nature. Miss Jones was as handsome as a prize heifer. She was a compact, plump, wholesome, clean-limbed, beautifully-marked animal, with eyes like inkstands running over, and a mouth that looked, when she smiled, as if it had never been opened before, the teeth seemed so fresh and unhandled. Her voice had a tone clear as the ring of a silver dollar; and her lungs must have been as sound as a pippin, for when she laughed (which she never did unless she was surprised into it, for she loved melancholy), it was like the gurgling of a brook over the pebbles. The bran-new people made by Deucalion and Pyrrha, when it cleared up after the flood, were probably in Miss Jones's style.

But do you suppose that "Ione S——" cared any thing for her good looks! What—value the poor perishing tenement in which nature had chosen to lodge her intellectual and spiritual part! What—care for her covering of clay! What—waste thought on the chain that kept her from the Pleiades, of which, perhaps, she was the lost sister (who knows)? And, more than all—oh gracious!—to be *loved* for this trumpery-drapery of her immortal essence!

Yes—*infra dig.* as it may seem to record such an unworthy trifle—the celestial Phebe had the superfluity of an every-day lover. Gideon Flimmins

was willing to take her on her outer inventory alone. He loved her cheeks—he did not hesitate to admit! He loved her lips—he could not help specifying! He had been known to name her shoulders! And, in taking out a thorn for her with a pair of tweezers one day, he had literally exclaimed with rapture that she had a heavenly little pink thumb. But of "Ione S——" he had never spoken a word. No, though she read him faithfully every effusion that appeared—asked his opinion of every separate stanza—talked of "Ione S——" as the person on earth she most wished to see (for she kept her literary incog.)—Gideon had never alluded to her a second time, and perseveringly, hatefully, atrociously, and with mundane motive only, he made industrious love to the outside and visible Phebe! Well! Well!

Contiguity is something, in love; and the Flimminses were neighbors of the Joneses. Gideon had another advantage—for Ophelia Flimmins, his eldest sister, was Miss Jones's eternally attached friend. To explain this, I must trouble the reader to take notice that there were two streaks in the Flimmins family. Fat Mrs. Flimmins, the mother (who had been dead a year), was a thorough "man of business," and it was to her downright and upright management of her husband's wholesale and retail hat-lining establishment, that the family owed its prosperity; for Heredotus Flimmins, whose name was on the sign, was a flimsyish kind of sighing-dying man, and nobody could ever find out what on earth he wanted. Gideon and the two fleshy Miss Flimminses took after their mother, but Ophelia, whose semi-translucent frame was the envy of her faithful Phebe, was, with very trifling exceptions, the perfect model of her sire. She devotedly loved the moon. She had her preferences among the stars of heaven. She abominated the garish sun. And she and Phebe met by night—on the sidewalk around their mutual nearest corner—deeply veiled to conceal their emotion from the intruding gaze of such stars as they were not acquainted with—and there they communed!

I never knew, nor have I any the remotest suspicion of the reasoning by which these commingled spirits arrived at the conclusion that there was a want in their delicious union. They might have known, indeed, that the chain of bliss, ever so far extended, breaks off at last with an imperfect link—that though mustard and ham may turn two slices of innocent bread into a sandwich, there will still be an unbuttered outside. But they were young—they were sanguine. Phebe, at least, believed that in the regions of space there existed—"wandering but not lost"—the aching worser half of which she was the "better"—some lofty intellect, capable of sounding the unfathomable abysses of hers—some male essence, all soul and romance, with whom she could soar finally, arm-in-arm, to their native star, with no

changes of any consequence between their earthly and their astral communion. It occurred to her, at last, that a letter addressed to him, through her favorite periodical, might possibly reach his eye. The following (which the reader may very likely remember to have seen) appeared in the paper of the following Saturday:—

"*To my spirit-husband, greeting:—*

"Where art thou, bridegroom of my soul? Thy Ione S—— calls to thee from the aching void of her lonely spirit! What name bearest thou? What path walkest thou? How can I, glow-worm like, lift my wings and show thee my lamp of guiding love? Thus wing I these words to thy dwelling-place (for thou art, perhaps, a subscriber to the M——r). Go—truants! Rest not till ye meet his eye.

"But I must speak to thee after the manner of this world.

"I am a poetess of eighteen summers. Eighteen weary years have I worn this prison-house of flesh, in which, when torn from thee, I was condemned to wander. But my soul is untamed by its cage of darkness! I remember, and remember only, the lost husband of my spirit-world. I perform, coldly and scornfully, the unheavenly necessities of this temporary existence; and from the windows of my prison (black—like the glimpses of the midnight heaven they let in) I look out for the coming of my spirit-lord. Lonely! lonely!

"Thou wouldst know, perhaps, what semblance I bear since my mortal separation from thee. Alas! the rose, not the lily, reigns upon my cheek! I would not disappoint thee, though of that there is little fear, for thou lovest for the spirit only. But believe not, because health holds me rudely down, and I seem not fragile and ready to depart—believe not, oh bridegroom of my soul! that I bear willingly my fleshly fetter, or endure with patience the degrading homage to its beauty. For there are soulless worms who think me fair. Ay—in the strength and freshness of my corporeal covering, there are those who rejoice! Oh! mockery! mockery!

"List to me, Ithuriel (for I must have a name to call thee by, and, till thou breathest thy own seraphic name into my ear, be thou Ithuriel)! List! I would meet thee in the darkness only! Thou shalt not see me with thy mortal eyes! Penetrate the past, and remember the smoke-curl of wavy lightness in which I floated to thy embrace! Remember the sunset-cloud to which we retired; the starry lamps that hung over our slumbers! And on the softest whisper of our voices let thy thoughts pass to mine! Speak not aloud! Murmur! murmur! murmur!

"Dost thou know, Ithuriel, I would fain prove to thee my freedom from the trammels of this world! In what chance shape thy accident of clay may

be cast, I know not. Ay, and I care not! I would thou wert a hunchback, Ithuriel! I would thou wert disguised as a monster, my spirit-husband! So would I prove to thee my elevation above mortality! So would I show thee, that in the range of eternity for which we are wedded, a moment's covering darkens thee not—that, like a star sailing through a cloud, thy brightness is remembered while it is eclipsed—that thy Ione would recognize thy voice, be aware of thy presence, adore thee, as she was celestially wont—ay, though thou wert imprisoned in the likeness of a reptile! Ione care for mortal beauty! Ha! ha! ha!—Ha! ha! ha!

"Come to me, Ithuriel! My heart writhes in its cell for converse with thee! I am sick-thoughted! My spirit wrings its thin fingers to play with thy ethereal hair! My earthly cheek, though it obstinately refuses to pale, tingles with fever for thy coming. Glide to me in the shadow of eve—softly! softly!

"Address 'P' at the M——r office.

"Thine, "IONE S——"

* * * * * *

There came a letter to "P."

* * * * * *

It was an inky night. The moon was in her private chamber. The stars had drawn over their heads the coverlet of clouds and pretended to sleep. The street lamps heartlessly burned on.

Twelve struck with "damnable iteration."

On tiptoe and with beating heart, Phebe Jane left her father's area. Ophelia Flimmins followed her at a little distance, for Ione was going to meet her spirit-bridegroom, and receive a renewal of his ante-vital vows; and she wished her friend, the echo of her soul, to overhear and witness them. For oh—if words were anything—if the soul could be melted and poured, lava-like, upon "satin post"—if there was truth in feelings magnetic and prophetic—then was he who had responded to, and corresponded with, Ione S——(she writing to "I," and he to "P"), the ideal for whom she had so long sighed—the lost half of the whole so mournfully incomplete—her soul's missing and once spiritually Siamesed twin! His sweet letters had echoed every sentiment of her heart. He had agreed with her that outside was nothing—that earthly beauty was poor, perishing, pitiful—that nothing that could be seen, touched, or described, had anything to do with the spiritually-passionate intercourse to which their respective essences achingly yearned—that, unseen, unheard, save in whispers faint as a rose's sigh when

languishing at noon, they might meet in communion blissful, superhuman, and satisfactory.

Yet where fittingly to meet—oh agony! agony!

The street-lamps two squares off had been taken up to lay down gas. Ophelia Flimmins had inwardly marked it. Between No. 126 and No. 132, more particularly, the echoing sidewalk was bathed in unfathomable night—for there were vacant lots occupied as a repository for used-up omnibuses. At the most lonely point there stood a tree, and, fortunately, this night, in the gutter beneath the tree, stood a newly-disabled 'bus of the Knickerbocker line—and (sweet omen!) it was blue! In this covert could the witnessing Ophelia lie *perdu*, observing unseen through the open door; and beneath this tree was to take place the meeting of souls—the re-interchange of sky-born vows—the immaterial union of Ithuriel and Ione! Bliss! bliss!—exquisite to anguish.

But—oh incontinent vessel—Ophelia had blabbed. The two fat Miss Flimminses were in the secret—nay, more—they were in the omnibus! Ay—deeply in, and portentously silent, they sat, warm and wondering, on either side of the lamp, probably extinguished for ever! They knew not well what was to be. But whatever sort of thing was a "marriage of soul," and whether "Ithuriel" was body or nobody—mortal man or angel in a blue scarf—the Miss Flimminses wished to see him. Half an hour before the trysting-time they had fanned their way thither, for a thunder-storm was in the air and the night was intolerably close; and, climbing into the omnibus, they reciprocally loosened each other's upper hook, and with their moistened collars laid starchless in their laps, awaited the opening of the mystery.

Enter Ophelia, as expected. She laid her thin hand upon the leather string, and, drawing the door after her, leaned out of its open window in breathless suspense and agitation.

Ione's step was now audible, returning from 132. Slowly she came, but invisibly, for it had grown suddenly pitch-dark; and only the far-off lamps, up and down the street, served to guide her footsteps.

But hark! the sound of a heel! He came! They met! He passed his arm around her and drew her beneath the tree—and with whispers, soft and low, leaned breathing to her ear. He was tall. He was in a cloak. And, oh extasy, he was thin! But thinkest thou to know, oh reader of dust, what passed on those ethereal whispers? Futile—futile curiosity! Even to Ophelia's straining ear, those whispers were inaudible.

But hark! a rumble! Something wrong in the bowels of the sky! And pash! pash!—on the resounding roof of the omnibus—fell drops of rain—

fitfully! fitfully!

"My dear!" whispered Ophelia (for Ione had borrowed her chip hat, the better to elude recognition), "ask Ithuriel to step in."

Ithuriel started to find a witness near, but a whisper from Ione reassured him, and gathering his cloak around his face, he followed his spirit-bride into the 'bus.

The fat Miss Flimminses contracted their orbed shapes, and made themselves small against the padded extremity of the vehicle; Ophelia retreated to the middle, and, next the door, on either side, sat the starry bride and bridegroom—all breathlessly silent. Yet there was a murmur—for five hearts beat within that 'bus's duodecimal womb; and the rain pelted on the roof, pailsful-like and unpityingly.

But slap! dash! whew! heavens!—In rushed a youth, dripping, dripping!

"Get out!" cried Ione, over whose knees he drew himself like an eel pulled through a basket of contorted other eels.

"Come, come, young man!" said a deep bass voice, of which everybody had some faint remembrance.

"Oh!" cried one fat Miss Flimmins.

"Ah!" screamed the other.

"What—dad!" exclaimed Gideon Flimmins, who had dashed into the sheltering 'bus to save his new hat—"dad here with a girl!"

But the fat Flimminses were both in convulsions. Scream! scream! scream!

A moment of confusion! The next moment a sudden light! A watchman with his lantern stood at the door.

"Papa!" ejaculated three of the ladies.

"Old Flimmins!—my heart will burst!" murmured Ione.

The two fat girls hurried on their collars; and Gideon, all amazement at finding himself in such a family party at midnight in a lonely 'bus, stepped out and entered into converse with the guardian of the night.

The rain stopped suddenly, and the omnibus gave up its homogeneous contents. Old Flimmins, who was in a violent perspiration, gave Gideon his cloak to carry, and his two arms to his two pinguid adult pledges. Gideon took Ophelia and Phebe, and they mizzled. Mockery! mockery!

Ione is not yet gone to the spirit-sphere—kept here partly by the fleshy fetter over which she mourned, and partly by the dovetailed duties consequent upon annual Flimminses. Gideon loves her after the manner of

this world—but she sighs “when she hears sweet music,” that her better part is still unappreciated—unfathomed—“cabined, cribbed, confined!”

THE GHOST BALL AT CONGRESS HALL.

It was the last week of September, and the keeper of "Congress hall" stood on his deserted colonnade. The dusty street of Saratoga was asleep in the stillness of village afternoon. The whittlings of the stage-runners at the corners, and around the leaning posts, were fading into dingy undistinguishableness. Stiff and dry hung the slop-cloths at the door of the livery stable, and drearily clean was doorway and stall. "The season" was over.

"Well, Mr. B——!" said the Boniface of the great caravansary, to a gentlemanly-looking invalid, crossing over from the village tavern on his way to Congress spring, "this looks like the end of it! A slimmish season, though, Mr. B——! 'Gad, things isn't as they used to be in *your* time! Three months we used to have of it, in them days, and the same people coming and going all summer, and folks' own horses, and all the ladies drinking champagne! And every 'hop' was as good as a ball, and a ball—when do you ever see such balls now-a-days? Why, here's all my best wines in the cellar; and as to beauty—pooh!—they're done coming *here*, anyhow, are the belles, such as belles *was*!"

"You may say that, mine host, you *may* say that!" replied the damaged Corydon, leaning heavily on his cane,—"what—they're all gone, now, eh—nobody at the 'United States?' "

"Not a soul—and here's weather like August!—capital weather for young ladies to walk out evenings, and, for a drive to Barheight's—nothing like it! It's a sin, *I* say, to pass such weather in the city! Why shouldn't they come to the springs in the Indian summer, Mr. B——?"

Coming events seemed to have cast their shadows before. As Boniface turned his eyes instinctively toward the sand hill, whose cloud of dust was the precursor of new pilgrims to the waters, and the sign for the black boy to ring the bell of arrival, behold, on its summit, gleaming through the nebulous pyramid, like a lobster through the steam of the fisherman's pot, one of the red coaches of "the People's Line."

And another!

And another!

And another!

Down the sandy descent came the first, while the driver's horn, intermittent with the crack of his whip, set to bobbing every pine cone of the adjacent wilderness.

"Prr—ru—te—too—toot—pash!—crack!—snap!—prrr—r—rut—rut—rr*ut*!! G'lang!—Hip!"

Boniface laid his hand on the pull of the porter's bell, but the thought flashed through his mind that he might have been dreaming—was he awake?

And, marvel upon wonder!—a horn of arrival from the *other* end of the village! And as he turned his eyes in that direction, he saw the dingier turnouts from Lake Sacrament—extras, wagons, every variety of rattletrap conveyance—pouring in like an Irish funeral on the return, and making (oh, climax more satisfactory!) straight, all, for Congress Hall!

Events now grew precipitate—

Ladies were helped out with green veils—parasols and baskets were handed after them—baggage was chalked and distributed—(and parasols, baskets, and baggage, be it noted, were all of the complexion that innkeepers love, the indefinable look which betrays the owner's addictedness to extras)—and now there was ringing of bells; and there were orders for the woodcocks to be dressed with pork chemises, and for the champagne to be iced, the sherry not—and through the arid corridors of Congress Hall floated a delicious toilet air of cold cream and lavender—and ladies' maids came down to press out white dresses, while the cook heated the curling irons—and up and down the stairs flitted, with the blest confusion of other days, boots and iced sangarees, hot water, towels, and mint-juleps—all delightful, but all incomprehensible! Was the summer encored, or had the Jews gone back to Jerusalem? To the keeper of Congress Hall the restoration of the millennium would have been a rush-light to this second advent of fun-and-fashion-dom!

Thus far we have looked through the eyes of the person (pocket-ually speaking) most interested in the singular event we wished to describe. Let us now (tea being over, and your astonishment having had time to breathe) take the devil's place at the elbow of the invalided dandy before-mentioned, and follow him over to Congress Hall. It was a mild night, and, as I said before (or meant to, if I did not), August having been prematurely cut off by his *raining* successor, seemed up again, like Hamlet's governor, and bent on walking out his time.

Rice (you remember Rice—famous for his lemonades with a corrective)—Rice, having nearly ignited his forefinger with charging wines at dinner, was out to cool on the colonnade, and B——, not strong enough to stand about, drew a chair near the drawing-room window, and begged the rosy bar-keeper to throw what light he could upon the multitudinous apparition. Rice could only feed the fire of his wonder with the fuel of additional circumstances. Coaches had been arriving from every direction till the house was full. The departed black band had been stopped at Albany, and sent back. There seemed no married people in the party—at least, judging by dress and flirtation. Here and there a belle, a little on the wane, but all most juvenescent in gayety, and (Rice thought) handsomer girls than had been at Congress Hall since the days of the Albany regency (the regency of beauty), ten years ago! Indeed, it struck Rice that he had seen the faces of these lovely girls before, though they whom he thought they resembled had long since gone off the stage—grandmothers, some of them, now!

Rice had been told, also, that there was an extraordinary and overwhelming arrival of children and nurses at the Pavilion Hotel, but he thought the report smelt rather like a jealous figment of the Pavilioners. Odd, if true—that's all!

Mr. B—— had taken his seat on the colonnade, as Shakespere expresses it, "about cock-shut time"—twilight—and in the darkness made visible of the rooms within, he could only distinguish the outline of some very exquisite, and exquisitely plump figures gliding to and fro, winged, each one, with a pair of rather stoutish, but most attentive admirers. As the curfew hour stole away, however, the ladies stole away with it, to dress; and at ten o'clock the sudden outbreak of the full band in a mazurka, drew Mr. B——'s attention to the dining-room frontage of the colonnade, and, moving his chair to one of the windows, the cockles of his heart warmed to see the orchestra in its glory of old—thirteen black Orpheuses perched on a throne of dining-tables, and the black veins on their shining temples strained to the crack of mortality with their zealous execution. The waiters, meantime, were lighting the tin Briareus (that spermaceti monster so destructive to broadcloth), and the side-sconces and stand-lamps, and presently a blaze of light flooded the dusty evergreens of the facade, and nothing was wanting but some fashionable Curtius to plunge first into the void—some adventurous Benton, "to set the ball in motion."

Wrapped carefully from the night-air in his cloak and belcher, B—— sat looking earnestly into the room, and to his excited senses there seemed, about all this supplement to the summer's gayety, a weird mysteriousness, an atmosphere of magic, which was observable, he thought, even in the

burning of the candles! And as to Johnson, the sable leader of the band —"God's-my-life," as Bottom says, how like a tormented fiend writhed the cremona betwixt his chin and white waistcoat! Such music, from instruments so vexed, had never split the ears of the Saratoga groundlings since the rule of St. Dominick (in whose hands even wine sparkled to song) —no, not since the golden age of the Springs, when that lord of harmony and the nabobs of lower Broadway made, of Congress Hall, a paradise for the unmarried! Was Johnson bewitched? Was Congress Hall repossessed by the spirits of the past? If ever Mr. B——, sitting in other years on that resounding colonnade, had *felt* the magnetic atmosphere of people he knew to be up stairs, he felt it now! If ever he had been contented, knowing that certain bright creatures would presently glide into the visual radius of black Johnson, he felt contented, inexplicably, from the same cause *now*— expecting, as if such music could only be *their* herald, the entrance of the same bright creatures, no older, and as bright after years of matrimony. And now and then B—— pressed his hand to his head—for he was not quite sure that he might not be a little wandering in his mind.

But suddenly the band struck up a march! The first bar was played through, and B—— looked at the door, sighing that this sweet hallucination —this waking dream of other days—was now to be scattered by reality. He could have filliped that mercenary Ethiopian on the nose for playing such music to such falling off from the past as he now looked to see enter.

A lady crossed the threshold on a gentleman's arm.

"Ha! ha!" said B——, trying with a wild effort to laugh, and pinching his arm into a blood blister, "come—this is *too* good! Helen K——! oh, no! Not quite crazy yet, I hope—not so far gone yet! Yet it is! I swear it is! And not changed, either! Beautiful as ever, by all that is wonderful! Psha! I'll not be mad! Rice!—Are you there? Why who are these coming after her? Julia L——! Anna K——, and my friend Fanny! The D——s! The M——s! Nay, I'm dreaming, silly fool that I am! I'll call for a light! Waiter!! Where the devil's the bell?"

And as poor B—— insisting on finding himself in bed, reached out his hand to find the bell-pull, one of the waiters of Congress Hall came to his summons. The gentleman wanted nothing, and the waiter thought he had cried out in his nap; and rather embarrassed to explain his wants, but still unconvinced of his freedom from dream-land, B—— drew his hat over his eyes, and his cloak around him, and screwed up his courage to look again into the enchanted ball-room.

The quadrilles were formed, and the lady at the head of the first set was spreading her skirts for the first *avant-deux*. She was a tall woman, superbly

handsome, and moved with the grace of a frigate at sea with a nine-knot breeze. Eyes capable of taking in lodgers (hearts, that is to say) of any and every calibre and quality, a bust for a Cornelia, a shape all love and lightness, and a smile like a temptation of Eblis—there she was—and there were fifty like her—not like her, exactly, either, but of *her* constellation—belles, every one of them, who will be remembered by old men, and used for the disparagement of degenerated younglings—splendid women of Mr. B ——'s time, and of the palmy time of Congress Hall——

"The past—the past—the past!"

Out on your staring and unsheltered lantern of brick—Your "United States Hotel," stiff, modern, and promiscuous! Who ever passed a comfortable hour in its glaring cross-lights, or breathed a gentle sentiment in its unsubdued air and townish open-to-dustiness! What is it to the leafy dimness, the cool shadows, the perpetual and pensive *demi-jour*—what to the ten thousand associations—of Congress Hall! Who has not lost a heart (or two) on the boards of that primitive wilderness of a colonnade! Whose first adorations, whose sighs, hopes, strategies, and flirtations, are not ground into that warped and slipper-polished floor, like heartache and avarice into the bricks of Wall street! Lord bless you, madam! don't desert old Congress Hall! We have done going to the Springs—(*we*)—and wouldn't go there again for anything, but a good price for a pang—(that is, except to see such a sight as we are describing)—but we can not bear, in our midsummer flit through the Astor, to see charming girls bound for Saratoga, and hear no talk of Congress Hall! What! no lounge on those proposal sofas—no pluck at the bright green leaves of those luxuriant creepers while listening to "the voice of the charmer"—no dawdle on the steps to the spring (mamma gone on before)—no hunting for *that* glow-worm in the shrubbery by the music-room—no swing—no billiards—no morning gossips with the few privileged beaux admitted to the upstairs entry, ladies' wing?

"I'd sooner be set quick i' the earth,
And bowled to death with turnips,"

than assist or mingle in such ungrateful forgetfulness of pleasure-land! But what do we with a digression in a ghost-story?

The ball went on. Champagne of the "exploded" color (pink) was freely circulated between the dances—(rosy wine suited to the bright days when all things were tinted rose)—and wit, exploded, too, in these leaden times, went round with the wine; and as a glass of the bright vintage was handed up to

old Johnson, B—— stretched his neck over the window-sill in an agony of expectation, confident that the black ghost, if ghost he were, would fail to recognize the leaders of fashion, as he was wont of old, and to bow respectfully to them before drinking in their presence. Oh, murder! not he! Down went his black poll to the music-stand, and up, and down again, and at every dip, the white roller of that unctuous eye was brought to bear upon some well-remembered star of the ascendant! *He* saw them as B—— did! *He* was not playing to an unrecognized company of late-comers to Saratoga —anybodies from any place! He, the unimaginative African, believed evidently that they were there in flesh—Helen, the glorious, and all her fair troop of contemporaries!—and that with them had come back their old lovers, the gay and gallant Lotharios of the time of Johnson's first blushing honors of renown! The big drops of agonized horror and incredulity rolled off the forehead of Mr. B——!

But suddenly the waiters radiated to the side-doors, and with the celestial felicity of star-rising and morning breaking, a waltz was found playing in the ears of the revellers! Perfect, yet when it did begin! Waltzed every brain and vein, waltzed every swimming eye within the reach of its magic vibrations! Gently away floated couple after couple, and as they circled round to his point of observation, B—— could have called every waltzer by name—but his heart was in his throat, but his eyeballs were hot with the stony immovableness of his long gazing.

Another change in the music! Spirits of bedevilment! could not *that* waltz have been spared! Boniface stood waltzing his head from shoulder to shoulder—Rice twirled the head chamber-maid in the entry—the black and white boys spun round on the colonnade—the wall-flowers in the ball-room crowded their chairs to the wall—the candles flared embracingly—ghosts or no ghosts, dream or hallucination, B—— could endure no more! He flung off his cloak and hat, and jumped in at the window. The divine Emily C—— had that moment risen from tying her shoe. With a nod to her partner, and a smile to herself, B—— encircled her round waist, and away he flew like Ariel, light on the toe, but his face pallid and wild, and his emaciated legs playing like sticks in his unfilled trousers. Twice he made the circuit of the room, exciting apparently less surprise than pleasure by his sudden appearance; then, with a wavering halt, and his hand laid tremulously to his forehead, he flew at the hall-door at a tangent, and rushing through servants and spectators, dashed across the portico, and disappeared in the darkness! A fortnight's brain-fever deprived him of the opportunity of repeating this remarkable flourish, and his subsequent sanity was established through some critical hazard.

There was some inquiry at supper about "old B——," but the lady who waltzed with him knew as little of his coming and going as the managers; and, by one belle, who had been at some trouble in other days to quench his ardor, it was solemnly believed to be his persevering apparition.

The next day there was a drive and dinner at Barheight's, and back in time for ball and supper; and the day after there was a most hilarious and memorable fishing-party to Saratoga lake, and all back again in high force for the ball and supper; and so like a long gala-day, like a short summer carnival, all frolic, sped the week away. Boniface, by the third day, had rallied his recollections, and with many a scrape and compliment, he renewed his acquaintance with the belles and beaux of a brighter period of beauty and gallantry. And if there was any mystery remaining in the old functionary's mind as to the identity and miracle of their presence and reunion, it was on the one point of the ladies' unfaded loveliness—for, saving a half inch aggregation in the waist, which was rather an improvement than otherwise, and a little more fulness in the bust, which was a most embellishing difference, the ten years that had gone over them had made no mark on the lady portion of his guests; and as to the gentlemen—but that is neither here nor there. They were "men of mark," young or old, and their wear and tear is, as Flute says, "a thing of naught."

It was revealed by the keeper of the Pavilion, after the departure of the late-come revellers of Congress Hall, that there had been constant and secret visitations by the belles of the latter sojourn, to the numerous infantine lodgers of the former. Such a troop of babies and boys, and all so lovely, had seldom gladdened even the eyes of angels, out of the cherubic choir (let alone the Saratoga Pavilion), and though, in their white dresses and rosebuds, the belles afore spoken of looked like beautiful elder sisters to those motherless younglings, yet when they came in, mothers confessed, on the morning of departure, openly to superintend the preparations for travel, they had so put off the untroubled maiden look from their countenances, and so put on the indescribable growing-old-iness of married life in their dress, that, to the eye of an observer, they might well have passed for the mothers of the girls they had themselves seemed to be, the day before, only.

Who devised, planned, and brought about, this practical comment on the *needlessness of the American haste to be old*, we are not at liberty to mention. The reader will have surmised, however, that it was some one who had observed the more enduring quality of beauty in other lands, and on returning to his own, looked in vain for those who, by every law of nature, should be still embellishing the society of which he had left them the budding flower and ornament. To get them together again, only with their

contemporaries, in one of their familiar haunts of pleasure—to suggest the exclusion of everything but youthfulness in dress, amusement, and occupation—to bring to meet them their old admirers, married like themselves, but entering the field once more for their smiles against their rejuvenescent husbands—to array them as belles again, and see whether it was any falling off in beauty or the power of pleasing which had driven them from their prominent places in social life—this was the obvious best way of doing his immediate circle of friends the service his feelings exacted of him; the only way, indeed, of convincing these bright creatures that they had far anticipated the fading hour of bloom and youthfulness. *Pensez-y!*

PASQUALI, THE TAILOR OF VENICE.

CHAPTER I.

GIANNINO PASQUALI was a smart tailor some five years ago occupying a cool shop on one of the smaller canals of Venice. Four pairs of suspenders, a print of the fashions, and a motley row of the gay-colored trousers worn by the gondoliers, ornamented the window looking on the dark alley in the rear, and, attached to the post of the water-gate on the canal side, floated a small black gondola, the possession of which afforded the same proof of prosperity of the Venetian tailor which is expressed by a horse and buggy at the door of a snip in London. The place-seeking traveller, who, *nez en l'air*, threaded the tangled labyrinth of alleys and bridges between the Rialto and St. Mark's, would scarce have observed the humble shop-window of Pasquali, yet he had a consequence on the Piazza, and the lagoon had seen his triumphs as an amateur gondolier. Giannino was some thirty years of age, and his wife Fiametta, whom he had married for her zecchini, was on the shady side of fifty.

If the truth must be told, Pasquali had discovered that, even with a bag of sequins for eye-water, Fiametta was not always the most lovely woman in Venice. Just across the canal lived old Donna Bentoccata, the nurse, whose daughter Turturilla was like the blonde in Titian's picture of the Marys; and to the charms of Turturilla, even seen through the leaden light of poverty, the unhappy Pasquali was far from insensible.

The festa of San Antonio arrived after a damp week of November, and though you would suppose the atmosphere of Venice not liable to any very sensible increase of moisture, Fiametta, like people who live on land, and have the rheumatism as a punishment for their age and ugliness, was usually confined to her *brazero* of hot coals till it was dry enough on the Lido for the peacocks to walk abroad. On this festa, however, San Antonio being, as every one knows, the patron saint of Padua, the Padovese were to come down the Brenta, as was their custom, and cross over the sea to Venice to assist in the celebration; and Fiametta once more thought Pasquali loved her for herself alone when he swore by his rosary that unless she accompanied him to the festa in her wedding dress, he would not turn an oar in the race, nor unfasten his gondola from the door-post. Alas! Fiametta was married in

the summer solstice, and her dress was permeable to the wind as a cobweb, or gossamer. Is it possible you could have remembered that, O wicked Pasquali?

It was a day to puzzle a barometer; now bright, now rainy, now gusty as a corridor in a novel, and now calm as a lady after a fit of tears. Pasquali was up early and waked Fiametta with a kiss, and, by way of unusual tenderness, or by way of ensuring the wedding dress, he chose to play dressing maid, and arranged with his own hands her *jupon* and *fazzoletta*. She emerged from her chamber looking like a slice of orange-peel in a flower-bed, but smiling and nodding, and vowing the day warm as April, and the sky without a cloud. The widening circles of an occasional drop of rain in the canal were nothing but the bubbles bursting after a passing oar, or perhaps the last flies of summer. Pasquali swore it was weather to win down a peri.

As Fiametta stepped into the gondola, she glanced her eyes over the way and saw Turturilla, with a face as sorrowful as the first day in Lent, seated at her window. Her lap was full of work, and it was quite evident that she had not thought of being at the festa. Fiametta's heart was already warm, and it melted quite at the sight of the poor girl's loneliness.

"Pasquali mio!" she said, in a deprecating tone, as if she were uncertain how the proposition would be received, "I think we could make room for poor Turturilla!"

A gleam of pleasure, unobserved by the confiding *sposa*, tinted faintly the smooth olive cheek of Pasquali.

"Eh! *diavolo!*" he replied, so loud that the sorrowful seamstress heard, and hung down her head still lower; "must you take pity on every cheese-paring of a *ragezza* who happens to have no lover! Have reason! have reason! The gondola is narrower than your brave heart, my fine Fiametta!" And away he pushed from the water-steps.

Turturilla rose from her work and stepped out upon the rusty gratings of the balcony to see them depart. Pasquali stopped to grease the notch of his oar, and between that and some other embarrassments, the gondola was suffered to float directly under her window. The compliment to the generous nature of Fiametta, was, meantime, working, and as she was compelled to exchange a word or two with Turturilla while her husband was getting his oar into the socket, it resulted (as he thought it very probable it would), in the good wife's renewing her proposition, and making a point of sending the deserted girl for her holiday bonnet. Pasquali swore through all the saints and angels by the time she had made herself ready, though she was but five minutes gone from the window, and telling Fiametta in her ear that she must

consider it as the purest obligation, he backed up to the steps of old Donna Bentoccata, helped in her daughter with a better grace than could have been expected, and with one or two short and deep strokes, put forth into the grand canal with the velocity of a lance-fly.

A gleam of sunshine lay along the bosom of the broad silver sheet, and it was beautiful to see the gondolas with their gay colored freights all hastening in one direction, and with a swift track to the festa. Far up and down they rippled the smooth water, here gliding out from below a palace-arch, there from a narrow and unseen canal, the steel beaks curved and flashing, the water glancing on the oar-blades, the curtains moving, and the fair women of Venice leaning out and touching hands as they neared neighbor or acquaintance in the close-pressing gondolas. It was a beautiful sight, indeed, and three of the happiest hearts in that swift gliding company were in Pasquali's gondola, though the bliss of Fiametta, I am compelled to say, was entirely owing to the bandage with which love is so significantly painted. Ah! poor Fiametta!

From the Lido, from Fusina, from under the Bridge of Sighs, from all quarters of the lagoon, and from all points of the floating city of Venice, streamed the flying gondolas to the Giudecca. The narrow walk along the edge of the long and close-built island was thronged with booths and promenaders, and the black barks by hundreds bumped their steel noses against the pier as the agitated water rose and fell beneath them. The gondolas intended for the race pulled slowly up and down, close to the shore, exhibiting their fairy-like forms and their sinewy and gayly dressed gondoliers to the crowds on land and water; the bands of music, attached to different parties, played here and there a strain; the criers of holy pictures and gingerbread made the air vocal with their lisping and soft Venetian; and all over the scene, as if it was the light of the sky or some other light as blessed but less common, shone glowing black eyes, black as night, and sparkling as the stars on night's darkest bosom. He who thinks lightly of Italian beauty should have seen the women of Venice on St. Antonio's day '32, or on any or at any hour when their pulses are beating high and their eyes alight—for they are neither one nor the other always. The women of that fair clime, to borrow the simile of Moore, are like lava-streams, only bright when the volcano kindles. Their long lashes cover lustreless eyes, and their blood shows dully through the cheek in common and listless hours. The calm, the passive tranquillity in which the delicate graces of colder climes find their element are to them a torpor of the heart when the blood scarce seems to flow. They are wakeful only to the energetic, the passionate, the joyous movements of the soul.

Pasquali stood erect in the prow of his gondola, and stole furtive glances at Turturilla while he pointed away with his finger to call off the sharp eyes of Fiametta; but Fiametta was happy and unsuspicious. Only when now and then the wind came up chilly from the Adriatic, the poor wife shivered and sat closer to Turturilla, who in her plainer but thicker dress, to say nothing of younger blood, sat more comfortably on the black cushion and thought less about the weather. An occasional drop of rain fell on the nose of poor Fiametta, but if she did not believe it was the spray from Pasquali's oar, she at least did her best to believe so; and the perfidious tailor swore by St. Anthony that the clouds were as dry as her eyelashes. I never was very certain that Turturilla was not in the secret of this day's treacheries.

The broad centre of the Giudecca was cleared, and the boats took their places for the race. Pasquali ranged his gondola with those of the other spectators, and telling Fiametta in her ear that he should sit on the other side of Turturilla as a punishment for their *malapropos* invitation, he placed himself on the small remainder of the deep cushion on the farthest side from his now penitent spouse, and while he complained almost rudely of the narrowness of his seat, he made free to hold on by Turturilla's waist, which no doubt made the poor girl's mind more easy on the subject of her intrusion.

Who won and who lost the race, what was the device of each flag, and what bets and bright eyes changed owners by the result, no personage of this tale knew or cared, save Fiametta. She looked on eagerly. Pasquali and Turturilla, as the French say, *trouvaient autress chats á frotter*.

After the decision of the grand race, St. Antonio being the protector, more particularly of the humble ("patron of pigs" in the saints' calendar), the *seignoria* and the grand people generally, pulled away for St. Mark's, leaving the crowded Giudecca to the people. Pasquali, as was said before, had some renown as a gondolier. Something what would be called in other countries a scrub race, followed the departure of the winning boat, and several gondolas, holding each one person only, took their places for the start. The tailor laid his hand on his bosom, and, with the smile that had first stirred the heart and the sequins of Fiametta, begged her to gratify his love by acting as his make-weight while he turned an oar for the pig of St Antonio. The prize roasted to an appetizing crisp, stood high on a platter in front of one of the booths on shore, and Fiametta smacked her lips, overcame her tears with an effort, and told him, in accents as little as possible like the creak of a dry oar in the socket, that he might set Turturilla on shore.

A word in her ear, as he handed her over the gunwale, reconciled Donna Bentoccata's fair daughter to this conjugal partiality, and stripping his manly figure of its upper disguises, Pasquali straightened out his fine limbs, and drove his bark to the line in a style that drew applause from even his competitors. As a mark of their approbation, they offered him an outside place where his fair dame would be less likely to be spattered with the contending oars; but he was too generous to take advantage of this considerate offer, and crying out as he took the middle, "*ben pronto, signori!*" gave Fiametta a confident look and stood like a hound in the leash.

Off they went at the tap of the drum, poor Fiametta holding her breath and clinging to the sides of the gondola, and Pasquali developing skill and muscle—not for Fiametta's eyes only. It was a short, sharp race, without jockeying or management, all fair play and main strength, and the tailor shot past the end of the Giudecca a boat's length ahead. Much more applauded than a king at a coronation or a lord-mayor taking water at London stairs, he slowly made his way back to Turturilla, and it was only when that demure damsel rather shrunk from sitting down in two inches of water, that he discovered how the disturbed element had quite filled up the hollow of the leather cushion and made a peninsula of the uncomplaining Fiametta. She was as well watered, as a favorite plant in a flower-garden.

"*Pasquali mio!*" she said in an imploring tone, holding up the skirt of her dress with the tips of her thumb and finger, "could you just take me home while I change my dress?"

"One moment, *Fiametta cara!* they are bringing the pig!"

The crisp and succulent trophy was solemnly placed in the prow of the victor's gondola, and preparation was made to convoy him home with a triumphant procession. A half hour before it was in order to move—an hour in first making the circuit of the grand canal, and an hour more in drinking a glass and exchanging good wishes at the stairs of the Rialto, and Donna Fiametta had sat too long by two hours and a half with scarce a dry thread on her body. What afterwards befell will be seen in the more melancholy sequel.

CHAPTER II.

THE hospital of St. Girolamo is attached to the convent of that name, standing on one of the canals which put forth on the seaward side of Venice. It is a long building, with its low windows and latticed doors opening almost on the level of the sea, and the wards for the sick are large and well aired; but, except when the breeze is stirring, impregnated with a saline dampness

from the canal, which, as Pasquali remarked, was *good* for the rheumatism. It was not so good for the patient.

The loving wife Fiametta grew worse and worse after the fatal festa, and the fit of rheumatism brought on by the slightness of her dress and the spattering he had given her in the race, had increased by the end of the week, to a rheumatic fever. Fiametta was old and tough, however, and struggled manfully (woman as she was) with the disease, but being one night a little out of her head, her loving husband took occasion to shudder at the responsibility of taking care of her, and jumping into his gondola, he pulled across to St. Girolamo and bespoke a dry bed and a sister of charity, and brought back the pious father Gasparo and a comfortable litter. Fiametta was dozing when they arrived, and the kind-hearted tailor willing to spare her the pain of knowing that she was on her way to the hospital for the poor, set out some meat and wine for the monk, and sending over for Turturilla and the nurse to mix the salad, they sat and ate away the hours till the poor dame's brain should be wandering again.

Toward night the monk and Dame Bentoccata were comfortably dozing with each other's support (having fallen asleep at table), and Pasquali with a kiss from Turturilla, stole softly up stairs. Fiametta was muttering unquietly, and working her fingers in the palms of her hands, and on feeling her pulse he found the fever was at its height. She took him, besides, for the prize pig of the festa, for he knew her wits were fairly abroad. He crept down stairs, gave the monk a strong cup of coffee to get him well awake, and between the four of them, they got poor Fiametta into the litter, drew the curtains tenderly around and deposited her safely in the bottom of the gondola.

Lightly and smoothly the winner of the pig pulled away with his loving burden, and gliding around the slimy corners of the palaces, and hushing his voice as he cried out "right!" or "left!" to guard the coming gondoliers of his vicinity, he arrived, like a thought of love to a maid's mind in sleep, at the door of St. Girolamo. The abbess looked out and said, "*Benedicite!*" and the monk stood firm on his brown sandals to receive the precious burden from the arms of Pasquali. Believing firmly that it was equivalent to committing her to the hand of St. Peter, and of course abandoning all hope of seeing her again in this world, the soft-hearted tailor wiped his eye as she was lifted in, and receiving a promise from Father Gasparo that he would communicate faithfully the state of her soul in the last agony, he pulled, with lightened gondola and heart back to his widower's home and Turturilla.

For many good reasons, and apparent as good, it is a rule in the hospital of St. Girolamo, that the sick under its holy charge shall receive the visit of neither friend nor relative. If they recover, they return to their abodes to earn

candles for the altar of the restoring saint. If they die, their clothes are sent to their surviving friends, and this affecting memorial, besides communicating the melancholy news, affords all the particulars and all the consolation they are supposed to require upon the subject of their loss.

Waiting patiently for Father Gasparo and his bundle, Pasquali and Turturilla gave themselves up to hopes, which on the tailor's part (we fear it must be admitted), augured a quicker recovery from grief than might be credited to an elastic constitution. The fortune of poor Fiametta was sufficient to warrant Pasquali in neglecting his shop to celebrate every festa that the church acknowledged, and for ten days subsequent to the committal of his wife to the tender mercies of St. Girolamo, five days out of seven was the proportion of merry holydays with his new betrothed.

They were sitting one evening in the open piazza of St. Mark, in front of the most thronged *café* of that matchless square. The moon was resting her silver disk on the point of the Campanile, and the shadows of thousands of gay Venetians fell on the immense pavement below, clear and sharply drawn as a black cartoon. The four extending sides of the square lay half in shades half in light, with their innumerable columns and balconies and sculptured work, and, frowning down on all, in broken light and shadow, stood the arabesque structure of St. Mark's itself, dizzying the eyes with its mosaics and confused devices, and thrusting forth the heads of her four golden-collared steeds into the moonbeams, till they looked on that black relief, like the horses of Pluto issuing from the gates of Hades. In the centre of the square stood a tall woman, singing, in rich contralto, an old song of the better days of Venice; and against one of the pillars, Polichinello had backed his wooden stage, and beat about his puppets with an energy worthy of old Dandolo and his helmeted galley-men. To those who wore not the spectacles of grief or discontent, the square of St. Mark's that night was like some cozening *tableau*. I never saw anything so gay.

Everybody who has "swam in a gondola," knows how the *cafés* of Venice thrust out their checkered awnings over a portion of the square, and filled the shaded space below with chairs and marble tables. In a corner of the shadow thus afforded, with ice and coffee on a small round slab between them, and the flat pavement of the public promenade under their feet, sat our two lovers. With neither hoof nor wheel to drown or interrupt their voices (as in cities whose streets are stones, not water), they murmured their hopes and wishes in the softest language under the sun, and with the *sotto voce* acquired by all the inhabitants of this noiseless city. Turturilla had taken ice to cool her and coffee to take off the chill of her ice, and a *bicchiere del perfetto amore* to reconcile these two antagonists in her digestion, when the

slippers of a monk glided by, and in a moment the recognized Father Gasparo made a third in the shadowy corner. The expected bundle was under his arm, and he was on his way to Pasquali's dwelling. Having assured the disconsolate tailor that she had unction and wafer as became the wife of a citizen of Venice like himself, he took heart and grew content that she was in heaven. It was a better place, and Turturilla for so little as a gold ring, would supply her place in his bosom.

The moon was but a brief week older when Pasquali and Turturilla stood in the church of our lady of grief, and Father Gasparo within the palings of the altar. She was as fair a maid as ever bloomed in the garden of beauty beloved of Titian, and the tailor was nearer worth nine men to look at, than the fraction of a man considered usually the exponent of his profession. Away mumbled the good father upon the matrimonial service, thinking of the old wine and rich pastries that were holding their sweetness under cork and crust only till he had done his ceremony, and quicker by some seconds than had ever been achieved before by priest or bishop, he arrived at the putting on of the ring. His hand was tremulous, and (oh unlucky omen!) he dropped it within the gilden fence of the chancel. The choristers were called, and Father Gasparo dropped on his knees to look for it—but if the devil had not spirited it away, there was no other reason why that search was in vain. Short of an errand to the goldsmith on the Rialto, it was at last determined the wedding could not proceed. Father Gasparo went to hide his impatience within the restiary, and Turturilla knelt down to pray against the arts of Sathanas. Before they had settled severally to their pious occupations, Pasquali was half way to the Rialto.

Half an hour elapsed, and then instead of the light grazing of a swift-sped gondola along the church stairs, the splash of a sullen oar was heard, and Pasquali stepped on shore. They had hastened to the door to receive him —monk, choristers and bride—and to their surprise and bewilderment, he waited to hand out a woman in a strange dress, who seemed disposed, bridegroom as he was, to make him wait her leisure. Her clothes fitted her ill, and she carried in her hand a pair of shoes, it was easy to see were never made for her. She rose at last, and as her face became visible, down dropped Turturilla and the pious father, and motionless and aghast stood the simple Pasquali. Fiametta stepped on shore!

In broken words Pasquali explained. He had landed at the stairs near the fish market, and with two leaps reaching the top, sped off past the buttress in the direction of the goldsmith, when his course was arrested by encountering at full speed, the person of an old woman. Hastily raising her up, he recognized his wife, who, fully recovered, but without a gondola, was

threading the zig-zag alleys on foot, on her way to her own domicil. After the first astonishment was over, her dress explained the error of the good father and the extent of his own misfortune. The clothes had been hung between the bed of Fiametta and that of a smaller woman who had been long languishing of a consumption. She died, and Fiametta's clothes, brought to the door by mistake, were recognized by Father Gasparo and taken to Pasquali.

The holy monk, chop-fallen and sad, took his solitary way to the convent, but with the first step he felt something slide into the heel of his sandal. He sat down on the church stairs and absolved the devil from theft—it was the lost ring, which had fallen upon his foot and saved Pasquali the tailor from the pains of bigamy.

THE WIDOW BY BREVET.

LET me introduce the courteous reader to two ladies.

Miss Picklin, a tall young lady of twenty-one, near enough to good-looking to permit of a delusion on the subject (of which, however, she had an entire monopoly), with cheeks always red in a small spot, lips not so red as the cheeks, and rather thin, sharpish nose, and waist very slender; and last (not least important), a very long neck, scalded on either side into a resemblance to a scroll of shrivelled parchment, which might or might not be considered as a *mis*-fortune—serving her as a title-deed to twenty thousand dollars. The scald was inflicted, and the fortune left in consequence, by a maiden aunt who, in the babyhood of Miss Picklin, attempted to cure the child's sore throat by an application of cabbage-leaves steeped in hot vinegar.

Miss Euphemia Picklin, commonly called Phemie—a good-humored girl, rather inclined to be fat, but gifted with several points of beauty of which she was not at all aware, very much a pet among her female friends, and admitting, with perfect sincerity and submission, her sister's exclusive right to the admiration of the gentlemen of their acquaintance.

Captain Isaiah Picklin, the father of these ladies, was a merchant of Salem, an importer of figs and opium, and once master of the brig "Simple Susan," which still plied between his warehouse and Constantinople—nails and codfish the cargo outward. I have not Miss Picklin's permission to mention the precise date of the events I am about to record, and leaving that point alone to the imagination of the reader, I shall set down the other particulars and impediments in her "course of true love" with historical fidelity.

Ever since she had been of sufficient age to turn her attention exclusively to matrimony, Miss Picklin had nourished a presentiment that her destiny was exotic; that the soil of Salem was too poor, and the indigenous lovers too mean; and that, potted in her twenty thousand dollars, she was a choice production, set aside for flowering in a foreign clime, and destined to be transplanted by a foreign lover. With this secret in her bosom, she had refused one or two gentlemen of middle age, recommended by her father, beside sundry score of young gentlemen of slender revenues in her

own set of acquaintances, till, if there had been anything beside poetry in Shakespere's assertion that it is—

"*Broom* groves
Whose shadow the dismissed bachelor loves,"

the neighboring "brush barrens" of Saugus would have sold in lots at a premium. It was possibly from the want of nightingales, to whose complaining notes the gentleman of Verona "turned his distresses," that the discarded of Salem preferred the consolations of Phemie Picklin.

News to the Picklins! Hassan Keui, the son of old Abdoul Keui, was coming out in the "Simple Susan!" A Turk—a live Turk—a young Turk, and the son of her father's rich correspondent in Turkey! "Ah me!" thought Miss Picklin.

The captain himself was rather taken aback. He had known old Abdoul for many years, had traded and smoked with him in the *cafés* of Galata, had gone out with him on Sundays to lounge on the tombstones at Scutari, and had never thought twice about his yellow gown and red trowsers; but what the deuce would be thought of them in Salem? True, it was his son; but a Turk's clothes descend from father to son through three generations; he knew that, from remembering this very boy all but smothered in a sort of saffron blanket, with sleeves like pillowcases—his first assumption of the *toga virilis* (not that old Picklin knew Latin, but such was "his sentiment better expressed"). Then *he* had never been asked to the house of the Stamboul merchant, not introduced to his wives nor his daughters (indeed, he had forgotten that old Keui was near cutting his throat for asking after them)—but of course it was very different in Salem. Young Keui must be the Picklin guest, fed and lodged, and the girls would want to give him a tea-party. Would he sit on a chair, or want cushions on the floor? Would he come to dinner with his breast bare, and leave his boots outside? Would he eat rice pudding with his fingers? Would he think it indecent if the girls didn't wear linen cloths, Turkey fashion, over their mouths and noses? Would he bring his pipes? Would he fall on his face and say his prayers four times a day, wherever he should be (with a clean place handy)? What would the neighbors say? The captain worked himself into a violent perspiration with merely thinking of all this.

The Salemites have a famous museum, and know "what manner of thing is your crocodile;" but a live Turk consigned to Captain Picklin! It set the town in a fever!

It would leave an indelicate opening for a conjecture as to Miss Picklin's present age, were I to state whether or not the arrival of the "Simple Susan" was reported by telegraph. She ran in with a fair wind one Sunday morning, and was immediately boarded by the harbor-master and Captain Picklin; and there, true to the prophetic boding of old Isaiah, the young Turk sat cross-legged on the quarter-deck, in a white turban and scarlet *et ceteras*, smoking his father's identical pipe—no other, the captain would have taken his oath!

Up rose Hassan, when informed who was his visitor, and taking old Picklin's hand, put it to his forehead. The weather-stained sea-captain had bleached in the counting-house, and he had not, at first sight, remembered the old friend of his father. He passed the pipe into Isaiah's hand and begged him to keep it as a memento of Abdoul, for his father had died at the last Ramazan. Hassan had come out to see the world, and secure a continuance of codfish and good-will from the house of Picklin, and the merchant got astride the tiller of his old craft, and smoked this news through his amber-mouthed legacy, while the youth went below to get ready to go ashore.

The reader of course would prefer to share the first impressions of the ladies as to the young Mussulman's personal appearance, and I pass at once, therefore, to their disappointment, surprise, mortification, and vexation; when, as the bells were ringing for church, the front door opened, their father entered, and in followed a young gentleman in frockcoat and trowsers! Yes, and in his hand a hat—a black hat—and on his feet no yellow boots, but calfskin, mundane and common calfskin, and with no shaved head, and no twisted shawl around his waist; nothing to be seen but a very handsome young man indeed, with teeth like a fresh slice of cocoa-nut meat, and a very deliberate pronunciation to his bad English.

Miss Picklin's disappointment had to be slept upon, for she had made great outlay of imagination upon the pomp and circumstance of wedding a white Othello in the eyes of wondering Salem; but Phemie's surprise took but five minutes to grow into a positive pleasure; and never suspecting, at any time, that she was visible to the naked eye during the eclipsing presence of her sister, she sat with a very admiring smile upon her lips, and her soft eyes fixed earnestly on the stranger, till she had made out a full inventory of his features, proportions, manners, and other stuff available in dream-land. What might be Hassan's impression of the young ladies, could not be gathered from his manner; for, in the first place, there was the reserve which belonged to him as a Turk, and, in the second place, there was a violation of all oriental notions of modesty in their exposing their chins to the masculine observation; and though he could endure the exposure, it was of course with

that diffidence of gaze which accompanies the consciousness of improper objects—adding to his demeanor another shade of timidity.

Miss Picklin's shoulders were not invaded quite to the limits of *terra cognita* by the cabbage-leaves which had exercised such an influence on her destiny; and as the scalds somewhat resembled two maps of South America (with Patagonia under each ear), she usually, in full dress, gave a clear view of the surrounding ocean—wisely thinking it better to have the geography of her disfigurement well understood, than, by covering a small extremity (as it were the isthmus of Darien), to leave an undiscovered North America to the imagination. She appeared accordingly at dinner in a costume not likely to diminish the modest embarrassment of Mr. Keui (as she chose to call him)—extremely *decolleté*, in a pink silk dress with short sleeves, and in a turban with a gold fringe—the latter, of course, out of compliment to his country. "Money is power," even in family circles, and it was only Miss Picklin who exercised the privilege of full dress at a midday dinner. Phemie came to table dressed as at breakfast, and if she felt at all envious of her sister's pink gown and elbows to match, it did not appear in her pleasant face or sisterly attention. The captain would allow anything, and do *almost* anything, for his rich daughter; but as to dining with his coat on, in hot weather, company or no company, he would rather—

> "be set quick i' the earth,
> And bowled to death with turnips"—

though that is not the way he expressed it. The *parti carré*, therefore (for there was no *Mrs.* Picklin), was, in the matter of costume, rather incongruous, but, as the Turk took it for granted that it was all according to the custom of the country, the carving was achieved by the shirt-sleeved captain, and the pudding "helped" by his bare-armed daughter, with no particular commotion in the elements. Earthquakes do not invariably follow violations of etiquette—particularly where nobody is offended.

After the first day, things took their natural course—as near as they were able. Hassan was not very quick at conversation, always taking at least five minutes to put together for delivery a sentence of English, but his laugh did not hang fire, nor did his nods and smiles; and where ladies are voluble (as ladies sometimes are), this paucity of ammunition on the gentleman's part is no prelude to discomfiture. Then Phemie had a very fair smattering of Italian, and that being the business language of the Levant, Hassan took refuge in it whenever brought to a stand-still in English—a refuge, by the way, of which he seemed inclined to avail himself oftener than was

consistent with Miss Picklin's exclusive property in his attention. Rebellious though Hassan might secretly have been to *this* authority over himself, Phemie was no accomplice, natural modesty combining with the long habit of subserviency to make her even anticipate the exactions of the heiress; and so Miss Picklin had "Mr. Keui" principally to herself, promenading him through the streets of Salem, and bestowing her sweetness upon him from his morning entrance to his evening exit; Phemie relieving guard very cheerfully, while her sister dressed for dinner. It was possibly from being permitted to converse in Italian during this half hour, that Hassan made it the only part of the day in which he talked of himself and his house on the Bosphorus, but that will not account also for Phemie's sighing while she listened—never having sighed before in her life, not even while the same voice was talking English to her sister.

Without going into a description of the Picklin tea-party, at which Hassan was induced to figure in his oriental costume, while Miss Picklin sat by him on a cushion, turbaned and (probably) cross-legged, *à la Sultana*, and without recording other signs satisfactory to the Salemites, that the young Turk had fallen to the scalded heiress—

> "As does the ospray to the fish, that takes it,
> By sovereignty of nature"—

I must come plump to the fact that, on the Monday following (one week after his arrival) Hassan left Salem, unaccompanied by Miss Picklin. As he had asked for no private interview in the best parlor, and had made his final business arrangements with the captain, so that he could take passage from New York without returning, some people were inclined to fancy that Miss Picklin's demonstrations with regard to him had been a little premature. And "some people" chose to smile. But it was reserved for Miss Picklin to look round in church, in about one year from this event, and have her triumph over "some people;" for she was about to sail for Constantinople—"sent for," as the captain rudely expressed it. But I must explain.

The "Simple Susan" came in, heavily freighted with a consignment from the house of Keui to Picklin & Co., and a letter from the American consul at Constantinople wrapped in the invoice. With the careful and ornate wording of an official epistle, it stated that Effendi Hassan Keui had called on the consul, and partly from the mistrust of his ability to express himself in English on so delicate a subject, but more particularly for the sake of approaching the object of his affections with proper deference and ceremony, he had requested that officer to prepare a document conveying a

proposal of marriage to the daughter of Captain Picklin. The incomplete state of his mercantile arrangements, while at Salem the previous year, would account for his silence on the subject at that time, but he trusted that his preference had been sufficiently manifest to the lady of his heart; and as his prosperity in business depended on his remaining at Constantinople, enriching himself only for her sake, he was sure that the singular request appended to his offer would be taken as a mark of his prudence rather than as a presumption. The cabin of the "Simple Susan," as Captain Picklin knew, was engaged on her next passage to Constantinople by a party of missionaries, male and female, and the request was to the intent that, in case of an acceptance of his offer, the fair daughter of the owner would come out, under their sufficient protection, to be wedded, if she should so please, on the day of her arrival in the "Golden Horn."

As Miss Picklin had preserved a mysterious silence on the subject of "Mr. Keui's" attentions since his departure, and as a lady with twenty thousand dollars in her own right is, of course, quite independent of parental control, the captain, after running his eye hastily through the document, called to the boy who was weighing out a quintal of codfish, and bid him wrap the letter in a brown paper and run with it to Miss Picklin—taking it for granted that she knew more about the matter than he did, and would explain it all, when he came home to dinner.

In thinking the matter over, on his way home, it occurred to old Picklin that it was worded as if he had but *one* daughter. At any rate, he was quite sure that neither of his daughters was particularly specified, either by name or age. No doubt it was all right, however. The girls understood it.

"So, it's *you*, miss!" he said, as Miss Picklin looked round from the turban she was trying on before the glass.

"Certainly, pa! who else should it be?"

And there ended the captain's doubts, for he never again got sight of the letter, and the turmoil of preparation for Miss Picklin's voyage, made the house anything but a place for getting answers to impertinent questions. Phemie, whom the news had made silent and thoughtful, let drop a hint or two that she would like to see the letter; but a mysterious air, and "La! child, you wouldn't understand it," was check enough for her timid curiosity, and she plied her needle upon her sister's wedding dress with patient submission.

The preparations for the voyage went on swimmingly. The missionaries were written to, and willingly consented to chaperon Miss Picklin over the seas, provided her union with a pagan was to be sanctified with a Christian

ceremonial. Miss Picklin replied with virtuous promptitude that the cake for the wedding was already soldered up in a tin case, and that she was to be married immediately on her arrival, under an awning on the brig's deck, and she hoped that four of the missionaries' wives would oblige her by standing up as her bridesmaids. Many square feet of codfish were unladen from the "Simple Susan" to make room for boxes and bags, and one large case was finally shipped, the contents of which had been shopped for by ladies with families—no book of oriental travels making any allusion to the sale of such articles in Constantinople, though, in the natural course of things, they must be wanted as much in Turkey as in Salem.

The brig was finally cleared and lay off in the stream, and on the evening before the embarkation the missionaries arrived and were invited to a tea-party at the Picklins. Miss Picklin had got up a little surprise for her friends with which to close the party—a "walking *tableau*," as she termed it, in which she should suddenly make her apparition at one door, pass through the room, and go out at the other, dressed as a sultana, with a muslin kirtle and satin trowsers. She disappeared accordingly half an hour before the breaking up; and, conversation rather languishing in her absence, the eldest of the missionaries rose to conclude the evening with a prayer, in the midst of which Miss Picklin passed through the room unperceived—the faces of the company being turned to the wall.

The next morning at daylight the "Simple Susan" put to sea with a fair wind, and at the usual hour for opening the store of Picklin and Co., she had dropped below the horizon. Phemie sat upon the end of the wharf and watched her till she was out of sight, and the captain walked up and down between two puncheons of rum which stood at the distance of a quarter-deck's length from each other, and both father and daughter were silent. The captain had a confused thought or two besides the grief of parting, and Phemie had feelings quite as confused, which were not all made up of sorrow for the loss of her sister. Perhaps the reader will be at the trouble of spelling out their riddles while I try to let him down softly to the catastrophe of my story.

Without confessing to any ailment whatever, the plump Phemie paled and thinned from the day of her sister's departure. Her spirits, too, seemed to keep her flesh and color company, and at the end of a month the captain was told by one of the good dames of Salem that he had better ask a physician what ailed her. The doctor could make nothing out of it except that she might be fretting for the loss of her sister, and he recommended a change of scene and climate. That day Captain Brown, an old mate of Isaiah's, dropped in to eat a family dinner and say good-by, as he was about sailing in

the new schooner Nancy for the Black sea—his wife for his only passenger. Of course he would be obliged to drop anchor at Constantinople to wait for a fair wind up the Bosphorus, and part of his errand was to offer to take letters and nicknackeries to Mrs. Keui. Old Picklin put the two things together, and over their glass of wine he proposed to Brown to take Phemie with Mrs. Brown to Constantinople, leave them both there on a visit to Mrs. Keui, till the return of the Nancy from the Black sea, and then re-embark them for Salem. Phemie came into the room just as they were touching glasses on the agreement, and when the trip was proposed to her she first colored violently, then grew pale and burst into tears; but consented to go. And, with such preparations as she could make that evening, she was quite ready at the appointed hour, and was off with the land-breeze the next morning, taking leave of nobody but her father. And this time the old man wiped his eyes very often before the departing vessel was "hull down," and was heartily sorry he had let Phemie go without a great many presents and a great many more kisses. * * * *

A fine, breezy morning at Constantinople!

Rapidly down the Bosphorus shot the caique of Hassan Keui, bearing its master from his country-house at Dolma-batchi to his warehouses at Galata. Just before the sharp prow rounded away toward the Golden Horn, the merchant motioned to the caikjis to rest upon their oars, and, standing erect in the slender craft, he strained his gaze long and with anxious earnestness toward the sea of Marmora. Not a sail was to be seen coming from the west, except a man-of-war with a crescent flag at the peak, lying off toward Scutari from Seraglio point, and with a sigh that carried the cloud off his brow, Hassan gayly squatted once more to his cushions, and the caique sped merrily on. In and out, among the vessels at anchor, the airy bark threaded her way with the dexterous swiftness of a bird, when suddenly a cable rose beneath her and lifted her half out of the water. A vessel newly-arrived was hauling in to a close anchorage, and they had crossed her hawser as it rose to the surface. Pitched headlong into the lap of the nearest caikji, the Turk's snowy turban fell into the water and was carried by the eddy under the stern of the vessel rounding to, and as the caique was driven backward to regain it, the bareheaded owner sank back aghast—SIMPLE SUSAN OF SALEM staring him in the face in golden capitals.

"Oh! Mr. Keui! how *do* you do!" cried a well-remembered voice, as he raised himself to fend off by the rudder of the brig. And there she stood within two feet of his lips—Miss Picklin in her bridal veil, waiting below in expectant modesty, and though surprised by his peep into the cabin

windows, excusing it as a natural impatience in a bridegroom coming to his bride.

The captain of the Susan, meantime, had looked over the tafferel and recognized his old passenger, and Hassan, who would have given a cargo of opium for an hour to compose himself, mounted the ladder which was thrown out to him, and stepped from the gangway into Miss Picklin's arms! She had rushed up to receive him, dressed in her muslin kirtle and satin trowsers, though, with her dramatic sense of propriety, she had intended to remain below till summoned to the bridal. The captain, of course, kept back from delicacy, but the missionaries stood in a cluster gazing on the happy meeting, and the sailors looked over their shoulders as they heaved at the windlass. As Miss Picklin afterward remarked, "it would have been a *tableau vivant* if the deck had not been so very dirty!"

Hassan wiped his eyes, for he had replaced his wet turban on his head, but what with his escape from drowning, and what with his surprise and embarrassment (for he had a difficult part to play, as the reader will presently understand), he had lost all memory of his little stock of English. Miss Picklin drew him gently by the hand to the quarter-deck, where, under an awning fringed with curtains partly drawn, stood a table with a loaf of wedding-cake upon it, and a bottle of wine and a bible. She nodded to the Rev. Mr. Griffin, who took hold of a chair and turned it round, and placing it against his legs with the back toward him, looked steadfastly at the happy couple.

"Good morning—good night—your sister—*aspetta! per amor' di Dio!*" cried the bewildered Hassan, giving utterance to all the English he could remember, and seizing the bride by the arm.

"These ladies are my bridesmaids," said Miss Picklin, pointing to the missionaries' wives who stood by in their bonnets and shawls. "I dare say he expected my sister would come as my bridesmaid!" she added, turning to Mr. Griffin to explain the outbreak as she understood it.

Hassan beat his hand upon his forehead, walked twice up and down the quarter-deck, looked around over the Golden Horn as if in search of an interpreter to his feelings, and finally walked up to Miss Picklin with a look of calm resignation, and addressed to her and to the Rev. Mr. Griffin a speech of three minutes, *in Italian*. At the close of it he made a very ceremonious salaam, and offered his hand to the bride, and, as no one present understood a syllable of what he had intended to convey in his address, it was received as probably a welcome to Turkey, or perhaps a formal repetition of his offer of heart and hand. At any rate, Miss Picklin took it to be high time to blush and take off her glove, and the Rev. Mr.

Griffin then bent across the back of the chair, joined their hands and went through the ceremony, ring and all. The ladies came up, one after another, and kissed the bride, and the gentlemen shook hands with Hassan, who received their good wishes with a curious look of unhappy resignation, and after cutting the cake and permitting the bride to retire for a moment to calm her feelings and put on her bonnet, the bridegroom made rather a peremptory movement of departure, and the happy couple went off in the caique toward Dolma-batchi amid much waving of handkerchiefs from the missionaries, and hurrahs from the Salem hands of the Simple Susan.

And now, before giving the reader a translation of the speech of Hassan before the wedding, we must go back to some little events which had taken place one month previously at Constantinople.

The Nancy arrived off Seraglio Point after a very remarkable passage, having still on her quarter the northwest breeze which had stuck to her like a bloodhound ever since leaving the harbor of Salem. She had brought it with her to Constantinople indeed, for twenty or thirty vessels which had been long waiting a favorable wind to encounter the adverse current of the Bosphorus, were loosing sail and getting under way, and the pilot, knowing that the destination of the Nancy was also to the Black sea, strongly dissuaded Captain Brown from dropping anchor in the Horn, with a chance of losing the good luck, and lying, perhaps a month, wind-bound in harbor. Understanding that the captain's only object in stopping was to leave the two ladies with Keui the opium-merchant, the pilot, who knew his residence at Dolma-batchi, made signal for a caique, and kept up the Bosphorus. Arriving opposite the little village of which Hassan's house was one of the chief ornaments, the ladies were lowered into the caique and sent ashore—expecting of course to be received with open arms by Mrs. Keui—and then, spreading all her canvass, the swift little schooner sped on her way to Trebisond.

Hassan sat in the little pavilion of his house which looked out on the Bosphorus, eating his pilau, for it was the noon of a holyday, and he had not been that morning to Galata. Recognizing at once the sweet face of Phemie as the caique came near the shore, he flew to meet her, supposing that the "Simple Susan" had arrived, and that the lady of his love had chosen to come and seek him. The reader will understand of course, that there was no "Mrs. Keui."

And now to shorten my story.

Mrs. Brown and Phemie were in Hassan's own house, with no other acquaintance or protector on that side of the world, and there was no possibility of escaping a true explanation. The mistake *was* explained, and

explained to Brown's satisfaction. Phemie was the "daughter" of Captain Picklin, to whom the offer was transmitted, and as, by blessed luck, the Nancy had outsailed the Simple Susan, Providence seemed to have chosen to set right for once, the traverse of true love. The English embassy was at Burgurlu, only six miles above, on the Bosphorus, and Hassan and his mother and sisters, and Mrs. Brown and Phemie were soon on their way thither in swift caiques, and *the* happy couple were wedded by the English chaplain. The arrival of the Simple Susan was of course looked for, by both Hassan and his bride, with no little dismay. She had met with contrary winds on the Atlantic, and had been caught in the Archipelago by a Levanter, and from the damage of the last she had been obliged to come to anchor off the little island of Paros and repair. This had been a job of six weeks, and meantime the Nancy had given them the go-by, and reached Constantinople.

Hassan was daily on the look-out for the brig in his trips to town, and on the morning of her arrival, his mind being put at ease for the day by his glance toward the sea of Marmora, the stumbling so suddenly and so unprepared on the object of his dread, completely bewildered and unnerved him. Through all his confusion, however, and all the awkwardness of his situation, there ran a feeling of self-condemnation, as well as pity for Miss Picklin; and this had driven him to the catastrophe described above. He felt that he owed her some reparation, and as the religion in which he was educated did not forbid a plurality of wives, and there was no knowing but possibly she might be inclined to "do in Turkey as Turkeys do," he felt it incumbent on himself to state the fact of his previous marriage, and then offer her the privilege of becoming Mrs. Keui No. 2, if she chose to accept. As he had no English at his command, he stated his dilemma and made his offer in the best language he had—Italian—and with the results the reader has been made acquainted.

Of the return passage of Miss Picklin, formerly Mrs. Keui, under the charge of Captain and Mrs. Brown, in the schooner Nancy, I have never learned the particulars. She arrived at Salem in very good health, however, and has since been distinguished principally by her sympathy for widows—based on what, I cannot very positively say. She resides at present in Salem with her father, Captain Picklin, who is still the consignee of the house of Keui, having made one voyage out to see the children of his daughter Phemie and strengthen the mercantile connexion. His old age is creeping on him, undistinguished by anything except the little monomania of reading the letters from his son-in-law at least a hundred times, and then wafering them up over the fireplace of his counting-room—in doubt, apparently, whether he rightly understands the contents.

NORA MEHIDY;

OR, THE STRANGE ROAD TO THE HEART OF MR. HYPOLET LEATHERS.

Now, Heaven rest the Phœnicians for their pleasant invention of the art of travel.

This is to be a story of love and pride, and the hero's name is Hypolet Leathers.

You have smiled prematurely, my friend and reader, if you "think you see" Mr. Leathers foreshadowed, as it were, in his name.

(Three mortal times have I mended this son of a goose of a pen, and it *will not*—as you see by the three unavailing attempts recorded above—it *will not* commence, for me, this tale, with a practicable beginning.)

The sun was rising (I think this promises well)—leisurely rising was the sun on the opposite side of the Susquehannah. The tall corn endeavored to lift its silk tassel out of the sloppy fog that had taken upon itself to rise from the water and prognosticate a hot fair day, and the driver of the Binghamton stage drew over his legs a two-bushel bag as he cleared the street of the village, and thought that, for a summer's morning, it was "very cold"—wholly unaware, however, that, in murmuring thus, he was expressing himself as Hamlet did while waiting for his father's ghost upon the platform.

Inside the coach were three passengers. A gentleman sat by the window on the middle seat, with his cloak over his lap, watching the going to heaven of the fog that had fulfilled its destiny. His mind was melancholy—partly for the contrast he could not but draw between this exemplary vapor and

himself, who was "but a vapor,"[1] and partly that his pancreas began to apprehend some interruption of the thoroughfare above—or, in other words, that he was hungry for his breakfast, having gone supperless to bed. He mused as he rode. He was a young man, about twenty-five, and had inherited from his father, John Leathers, a gentleman's fortune, with the two drawbacks of a name troublesome to Phœbus ("Phœbus! what a name!"), and premature gray hair. He was, in all other respects, a finished and well-conditioned hero—tall, comely, courtly, and accomplished—and had seen the sight-worthy portions of the world, and knew their differences. Travel, indeed, had become a kind of diseased necessity with him—for he fled from the knowledge of his name, and from the observation of his gray hair, like a man fleeing from two fell phantoms. He was now returning from Niagara, and left the Mohawk route to see where the Susquehannah makes its Great Bend in taking final leave of Mr. Cooper, who lives above; and at the village of the Great Bend he was to eat that day's breakfast.

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"Man's *but a vapor*,
Full of woes,
Cuts a caper,
And down he goes."—*Familiar Ballads.*

On the back seat, upon the leather cushion, behind Mr. Leathers, sat two other chilly persons, a middle-aged man and a girl of sixteen—the latter with her shawl drawn close to her arms, and her dark eyes bent upon her knees, as if to warm them (as unquestionably they did). Her black curls swung out from her bonnet, like ripe grapes from the top of an arbor—heavy, slumberous, bulky, prodigal black curls—oh, how beautiful! And I do not know that it would be a "trick worth an egg" to make any mystery of these two persons. The gentleman was John Mehidy, the widowed tailor of Binghamton, and the lady was Nora Mehidy, his daughter; and they were on their way to New York to change the scene, Mrs. Mehidy having left the painful legacy of love—her presence—behind her. For, ill as he could afford the journey, Mr. Mehidy thought the fire of Nora's dark eyes might be put out with water, and he must go where every patch and shred would not set her a weeping. She "took it hard," as they describe grief for the dead in the country.

The Great Bend is a scene you may look at with pleasure, even while waiting for procrastinated prog, and Hypolet Leathers had been standing for ten minutes on the high bank around which the Susquehannah sweeps, like a train of silver tissue after a queen turning a corner, when passed him suddenly tripped Nora Mehidy bonnetless, and stood gazing on the river from the outer edge of the precipice. Leathers' visual consciousness dropped into that mass of clustering hair like a ring into the sea, and disappeared. His soul dived after it, and left him with no sense or remembrance of how his outer orbs were amusing themselves. Of what unpatented texture of velvet, and of what sifting of diamond dust were those lights and shadows manufactured! What immeasurable thickness in those black flakes—compared, with all locks that he had ever seen, as an edge of cocoa-meat, fragrantly and newly broken, to a torn leaf, limp with wilting. Nora stood motionless, absorbed in the incomparable splendor of that silver hook bent into the forest—Leathers as motionless, absorbed in her wilderness of jetty locks—till the bar-keeper rang the bell for them to come to breakfast. Ah, Hypolet! Hypolet! what dark thought came to share, with that innocent beefsteak, your morning's digestion!

That tailors have, and why they have, the handsomest daughters, in all countries, have been points of observation and speculation for physiology, written and unwritten. Most men know the fact. Some writers have ventured to guess at the occult secret. But I think "it needs no ghost, come from the grave," to unravel the matter. Their vocation is the embellishment—partly indeed the creation—of material beauty. If philosophy sit on their shears (as it should ever), there are questions to decide which discipline the sense of beauty—the degree in which fashion should be sacrificed to becomingness, and the resistance to the invasion of the poetical by whim and usage, for example—and as a man thinketh—to a certain degree—so is his daughter. Beauty is the business-thought of every day, and the desire to know how best to remedy its defects is the ache and agony of the tailor's soul, if he be ambitious. Why should not this have its exponent on the features of the race, as other strong emotions have—plastic and malleable as the human body is, by habit and practice. Shakspere, by-the-way, says—

'Tis use that breeds a *habit* in a man,

and I own to the dulness of never till now apprehending that this remarkable passage typifies the steeping of superfine broadcloth (made into superfine *habits*) into the woof and warp of the tailor's idiosyncrasy. Q. E. D.

Nora Mehidy had ways with her that, if the world had not been thrown into a muss by Eve and Adam, would doubtless have been kept for queens. Leathers was particularly struck with her never lifting up her eyelids till she was ready. If she chanced to be looking thoughtfully down when he spoke to her, which was her habit of sadness just now, she heard what he had to say and commenced replying—and then, slowly, up went the lids, combing the loving air with their long lashes, and no more hurried than the twilight taking its fringes off the stars. It was adorable—altogether adorable! And her hands and lips, and feet and shoulders, had the same contemptuous and delicious deliberateness.

On the second evening, at half past five—just half an hour too late for the "Highlander" steamer—the "Binghamton stage" slid down the mountain into Newburgh. The next boat was to touch at the pier at midnight, and Leathers had six capacious hours to work on the mind of John Mehidy. What was the process of that fiendish temptation, what the lure and the resistance, is a secret locked up with Moloch—but it was successful! The glorious *chevelure* of the victim—(sweet descriptive word—*chevelure*!)—the matchless locks that the matchlocks of armies should have defended—went down in the same boat with Nora Mehidy, but tied up in Mr. Leathers' linen pocket-handkerchief! And, in one week from that day, the head of Hypolet Leathers was shaven nude, and the black curls of Nora Mehidy were placed upon its irritated organs in an *incomparable* WIG!!

A year had elapsed. It was a warm day, in No. 77 of the Astor, and Hypolet Leathers, Esq., arrived a week before by the Great Western, sat aiding the evaporation from his brain by lotions of iced lavender. His wig stood before him, on the blockhead that was now his inseparable companion, the back toward him; and as the wind chased off the volatile lavender from the pores of his skull, he toyed thoughtfully with the lustrous curls of Nora Mehidy. His heart was on that wooden block! He dressed his own wig habitually, and by dint of perfuming, combing, and caressing those finger-like ringlets—he had tangled up his heart in their meshes. A phantom, with the superb face of the owner, stayed with the separated locks, and it grew hourly more palpable and controlling. The sample had made him sick at heart for the remainder. He wanted the rest of Nora Mehidy. He had come over for her. He had found John Mehidy, following his trade obscurely in a narrow lane, and he had asked for Nora's *hand*. But though this was not the whole of his daughter, and he had already sold part of her to Leathers, he shook his head over his shiny shears. Even if Nora could be propitiated after the sacrifice she had made (which he did not believe she could be), he would as lief put her in the world of spirits as in a world above him. She was his

life, and he would not give his life willingly to a stranger who would take it from him, or make it too fine for his using. Oh, no! Nora must marry a tailor, if she marry at all—and this was the adamantine resolution, stern and without appeal, of John Mehidy.

Some six weeks after this, a new tailoring establishment of great outlay and magnificence was opened in Broadway. The show-window was like a new revelation of stuff for trowsers, and resplendent, but not gaudy, were the neckcloths and waistcoatings—for absolute taste reigned over all. There was not an article on show possible to William street—not a waistcoat that, seen in Maiden lane, would not have been as unsphered as the Lost Pleiad in Botany Bay. It was quite clear that there was some one of the firm of "Mehidy & Co." (the new sign) who exercised his taste "from within, out," as the Germans say of the process of true poetry. He began *inside* a gentleman, that is to say, to guess at what was wanted for a gentleman's *outside*. He was a tailor-gentleman, and was therefore, and by that quality only, fitted to be a gentleman's tailor.

The dandies flocked to Mehidy & Co. They could not be measured immediately—oh no! The gentleman to be built was requested to walk about the shop for a half hour, till the foreman got him well in his eye, and then to call again in a week. Meantime he would mark his customer in the street, to see how he performed. Mehidy & Co. never ventured to take measure for *terra incognita*. The man's gait, shrug, speed, style, and quality, were all to be allowed for, and these were not seen in a minute. And a very sharp and stylish-looking fellow seemed that foreman to be. There was evidently spoiled some very capable stuff for a lord when *he* was made a tailor.

> "His leaf,
> By some o'er hasty angel, was misplaced
> In Fate's eternal volume."

And, faith! it was a study to see him take a customer's measure! The quiet contempt with which he overruled the man's indigenous idea of a coat!—the rather satirical comments on his peculiarities of wearing his kerseymere!—the cool survey of the adult to be embellished, as if he were inspecting him for admission to the grenadiers!—On the whole, it was a nervous business to be measured for a coat by that fellow with the devilish fine head of black hair!

And, with the hair upon *his* head, from which Nora had once no secrets—with the curls upon *his* cheek and temples which had once slumbered peacefully over hers, Hypolet Leathers, the foreman of "Mehidy & Co.,"

made persevering love to the tailor's magnificent daughter. For she *was* magnificent! She had just taken that long stride from girl to woman, and her person had filled out to the imperial and voluptuous model indicated by her deliberate eyes. With a dusky glow in her cheek, that looked like a peach tinted by a rosy twilight, her mouth, up to the crimson edge of its bow of Cupid, was moulded with the slumberous fairness of newly wrought sculpture, and gloriously beautiful in expression. She was a creature for whom a butterfly might do worm over again—to whose condition in life, if need be, a prince might proudly come down. Ah, queenly Nora Mehidy!

But the wooing—alas! the wooing throve slowly! That lovely head was covered again with prodigal locks, in short and massive clusters, but Leathers was pertinacious as to his property in the wig, and its becomingness and indispensableness—and to be made love to by a man in her own hair!—to be obliged to keep her own dark curls at a respectful distance!—to forbid all intercourse between them and their children-ringlets, as it were—it roughened the course of Leather's true love that Nora must needs be obliged to reason on such singular dilemmas. For, though a tailor's daughter, she had been furnished by nature with an imagination!

But virtue, if nothing more and no sooner, is its own reward, and in time "to save its bacon." John Mehidy's fortune was pretty well assured in the course of two years, and made, in his own line, by his proposed son-in-law, and he could no longer refuse to throw into the scale the paternal authority. Nora's hair was, by this time, too, restored to its pristine length and luxuriousness, and, on condition that Hypolet would not exact a new wig from his new possessions, Nora, one summer's night, made over to him the remainder. The long-exiled locks revisited their natal soil, during the caresses which sealed the compact, and a very good tailor was spoiled the week after, for the married Leathers became once more a gentleman at large, having bought, in two instalments, at an expense of a hundred dollars, a heart, and two years of service, one of the finest properties of which Heaven and a gold ring ever gave mortal the copyhold!

THE MARQUIS IN PETTICOATS.

(THE OUTLINE FROM A FRENCH MEMOIR.)

I INTRODUCE you at once to the Marquis de la Chetardie—a diplomatist who figured largely in the gay age of Louis XV.—and the story is but one of the illuminated pages of the dark book of diplomacy.

Charles de la Chetardie appeared for the first time to the eyes of the king at a masquerade ball, given at Versailles, under the auspices of *la belle* Pompadour. He was dressed as a young lady of high rank, making her *début*; and, so perfect was his acting, and the deception altogether, that Louis became enamored of the disguised marquis, and violently excited the jealousy of "Madame," by his amorous attentions. An *eclaircissement*, of course, took place, and the result was a great partiality for the marquis's society, and his subsequent employment, in and out of petticoats, in many a scheme of state diplomacy and royal amusement.

La Chetardie was at this time just eighteen. He was very slight, and had remarkably small hands and feet, and the radiant fairness of his skin and the luxuriant softness of his profuse chestnut curls, might justly have been the envy of the most delicate woman. He was, at first, subjected to some ridicule for his effeminacy, but the merry courtiers were soon made aware, that, under this velvet fragility lay concealed the strength and ferocity of the tiger. The grasp of his small hand was like an iron vice, and his singular activity, and the cool courage which afterward gave him a brilliant career on the battle-field, established him, in a very short time, as the most formidable swordsman of the court. His ferocity, however, lay deeply concealed in his character, and, unprovoked, he was the gayest and most brilliant of merry companions.

This was the age of occult and treacherous diplomacy, and the court of Russia, where Louis would fain have exercised an influence (private as well as political in its results), was guarded by an implacable Argus, in the person of the prime minister, Bestucheff. Aided by Sir Hambury Williams, the English ambassador, one of the craftiest men of that crafty period, he had succeeded for some years in defeating every attempt at access to the imperial ear by the secret emissaries of France. The sudden appearance of La Chetardie, his cool self-command, and his successful personation of a

female, suggested a new hope to the king, however; and, called to Versailles by royal mandate, the young marquis was taken into cabinet confidence, and a secret mission to St. Petersburgh, in petticoats, proposed to him and accepted.

With his instructions and secret dispatches stitched into his corsets, and under the ostensible protection of a scientific man, who was to present him to the tzarine as a Mademoiselle de Beaumont, desirous of entering the service of Elizabeth, the marquis reached St. Petersburgh without accident or adventure. The young lady's guardian requested an audience through Bestucheff, and having delivered the open letters recommending her for her accomplishments to the imperial protection, he begged leave to continue on his scientific tour to the central regions of Russia.

Congé was immediately granted, and on the disappearance of the *savant*, and before the departure of Bestucheff, the tzarine threw off all ceremony, and pinching the cheeks and imprinting a kiss on the forehead of the beautiful stranger, appointed her, by one of those sudden whims of preference against which her ministers had so much trouble to guard, *lectrice intime et particulière*—in short, confidential personal attendant. The blushes of the confused marquis, who was unprepared for so affectionate a reception, served rather to heighten the disguise, and old Bestucheff bowed himself out with a compliment to the beauty of Mademoiselle de Beaumont, veiled in a diplomatic congratulation to her imperial mistress.

Elizabeth was forty and a little *passée*, but she still had pretensions, and was particularly fond of beauty in her attendants, female as well as male. Her favorite, of her personal *suite*, at the time of the arrival of the marquis, was an exquisite little creature who had been sent to her, as a compliment to this particular taste, by the Duchess of Mecklenberg-Strelitz—a kind of German "Fenella," or "Mignon," by the name of Nadége Stein. Not much below the middle size, Nadége was a model of symmetrical proportion, and of very extraordinary beauty. She had been carefully educated for her present situation, and was highly accomplished; a fine reader, and a singularly sweet musician and dancer. The tzarine's passion for this lovely attendant was excessive, and the arrival of a new favorite of the same sex was looked upon with some pleasure by the eclipsed remainder of the palace idlers.

Elizabeth summoned Nadége, and committed Mademoiselle de Beaumont temporarily to her charge; but the same mysterious magnetism which had reached the heart of the tzarine, seemed to kindle, quite as promptly, the affections of her attendant. Nadége was no sooner alone with her new friend, than she jumped to her neck, smothered her with kisses,

called her by every endearing epithet, and overwhelmed her with questions, mingled with the most childlike exclamations of wonder at her own inexplicable love for a stranger. In an hour she had shown to the new demoiselle all the contents of the little boudoir in which she lived; talked to her of her loves and hates at the Russian court; of her home in Mecklenberg, and her present situation—in short, poured out her heart with the *naif abandon* of a child. The young marquis had never seen so lovely a creature; and, responsibly as he felt his difficult and delicate situation, he returned the affection so innocently lavished upon him, and by the end of this first fatal hour, was irrecoverably in love. And, gay as his life had been at the French court, it was the first and subsequently proved to be the deepest passion of his life.

On the tzarine's return to her private apartment, she summoned her new favorite, and superintended, with condescending solicitude, the arrangements for her palace lodging. Nadége inhabited a small tower adjoining the bedroom of her mistress, and above this was an unoccupied room, which, at the present suggestion of the fairy little attendant, was allotted to the new-comer. The staircase opened by one door into the private gardens, and by the opposite, into the corridor leading immediately to the imperial chamber. The marquis's delicacy would fain have made some objection to this very intimate location; but he could hazard nothing against the interests of his sovereign, and he trusted to a speedy termination of his disguise with the attainment of his object. Meantime, the close neighborhood of the fair Nadége was not the most intolerable of necessities.

The marquis's task was a very difficult one. He was instructed, before abandoning his disguise and delivering his secret despatches, to awaken the interest of the tzarine on the two subjects to which the documents had reference: viz., a former partiality of her majesty for Louis, and a formerly discussed project of seating the Prince de Conti on the throne of Poland. Bestucheff had so long succeeded in cutting off all approach of these topics to the ear of the tzarine, that her majesty had probably forgotten them altogether.

Weeks passed and the opportunities to broach these delicate subjects had been inauspiciously rare. Mademoiselle de Beaumont, it is true, had completely eclipsed the favorite Nadége; and Elizabeth, in her hours of relaxation from state affairs, exacted the constant attendance of the new favorite in her private apartments. But the almost constant presence of some other of the maids of honor, opposed continual obstacles and interruptions, and the tzarine herself was not always disposed to talk of matters more serious than the current trifles of the hour. She was extremely indolent in her

personal habits; and often reclining at length upon cushions on the floor of her boudoir, she laid her imperial head in the lap of the embarrassed demoiselle, and was soothed to sleep by reading and the bathing of her temples. And during this period, she exacted frequently of the marquis, with a kind of instinctive mistrust, promises of continuance for life in her personal service.

But there were sweeter hours for the enamored La Chetardie than those passed in the presence of his partial and imperial mistress. Encircled by sentinels, and guarded from all intrusion of other eyes, in the inviolable sanctuary of royalty, the beautiful Nadége, impassioned, she knew not why, in her love for her new companion, was ever within call, and happy in devoting to him all her faculties of caressing endearment. He had not yet dared to risk the interests of his sovereign by a disclosure of his sex, even in the confidence of love. He could not trust Nadége to play so difficult a part as that of possessor of so embarrassing a secret in the presence of the shrewd and observing tzarine. A betrayal, too, would at once put an end to his happiness. With the slight arm of the fair and relying creature about his waist, and her head pressed close against his breast, they passed the balmy nights of the Russian summer in pacing the flowery alleys of the imperial garden, discoursing, with but one reserve, on every subject that floated to their lips. It required, however, all the self-control of La Chetardie, and all the favoring darkness of the night, to conceal his smiles at the *naive* confessions of the unconscious girl, and her wonderings at the peculiarity of her feelings. She had thought, hitherto, that there were affections in her nature which could only be called forth by a lover. Yet now, the thought of caressing another than her friend—of repeating to any human ear, least of all to a man, those new-born vows of love—filled her with alarm and horror. She felt that she had given her heart irrevocably away—and to a woman! Ali, with what delirious, though silent passion, La Chetardie drew her to his bosom, and with the pressure of his lips upon hers, interrupted those sweet confessions!

Yet the time at last drew near for the waking from this celestial dream. The disguised diplomatist had found his opportunity, and had successfully awakened in Elizabeth's mind both curiosity and interest as to the subjects of the despatches still sewed safely in his corsets. There remained nothing for him now but to seize a favorable opportunity, and, with the delivery of his missives, to declare his sex to the tzarine. There was risk to life and liberty in this, but the marquis knew not fear, and he thought but of its consequences to his love.

In La Chetardie's last interview with the *savant* who conducted him to Russia, his male attire had been successfully transferred from one portmanteau to the other, and it was now in his possession, ready for the moment of need. With his plans brought to within a single night of the *dénouement*, he parted from the tzarine, having asked the imperial permission for an hour's private interview on the morrow, and, with gentle force excluding Nadége from his apartment, he dressed himself in his proper costume, and cut open the warm envelope of his despatches. This done, he threw his cloak over him, and, with a dark lantern in his hand, sought Nadége in the garden. He had determined to disclose himself to her, renew his vows of love in his proper guise, and arrange, while he had access and opportunity, some means for uniting their destinies hereafter.

As he opened the door of the turret, Nadége flew up the stair to meet him, and observing the cloak in the faint glimmer of the stars, she playfully endeavored to envelope herself in it. But seizing her hands, La Chetardie turned and glided backward, drawing her after him toward a small pavilion in the remoter part of the garden. Here they had never been interrupted, the empress alone having the power to intrude upon them, and La Chetardie felt safe in devoting this place and time to the double disclosure of his secret and his suppressed passion.

Persuading her with difficulty to desist from putting her arms about him and sit down without a caress, he retreated a few steps, and in the darkness of the pavilion, shook down his imprisoned locks to their masculine *abandon*, threw off his cloak, and drew up the blind of his lantern. The scream of surprise, which instantly parted from the lips of Nadége, made him regret his imprudence in not having prepared her for the transformation, but her second thought was mirth, for she could believe it of course to be nothing but a playful masquerade; and with delighted laughter she sprang to his neck, and overwhelmed him with her kisses—another voice, however, joining very unexpectedly in the laughter!

The empress stood before them!

For an instant, with all his self-possession, La Chetardie was confounded and dismayed. Siberia, the knout, the scaffold, flitted before his eyes, and Nadége was the sufferer! But a glance at the face of the tzarine reassured him. She, too, took it for a girlish masquerade.

But the empress, unfortunately, was not disposed to have a partner in her enjoyment of the society of this new apparition of "hose and doublet." She ordered Nadége to her turret, with one of those petulant commands which her attendants understood to admit of no delay, and while the eclipsed favorite disappeared with the tears of unwilling submission in her soft eyes,

La Chetardie looked after her with the anguish of eternal separation at his heart, for a presentiment crowded irresistibly upon him that he should never see her more!

The empress was in slippers and *robe de nuit*, and, as if fate had determined that this well-kept secret should not survive the hour, her majesty laid her arm within that of her supposed masquerader, and led the way to the palace. She was wakeful, and wished to be read to sleep. And, with many a compliment to the beauty of her favorite in male attire, and many a playful caress, she arrived at the door of her chamber.

But the marquis could go no farther. He had hitherto been spared the embarrassment of passing this sacred threshold, for the *passée* empress had secrets of toilet for the embellishment of her person, which she trusted only to the eyes of an antiquated attendant. La Chetardie had never passed beyond the boudoir which was between the antechamber and the bedroom, and the time had come for the disclosure of his secret. He fell on his knees and announced himself a man!

Fortunately they were alone. Incredulous at first, the empress listened to his asseverations, however, with more amusement than displeasure, and the immediate delivery of the despatches, with the commendations of the disguised ambassador by his royal master to the forgiveness and kindness of the empress, amply secured his pardon. But it was on condition that he should resume his disguise and remain in her service.

Alone in his tower (for Nadége had disappeared, and he knew enough of the cruelty of Elizabeth to dread the consequences to the poor girl of venturing on direct inquiries as to her fate), La Chetardie after a few weeks fell ill; and fortunate, even at this price, to escape from the silken fetters of the enamored tzarine, he departed under the care of the imperial physician, for the more genial climate of France—not without reiterated promises of return, however, and offers, in that event, of unlimited wealth and advancement.

But, as the marquis made his way slowly toward Vienna, a gleam of light dawned on his sadness. The Princess Sophia Charlotte was newly affianced to George the Third of England, and this daughter of the house of Mecklenberg had been the playmate of Nadége Stein from infancy till the time when Nadége was sent to the tzarine by the Duchess of Mecklenberg. Making a confident of the kind physician who accompanied him, La Chetardie was confirmed, by the good man's better experience and knowledge, in the belief that Nadége had shared the same fate of every female of the court who had ever awakened the jealousy of the empress. She was doubtless exiled to Siberia; but, as she had committed no voluntary

fault, it was probably without other punishment; and, with a playmate on the throne of England, she might be demanded and recovered ere long, in all her freshness and beauty. Yet the recent fate of the fair Eudoxie Lapoukin, who, for an offence but little more distasteful to the tzarine, had been pierced through the tongue with hot iron, whipped with the knout, and exiled for life to Siberia, hung like a cloud of evil augury over his mind.

The marquis suddenly determined that he would see the affianced princess, and plead with her for her friend, before the splendors of a throne should make her inaccessible. The excitement of this hope had given him new life, and he easily persuaded his attendant, as they entered the gates of Vienna, that he required his attendance no farther. Alone, with his own servants, he resumed his female attire, and directed his course to Mecklenberg-Strelitz.

The princess had maintained an intimate correspondence with her playmate up to the time of her betrothal, and the name of Mademoiselle de Beaumont was passport enough. La Chetardie had sent forward his servant, on arriving at the town, in the neighborhood of the ducal residence, and the reply to his missive was brought back by one of the officers in attendance, with orders to conduct the demoiselle to apartments in the castle. He was received with all honor at the palace-gate by a chamberlain in waiting, who led the way to a suite of rooms adjoining those of the princess, where, after being left alone for a few minutes, he was familiarly visited by the betrothed girl, and overwhelmed, as formerly by her friend, with most embarrassing caresses. In the next moment, however, the door was hastily flung open, and Nadége, like a stream of light, fled through the room, hung upon the neck of the speechless and overjoyed marquis, and ended with convulsions of mingled tears and laughter. The moment that he could disengage himself from her arms, La Chetardie requested to be left for a moment alone. He felt the danger and impropriety of longer maintaining his disguise. He closed his door on the unwilling demoiselles, hastily changed his dress, and, with his sword at his side, entered the adjoining reception-room of the princess, where Mademoiselle de Beaumont was impatiently awaited.

The scene which followed, the mingled confusion and joy of Nadége, the subsequent hilarity and masquerading at the castle, and the particulars of the marriage of the Marquis de la Chetardie to his fair fellow maid-of-honor, must be left to the reader’s imagination. We have room only to explain the reappearance of Nadége at Mecklenberg.

Nadége retired to her turret at the imperative command of the empress, sad and troubled; but waited wakefully and anxiously for the re-entrance of her disguised companion. In the course of an hour, however, the sound of a

sentinel's musket, set down at her door, informed her that she was a prisoner. She knew Elizabeth, and the Duchess of Mecklenberg, with an equal knowledge of the tzarine's character, had provided her with a resource against the imperial cruelty, should she have occasion to use it. She crept to the battlements of the tower, and fastened a handkerchief to the side looking over the public square.

The following morning, at daylight, Nadége was summoned to prepare for a journey, and, in an hour, she was led between soldiers to a carriage at the palace-gate, and departed by the northern egress of the city, with a guard of three mounted Cossacks. In two hours from that time, the carriage was overtaken, the guard overpowered, and the horses' heads turned in the direction of Moscow. After many difficulties and dangers, during which she found herself under the charge of a Mecklenbergian officer in the service of the tzarine, she reached Vienna in safety, and was immediately concealed by her friends in the neighborhood of the palace at Mecklenberg, to remain hidden till inquiry should be over. The arrival of Mademoiselle de Beaumont, for the loss of whose life or liberty she had incessantly wept with dread and apprehension, was joyfully communicated to her by her friends; and so the reader knows some of the passages in the early life of the far-famed beauty in the French court in the time of Louis XV.—the Marchioness de la Chetardie.

TOM FANE AND I.

"Common as light is love,
And its familiar voice wearies not ever."
SHELLEY.

TOM FANE'S four Canadian ponies were whizzing his light phæton through the sand at a rate that would have put spirits into anything but a lover absent from his mistress. The "heaven-kissing" pines towered on every side like the thousand and one columns of the Palæologi at Constantinople; their flat and spreading tops shutting out the light of heaven almost as effectually as the world of mussulmans, mosques, kiosks, bazars, and Giaours, sustained on those innumerable capitals, darkens the subterranean wonder of Stamboul. An American pine forest is as like a temple, and a sublime one, as any dream that ever entered into the architectural brain of the slumbering Martin. The Yankee methodists in their camp-meetings, have but followed an irresistible instinct to worship God in the religious dimness of these interminable aisles of the wilderness.

Tom Fane and I had stoned the storks together in the palace of Crœsus at Sardis. We had read Anastasius on a mufti's tomb in the *Nekropolis* of Scutari. We had burned with fig-fevers in the same caravanserai at Smyrna. We had cooled our hot foreheads and cursed the Greeks in emulous Romaic in the dim tomb of Agamemnon at Argos. We had been grave at Paris, and merry at Rome; and we had pic-nic'd with the beauties of the Fanar in the Valley of Sweet Waters in pleasant Roumelia; and when, after parting in France, he had returned to England and his regiment, and I to New England and law, whom should I meet in a summer's trip to the St. Lawrence but Captain Tom Fane of the —th, quartered at the cliff-perched and doughty garrison of Quebec, and ready for any "lark" that would vary the monotony of duty!

Having eaten seven mess-dinners, driven to the falls of Montmorenci, and paid my respects to Lord Dalhousie, the hospitable and able governor of the Canadas, Quebec had no longer a temptation: and obeying a magnet, of which more anon, I announced to Fane that my traps were packed, and my heart sent on, *a l'avant courier*, to Saratoga.

“Is she pretty?” said Tom.

“As the starry-eyed Circassian we gazed at through the grill in the slave-market at Constantinople!”—(Heaven and my mistress forgive me for the comparison!—but it conveyed more to Tom Fane than a folio of more respectful similitudes.)

“Have you any objection to be drawn to your lady-love by four cattle that would buy the soul of Osbaldiston?”

“ ‘Objection!’ quotha?”

The next morning, four double-jointed and well-groomed ponies were munching their corn in the bow of a steamer, upon the St. Lawrence, wondering possibly what, in the name of Bucephalus, had set the hills and churches flying at such a rate down the river. The hills and churches came to a stand-still with the steamer opposite Montreal, and the ponies were landed and put to their mettle for some twenty miles, where they were destined to be astonished by a similar flying phenomenon in the mountains girding the lengthening waters of Lake Champlain. Landed at Ticonderoga, a few miles’ trot brought them to Lake George and a third steamer, and, with a winding passage among green islands and overhanging precipices, loaded like a harvest-wagon with vegetation, we made our last landing on the edge of the pine forest, where our story opens.

“Well, I must object,” says Tom, setting his whip in the socket, and edging round upon his driving-box, “I must object to this republican gravity of yours. I should take it for melancholy, did I not know it was the ‘complexion’ of your never-smiling countrymen.”

“Spare me, Tom! ‘I see a hand you cannot see.’ Talk to your ponies, and let me be miserable, if you love me.”

“For what, in the name of common sense? Are you not within five hours of your mistress? Is not this cursed sand your natal soil? Do not

‘The pine-boughs sing
Old songs with new gladness?’

and in the years that we have dangled about, ‘here-and-there-ians’ together, were you ever before grave, sad, or sulky? and will you without a precedent, and you a lawyer, inflict your stupidity upon me for the first time in this waste and being-less solitude? Half an hour more of the dread silence of this forest, and it will not need the horn of Astolpho to set me irremediably mad!”

“If employment will save your wits, you may invent a scheme for marrying the son of a poor gentleman to the ward of a rich trader in rice and molasses.”

“The programme of our approaching campaign, I presume?”

“Simply.”

“Is the lady willing?”

“I would fain believe so.”

“Is Mr. Popkins unwilling?”

“As the most romantic lover could desire.”

“And the state of the campaign?”

“Why, thus: Mr. George Washington Jefferson Frump, whom you have irreverently called Mr. Popkins, is sole guardian to the daughter of a dead West Indian planter, of whom he was once the agent. I fell in love with Kate Lorimer from description, when she was at school with my sister, saw her by favor of a garden-wall, and after the usual vows—”

“Too romantic for a Yankee, by half!”

“—Proposed by letter to Mr. Frump.”

“Oh, bathos!”

“He refused me.”

“Because——”

“*Imprimis*, I was not myself in the ‘sugar line,’ and *in secundis*, my father wore gloves and ‘did nothing for a living’—two blots in the eyes of Mr. Frump, which all the waters of Niagara would never wash from my escutcheon.”

“And what the devil hindered you from running off with her?”

“Fifty shares in the Manhattan Insurance Company, a gold mine in Florida, Heaven knows how many hogsheads of treacle, and a million of acres on the banks of the Missouri.”

“ ‘Pluto’s flame-colored daughter’ defend us! what a living El Dorado!”

“All of which she forfeits if she marries without old Frump’s consent.”

“I see—I see! And this Io and her Argus are now drinking the waters at Saratoga?”

“Even so.”

“I’ll bet you my four-in-hand to a sonnet, that I get her for you before the season is over.”

“Money and all?”

"Mines, molasses, and Missouri acres!"

"And if you do, Tom, I'll give you a team of Virginian bloods that would astonish Ascot, and throw you into the bargain a forgiveness for riding over me with your camel on the banks of the Hermus."

"Santa Maria! do you remember that spongy foot stepping over your frontispiece? I had already cast my eyes up to Mont Sypilus to choose a clean niche for you out of the rock-hewn tombs of the kings of Lydia. I thought you would sleep with Alyattis, Phil!"

We dashed on through dark forest and open clearing, through glens of tangled cedar and wild vine, over log bridges, corduroy marshes, and sand-hills, till, toward evening, a scattering shanty or two, and an occasional sound of a woodman's axe, betokened our vicinity to Saratoga. A turn around a clump of tall pines brought us immediately into the broad street of the village, and the flaunting shops, the overgrown, unsightly hotels, riddled with windows like honey combs, the fashionable idlers out for their evening lounge to the waters, the indolent smokers on the colonnades, and the dusty and loaded coaches driving from door to door in search of lodgings, formed the usual evening picture of the Bath of America.

As it was necessary to Tom's plan that my arrival at Saratoga should not be known, he pulled up at a small tavern at the entrance of the street, and dropping me and my baggage, drove on to Congress Hall, with my best prayers, and a letter of introduction to my sister, whom I had left on her way to the Springs with a party at my departure for Montreal. Unwilling to remain in such a tantalizing vicinity, I hired a chaise the next morning, and despatching a note to Tom, drove to seek a retreat at Barhydt's—a spot that cannot well be described in the tail of a paragraph.

Herr Barhydt is an old Dutch settler, who, till the mineral springs of Saratoga were discovered some five miles from his door, was buried in the depth of a forest solitude, unknown to all but the prowling Indian. The sky is supported above him (or looks to be) by a wilderness of straight, columnar pine shafts, gigantic in girth, and with no foliage except at the top, where they branch out like round tables spread for a banquet in the clouds. A small ear shaped lake, sunk as deep into the earth as the firs shoot above it, black as Erebus in the dim shadow of its hilly shore and the obstructed light of the trees that nearly meet over it, and clear and unbroken as a mirror, save the pearl-spots of the thousand lotuses holding up their cups to the blue eye of heaven that peers through the leafy vault, sleeps beneath his window; and around him, in the forest, lies, still unbroken, the elastic and brown carpet of the faded pine tassels, deposited in yearly layers since the continent rose from the flood, and rooted a foot beneath the surface to a rich mould that

would fatten the Sympleglades to a flower-garden. With his black tarn well stocked with trout, his bit of a farm in the clearing near by, and an old Dutch bible, Herr Barhydt lived a life of Dutch musing, talked Dutch to his geese and chickens, sung Dutch psalms to the echoes of the mighty forest, and, except on his far-between visits to Albany, which grew rarer and rarer as the old Dutch inhabitants dropped faster away, saw never a white human face from one maple-blossoming to another.

A roving mineralogist tasted the waters of Saratoga, and, like the work of a lath-and-plaster Aladdin, up sprung a thriving village around the fountain's lip, and hotels, tin tumblers, and apothecaries, multiplied in the usual proportion to each other, but out of all precedent, with everything else for rapidity. Libraries, newspapers, churches, livery stables, and lawyers, followed in their train; and it was soon established, from the plains of Abraham to the savannahs of Alabama, that no person of fashionable taste or broken constitution could exist through the mouths of July and August without a visit to the chalybeate springs and populous village of Saratoga. It contained seven thousand inhabitants before Herr Barhydt, living in his wooded seclusion only five miles off, became aware of its existence. A pair of lovers, philandering about the forest on horseback, popped in upon him one June morning, and thenceforth there was no rest for the soul of the Dutchman. Everybody rode down to eat his trout and make love in the dark shades of his mirrored lagoon; and at last, in self-defence, he added a room or two to his shanty, enclosed his cabbage-garden, and put a price upon his trout-dinners. The traveller now-a-days who has not dined at Barhydt's with his own champagne cold from the tarn, and the white-headed old settler "gargling" Dutch about the house, in his manifold vocation of cook, ostler, and waiter, may as well not have seen Niagara.

Installed in the back-chamber of the old man's last addition to his house, with Barry Cornwall and Elia (old fellow-travellers of mine), a rude chair, a ruder, but clean bed, and a troop of thoughts so perpetually from home, that it mattered very little what was the complexion of anything about me, I waited Tom's operations with a lover's usual patience. Barhydt's visitors seldom arrived before two or three o'clock, and the long, soft mornings, quiet as a shadowy Elysium on the rim of that ebon lake, were as solitary as a melancholy man could desire. Didst thou but know, oh! gentle Barry Cornwall! how gratefully thou hast been read and mused upon in those dim and whispering aisles of the forest, three thousand and more miles from thy smoky whereabout, methinks it would warm up the flush of pleasure around thine eyelids, though the "golden-tressed Adelaide!" were waiting her good-night kisses at thy knee!

I could stand it no longer. On the second evening of my seclusion, I made bold to borrow old Barhydt's superannuated roadster, and getting up the steam with infinite difficulty in his ricketty engine, higgled away, with a pace to which I could not venture to affix a name, to the gay scenes of Saratoga.

It was ten o'clock when I dismounted at the stable in Congress Hall, and giving *der Teufel*, as the old man ambitiously styled his steed, to the hands of the ostler, stole round through the garden to the eastern colonnade.

I feel called upon to describe "Congress Hall." Some fourteen or fifteen millions of white gentlemen and ladies consider that wooden and windowed Babylon as the proper palace of Delight—a sojourn to be sighed for, and sacrificed for, and economized for—the birthplace of Love, the haunt of Hymen, the arena of Fashion—a place without which a new lease of life were valueless—for which, if the conjuring cap of King Erricus itself could not furnish a season ticket, it might lie on a lady's toilet as unnoticed as a bride's night-cap a twelvemonth after marriage. I say to myself, sometimes, as I pass the window at White's, and see a world-sick worlding with the curl of satiety and disgust on his lip, wondering how the next hour will come to its death, "If you but knew, my friend, what a campaign of pleasure you are losing in America—what belles than the bluebell slighter and fairer—what hearts than the dewdrops fresher and clearer are living their pretty hour, like gems undived for in the ocean—what loads of foliage, what Titans of trees, what glorious wildernesses of rocks and waters, are lavishing their splendors on the clouds that sail over them, and all within the magic circle of which Congress Hall is the centre, and which a circling dove would measure to get an appetite for his breakfast—if you but knew this, my lord, as I know it, you would not be gazing so vacantly on the steps of Crockford's, nor consider 'the graybeard' such a laggard in his hours!"

Congress Hall is a wooden building, of which the size and capacity could never be definitely ascertained. It is built on a slight elevation, just above the strongly-impregnated spring whose name it bears, with little attempt at architecture, save a spacious and vine-covered colonnade, serving as a promenade on either side, and two wings, the extremities of which are lost in the distance. A relic or two of the still-astonished forest towers above the chimneys, in the shape of a melancholy group of firs; and, five minutes' walk from the door, the dim old wilderness stands looking down on the village in its primeval grandeur, like the spirits of the wronged Indians, whose tracks are scarce vanished from the sand. In the strength of the summer solstice, from five hundred to a thousand people dine together at Congress Hall, and after absorbing as many bottles of the best wines of the

world, a sunset promenade plays the valve to the sentiment thus generated, and, with a cup of tea, the crowd separates to dress for the nightly ball. There are several other hotels in the village, equally crowded and equally spacious, and the ball is given alternately at each. Congress Hall is the "crack" place, however, and I expect that Mr. Westcott, the obliging proprietor, will give me the preference of rooms, on my next annual visit, for this just and honorable mention.

The dinner-tables were piled into an orchestra, and draped with green baize and green wreaths, the floor of the immense hall was chalked with American flags and the initials of all the heroes of the Revolution, and the band were playing a waltz in a style that made the candles quiver, and the pines tremble audibly in their tassels. The ball-room was on the ground floor, and the colonnade upon the garden side was crowded with spectators, a row of grinning black fellows edging the cluster of heads at every window, and keeping time with their hands and feet in the irresistible sympathy of their music-loving natures. Drawing my hat over my eyes, I stood at the least-thronged window, and concealing my face in the curtain, waited impatiently for the appearance of the dancers.

The bevy in the drawing-room was sufficiently strong at last, and the lady patronesses, handed in by a state governor or two, and here and there a member of congress, achieved the *entre* with their usual intrepidity. Followed beaux and followed belles. *Such* belles! Slight, delicate, fragile-looking creatures, elegant as Retzsch's angels, warm-eyed as Mohammedan houries, yet timid as the antelope whose hazel orbs they eclipse, limbed like nothing earthly except an American woman—I would rather not go on! When I speak of the beauty of my countrywomen, my heart swells. I do believe the New World has a newer mould for its mothers and daughters. I *think* I am not prejudiced. I have been years away. I have sighed in France; I have loved in Italy; I have bargained for Circassians in an eastern bezestein, and I have lounged at Howell and James's on a sunny day in the season; and my eye is trained, and my perceptions quickened: but I *do* think (honor bright! and Heath's "Book of Beauty" forgiving me) that there is no such beautiful work of God under the arch of the sky as an American girl in her bellehood.

Enter Tom Fane in a Stultz coat and Sparding tights, looking as a man who had been the mirror of Bond street might be supposed to look, a thousand leagues from his club-house. *She* leaned on his arm. I had never seen her half so lovely. Fresh and calm from the seclusion of her chamber, her transparent cheek was just tinged with the first mounting blood, from the excitement of lights and music. Her lips were slightly parted, her fine-lined

eyebrows were arched with a girlish surprise, and her ungloved arm lay carelessly and confidingly within his, as white, round, and slender, as if Canova had wrought it in Parian for his Psyche. If you have never seen a beauty of northern blood nurtured in a southern clime, the cold fairness of her race warmed up as if it had been steeped in some golden sunset, and her deep blue eye darkened and filled with a fire as unnaturally resplendent as the fusion of crysoprase into a diamond, and if you have never known the corresponding contrast in the character, the intelligence and constancy of the north kindling with the enthusiasm and impulse, the passionateness and the *abandon* of a more burning latitude—you have seen nothing, let me insinuate, though you "have been i' the Indies twice," that could give you an idea of Kate Lorimer.

She waltzed, and then Tom danced with my sister, and then, resigning her to another partner, he offered his arm again to Miss Lorimer, and left the ball-room with several other couples for a turn in the fresh air of the colonnade. I was not jealous, but I felt unpleasantly at his returning to her so immediately. He was the handsomest man, out of all comparison, in the room, and he had dimmed my star too often in our rambles in Europe and Asia, not to suggest a thought, at least, that the same pleasant eclipse might occur in our American astronomy. I stepped off the colonnade, and took a turn in the garden.

Those "children of eternity," as Walter Savage Landor poetically calls "the breezes," performed their soothing ministry upon my temples, and I replaced Tom in my confidence with an heroic effort, and turned back. A swing hung between two gigantic pines, just under the balustrade, and flinging myself into the cushioned seat, I abandoned myself to the musings natural to a person "in my situation." The sentimentalizing promenaders lounged backward and forward above me, and not hearing Tom's drawl among them, I presumed he had returned to the ball-room. A lady and gentleman, walking in silence, stopped presently, and leaned upon the railing opposite the swing. They stood a moment, looking into the dim shadow of the pine-grove, and then a voice, that I knew better than my own, remarked in a low and silvery tone upon the beauty of the night.

She was not answered, and after a moment's pause, as if resuming a conversation that had been interrupted, she turned very earnestly to her companion, and asked, "Are you sure, quite *sure*, that you could venture to marry without a fortune?"

"Quite, dear Miss Lorimer!"

I started from the swing, but before the words of execration that rushed choking from my heart could struggle to my lips, they had mingled with the

crowd and vanished.

I strode down the garden-walk in a phrensy of passion. Should I call him immediately to account? Should I rush into the ball-room and accuse him of his treachery to her face? Should I drown myself in old Barhydt's tarn, or join an Indian tribe, and make war upon the whites? Or should I—*could* I—be magnanimous—and write him a note immediately, offering to be his groomsman at the wedding?

I stepped into the punch-room, asked for pen, ink, and paper, and indited the following note:—

"DEAR TOM: If your approaching nuptials are to be sufficiently public to admit of a groomsman, you will make me the happiest of friends by selecting me for that office.

"Yours ever truly,
"PHIL."

Having despatched it to his room, I flew to the stable, roused *ler Teufel*, who had gathered up his legs in the straw for the night, flogged him furiously out of the village, and giving him the rein as he entered the forest, enjoyed the scenery in the humor of mad old Hieronymo in the Spanish tragedy—"the moon dark, the stars extinct, the winds blowing, the owls shrieking, the toads croaking, the minutes jarring, and the clock striking twelve!"

Early the next day Tom's "tiger" dismounted at Barhydt's door, with an answer to my note, as follows:—

"DEAR PHIL: The devil must have informed you of a secret I supposed safe from all the world. Be assured I should have chosen no one but yourself to support me on the occasion; and however you have discovered my design upon your treasure, a thousand thanks for your generous consent. I expected no less from your noble nature.

"Yours devotedly,
"TOM.

"P. S.—I shall endeavor to be at Barhydt's, with materials for the fifth act of our comedy, to-morrow morning."

" 'Comedy!' call you this, Mr. Fane?" I felt my heart turn black as I threw down the letter. After a thousand plans of revenge formed and abandoned—borrowing old Barhydt's rifles, loading them deliberately, and

discharging them again into the air—I flung myself exhausted on the bed, and reasoned myself back to my magnanimity. I *would* be his groomsman!

It was a morning like the burst of a millennium on the world. I felt as if I should never forgive the birds for their mocking enjoyment of it. The wild heron swung up from the reeds, the lotuses shook out their dew into the lake as the breeze stirred them, and the senseless old Dutchman sat fishing in his canoe, singing one of his unintelligible psalms to a quick measure that half maddened me. I threw myself upon the yielding floor of pine-tassels on the edge of the lake, and with the wretched school philosophy, "*Si gravis est, brevis est*," endeavored to put down the tempest of my feelings.

A carriage rattled over the little bridge, mounted the ascent rapidly, and brought up at Barhydt's door.

"Phil!" shouted Tom, "Phil!"

I gulped down a choking sensation in my throat, and rushed up the bank to him. A stranger was dismounting from his horse.

"Quick!" said Tom, shaking my hand hurriedly—"there is no time to lose. Out with your inkhorn, Mr. Poppletree, and have your papers signed while I tie up my ponies."

"What is this sir?" said I, starting back as the stranger deliberately presented me with a paper, in which my own name was written in conspicuous letters.

The magistrate gazed at me with a look of astonishment. "A contract of marriage, I think, between Mr. Philip Slingsby and Miss Katherine Lorimer, spinster. Are you the gentleman named in that instrument, sir?"

At this moment my sister, leading the blushing girl by the hand, came and threw her arms about my neck, and drawing her within my reach, ran off and left us together.

There are some pure moments in this life that description would only profane.

We were married by the village magistrate in that magnificent sanctuary of the forest, old Barhydt and his lotuses the only indifferent witnesses of vows as passionate as ever trembled upon human lips.

I had scarce pressed her to my heart and dashed the tears from my eyes, when Fane, who had looked more at my sister than at the bride during the ceremony, left her suddenly, and thrusting a roll of parchment into my pocket, ran off to bring up his ponies. I was on the way to Saratoga, a married man, and my bride on the seat beside me, before I had recovered from my astonishment.

“Pray,” said Tom, “if it be not an impertinent question, and you can find breath in your ecstacies, how did you find out that your sister had done me the honor to accept the offer of my hand?”

The resounding woods rung with his unmerciful laughter at the explanation.

“And pray,” said I, in my turn, “if it is not an impertinent question, and you can find a spare breath in *your* ecstacies, by what magic did you persuade old Frump to trust his ward and her title-deeds in your treacherous keeping?”

“It is a long story, my dear Phil, and I will give you the particulars when you pay me the ‘Virginia bloods’ you wot of. Suffice it for the present, that Mr. Frump believes Mr. Tom Fane (alias Jacob Phipps, Esq., sleeping partner of a banking-house at Liverpool) to be the accepted suitor of his fair ward. In his extreme delight at seeing her in so fair a way to marry into a bank, he generously made her a present of her own fortune, signed over his right to control it by a document in your possession, and will undergo as agreeable a surprise in about five minutes as the greatest lover of excitement could desire.”

The ponies dashed on. The sandy ascent by the Pavilion Spring was surmounted, and in another minute we were at the door of Congress Hall. The last stragglers from the breakfast table were lounging down the colonnade, and old Frump sat reading the newspaper under the portico.

“Aha! Mr. Phipps,” said he, as Tom drove up—“back so soon, eh? Why, I thought you and Kitty would be billing it till dinner-time!”

“Sir!” said Tom, very gravely, “you have the honor of addressing Captain Thomas Fane, of his majesty’s —th Fusileers; and whenever you have a moment’s leisure, I shall be happy to submit to your perusal a certificate of the marriage of Miss Katherine Lorimer to the gentleman I have the pleasure to present to you. Mr. Frump, Mr. Slingsby!”

At the mention of my name, the blood in Mr. Frump’s ruddy complexion turned suddenly to the color of the Tiber. Poetry alone can express the feeling pictured in his countenance:—

> “If every atom of a dead man’s flesh
> Should creep, each one with a particular life,
> Yet all as cold as ever—’twas just so:
> Or had it drizzled needle-points of frost,
> Upon a feverish head made suddenly bald.”

George Washington Jefferson Frump, Esq., left Congress Hall the same evening, and has since ungraciously refused an invitation to Captain Fane's wedding—possibly from his having neglected to invite him on a similar occasion at Saratoga. This last, however, I am free to say, is a gratuitous supposition of my own.

THE POET AND THE MANDARIN.

THE moon shone like glorified and floating dew on the bosom of the tranquil Pei-ho, and the heart of the young poet Le-pih was like a cup running over with wine. It was no abatement of his exulting fulness that he was as yet the sole possessor of the secret of his own genius. Conscious of exquisite susceptibility to beauty, fragrance and music (the three graces of the Chinese), he was more intent upon enjoying his gifts than upon the awakening of envy for their possession—the latter being the second leaf in the book of genius, and only turned over by the finger of satiety. Thoughtless of the acquisition of fame as the youthful poet may be, however, he is always ready to anticipate its fruits, and Le-pih committed but the poet's error, when, having the gem in his bosom which could buy the favor of the world, he took the favor for granted without producing the gem.

Kwonfootse had returned a conqueror, from the wars with the Hwong-kin, and this night, on which the moon shone so gloriously, was the hour of his triumph, for the Emperor Tang had condescended to honor with his presence, a gala given by the victorious general at his gardens on the Pei-ho. Softened by his exulting feelings (for though a brave soldier, he was as haughty as Luykong the thunder-god, or Hwuyloo the monarch of fire), the warlike mandarin threw open his gardens on this joyful night, not only to those who wore in their caps the gold ball significant of patrician birth, but to all whose dress and mien warranted their appearance in the presence of the emperor.

Like the realms of the blest shone the gardens of Kwonfootse. Occupying the whole valley of the Pei-ho, at a spot where it curved like the twisted cavity of a shell, the sky seemed to shut in the grounds like the cover of a vase, and the stars seemed but the garden-lights overhead. From one edge of the vase to the other—from hill-top to hill-top—extended a broad avenue, a pagoda at either extremity glittering with gold and scarlet, the sides flaming with colored lamps and flaunting with gay streamers of barbarian stuffs, and the moonlit river cutting it in the centre, the whole vista, at the first glance, resembling a girdle of precious stones with a fastening of opal. Off from this central division radiated in all directions alleys of camphor and cinnamon trees, lighted with amorous dimness, and

leading away to bowers upon the hill-side, and from every quarter resounded music, and in every nook was seen feasting and merriment.

In disguise, the emperor and imperial family mingled in the crowd, and no one save the host and his daughters knew what part of the gardens was honored with their presence. There was, however, a retreat in the grounds, sacred to the privileged few, and here, when fatigued or desirous of refreshment, the royal personages laid aside disguise and were surrounded with the deferential honors of the court. It was so contrived that the access was unobserved by the people, and there was, therefore, no feeling of exclusion to qualify the hilarity of the entertainment, Kwonfootse, with all his pride, looking carefully to his popularity. At the foot of each descent, upon the matted banks of the river, floated gilded boats with lamps burning in their prows, and gayly-dressed boatmen offering conveyance across to all who required it; but there were also, unobserved by the crowd, boats unlighted and undecorated, holding off from the shore, which, at a sign given by the initiated, silently approached a marble stair without the line of the blazing avenue, and taking their freight on board, swiftly pulled up the moonlit river, to a landing concealed by the shoulder of the hill. No path led from the gardens hither, and from no point of view could be overlooked the more brilliant scene of imperial revel.

It was verging toward midnight when the unknown poet, with brain floating in a celestial giddiness of delight, stood on the brink of the gleaming river. The boats plied to and fro with their freights of fair damsels and gayly-dressed youths, the many-colored lamps throwing a rainbow profusion of tints on the water, and many a voice addressed him with merry invitation, for Le-pih's beauty, so famous now in history, was of no forbidding stateliness, and his motions, like his countenance, were as frankly joyous as the gambols of a young leopard. Not inclined to boisterous gayety at the moment, Le-pih stepped between the lamp-bearing trees of the avenue, and folding his arms in his silken vest, stood gazing in revery on the dancing waters. After a few moments, one of the dark boats on which he had unconsciously fixed his gaze drew silently toward him, and as the cushioned stern was brought round to the bank, the boatman made a reverence to his knees and sat waiting the poet's pleasure.

Like all men born to good fortune, Le-pih was prompt to follow the first beckonings of adventure, and asking no questions, he quietly embarked, and with a quick dip of the oars the boat shot from the shore and took the descending current. Almost in the next instant she neared again to the curving and willow-fringed margin of the stream, and lights glimmered through the branches, and sweet, low music became audible, and by rapid

degrees, a scene burst on his eye, which the first glimpse into the gate of paradise (a subsequent agreeable surprise, let us presume) could scarcely have exceeded.

Without an exchange of a syllable between the boatman and his freight, the stern was set against a carpeted stair at the edge of the river, and Le-pih disembarked with a bound, and stood upon a spacious area lying in a lap of the hill, the entire surface carpeted smoothly with Persian stuffs, and dotted here and there with striped tents pitched with poles of silver. Garlands of flowers hung in festoons against the brilliant-colored cloths, and in the centre of each tent stood a low tablet surrounded with couches and laden with meats and wine. The guests, for whom this portion of the entertainment was provided, were apparently assembled at a spot farther on, from which proceeded the delicious music heard by the poet in approaching; and, first entering one of the abandoned tents for a goblet of wine, Le-pih followed to the scene of attraction.

Under a canopy of gold cloth held by six bearers, stood the imperial chair upon a raised platform—not occupied, however, the august Tang reclining more at his ease, a little out of the circle, upon cushions canopied by the moonlight. Around upon the steps of the platform and near by, were grouped the noble ladies of the court and the royal princesses (Tang living much in the female apartments and his daughters numbering several score), and all, at the moment of Le-pih's joining the assemblage, turning to observe a damsel with a lute, to whose performance the low sweet music of the band had been a prelude. The first touch of the strings betrayed a trembling hand, and the poet's sympathies were stirred, though from her bent posture and her distant position he had not yet seen the features of the player. As the tremulous notes grew firmer, and the lute began to give out a flowing harmony, Le-pih approached, and at the same time, the listening groups of ladies began to whisper and move away, and of those who remained, none seemed to listen with pleasure except Kwonfootse and the emperor. The latter, indeed, rivalled the intruding bard in his interest, rolling over upon the cushions and resting on the other imperial elbow in close attention.

Gaining confidence evidently from the neglect of her auditory, or, as is natural to women less afraid of the judgment of the other sex, who were her only listeners, the fair Taya (the youngest daughter of Kwonfootse), now joined her voice to her instrument, and sang with a sweetness that dropped like a plummet to the soul of Le-pih. He fell to his knee upon a heap of cushions and leaned eagerly forward. As she became afterward one of his most passionate themes, we are enabled to reconjure the features that were presented to his admiring wonder. The envy of the princesses was sufficient

proof that Taya was of rare beauty; she had that wonderful perfection of feature to which envy pays its bitterest tribute, which is apologized for if not found in the poet's ideal, which we thirst after in pictures and marble, of which loveliness and expression are but lesser degrees—fainter shadowings. She was adorably beautiful. The outer corners of her long almond-shaped eyes, the dipping crescent of her forehead, the pencil of her eyebrow and the indented corners of her mouth—all these turned downward; and this peculiarity which, in faces of a less elevated character, indicates a temper morose and repulsive, in Taya's expressed the very soul of gentle and lofty melancholy. There was something infantine about her mouth, the teeth were so small and regular, and their dazzling whiteness, shining between lips of the brilliant color of a cherry freshly torn apart, was in startling contrast with the dark lustre of her eyes. Le-pih's poetry makes constant allusion to those small and snowy teeth, and the turned-down corners of the lips and eyes of his incomparable mistress.

Taya's song was a fragment of that celebrated Chinese romance from which Moore has borrowed so largely in his loves of the angels, and it chanced to be particularly appropriate to her deserted position (she was alone now with her three listeners), dwelling as it did upon the loneliness of a disguised Peri, wandering in exile upon earth. The lute fell from her hands when she ceased, and while the emperor applauded, and Kwonfootse looked on her with paternal pride, Le-pih modestly advanced to the fallen instrument, and with a low obeisance to the emperor and a hesitating apology to Taya, struck a prelude in the same air, and broke forth into an impulsive expression of his feelings in verse. It would be quite impossible to give a translation of this famous effusion with its oriental load of imagery, but in modifying it to the spirit of our language (giving little more than its thread of thought) the reader may see glimpses of the material from which the great Irish lyrist spun his woof of sweet fable. Fixing his keen eyes upon the bright lips just closed, Le-pih sang:—

When first from heaven's immortal throngs
The earth-doomed angels downward came,
And mourning their enraptured songs,
Walked sadly in our mortal frame;
To those, whose lyres of loftier string
Had taught the myriad lips of heaven,
The song that they forever sing,
A wondrous lyre, 'tis said, was given.
'And go,' the seraph warder said,
As from the diamond gates they flew,
'And wake the songs ye here have led
In earthly numbers, pure and new!
And yours shall be the hallowed power
To win the lost to heaven again,
And when earth's clouds shall darkest lower
Your lyre shall breathe its holiest strain!
Yet, chastened by this inward fire,
Your lot shall be to walk alone,
Save when, perchance, with echoing lyre,
You touch a spirit like your own;
And whatsoe'er the guise you wear,
To him, 'tis given to know you there.'

The song over, Le-pih sat with his hands folded across the instrument and his eyes cast down, and Taya gazed on him with wondering looks, yet slowly, and as if unconsciously, she took from her breast a rose, and with a half-stolen glance at her father, threw it upon the lute. But frowningly Kwonfootse rose from his seat and approached the poet.

"Who are you?" he demanded angrily, as the bard placed the rose reverently in his bosom.

"Le-pih!"

With another obeisance to the emperor, and a deeper one to the fair Taya, he turned, after this concise answer, upon his heel, lifting his cap to his head, which, to the rage of Kwonfootse, bore not even the gold ball of aristocracy.

"Bind him for the bastinado!" cried the infuriated mandarin to the bearers of the canopy.

The six soldiers dropped their poles to the ground, but the emperor's voice arrested them.

"He shall have no violence but from you, fair Taya," said the softened monarch; "call to him by the name he has just pronounced, for I would hear

that lute again!"

"Le-pih! Le-pih!" cried instantly the musical voice of the fair girl.

The poet turned and listened, incredulous of his own ears.

"Le-pih! Le-pih!" she repeated, in a soft tone.

Half-hesitating, half-bounding, as if still scarce believing he had heard aright, Le-pih flew to her feet, and dropped to one knee upon the cushion before her, his breast heaving and his eyes flashing with eager wonder. Taya's courage was at an end, and she sat with her eyes upon the ground.

"Give him the lute, Kwonfootse!" said the emperor, swinging himself on the raised chair with an abandonment of the imperial avoirdupois, which set ringing violently the hundred bells suspended in the golden fringes.

"Let not the crow venture again into the nest of the eagle," muttered the mandarin between his teeth as he handed the instrument to the poet.

The sound of the bells brought in the women and courtiers from every quarter of the privileged area, and preluding upon the strings to gather his scattered senses, while they were seating themselves around him, Le-pih at last fixed his gaze upon the lips of Taya, and commenced his song to an irregular harmony well adapted to extempore verse. We have tried in vain to put this celebrated song of compliment into English stanzas. It commenced with a description of Taya's beauty, and an enumeration of things she resembled, dwelling most upon the blue lily, which seems to have been Le-pih's favorite flower. The burthen of the conclusion, however, is the new value everything assumed in her presence. "Of the light in this garden," he says, "there is one beam worth all the glory of the moon, for it sleeps on the eye of Taya. Of the air about me there is one breath which my soul drinks like wine—it is from the lips of Taya. Taya looks on a flower, and that flower seems to me, with its pure eye, to gaze after her for ever. Taya's jacket of blue silk is my passion. If angels visit me in my dreams, let them be dressed like Taya. I love the broken spangle in her slipper better than the first star of evening. Bring me, till I die, inner leaves from the water-lily, since white and fragrant like them are the teeth of Taya. Call me, should I sleep, when rises the crescent moon, for the blue sky in its bend curves like the drooped eye of Taya," &c., &c.

"By the immortal Fo!" cried the emperor, raising himself bolt upright in his chair, as the poet ceased, "you shall be the bard of Tang! Those are my sentiments better expressed! The lute, in your hands, is my heart turned inside out! Lend me your gold chain, Kwonfootse, and, Taya! come hither and put it on his neck!"

Taya glided to the emperor, but Le-pih rose to his feet, with a slight flush on his forehead, and stood erect and motionless.

"Let it please your imperial majesty," he said, after a moment's pause, "to bestow upon me some gift less binding than a chain."

"Carbuncle of Budha! What would the youth have!" exclaimed Tang in astonishment. "Is not the gold chain of a mandarin good enough for his acceptance?"

"My poor song," replied Le-pih, modestly casting down his eyes, "is sufficiently repaid by your majesty's praises. The chain of the mandarin would gall the neck of the poet. Yet—if I might have a reward more valuable—"

"In Fo's name what is it?" said the embarrassed emperor.

Kwonfootse laid his hand on his cimeter, and his daughter blushed and trembled.

"The broken spangle on the slipper of Taya!" said Le-pih, turning half indifferently away.

Loud laughed the ladies of the court, and Kwonfootse walked from the bard with a look of contempt, but the emperor read more truly the proud and delicate spirit that dictated the reply; and in that moment probably commenced the friendship with which, to the end of his peaceful reign, Tang distinguished the most gifted poet of his time.

The lovely daughter of the mandarin was not behind the emperor in her interpretation of the character of Le-pih, and as she stepped forward to put the detached spangle into his hand, she bent on him a look full of earnest curiosity and admiration.

"What others give me," he murmured in a low voice, pressing the worthless trifle to his lips, "makes me their slave; but what Taya gives me is a link that draws her to my bosom."

Kwonfootse probably thought that Le-pih's audience had lasted long enough, for at this moment the sky seemed bursting into flame with a sudden tumult of fire-works, and in the confusion that immediately succeeded, the poet made his way unquestioned to the bank of the river, and was reconveyed to the spot of his first embarkation, in the same silent manner with which he had approached the privileged area.

During the following month, Le-pih seemed much in request at the imperial palace, but, to the surprise of his friends, the keeping of "worshipful society" was not followed by any change in his merry manners, nor apparently by any improvement in his worldly condition. His mother still sold mats in the public market, and Le-pih still rode, every few days, to

the marsh, for his panniers of rushes, and to all comers, among his old acquaintances, his lute and song were as ready and gratuitous as ever.

All this time, however, the fair Taya was consuming with a passionate melancholy which made startling ravages in her health, and the proud mandarin, whose affection for his children was equal to his pride, in vain shut his eyes to the cause, and ate up his heart with mortification. When the full moon came round again, reminding him of the scenes the last moon had shone upon, Kwonfootse seemed suddenly lightened of his care, and his superb gardens on the Pei-ho were suddenly alive with preparations for another festival. Kept in close confinement, poor Taya fed on her sorrow, indifferent to the rumors of marriage which could concern only her sisters; and the other demoiselles Kwonfootse tried in vain, with fluttering hearts, to pry into their father's secret. A marriage it certainly was to be, for the lanterns were painted of the color of peach-blossoms—but whose marriage?

It was an intoxicating summer's morning, and the sun was busy calling the dew back to heaven, and the birds wild with entreating it to stay (so Le-pih describes it), when down the narrow street in which the poet's mother plied her vocation, there came a gay procession of mounted servants with a led horse richly caparisoned, in the centre. The one who rode before held on his pommel a velvet cushion, and upon it lay the cap of a noble, with its gold ball shining in the sun. Out flew the neighbors as the clattering hoofs came on, and roused by the cries and the barking of dogs, forth came the mother of Le-pih, followed by the poet himself, but leading his horse by the bridle, for he had just thrown on his panniers, and was bound out of the city to cut his bundle of rushes. The poet gazed on the pageant with the amused curiosity of others, wondering what it could mean, abroad at so early an hour; but, holding back his sorry beast to let the prancing horsemen have all the room they required, he was startled by a reverential salute from the bearer of the velvet cushion, who, drawing up his followers in front of the poet's house, dismounted and requested to speak with him in private.

Tying his horse to the door post, Le-pih led the way into the small room, where sat his mother braiding her mats to a cheerful song of her son's making, and here the messenger informed the bard, with much circumstance and ceremony, that in consequence of the pressing suit of Kwonfootse, the emperor had been pleased to grant to the gifted Le-pih, the rank expressed by the cap borne upon the velvet cushion, and that as a noble of the celestial empire, he was now a match for the incomparable Taya. Furthermore the condescending Kwonfootse had secretly arranged the ceremonial for the bridal, and Le-pih was commanded to mount the led horse and come up with his cap and gold ball to be made forthwith supremely happy.

An indefinable expression stole over the features of the poet as he took up the cap, and placing it on his head, stood gayly before his mother. The old dame looked at him a moment, and the tears started to her eyes. Instantly Le-pih plucked it off and cast it on the waste heap at her side, throwing himself upon his knees before her in the same breath, and begging her forgiveness for his silly jest.

"Take back your bauble to Kwonfootse!" he said, rising proudly to his feet, "and tell him that the emperor, to whom I know how to excuse myself, can easily make a poet into a noble but he cannot make a noble into a poet. The male bird does not borrow its brighter plumage from its mate, and she who marries Le-pih will braid rushes for his mother!"

Astonished, indeed, were the neighbors, who had learned the errand of the messenger from his attendants without, to see the crest-fallen man come forth again with his cap and cushion. Astonished much more were they, ere the gay cavalcade were well out of sight, to see Le-pih appear with his merry countenance and plebeian cap, and, mounting his old horse, trot briskly away, sickle in hand, to the marshes. The day passed in wondering and gossip, interrupted by the entrance of one person to the house while the old dame was gone with her mats to the market, but she returned duly before sunset, and went in as usual to prepare supper for her son.

The last beams of day were on the tops of the pagodas when Le-pih returned, walking beside his heavy-laden beast, and singing a merry song. He threw off his rushes at the door and entered, but his song was abruptly checked, for a female sat on a low seat by his mother, stooping over a half-braided mat, and the next moment, the blushing Taya lifted up her brimming eyes and gazed at him with silent but pleading love.

Now, at last, the proud merriment and self respecting confidence of Le-pih were overcome. His eyes grew flushed and his lips trembled without utterance. With both his hands placed on his beating heart, he stood gazing on the lovely Taya.

"Ah!" cried the old dame, who sat with folded hands and smiling face, looking on at a scene which she did not quite understand, though it gave her pleasure. "Ah! this is a wife for my boy, sent from heaven! No haughty mandarin's daughter she! no proud minx to fall in love with the son and despise the mother! Let them keep their smart caps and gift-horses for those who can be bought at such prices! My son is a noble by the gift of his Maker —better than an emperor's gold ball! Come to your supper, Le-pih! Come, my sweet daughter!"

Taya placed her finger on her lip, and Le-pih agreed that the moment had not yet come to enlighten his mother as to the quality of her guest. She was not long in ignorance, however, for before they could seat themselves at table, there was a loud knocking at the door, and before the old dame could bless herself, an officer entered and arrested the daughter of Kwonfootse by name, and Le-pih and his mother at the same time, and there was no dismissing the messenger now. Off they marched, amid the silent consternation and pity of the neighbors—not toward the palace of justice, however, but to the palace of the emperor, where his majesty, to save all chances of mistake, chose to see the poet wedded, and sit, himself, at the bridal feast. Tang had a romantic heart, fat and voluptuous as he was, and the end of his favor to Le-pih and Taya was the end of his life.

THE COUNTESS NYSCHRIEM,

AND THE HANDSOME ARTIST.

THAT favored portion of the light of one summer's morning that was destined to be the transparent bath of the master-pieces on the walls of the Pitti, was pouring in a languishing flood through the massive windows of the palace. The ghosts of the painters (who, ministering to the eye only, walk the world from cock-crowing to sunset) were haunting invisibly the sumptuous rooms made famous by their pictures; and the pictures themselves, conscious of the presence of the fountain of soul from which gushed the soul that is in them, glowed with intoxicated mellowness and splendor, and amazed the living students of the gallery with effects of light and color till that moment undiscovered.

[And now, dear reader, having paid you the compliment of commencing my story in *your* vein (poetical), let me come down to a little every-day brick-and-mortar, and build up a fair and square common-sense foundation].

Graeme McDonald was a young highlander from Rob Roy's country, come to Florence to study the old masters. He was an athletic, wholesome, handsome fellow, who had probably made a narrow escape of being simply a fine animal; and, as it was, you never would have picked him from a crowd as anything but a hussar out of uniform, or a brigand perverted to honest life. His peculiarity was (and this I foresee is to be an ugly sentence), that he had peculiarities which did not seem peculiar. He was full of genius for his art, but the canvass which served him as a vent, gave him no more anxiety than his pocket-handkerchief. He painted in the palace, or wiped his forehead on a warm day with equally small care, to all appearance, and he had brought his mother and two sisters to Italy, and supported them by a most heroic economy and industry—all the while looking as if the "*silver* moon" and all the small change of the stars would scarce serve him for a day's pocket-money. Indeed, the more I knew of McDonald, the more I became convinced that there was another man built over him. The painter was inside. And if he had free thoroughfare and use of the outer man's windows and ivory door, he was at any rate barred from hanging out the smallest sign or indication of being at any time "within." Think as hard as he would—devise, combine, study, or glow with enthusiasm—the proprietor of

the front door exhibited the same careless and smiling bravery of mien, behaving invariably as if he had the whole tenement to himself, and was neither proud of, nor interested in the doings of his more spiritual inmate—leading you to suppose, almost, that the latter, though billeted upon him, had not been properly *introduced*. The thatch of this common tenement was of jetty black hair, curling in most opulent prodigality, and, altogether, it was a house that Hadad, the fallen spirit, might have chosen, when becoming incarnate to tempt the sister of Absalom.

Perhaps you have been in Florence, dear reader, and know by what royal liberality artists are permitted to bring their easels into the splendid apartments of the palace, and copy from the priceless pictures on the walls. At the time I have my eye upon (some few years ago), McDonald was making a beginning of a copy of Titian's Bella, and near him stood the easel of a female artist who was copying from the glorious picture of "Judith and Holofernes," in the same apartment. Mademoiselle Folie (so she was called by the elderly lady who always accompanied her) was a small and very gracefully-formed creature, with the plainest face in which attraction could possibly reside. She was a passionate student of her art, pouring upon it apparently the entire fulness of her life, and as unconsciously forgetful of her personal impressions on those around her, as if she wore the invisible ring of Gyges. The deference with which she was treated by her staid companion drew some notice upon her, however, and her progress, in the copy she was making, occasionally gathered the artists about her easel; and, altogether, her position among the silent and patient company at work in the different halls of the palace, was one of affectionate and tacit respect. McDonald was her nearest neighbor, and they frequently looked over each other's pictures, but, as they were both foreigners in Florence (she of Polish birth, as he understood), their conversation was in French or Italian, neither of which languages were fluently familiar to Graeme, and it was limited generally to expressions of courtesy or brief criticism of each other's labors.

As I said before, it was a "proof-impression" of a celestial summer's morning, and the thermometer stood at heavenly idleness. McDonald sat with his maul-stick across his knees, drinking from Titian's picture. An artist, who had lounged in from the next room, had hung himself by the crook of his arm over a high peg, in his comrade's easel, and every now and then he volunteered an observation to which he expected no particular answer.

"When I remember how little beauty I have seen in the world," said Ingarde (this artist), "I am inclined to believe with Saturninus, that there is

no resurrection of bodies, and that only the spirits of the good return into the body of the Godhead—for what is ugliness to do in heaven?"

McDonald only said, "hm—hm!"

"Or rather," said Ingarde again, "I should like to fashion a creed for myself, and believe that nothing was immortal but what was heavenly, and that the good among men and the beautiful among women would be the only reproductions hereafter. How will this little plain woman look in the streets of the New Jerusalem, for example? Yet she expects, as we all do, to be recognizable by her friends in Heaven, and, of course, to have the same irredeemably plain face! (Does she understand English, by the way—for she might not be altogether pleased with my theory!")

"I have spoken to her very often," said McDonald, "and I think English is Hebrew to her—but my theory of beauty crosses at least one corner of your argument, my friend! I believe that the original type of every human face is beautiful, and that every human being could be made beautiful, without, in any essential particular, destroying the visible identity. The likeness preserved in the faces of a family through several generations is modified by the bad mental qualities, and the bad health of those who hand it down. Remove these modifications, and without destroying the family likeness, you would take away all that mars the beauty of its particular type. An individual countenance is an integral work of God's making, and God saw that it was good' when he made it. *Ugliness*, as you phrase it, is the damage that type of countenance has received from the sin and suffering of life. But the type can be restored, and will be, doubtless, in Heaven!"

"And you think that little woman's face could be made beautiful?"

"I know it."

"Try it, then! Here is your copy of Titian's 'Bella,' all finished but the face. Make an *apotheosis* portrait of your neighbor, and while it harmonizes with the body of Titian's beauty, still leave it recognizable as her portrait, and I'll give in to your theory—believing in all other miracles, if you like, at the same time!"

Ingarde laughed, as he went back to his own picture, and McDonald, after sitting a few minutes lost in revery, turned his easel so as to get a painter's view of his female neighbor. He thought she colored slightly as he fixed his eyes upon her; but, if so, she apparently became very soon unconscious of his gaze, and he was soon absorbed himself in the task to which his friend had so mockingly challenged him.

II.

[Excuse me, dear reader, while with two epistles I build a bridge over which you can cross a chasm of a month in my story.]

"To Graeme McDonald.

"Sir: I am intrusted with a delicate commission, which I know not how to broach to you, except by simple proposal. Will you forgive my abrupt brevity, if I inform you, without further preface, that the Countess Nyschriem, a Polish lady of high birth and ample fortune, does you the honor to propose for your hand. If you are disengaged, and your affections are not irrevocably given to another, I can conceive no sufficient obstacle to your acceptance of this brilliant connexion. The countess is twenty-two, and not beautiful, it must in fairness be said; but she has high qualities of head and heart, and is worthy of any man's respect and affection. She has seen you, of course, and conceived a passion for you, of which this is the result. I am directed to add, that should you consent, the following conditions are imposed—that you marry her within four days, making no inquiry except as to her age, rank, and property, and that, without previous interview, she come veiled to the altar.

"An answer is requested in the course of to-morrow, addressed to 'The Count Hanswald, minister of his majesty the king of Prussia.'

"I have the honor,
&c., &c.

"Hanswald."

McDonald's answer was as follows:—

"To his Excellency, Hanswald, &c., &c.

"You will pardon me that I have taken two days to consider the extraordinary proposition made me in your letter. The subject, since it is to be entertained a moment, requires, perhaps, still further reflection—but my reply shall be definite, and as prompt as I can bring myself to be, in a matter so important.

"My first *impulse* was to return your letter, declining the honor you would do me, and thanking the lady for the compliment of her choice. My first *reflection* was the relief and happiness which an independence would bring to a mother and two sisters dependent, now, on the precarious profits of my pencil. And I first consented to ponder the matter with this view, and I now consent to marry (frankly) for this advantage. But still I have a condition to propose.

"In the studies I have had the opportunity to make of the happiness of imaginative men in matrimony, I have observed that their two worlds of fact

and fancy were seldom under the control of one mistress. It must be a very extraordinary woman of course, who, with the sweet domestic qualities needful for common life, possesses at the same time the elevation and spirituality requisite for the ideal of the poet and painter. And I am not certain, in any case, whether the romance of some secret passion, fed and pursued in the imagination only, be not the inseparable necessity of a poetical nature. For the imagination is incapable of being chained, and it is at once disenchanted and set roaming by the very possession and certainty, which are the charms of matrimony. Whether exclusive devotion of all the faculties of mind and body be the fidelity exacted in marriage, is a question every woman should consider before making a husband of an imaginative man. As I have not seen the countess, I can generalize on the subject without giving offence, and she is the best judge whether she can chain my fancy as well as my affections, or yield to an imaginative mistress the devotion of so predominant a quality of my nature. I can only promise her the constancy of a husband.

"Still—if this were taken for only vague speculation—she might be deceived. I must declare, frankly, that I am at present, completely possessed with an imaginative passion. The object of it is probably as poor as I, and I could never marry her were I to continue free. Probably, too, the high-born countess would be but little jealous of her rival, for she has no pretensions to beauty, and is an humble artist. But, in painting this lady's portrait—(a chance experiment, to try whether so plain a face could be made lovely)—I have penetrated to so beautiful an *inner* countenance (so to speak)—I have found charms of impression so subtly masked to the common eye—I have traced such exquisite lineament of soul and feeling, visible, for the present, I believe, to my eye only—that, while I live, I shall do irresistible homage to her as the embodiment of my fancy's want, the very spirit and essence suitable to rule over my unseen world of imagination. Marry whom I will, and be true to her as I shall, this lady will (perhaps unknown to herself) be my mistress in dream-land and revery.

"This inevitable license allowed—my ideal world and its devotions, that is to say, left entirely to myself—I am ready to accept the honor of the countess's hand. If, at the altar, she should hear me murmur another name *with* her own—(for the bride of my fancy must be present when I wed, and I shall link the vows to both in one ceremony)—let her not fear for my constancy to herself, but let her remember that it is not to offend her hereafter, if the name of the other come to my lip in dreams.

"Your excellency may command my time and presence. With high consideration, &c.,

Rather agitated than surprised seemed Mademoiselle Folie, when, the next day, as she arranged her brushes upon the shelf of her easel, her handsome neighbor commenced, in the most fluent Italian he could command, to invite her to his wedding. Very much surprised was McDonald when she interrupted him in English, and begged him to use his native tongue, as madame, her attendant, would not then understand him. He went on delightedly in his own honest language, and explained to her his imaginative admiration, though he felt compunctious, somewhat, that so unreal a sentiment should bring the blood into her cheek. She thanked him—drew the cloth from the upper part of her own picture, and showed him an admirable portrait of his handsome features, substituted for the masculine head of Judith in the original from which she copied—and promised to be at his wedding, and to listen sharply for her murmured name in his vow at the altar. He chanced to wear at the moment a ring of red carnelian, and he agreed with her that she should stand where he could see her, and, at the moment of his putting the marriage ring upon the bride's fingers, that she should put on this, and forever after wear it, as a token of having received his spiritual vows of devotion.

The day came, and the splendid equipage of the countess dashed into the square of Santa Maria, with a veiled bride and a cold bridegroom, and deposited them at the steps of the church. And they were followed by other coroneted equipages, and gayly dressed from each—the mother and sisters of the bridegroom gayly dressed, among them, but looking pale with incertitude and dread.

The veiled bride was small, but she moved gracefully up the aisle, and met her future husband at the altar with a low courtesy, and made a sign to the priest to proceed with the ceremony. McDonald was colorless, but firm, and indeed showed little interest, except by an anxious look now and then among the crowd of spectators at the sides of the altar. He pronounced with a steady voice, but when the ring was to be put on, he looked around for an instant, and then suddenly, and to the great scandal of the church, clasped his bride with a passionate ejaculation to his bosom. *The carnelian ring was on her finger*—and the Countess Nyschriem and Mademoiselle Folie—his bride and his fancy queen—were one.

This curious event happened in Florence some eight years since—as all people then there will remember—and it was prophesied of the countess that she would have but a short lease of her handsome and gay husband. But time does not say so. A more constant husband than McDonald to his plain

and titled wife, and one more continuously in love, does not travel and buy pictures, and patronize artists—though few except yourself and I, dear reader, know the philosophy of it!

THE INLET OF PEACH-BLOSSOMS.

THE Emperor Yuentsoong, of the dynasty Chow, was the most magnificent of the long-descended succession of Chinese sovereigns. On his first accession to the throne, his character was so little understood, that a conspiracy was set on foot among the yellow-caps, or eunuchs, to put out his eyes, and place upon the throne the rebel Szema, in whose warlike hands, they asserted, the empire would more properly maintain its ancient glory. The gravity and reserve which these myrmidons of the palace had construed into stupidity and fear, soon assumed another complexion, however. The eunuchs silently disappeared; the mandarins and princes whom they had seduced from their allegiance, were made loyal subjects by a generous pardon; and in a few days after the period fixed upon for the consummation of the plot, Yuentsoong set forth in complete armor at the head of his troops to give battle to the rebel in the mountains.

In Chinese annals this first enterprise of the youthful Yuentsoong is recorded with great pomp and particularity. Szema was a Tartar prince of uncommon ability, young like the emperor, and, during the few last imbecile years of the old sovereign, he had gathered strength in his rebellion, till now he was at the head of ninety thousand men, all soldiers of repute and tried valor. The historian has unfortunately dimmed the emperor's fame to European eyes, by attributing his wonderful achievements in this expedition to his superiority in arts of magic. As this account of his exploits is only prefatory to our tale, we will simply give the reader an idea of the style of the historian, by translating literally a passage or two of his description of the battle:—

"Szema now took refuge within a cleft of the mountain, and Yuentsoong, upon his swift steed, outstripping the body-guard in his ardor, dashed amid the paralyzed troops with poised spear, his eyes fixed only on the rebel. There was a silence of an instant, broken only by the rattling hoofs of the intruder, and then, with dishevelled hair and waving sword, Szema uttered a fearful imprecation. In a moment the wind rushed, the air blackened, and with the suddenness of a fallen rock, a large cloud enveloped the rebel, and innumerable men and horses issued out of it. Wings flapped against the eyes of the emperor's horse, hellish noises screamed in his ears, and, completely

beyond control, the animal turned and fled back through the narrow pass, bearing his imperial master safe into the heart of his army.

"Yuentsoong, that night, commanded some of his most expert soldiers to scale the beetling heights of the ravine, bearing upon their backs the blood of swine, sheep, and dogs, with other impure things, and these they were ordered to shower upon the combatants at the sound of the imperial clarion. On the following morning, Szema came forth again to offer battle, with flags displayed, drums beating, and shouts of triumph and defiance. As on the day previous, the bold emperor divided, in his impatience, rank after rank of his own soldiery, and, followed closely by his body-guard, drove the rebel army once more into their fastness. Szema sat upon his war-horse as before, entrenched amid his officers and ranks of the tallest Tartar spearmen, and as the emperor contended hand to hand with one of the opposing rebels, the magic imprecation was again uttered, the air again filled with cloudy horsemen and chariots, and the mountain shaken with discordant thunder. Backing his willing steed, the emperor blew a long sharp note upon his silver clarion, and in an instant the sun broke through the darkness, and the air seemed filled with paper men, horses of straw, and phantoms dissolving into smoke. Yuentsoong and Szema now stood face to face, with only mortal aid and weapons."

The historian goes on to record that the two armies suspended hostilities at the command of their leaders, and that the emperor and his rebel subject having engaged in single combat, Yeuntsoong was victorious, and returned to his capital with the formidable enemy, whose life he had spared, riding beside him like a brother. The conqueror's career, for several years after this, seems to have been a series of exploits of personal valor, and the Tartar prince shared in all his dangers and pleasures, his inseparable friend. It was during this period of romantic friendship that the events occurred which have made Yuentsoong one of the idols of Chinese poetry.

By the side of a lake in a distant province of the empire, stood one of the imperial palaces of pleasure, seldom visited, and almost in ruins. Hither, in one of his moody periods of repose from war, came the conqueror Yuentsoong, for the first time in years separated from his faithful Szema. In disguise, and with only one or two attendants, he established himself in the long silent halls of his ancestor Tsinchemong, and with his boat upon the lake, and his spear in the forest, seemed to find all the amusement of which his melancholy was susceptible. On a certain day in the latter part of April, the emperor had set his sail to a fragrant south wind, and reclining on the cushions of his bark, watched the shore as it softly and silently glided past, and, the lake being entirely encircled by the imperial forest, he felt

immersed in what he believed to be the solitude of a deserted paradise. After skirting the fringed sheet of water in this manner for several hours, he suddenly observed that he had shot through a streak of peach-blossoms floating from the shore, and at the same moment he became conscious that his boat was slightly headed off by a current setting outward. Putting up his helm, he returned to the spot, and beneath the drooping branches of some luxuriant willows, thus early in leaf, he discovered the mouth of an inlet, which, but for the floating blossoms it brought to the lake, would have escaped the notice of the closest observer. The emperor now lowered his sail, unshipped the slender mast, and betook him to the oars, and as the current was gentle, and the inlet wider within the mouth, he sped rapidly on, through what appeared to be but a lovely and luxuriant vale of the forest. Still, those blushing betrayers of some flowering spot beyond, extended like a rosy clue before him, and with impulse of muscles swelled and indurated in warlike exercise, the swift keel divided the besprent mirror winding temptingly onward, and, for a long hour, the royal oarsman untiringly threaded this sweet vein of the wilderness.

Resting a moment on his oars while the slender bark still kept her way, he turned his head toward what seemed to be an opening in the forest on the left, and in the same instant the boat ran, head on, to the shore, the inlet at this point almost doubling on its course. Beyond, by the humming of bees, and the singing of birds, there should be a spot more open than the tangled wilderness he had passed, and disengaging his prow from the alders, he shoved the boat again into the stream, and pulled round a high rock, by which the inlet seemed to have been compelled to curve its channel. The edge of a bright green meadow now stole into the perspective, and, still widening with his approach, disclosed a slightly rising terrace clustered with shrubs, and studded here and there with vases; and farther on, upon the same side of the stream, a skirting edge of peach-trees, loaded with the gay blossoms which had guided him hither.

Astonished at these signs of habitation in what was well understood to be a privileged wilderness, Yuentsoong kept his boat in mid-stream, and with his eyes vigilantly on the alert, slowly made headway against the current. A few strokes with his oars, however, traced another curve of the inlet, and brought into view a grove of ancient trees scattered over a gently ascending lawn, beyond which, hidden by the river till now by the projecting shoulder of a mound, lay a small pavilion with gilded pillars, glittering like fairy-work in the sun. The emperor fastened his boat to a tree leaning over the water, and with his short spear in his hand, bounded upon the shore, and took his way toward the shining structure, his heart beating with a feeling of

wonder and interest altogether new. On a nearer approach, the bases of the pillars seemed decayed by time, and the gilding weather-stained and tarnished, but the trellised porticoes on the southern aspect were laden with flowering shrubs, in vases of porcelain, and caged birds sang between the pointed arches, and there were manifest signs of luxurious taste, elegance, and care.

A moment, with an indefinable timidity, the emperor paused before stepping from the green sward upon the marble floor of the pavilion, and in that moment a curtain was withdrawn from the door, and a female, with step suddenly arrested by the sight of the stranger, stood motionless before him. Ravished with her extraordinary beauty, and awe-struck with the suddenness of the apparition and the novelty of the adventure, the emperor's tongue cleaved to his mouth, and ere he could summon resolution, even for a gesture of courtesy, the fair creature had fled within, and the curtain closed the entrance as before.

Wishing to recover his composure, so strangely troubled, and taking it for granted that some other inmate of the house would soon appear, Yuentsoong turned his steps aside to the grove, and with his head bowed, and his spear in the hollow of his arm, tried to recall more vividly the features of the vision he had seen. He had walked but a few paces, when there came toward him from the upper skirt of the grove, a man of unusual stature and erectness, with white hair, unbraided on his shoulders, and every sign of age except infirmity of step and mien. The emperor's habitual dignity had now rallied, and on his first salutation, the countenance of the old man softened, and he quickened his pace to meet and give him welcome.

"You are noble?" he said, with confident inquiry.

Yuentsoong colored slightly.

"I am," he replied, "Lew-melin, a prince of the empire."

"And by what accident here?"

Yuentsoong explained the clue of the peach-blossoms, and represented himself as exiled for a time to the deserted palace upon the lakes.

"I have a daughter," said the old man, abruptly, "who has never looked on human face, save mine."

"Pardon me!" replied his visitor; "I have thoughtlessly intruded on her sight, and a face more heavenly fair—"

The emperor hesitated, but the old man smiled encouragingly.

"It is time," he said, "that I should provide a younger defender for my bright Teh-leen, and Heaven has sent you in the season of peach-blossoms,

with provident kindness.[2] You have frankly revealed to me your name and rank. Before I offer you the hospitality of my roof, I must tell you mine. I am Chootseen, the outlaw, once of your own rank, and the general of the Celestial army."

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[2] The season of peach-blossoms was the only season of marriage in ancient China.

The emperor started, remembering that this celebrated rebel was the terror of his father's throne.

"You have heard my history," the old man continued. "I had been, before my rebellion, in charge of the imperial palace on the lake. Anticipating an evil day, I secretly prepared this retreat for my family; and when my soldiers deserted me at the battle of Ke-chow, and a price was set upon my head, hither I fled with my women and children; and the last alive is my beautiful Teh-leen. With this brief outline of my life, you are at liberty to leave me as you came, or to enter my house, on the condition that you become the protector of my child."

The emperor eagerly turned toward the pavilion, and with a step as light as his own, the erect and stately outlaw hastened to lift the curtain before him. Leaving his guest for a moment in the outer apartment, he entered to an inner chamber in search of his daughter, whom he brought, panting with fear, and blushing with surprise and delight, to her future lover and protector. A portion of an historical tale so delicate as the description of the heroine is not work for imitators, however, and we must copy strictly the portrait of the matchless Teh-leen, as drawn by Le-pih, the Anacreon of Chinese poetry, and the contemporary and favorite of Yuentsoong.

"Teh-leen was born while the morning star shone upon the bosom of her mother. Her eye was like the unblemished blue lily, and its light like the white gem unfractured. The plum-blossom is most fragrant when the cold has penetrated its stem, and the mother of Teh-leen had known sorrow. The head of her child drooped in thought, like a violet overladen with dew. Bewildering was Teh-leen. Her mouth's corners were dimpled, yet pensive. The arch of her brows was like the vein in the tulip's heart, and the lashes shaded the blushes on her cheek. With the delicacy of a pale rose, her complexion put to shame the floating light of day. Her waist, like a thread in fineness, seemed ready to break; yet was it straight and erect, and feared not the fanning breeze; and her shadowy grace was as difficult to delineate, as

the form of the white bird rising from the ground by moonlight. The natural gloss of her hair resembled the uncertain sheen of calm water, yet without the false aid of unguents. The native intelligence of her mind seemed to have gained strength by retirement, and he who beheld her, thought not of her as human. Of rare beauty, of rarer intellect was Teh-leen, and her heart responded to the poet's lute."

We have not space, nor could we, without copying directly from the admired Le-pih, venture to describe the bringing of Teh-leen to court, and her surprise at finding herself the favorite of the emperor. It is a romantic circumstance, besides, which has had its parallels in other countries. But the sad sequel to the loves of poor Teh-leen is but recorded in the cold page of history; and if the poet, who wound up the climax of her perfections, with her susceptibility to his lute, embalmed her sorrows in verse, he was probably too politic to bring it ever to light. Pass we to these neglected and unadorned passages of her history.

Yuentsoong's nature was passionately devoted and confiding; and, like two brothers with one favorite sister, lived together Teh-leen, Szema, and the emperor. The Tartar prince, if his heart knew a mistress before the arrival of Teh-leen at the palace, owned afterward no other than her; and fearless of check or suspicion from the noble confidence and generous friendship of Yuentsoong, he seemed to live but for her service, and to have neither energies nor ambition except for the winning of her smiles. Szema was of great personal beauty, frank when it did not serve him to be wily, bold in his pleasures, and of manners almost femininely soft and voluptuous. He was renowned as a soldier, and for Teh-leen, he became a poet and master of the lute; and, like all men formed for ensnaring the heart of women, he seemed to forget himself in the absorbing devotion of his idolatry. His friend, the emperor, was of another mould. Yuentsoong's heart had three chambers—love, friendship, and glory. Teh-leen was but a third in his existence, yet he loved her—the sequel will show how well! In person he was less beautiful than majestic, of large stature, and with a brow and lip naturally stern and lofty. He seldom smiled, even upon Teh-leen, whom he would watch for hours in pensive and absorbed delight; but his smile, when it did awake, broke over his sad countenance like morning. All men loved and honored Yuentsoong, and all men, except only the emperor, looked on Szema with antipathy. To such natures as the former, women give all honor and approbation; but for such as the latter, they reserve their weakness!

Wrapt up in his friend and mistress, and reserved in his intercourse with his counsellors, Yuentsoong knew not that, throughout the imperial city, Szema was called "*the kieu*," or robber-bird, and his fair Teh-leen openly

charged with dishonor. Going out alone to hunt as was his custom, and having left his signet with Szema, to pass and repass through the private apartments at his pleasure, his horse fell with him unaccountably in the open field. Somewhat superstitious, and remembering that good spirits sometimes "knit the grass," when other obstacles fail to bar our way into danger, the emperor drew rein and returned to his palace. It was an hour after noon, and having dismissed his attendants at the city gate, he entered by a postern to the imperial garden, and bethought himself of the concealed couch in a cool grot by a fountain (a favorite retreat, sacred to himself and Teh-leen), where he fancied it would be refreshing to sleep away the sultriness of the remaining hours till evening. Sitting down by the side of the murmuring fount, he bathed his feet, and left his slippers on the lip of the basin to be unencumbered in his repose within, and so with unechoing step entered the resounding grotto. Alas! there slumbered the faithless friend with the guilty Teh-leen upon his bosom!

Grief struck through the noble heart of the emperor like a sword in cold blood. With a word he could consign to torture and death the robber of his honor, but there was agony in his bosom deeper than revenge. He turned silently away, recalled his horse and huntsmen, and, outstripping all, plunged on through the forest till night gathered around him.

Yuentsoong had been absent many days from his capitol, and his subjects were murmuring their fears for his safety, when a messenger arrived to the counsellors, informing them of the appointment of the captive Tartar prince to the government of the province of Szechuen, the second honor of the Celestial empire. A private order accompanied the announcement, commanding the immediate departure of Szema for the scene of his new authority. Inexplicable as was this riddle to the multitude, there were those who read it truly by their knowledge of the magnanimous soul of the emperor; and among these was the crafty object of his generosity. Losing no time, he set forward with great pomp for Szechuen, and in their joy to see him no more at the palace, the slighted princes of the empire forgave his unmerited advancement. Yuentsoong returned to his capitol; but to the terror of his counsellors and people, his hair was blanched white as the head of an old man! He was pale as well, but he was cheerful and kind beyond his wont, and to Teh-leen untiring in pensive and humble attentions. He pleaded only impaired health and restless slumbers as an apology for nights of solitude. Once, Teh-leen penetrated to his lonely chamber, but by the dim night-lamp she saw that the scroll over her window[3] was changed, and instead of the stimulus to glory which formerly hung in golden letters before his eyes, there was a sentence written tremblingly in black:—

"The close wing of love covers the death-throb of honor."

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[3] The most common decorations of rooms, halls and temples, in China, are ornamental scrolls or labels of colored paper, or wood painted and gilded, and hung over doors or windows, and inscribed with a line or couplet conveying some allusion to the circumstances of the inhabitant, or some pious or philosophical axiom. For instance, a poetical one recorded by Dr. Morrison:—

"From the pine forest the azute dragon ascends to the milky way,"

typical of the prosperous man arising to wealth and honors.

Six months from this period the capital was thrown into a tumult with the intelligence that the province of Szechuen was in rebellion, and Szema at the head of a numerous army on his way to seize the throne of Yuentsoong. This last sting betrayed the serpent even to the forgiving emperor, and tearing the reptile at last from his heart, he entered with the spirit of other times into the warlike preparations. The imperial army was in a few days on its march, and at Keo-yang the opposing forces met and prepared for encounter.

With a dread of the popular feeling towards Teh-leen, Yuentsoong had commanded for her a close litter, and she was borne after the imperial standard in the centre of the army. On the eve before the battle, ere the watch-fires were lit, the emperor came to her tent, set apart from his own, and with the delicate care and kind gentleness from which he never varied, inquired how her wants were supplied, and bade her, thus early, farewell for the night; his own custom of passing among his soldiers on the evening previous to an engagement, promising to interfere with what was usually his last duty before retiring to his couch. Teh-leen on this occasion seemed moved by some irrepressible emotion, and as he rose to depart, she fell forward upon her face, and bathed his feet with her tears. Attributing it to one of those excesses of feeling to which all, but especially hearts ill at ease, are liable, the noble monarch gently raised her, and, with repeated efforts at reassurance, committed her to the hands of her women. His own heart beat far from tranquilly, for, in the excess of his pity for her grief he had unguardedly called her by one of the sweet names of their early days of love —strange word now upon his lip—and it brought back, spite of memory and truth, happiness that would not be forgotten!

It was past midnight, and the moon was riding high in heaven, when the emperor, returning between the lengthening watch-fires, sought the small lamp which, suspended like a star above his own tent, guided him back from the irregular mazes of the camp. Paled by the intense radiance of the moonlight, the small globe of alabaster at length became apparent to his weary eye, and with one glance at the peaceful beauty of the heavens, he parted the curtained door beneath it, and stood within. The Chinese historian asserts that a bird, from whose wing Teh-leen had once plucked an arrow, restoring it to liberty and life, and in grateful attachment to her destiny, removed the lamp from the imperial tent, and suspended it over hers. The emperor stood beside her couch. Startled at his inadvertent error, he turned to retire; but the lifted curtain let in a flood of moonlight upon the sleeping features of Teh-leen, and like dewdrops, the undried tears glistened in her silken lashes. A lamp burned faintly in the inner apartment of the tent, and her attendants slept soundly. His soft heart gave way. Taking up the lamp, he held it over his beautiful mistress, and once more gazed passionately and unrestrainedly on her unparalleled beauty. The past—the early past was alone before him. He forgave her—there, as she slept, unconscious of the throbbing of his injured, but noble heart, so close beside her—he forgave her in the long silent abysses of his soul! Unwilling to wake her from her tranquil slumber, but promising to himself, from that hour, such sweets of confiding love as had well nigh been lost to him for over, he imprinted one kiss upon the parted lips of Teh-leen, and sought his couch for slumber.

Ere daybreak the emperor was aroused by one of his attendants with news too important for delay. Szema, the rebel, had been arrested in the imperial camp, disguised, and on his way back to his own forces, and like wild-fire, the information had spread among the soldiery, who in a state of mutinous excitement, were with difficulty restrained from rushing upon the tent of Teh-leen. At the door of his tent, Yuentsoong found messengers from the alarmed princes and officers of the different commands, imploring immediate aid and the imperial presence to allay the excitement, and while the emperor prepared to mount his horse, the guard arrived with the Tartar prince, ignominiously tied, and bearing marks of rough usage from his indignant captors.

“Loose him!” cried the emperor, in a voice of thunder.

The cords were severed, and with a glance whose ferocity expressed no thanks, Szema reared himself up to his fullest height, and looked scornfully around him. Daylight had now broke, and as the group stood upon an eminence in sight of the whole army, shouts began to ascend, and the armed multitude, breaking through all restraint, rolled in toward the centre.

Attracted by the commotion, Yuentsoong turned to give some orders to those near him, when Szema suddenly sprung upon an officer of the guard, wrenched his drawn sword from his grasp, and in an instant was lost to sight in the tent of Teh-leen. A sharp scream, a second of thought, and forth again rushed the desperate murderer, with his sword flinging drops of blood, and ere a foot stirred in the paralyzed group, the avenging cimeter of Yuentsoong had cleft him to the chin.

A hush, as if the whole army was struck dumb by a bolt from heaven, followed this rapid tragedy. Dropping the polluted sword from his hand, the emperor, with uncertain step, and the pallor of death upon his countenance, entered the fatal tent.

He came no more forth that day. The army was marshalled by the princes, and the rebels were routed with great slaughter; but Yuentsoong never more wielded sword. “He pined to death,” says the historian, “with the wane of the same moon that shone upon the forgiveness of Teh-leen.”

THE BELLE OF THE BELFRY;

OR, THE DARING LOVER.

A GRISETTE is something else beside a "mean girl" or a "gray gown," the French dictionary to the contrary notwithstanding. Bless me! you should see the grisettes of Rochepot! And if you wished to take a lesson in political compacts, you should understand the grisette confederacy of Rochepot! They were working-girls, it is true—dressmakers, milliners, shoebinders, tailoresses, flowermakers, embroideresses—and they never expected to be anything more aristocratic. And in that content lay their power.

The grisettes of Rochepot were a good fourth of the female population. They had their jealousies, and little scandals, and heart-burnings, and plottings, and counterplottings (for they were women) among themselves. But they made common cause against the enemy. They would bear no disparagement. They knew exactly what was due to them, and what was due to their superiors, and they paid and gave credit in the coin of good-manners, as cannot be done in countries of "liberty and equality." Still there were little shades of difference in the attention shown them by their employers, and they worked twice as much in a day when sewing for Madame Durozel, who took her dinner with them, *sans façon* in the work-room, as for old Madame Chiquette, who dined all alone in her grand saloon, and left them to eat by themselves among their shreds and scissors. But these were not slights which they seriously resented. Woe only to the incautious dame who dared to scandalize one of their number, or dispute her dues, or encroach upon her privileges! They would make Rochepot as uncomfortable for her, *parbleu!* as a kettle to a slow-boiled lobster.

But the prettiest grisette of Rochepot was not often permitted to join her companions in their self-chaperoned excursions on the holydays. Old dame Pomponney was the sexton's widow, and she had the care of the great clock of St. Roch, and of one only daughter; and excellent care she took of both her charges. They lived all three in the belfry—dame, clock, and daughter—and it was a bright day for Thénais when she got out of hearing of that "tick, tick, tick," and of the thumping of her mother's cane on the long staircase, which always kept time with it.

Not that old Dame Pomponney had any objection to have her daughter convenably married. She had been deceived in her youth (or so it was whispered) by a lover above her condition, and she vowed by the cross on her cane, that her daughter should have no sweetheart above a journeyman mechanic. Now the romance of the grisettes (*parlons bas!*) was to have one charming little flirtation with a gentleman before they married the leather-apron—just to show that, had they by chance been born ladies, they could have played their part to the taste of their lords. But it was at this game that Dame Pomponney had burnt her fingers, and she had this one subject for the exercise of her powers of mortal aversion.

When I have added that, four miles from Rochepot, stood the Château de Brevanne, and that the old Count de Brevanne was a proud aristocrat of the *ancien regimé*, with one son, the young Count Felix, whom he had educated at Paris, I think I have prepared you tolerably for the little romance I have to tell you.

It was a fine Sunday morning that a mounted hussar appeared in the street of Rochepot. The grisettes were all abroad in their holyday *parure*, and the gay soldier soon made an acquaintance with one of them at the door of the inn, and informed her that he had been sent on to prepare the old barracks for his troop. The hussars were to be quartered a month at Rochepot. Ah! what a joyous bit of news! And six officers beside the colonel! And the trumpeters were miracles at playing quadrilles and waltzes! And not a plain man in the regiment—except always the speaker. And none, except the old colonel, had ever been in love in his life. But as this last fact required to be sworn to, of course he was ready to kiss the book—or, in the absence of the book, the next most sacred object of his adoration.

"*Finissez donc, Monsieur!*" exclaimed his pretty listener, and away she ran to spread the welcome intelligence with its delightful particulars.

The next day the troop rode into Rochepot, and formed in the great square in front of St. Roch; and by the time the trumpeters had played themselves red in the face, the hussars were all appropriated, to a man—for the grisettes knew enough of a marching regiment to lose no time. They all found leisure to pity poor Thénais, however, for there she stood in one of the high windows of the belfry, looking down on the gay crowd below, and they knew very well that old Dame Pomponney had declared all soldiers to be gay deceivers, and forbidden her daughter to stir into the street while they were quartered at Rochepot.

Of course the grisettes managed to agree as to each other's selection of a sweetheart from the troop, and of course each hussar thankfully accepted the pair of eyes that fell to him. For, aside from the limited duration of their stay,

soldiers are philosophers, and know that "life is short," and it is better "to take the goods the gods provide." But "after everybody was helped," as they say at a feast, there appeared another short jacket and foraging cap, very much to the relief of red-headed Susette, the shoebinder, who had been left out in the previous allotment. And Susette made the amiable accordingly, but to no purpose, for the lad seemed an idiot with but one idea—looking for ever at St. Roch's clock to know the time of day! The grisettes laughed and asked their sweethearts his name, but they significantly pointed to their foreheads and whispered something about poor Robertin's being a privileged follower of the regiment and a *protegé* of the colonel.

Well, the grisettes flirted, and the old clock at St. Roch ticked on, and Susette and Thénais, the plainest and the prettiest girl in the village, seemed the only two who were left out in the extra dispensation of lovers. And poor Robertin still persisted in occupying most of his leisure with watching the time of day.

It was on the Sunday morning after the arrival of the troop that old Dame Pomponney went up, as usual, to do her Sunday's duty in winding up the clock. She had previously locked the belfry door to be sure that no one entered below while she was above; but—the Virgin help us!—on the top stair, gazing into the machinery of the clock with absorbed attention, sat one of those devils of hussars! "Thief," "vagabond," and "housebreaker," were the most moderate epithets with which Dame Pomponney accompanied the enraged beating of her stick on the resounding platform. She was almost beside herself with rage. And Thénais had been up to dust the wheels of the clock! And how did she know that that *scélérat* of a trooper was not there all the time!

But the intruder, whose face had been concealed till now, turned suddenly round and began to gibber and grin like a possessed monkey. He pointed at the clock, imitated the "tick, tick, tick," laughed till the big bell gave out an echo like a groan, and then suddenly jumped over the old dame's stick and ran down stairs.

"*Eh, Sainte Vierge!*" exclaimed the old dame, "it's a poor idiot after all! And he has stolen up to see what made the clock tick! Ha! ha! ha! Well!—well! I cannot come up these weary stairs twice a day, and I must wind up the clock before I go down to let him out. 'Tick, tick, tick!'—poor lad! poor lad! They must have dressed him up to make fun of him—those vicious troopers! Well!—well!"

And with pity in her heart, Dame Pomponney hobbled down, stair after stair, to her chamber in the square turret of the belfry, and there she found the poor idiot on his knees before Thénais, and Thénais was just preparing to

put a skein of thread over his thumbs, for she thought she might make him useful and amuse him with the winding of it till her mother came down. But as the thread got vexatiously entangled, and the poor lad sat as patiently as a wooden reel, and it was time to go below to mass, the dame thought she might as well leave him there till she came back, and down she stumped, locking the door very safely behind her.

Poor Thénais was very lonely in the belfry, and Dame Pomponney, who had a tender heart where her duty was not involved, rather rejoiced when she returned, to find an unusual glow of delight on her daughter's cheek; and if Thénais could find so much pleasure in the society of a poor idiot lad, it was a sign, too, that her heart was not gone altogether after those abominable troopers. It was time to send the innocent youth about his business, however, so she gave him a holyday cake and led him down stairs and dismissed him with a pat on his back and a strict injunction never to venture again up to the "tick, tick, tick." But as she had had a lesson as to the accessibility of her bird's nest, she determined thenceforth to lock the door invariably and carry the key in her pocket.

While poor Robertin was occupied with his researches into the "tick, tick, tick," never absent a day from the neighborhood of the tower, the more fortunate hussars were planning to give the grisettes a *fête champétre*. One of the saints' days was coming round, and, the weather permitting, all the vehicles of the village were to be levied, and, with the troop-horses in harness, they were to drive to a small wooded valley in the neighborhood of the château de Brevanne, where seclusion and a mossy carpet of grass were combined in a little paradise for such enjoyment.

The morning of this merry day dawned, at last, and the grisettes and their admirers were stirring betimes, for they were to breakfast *sur l'herbe*, and they were not the people to turn breakfast into dinner. The sky was clear, and the dew was not very heavy on the grass, and merrily the vehicles rattled about the town, picking up their fair freights from its obscurest corners. But poor Thénais looked out, a sad prisoner, from her high window in the belfry.

It was a half hour after sunrise and Dame Pomponney was creeping up stairs after her matins, thanking Heaven that she had been firm in her refusals—at least twenty of the grisettes having gathered about her, and pleaded for a day's freedom for her imprisoned daughter. She rested on the last landing but one to take a little breath—but hark!—a man's voice talking in the belfry! She listened again, and quietly slipped her feet out of her high-heeled shoes. The voice was again audible—yet how could it be! She knew that no one could have passed up the stair, for the key had been kept in her

pocket more carefully than usual, and, save by the wings of one of her own pigeons, the belfry window was inaccessible, she was sure. Still the voice went on in a kind of pleading murmur, and the dame stole softly up in her stockings, and noiselessly opened the door. There stood Thénais at the window, but she was alone in the room. At the same instant the voice was heard again, and sure now that one of those desperate hussars had climbed the tower, and unable to control her rage at the audacity of the attempt, Dame Pomponney clutched her cane and rushed forward to aim a blow at the military cap now visible at the sill of the window. But at the same instant the head of the intruder was thrown back, and the gibbering and idiotic smile of poor Robertin checked her blow in its descent, and turned all her anger into pity. Poor, silly lad! he had contrived to draw up the garden ladder and place it upon the roof of the stone porch below, to climb and offer a flower to Thénais! Not unwilling to have her daughter's mind occupied with some other thought than the forbidden excursion, the dame offered her hand to Robertin and drew him gently in at the window. And as it was now market-time she bid Thénais be kind to the poor boy, and locking the door behind her, trudged contentedly off with her stick and basket.

I am sorry to be obliged to record an act of filial disobedience in the heroine of my story. An hour after, Thénais was welcomed with acclamations as she suddenly appeared with Robertin in the midst of the merry party of grisettes. With Robertin—not as he had hitherto been seen, his cap on the back of his head and his under lip hanging loose like an idiot's—but with Robertin, gallant, spirited, and gay, the handsomest of hussars, and the most joyous of companions. And Thénais, spite of her hasty toilet and the cloud of conscious disobedience which now and then shaded her sweet smile, was, by many degrees, the belle of the hour; and the palm of beauty, for once in the world at least, was yielded without envy. The grisettes dearly love a bit of romance, too, and the circumventing of old Dame Pomponney by his *ruse* of idiocy, and the safe extrication of the prettiest girl of the village from that gloomy old tower, was quite enough to make Robertin a hero, and his sweetheart Thénais more interesting than a persecuted princess.

And, seated on the ground while their glittering cavaliers served them with breakfast, the light-hearted grisettes of Rochepot were happy enough to be envied by their betters. But suddenly the sky darkened, and a slight gust murmuring among the trees, announced the coming up of a summer storm. *Sauve qui peut!* The soldiers were used to emergencies, and they had packed up and reloaded their cars and were under way for shelter almost as soon as

the grisettes, and away they all fled toward the nearest grange—one of the dependencies of the château de Brevanne.

But Robertin, now, had suddenly become the director and ruling spirit of the festivities. The soldiers treated him with instinctive deference, the old farmer of the grange hurried out with his keys and unlocked the great storehouse, and disposed of the horses under shelter; and by the time the big drops began to fall, the party were dancing gayly and securely on the dry and smooth thrashing-floor, and the merry harmony of the martial trumpets and horns rang out far and wide through the gathering tempest.

The rain began to come down very heavily, and the clatter of a horse's feet in a rapid gallop was heard in one of the pauses in the waltz. Some one seeking shelter, no doubt. On went the bewitching music again, and at this moment two or three couples ceased waltzing, and the floor was left to Robertin and Thénais, whose graceful motions drew all eyes upon them in admiration. Smiling in each other's faces, and wholly unconscious of any other presence than their own, they whirled blissfully around—but there was now another spectator. The horseman who had been heard to approach, had silently joined the party, and making a courteous gesture to signify that the dancing was not to be interrupted, he smiled back the courtesies of the pretty grisettes—for, aristocratic as he was, he was a polite man to the sex, was the Count de Brevanne.

"Felix!" he suddenly cried out, in a tone of surprise and anger.

The music stopped at that imperative call, and Robertin turned his eyes, astonished, in the direction from which it came.

The name was repeated from lip to lip among the grisettes, "Felix!" "Count Felix de Brevanne!"

But without deigning another word, the old man pointed with his riding-whip to the farm-house. The disguised count respectfully bowed his head, but held Thénais by the hand and drew her gently with him.

"Leave her! disobedient boy!" exclaimed the father.

But as Count Felix tightened his hold upon the small hand he held, and Thénais tried to shrink back from the advancing old man, old Dame Pomponney, streaming with rain, broke in unexpectedly upon the scene.

"Disgrace not your blood," said the Count de Brevanne at that moment.

The offending couple stood alone in the centre of the floor, and the dame comprehended that her daughter was disparaged.

"And who is disgraced by dancing with my daughter?" she screamed with furious gesticulation.

The old noble made no answer, but the grisettes, in an under tone, murmured the name of Count Felix!

“Is it he—the changeling! the son of a poor gardener, that is disgraced by the touch of my daughter?”

A dead silence followed this astounding exclamation. The old dame had forgotten herself in her rage, and she looked about with a terrified bewilderment—but the mischief was done. The old man stood aghast. Count Felix clung still closer to Thénais, but his face expressed the most eager inquisitiveness. The grisettes gathered around Dame Pomponney, and the old count, left standing and alone, suddenly drew his cloak about him and stepped forth into the rain; and in another moment his horse’s feet were heard clattering away in the direction of the château de Brevanne.

We have but to tell the sequel.

The incautious revelation of the old dame turned out to be true. The dying infant daughter of the Marchioness de Brevanne had been changed for the healthy son of the count’s gardener, to secure an heir to the name and estates of the nearly extinct family of Brevanne. Dame Pomponney had assisted in this secret, and but for her heart full of rage at the moment, to which the old count’s taunt was but the last drop, the secret would probably have never been revealed. Count Felix, who had played truant from his college at Paris, to come and hunt up some of his childish playfellows, in disguise, had remembered and disclosed himself to the little Thénais, who was not sorry to recognize him, while he played the idiot in the belfry. But of course there was now no obstacle to their union, and united they were. The old count pardoned him, and gave the new couple a portion of his estate, and they named their first child Robertin, as was natural enough.

THE FEMALE WARD.

Most men have two or more souls, and Jem Thalimer was a doublet, with sets of manners corresponding. Indeed one identity could never have served the pair of him! When sad—that is to say, when in disgrace or out of money—he had the air of a good man with a broken heart. When gay—flush in pocket and happy in his little ambitions—you would have thought him a dangerous companion for his grandmother. The last impression did him more injustice than the first, for he was really very amiably disposed when depressed, and not always wicked when gay—but he made friends in both characters. People seldom forgive us for compelling them to correct their first impressions of us, and as this was uniformly the case with Jem, whether he had begun as saint or sinner, he was commonly reckoned a deep-water fish; and where there were young ladies in the case, early warned off the premises. The remarkable exception to this rule, in the incident I am about to relate, arose, as may naturally be supposed, from his appearing, during a certain period, in one character only.

To begin my story fairly, I must go back for a moment to our junior Jem in college, showing, by a little passage in our adventures, how Thalimer and I became acquainted with the confiding gentleman to be referred to.

A college suspension, very agreeably timed, in June, left my friend Jem and myself masters of our travels for an uncertain period; and as our purse was always in common, like our shirts, love-letters, and disgraces, our several borrowings were thrust into a wallet which was sometimes in his pocket, sometimes in mine, as each took the turn to be paymaster. With the (intercepted) letters in our pockets, informing the governors of our degraded position, we travelled very prosperously on—bound to Niagara, but very ready to fall into any obliquity by the way. We arrived at Albany, Thalimer chancing to be purser, and as this function tacitly conferred on the holder all other responsibilities, I made myself comfortable at the hotel for the second day and the third—up to the seventh—rather wondering at Jem's depressed spirits and the sudden falling off of his enthusiasm for Niagara, but content to stay, if he liked, and amusing myself in the side-hill city passably well. It was during my rambles without him in this week that he made the acquaintance of a bilious-looking person, lodging at the same hotel—a

Louisianian on a tour of health. This gentleman, whom he introduced to me by the name of Dauchy, seemed to have formed a sudden attachment to my friend, and as Jem had a "secret sorrow" unusual to him, and the other an unusual secretion of bile, there was of course between them that "secret sympathy" which is the basis of many tender friendships. I rather liked Mr. Dauchy. He seemed one of those chivalric, polysyllabic southerners, incapable of a short word or a mean action, and, interested that Jem should retain his friendship, I was not sorry to find our departure follow close on the recovery of his spirits.

We went on toward Niagara, and in the irresistible confidence of canal travelling I made out the secret of my *fidus achates*. He had attempted to alleviate the hardship of a deck passage for a bright-eyed girl on board the steamer, and, on going below to his berth, left her his greatcoat for a pillow. The stuffed wallet, which somewhat distended the breast pocket, was probably in the way of her downy cheek, and Jem supposed that she simply forgot to return the "removed deposite"—but he did not miss his money till twelve hours after, and then between lack of means to pursue her, and shame at the sentiment he had wasted, kept the disaster to himself, and passed a melancholy week in devising means for replenishing. Through this *penseroso* vein, however, lay his way out of the difficulty, for he thus touched the soul and funds of Mr. Dauchy. The correspondence (commenced by the repayment of the loan) was kept up stragglingly for several years, bolstered somewhat by barrels of marmalade, boxes of sugar, hommony, &c., till finally it ended in the unlooked-for consignment which forms the subject of my story.

Jem and myself had been a year out of college, and were passing through that "tight place" in life, commonly understood in New England as "the going in at the little end of the horn." Expected by our parents to take to money-making like ducks to swimming, deprived at once of college allowance, called on to be men because our education was paid for, and frowned upon at every manifestation of a lingering taste for pleasure—it was not surprising that we sometimes gave tokens of feeling "crowded," and obtained somewhat the reputation of "bad subjects"—(using this expressive phrase quite literally). Jem's share of this odor of wickedness was much the greater, his unlucky deviltry of countenance doing him its usual disservice; but like the gentleman to whom he was attributed as a favorite *protegé*, he was "not so black as he was painted."

We had been so fortunate as to find one believer in the future culmination of our clouded stars—Gallagher, "mine host"—and for value *to be* received when our brains should fructify, his white soup and "red-string

Madeira," his game, turtle, and all the forthcomings of the best *restaurant* of our epoch, were served lovingly and charged moderately. Peace be with the ashes of William Gallagher! "The brains *have* fructified, and "the value" *has been* received—but his name and memory are not "filed away with the receipt;" and though years have gone over his grave, his modest welcome, and generous dispensation of entertainment and service, are, by one at least of those who enjoyed them, gratefully and freshly remembered!

We were to dine as usual at Gallagher's at six—one May day which I well remember. I was just addressing myself to my day's work, when Jem broke into my room with a letter in his hand, and an expression on his face of mingled embarrassment and fear.

"What the deuce to do with her?" said he, handing me the letter.

"A new scrape, Jem?" I asked, as I looked for an instant at the Dauchy coat-of-arms on a seal as big as a dollar.

"Scrape?—yes, it *is* a scrape!—for I shall never get out of it reputably. What a dunce old Dauchy must be to send me a girl to educate! *I* a young lady's guardian! Why, I shall be the laugh of the town! What say? Isn't it a good one?"

I had been carefully perusing the letter while Thalimer walked soliloquizing about the room. It was from his old friend of marmalades and sugars, and in the most confiding and grave terms, as if Jem and he had been a couple of contemporaneous old bachelors, it consigned to his guardianship and friendly counsel, Miss Adelmine Lasacque, the only daughter of a neighboring planter! Mr. Lasacque having no friends at the north, had applied to Mr. Dauchy for his guidance in the selection of a proper person to superintend her education, and as Thalimer was the only correspondent with whom Mr. Dauchy had relations of friendship, and was, moreover, "fitted admirably for the trust by his impressive and dignified address," (?) he had "taken the liberty," &c., &c.

"Have you seen her?" I asked, after a long laugh, in which Jem joined but partially.

"No, indeed! She arrived last night in the New Orleans packet, and the captain brought me this letter at daylight, with the young lady's compliments. The old sea-dog looked a little astounded when I announced myself. Well he might, faith! I don't look like a young lady's guardian, do I?"

"Well—you are to go on board and fetch her—is that it?"

"Fetch her! Where shall I fetch her? Who is to take a young lady of my fetching? I can't find a female academy that I can approve——"

I burst into a roar of laughter, for Jem was in earnest with his scruples, and looked the picture of unhappiness.

"I say I can't find one in a minute—don't laugh, you blackguard;—and where to lodge her meantime? What should I say to the hotel-keepers? They all know *me*? It looks devilish odd, let me tell you, to bring a young girl, without matron or other acquaintance than myself, and lodge her at a public house."

"Your mother must take your charge off your hands."

"Of course, that was the first thing I thought of. You know my mother! She don't half believe the story, in the first place. *If there is* such a man as Mr. Dauchy, she says, and *if this is* a 'Miss Lasacque,' all the way from Louisiana, there is but one thing to do—send her back in the packet she came in! She'll have nothing to do with it! There's more in it than I am willing to explain. I never mentioned this Mr. Dauchy before. Mischief will come of it! Abduction's a dreadful thing! If I will make myself notorious, I need not think to involve my mother and sisters! That's the way she talks about it."

"But couldn't we mollify your mother?—for, after all, her countenance in the matter will be expected."

"Not a chance of it!"

"The money part of it is all right?"

"Turn the letter over. Credit for a large amount on the Robinsons, payable to my order only!"

"Faith! its a very hard case if a nice girl with plenty of money can't be permitted to land in Boston! You didn't ask the captain if she was pretty?"

"No, indeed! But pretty or plain, I must get her ashore and be civil to her. I must ask her to dine! I must do something besides hand her over to a boarding-school! Will you come down to the ship with me?"

My curiosity was quite aroused, and I dressed immediately. On our way down we stopped at Gallagher's, to request a little embellishment to our ordinary dinner. It was quite clear, for a variety of reasons, that she must dine with her guardian there, or nowhere. Gallagher looked surprised, to say the least, at our proposition to bring a young lady to dine with us, but he made no comment beyond a respectful remark that "No. 2 was very private!"

We had gone but a few steps from Devonshire street when Jem stopped in the middle of the sidewalk.

“We have not decided yet what we are to do with Miss Lasacque all day, nor where we shall send her baggage, nor where she is to lodge to-night. For Heaven’s sake, suggest something!” added Jem, quite out of temper.

“Why, as you say, it would be heavy work to walk her about the streets from now till dinner-time—eight hours or more! Gallagher’s is only an eating-house, unluckily, and you are so well known at all the hotels, that, to take her to one of them without a chaperon, would, to say the least, give occasion for remark. But here, around the corner, is one of the best boarding-houses in town, kept by the two old Misses Smith. You might offer to put her under their protection. Let’s try.”

The Misses Smith were a couple of reduced gentlewomen, who charged a very good price for board and lodging, and piqued themselves on entertaining only very good company. Begging Jem to assume the confident tone which the virtuous character of his errand required, I rang at the door, and in answer to our inquiry for the ladies of the house, we were shown into the basement parlor, where the eldest Miss Smith sat with her spectacles on, adding new vinegar to some pots of pickles. Our business was very briefly stated. Miss Smith had plenty of spare room. Would we wait a moment till she tied on the covers to her pickle-jars?

The cordiality of the venerable demoiselle evidently put Thalimer in spirits. He gave me a glance which said very plainly, “You see we needn’t have troubled our heads about this!”—but the sequel was to come.

Miss Smith led the way to the second story, where were two very comfortable unoccupied bed-rooms.

“A single lady?” she asked.

“Yes,” said Jem, “a Miss Lasacque, of Louisiana.”

“Young, did you say?”

“Seventeen, or thereabout, I fancy.” (This was a guess, but Jem chose to appear to know all about her.)

“And—ehem!—and—quite alone?”

“Quite alone—she is come here to go to school.”

“Oh, to go to school! Pray—will she pass her vacations with your mother?”

“No!” said Jem, coughing, and looking rather embarrassed.

“Indeed! She is with Mrs. Thalimer at present, I presume.”

“No—she is still on shipboard! Why, my dear madam, she only arrived from New Orleans this morning.”

"And your mother has not had time to see her! I understand. Mrs. Thalimer will accompany her here, of course."

Jem began to see the end of the old maid's catechism, and thought it best to volunteer the remainder of the information.

"My mother is not acquainted with this young lady's friends," he said; "and, in fact, she comes introduced only to myself."

"She has a guardian, surely?" said Miss Smith, drawing back into her Elizabethan ruff with more dignity than she had hitherto worn.

"I am her guardian!" replied Jem, looking as red and guilty as if he had really abducted the young lady, and was ashamed of his errand.

The spinster bit her lips and looked out of the window.

"Will you walk down stairs for a moment, gentlemen," she resumed, "and let me speak to my sister. I should have told you that the rooms *might* possibly be engaged. I am not quite sure—indeed—ehem—pray walk down and be seated a moment!"

Very much to the vexation of my discomfited friend, I burst into a laugh as we closed the door of the basement parlor behind us.

"You don't realize my confoundedly awkward position," said he. "I am responsible for every step I take, to the girl's father in the first place, and then to my friend Dauchy, one of the most chivalric old cocks in the world, who, at the same time, could never understand why there was any difficulty in the matter! And it *does* seem strange, that in a city with eighty thousand inhabitants it should be next to impossible to find lodging for a virtuous lady, a stranger!"

I was contriving how to tell Thalimer that "there was no objection to the camel but for the dead cat hung upon its neck," when a maid-servant opened the door with a message—"Miss Smith's compliments, and she was very sorry she had no room to spare!"

"Pleasant!" said Jem, "very pleasant! I suppose every other keeper of a respectable house will be equally sorry. Meantime, it's getting on toward noon, and that poor girl is moping on shipboard, wondering whether she is ever to be taken ashore! Do you think she might sleep at Gallagher's?"

"Certainly not! He has, probably, no accommodations for a lady, and to lodge in a *restaurant*, after dining with you there, would be an indiscreet first step, in a strange city, to say the least. But let us make our visit to your fair ward, my dear Jem! Perhaps she has a face innocent enough to tell its own story—like the lady who walked through Erin 'with the snow-white wand.' "

The vessel had lain in the stream all night, and was just hauling up to the wharf with the moving tide. A crowd of spectators stood at the end of her mooring cable, and, as she warped in, universal attention seemed to be given to a single object. Upon a heap of cotton-bales, the highest point of the confused lumber of the deck, sat a lady under a sky-blue parasol. Her gown was of pink silk; and by the volume of this showy material which was presented to the eye, the wearer, when standing, promised to turn out of rather conspicuous stature. White gloves, a pair of superb amethyst bracelets, a string of gold beads on her neck, and shoulders quite naked enough for a ball, were all the disclosures made for a while by the envious parasol, if we except a little object in blue, which seemed the extremity of something she was sitting on, held in her left hand—and which turned out to be her right foot in a blue satin slipper!

I turned to Thalimer. He was literally pale with consternation.

"Hadn't you better send for a carriage to take your ward away?" I suggested.

"You don't believe that to be Miss Lasacque, surely!" exclaimed Jem, turning upon me with an imploring look.

"Such is my foreboding," I replied; "but wait a moment. Her face may be pretty, and you, of course, in your guardian capacity may suggest a simplification of her toilet. Consider!—the poor girl was never before off the plantation—at least, so says old Dauchy's letter."

The sailors now began to pull upon the stern-line, and, as the ship came round, the face of the unconscious object of curiosity stole into view. Most of the spectators, after a single glance, turned their attention elsewhere with a smile, and Jem, putting his hands into his two coat pockets behind him, walked off towards the end of the pier, whistling to himself very energetically. She was an exaggeration of the peculiar physiognomy of the South—lean rather than slight, sallow rather than pale. Yet I thought her eyes fine.

Thalimer joined me as the ship touched the dock, and we stepped on board together. The cabin-boy confirmed our expectations as to the lady's identity, and putting on the very insinuating manner which was part of his objectionable exterior, Jem advanced and begged to know if he had the honor of addressing Miss Lasacque.

Without loosing her hold upon her right foot, the lady nodded.

"Then, madam!" said Jem, "permit me to introduce to you your guardian, Mr. Thalimer!"

"What, that old gentlemen coming this way?" asked Miss Lasacque, fixing her eyes on a custom-house officer who was walking the deck.

Jem handed the lady his card.

"That is my name," said he, "and I should be happy to know how I can begin the duties of my office!"

"Dear me!" said the astonished damsel, dropping her foot to take his hand, "isn't there an older Mr. James Thalimer? Mr. Dauchy said it was a gentleman near his own age!"

"I grow older, as you know me longer!" Jem replied, apologetically; but his ward was too well satisfied with his appearance, to need even this remarkable fact to console her. She came down with a slide from her cotton-bag elevation, called to the cook to bring the bandbox with the bonnet in it, and meantime gave us a brief history of the inconveniences she had suffered in consequence of the loss of her slave, Dinah, who had died of seasickness three days out. This, to me, was bad news, for I had trusted to a "lady's maid" for the preservation of appearances, and the scandal threatening Jem's guardianship looked, in consequence, very imminent.

"I am dying to get my feet on land again!" said Miss Lasacque, putting her arm into her guardian's, and turning toward the gangway—her bonnet not tied, nor her neck covered, and thin blue satin slippers, though her feet *were* small, showing forth in contrast with her pink silk gown, with frightful conspicuousness! Jem resisted the shoreward pull, and stood motionless and aghast.

"Your baggage," he stammered at last.

"Here, cook!" cried the lady, "tell the captain, when he comes aboard, to send my trunks to Mr. Thalimer's! They are down in the hold, and he told me he couldn't get at 'em till to-morrow," she added, by way of explanation to Thalimer.

I felt constrained to come to the rescue.

"Pardon me, madam!" said I, "there is a little peculiarity in our climate, of which you probably are not advised. An east wind commonly sets in about noon, which makes a shawl very necessary. In consequence, too, of the bronchitis which this sudden change is apt to give people of tender constitutions, the ladies of Boston are obliged to sacrifice what is becoming, and wear their dresses very high in the throat."

"La!" said the astonished damsel, putting her hand upon her bare neck, "is it sore throat that you mean? I'm very subject to it, indeed! Cook! bring me that fur-tippet out of the cabin! I'm so sorry my dresses are all made so low, and I haven't a shawl unpacked either!—dear! dear!"

Jem and I exchanged a look of hopeless resignation, as the cook appeared with a chinchilli tippet. A bold man might have hesitated to share the conspicuousness of such a figure in a noon promenade, but we each gave her an arm when she had tied the soiled riband around her throat, and silently set forward.

It was a bright and very warm day, and there seemed a conspiracy among our acquaintances to cross our path. Once in the street, it was not remarkable that they looked at us, for the towering height at which the lady carried her very showy bonnet, the flashy material of her dress, the jewels and the chinchilli tippet, formed an *ensemble* which caught the eye like a rainbow; and truly people did gaze, and the boys, spite of the unconscious look which we attempted, did give rather disagreeable evidence of being amused. I had various misgivings, myself, as to the necessity for my own share in the performance, and, at every corner, felt sorely tempted to bid guardian and ward good morning; but friendship and pity prevailed. By streets and lanes not calculated to give Miss Lasacque a very favorable first impression of Boston, we reached Washington street, and made an intrepid dash across it to the Marlborough hotel.

Of this public house, Thalimer had asked my opinion during our walk, by way of introducing an apology to Miss Lasacque for not taking her to his own home. She had made it quite clear that she expected this, and Jem had nothing for it but to draw such a picture of the decrepitude of Mr. Thalimer, senior, and the bed-ridden condition of his mother (as stout a couple as ever plodded to church!) as would satisfy the lady for his short-comings in hospitality. This had passed off very smoothly, and Miss Lasacque entered the Marlboro' quite prepared to lodge there, but very little aware (poor girl!) of the objections to receiving her as a lodger.

Mr. ——, the proprietor, had stood in the archway as we entered. Seeing no baggage in the lady's train, however, he had not followed us in, supposing, probably, that we were callers on some of his guests. Jem left us in the drawing-room, and went upon his errand to the proprietor, but after half an hour's absence, came back, looking very angry, and informed us that no rooms were to be had! Instead of taking the rooms without explanation, he had been unwise enough to "make a clean breast" to Mr. ——, and the story of the lady's being his "ward," and come from Louisiana to go to school, rather staggered that discreet person's credulity.

Jem beckoned me out, and we held a little council of war in the entry. Alas! I had nothing to suggest. I knew the puritan metropolis very well—I knew its *phobia* was "the *appearance* of evil." In Jem's care-for-nothing face lay the leprosy which closed all doors against us. Even if we had

succeeded, by a *coup de main*, in lodging Miss Lasacque at the Marlboro', her guardian's daily visits would have procured for her, in the first week, some intimation that she could no longer be accommodated.

"We had best go and dine upon it," said I; "worst come to the worst, we can find some sort of dormitory for her at Gallagher's, and to-morrow she must be put to school, out of the reach of your 'pleasant, but wrong society.' "

"I hope to Heaven she'll 'stay put,' " said Jem, with a long sigh.

We got Miss Lasacque again under way, and avoiding the now crowded *pavé* of Washington street, made a short cut by Theatre Alley to Devonshire street and Gallagher's. Safely landed in "No. 2," we drew a long breath of relief. Jem rang the bell.

"Dinner, waiter, as soon as possible."

"The same that was ordered at six, sir?"

"Yes, only more champagne, and bring it immediately. Excuse me, Miss Lasacque," added Jem, with a grave bow, "but the non-appearance of that east wind my friend spoke of, has given me an unnatural thirst. Will you join me in some champagne after your hot walk?"

"No, thank you," said the lady, untying her tippet, "but, if you please, I will go to my room before dinner!"

Here was trouble again! It had never occurred to either of us, that ladies must go to their rooms before bed-time.

"Stop!" cried Jem, as she laid her hand on the bell to ring for the chamber-maid, "excuse me—I must first speak to the landlord—the room—the room is not ready, probably!"

He seized his hat, and made his exit, probably wishing all confiding friends, with their neighbor's daughters, in a better world! He had to do with a man of sense, however. Gallagher had but one bedroom in the house, which was not a servant's room, and that was his own. In ten minutes it was ready, and at the lady's service. A black scullion was promoted for the nonce, to the post of chamber-maid, and, fortunately, the plantation-bred girl had not been long enough from home to be particular. She came to dinner as radiant as a summer-squash.

With the door shut, and the soup before us, Thalimer's spirits and mine flung off their burthens together. Jem was the pleasantest table-companion in the world, and he chatted and made the amiable to his ward, as if he owed her some amends for the awkward position of which she was so blessedly unconscious. Your "dangerous man" (such as he was voted), inspires, of course, no distrust in those to whom he chooses to be agreeable. Miss

Lasacque grew, every minute, more delighted with him. She, too, improved on acquaintance. Come to look at her closely, Nature meant her for a fine showy creature, and she was "out of condition," as the jockeys say—that was all! Her features were good, though gamboged by a southern climate, and the fever-and-ague had flattened what should be round and ripe lips, and reduced to the mere frame, what should be the bust and neck of a Die Vernon. I am not sure I saw all this at the time. Her subsequent chrysalis and emergence into a beautiful woman naturally color my description now. But I did see, then, that her eyes were large and lustrous, and that naturally she had high spirit, good abilities, and was a thorough woman in sentiment, though deplorably neglected—for, at the age of twenty she could hardly read and write! It was not surprising that she was pleased with *us*! She was the only lady present, and we were the first coxcombs she had ever seen, and the day was summery, and the dinner in Gallagher's best style. We treated her like a princess; and the more agreeable man of the two being her guardian, and responsible for the propriety of the whole affair, there was no chance for a failure. We lingered over our coffee; and we lingered over our *chassecafé*; and we lingered over our tea; and, when the old South struck twelve, we were still at the table in "No. 2," quite too much delighted with each other to have thought of separating. It was the venerated guardian who made the first move, and, after ringing up the waiter to discover that the scullion had, six hours before, made her nightly disappearance, the lady was respectfully dismissed with only a candle for her chamber-maid, and Mr. Gallagher's room for her destination, wherever that might be!

We dined together every successive day for a week, and during this time the plot rapidly thickened. Thalimer, of course, vexed soul and body, to obtain for Miss Lasacque a less objectionable lodging—urged scarcely more by a sense of propriety than by a feeling for her good-natured host, who, meantime, slept on a sofa. But the unlucky first step of dining and lodging a young lady at a *restaurant*, inevitable as it was, gave a fatal assurance to the predisposed scandal of the affair, and every day's events heightened its glaring complexion. Miss Lasacque had ideas of her own, and very independent ones, as to the amusement of her leisure hours. She had never been before where there were shops, and she spent her first two or three mornings in perambulating Washington street, dressed in a style perfectly amazing to beholders, and purchasing every description of gay trumpery—the parcels, of course, sent to Gallagher's, and the bills to James Thalimer, Esq.! To keep her out of the street, Jem took her, on the third day, to the riding school, leaving her (safely enough, he thought), in charge of the authoritative Mr. Roulstone, while he besieged some school-mistress or

other to undertake her ciphering and geography. She was all but born on horseback, however, and soon tired of riding round the ring. The street-door was set open for a moment, leaving exposed a tempting tangent to the circle, and out flew Miss Lasacque, saving her "Leghorn flat," by a bend to the saddle-bow, that would have done credit to a dragoon, and no more was seen, for hours, of the "bonnie black mare" and her rider.

The deepening of Miss Lasacque's passion for Jem, would not interest the reader. She loved like other women, timidly and pensively. Young as the passion was, however, it came too late to affect her manners before public opinion had pronounced on them. There was neither boarding-house nor "private female academy" within ten miles, into which "Mr. Thalimer's young lady" would have been permitted to set her foot—small as was the foot, and innocent as was the pulse to which it stepped.

Uncomfortable as was this state of suspense, and anxious as we were to fall into the track marked "virtuous," if virtue would only permit; public opinion seemed to think we were enjoying ourselves quite too prosperously. On the morning of the seventh day of our guardianship, I had two calls after breakfast, one from poor Gallagher, who reported that he had been threatened with a prosecution of his establishment as a nuisance, and another from poorer Jem, whose father had threatened to take the lady out of his hands, and lodge her in the insane asylum!

"Not that I don't wish she was there," added Jem, "for it is a very fine place, with a nice garden, and luxuries enough for those who can pay for them, and faith, I believe it's the only lodging-house I've not applied to!"

I must shorten my story. Jem anticipated his father, by riding over, and showing his papers constituting him the guardian of Miss Lasacque, in which capacity he was, of course, authorized to put his ward under the charge of keepers. Everybody who knows Massachusetts, knows that its insane asylums are sometimes brought to bear on irregular morals, as well as on diseased intellects, and as the presiding officer of the institution was quite well assured that Miss Lasacque was well qualified to become a patient, Jem had no course left but to profit by the error. The poor girl was invited, that afternoon, to take a drive in the country, and we came back and dined without her, in abominable spirits, I must say.

Provided with the best instruction, the best of care taken of her health, and the most exemplary of matrons interesting herself in her patient's improvements, Miss Lasacque rapidly improved—more rapidly, no doubt, than she ever could have done by control less rigid and inevitable. Her father, by the advice of the matron, was not informed of her location for a year, and at the end of that time he came on, accompanied by his friend, Mr.

Dauchy. He found his daughter sufficiently improved in health, manners, and beauty, to be quite satisfied with Jem's discharge of his trust, and we all dined very pleasantly in "No. 2;" Miss Lasacque declining, with a blush, my invitation to her to make one of the party.

THE PHARISEE AND THE BARBER.

SHEAFE LANE, in Boston, is an almost unmentionable and plebeian thoroughfare, between two very mentionable and patrician streets. It is mainly used by bakers, butchers, urchins going to school, and clerks carrying home parcels—in short, by those who care less for the beauty of the road than for economy of time and shoe-leather. If you please, it is a shabby hole. Children are born there, however, and people die and marry there, and are happy and sad there, and the great events of life, more important than our liking or disliking of Sheafe lane, take place in it continually. It used not to be a very savory place. Yet it has an indirect share of such glory as attaches to the birth-places of men above the common. The (present) great light of the Unitarian church was born at one end of Sheafe lane, and one of the most accomplished merchant-gentlemen in the gay world of New York was born at the other. And in the old Hay-market (a kind of *cul-de-sac*, buried in the side of Sheafe lane), stood the dusty lists of chivalric old Roulstone, a gallant horseman, who in other days would have been a knight of noble devoir, though in the degeneracy of a Yankee lustrum, he devoted his soldierly abilities to the teaching of young ladies how to ride.

Are you in Sheafe lane? (as the magnetizers inquire.) Please to step back twenty-odd years, and take the hand of a lad with a rosy face (ourself—for we lived in Sheafe lane twenty-odd years ago), and come to a small house, dingy yellow, with a white gate. The yard is below the level of the street. Mind the step.

The family are at breakfast in the small parlor fronting on the street. But come up this dark staircase to the bedroom over the parlor—a very neat room, plainly furnished; and the windows are curtained, and there is one large easy chair, and a stand with a Bible open upon it. In the bed lies an old man of seventy, deaf, nearly blind, and bed-ridden.

We have now shown you what comes out of the shadows to us, when we remember the circumstances we are about to body forth in a sketch, for it can scarcely be called a story.

It wanted an hour to noon. The Boylston clock struck eleven, and close on the heel of the last stroke followed the tap of the barber's knuckle on the door of the yellow house in Sheafe lane. Before answering to the rap, the

maid-of-all-work filled a tin can from the simmering kettle, and surveyed herself in a three-cornered bit of looking-glass, fastened on a pane of the kitchen window; then, with a very soft and sweet "good morning," to Rosier, the barber, she led the way to the old man's room.

"He looks worse to-day," said the barber, as the skinny hand of the old man crept up tremblingly to his face, conscious of the daily office about to be performed for him.

"They think so below stairs," said Harriet, "and one of the church is coming to pray with him to-night. Shall I raise him up now?"

The barber nodded, and the girl seated herself near the pillow, and lifting the old man, drew him upon her breast, and as the operation went rather lingeringly on, the two chatted together very earnestly.

Rosier was a youth of about twenty-one, talkative and caressing, as all barbers are; and what with his curly hair and ready smile, and the smell of soap that seemed to be one of his natural properties, he was a man to be thought of over a kitchen fire. Besides, he was thriving in his trade, and not a bad match. All of which was duly considered by the family with which Harriet lived, for they loved the poor girl.

Poor girl, I say. But she was not poor, at least if it be true that as a woman thinketh so is she. Most people would have described her as a romantic girl. And so she was, but without deserving a breath of the ridicule commonly attached to the word. She was uneducated, too, if any child in New England can be called uneducated. Beyond school-books and the Bible, she had read nothing but the Scottish Chiefs, and this novel was to her what the works of God are to others. It could never become familiar. It must be the gate of dream-land; what the moon is to a poet, what a grove is to a man of revery, what sunshine is to all the world. And she mentioned it as seldom as people praise sunshine, and lived in it as unconsciously.

Harriet had never before been out to service. She was a farmer's daughter, new from the country. If she was not ignorant of the degradation of her condition in life, she forgot it habitually. A cheerful and thoughtful smile was perpetually on her lips, and the hardships of her daily routine were encountered as things of course, as clouds in the sky, as pebbles in the inevitable path. Her attention seemed to belong to her body, but her consciousness only to her imagination. In her voice and eyes there was no touch or taint of her laborious servitude, and if she had suddenly been "made a lady," there would have been nothing but her hard hands to redeem from her low condition. Then, hard-working creature as she was, she was touchingly beautiful. A coarse eye would have passed her without notice,

perhaps, but a painter would not. She was of a fragile shape, and had a slight stoop, but her head was small and exquisitely moulded, and her slender neck, round, graceful, and polished, was set upon her shoulders with the fluent grace of a bird's. Her hair was profuse, and of a tinge almost yellow in the sun, but her eyes were of a blue, deep almost to blackness, and her heavy eyelashes darkened them still more deeply. She had the least possible color in her cheeks. Her features were soft and unmarked, and expressed delicacy and repose, though her nostrils were capable of dilating with an energy of expression that seemed wholly foreign to her character.

Rosier had first seen Harriet when called in to the old man, six months before, and they were now supposed by the family to be engaged lovers, waiting only for a little more sunshine on the barber's fortune. Meantime, they saw each other at least half an hour every morning, and commonly passed their evenings together, and the girl seemed very tranquilly happy in her prospect of marriage.

At four o'clock on the afternoon of the day before mentioned, Mr. Flint was to make a spiritual visit to the old man. Let us first introduce him to the reader.

Mr. Asa Flint was a bachelor of about forty-five, and an "active member" of a church famed for its zeal. He was a tall man, with a little bend in his back, and commonly walked with his eyes upon the ground, like one intent on meditation. His complexion was sallow, and his eyes dark and deeply set; but by dint of good teeth, and a little "wintry redness in his cheek," he was good-looking enough for all his ends. He dressed in black, as all religious men must (in Boston), and wore shoes with black stockings the year round. In his worldly condition, Mr. Flint had always been prospered. He spent five hundred dollars a year in his personal expenses, and made five thousand in his business, and subscribed, say two hundred dollars a year to such societies as printed the name of the donors. Mr. Flint had no worldly acquaintances. He lived in a pious boarding-house, and sold all his goods to the members of the country churches in communion with his own. He "loved the brethren," for he wished to converse with no one who did not see heaven and the church at his back—himself in the foreground, and the other two accessories in the perspective. Piety apart, he had found out at twenty-five, that, as a sinner, he would pass through the world simply Asa Flint—as a saint, he would be Asa Flint *plus* eternity, and the respect of a large congregation. He was a shrewd man, and chose the better part. Also, he remembered, sin is more expensive than sanctity.

At four o'clock Mr. Flint knocked at the door. At the same hour there was a maternal prayer-meeting at the vestry, and of course it was to be

numbered among his petty trials that he must find the mistress of the house absent from home. He walked up stairs, and after a look into the room of the sick man, dispatched the lad who had opened the door for him, to request the "help" of the family to be present at the devotions.

Harriet had a rather pleasing recollection of Mr. Flint. He had offered her his arm, a week before, in coming out from a conference meeting, and had "presumed that she was a young lady on a visit" to the mistress! She arranged her 'kerchief and took the kettle off the fire.

Mr. Flint was standing by the bedside with folded hands. The old man lay looking at him with a kind of uneasy terror in his face, which changed, as Harriet entered, to a smile of relief. She retired modestly to the foot of the bed, and, hidden by the curtain, open only at the side, she waited the commencement of the prayer.

"Kneel there, little boy!" said Mr. Flint, pointing to a chair on the other side of the light-stand, "and you, my dear, kneel here by me! Let us pray!"

Harriet had dropped upon her knees near the corner of the bed, and Mr. Flint dropped upon his, on the other side of the post, so that after raising his hands in the first adjuration, they descended gradually, and quite naturally, upon the folded hands of the neighbor—and there they remained. She dared not withdraw them, but as his body rocked to and fro in his devout exercise, she drew back her head to avoid coming into further contact, and escaped with only his breath upon her temples.

It was a very eloquent player. Mr. Flint's voice, in a worldly man, would have been called insinuating, but its kind of covert sweetness, low and soft, seemed, in a prayer, only the subdued monotony of reverence and devotion. But it won upon the ear all the same. He began, with a repetition of all the most sublime ascriptions of the psalmist, filling the room, it appeared to Harriet, with a superhuman presence. She trembled to be so near him with his words of awe. Gradually he took up the more affecting and tender passages of scripture, and drew the tears into her eyes with the pathos of his tone and the touching images he wove together. His hand grew moist upon hers, and he leaned closer to her. He began, after a short pause, to pray for her especially—that her remarkable beauty might not be a snare to her—that her dove-like eyes might beam only on the saddened faces of the saints—that she might be enabled to shun the company of the worldly, and consort only with God's people—and that the tones of prayer now in her ears might sink deep into her heart as the voice of one who would never cease to feel an interest in her temporal and eternal welfare. His hand tightened its grasp upon hers, and his face turned more toward her; and as Harriet, blushing, spite of the awe weighing on her heart, stole a look at the devout man, she

met the full gaze of his coal-black eyes fixed unwinkingly upon her. She was entranced. She dared not stir, and she dared not take her eyes from his. And when he came to his amen, she sank back upon the ground, and covered her face with her hands. And presently she remembered, with some wonder, that the old man, for whom Mr. Flint had come to pray, had not been even mentioned in the prayer.

The lad left the room after the amen, and Mr. Flint raised Harriet from the floor and seated her upon a chair out of the old man's sight, and pulled a hymn-book from his pocket, and sat down beside her. She was a very enthusiastic singer, to say the least, and he commonly led the singing at the conferences, and so, holding her hand that she might beat the time with him, he passed an hour in what he would call very sweet communion. And by this time the mistress of the family came home, and Mr. Flint took his leave.

From that evening, Mr. Flint fairly undertook the "eternal welfare" of the beautiful girl. From her kind mistress he easily procured for her the indulgence due to an awakened sinner, and she had permission to frequent the nightly conference, Mr. Flint always charging himself with the duty of seeing her safely home. He called sometimes in the afternoon, and had a private interview to ascertain the "state of her mind," and under a strong "conviction" of something or other, the excited girl lived now in a constant revery, and required as much looking after as a child. She was spoiled as a servant, but Mr. Flint had only done his duty by her.

This seemed all wrong to Rosier, the barber, however. The bright sweet face of the girl he thought to marry, had grown sad, and her work went all amiss—he could see that. She had no smile, and almost no word, for him. He liked little her going out at dusk when he could not accompany her, and coming home late with the same man always, though a very good man, no doubt. Then, once lately, when he had spoken of the future, she had murmured something which Mr. Flint had said about "marrying with unbelievers," and it stuck in Rosier's mind and troubled him. Harriet grew thin and haggard besides, though she paid more attention to her dress, and dressed more ambitiously than she used to do.

We are reaching back over a score or more of years for the scenes we are describing, and memory drops here and there a circumstance by the way. The reader can perhaps restore the lost fragments, if we give what we remember of the outline.

The old man died, and Rosier performed the last of his offices to fit him for the grave, and that, if we remember rightly, was the last of his visits, but one, to the white house in Sheafe lane. The bed was scarce vacated by the dead, ere it was required again for another object of pity. Harriet was put

into it with a brain fever. She was ill for many weeks, and called constantly on Mr. Flint's name in her delirium; and when the fever left her, she seemed to have but one desire on earth—that he should come and see her. Message after message was secretly carried to him by the lad, whom she had attached to her with her uniform kindness and sweet temper, but he never came. She relapsed after a while into a state of stupor, like idiocy, and when day after day passed without amendment, it was thought necessary to send for her father to take her home.

A venerable looking old farmer, with white hairs, drove his rough wagon into Sheafe lane one evening, we well remember. Slowly, with the aid of his long staff, he crept up the narrow staircase to his daughter's room, and stood a long time, looking at her in silence. She did not speak to him.

He slept upon a bed made up at the side of hers, upon the floor, and the next morning he went out early for his horse, and she was taken up and dressed for the journey. She spoke to no one, and when the old man had breakfasted, she quietly submitted to be carried toward the door. The sight of the street first seemed to awaken some recollection, and suddenly in a whisper she called to Mr. Flint.

"Who is Mr. Flint?" asked the old man.

Rosier was at the gate, standing there with his hat off to bid her farewell. She stopped upon the sidewalk, and looked around hurriedly.

"He is not here—I'll wait for him!" cried Harriet, in a troubled voice, and she let go her father's arm and stepped back.

They took hold of her and drew her toward the wagon, but she struggled to get free, and moaned like a child in grief. Rosier took her by the hand and tried to speak to her, but he choked, and the tears came to his eyes. Apparently she did not know him.

A few passers-by gathered around now, and it was necessary to lift her into the wagon by force, for the distressed father was confused and embarrassed with her struggles, and the novel scene around him. At the suggestion of the mistress of the family, Rosier lifted her in his arms and seated her in the chair intended for her, but her screams began to draw a crowd around, and her struggles to free herself were so violent, that it was evident the old man could never take her home alone. Rosier kindly offered to accompany him, and as he held her in her seat and tried to soothe her, the unhappy father got in beside her and drove away.

She reached home, Rosier informed us, in a state of dreadful exhaustion, still calling on the name that haunted her; and we heard soon after that she

relapsed into a brain fever, and death soon came to her with a timely deliverance from her trouble.

MABEL WYNNE.

MABEL WYNNE was the topmost sparkle on the crest of the first wave of luxury that swept over New York. Up to her time, the aristocratic houses were furnished with high buffets, high-backed and hair-bottomed mahogany chairs, one or two family portraits, and a silver tray on the side-board, containing cordials and brandy for morning callers. In the centre of the room hung a chandelier of colored lamps, and the lighting of this and the hiring of three negroes (to "fatigue," as the French say, a clarionet, a base-viol, and a violin) were the only preparations necessary for the most distinguished ball. About the time that Mabel left school, however, some adventurous pioneer of the Dutch *haut ton* ventured upon lamp stands for the corners of the rooms, stuffed red benches along the walls, and chalked floors; and upon this a French family of great beauty, residing in the lower part of Broadway, ventured upon a fancy ball with wax-candles instead of lamps, French dishes and sweatmeats instead of pickled oysters and pink champagne; and, the door thus opened, luxury came in like a flood. Houses were built on a new plan of sumptuous arrangement, the ceiling stained in fresco, and the columns of the doors within painted in imitation of bronze and marble; and at last the climax was topped by Mr. Wynne, who sent the dimensions of every room in his new house to an upholsterer, in Paris, with *carte blanche* as to costliness and style, and the *fournisseur* to come out himself and see to the arrangement and decoration.

It was Manhattan tea-time, old style, and while Mr. Wynne, who had the luxury of a little plain furniture in the basement, was comfortably taking his toast and hyson below stairs, Miss Wynne was just announced as "at home," by the black footman, and two of her admirers made their highly-scented *entrée*. They were led through a suite of superb rooms, lighted with lamps hid in alabaster vases, and ushered in at a mirror-door beyond, where, in a tent of fluted silk, with ottomans and draperies of the same stuff, exquisitely arranged, the imperious Mabel held her court of 'teens.

Mabel Wynne was one of those accidents of sovereign beauty which nature seems to take delight in misplacing in the world—like the superb lobelia flashing among the sedges, or the golden oriole pluming his dazzling wings in the depth of a wilderness. She was no less than royal in all her

belongings. Her features expressed consciousness of sway—a sway whose dictates had been from infancy anticipated. Never a surprise had startled those languishing eyelids from their deliberateness—never a suffusion other than the humid cloud of a tender and pensive hour had dimmed those adorable dark eyes. Or, so at least it seemed!

She was a fine creature, nevertheless—Mabel Wynne! But she looked to others like a specimen of such fragile and costly workmanship that nothing beneath a palace would be a becoming home for her.

"For the present," said Mr. Bellallure, one of the gentlemen who entered, "the bird has a fitting cage."

Miss Wynne only smiled in reply, and the other gentleman took upon himself to be the interpreter of her unexpressed thought.

"The cage is the accessory—not the bird," said Mr. Blythe, "and, for my part, I think Miss Wynne would show better the humbler her surroundings. As Perdita upon the green-sward, and open to a shepherd's wooing, I should inevitably sling my heart upon a crook—"

"And forswear that formidable, impregnable vow of celibacy?" interrupted Miss Wynne.

"I am only supposing a case, and you are not likely to be a shepherdess on the green." But Mr. Blythe's smile ended in a look of clouded revery, and after a few minutes' conversation, ill sustained by the gentlemen, who seemed each in the other's way, they rose and took their leave—Mr. Bellallure lingering last, for he was a lover avowed.

As the door closed upon her admirer, Miss Wynne drew a letter from her portfolio, and turning it over and over with a smile of abstracted curiosity, opened and read it for the second time. She had received it that morning from an unknown source, and as it was rather a striking communication, perhaps the reader had better know something of it before we go on.

It commenced without preface, thus:—

"On a summer morning, twelve years ago, a chimney-sweep, after doing his work and singing his song, commenced his descent. It was the chimney of a large house, and becoming embarrassed among the flues, he lost his way and found himself on the hearth of a sleeping-chamber occupied by a child. The sun was just breaking through the curtains of the room, a vacated bed showed that some one had risen lately, probably the nurse, and the sweep, with an irresistible impulse, approached the unconscious little sleeper. She lay with her head upon a round arm buried in flaxen curls, and the smile of a dream on her rosy and parted lips. It was a picture of singular

loveliness, and something in the heart of that boy-sweep, as he stood and looked upon the child, knelt to it with an agony of worship. The tears gushed to his eyes. He stripped the sooty blanket from his breast, and looked at the skin white upon his side. The contrast between his condition and that of the fair child sleeping before him brought the blood to his blackened brow with the hot rush of lava. He knelt beside the bed on which she slept, took her hand in his sooty grasp, and with a kiss upon the white and dewy fingers, poured his whole soul with passionate earnestness into a resolve.

"Hereafter you may learn, if you wish, the first struggles of that boy in the attempt to diminish the distance between yourself and him—for you will have understood that you were the beautiful child he saw asleep. I repeat that it is twelve years since he stood in your chamber. He has seen you almost daily since then—watched your going out and coming in—fed his eyes and heart on your expanding beauty, and informed himself of every change and development in your mind and character. With this intimate knowledge of you, and with the expansion of his own intellect, his passion has deepened and strengthened. It possesses him now as life does his heart, and will endure as long. But his views with regard to you are changed, nevertheless.

"You will pardon the presumption of my first feeling—that to attain my wishes I had only to become your equal. It was a natural error—for my agony at realizing the difference of our conditions in life was enough to absorb me at the time—but it is surprising to me how long that delusion lasted. I am rich now. I have lately added to my fortune the last acquisition I thought desirable. But with the thought of the next thing to be done, came like a thunderbolt upon me the fear that after all my efforts you might be destined for another! The thought is simple enough. You would think that it would have haunted me from the beginning. But I have either unconsciously shut my eyes to it, or I have been so absorbed in educating and enriching myself, that *that* goal only was visible to me. It was perhaps fortunate for my perseverance that I was so blinded. Of my midnight studies, of my labors, of all my plans, self-denials, and anxieties, you have seemed the reward! I have never gained a thought, never learned a refinement, never turned over gold and silver, that it was not a step nearer to Mabel Wynne. And now, that in worldly advantages, after twelve years of effort and trial, I stand by your side at last, a thousand men who never thought of you till yesterday are equal competitors with me for your hand!

"But, as I said, my views with regard to you have changed. I have with bitter effort, conquered the selfishness of this one lifetime ambition. I am devoted to you, as I have been from the moment I first saw you—life and

fortune. These are still yours—but without the price at which you might spurn them. My person is plain and unattractive. You have seen me, and shown me no preference. There are others whom you receive with favor. And with your glorious beauty, and sweet, admirably sweet qualities of character, it would be an outrage to nature that you should not choose freely, and be mated with something of your kind. Of those who now surround you I see no one worthy of you—but he may come! Jealousy shall not blind me to his merits. The first mark of your favor (and I shall be aware of it) will turn upon him my closest, yet most candid scrutiny. He must love you well—for I shall measure his love by my own. He must have manly beauty, and delicacy, and honor—he must be worthy of you, in short—but he need not be rich. He who steps between me and you takes the fortune I had amassed for you. I tell you this that you may have no limit in your choice—for the worthiest of a woman's lovers is often barred from her by poverty.

"Of course I have made no vow against seeking your favor. On the contrary, I shall lose no opportunity of making myself agreeable to you. It is against my nature to abandon hope, though I am painfully conscious of my inferiority to other men in the qualities which please a woman. All I have done is to deprive my pursuit of its selfishness—to make it subservient to your happiness purely—as it still would be were I the object of your preference. You will hear from me at any crisis of your feelings. Pardon my being a spy upon you. I know you well enough to be sure that this letter will be a secret—since I wish it. Adieu."

Mabel laid her cheek in the hollow of her hand and mused long on this singular communication. It stirred her romance, but it awakened still more her curiosity. Who was he? She had "seen him and shown him no preference!" Which could it be of the hundred of her chance-made acquaintances? She conjectured at some disadvantage, for "she had come out" within the past year only, and her mother having long been dead, the visitors to the house were all but recently made known to her. She could set aside two-thirds of them, as sons of families well known, but there were at least a score of others, any one of whom might, twelve years before, have been as obscure as her anonymous lover. Whoever he might be, Mabel thought he could hardly come into her presence again without betraying himself, and with a pleased smile at the thought of the discovery, she again locked up the letter.

Those were days (to be regretted or not, as you please, dear reader!) when the notable society of New York revolved in one self-complacent and clearly-defined circle. Call it a wheel, and say that the centre was a belle and

the radii were beaux—(the periphery of course composed of those who could "down with the dust"). And on the fifteenth of July regularly and imperatively, this fashionable wheel rolled off to Saratoga.

"Mabel! my daughter!" said old Wynne, as he bade her good night the evening before starting for the Springs, "it is useless to be blind to the fact that among your many admirers you have several very pressing lovers—suiters for your hand I may safely say. Now, I do not wish to put any unnecessary restraint upon your choice, but as you are going to a gay place, where you are likely to decide the matter in your own mind, I wish to express an opinion. You may give it what weight you think a father's judgment should have in such matters. I do *not* like Mr. Bellallure—for, beside my prejudice against the man, we know nothing of his previous life, and he may be a swindler or anything else. I *do* like Mr. Blythe—for I have known him many years—he comes of a most respectable family, and he is wealthy and worthy. These two seem to me the most earnest, and you apparently give them the most of your time. If the decision is to be between them, you have my choice. Good night, my love!"

Some people think it is owing to the Saratoga water. I differ from them. The water is an "alterative," it is true—but I think people do not so much alter as develop at Saratoga. The fact is clear enough—that at the Springs we change our opinions of almost every body—but (though it seems a bold supposition at first glance) I am inclined to believe it is because we see so much more of them! Knowing people in the city and knowing them at the Springs is very much in the same line of proof as tasting wine and drinking a bottle. Why, what is a week's history of a city acquaintance? A morning call thrice a week, a diurnal bow in Broadway, and perhaps a quadrille or two in the party season. What chance in that to ruffle a temper or try a weakness? At the Springs, now, dear lady, you wear a man all day like a shoe. Down at the platform with him to drink the waters before breakfast—strolls on the portico with him till ten—drives with him to Barheight's till dinner—lounges in the drawing-room with him till tea—dancing and promenading with him till midnight—very little short altogether of absolute matrimony; and like matrimony, it is a very severe trial. Your "best fellow" is sure to be found out, and so is your plausible fellow, your egotist, and your "spoon."

Mr. Beverly Bellallure had cultivated the male attractions with marked success. At times he probably thought himself a plain man, and an artist who should only paint what could be measured with a rule, would have made a plain portrait of Mr. Bellallure. But—the atmosphere of the man! There is a physiognomy in movement—there is aspect in the harmonious link between mood and posture—there is expression in the face of which the features are

as much a portrait as a bagpipe is a copy of a Scotch song. Beauty, my dear artist, can not always be translated by canvass and oils. You must paint "the magnetic fluid" to get a portrait of some men. Sir Thomas Lawrence seldom painted anything else—as you may see by his picture of Lady Blessington, which is like her without having copied a single feature of her face. Yet an artist would be very much surprised if you should offer to sit to him for your magnetic atmosphere—though it expresses (does it not?) exactly what you want when you order a picture! You wish to be painted as you appear to those who love you—a picture altogether unrecognizable by those who love you not.

Mr. Bellallure, then, was magnetically handsome—positively plain. He dressed with an art beyond detection. He spent his money as if he could dip it at will out of Pactolus. He was intimate with nobody, and so nobody knew his history; but he wrote himself on the register of Congress Hall as "from New York," and he threw all his forces into one unmistakeable demonstration—the pursuit of Miss Mabel Wynne.

But Mr. Bellallure had a formidable rival. Mr. Blythe was as much in earnest as he, though he played his game with a touch-and-go freedom, as if he was prepared to lose it. And Mr. Blythe had very much surprised those people at Saratoga who did not know that between a very plain man and a very elegant man there is often but the adding of the rose-leaf to the brimming jar. He was perhaps a little gayer than in New York, certainly a little more dressed, certainly a little more prominent in general conversation—but without any difference that you could swear to, Mr. Blythe, the plain and reliable business man, whom everybody esteemed without particularly admiring, had become Mr. Blythe the model of elegance and ease, the gentleman and conversationist *par excellence*. And nobody could tell how the statue could have lain so long unsuspected in the marble.

The race for Miss Wynne's hand and fortune was a general sweepstakes, and there were a hundred men at the Springs ready to take advantage of any falling back on the part of the two on the lead; but with Blythe and Bellallure Miss Wynne herself seemed fully occupied. The latter had a "friend at court"—the belief, kept secret in the fair Mabel's heart, that he was the romantic lover of whose life and fortune she had been the inspiration. She was an eminently romantic girl, with all her strong sense; and the devotion which had proved itself so deep and controlling was in reality the dominant spell upon her heart. She felt that she must love that man, whatever his outside might be, and she construed the impenetrable silence of which Bellallure received her occasional hints as to his identity,

into a magnanimous determination to win her without any advantage from the romance of his position.

Yet she sometimes wished it had been Mr. Blythe! The opinion of her father had great weight with her; but, more than that, she felt instinctively that he was the safer man to be intrusted with a woman's happiness. If there had been a doubt—if her father had not assured her that "Mr. Blythe came of a most respectable family"—if the secret had wavered between them—she would have given up to Bellallure without a sigh. Blythe was everything she admired and wished for in a husband—but the man who had *made himself for her*, by a devotion unparalleled even in her reading of fiction, held captive her dazzled imagination, if not her grateful heart. She made constant efforts to think only of Bellallure, but the efforts were preceded ominously with a sigh.

And now Bellallure's star seemed in the ascendant—for urgent business called Mr. Wynne to the city, and on the succeeding day Mr. Blythe followed him, though with an assurance of speedy return. Mabel was left under the care of an indulgent chaperon, who took a pleasure in promoting the happiness of the supposed lovers; and driving, lounging, waltzing, and promenading, Bellallure pushed his suit with ardor unremitted. He was a skillful master of the art of wooing, and it would have been a difficult woman indeed who would not have been pleased with his society—but the secret in Mabel's breast was the spell by which he held her.

A week elapsed, and Bellallure pleaded the receipt of unexpected news, and left suddenly for New York—to Mabel's surprise exacting no promise at parting, though she felt that she should have given it with reluctance. The mail of the second day following brought her a brief letter from her father, requesting her immediate return; and more important still, a note from her incognito lover. It ran thus:—

"You will recognize my handwriting again. I have little to say—for I abandon the intention I had formed to comment on your apparent preference. Your happiness is in your own hands. Circumstances which will be explained to you, and which will excuse this abrupt forwardness, compel me to urge you to an immediate choice. On your arrival at home, you will meet me in your father's house, where I shall call to await you. I confess, tremblingly, that I still cherish a hope. If I am not deceived—if you can consent to love me—if my long devotion is to be rewarded—take my hand when you meet me. That moment will decide the value of my life. But be prepared also to name another, if you love him—for there is a necessity, which I cannot explain to you till you have chosen your husband, that this

choice should be made on your arrival. Trust and forgive one who has so long loved you!"

Mabel pondered long on this strange letter. Her spirits at moments revolted against its apparent dictation, but there was the assurance, which she could not resist trusting, that it could be explained and forgiven. At all events, she was at liberty to fulfill its requisitions or not—and she would decide when the time came. Happy was Mabel—unconsciously happy—in the generosity and delicacy of her unnamed lover! Her father, by one of the sudden reverses of mercantile fortune, had been stripped of his wealth in a day! Stunned and heart-broken, he knew not how to break it to his daughter, but he had written for her to return. His sumptuous house had been sold over his head, yet the purchaser, whom he did not know, had liberally offered the use of it till his affairs were settled. And, meantime, his ruin was made public. The news of it, indeed, had reached Saratoga before the departure of Mabel—but there were none willing to wound her by speaking of it.

The day was one of the sweetest of summer, and as the boat ploughed her way down the Hudson, Mabel sat on the deck lost in thought. Her father's opinion of Bellallure, and his probable displeasure at her choice, weighed uncomfortably on her mind. She turned her thoughts upon Mr. Blythe, and felt surprised at the pleasure with which she remembered his kind manners and his trust inspiring look. She began to reason with herself more calmly than she had power to do with her lovers around her. She confessed to herself that Bellallure might have the romantic perseverance shown in the career of the chimney-sweep, and still be deficient in qualities necessary to domestic happiness. There seemed to her something false about Bellallure. She could not say in what—but he had so impressed her. A long day's silent reflection deepened this impression, and Mabel arrived at the city with changed feelings. She prepared herself to meet him at her father's house, and show him by her manner that she could accept neither his hand nor his fortune.

Mr. Wynne was at the door to receive his daughter, and Mabel felt relieved, for she thought that his presence would bar all explanation between herself and Bellallure. The old man embraced her with an effusion of tears, which she did not quite understand, but he led her to the drawing-room and closed the door. Mr. Blythe stood before her!

Forgetting the letter—dissociated wholly as it was, in her mind, with Mr. Blythe—Mabel ran to him with frank cordiality and gave him her hand! Blythe stood a moment—his hand trembling in hers—and as a suspicion of the truth flashed suddenly on Mabel's mind, the generous lover drew her to

his bosom and folded her passionately in his embrace. Mabel's struggles were slight, and her happiness unexpectedly complete.

The marriage was like other marriages.

Mr. Wynne had drawn a little on his imagination in recommending Mr. Blythe to his daughter as "a young man of most respectable family."

Mr. Blythe was the purchaser of Mr. Wynne's superb house, and the old man ended his days under its roof—happy to the last in the society of the Blythes, large and little.

Mr. Bellallure turned out to be a clever adventurer, and had Mabel married him, she would have been Mrs. Bellallure No. 2—possibly No. 4. He thought himself too nice a young man for monopoly.

I think my story is told—if your imagination has filled up the interstices, that is to say.

THE BANDIT OF AUSTRIA.

"Affection is a fire which kindleth as well in the bramble as in the oak, and catcheth hold where it first lighteth, not where it may best burn. Larks that mount in the air build their nests below in the earth; and women that cast their eyes upon kings, may place their hearts upon vassals."—MARLOWE.

"L'agrement est arbitraire: la beaute est quelque chose de plus reel et de plus independent du gout et de l'opinion."—LA BRUYERE.

FAST and rebukingly rang the matins from the towers of St. Etienne, and, though unused to wake, much less to pray, at that sunrise hour, I felt a compunctious visiting as my postillion cracked his whip and flew past the sacred threshold, over which tripped, as if every stroke would be the last, the tardy yet light-footed mass-goers of Vienna. It was my first entrance into this Paris of Germany, and I stretched my head from the window to look back with delight upon the fretted gothic pile, so cumbered with ornament, yet so light and airy—so vast in the area it covered, yet so crusted in every part with delicate device and sculpture. On sped the merciless postillion, and the next moment we rattled into the court-yard of the hotel.

I gave my keys to the most faithful and intelligent of valets—an English boy of sixteen, promoted from white top-boots and a cabriolet in London, to a plain coat and almost his master's friendship upon the continent—and leaving him to find rooms to my taste, make them habitable and get breakfast, I retraced my way to ramble a half hour through the aisles of St. Etienne.

The lingering bell was still beating its quick and monotonous call, and just before me, followed closely by a female domestic, a veiled and slightly-formed lady stepped over the threshold of the cathedral, and took her way by the least-frequented aisle to the altar. I gave a passing glance of admiration at the small ankle and dainty *chaussure* betrayed by her hurried step; but remembering with a slight effort that I had sought the church with at least some feeble intentions of religious worship, I crossed the broad nave to the opposite side, and was soon leaning against a pillar, and listening to the heavenly-breathed music of the voluntary, with a confused, but I trust, not altogether unprofitable feeling of devotion.

The peasants, with their baskets standing beside them on the tesselated floor, counted their beads upon their knees; the murmur, low-toned and universal, rose through the vibrations of the anthem with an accompaniment upon which I have always thought the great composers calculated, no less than upon the echoing arches, and atmosphere thickened with incense; and the deep-throated priest muttered his Latin prayer, more edifying to me that it left my thoughts to their own impulses of worship, undemeaned by the irresistible littleness of criticism, and unchecked by the narrow bounds of another's comprehension of the Divinity.

Without being in any leaning of opinion a son of the church of Rome, I confess my soul gets nearer to heaven; and my religious tendencies, dulled and diverted from improvement by a life of travel and excitement, are more gratefully ministered to, in the indistinct worship of the catholics. It seems to me that no man can pray well through the hesitating lips of another. The inflated style or rhetorical efforts of many, addressing Heaven with difficult grammar and embarrassed logic—and the weary monotony of others, repeating without interest and apparently without thought, the most solemn appeals to the mercy of the Almighty—are imperfect vehicles, at least to me, for a fresh and apprehensive spirit of worship. The religious architecture of the catholics favors the solitary prayer of the heart. The vast floor of the cathedral, the far receding aisles with their solemn light, to which penetrate only the indistinct murmur of priest and penitent, and the affecting wail or triumphant hallelujah of the choir; the touching attitudes and utter abandonment of all around to their unarticulated devotions; the freedom to enter and depart, unquestioned and unnoticed, and the wonderful impressiveness of the lofty architecture, clustered with mementoes of death, and presenting through every sense, some unobtrusive persuasion to the duties of the spot—all these, I cannot but think, are aids, not unimportant to devout feeling, nor to the most careless keeper of his creed and conscience, entirely without salutary use.

My eye had been resting unconsciously on the drapery of a statue, upon which the light of a painted oriel window threw the mingled dyes of a peacock. It was the figure of an apostle; and curious at last to see whence the colors came which turned the saintly garb into a mantle of shot silk, I strayed toward the eastern window, and was studying the gorgeous dyes and grotesque drawing of an art lost to the world, when I discovered that I was in the neighborhood of the pretty figure that had tripped into church so lightly before me. She knelt near the altar, a little forward from one of the heavy gothic pillars, with her maid beside her, and, close behind knelt a gentleman, who I observed at a second glance, was paying his devotions exclusively to

the small foot that peeped from the edge of a snowy *peignoir*, the dishabille of which was covered and betrayed by a lace-veil and mantle. As I stood thinking what a graceful study her figure would make for a sculptor, and what an irreligious impertinence was visible in the air of the gentleman behind, he leaned forward as if to prostrate his face upon the pavement, and pressed his lips upon the slender sole of (I have no doubt) the prettiest shoe in Vienna. The natural aversion which all men have for each other as strangers, was quickened in my bosom by a feeling much more vivid, and said to be quite as natural—resentment at any demonstration by another of preference for the woman one has admired. If I have not mistaken human nature, there is a sort of imaginary property which every man feels in a woman he has looked upon with even the most transient regard, which is violated *malgré lui*, by a similar feeling on the part of any other individual.

Not sure that the gentleman, who had so suddenly become my enemy, had any warrant in the lady's connivance for his attentions, I retreated to the shelter of the pillar, and was presently satisfied that he was as much a stranger to her as myself, and was decidedly annoying her. A slight advance in her position to escape his contact gave me the opportunity I wished, and stepping upon the small space between the skirt of her dress and the outpost of his ebony cane, I began to study the architecture of the roof with great seriousness. The gothic order, it is said, sprang from the first attempts at constructing roofs from the branches of trees, and is more perfect as it imitates more closely the natural wilderness with its tall tree-shafts and interlacing limbs. With my eyes half shut I endeavored to transport myself to an American forest, and convert the beams and angles of this vast gothic structure into a primitive temple of pines, with the sunshine coming brokingly through; but the delusion, otherwise easy enough, was destroyed by the cherubs roosting on the cornices, and the apostles and saints perched as it were in the branches; and, spite of myself, I thought it represented best Shylock's "wilderness of monkeys."

"*S'il vous plait, monsieur!*" said the gentleman, pulling me by the pantaloons as I was losing myself in these ill-timed speculations.

I looked down.

"*Vous me génez, monsieur!*"

"*J'èn suis bien sure, monsieur!*"—and I resumed my study of the roof, turning gradually round till my heels were against his knees, and backing *peu à peu*.

It has often occurred to me as a defect in the system of civil justice, that the time of the day at which a crime is committed is never taken into

account by judge or jury. The humors of an empty stomach act so energetically on the judgment and temper of a man, and the same act appears so differently to him, fasting and full, that I presume an inquiry into the subject would prove that few offences against law and human pity were ever perpetrated by villains who had dined. In the adventure before us, the best-disposed reader will condemn my interference in a stranger's gallantries as impertinent and quixotic. Later in the day, I should as soon have thought of ordering water-cresses for the gentleman's *dindon aux truffes*.

I was calling myself to account something after the above fashion, the gentleman in question standing near me, drumming on his boot with his ebony cane, when the lady rose, threw her rosary over her neck, and turning to me with a graceful smile, courtesied slightly and disappeared. I was struck so exceedingly with the intense melancholy in the expression of the face—an expression so totally at variance with the elasticity of the step, and the promise of the slight and *riante* figure and air—that I quite forgot I had drawn a quarrel on myself, and was loitering slowly toward the door of the church, when the gentleman I had offended touched me on the arm, and in the politest manner possible requested my address. We exchanged cards, and I hastened home to breakfast, musing on the facility with which the current of our daily life may be thickened. I fancied I had a new love on my hands, and I was tolerably sure of a quarrel—yet I had been in Vienna but fifty-four minutes by Bréguet.

My breakfast was waiting, and Percie had found time to turn a comb through his brown curls, and get the dust off his gaiters. He was tall for his age, and (unaware to himself, poor boy!) every word and action reflected upon the handsome seamstress in Cranbourne Alley, whom he called his mother—for he showed blood. His father was a gentleman, or there is no truth in thorough-breeding. As I looked at him, a difficulty vanished from my mind.

"Percie!"

"Sir!"

"Get into your best suit of plain clothes, and if a foreigner calls on me this morning, come in and forget that you are valet. I have occasion to use you for a gentleman."

"Yes, sir!"

"My pistols are clean, I presume?"

"Yes, sir!"

I wrote a letter or two, read a volume of "*Ni jamais, ni toujours*," and about noon a captain of dragoons was announced, bringing me the expected

cartel. Percie came in, treading gingerly in a pair of tight French boots, but behaving exceedingly like a gentleman, and after a little conversation, managed on his part strictly according to my instructions, he took his cane and walked off with his friend of the steel scabbard to become acquainted with the ground.

The gray of a heavenly summer morning was brightening above the chimneys of the fair city of Vienna as I stepped into a *calèche*, followed by Percie. With a special passport (procured by the politeness of my antagonist) we made our sortie at that early hour from the gates, and crossing the *glacis*, took the road to the banks of the Danube. It was but a mile from the city, and the mist lay low on the face of the troubled current of the river, while the towers and pinnacles of the silent capital cut the sky in clear and sharp lines —as if tranquillity and purity, those immaculate hand-maidens of nature, had tired of innocence and their mistress—and slept in town!

I had taken some coffee and broiled chicken before starting, and (removed thus from the category of the savage unbreakfasted) I was in one of those moods of universal benevolence, said (erroneously) to be produced only by a clean breast of milk diet. I could have wept, with Wordsworth, over a violet.

My opponent was there with his dragoon, and Percie, cool and gentleman like, like a man who "had served," looked on at the loading of the pistols, and gave me mine with a very firm hand, but with a moisture and anxiety in his eye which I have remembered since. We were to fire any time after the counting of three, and having no malice against my friend, whose impertinence to a lady was (really!) no business of mine, I intended, of course, to throw away my fire.

The first word was given and I looked at my antagonist, who, I saw at a glance, had no such gentle intentions. He was taking deliberate aim, and in the four seconds that elapsed between the remaining two words, I changed my mind (one thinks so fast when his leisure is limited!) at least twenty times whether I should fire at him or no.

"*Trois!*" pronounced the dragoon, from a throat like a trombone, and with the last thought, up flew my hand, and as my pistol discharged in the air, my friend's shot struck upon a large turquoise which I wore on my third finger, and drew a slight pencil-line across my left organ of causality. It was well aimed for my temple, but the ring had saved me.

Friend of those days, regretted and unforgotten! days of the deepest sadness and heart-heaviness, yet somehow dearer in remembrance than all

the joys I can recall—there was a talisman in thy parting gift thou didst not think would be, one day, my angel!

"You will be able to wear your hair over the scar, sir!" said Percie, coming up and putting his finger on the wound.

"Monsieur!" said the dragoon, advancing to Percie after a short conference with his principal, and looking twice as fierce as before.

"Monsieur!" said Percie, wheeling short upon him.

"My friend is not satisfied. He presumes that monsieur *l'Anglais* wishes to trifle with him."

"Then let your friend take care of himself," said I, roused by the unprovoked murderousness of the feeling. "Load the pistols, Percie! In my country," I continued, turning to the dragoon, "a man is disgraced who fires twice upon an antagonist who has spared him! Your friend is a ruffian, and the consequences be on his own head!"

We took our places and the first word was given, when a man dashed between us on horseback at top-speed. The violence with which he drew rein brought his horse upon his haunches, and he was on his feet in half a breath.

The idea that he was an officer of the police was immediately dissipated by his step and air. Of the finest athletic form I had ever seen, agile, graceful, and dressed pointedly well, there was still an indefinable something about him, either above or below a gentleman—which, it was difficult to say. His features were slight, fair, and, except a brow too heavy for them and a lip of singular and (I thought) habitual defiance, almost feminine. His hair grew long and had been *soigné*, probably by more caressing fingers than his own, and his rather silken mustache was glossy with some odorent oil. Ashe approached me and took my hand, with a clasp like a smith's vice, I observed these circumstances, and could have drawn his portrait without ever seeing him again—so marked a man was he, in every point and feature.

His business was soon explained. He was the husband of the lady my opponent had insulted, and that pleasant gentleman could, of course, make no objection to his taking my place. I officiated as *tèmoin*, and, as they took their position, I anticipated for the dragoon and myself the trouble of carrying them both off the field. I had a practical assurance of my friend's pistol, and the stranger was not the looking man to miss a hair's breadth of his aim.

The word was not fairly off my lips when both pistols cracked like one discharge, and high into the air sprang my revengeful opponent, and dropped

like a clod upon the grass. The stranger opened his waistcoat, thrust his forefinger into a wound in his left breast, and slightly closing his teeth, pushed a bullet through, which had been checked by the bone and lodged in the flesh near the skin. The surgeon who had accompanied my unfortunate antagonist, left the body, which he had found beyond his art, and readily gave his assistance to stanch the blood of my preserver; and jumping with the latter into my *calèche*, I put Percie upon the stranger's horse, and we drove back to Vienna.

The market people were crowding in at the gate, the merry peasant girls glanced at us with their blue, German eyes, the shopmen laid out their gay wares to the street, and the tide of life ran on as busily and as gayly, though a drop had been extracted, within scarce ten minutes, from its quickest vein. I felt a revulsion at my heart, and grew faint and sick. Is a human life—is *my* life worth anything, even a thought, to my fellow-creatures? was the bitter question forced upon my soul. How icily and keenly the unconscious indifference of the world penetrates to the nerve and marrow of him who suddenly realizes it.

We dashed through the kohl-market, and driving into the *porte-cochére* of a dark-looking house in one of the cross streets of that quarter, were ushered into apartments of extraordinary magnificence.

CHAPTER II.

"WHAT do you want, Percie?"

He was walking into the room with all the deliberate politeness of a "gold-stick-in-waiting."

"I beg pardon, sir, but I was asked to walk up, and I was not sure whether I was still a gentleman."

It instantly struck me that it might seem rather *infra dig* to the chevalier (my new friend had thus announced himself) to have had a valet for a second, and as he immediately after entered the room, having stepped below to give orders about his horse, I presented Percie as a gentleman and my friend, and resumed my observation of the singular apartment in which I found myself.

The effect on coming first in at the door, was that of a small and lofty chapel, where the light struggled in from an unseen aperture above the altar. There were two windows at the farther extremity, but curtained so heavily, and set so deeply into the wall, that I did not at first observe the six richly-

carpeted steps which led up to them, nor the luxuriously cushioned seats on either side of the casement, within the niche, for those who would mount thither for fresh air. The walls were tapestried, but very ragged and dusty, and the floor, though there were several thicknesses of the heavy-piled, small, Turkey carpets laid loosely over it, was irregular and sunken. The corners were heaped with various articles I could not at first distinguish. My host fortunately gave me an opportunity to gratify my curiosity by frequent absences, under the housekeeper's apology (odd I thought for a chevalier) of expediting breakfast; and with the aid of Percie, I tumbled his chattels about with all necessary freedom.

"That," said the chevalier, entering, as I turned out the face of a fresh colored picture to the light, "is a *capo d'opera* of a French artist, who painted it, as you may say, by the gleam of the dagger."

"A *cool* light, as a painter would say!"

"He was a cool fellow, sir, and would have handled a broad-sword better than a pencil."

Percie stepped up while I was examining the exquisite finish of the picture, and asked very respectfully if the chevalier would give him the particulars of the story. It was a full length portrait of a young and excessively beautiful girl, of apparently scarce fifteen, entirely nude, and lying upon a black velvet couch, with one foot laid on a broken diadem, and her right hand pressing a wild rose to her heart.

"It was the fancy, sir," continued the chevalier, "of a bold outlaw, who loved the only daughter of a noble of Hungary."

"Is this the lady, sir?" asked Percie, in his politest valet French.

The chevalier hesitated a moment and looked over his shoulder, as if he might be overheard.

"This is she—copied to the minutest shadow of a hair! He was a bold outlaw, gentlemen, and had plucked the lady from her father's castle with his own hand."

"Against her will?" interrupted Percie, rather energetically.

"No!" scowled the chevalier, as if his lowering brows had articulated the word, "by her own will and connivance; for she loved him."

Percie drew a long breath, and looked more closely at the taper limbs and the exquisitely-chiselled features of the face, which was turned over the shoulder with a look of timid shame inimitably true to nature.

"She loved him," continued our fierce narrator, who, I almost began to suspect was the outlaw himself, by the energy with which he enforced the

tale, “and after a moonlight ramble or two with him in the forest of her father’s domain, she fled and became his wife. You are admiring the hair, sir! It is as luxuriant and glossy now!”

“If you please, sir, it is the villain himself!” said Percie in an undertone.

“*Bref*,” continued the chevalier, either not understanding English or not heeding the interruption, “an adventurous painter, one day hunting the picturesque in the neighborhood of the outlaw’s retreat, surprised this fair creature bathing in one of the loneliest mountain-streams in Hungary. His art appeared to be his first passion, for he hid himself in the trees and drew her as she stood dallying on the margin of the small pool in which the brook loitered; and so busy was he with his own work, or so soft was the mountain moss under its master’s tread, that the outlaw looked, unperceived the while, over his shoulder, and fell in love anew with the admirable counterfeit. She looked like a naiad, sir, new born of a dew-drop and a violet.”

I nodded an assent to Percie.

“The sketch, excellent as it seemed, was still unfinished when the painter, enamored as he might well be, of these sweet limbs, glossy with the shining water, flung down his book and sprang toward her. The outlaw——”

“Struck him to the heart? Oh Heaven!” said Percie, covering his eyes as if he could see the murder.

“No! he was a student of the human soul, and deferred his vengeance.”

Percie looked up and listened, like a man whose wits were perfectly abroad.

“He was not unwilling, since her person had been seen irretrievably, to know how his shrinking Iminild (this was her name of melody) would have escaped had she been found alone.”

“The painter”—prompted Percie, impatient for the sequel.

“The painter flew over rock and brake, and sprang into the pool in which she was half immersed; and my brave girl——”

He hesitated, for he had betrayed himself.

“Ay—she *is mine*, gentlemen; and I am Yvain, the outlaw—my brave wife, I say, with a single bound, leaped to the rock where her dress was concealed, seized a short spear which she used as a staff in her climbing rambles, and struck it through his shoulder as he pursued!”

“Bravely done!” I thought aloud.

“Was it not? I came up the next moment, but the spear stuck in his shoulder, and I could not fall upon a wounded man. We carried him to our ruined castle in the mountains, and while my Iminild cured her own wound,

I sent for his paints, and let him finish his bold beginning with a difference of my own. You see the picture."

"Was the painter's love cured with his wound?" I asked with a smile.

"No, by St. Stephen! He grew ten times more enamored as he drew. He was as fierce as a welk hawk, and as willing to quarrel for his prey. I could have driven my dagger to his heart a hundred times for the mutter of his lips and the flash of his dark eyes as he fed his gaze upon her; but he finished the picture, and I gave him a fair field. He chose the broad-sword, and hacked away at me like a man."

"And the result"—I asked.

"I am here!" replied the outlaw significantly.

Percie leaped upon the carpeted steps, and pushed back the window for fresh air; and, for myself, I scarce knew how to act under the roof of a man, who, though he confessed himself an outlaw and almost an assassin, was bound to me by the ties of our own critical adventure, and had confided his condition to me with so ready a reliance on my honor. In the midst of my dilemma, while I was pretending to occupy myself with examining a silver mounted and peaked saddle, which I found behind the picture in the corner, a deep and unpleasant voice announced breakfast.

"Wolfen is rather a grim chamberlain," said the chevalier, bowing with the grace and smile of the softest courtier, "but he will usher you to breakfast, and I am sure you stand in need of it. For myself, I could eat worse meat than my grandfather, with this appetite."

Percie gave me a look of inquiry and uneasiness when he found we were to follow the rough domestic through the dark corridors of the old house, and through his under-bred politeness of insisting on following his host, I could see that he was unwilling to trust the outlaw with the rear; but a massive and broad door, flung open at the end of the passage, let in upon us presently the cool and fresh air from a northern exposure, and stepping forward quickly to the threshold, we beheld a picture which changed the current and color of our thoughts.

In the bottom of an excavated area, which, as well as I could judge, must be forty feet below the level of the court, lay a small and antique garden, brilliant with the most costly flowers, and cooled by a fountain gushing from under the foot of a nymph in marble. The spreading tops of six alleys of lindens reaching to the level of the street, formed a living roof to the grot-like depths of the garden, and concealed it from all view but that of persons descending like ourselves from the house; while, instead of walls to shut in this paradise in the heart of a city, sharply inclined slopes of green-sward

leaned in under the branches of the lindens, and completed the fairy-like enclosure of shade and verdure. As we descended the rose-laden steps and terraces, I observed, that, of the immense profusion of flowers in the area below, nearly all were costly exotics, whose pots were set in the earth, and probably brought away from the sunshine only when in high bloom; and as we rounded the spreading basin of the fountain which broke the perspective of the alley, a table, which had been concealed by the marble nymph, and a skilfully-disposed array of rhododendrons, lay just beneath our feet, while a lady, whose features I could not fail to remember, smiled up from her couch of crimson cushions and gave us a graceful welcome.

The same taste for depth which had been shown in the room sunk below the windows, and the garden below the street, was continued in the kind of marble divan in which we were to breakfast. Four steps descending from the pavement of the alley introduced us into a circular excavation, whose marble seats, covered with cushions of crimson silk, surrounded a table laden with the substantial viands which are common to a morning meal in Vienna, and smoking with coffee whose aroma (Percie agreed with me) exceeded even the tube roses in grateful sweetness. Between the cushions at our backs and the pavements just above the level of our heads, were piled circles of thickly flowering geraniums, which enclosed us in rings of perfume, and, pouring from the cup of a sculptured flower, held in the hand of the nymph, a smooth stream like a silver rod supplied a channel grooved around the centre of the marble table, through which the bright water, with the impulse of its descent, made a swift revolution and disappeared.

It was a scene to give memory the lie if it could have recalled the bloodshed of the morning. The green light flecked down through the lofty roof upon the glittering and singing water; a nightingale in a recess of the garden, gurgled through his wires as if intoxicated with the congenial twilight of his prison; the heavy-cupped flowers of the tropics nodded with the rain of the fountain spray. The distant roll of wheels in the neighboring streets came with an assurance of reality to this dream-land, yet softened by the unreverberating roof and an air crowded with flowers and trembling with the pulsations of falling water. The lowering forehead of the outlaw cleared up like a sky of June after a thunder-shower, and his voice grew gentle and caressing; and the delicate mistress of all (by birth, Countess Iminild), a creature as slight as Psyche, and as white as the lotus, whose flexible stem served her for a bracelet, welcomed us with her soft voice and humid eyes, and saddened by the event of the morning, looked on her husband with a tenderness that would have assoiled her of her sins against delicacy, I thought, even in the mind of an angel.

"We live, like truth, here, in the bottom of a well," said the countess to Percie, as she gave him his coffee; "how do you like my whimsical abode, sir?"

"I should like any place where you were, Miladi!" he answered, blushing and stealing his eyes across at me, either in doubt how far he might presume upon his new character, or suspecting that I should smile at his gallantry.

The outlaw glanced his eyes over the curling head of the boy, with one of those just perceptible smiles which developed, occasionally, in great beauty, the gentle spirit in his bosom; and Iminild, pleased with the compliment or the blush, threw off her pensive mood, and assumed, in an instant, the coquettish air which had attracted my notice as she stepped before me into the church of St. Etienne.

"You had hard work," she said, "to keep up with your long-legged dragoon yesterday, Monsieur Percie!"

"Miladi?" he answered, with a look of inquiry.

"Oh, I was behind you, and my legs are not much longer than yours. How he strided away with his long spurs, to be sure! Do you remember a smart young gentleman with a blue cap that walked past you on the *glacis* occasionally?"

"Ah, with laced boots, like a Hungarian?"

"I see I am ever to be known by my foot," said she, putting it out upon the cushion, and turning it about with *naive* admiration; "that poor captain of the imperial guard paid dearly for kissing it, holy virgin!" and she crossed herself and was silent for a moment.

"If I might take the freedom, chevalier," I said, "pray how came I indebted to your assistance in this affair?"

"Iminild has partly explained," he answered. "She knew, of course, that a challenge would follow your interference, and it was very easy to know that an officer of some sort would take a message in the course of the morning to *Le Prince Charles*, the only hotel frequented by the English *d'un certain gens*."

I bowed to the compliment.

"Arriving in Vienna late last night, I found Iminild (who had followed this gentleman and the dragoon unperceived) in possession of all the circumstances; and, but for oversleeping myself this morning, I should have saved your turquoise, *mon seigneur*!"

"Have you lived here long, Miladi?" asked Percie, looking up into her eyes with an unconscious passionateness which made the countess Iminild

color slightly, and bite her lips to retain an expression of pleasure.

"I have not lived long anywhere, sir!" she answered half archly, "but I played in this garden when not much older than you!"

Percie looked confused and pulled up his cravat.

"This house," said the chevalier, willing apparently to spare the countess a painful narration, "is the property of the old count Ildefert, my wife's father. He has long ceased to visit Vienna, and has left it, he supposes, to a stranger. When Iminild tires of the forest, she comes here, and I join her if I can find time. I must to the saddle to-morrow, by St. Jacques!"

The word had scarce died on his lips when the door by which we had entered the garden was flung open, and the measured tread of *gens-d'armes* resounded in the corridor. The first man who stood out upon the upper terrace was the dragoon who had been second to my opponent.

"Traitor and villain!" muttered the outlaw between his teeth, "I thought I remembered you! It is that false comrade Berthold, Iminild!"

Yvain had risen from the table as if but to stretch his legs; and drawing a pistol from his bosom he cocked it as he quietly stepped up into the garden. I saw at a glance that there was no chance for his escape, and laid my hand on his arm.

"Chevalier!" I said, "surrender, and trust to opportunity. It is madness to resist here."

"Yvain" said Iminild, in a low voice, flying to his side as she comprehended his intention, "leave *me* that vengeance, and try the parapet. I'll kill him before he sleeps! Quick! Ah, Heavens!"

The dragoon had turned at that instant to fly, and with suddenness of thought the pistol flashed, and the traitor dropped heavily on the terrace. Springing like a cat up the slope of green sward, Yvain stood an instant on the summit of the wall, hesitating where to jump beyond, and in the next moment rolled heavily back, stabbed through and through with a bayonet from the opposite side.

The blood left the lips and cheek of Iminild; but without a word or a sign of terror, she sprang to the side of the fallen outlaw and lifted him up against her knee. The *gens-d'armes* rushed to the spot, but the subaltern who commanded them yielded instantly to my wish that they should retire to the skirts of the garden; and sending Percie to the fountain for water, we bathed the lips and forehead of the dying man and set him against the sloping parapet. With one hand grasping the dress of Iminild and the other clasped in mine, he struggled to speak.

"The cross!" he gasped, "the cross!"

Iminild drew a silver crucifix from her bosom.

"Swear on this," he said, putting it to my lips and speaking with terrible energy "swear that you will protect her while you live!"

"I swear!"

He shut our hands together convulsively, gasped slightly as if he would speak again, and, in another instant, sunk, relaxed and lifeless, on the shoulder of Iminild.

CHAPTER III.

THE fate and history of Yvain, the outlaw, became, on the following day, the talk of Vienna. He had been long known as the daring horse-stealer of Hungary; and, though it was not doubted that his sway was exercised over plunderers of every description, even pirates upon the high seas, his own courage and address were principally applied to the robbery of the well-guarded steeds of the emperor and his nobles. It was said that there was not a horse in the dominions of Austria whose qualities and breeding were not known to him, nor one he cared to have which was not in his concealed stables in the forest. The most incredible stories were told of his horsemanship. He would so disguise the animal on which he rode, either by forcing him into new paces or by other arts only known to himself, that he would make the tour of the *Glacis* on the emperor's best horse, newly stolen, unsuspected even by the royal grooms. The roadsters of his own troop were the best steeds bred on the banks of the Danube; but although always in the highest condition, they would never have been suspected to have been worth a florin till put upon their mettle. The extraordinary escapes of his band from the vigilant and well mounted *gens-d'armes* were thus accounted for; and, in most of the villages in Austria, the people, on some market-day or other, had seen a body of apparently ill-mounted peasants suddenly start off with the speed of lightning at the appearance of *gens-d'armes*, and, flying over fence and wall, draw a straight course for the mountains, distancing their pursuers with the ease of swallows on the wing.

After the death of Yvain in the garden, I had been forced with Percie into a carriage, standing in the court, and accompanied by a guard, driven to my hotel, where I was given to understand that I was to remain under arrest till further orders. A sentinel at the door forbade all ingress or egress except to the people of the house; a circumstance which was only distressing to me, as it precluded my inquiries after the countess Iminild, of whom common rumor, the servants informed me, made not the slightest mention.

Four days after this, on the relief of the guard at noon, a subaltern entered my room and informed me that I was at liberty. I instantly made preparations to go out, and was drawing on my boots, when Percie, who had not yet recovered from the shock of his arrest, entered in some alarm, and informed me that one of the royal grooms was in the court with a letter, which he would deliver only into my own hands. He had orders beside, he said, not to leave his saddle. Wondering what new leaf of my destiny was to turn over, I went below and received a letter, with apparently the imperial seal, from a well-dressed groom in the livery of the emperor's brother, the king of Hungary. He was mounted on a compact, yet fine-limbed horse, and both horse and rider were as still as if cut in marble.

I returned to my room and broke the seal. It was a letter from Iminild, and the bold bearer was an outlaw disguised! She had heard that I was to be released that morning, and desired me to ride out on the road to Gratz. In a postscript she begged I would request Monsieur Percie to accompany me.

I sent for horses, and wishing to be left to my own thoughts, ordered Percie to fall behind, and rode slowly out of the southern gate. If the countess Iminild were safe, I had enough of the adventure for my taste. My oath bound me to protect this wild and unsexed woman, but farther intercourse with a band of outlaws, or farther peril of my head for no reason that either a court of gallantry or of justice would recognize, was beyond my usual programme of pleasant events. The road was a gentle ascent, and with the bridle on the neck of my hack I paced thoughtfully on, till, at a slight turn, we stood at a fair height above Vienna.

"It is a beautiful city, sir," said Percie, riding up.

"How the deuce could she have escaped?" said I, thinking aloud.

"*Has* she escaped, sir? Ah, thank Heaven!" exclaimed the passionate boy, the tears rushing to his eyes.

"Why, Percie!" I said with a tone of surprise which called a blush into his face, "have you really found leisure to fall in love amid all this *imbroglio*?"

"I beg pardon, my dear master!" he replied in a confused voice, "I scarce know what it is to fall in love; but I would die for Miladi Iminild."

"Not at all an impossible sequel, my poor boy! But wheel about and touch your hat, for here comes some one of the royal family!"

A horseman was approaching at an easy canter, over the broad and unfenced plain of table-land which overlooks Vienna on the south, attended by six mounted servants in the white kerseymere frocks, braided with the

two-headed black eagle, which, distinguish the members of the imperial household.

The carriages on the road stopped while he passed, the foot passengers touched their caps, and, as he came near, I perceived that he was slight and young, but rode with a confidence and a grace not often attained. His horse had the subdued, half-fiery action of an Arab, and Percie nearly dropped from his saddle when the young horseman suddenly drove in his spurs, and with almost a single vault stood motionless before us.

"*Monsieur!*"

"*Madame la Comtesse!*"

I was uncertain how to receive her, and took refuge in civility. Whether she would be overwhelmed with the recollection of Yvain's death, or had put away the thought altogether with her masculine firmness, was a dilemma for which the eccentric contradictions of her character left me no probable solution. Motioning with her hand after saluting me, two of the party rode back and forward in different directions, as if patrolling; and giving a look between a tear and a smile at Percie, she placed her hand in mine, and shook off her sadness with a strong effort.

"You did not expect so large a *suite* with your *protégée*," she said, rather gayly, after a moment.

"Do I understand that you come now to put yourself under my protection?" I asked in reply.

"Soon, but not now, nor here. I have a hundred men at the foot of Mount Semering, whose future fate, in some important respects, none can decide but myself. Yvain was always prepared for this, and everything is *en train*. I come now but to appoint a place of meeting. Quick! my patrol comes in, and some one approaches whom we must fly. Can you await me at Gratz?"

"I can and will!"

She put her slight hand to my lips, waved a kiss at Percie, and away with the speed of wind, flew her swift Arab over the plain, followed by the six horsemen, every one of whom seemed part of the animal that carried him—he rode so admirably.

The slight figure of Iminild in the close-fitting dress of a Hungarian page, her jacket open and her beautiful limbs perfectly defined, silver fringes at her ankles and waist, and a row of silver buttons *gallonné* down to the instep, her bright, flashing eyes, her short curls escaping from her cap and tangled over her left temple, with the gold tassel, dirk and pistol at her belt, and spurs upon her heels—it was an apparition I had scarce time to realize,

but it seemed painted on my eyes. The cloud of dust which followed their rapid flight faded away as I watched it, but I saw her still.

"Shall I ride back and order post-horses, sir?" asked Percie, standing up in his stirrups.

"No; but you may order dinner at six. And Percie!" he was riding away with a gloomy air; "you may go to the police and get our passports for Venice."

"By the way of Gratz, sir?"

"Yes, simpleton!"

There is a difference between sixteen and twenty-six, I thought to myself, as the handsome boy flogged his horse into a gallop. The time is gone when I could love without reason. Yet I remember when a feather, stuck jauntingly into a bonnet, would have made any woman a princess; and in those days, Heaven help us! I should have loved this woman more for her *galliardize* than ten times a prettier one with all the virtues of Dorcas. For which of my sins am I made guardian to a robber's wife, I wonder!

The heavy German postillions, with their cocked hats and yellow coats, got us over the ground after a manner, and toward the sunset of a summer's evening the tall castle of Gratz, perched on a pinnacle of rock in the centre of a vast plain, stood up boldly against the reddening sky. The rich fields of Styria were ripening to an early harvest, the people sat at their doors with the look of household happiness for which the inhabitants of these "despotic countries" are so remarkable; and now and then on the road the rattling of steel scabbards drew my attention from a book or a revery, and the mounted troops, so perpetually seen on the broad roads of Austria, lingered slowly past with their dust and baggage-trains.

It had been a long summer's day, and, contrary to my usual practice, I had not mounted, even for half a post, to Percie's side in the rumble. Out of humor with fate for having drawn me into very embarrassing circumstances —out of humor with myself for the quixotic step which had first brought it on me—and a little out of humor with Percie (perhaps from an unacknowledged jealousy of Iminild's marked preference for the varlet), I left him to toast alone in the sun, while I tried to forget him and myself in "*Le Marquis de Pontangos*." What a very clever book it is, by the way!

The pompous sergeant of the guard performed his office upon my passport at the gate—giving me at least a *kreutzer* worth of his majesty's black sand in exchange for my florin and my English curse (I said before I

was out of temper, and he was half an hour writing his abominable name), and leaving my carriage and Percie to find their way together to the hotel, I dismounted at the foot of a steep street and made my way to the battlements of the castle, in search of scenery and equanimity.

Ah! what a glorious landscape! The precipitous rock on which the old fortress is built seems dropped by the Titans in the midst of a plain, extending miles in every direction, with scarce another pebble. Close at its base run the populous streets, coiling about it like serpents around a pyramid, and away from the walls of the city spread the broad fields, laden, as far as the eye can see, with tribute for the emperor! The tall castle, with its armed crest, looks down among the reapers.

"You have not lost your friend and lover, yet you are melancholy!" said a voice behind me, that I was scarce startled to hear.

"Is it you, Iminild?"

"Scarce the same—for Iminild was never before so sad. It is something in the sunset. Come away whilst the woman keeps down in me, and let us stroll through the Plaza, where the band is playing. Do you love military music?"

I looked at the costume and figure of the extraordinary creature before I ventured with her on a public promenade. She was dressed like one of the travelling apprentices of Germany, with cap and *bleuzer*, and had assumed the air of the craft with a success absolutely beyond detection. I gave her my arm and we sauntered through the crowd, listening to the thrilling music of one of the finest bands in Germany. The privileged character and free manners of the wandering craftsmen whose dress she had adopted, I was well aware, reconciled, in the eyes of the inhabitants, the marked contrast between our conditions in life. They would simply have said, if they had made a remark at all, that the Englishman was *bon enfant* and the craftsman *bon camarade*.

"You had better look at *me*, messieurs!" said the dusty apprentice, as two officers of the regiment passed and gave me the usual strangers' stare; "I am better worth your while by exactly five thousand florins."

"And pray how?" I asked.

"That price is set on my head."

"Heavens! and you walk here?"

"They kept you longer than usual with your passport, I presume?"

"At the gate? yes."

"I came in with my pack at the time. They have orders to examine all travellers and passports with unusual care, these sharp officials! But I shall get out as easily as I got in!"

"My dear countess!" I said, in a tone of serious remonstrance, "do not trifle with the vigilance of the best police in Europe! I am your guardian, and you owe my advice some respect. Come away from the square and let us talk of it in earnest."

"Wise seignior! suffer me to remind you how deftly I slipped through the fingers of these gentry after our tragedy in Vienna, and pay *my* opinion some respect! It was my vanity that brought me, with my lackeys, to meet you *à la prince royale* so near Vienna; and hence this alarm in the police, for I was seen and suspected. I have shown myself to you in my favorite character, however, and have done with such measures. You shall see me on the road to-morrow, safe as the heart in your bosom. Where is Monsieur Percie!"

"At the hotel. But stay! can I trust you with yourself?"

"Yes, and dull company, too! *A revoir!*"

And whistling the popular air of the craft she had assumed, the countess Iminild struck her long staff on the pavement, and with the gait of a tired and habitual pedestrian, disappeared by a narrow street leading under the precipitory battlements of the castle.

Percie made his appearance with a cup of coffee the following morning, and, with the intention of posting a couple of leagues to breakfast, I hurried through my toilet and was in my carriage an hour after sunrise. The postillion was in his saddle, and only waited for Percie, who, upon inquiry, was nowhere to be found. I sat fifteen minutes, and just as I was beginning to be alarmed, he ran into the large court of the hotel, and, crying out to the postillion that all was right, jumped into his place with an agility, it struck me, very unlike his usual gentlemanlike deliberation. Determining to take advantage of the first up-hill to catechize him upon his matutinal rambles, I read the signs along the street till we pulled up at the gate.

Iminild's communication had prepared me for an unusual delay with my passport, and I was not surprised when the officer, in returning it to me, requested me as a matter of form, to declare, upon my honor, that the servant behind my carriage was an Englishman, and the person mentioned in my passport.

"*Foi d'honneur*, monsieur," I said, placing my hand politely on my heart, and off trotted the postillion, while the captain of the guard, flattered

with my civility, touched his foraging-cap, and sent me a German blessing through his mustache.

It was a divine morning, and the fresh and dewy air took me back many a year, to the days when I was more familiar with the hour. We had a long *trajet* across the plain, and unlooping an antivibration tablet, for the invention of which my ingenuity took great credit to itself (suspended on caoutchouc cords from the roof of the carriage—and deserving of a patent I trust you will allow!) I let off my poetical vein in the following beginning to what might have turned out, but for the interruption, a very edifying copy of verses:—

‘Ye are not what you were to me,
Oh waning night and morning star!
Though silent still your watches flee—
Though hang yon lamp in heaven as far—
Though live the thoughts ye fed of yore—
I’m thine, oh starry dawn, no more!
Yet to that dew-pearled hour alone
I was not folly’s blindest child;
It came when wearied mirth had flown,
And sleep was on the gay and wild;
And wakeful with repentant pain,
I lay amid its lap of flowers,
And with a truant’s earnest brain
Turned back the leaves of wasted hours.
The angels that by day would flee,
Returned, oh morning star! with thee!
Yet now again——’ * * * *
* * * * *

A foot thrust into my carriage-window rudely broke the thread of these delicate musings. The postillion was on a walk, and before I could get my wits back from their wool-gathering, the countess Iminild, in Percie’s clothes, sat laughing on the cushion beside me.

“On what bird’s back has your ladyship descended from the clouds?” I asked with unfeigned astonishment.

“The same bird has brought us both down—*c’est à dire*, if you are not still *en l’air*,” she added, looking from my scrawled tablets to my perplexed face.

“Are you really and *really* the countess Iminild?” I asked with a smile, looking down at the trowsered feet and loose-fitting boots of the *pseudo-valet*.

“Yes, indeed! but I leave it to you to swear, ‘*foi d’honneur*,’ that a born countess is an English valet!” And she laughed so long and merrily that the postillion looked over his yellow epaulets in astonishment.

“Kind, generous Percie!” she said, changing her tone presently to one of great feeling, “I would scarce believe him last night when he informed me as an inducement to leave him behind, that he was only a servant! You never told me this. But he is a gentleman, in every feeling as well as in every feature, and by Heavens! he shall be a menial no longer!”

This speech, begun with much tenderness, rose, toward the close, to the violence of passion; and folding her arms with an air of defiance, the ladyoutlaw threw herself back in the carriage.

“I have no objection,” I said, after a short silence, “that Percie should set up for a gentleman. Nature has certainly done her part to make him one; but till you can give him means and education, the coat which you wear, with such a grace, is his safest shell. ‘Ants live safely till they have gotten wings,’ says the old proverb.”

The blowing of the postillion’s horn interrupted the argument, and a moment after, we were rolled up with German leisure, to the door of the small inn where I had designed to breakfast. Thinking it probable that the people of the house, in so small a village, would be too simple to make any dangerous comments upon our appearance, I politely handed the countess out of the carriage, and ordered plates for two.

“It is scarce worth while,” she said, as she heard the order, “for I shall remain at the door on the look out. The *eil-waggen* for Trieste, which was to leave Gratz an hour after us, will be soon here, and (if my friends have served me well) Percie in it. St. Mary speed him safely!”

She strode away to a small hillock to look out for the lumbering diligence, with a gait that was no stranger to “doublet and hose.” It soon came on with its usual tempest of whip-cracking and bugle-blasts, and nearly overturning a fat burgher, who would have proffered the assistance of his hand, out jumped a petticoat, which I saw at a glance, gave a very embarrassed motion to gentleman Percie.

“This young lady,” said the countess, dragging the striding and unwilling damsel into the little parlor where I was breakfasting, “travels under the charge of a deaf old brazier, who has been requested to protect her modesty as far as Laybach. Make a courtesy, child!”

“I beg pardon, sir!” began Percie.

“Hush, hush! no English! Walls have ears, and your voice is rather gruffish, mademoiselle. Show me your passport? *Cunegunda Von Krakenpate, eighteen years of age, blue eyes, nose and chin middling, etc!* There is the conductor’s horn! *Allez vite!* We meet at Laybach. Adieu, *charmante femme*! Adieu!”

And with the sort of caricatured elegance which women always assume in their imitations of our sex, Countess Iminild, in frockcoat and trowsers, helped into the diligence, in hood and petticoat, my “tiger” from Cranbourne-alley!

CHAPTER IV.

SPITE of remonstrance on my part, the imperative countess, who had asserted her authority more than once on our way to Laybach, insisted on the company of Miss Cunegunda Von Krakenpate, in an evening walk around the town. Fearing that Percie’s masculine stride would betray him, and objecting to lend myself to a farce with my valet, I opposed the freak as long as it was courteous—but it was not the first time I had learned that a spoiled woman would have her own way, and too vexed to laugh, I soberly promenaded the broad avenue of the capital of Styria, with a *valet en demoiselle*, and a *dame en valet*.

It was but a few hours hence to Planina, and Iminild, who seemed to fear no risk out of a walled city, waited on Percie to the carriage the following morning, and in a few hours we drove up to the rural inn of this small town of Littorale.

I had been too much out of humor to ask the countess a second time what errand she could have in so rustic a neighborhood. She had made a mystery of it, merely requiring of me that I should defer all arrangements for the future, as far as she was concerned, till we had visited a spot in Littorale, upon which her fate in many respects depended. After twenty fruitless conjectures, I abandoned myself to the course of circumstances, reserving only the determination, if it should prove a haunt of Yvian’s troop, to separate at once from her company and await her at Trieste.

Our dinner was preparing at the inn, and tired of the embarrassment Percie exhibited in my presence I walked out and seated myself under an immense linden, that every traveller will remember, standing in the centre of the motley and indescribable clusters of buildings, which serve the

innkeeper and blacksmith of Planina for barns, forge, dwelling, and out-houses. The tree seems the father of the village. It was a hot afternoon, and I was compelled to dispute the shade with a congregation of cows and double-jointed post-horses; but finding a seat high up on the root, at last I busied myself with gazing down the road, and conjecturing what a cloud of dust might contain, which in an opposite direction from that which we had come, was slowly creeping onward to the inn.

Four roughly-harnessed horses at length appeared, with their traces tied over their backs—one of them ridden by a man in a farmer's frock. They struck me at first as fine specimens of the German breed of draught-horses, with their shaggy fetlocks and long manes; but while they drank at the trough which stood in the shade of the linden, the low tone in which the man checked their greedy thirst, and the instant obedience of the well-trained animals, awakened at once my suspicions that we were to become better acquainted. A more narrow examination convinced me that, covered with dust and disguised with coarse harness as they were, they were four horses of such bone and condition, as were never seen in a farmer's stables. The rider dismounted at the inn door, and very much to the embarrassment of my suppositions, the landlord, a stupid and heavy Boniface, greeted him with the familiarity of an old acquaintance, and in answer, apparently to an inquiry, pointed to my carriage, and led him into the house.

"Monsieur Tyrell," said Iminild, coming out to me a moment after, "a servant whom I had expected has arrived with my horses, and with your consent, they shall be put to your carriage immediately."

"To take us where?"

"To our place of destination."

"Too indefinite, by half, countess! Listen to me! I have very sufficient reason to fancy that, in leaving the post-road to Trieste, I shall leave the society of honest men. You and your 'minions of the moon' may be very pleasant, but you are not very safe companions; and having really a wish to die quietly in my bed—"

The countess burst into a laugh.

"If you will have the character of the gentleman you are about to visit from the landlord here—"

"Who is one of your ruffians himself, I'll be sworn!"

"No, on my honor! A more innocent old beer-guzzler lives not on the road. But I will tell you thus much, and it ought to content you. Ten miles to the west of this dwells a country gentleman, who, the landlord will certify, is as honest a subject of his gracious majesty as is to be found in Littorale. He

lives freely on his means, and entertains strangers occasionally from all countries, for he has been a traveller in his time. You are invited to pass a day or two with this Mynheer Krakenpate (who, by the way, has no objection to pass for the father of the young lady you have so kindly brought from Laybach), and he has sent you his horses, like a generous host, to bring you to his door. More seriously, this was a retreat of Yvain's, where he would live quietly and play *bon citoyen*, and you have nothing earthly to fear in accompanying me thither. And now will you wait and eat the greasy meal you have ordered, or will you save your appetite for *la fortune de pot* at Mynheer Krakenpate's, and get presently on the road?"

I yielded rather to the seducing smile and captivating beauty of my pleasing ward, than to any confidence in the honesty of Mynheer Krakenpate; and Percie being once more ceremoniously handed in, we left the village at the sober trot becoming the fat steeds of a landholder. A quarter of a mile of this was quite sufficient for Iminild, and a word to the postillion changed, like a metamorphosis, both horse and rider. From a heavy unelastic figure, he rose into a gallant and withy horseman, and, with one of his low-spoken words, away flew the four compact animals, treading lightly as cats, and with the greatest apparent ease, putting us over the ground at the rate of fourteen miles in the hour.

The dust was distanced, a pleasant breeze was created by the motion, and when at last we turned from the main road, and sped off to the right at the same exhilarating pace, I returned Iminild's arch look of remonstrance with my best-humored smile and an affectionate *je me fie à vous!* Miss Krakenpate, I observed, echoed the sentiment by a slight pressure of the countess's arm, looking very innocently out of the window all the while.

A couple of miles, soon done, brought us round the face of a craggy precipice, forming the brow of a hill, and with a continuation of the turn, we drew up at the gate of a substantial-looking building, something between a villa and a farm-house, built against the rock, as if for the purpose of shelter from the north winds. Two beautiful Angora hounds sprang out at the noise, and recognized Iminild through all her disguise, and presently, with a look of forced courtesy, as if not quite sure whether he might throw off the mask, a stout man of about fifty, hardly a gentleman, yet above a common peasant in his manners, stepped forward from the garden to give Miss Krakenpate his assistance in alighting.

"Dinner in half an hour!" was Iminild's brief greeting, and, stepping between her bowing dependent and Percie, she led the way into the house.

I was shown into a chamber, furnished scarce above the common style of a German inn, where I made a hungry man's dispatch of my toilet, and

descended at once to the parlor. The doors were all open on the ground floor, and, finding myself quite alone, I sauntered from room to room, wondering at the scantiness of the furniture and general air of discomfort, and scarce able to believe that the same mistress presided over this and the singular paradise in which I had first found her at Vienna. After visiting every corner of the ground floor with a freedom which I assumed in my character as guardian, it occurred to me that I had not yet found the dining-room, and I was making a new search, when Iminild entered.

I have said she was a beautiful woman. She was dressed now in the Albanian costume, with the additional gorgeousness of gold embroidery, which might distinguish the favorite child of a chief of Suli. It was the male attire, with a snowy white juktanilla reaching to the knee, a short jacket of crimson velvet, and a close-buttoned vest of silver cloth, fitting admirably to her girlish bust, and leaving her slender and pearly neck to rise bare and swan-like into the masses of her clustering hair. Her slight waist was defined by the girdle of fine linen edged with fringe of gold, which was tied coquettishly over her left side and fell to her ankle, and below the embroidered leggin appeared the fairy foot, which had drawn upon me all this long train of adventure, thrust into a Turkish slipper with a sparkling emerald on its instep. A feronière of the yellowest gold sequins bound her hair back from her temples, and this was the only confinement to the dark brown meshes which, in wavy lines and in the richest profusion, fell almost to her feet. The only blemish to this vision of loveliness was a flush about her eyes. The place had recalled Yvain to her memory.

"I am about to disclose to you secrets," said she, laying her hand on my arm, "which have never been revealed but to the most trusty of Yvain's confederates. To satisfy those whom you will meet you must swear to me on the same cross which *he* pressed to your lips when dying, that you will never violate, while I live, the trust we repose in you."

"I will take no oath," I said; "for you are leading me blindfolded. If you are not satisfied with the assurance that I can betray no confidence which honor would preserve, hungry as I am, I will yet dine in Planina."

"Then I will trust to the faith of an Englishman. And now I have a favor, not to beg, but to insist upon—that from this moment you consider Percie as dismissed from your service, and treat him, while here at least, as my equal and friend."

"Willingly!" I said; and as the word left my lips, enter Percie in the counterpart dress of Iminild, with a silver-sheathed ataghan at his side, and the bluish muzzles of a pair of Egg's hair-triggers peeping from below his girdle. To do the rascal justice, he was as handsome in his new toggery as

his mistress, and carried it as gallantly. They would have made the prettiest *tableau* as Juan and Haidée.

"Is there any chance that these 'persuaders' may be necessary," I asked, pointing to his pistols, which awoke in my mind a momentary suspicion.

"No—none that I can foresee—but they are loaded. A favorite, among men whose passions are professionally wild," she continued with a meaning glance at Percie; "should be ready to lay his hand on them, even if stirred in his sleep!"

I had been so accustomed to surprises of late, that I scarce started to observe, while Iminild was speaking, that an old-fashioned clock, which stood in a niche in the wall, was slowly swinging out upon hinges. A narrow aperture of sufficient breadth to admit one person at a time, was disclosed when it had made its entire revolution, and in it stood, with a lighted torch, the stout landlord Von Krakenpate. Iminild looked at me an instant as if to enjoy my surprise.

"Will you lead me in to dinner, Mr. Tyrell?" she said, at last, with a laugh.

"If we are to follow Mynheer Von Krakenpate," I replied, "give me hold of the skirt of your *juktanilla*, rather, and let me follow! Do we dine in the cellar?"

I stepped before Percie, who was inclined to take advantage of my hesitation to precede me, and followed the countess into the opening, which, from the position of the house, I saw must lead directly into the face of the rock. Two or three descending steps convinced me that it was a natural opening enlarged by art; and after one or two sharp turns, and a descent of perhaps fifty feet, we came to a door which, suddenly flung open by our torch-bearer, deluged the dark passage with a blaze of light which the eyesight almost refused to bear. Recovering from my amazement, I stepped over the threshold of the door, and stood upon a carpet in a gallery of sparkling stalactites, the dazzling reflection of innumerable lamps flooding the air around, and a long snow-white vista of the same brilliancy and effect stretching downward before me. Two ridges of the calcareous strata running almost parallel over our heads, formed the cornices of the descending corridor, and from these, with a regularity that seemed like design, the sparkling pillars, white as alabaster, and shaped like inverted cones, dropped nearly to the floor, their transparent points resting on the peaks of the corresponding stalagmites, which, of a darker hue and coarser grain, seemed designed as bases to a new order of architectural columns. The reflection from the pure crystalline rock gave to this singular gallery a splendor which

only the palace of Aladdin could have equalled. The lamps were hung between in irregular but effective ranges, and in our descent, like Thalaba, who refreshed his dazzled eyes in the desert of snow by looking on the green wings of the spirit bird, I was compelled to bend my eyes perpetually for relief upon the soft, dark masses of hair which floated upon the lovely shoulders of Iminild.

At the extremity of the gallery we turned short to the right, and followed an irregular passage, sometimes so low that we could scarce stand upright, but all lighted with the same intense brilliancy, and formed of the same glittering and snow-white substance. We had been rambling on thus far perhaps ten minutes, when suddenly the air, which I had felt uncomfortably chill, grew warm and soft, and the low reverberation of running water fell delightfully on our ears. Far ahead we could see two sparry columns standing close together, and apparently closing up the way.

"Courage! my venerable guardian!" cried Iminild, laughing over her shoulder; "you will see your dinner presently. Are you hungry, Percie?"

"Not while you look back, Madame la Comtesse!" answered the callow gentleman, with an instinctive tact at his new vocation.

We stood at the two pillars which formed the extremity of the passage, and looked down upon a scene of which all description must be faint and imperfect. A hundred feet below ran a broad subterraneous river, whose waters, sparkling in the blaze of a thousand torches, sprang into light from the deepest darkness, crossed with foaming rapidity the bosom of the vast illuminated cavern, and disappeared again in the same inscrutable gloom. Whence it came or whither it fled was a mystery beyond the reach of the eye. The deep recesses of the cavern seemed darker for the intense light gathered about the centre.

After the first few minutes of bewilderment, I endeavored to realize in detail the wondrous scene before me. The cavern was of an irregular shape, but all studded above with the same sparry incrustations, thousands upon thousands of pendent stalactites glittering on the roof, and showering back light upon the clusters of blazing torches fastened every where upon the shelvy sides. Here and there vast columns, alabaster white, with bases of gold color, fell from the roof to the floor, like pillars left standing in the ruined aisle of a cathedral, and from corner to corner ran thin curtains of the same brilliant calcareous spar, shaped like the sharp edge of a snow-drift, and almost white. It was like laying bare the palace of some king wizard of the mine to gaze down upon it.

"What think you of Mynheer Krakenpate's taste in a dining-room, Monsieur Tyrell?" asked the countess, who stood between Percie and myself, with a hand on the shoulder of each.

I had scarce found time, as yet, to scrutinize the artificial portion of the marvellous scene, but, at the question of Iminild, I bent my gaze on a broad platform, rising high above the river on its opposite bank, the rear of which was closed in by perhaps forty irregular columns, leaving between them and the sharp precipice on the river-side, an area, in height and extent of about the capacity of a ball-room. A rude bridge, of very light construction, rose in a single arch across the river, forming the only possible access to the platform from the side where we stood, and, following the path back with my eye, I observed a narrow and spiral staircase, partly of wood and partly cut in the rock, ascending from the bridge to the gallery we had followed hither. The platform was carpeted richly, and flooded with intense light, and in its centre stood a gorgeous array of smoking dishes, served after the Turkish fashion, with a cloth upon the floor, and surrounded with cushions and ottomans of every shape and color. A troop of black slaves, whose silver anklets, glittered as they moved, were busy bringing wines and completing the arrangements for the meal.

"*Allons, mignon!*" cried Iminild, getting impatient and seizing Percie's arm, "let us get over the river, and perhaps Mr. Tyrell will look down upon us with his *grands yeux* while we dine. Oh, you will come with us! *Suivez donc!*"

An iron door, which I had not hitherto observed, let us out from the gallery upon the staircase, and Mynheer Von Krakenpate carefully turned the key behind us. We crept slowly down the narrow staircase and reached the edge of the river, where the warm air from the open sunshine came pouring through the cavern with the current, bringing with it a smell of green fields and flowers, and removing entirely the chill of the cavernous and confined atmosphere I had found so uncomfortable above. We crossed the bridge, and stepping upon the elastic carpets piled thickly on the platform, arranged ourselves about the smoking repast, Mynheer Von Krakenpate sitting down after permission from Iminild, and Percie by order of the same imperative dictatress, throwing his graceful length at her feet.

CHAPTER V.

"TAKE a lesson in flattery from Percie, Mr. Tyrell, and be satisfied with your bliss in my society without asking for explanations. I would fain have

the use of my tongue (to swallow) for ten minutes, and I see you making up your mouth for a question. Try this *pilau*! It is made by a Greek cook, who fries, boils, and stews, in a kitchen with a river for a chimney."

"Precisely what I was going to ask you. I was wondering how you cook without smoking your snow-white roof."

"Yes, the river is a good slave, and steals wood as well. We have only to cut it by moonlight and commit it to the current."

"The kitchen is down stream, then?"

"Down stream; and down stream lives jolly Perdicaris the cook, who having lost his nose in a sea-fight, is reconciled to forswear sunshine and mankind and cook rice for pirates."

"Is it true then that Yvain held command on the sea?"

"No, not Yvain, but Tranchcœur—his equal in command over this honest confederacy. By the way, he is your countryman, Mr. Tyrell, though he fights under a *nom de guerre*. You are very likely to see him, too, for his bark is at Trieste, and he is the only human being besides myself (and my company here) who can come and go at will in this robber's paradise. He is a lover of mine, *parbleu!* and since Yvain's death, Heaven knows what fancy he may bring hither in his hot brain! I have armed Percie for the hazard!"

The thin nostrils of my friend from Cranbourne-alley dilated with prophetic dislike of a rival thus abruptly alluded to, and there was that in his face which would have proved, against all the nurses' oaths in Christendom, that the spirit of a gentleman's blood ran warm through his heart. Signor Tranchcœur must be gentle in his suit, I said to myself, or he will find what virtue lies in hair-triggers! Percie had forgot to eat since the mention of the pirate's name, and sat with folded arms and his right hand on his pistol.

A black slave brought in an *omelette souffleé*, as light and delicate as the *chef-d'œuvre* of an *artiste* in the Palais Royal. Iminild spoke to him in Greek, as he knelt and placed it before her.

"I have a presentiment," she said, looking at me as the slave disappeared, "that Tranchcœur will be here presently. I have ordered another *omelette* on the strength of the feeling, for he is fond of it, and may be soothed by the attention."

"You fear him, then?"

"Not if I were alone, for he is as gentle as a woman when he has no rival near him—but I doubt his relish of Percie. Have you dined?"

"Quite."

"Then come and look at my garden, and have a peep at old Perdicaris. Stay here, Percie, and finish your grapes, *mon-mignon*! I have a word to say to Mr. Tyrell."

We walked across the platform, and passing between two of the sparry columns forming its boundary, entered upon a low passage which led to a large opening, resembling singularly a garden of low shrubs turned by some magic to sparkling marble.

Two or three hundred of these stalagmite cones, formed by the dripping of calcareous water from the roof (as those on the roof were formed by the same fluid which hardened and pondered), stood about in the spacious area, every shrub having an answering cone on the roof, like the reflection of the same marble garden in a mirror. One side of this singular apartment was used as a treasury for the spoils of the band, and on the points of the white cones hung pitchers and altar lamps of silver, gold drinking-cups, and chains, and plate and jewelery of every age and description. Farther on were piled, in unthrifty confusion, heaps of velvets and silks, fine broadcloths, French gloves, shoes and slippers, brocades of Genoa, pieces of English linen, damask curtains still fastened to their cornices, a harp and mandolin, cases of damaged *bons-bons*, two or three richly-bound books, and (last and most valuable in my eyes), a miniature bureau, evidently the plunder of some antiquary's treasure, containing in its little drawers antique gold coins of India, carefully dated and arranged, with a list of its contents half torn from the lid.

"You should hear Tranchcœur's sermons on these pretty texts," said the countess, trying to thrust open a bale of Brusa silk with her Turkish slipper. "He will beat off the top of a stalagmite with his sabre-hilt, and sit down and talk over his spoils and the adventures they recall, till morning dawns."

"And how is that discovered in this sunless cave?"

"By the perfume. The river brings news of it, and fills the cavern with the sun's first kisses. Those violets 'kiss and tell,' Mr. Tyrell! *Apropos des bottes*, let us look into the kitchen."

We turned to the right, keeping on the same level, and a few steps brought us to the brow of a considerable descent, forming the lower edge of the carpeted platform, but separated from it by a wall of close stalactites. At the bottom of the descent ran the river, but just along the brink, forming a considerable crescent, extended a flat rock, occupied by all the varied implements of a kitchen, and lighted by the glare of two or three different fires blazing against the perpendicular limit of the cave. The smoke of these followed the inclination of the wall, and was swept entirely down with the

current of the river. At the nearest fire stood Perdicaris, a fat, long-haired and sinister-looking rascal, his noseless face glowing with the heat, and at his side waited, with a silver-dish, the Nubian slave who had been sent for Tranchcœur's *omelette*.

"One of the most bloody fights of my friend the rover," said Iminild, "was with an armed slaver, from whom he took these six pages of mine. They have reason enough to comprehend an order, but too little to dream of liberty. They are as contented as tortoises, *ici-bas*."

"Is there no egress hence but by the iron door?"

"None that I know of, unless one could swim up this swift river like a salmon. You may have surmised by this time, that we monopolize an unexplored part of the great cave of Adelsberg. Common report says it extends ten miles under ground, but common report has never burrowed as far as this, and I doubt whether there is any communication. Father Krakenpate's clock conceals an entrance, discovered first by robbers, and handed down by tradition, Heaven knows how long. But—hark! Tranchcœur, by Heaven! my heart foreboded it!"

I sprang after the countess, who with her last exclamation, darted between two of the glittering columns separating us from the platform, and my first glance convinced me that her fullest anticipations of the pirate's jealousy were more than realized. Percie stood with his back to a tall pillar on the farther side, with his pistol levelled, calm and unmovable as a stalactite; and with his sabre drawn and his eyes flashing fire, a tall, powerfully-built man in a sailor's dress, was arrested by Iminild in the act of rushing on him. "Stop! or you die, Tranchcœur!" said the countess in a tone of trifling command. "He is my guest!"

"He is my prisoner, madame!" was the answer, as the pirate changed his position to one of perfect repose, and shot his sabre into his sheath, as if a brief delay could make little difference.

"We shall see that," said the countess once more, with as soft a voice as was ever heard in a lady's boudoir; and stepping to the edge of the platform, she touched with her slipper a suspended gong, which sent through the cavern a shrill reverberation heard clearly over the rushing music of the river.

In an instant the click of forty muskets from the other side fell on our ears; and, at a wave of her hand, the butts rattled on the rocks, and all was still again.

"I have not trusted myself within your reach, Monsieur Tranchcœur," said Iminild, flinging herself carelessly on an ottoman, and motioning Percie

to keep his stand, “without a score or two of my free-riders from Mount Semering to regulate your conscience. I am mistress here, sir! You may sit down!”

Tranchcœur had assumed an air of the most gentlemanly tranquillity, and motioning to one of the slaves for his pipe, he politely begged pardon for smoking in the countess’s presence, and filled the enamelled bowl with Shiraz tobacco.

“You heard of Yvain’s death?” she remarked after a moment, passing her hand over her eyes.

“Yes, at Venice.”

“With his dying words, he gave me and mine in charge to this Englishman. Mr. Tyrell, Monsieur Tranchcœur.”

The pirate bowed.

“Have you been long from England?” he asked, with an accent and voice that even in that brief question, savored of the nonchalant English of the west end.

“Two years!” I answered.

“I should have supposed much longer from your chivalry in St. Etienne, Mr. Tyrell. My countrymen generally are less hasty. Your valet there,” he continued, looking sneeringly at Percie, “seems as quick on the trigger as his master.”

Percie turned on his heel, and walked to the edge of the platform as if uneasy at the remark, and Iminild rose to her feet.

“Look you, Tranchcœur! I’ll have none of your sneers. That youth is as well-born and better bred than yourself, and with his consent, shall have the authority of the holy church ere long to protect my property and me. Will you aid me in this, Mr. Tyrell?”

“Willingly, countess!”

“Then, Tranchcœur, farewell! I have withdrawn from the common stock Yvain’s gold and jewels, and I trust to your sense of honor to render me at Venice whatever else of his private property may be concealed in the island.”

“Iminild!” cried the pirate, springing to his feet, “I did not think to show a weakness before this stranger, but I implore you to delay!”

His bosom heaved with strong emotion as he spoke, and the color fled from his bronzed features as if he were struck with a mortal sickness.

“I cannot lose you, Iminild! I have loved you too long. You must——”

She motioned to Percie to pass on.

“By Heaven, you shall!” he cried, in a voice suddenly become hoarse with passion; and reckless of consequences, he leaped across the heaps of cushion, and, seizing Percie by the throat, flung him with terrible and headlong violence into the river.

A scream from Iminild, and the report of a musket from the other side, rang at the same instant through the cavern, and as I rushed forward to seize the pistol which he had struck from Percie’s hand, his half-drawn sabre slid back powerless into the sheath, and Tranchcœur dropped heavily on his knee.

“I am peppered, Mr. Tyrell!” he said, waving me off with a difficult effort to smile, “look after the boy, if you care for him! A curse on her German wolves!”

Percie met me on the bridge, supporting Iminild, who hung on his neck, smothering him with kisses.

“Where is that dog of a pirate?” she cried, suddenly snatching her ataghan from the sheath and flying across the platform. “Tranchcœur!”

Her hand was arrested by the deadly pallor and helpless attitude of the wounded man, and the weapon dropped as she stood over him.

“I think it is not mortal,” he said, groaning as he pressed his hand to his side, “but take your boy out of my sight! Iminild!”

“Well, Tranchcœur!”

“I have not done well—but you know my nature—and my love! Forgive me, and farewell! Send Bertram to stanch this blood—I get faint! A little wine, Iminild!”

He took the massive flagon from her hand, and drank a long draught, and then drawing to him a cloak which lay near, he covered his head and dropped on his side as if to sleep.

Iminild knelt beside him and tore open the shirt beneath his jacket, and while she busied herself in stanching the blood, Perdicaris, apparently well prepared for such accidents, arrived with a surgeon’s probe, and, on examination of the wound, assured Iminild that she might safely leave him. Washing her hands in the flagon of wine, she threw a cloak over the wet and shivering Percie, and, silent with horror at the scene behind us, we made our way over the bridge, and in a short time, to my infinite relief, stood in the broad moonlight on the portico of Mynheer Krakenpate.

My carriage was soon loaded with the baggage and treasure of the countess, and with the same swift horses that had brought us from Planina, we regained the post-road and sped on toward Venice by the Friuli. We arrived on the following night at the fair city so beloved of romance, and

with what haste I might, I procured a priest and married the Countess Iminild to gentleman Percie.

As she possessed now a natural guardian, and a sufficient means of life, I felt released from my death vow to Yvain, and bidding farewell to the “happy couple,” I resumed my quiet habit of travel, and three days after my arrival at Venice, was on the road to Padua by the Brenta.

MY ONE ADVENTURE AS A BRIGAND.

I WAS standing in a hostelry, at Geneva, making a bargain with an Italian for a place in a return carriage to Florence, when an Englishman, who had been in the same steamer with me on Lake Leman, the day before, came in and stood listening to the conversation. We had been the only two passengers on board, but had passed six hours in each other's company without speaking. The road to an Englishman's friendship is to have shown yourself perfectly indifferent to his acquaintance, and, as I liked him from the first, we were now ready to be conscious of each other's existence.

"I beg pardon," said he, advancing in a pause of the vetturino's oration, "will you allow me to engage a place with you? I am going to Florence, and if agreeable to you, we will take the carriage to ourselves."

I agreed very willingly, and in two hours we were free of the gates of Geneva, and keeping along the edge of the lake, in the cool twilight of one of the loveliest of heaven's summer evenings. The carriage was spaciously contrived for four; and, with the curtains up all around, our feet on the forward seat, my companion smoking, and conversation bubbling up to please itself, we rolled over the smooth road, gliding into the first chapter of our acquaintance as tranquilly as Geoffrey Crayon and his reader into the first chapter of anything he has written.

My companion (Mr. St. John Elmslie, as put down in his passport) seemed to have something to think of beside propitiating my good will, but he was considerate and winning, from evident high breeding, and quite open, himself, to my most scrutinizing study. He was about thirty, and, without any definite beauty, was a fine specimen of a man. Probably most persons would have called him handsome. I liked him better, probably, from the subdued melancholy with which he brooded on his secret thought, whatever it might be—sad men, in this world of boisterous gayety or selfish ill-humor, interesting me always.

From that something, on which his memory fed in quiet but constant revery, nothing aroused my companion except the passing of a travelling carriage, going in the other direction, on our arrival at an inn. I began to suspect, indeed, after a little while, that Elmslie had some understanding with our vetturino, for, on the approach of any vehicle of pleasure, our

horses became restiff, and, with a sudden pull up, stood directly across the way. Out jumped my friend to assist in controlling the restiff animals, and, in the five minutes during which the strangers were obliged to wait, we generally saw their heads once or twice thrust inquiringly from the carriage window. This done, our own vehicle was again wheeled about, and the travellers allowed to proceed.

We had arrived at Bologna with but one interruption to the quiet friendliness of our intercourse. Apropos of some vein of speculation, I had asked my companion if he were married. He was silent for a moment, and then, in a jocose tone of voice which was new to me, replied, "I believe I have a wife—somewhere in Scotland." But though Elmslie had determined to show me that he was neither annoyed nor offended at my inquisitiveness, his manner changed. He grew ceremonious. For the remainder of that day, I felt uncomfortable, I scarce knew why; and I silently determined that if my friend continued so exceedingly well-bred in his manner for another day, I should find an excuse for leaving him at Bologna.

But we had left Bologna, and, at sunset of a warm day, we were slowly toiling up the Appenines. The inn to which we were bound was in sight, a mile or two above us, and, as the vetturino stopped to breathe his horses, Elmslie jumped from the carriage and started to walk on. I took advantage of his absence to stretch myself over the vacated cushions, and, on our arrival at the inn, was soundly asleep.

My friend's voice, in an unusual tone, awoke me; and, by his face, as he looked in at the carriage window, I saw that he was under some extraordinary excitement. This I observed by the light of the stable-lantern —for the hostelry, Italian fashion, occupied the lower story of the inn, and our carriage was driven under the archway, where the faint light from without made but little impression on the darkness. I followed Elmslie's beckoning finger, and climbing after him up the stairway of stone, stood in a large refectory occupying the whole of the second story of the building.

At the first glance I saw that there was an English party in the house. An Italian inn of the lower order has no provision for private parties, and few, except English travellers, object to joining the common evening meal. The hall was dark with the twilight, but a large curtain was suspended across the farther extremity, and, by the glimmer of lights, and an occasional sound of a knife, a party was within supping in silence.

"If you speak, speak in Italian," whispered Elmslie, taking me by the arm, and leading me on tiptoe to one of the corners of the curtain.

I looked in and saw two persons seated at a table—a bold and soldierly-looking man of fifty, and a young lady, evidently his daughter. The beauty of the last-mentioned person was so extraordinary that I nearly committed the indiscretion of an exclamation in English. She was slight, but of full and well-rounded proportions, and she sat and moved with an eminent grace and ladylikeness altogether captivating. Though her face expressed a settled sadness, it was of unworn and faultless youth and loveliness, and while her heavily-fringed eyes would have done, in their expression, for a Niobe, Hebe's lips were not more ripe, nor Juno's arched more proudly. She was a blonde, with eyes and eyelashes darker than her hair—a kind of beauty almost peculiar to England.

The passing in of a tall footman, in a plain livery of gray, interrupted my gaze, and Elmslie drew me away by the arm, and led me into the road in front of the locanda. The night had now fallen, and we strolled up and down in the glimmer of the starlight. My companion was evidently much disturbed, and we made several turns after I had seen very plainly that he was making up his mind to communicate to me the secret.

"I have a request to make of you," he said, at last; "a service to exact, rather, to which there were no hope that you would listen for a moment if I did not first tell you a very singular story. Have a little patience with me, and I will make it as brief as I can—the briefer, that I have no little pain in recalling it with the distinctness of description."

I expressed my interest in all that concerned my new friend, and begged him to go on.

"Hardly six years ago," said Elmslie, pressing my arm gently in acknowledgment of my sympathy, "I left college and joined my regiment, for the first time, in Scotland. By the way, I should re-introduce myself to you as Viscount S——, of the title of which, then, I was in prospect. My story hinges somewhat upon the fact that, as an honorable captain, a nobleman in expectancy, I was an object of some extraneous interest to the ladies who did the flirting for the garrison. God forgive me for speaking lightly on the subject!

"A few evenings after my arrival, we had been dining rather freely at mess, and the major announced to us that we were invited to take tea with a linen-draper, whose house was a popular resort of the officers of the regiment. The man had three or four daughters, who, as the phrase goes, 'gave you a great deal for your money,' and, for romping and frolicking, they had good looks and spirit enough. The youngest was really very pretty, but the eldest, to whom I was exclusively presented by the major, as a sort of quiz on a new-comer, was a sharp and sneering old maid, red-headed,

freckled, and somewhat lame. Not to be outdone in frolic by my persecutor, I commenced making love to Miss Jacky in mock heroics, and we were soon marching up and down the room, to the infinite entertainment of my brother-officers, lavishing on each other every possible term of endearment.

"In the midst of this the major came up to me with rather a serious face.

" 'Whatever you do,' said he, 'for God's sake don't call the old girl your wife. The joke might be serious.'

"It was quite enough that I was desired not to do anything in the reign of misrule then prevailing. I immediately assumed a connubial air, to the best of my dramatic ability, begged Miss Jacky to join me in the frolic, and made the rounds of the room, introducing the old girl as Mrs. Elmslie, and receiving from her quite as many tendernesses as were bearable by myself or the company present. I observed that the lynx-eyed linen-draper watched this piece of fun very closely, and my friend, the major, seemed distressed and grave about it. But we carried it out till the party broke up, and the next day the regiment was ordered over to Ireland, and I thought no more, for a while, either of Miss Jacky or my own absurdity.

"Two years afterwards, I was, at a drawing-room, at St. James's, presented, for the first time, by the name which I bear. It was not a very agreeable event to me, as our family fortunes were inadequate to the proper support of the title, and on the generosity of a maternal uncle, who had been at mortal variance with my father, depended our hopes of restoration to prosperity. From the mood of bitter melancholy in which I had gone through the ceremony of an introduction, I was aroused by the murmur in the crowd at the approach of a young girl just presented to the king. She was following a lady whom I slightly knew, and had evidently been presented by her; and, before I had begun to recover from my astonishment at her beauty, I was requested by this lady to give her *protegé* an arm, and follow to a less crowded apartment of the palace.

"Ah, my friend! the exquisite beauty of Lady Melicent—but you have seen her. She is here, and I must fold her in my arms to-night, or perish in the attempt.

"Pardon me!" he added, as I was about to interrupt him with an explanation. "She has been—she is—my wife! She loved me and married me, making life a heaven of constant ecstasy—for I worshipped her with every fibre of my existence."

He paused and gave me his story brokenly, and I waited for him to go on without questioning.

"We had lived together in absolute and unclouded happiness for eight months, in lover-like seclusion, at her father's house, and I was looking forward to the birth of my child with anxiety and transport, when the death of my uncle left me heir to his immense fortune, and I parted from my greater treasure to go and pay the fitting respect at his burial.

"I returned, after a week's absence, with an impatience and ardor almost intolerable, and found the door closed against me.

"There were two letters for me at the porter's lodge—one from Lord A ——, my wife's father, informing me that the Lady Melicent had miscarried and was dangerously ill, and enjoining upon me as a man of honor and delicacy never to attempt to see her again; and another from Scotland, claiming a fitting support for my lawful wife, the daughter of the linen-draper. The proofs of the marriage, duly sworn to and certified by the witnesses of my fatal frolic, were enclosed, and on my recovery, six weeks after, from the delirium into which these multiplied horrors precipitated me, I found that, by the Scotch law, the first marriage was valid, and my ruin was irrevocable."

"And how long since was this?" I inquired, breaking in upon his narration for the first time.

"A year and a month—and till to-night I have not seen her. But I must break through this dreadful separation now—and I must speak to her, and press her to my breast—and you will aid me?"

"To the last drop of my blood assuredly. But how?"

"Come to the inn! You have not supped, and we will devise as you eat. And you must lend me your invention, for my heart and brain seem to be going wild."

Two hours after, with a pair of loaded pistols in my breast, we went to the chamber of the host, and bound him and his wife to the posts of their bed. There was but one man about the house, the hostler, and we had made him intoxicated with our travelling flask of brandy. Lord A—— and his daughter were still sitting up, and she, at her chamber window, was watching the just risen moon, over which the clouds were drifting very rapidly. Our business was, now, only with them, as, in their footman, my companion had found an attached creature, who remembered him, and willingly agreed to offer no interruption.

After taking a pull at the brandy-flask myself (for, in spite of my blackened face and the slouched hat of the hostler, I required some fortification of the muscles of my face before doing violence to an English nobleman), I opened the door of the chamber which must be passed to gain

access to that of Lady Melicent. It was Lord A——'s sleeping-room, and, though the light was extinguished, I could see that he was still up, and sitting at the window. Turning my lantern inward, I entered the room and set it down, and, to my relief, Lord A—— soliloquized in English, that it was the host with a hint that it was time to go to bed. My friend was at the door, according to my arrangement, ready to assist me should I find any difficulty; but, from the dread of premature discovery of the person, he was to let me manage it alone if possible.

Lord A—— sat unsuspectingly in the chair, with his head turned half way over his shoulders to see why the officious host did not depart. I sprung suddenly upon him, drew him backward and threw him on his face, and with my hand over his mouth, threatened him with death, in my choicest Italian, if he did not remain passive till his portmanteau had been looked into. I thought he might submit, with the idea that it was only a robbery, and so it proved. He allowed me, after a short struggle, to tie his hands behind him, and march him down to his carriage, before the muzzle of my pistol. The hostelry was still as death, and shutting his carriage door upon his lordship, I mounted guard.

The night seemed to me very long, but morning dawned, and, with the earliest gray, the postillions came knocking at the outer door of the locanda. My friend went out to them, while I marched back Lord A—— to his chamber, and, by immense bribing, the horses were all put to our carriage a half hour after, and the outraged nobleman was left without the means of pursuit till their return. We reached Florence in safety, and pushed on immediately to Leghorn, where we took the steamer for Marseilles and eluded arrest, very much to my most agreeable surprise.

By a Providence that does not always indulge mortals with removing those they wish into another world, Lord S—— has lately been freed from his harrowing chain by the death of his so-called lady; and, having re-married Lady Melicent, their happiness is renewed and perfect. In his letter to me, announcing it, he gives me liberty to tell the story, as the secret was divulged to Lord A—— on the day of his second nuptials. He said nothing, however, of his lordship's forgiveness for my rude handling of his person, and, in ceasing to be considered a brigand, possibly I am responsible as a gentleman.

COUNT POTTS'S STRATEGY.

"L'Esprit est un faux monnayeur, qui change continuellement les gros sous en louis d'or, et qui souvent fait de ses louis d'or des gros sous."

THERE were five hundred guardian angels (and of course as many evil spirits), in and about the merry premises of Congress Hall. Each gay guest had his pair; but though each pair had their special ministry (and there were here and there a guest who would not have objected to transform his, for the time being, into a pair of trotting ponies), the attention of the cherubic troop, it may fairly be presumed, was directed mainly to the momentous flirtations of Miss C. Sophy Onthank, the dread disposer of the destinies of eighty thousand innocent little dollars.

Miss Chittaline Sophy (though this is blabbing, for that mysterious "C." was generally condemned to travel in domino)—Miss Chittaline Sophy, besides her good and evil spirit already referred to, was under the additional watch and ward of a pair of bombazine aunts, Miss Charity Onthank and Miss Sophy the same, of which she was the united namesake. "Chittaline" being the embellished diminutive of "Charity." These Hesperian dragons of old maids were cut after the common pattern of such utensils, and of course would not dignify a description; though this disparaging remark (we must stop long enough to say) is not at all to the prejudice of that occasional love-of-an-old-maid that one *does* sometimes see—that four-leaved clover of virginity—that star apart in the spilled milk of the Via Lactea:—

"For now and then you find one who could rally
  At forty, and go back to twenty-three—
A handsome, plump, affectionate 'Aunt Sally,'
  With no rage for cats, flannel, and Bohea."

But the two elderly Misses Onthank were not of this category.

By the absence of that Junonic assurance, common to those ladies who are born and bred heiresses, Miss C. Sophy's autograph had not long been an object of interest at the bank. She had all the air of having been "brought up at the trough," as the French phrase it,

and her belleship was still a surprise to her. Like the red-haired and freckled who find, when they get to Italy, that their flaming peculiarities are considered as captivating signs of a skin too delicate for exposure, she received with a slight incredulity the homage to her unseen charms—homage not the less welcome for exacting from the giver an exercise of faith and imagination. The same faith and imagination, she was free to suppose, might find a Venus within her girdle, as the sculptor sees one in the goodly block of marble, lacking only the removal of its clumsy covering by chisel and sand-paper. With no visible waist, she was as tall as a pump, and riotously rosy like a flowering rhododendron. Hair brown and plenty of it. Teeth white and all at home. And her voice, with but one semitone higher, would have been an approved contralto.

Having thus compressed into a couple of paragraphs what would have served a novelist for his first ten chapters, permit us, without the bother of intermediate mortar or moralizing (though this is rather a mixed figure), to lay on the next brick in the shape of a hint at the character of Miss Onthank’s two prominent admirers.

Mr. Greville Seville was a New York beau. He had all the refinement that could possibly be imported. He had seen those who had seen all that is visible in the fashionable man of London and Paris, and he was well versed in the conduits through which their several peculiarities found their way across the Atlantic. Faultlessly booted, pantalooned, waistcoated, and shirted, he could afford to trust his coat and scarf to Providence, and his hat to Warnock or Leary. He wore a slightly restrained whisker, and a faint smut of an imperial, and his gloves fitted him inexorably. His figure was a matter of course. He was brought up in New York, and was one of the four hundred thousand results (more or less) of its drastic waters—washy and short. And he had as good a heart as is compatible with the above personal advantages.

It would very much have surprised the “company” at Congress Hall to have seen Mr. Chesterfield Potts put down as No. 2, in the emulous contest for the two hands of Miss Onthank. The count (he was commonly called “Count Potts,” a compliment to good manners not unusual in America), was, by his own label, a man of “thirty and upward”—by the parish register possibly sixty-two. He was an upright, well preserved, stylish-looking man, with an expensive wig, fine teeth (commonly supposed not to be indigenous), and a lavish outlay of cotton batting, covering the retreat of such of his muscular forces as were inclined to retire from the field. What his native qualities might be was a branch of knowledge long since lost to

the world. His politeness had superseded the necessity of any particular inquiry into the matter; indeed, we are inclined to believe his politeness had superseded his character altogether. He was as incapable of the impolite virtues (of which there are several) as of the impolite vices. Like cricketing, punning, political speech-making, and other mechanical arts, complimenting may be brought to a high degree of dexterity, and Count Potts, after a practice of many years, could, over most kinds of female platitude, spread a flattering unction humbugative to the most suspicious incredulity. As he told no stories, made no puns, volunteered but little conversation, and had the air of a modest man wishing to avoid notice, the blockheads and the very young girls stoutly denied his fascination. But in the memory of riper belles, as they went to sleep night after night, lay snugly lodged and carefully treasured, some timely compliment, some soothing word, and though credited to "old Potts," the smile with which it was gracefully re-acknowledged the next morning at breakfast, would have been warm enough for young Ascanius. "Nice old Potts!" was the faint murmur of many a bright lip turning downward to the pillow in the "last position."

And now, dear reader, you have an idea of the forces in the field, and you probably know how "the war is carried on" at Saratoga. Two aunts and a guardian angel *versus* an evil spirit and two lovers—Miss Onthank's hand, the (well-covered) bone of contention. Whether the citadel would speedily yield, and which of these two rival knights would bear away the *palm* of victory, were questions upon which the majority of lookers-on were doomed to make erroneous predictions. The reader, of course, is in the sagacious minority.

Mr. Potts' income was a net answer to his morning prayer. It provided his "daily bread" but no provender for a horse. He probably coveted Miss Onthank as much for her accompanying oats as for her personal avoirdupois, since the only complaint with which he ever troubled his acquaintances, was one touching his inability to keep an equipage. Man is instinctively a centaur, he used to say, and when you cut him off from his horse and reduce him to his simple trunk (and a trunk was all the count's worldly furniture), he is but a mutilated remainder, robbed of his natural locomotive.

It was not authenticated in Wall-street that Mr. Greville Seville was reasonably entitled to horse-flesh and caparison; but he *had* a trotting wagon and two delicious cropped sorrels; and those who drove in his company were obliged to "down with the dust" (a *bon mot* of Count Potts'). Science explains many of the enigmas of common life, however, and the secret of Mr. Seville's equipment and other means of going on swimmingly, lay in his unusually large organ of hope. He was simply anticipating the arrival of

1840, a year in which he had reason to believe that there would be paid in to the credit of the present Miss Onthank, a sufficient sum to cover his loosest expenditure. The intermediate transfer to himself of her rights to the same, was a mere filling up of an outline, his mind being entirely made up as to the conditional incumbrance of the lady's person. He was now paying her some attentions in advance, and he felt justified in charging his expenses on the estate. She herself would wish it, doubtless, if she could look into the future with *his* eyes.

By all the common data of matrimonial skirmishing, a lover with horses easily outstrips a lover with none. Miss C. Sophy, besides, was particularly fond of driving, and Seville was an accomplished whip. There was no lack of the "golden opportunity" of *tête à tête*, for, with a deaf aunt and somebody else on the back seat, he had Miss Onthank to himself on the driving box, and could talk to his horses in the embarrassing pauses. It looked a clear case to most observers; and as to Seville, he had studied out a livery for his future footman and tiger, and would not have taken an insurance at a quarter per cent.

But Potts—ah! Potts had traced back the wires of woman's weaknesses. The heiress had no conversation (why should she have it and money too?), and the part of her daily drive which she remembered with most pleasure, was the flourish of starting and returning—managed by Potts with a pomp and circumstance that would have done honor to the goings and comings of Queen Victoria. Once away from the portico, it was a monotonous drag through the dust for two or three hours, and as most ladies know, it takes a great deal of chit-chat to butter so large a slice of time; for there was no making love, *parbleu*! Miss Chittaline Onthank was of a stratum of human nature susceptible of no sentiment less substantial than a kiss, and when the news, and the weather, and the virtues of the sorrel ponies, were exhausted, the talk came to a stand-still. The heiress began to remember with alarm that her education had been neglected, and that it was a relief to get back to old Potts and the portico.

Fresh from his nap and warm bath, the perfumed count stepped out from the group he had purposely collected, gave her his hand with a deferential inquiry, spread the loungers to the right and left like an "usher of the black rod," and with some well-studied impromptu compliment, waited on her to her chamber door. He received her again after her toilet, and for the remainder of the day devoted his utmost powers to her aggrandizement. If talking alone with her, it was to provoke her to some passage of school-girl autobiography, and listen like a charmed stone to the harp of Orpheus. If others were near, it was to catch her stupidities half uttered and twist them

into sense before they came to the ground. His own clevernesses were prefaced with "As you remarked yesterday, Miss Onthank," or, "As you were about to say when I interrupted you." If he touched her foot, it was "so small he didn't see it." If she uttered an irredeemable and immitigable absurdity, he covered its retreat with some sudden exclamation. He called her pensive, when she was sleepy and vacant. He called her romantic, when he couldn't understand her. In short, her vanity was embodied—turned into a magician and slave—and in the shape of Count Chesterfield Potts ministered to her indefatigably.

But the summer solstice began to wane. A week more was all that was allotted to Saratoga by that great American commander, General Consent.

Count Potts came to breakfast, in a shawl cravat!

"Off, Potts?"

"Are you flitting, my dear count?"

"What—going away, dear Mr. Potts?"

"Gracious me! don't go, Mr. Potts!"

The last exclamation was sent across the table in a tone of alarm by Miss C. Sophy, and responded to only by a bow of obsequious melancholy.

Breakfast was over, and Potts arose. His baggage was at the door. He sought no interview with Miss Onthank. He did not even honor the two bombazinities with a farewell. He stepped up to the group of belles, airing their demi toilets on the portico, said "Ladies! au revoir!" took the heiress's hand and put it gallantly toward his lips, and walked off with his umbrella, requesting the driver to pick him up at the spring.

"He has been refused!" said one.

"He has given Seville a clear field in despair!" said another. And this was the general opinion.

The day crept on. But there was an emptiness without Potts. Seville had the field to himself, and as there was no fear of a new squatter, he thought he might dispense with tillage. They had a very dull drive and a very dull dinner, and in the evening, as there was no ball, Seville went off to play billiards. Miss Onthank was surrounded, as usual, by the belles and beaux, but she was down flat—unmagnetized, ungalvanized. The magician was gone. Her stupid things "stayed put." She was like a glass bead lost from a kaleidoscope.

That weary week was spent in lamentations over Potts. Everybody praised him. Everybody complimented Miss Onthank on her exclusive power of monopoly over such porcelain ware. The two aunts were his main

glorifiers; for, as Potts knew, they were of that leathery toughness that only shines on you with rough usage.

We have said little, as yet, of Miss Onthank's capabilities in the love line. We doubt, indeed, whether she rightly understood the difference between loving and being born again. As to giving away her heart, she believed she could do what her mother did before her, but she would rather it would be one of her back teeth, if that would do as well. She liked Mr. Potts because he never made any difficulty about such things.

Seville considered himself accepted, though he had made no direct proposition. He had asked whether she preferred to live in country or town —she said "town." He had asked if she would leave the choice and management of horses and equipages to him—she said "be sure!" He had asked if she had any objection to his giving bachelor dinners occasionally—she said "la! no!" As he understood it, the whole thing was most comfortably arranged, and he lent money to several of his friends on the strength of it—giving his note, this is to say.

On a certain morning, some ten days after the departure of the count from Saratoga, Miss Onthank and her two aunts sat up in state in their parlor at the City Hotel. They always went to the City Hotel because Willard remembered their names, and asked after their uncle the Major. Mr. Seville's ponies and wagon were at the door, and Mr. Seville's father, mother, seven sisters, and two small brothers, were in the progress of a betrothal visit—calling on the future Mrs. Greville Seville.

All of a sudden the door was thrown open, and enter Count Potts!

Up jumped the enchanted Chittaline Sophy.

"How *do* you *do*, Mr. Potts?"

"Good morning, Mr. Potts!" said the aunts in a breath.

"D'ye-do, Potts!" said Seville, giving him his forefinger, with the air of a man rising from winning at cards.

Potts made his compliments all round. He was about sailing for Carolina, he said, and had come to ask permission of Miss Onthank to leave her sweet society for a few years of exile. But as this was the last of his days of pleasure, at least till he saw Miss Onthank again, he wished to be graced with the honor of her arm for a promenade in Broadway. The ladies and Mr. Seville doubtless would excuse her if she put on her bonnet without further ceremony.

Now Potts's politenesses had such an air of irresistible authority that people fell into their track like cars after a locomotive. While Miss Onthank was bonneting and shawling, the count entertained the entire party most

gayly, though the Sevilles thought it rather unceremonious in the affianced miss to leave them in the midst of a first visit, and Mr. Greville Seville had arranged to send his mother home on foot, and drive Miss Onthank out to Harlem.

"I'll keep my horses here till you come back!" he shouted after them, as she tripped gayly down stairs on the count's arm.

And so he did. Though it was two hours before she appeared again, the impatient youth kept the old aunts company, and would have stayed till night, sorrels and all—for in that drive he meant to "name the day," and put his creditors at ease.

"I wouldn't even go up stairs, my dear!" said the count, handing her to the wagon, and sending up the groom for his master, "it's but an hour to dine, and you'll like the air after your fatigue. Ah, Seville, I've brought her back! Take good care of her for *my* sake, my good fellow!"

"What the devil has *his* sake to do with it, I wonder?" said Seville, letting his horses off like two rockets in harness.

And away they went toward Harlem; and in about an hour, very much to the surprise of the old aunts, who were looking out of the parlor window, the young lady dismounted from an omnibus! Count Potts had come to dine with them, and he tripped down to meet her with uncommon agility.

"Why, do you know, aunties!" she exclaimed, as she came up stairs out of breath, "do you know that Mr. Seville, when I told him I was married already to Mr. Potts, stopped his wagon, and p-p-put me into an omnibus!"

"Married to Mr. Potts!" screamed Aunt Charity.

"Married to Mr. Potts!" screamed Aunt Sophy.

"Why—yes, aunties; he said he must go south, if I didn't!" drawled out the bride, with only a very little blush indeed. "Tell aunties all about it, Mr. Potts!"

And Mr. Potts, with the same smile of infallible propriety, which seemed a warrant for everything he said or did, gave a very sketchy account of his morning's work, which, like all he undertook, had been exceedingly well done—properly witnessed, certified, &c., &c., &c. All of which shows the very sound policy of first making yourself indispensable to people you wish to manage. Or, put it receipt-wise:—

To marry a flat:—First, raise her up till she is giddy. Second, go away, and let her down. Third, come back, and offer to support her, if she will give you her hand.

"*Simple comme bonjour!*" as Balsac says.

THE POWER OF AN "INJURED LOOK."

CHAPTER I.

I HAD a sort of candle-light acquaintance with Mr. Philip McRueit when we were in college. I mean to say that I had a daylight repugnance to him, and never walked with him or talked with him, or rode with him, or sat with him; and, indeed, seldom saw him—except as one of a club oyster-party of six. He was a short, sharp, satirical man (nicknamed "*my cruet*," by his cronies—rather descriptively!) but as plausible and vindictive as Mephistopheles before and after the ruin of a soul. In some other state of existence I had probably known and suffered by Phil. McRueit—for I knew him like the sleeve of an old coat, the first day I laid eyes on him; though other people seemed to have no such instinct. Oh, we were not new acquaintances—from whatever star he had been transported, for his sins, to this planet of dirt. I think he was of the same opinion, himself. He chose between open warfare and conciliation in the first five minutes—after seeing me as a stranger—chose the latter.

Six or seven years after leaving college, I was following my candle up to bed rather musingly, one night at the Astor, and on turning a corner, I was obliged to walk round a short gentleman who stood at the head of the stairs in an attitude of fixed contemplation. As I weathered the top of his hat rather closely, I caught the direction of his eye, and saw that he was regarding, very fixedly, a pair of rather dusty kid slippers, which had been set outside the door, probably for cleaning, by the occupant of the chamber opposite. As the gentleman did not move, I turned on the half landing of the next flight of stairs, and looked back, breaking in, by my sudden pause, upon his fit of abstraction. It was McRueit, and on recognizing me, he immediately beckoned me to his side.

"Does it strike you," said he, "that there is anything peculiar in that pair of shoes?"

"No—except that they certify to two very small feet on the other side of the door."

"Not, merely 'small,' my dear fellow! Do you see where the *pressure* has been in those slender shoes, how straight the inside line, how arched the

instep, how confidingly flat the pressure downward of the little great toe! It's a woman of sweet and relying character who wore that shoe to-day, and I must know her. More, sir, I must marry her! Ah, you laugh—but I *will*! There's a magnetism in that pair of shoes addressed to me only. Beg your pardon—good night—I'll go down stairs and find out her number—'74!' I'll be well acquainted with '74' by this time to-morrow!"

For the unconscious young lady asleep in that room, I lay awake half the night, troubled with foreboding pity. I knew the man so well, I was so certain that he would leave nothing possible undone to carry out this whimsical purpose. I knew that from that moment was levelled, point-blank, at the lady, whoever she might be (if single) a battery of devilish and pertinacious ingenuity, which would carry most any small fort of a heart, most any way barricaded and defended. He was well off, he was well-looking enough; he was deep and crafty. But if he *did* win her, she was gone! gone, I knew, from happiness, like a stone from a sling. He was a tyrant—subtle in his cruelties to all people dependent on him—and her life would be one of refined torture, neglect, betrayal and tears.

A fit of intermittent disgust for strangers, to which all persons living in hotels are more or less liable, confined my travels, for some days after this rencontre, to the silence-and-slop thoroughfare of the back-stairs. "Coming to my feed" of society one rainy morning, I went into the drawing-room after breakfast, and was not surprised to see McRueit in a posture of absorbed attention beside a lady. His stick stood on the floor, and with his left cheek resting on the gold head, he was gazing into her face, and evidently keeping her perfectly at her ease as to the wants and gaps of conversation, as he knew how to do—for he was the readiest man with his brick and mortar whom I ever had encountered.

"Who is that lady?" I asked of an omni-acquainted old bachelor friend of mine.

"Miss Jonthee Twitt—and what can be the secret of that rather exclusive gentleman's attention to her, I cannot fancy."

I pulled a newspaper from my pocket, and seating myself in one of the deep windows, commenced rather a compassionate study of Miss Twitt—intending fully, if I should find her interesting, to save her from the clutches of my detestable classmate.

She was a slight, hollow-chested, consumptive-looking girl, with a cast of features that any casual observer would be certain to describe as "interesting." With the first two minutes' gaze upon her, my sympathies were active enough for a crusade against a whole army of connubial tyrants.

I suddenly paused, however. Something McRueit said made a change in the lady's countenance. She sat just as still; she did not move her head from its negligent posture; her eyebrows did not contract; her lips did not stir; but the dull, sickly-colored lids descended calmly and fixedly till they hid from sight the upper edges of the pupils! and by this slight but infallible sign I knew—but the story will tell what I knew. Napoleon was nearly, but not quite right, when he said that there was no reliance to be placed on peculiarities of feature or expression.

CHAPTER II.

In August of that same year, I followed the world to Saratoga. In my first reconnoitre of the drawing-room of Congress Hall, I caught the eye of Mr. McRueit, and received from him a cordial salutation. As I put my head right, upon its pivot, after an easy nod to my familiar aversion, my eyes fell upon Miss Jonthee Twitt—*that was*—for I had seen, in the newspapers of two months before, that the resolve (born of the dusty slipper outside her door), had been brought about, and she was now on the irrevocable side of a honeymoon sixty days old.

Her eyelid was down upon the pupil—motionless, concentrated, and vigilant as a couched panther—and from beneath the hem of her dress curved out the high arched instep of a foot pointed with desperate tension to the carpet; the little great toe (whose relying pressure on the soiled slipper Mr. McRueit had been captivated by), now rigid with as strong a purpose as spiritual homeopathy could concentrate in so small a tenement. I thought I would make Mr. and Mrs. McRueit the subject of quiet study while I remained at Saratoga.

But I have not mentioned the immediate cause of Mrs. McRueit's resentment. Her bridegroom was walking up and down the room with a certain Mrs. Wanmaker, a widow, who was a better woman than she looked to be, as I chanced to know, but as nobody could know without the intimate acquaintance with Mrs. Wanmaker upon which I base this remark. With beauty of the most voluptuous cast, and a passion for admiration which induced her to throw out every possible lure to men any way worth her time as victims, Mrs. Wanmaker's blood was as "cold as the flow of Iser," and her propriety, in fact, wholly impregnable. I had been myself "tried on" by the widow Wanmaker, and twenty caravan-marches might have been made across the Desert of Sahara, while the conviction I have just stated was "getting through my hair." It was not wonderful, therefore, that both the

bride and her (usually) most penetratious bridegroom, had sailed over the widow's shallows, unconscious of soundings. She was a "deep" woman, too —but in the love line.

I thought McRueit singularly off his guard, if it were only for "appearances." He monopolized the widow effectually, and she thought it worth her while to let the world think him (a bridegroom and a rising young politician), mad for her, and, truth to say, they carried on the war strenuously. Perfectly certain as I was that "the whirligig of time" would "bring about the revenges" of Mrs. McRueit, I began to feel a meantime pity for her, and had myself presented duly by McRueit the next morning after breakfast.

It was a tepid, flaccid, revery-colored August morning, and the sole thought of the universe seemed to be to sit down. The devotees to gayety and mineral water dawdled out to the porticoes, and some sat on chairs under the trees, and the dandies lay on the grass, and the old ladies on the steps and the settees, and here and there, a man on the balustrade, and, in the large swing, *vis-à-vis*, sat McRueit and the widow Wanmaker, chattering in an undertone quite inaudible. Mrs. McRueit sat on a bench, with her back against one of the high-shouldered pine-trees in the court-yard, and I had called McRueit out of his swing to present me. But he returned immediately to the widow.

I thought it would be alleviative and good-natured to give Mrs. McRueit an insight to the harmlessness of Mrs. Wanmaker, and I had done so very nearly to my satisfaction, when I discovered that the slighted wife did not care sixpence about the *fact*, and that, unlike Hamlet, she only knew *seems*. The more I developed the innocent object of the widow's outlay of smiles and confidentialities, the more Mrs. McRueit placed herself in a posture to be remarked by the loungers in the court-yard and the dawdlers on the portico, and the more she deepened a certain look—you must imagine it for the present, dear reader. It would take a razor's edge of analysis, and a Flemish paint-pot and patience to carve that *injured look* into language, or paint it truthfully to the eye! Juries would hang husbands, and recording angels "ruthlessly overcharge," upon the unsupported evidence of such a look. She looked as if her heart must have suffocated with forbearance long before she began to look so. She looked as if she had forgiven and wept, and was ready to forgive and weep again. She looked as if she would give her life if she could conceal "her feelings," and as if she was nerving soul, and heart, and eyelids, and lachrymatory glands—all to agony—to prevent bursting into tears with her unutterable anguish! It was the most unresisting, unresentful, patient, sweet miserableness! A lamb's willingness to "furnish

forth another meal" of chops and sweetbread, was testy to such meek endurance! She was evidently a martyr, a victim, a crushed flower, a "poor thing!" But she *did*, now and then—unseen by anybody but me—give a glance from that truncated orb of a pupil of hers, over the top of her handkerchief, that, if incarnated, would have made a hole in the hide of a rhinoceros! It was triumph, venom, implacability—such as I had never before seen expressed in human glances.

There are many persons with but one idea, and that a good one. Mrs. McRueit, I presume, was incapable of appreciating my interest in her. At any rate she played the same game with me as with other people, and managed her affairs altogether with perfect unity. It was in vain that I endeavored to hear from her tongue what I read in the lowering pupil of her eye. She spoke of McRueit with evident reluctance, but always with discretion—never blaming him, nor leaving any opening that should betray resentment, or turn the current of sympathy from herself. The result was immediate. The women in the house began to look black upon McRueit. The men "sent him to Coventry" more unwillingly, for he was amusing and popular—but "to Coventry" he went! And at last the widow Wanmaker became aware that she was wasting her time on a man whose attentions were not wanted elsewhere—and *she* (the unkindest cut of all) found reasons for looking another way when he approached her. He had became aware, during this process, what was "in the wind," but he knew too much to stay in the public eye when it was inflamed. With his brows lowering, and his face gloomy with feelings I could easily interpret, he took the early coach on the third morning after my introduction to Mrs. McRueit, and departed, probably for a discipline trip, to some place where sympathy with his wife would be less dangerous.

CHAPTER III.

I THINK, that within the next two or three years, I heard McRueit's name mentioned several times, or saw it in the papers, connected with strong political movements. I had no very definite idea of where he was residing, however. Business called me to a western county, and on the road I fell into the company of a great political schemer and partisan—one of those joints (of the feline political body), the next remove from the "cat's paw." Finding that I cared not a straw for politics, and that we were going to the same town, he undertook the blandishment of an overflow of confidence upon me, probably with the remote possibility that he might have occasion to use me.

I gave in to it so far as courteously to receive all his secrets, and we arrived at our destination excellent friends.

The town was in a ferment with the coming election of a member for the legislature, and the hotel being very crowded, Mr. Develin (my fellow-traveller) and myself were put into a double-bedded room. Busy with my own affairs, I saw but little of him, and he seemed quite too much occupied for conversation, till the third night after our arrival. Lying in bed with the moonlight streaming into the room, he began to give me some account of the campaign preparing for around us, and presently mentioned the name of McRueit—(the name, by the way, that I had seen upon the placards, without caring particularly to inquire whether or not it was "mine ancient" aversion).

"They are not aware," said Mr. Develin, after talking on the subject awhile, "that this petty election, is, in fact, the grain of sand that is to turn the presidential scale. If McRueit should be elected (as I am sorry to say there seems every chance he will be), Van Buren's doom is sealed. I have come a little too late here. I should have had time to know something more of this man McRueit—"

"Perhaps I can give you some idea of him," interrupted I, "for he has chanced to be more in my way than I would have bargained for. But what do you wish to know particularly?" (I spoke, as the reader will see, in the unsuspecting innocence of my heart).

"Oh—anything—anything! Tell me all you know of him!"

Mr. Develin's vividness rather surprised me, for he raised himself on his elbow in bed—but I went on and narrated very much what I have put down for the reader in the two preceding chapters.

"How do you spell Mrs. Wanmaker's name?" asked my imbedded *vis-à-vis*, as I stopped and turned over to go to sleep.

I spelt it for him.

He jumped out of bed, dressed himself and left the room. Will the reader permit me to follow him, like Asmodeus, giving with Asmodean brevity the knowledge I afterward gained of his use of my involuntary revelation?

Mr. Develin roused the active member of the Van Buren committee from his slumber, and in an hour had the printers of their party paper at work upon a placard. A large meeting was to be held the next day in the town-hall, during which both candidates, it was supposed, would address the people. Ladies were to occupy the galleries. The hour came round. Mrs. McRueit's carriage drove into the village a few minutes before eleven, and as she stopped at a shop for a moment, a letter was handed her by a boy. She sat still and read it. She was alone. Her face turned livid with paleness after its

first flush, and forgetting her errand at the shop, she drove on to the town-hall. She took her seat in a prominent part of the gallery. The preliminaries were gone through with, and her husband rose to speak. He was a plausible orator, an eloquent man. But there was a sentiment circulating in the audience—something whispered from man to man—that strangely took off the attention of the audience. He could not, as he had never before found difficulty in doing, keep their eyes upon his lips. *Every one was gazing on his wife!* And there she sat—with her INJURED LOOK!—pale, sad, apparently striving to listen and conceal her mental suffering. It was as convincing to the audience of the truth of the insinuation that was passing from mouth to mouth—as convincing as would have been a revelation from Heaven. McRueit followed the many upturned eyes at last, and saw that they were bent on his wife, and that—*once more*—after years of conciliation, she wore THAT INJURED LOOK! His heart failed him. He evidently comprehended that the spirit that had driven him from Saratoga, years before—*popular sympathy with women*—had overtaken him and was plotting against him once more. His speech began to lose its concentration. He talked wide. The increasing noise overpowered him, and he descended at last from the platform in the midst of a universal hiss. The other candidate rose and spoke; and at the close of his speech the meeting broke up, and as they dispersed, their eyes were met at every corner with a large placard, in which "injured wife," "unfaithful husband," "widow W—n—k—r," were the words in prominent capitals. The election came on the next day, and Mr. McRueit being signally defeated, Mr. Van Buren's election to the Presidency (if Mr. Develin knew anything) was made certain—brought about by a woman's INJURED LOOK.

My business in the county was the purchase of land, and for a year or two afterward, I was a great deal there. Feeling that I had unintentionally furnished a weapon to his enemies, I did penance by cultivating McRueit. I went often to his house. He was at first a good deal broken up by the sudden check to his ambition, but he rallied with a change in his character for which I was not prepared. He gave up all antagonism toward his wife. He assumed a new manner to her. She had been skilfully *managed* before—but he took her now confidingly behind his shield. He felt overmastered by the key she had to popular sympathy, and he determined wisely to make it turn in his favor. By assiduity, by tenderness, childlikeness, he succeeded in completely convincing her that he had but one out-of-doors wish—that of embellishing her existence by his success. The effort on her was marvellous. She recovered her health, gradually changed to a joyous and earnest promoter of her husband's interests, and they were soon a marked model in the county

for conjugal devotion. The popular impression soon gained ground that Mr. McRueit had been shamefully wronged by the previous prejudice against his character as a husband. The tide that had already turned, soon swelled to a flood, and Mr. McRueit *now*—but Mr. McRueit is too powerful a person in the present government to follow any farther. Suffice it to say that he might return to Mrs. Wanmaker and his old courses if he liked—for his wife's INJURED LOOK is entirely *fattened out of possibility* by her happiness. She weighs two hundred, and could no more look injured than Sir John Falstaff.

MRS. FLIMSON.

Few women had more gifts than Mrs. Flimson. She was born of clever parents, and was lady-like and good-looking. Her education was that of a female Crichton, careful and universal; and while she had more than a smattering of most languages and sciences, she was up to any flight of fashion, and down to every secret of notable housewifery. She piqued herself, indeed, most upon her plain accomplishments (thinking, perhaps, that her more uncommon ones would speak for themselves); and it was a greater triumph, to her apprehension, that she could direct the country butcher to the sweetbread in slaughtering his veal, and show a country-girl how to send it to table with the proper complexion of a *riz de veau*, than that she could entertain any manner of foreigner in his own language, and see order in the stars and diamonds in back-logs. Like most female prodigies, whose friends expect them to be matched as well as praised, Mrs. Flimson lost the pick of the market, and married a man very much her inferior. The *pis aller*, Mr. Flimson, was a person of excellent family (after the fashion of a hill of potatoes—the best part of it under ground), and possessed of a moderate income. Near the meridian sun of a metropolis, so small a star would of course be extinguished; and as it was necessary to Mrs. Flimson's existence that she should be the cynosure of something, she induced her husband to remove to the sparser field of a distant country-town, where, with her diplomatic abilities, she hoped to build him up into a member of Congress. And here shone forth the genius of Mrs. Flimson. To make herself perfectly *au fait* of country habits, usages, and prejudices, and opinions, was but the work of a month or two of stealthy observation. At the end of this short period, she had mastered a manner of rustic frankness (to be put on at will); she had learned the secret of all rural economies; she had found out what degree of gentility would inspire respect without offending, or exciting envy, and she had made a near estimate of the influence, consequence, and worth-trouble-ness of every family within visiting distance.

With this ammunition, Mrs. Flimson opened the campaign. She joined all the sewing-circles of the village, refusing steadily the invidious honor of manager, pattern-cutter, and treasurer; she selected one or two talkative objects for her charity, and was studiously secret in her manner of conveying

her benefactions. She talked with farmers, quoting Mr. Flimson for her facts. She discoursed with the parson, quoting Mr. Flimson for her theology. She was intelligent and witty, and distributed plentiful scraps of information, always quoting Mr. Flimson. She managed the farm and the household, and kept all the accounts—Mr. Flimson was so overwhelmed with other business! She talked politics, admitting that she was less of a republican than Mr. Flimson. She produced excellent plans for charitable associations, town improvements, and the education of children—all the result of Mr. Flimson's hours of relaxation. She was—and was only—Mr. Flimson's humble vicegerent and poor representative. And every thing would seem so much better devised if he could have expressed it in person!

But Mr. Flimson was never nominated for Congress, and Mrs. Flimson was very well understood from the first by her country neighbors. There was a flaw in the high polish of her education—an error inseparable from too much consciousness of porcelain in this crockery world. To raise themselves sufficiently above the common level, the family of Mrs. Flimson habitually underrated vulgar human nature, and the accomplished daughter, good at every thing else, never knew where to find it. She thinks herself in a cloud, floating far out of the reach of those around her, when they are reading her at arm's length like a book. She calculates her condescension for "forty fathom deep," when the object of it sits beside her. She comes down graciously to the people's capacity, and her simplicity is set down for trap. And still wondering that Mr. Flimson is allowed by his country to remain in obscurity, and that stupid rustics will not fuse and be moulded by her well-studied congenialities, she begins to turn her attention to things more on her own level, and on Sundays looks like a saint distressed to be out of heaven. But for that one thread of contempt woven into the woof of her education, Mrs. Flimson might have shone as a star in the world where she glimmers like a taper.

FROM SARATOGA.

TO THE JULIA OF SOME YEARS AGO.

August 2, 1843.

I HAVE not written to you in your boy's lifetime—that fine lad, a shade taller than yourself, whom I sometimes meet at my tailor's and bootmaker's. I am not very sure, that after the first month (bitter month) of your marriage, I have thought of you for the duration of a revery—fit to be so called. I loved you—lost you—swore your ruin and forgot you—which is love's climax when jilted. And I never expected to think of you again.

Beside the astonishment at hearing from me at all, you will be surprised at receiving a letter from me at Saratoga. Here where the stars are, that you swore by—here, where the springs and colonnades, the woodwalks and drives, the sofas and springs, are all coated over with your delicious perjuries, your "protested" protestations, your incalculable bankruptcy of sighs, tears, caresses, promises! Oh! Julia—*mais, retiens toi, ma plume*!

I assure you I had not the slightest idea of ever coming here again in the world—not the slightest! I had a vow in heaven against it, indeed. While I hated you—before I forgot you, that is to say—I would not have come for your husband's million—(your price, Julia!) I had laid Saratoga away with a great seal, to be reopened in the next star I shall inhabit, and used as a lighthouse of warning. There was one bannister at Congress Hall, particularly—across which we parted nightly—the next object my hand touched after losing the warm pressure of yours—the place I leaned over with a heart under my waistcoat which would have scaled Olympus to be nearer to you, yet was kept back by that mahogany and your "no"—and I will believe that devils may become dolls, and ghosts play around us like the smoke of a cigar, since over that bannister I have thrown my leg and sat thinking of the past without phrensy or emotion! And none have a better right than we to laugh now at love's passionate eternities! For we were lovers, Julia—I, as I know, and you, as I believe—and in that entry, when we parted to dream, write, contrive for the blissful morrow—anything but sleep and forget—in that entry and over that bannister were said words of tenderness and devotion, from as deep soundings of two hearts as ever

plummet of this world could by possibility fathom. You *did* love me—monster of untruth and forgetfulness as you have since been bought for—*you did love me*! And that you can ride in your husband's carriage and grow fat, and that I can come here and make a mock of it, are two comments on love worthy of the common-place-book of Mephistopheles. Fie on us!

I came to Saratoga as I would look at a coat that I had worn twenty years before—with a sort of vacant curiosity to see the shell in which I had once figured. A friend said, "Join me at Saratoga!" and it sounded like, "Come and see where Julia was adorable." I came in a rail-car, under a hot sun, and wanted my dinner, and wished myself where Julia, indeed, sat fat in her *fauteuil*—wished it, for the good wine in the cellar and the French cook in the kitchen. And I did not go down to "Congress Hall," the old *palais d'amour*—but in the modern and comfortable parlor of the "United States," sat down by a pretty woman of these days, and chatted about the water-lily in her bosom and the boy she had up stairs—coldly and every-day-ishly. I had been there six hours, and you had not entered my thoughts. Please to believe that, Julia!

But in the evening there was a ball at Congress Hall. And though the old house is unfashionable now, and the lies of love are elsewhere told and listened to, there was a movement among the belles in its favor, and I appended myself to a lady's arm and went boldly. I say boldly, for it required an effort. The twilight had fallen, and with it had come a memory or two of the Springs in *our* time. I had seated myself against a pillar of the colonnade of the "United States," and looked down toward Congress Hall—and *you* were under the old vine-clad portico, as I should have seen you from the same spot, and with the same eye of fancy, sundry years ago. So it was not quite like a passionless antiquary that I set foot again on that old-time colonnade, and, to say truth, as the band struck up a waltz, I might have had in my lip a momentary quiver, and some dimness in my world-weary eye. But it passed away.

The ball was *comme ca*, and I found sweet women (as where are they not—given, candles and music?) and aired my homage as an old stager may. I danced without thinking of you uncomfortably, though the ten years' washing of that white floor has not quite washed out the memory of your Arab instep with its embracing and envied sandal, gliding and bounding, oh how airily! For you had feet, absolute in their perfection, dear Julia!—had you not?

But I went out for fresh air on the colonnade, in an evil and forgetful moment. I strolled alone toward the spring. The lamp burned dim, as it used to burn, tended by Cupid's minions. And on the end of the portico, by the

last window of the music-room, under that overhanging ivy, with stars in sight that I would have sworn to for the very same—sat a lady in a dress like yours as I saw you last, and black eyes, like jet lamps framed in velvet, turning indolently toward me. I held by the railing, for I am superstitious, and it seemed to me that I had only to ask why you were there—for, ghostly or bodily, there I saw you! Back came your beauty on my memory with yesterday's freshness of recollection. Back came into my heart the Julia of my long-accursed adoration! I saw your confiding and bewildering smile, your fine-cut teeth of pearl, your over-bent brow and arch look from under, your lily shoulders, your dimpled hands. You were there, if my senses were sufficient evidence, if presence be anything without touch—bodily there!

Of course it was somebody else. I went in and took a julep. But I write to tell you that for a minute—a minute of enormous capacity—I have loved you once more. For one minute, while you probably were buried deep in your frilled pillow—(snoring, perhaps—who knows?)—for one minute, fleeting and blissful, you have been loved again—with heart, brain, blood, all on fire with truth, tenderness, and passionate adoration—by a man who could have bought you (you know I could!) for half the money you sold for! And I thought you would like to know this, Julia! And now, hating you as before, in your fleshy forgetfulness, Yours not at all.

TO MISS VIOLET MABY, AT SARATOGA.

ASTOR HOUSE, *August, 1843*.

START fair, my sweet Violet! This letter will lie on your table when you arrive at Saratoga, and it is intended to prepare you for that critical campaign. You must know the ammunition with which you go into the field. I have seen service, as you know, and from my retirement (on half-pay), can both devise strategy and reconnoitre the enemy's weakness, with discretion. Set your glass before you on the table, and let us hold a frank council of war.

You never were called beautiful, as you know; and at home you have not been a belle—but that is no impediment. You are to be beautiful, *now*, or at least to produce the result of beauty, which is the same thing; and of course you are to be a belle—*the* belle, if I mistake not, of the season. Look in your mirror, for a moment, and refresh your memory with the wherewithal.

You observe that your mouth has blunt corners—which, properly managed, is a most effective feature. Your complexion is rather darkly pale,

your forehead is a shade lower than thought desirable, your lips are full, sweet, and indolent, and your eyes are not remarkable unless when well handled. The lids have a beauty, however, which a sculptor would understand, and the duskiness around them may intensify, exceedingly, one particular expression. Your figure is admirably perfect, but in this country, and particularly among the men you are to control, this large portion of female beauty is neither studied nor valued. Your hair is too profuse to be dressed quite fashionably, but it is a beauty not to be lost, so it must be coiffed *a l'abandon*—a very taking style to a man once brought to the point of studying you.

There are two phases in your character, Violet—earnestness and repose. The latter shows your features to the most advantage, besides being a most captivating quality in itself. I would use it altogether for the first week. Gayety will never do. A laugh on a face like yours is fatal. It spreads into unmeaning platitude the little wells in the corners of your mouth (the blunt corners I spoke of above), and it makes your eyes smaller—which they can not well bear. Your teeth are minion and white, it is true, but they show charmingly when you speak, and are excellent as reserved artillery, to follow an introduction. Save your mirth till the game is won, my dear Violet!

Of course you will not appear at breakfast the first morning after your arrival. The mental atmosphere of the unaired hours is too cold and questioning for a first appearance. So is the hungry half-hour till the soup is removed. Go down late to dinner. Till after the first glass of wine, the heart of man is a shut book—opened then for entries, and accessible till shut again by sleep. You need no table-lesson. You eat elegantly, and, with that swan's neck wrist, curving and ivory-fair, your every movement is ammunition well-bestowed. But there may, or may not, be a victim on the other side of the table.

After dinner is the *champ de bataille*! The men are gallant, the ladies melted out, impulses a-top, the key of conversation soprano, and everybody gay and trivial. *So be not you.* It is not your style. Seat yourself where you will have a little space for a foreground, lean your light elbow on your left wrist, and support your cheek languidly in the hollow of your gloved thumb and forefinger. Excuse the particularity, but try the attitude as you sit now. Pretty—is it not?

Look only out of the tops of your eyes! If women's glances were really the palpable shafts the poets paint them, the effective ones would cut through the eyebrows. Stupid ones slide over the under lid. Try this! How earnest the glance with the head bent downward!—how silly the eyes with the chin salient! And move your eye indolently, my charming Violet! It

traverses the frippery gayety-woof of the hour with a pretty thread of contrast that looks like superiority. Men have a natural contempt for themselves when in high spirits, and repose comes over them like a star left in heaven after the turn of a rocket.

Nothing is prettier in woman than *a leaning head*! Bow without removing the supporting hand from your cheek when a man is introduced to you; smile tranquilly, and look steadfastly in his eyes and hear what he has to say. Lucky for you—it is his *devoir* to commence conversation! And in whatever tone he speaks, *pitch your reply a note lower*! Unutterably sweet is the *contralto* tone of woman, and the voices of two persons, conversing, are like the plummets of their hearts—the deeper from the deeper—so felt, and so yielded. If you think it worth your while to harmonize with his tone afterward, either in argument or tenderness, the compliment is only less subtle than overpowering.

There is a great deal of promenading at Saratoga, and natural instinct will teach you most of its overcomingness; but I will venture a suggestion or two. If you are bent on damage to your man, *lay your wrist forward to his*, and let your hand drop over it, when you take his arm. No mortal eye would think it particular, nor would he—but there is a kind of unconscious affectionateness about it which is electric. Of course you would not resort to manifest pressure, or leaning heavily, except you were carrying on the war *a l'outrance*. Walk with your head a little drooped. If you wish to walk more slowly, tell him so, but *don't hang back*. It is enchanting to have a woman "head you off," as the sailors say, as if she were trying to wind around you—and it has the charm, too, of not looking particular!

As to conversation, the trick is born with woman. If her person is admired to begin with, this is the least of her troubles. But though you are sweet subjects, and men like to hear you talk about yourselves, there is a sweeter subject, which they like better than you—*them*selves. And lean away from merriment, Violet! No man ever began to love, or made any progress in loving, while a woman was laughing. There is a confidingness in subdued tones and sad topics which sinks through the upper-crust of a man like a stone through the thin ice of a well. And if he is a man of natural sentiment or feeling, though a worldling himself, the less worldliness in *you*, the better. Piety, in those who are to belong to us, is a spell that, in any but mythological days, would have superseded the sirens.

I believe that is all, Violet. At least it is all I need harp upon, to *you*. Dress, you understand to a miracle. I see, by the way, that they are wearing the hair now, like the chains on the shoulder of a hussar—three or four heavy curls swung from the temples to the back-knot. And that will be pretty

for you, as your jaw is not Napoleonesque, and looks better for partial hiding. Ruin your father, if necessary, in gloves and shoes. Primroses should not be fresher. And whatever scarfs are made for, wear nothing to break the curves from ear-tip to shoulder—the sculpture lines of beauty in woman. Keep calm. Blood out of place is abominable. And last, not least, for Heaven's sake *don't fall in love*! If you do, my precepts go for nothing and your belleship is forgotten by all but "the remainder biscuit."

Your affectionate uncle,

CINNA BEVERLEY.

The above curious letter was left in the dressing-table drawer of No. ——, United States Hotel. It was not generally known that the young lady who had occupied the room before a certain respectable spinster (who handed us the letter, taking the responsibility of its publication as a warning), eloped after the third day of her belleship—as was to be expected. The result of such pestilent advice is its own proper moral.

The respectable and zealous spinster who sent us for publication, as a salutary warning, the very worldly and trappy epistle, addressed to Miss Violet Maby, at Saratoga, and published on a previous page, has laid her fingers on another specimen of the same gentleman's correspondence, which we give, without comment or correction, as follows:

ASTOR HOUSE, *August 10, 1843*.

MY DEAR WIDOW: For the wear and tear of your bright eyes in writing me a letter you are duly credited. That for a real half-hour, as long as any ordinary half-hour, such well-contrived illuminations should have concentrated their mortal using on me only, is equal, I am well aware, to a private audience of any two stars in the firmament—eyelashes and petticoats (if not thrown in) turning the comparison a little in your favor. Thanks—of course—piled high as the porphyry pyramid of Papantla!

And you want "a pattern for a chemisette." Let me tell you, my dear widow, you have had a narrow escape. Had you unguardedly written to your milliner for an article so obsolete—but I'll not harrow up your feelings.

Suffice it, that that once-privileged article has passed over, with decayed empires, to history—an aristocracy of muslin too intoxicated to last. "*Fuit!*"

The truth is *shams* are tottering. The linen cuff which was a shallow representation of the edge of a linen sleeve, and the linen collar or embroidered chemisette, which as faintly imagined forth the spotless upper portion of the same investiture, are now *bona fide* continuations of a garment, "though lost to sight to memory dear!" The plait on the throat and wrist is scrupulously of the same fineness, and simply emerges from the neck and sleeve of the dress without turning over.

The hem of the skirt is beyond my province of observation, but as the plaited edge would be pretty (spread over the instep when sitting), the unity is probably preserved.

Apropos of instep—the new discovery of a steel spring in the shoe to arch the hollow of the foot, has directed attention to the curves of those bewitching locomotives, and *heels* are coming into fashion. This somewhat improves the shapeliness of the pastern, lifts the sex a half inch nearer heaven—more out of reach than ever, of course. Adieu in time—should you lose sight of me!

And now—(for I believe you may trust "The Lady's Book" for the remainder of the chronicle of fashion)—how comes on, oh, charming widow, the little property I have in your empire of alabaster? Shall I recall the title-deed to your recollection? Did you not, on a summer's night, having the full possession of your senses, lay a rose-leaf wetted with dew on your left temple? Did you not, without mental reservation, scratch it round with a thorn of the same rose, and then and there convey to me the territory so bounded, to have and to hold for my natural life, to be guarded, at your peril, from trespass or damage? Did you not, at the same place and time, with blood taken from your pricked finger, write me out, to this effect, a rosy conveyance, of which, if needful, I can send you, in red ink, a paler copy? Of course I do not ask for information. You know you did. And you know you had for it a consideration—of such immortality as was in my power to bestow:—

"Where press this hour those fairy feet?" &c.

You married—and with so prying a neighbor as your remainder's husband, I did not very frequently visit my little property. You had the stewardship over it, and I presume that you respected, and made others respect, the rights of the proprietor. I never heard that your husband was seen invading the premises. I have every reason to believe that he was

uniformly directed to plant his *tulips* elsewhere than in my small garden. It was to me a slumbering investment—and the *interest*, I must be permitted to advise you, has accumulated upon it!

And now that my prying neighbor is dead, and the property in the opposite temple and the remainder of the demesne, has reverted to the original proprietor, I may be permitted to propose myself as an occupant of my own territory, *pro tem.*, with liberty to pluck fruit from the opposite garden as long as it remains untenanted. Take care how you warn me off. That peach upon your cheek would make a thief of a better man.

You disdain news, of course. China is taken by the English, and the Down-Town-Bard has recovered his appetite for champagne, and writes regularly for the New Mirror. The Queen's Guards have done coming over; the town dull; and bonnets (I forgot to mention) are now worn precipitated over the nose at an angle of forty-five degrees.

Adieu, my dear widow. Command me till you lose your beauty. Yours at present,

CINNA BEVERLEY.

CINNA BEVERLEY, ESQ., TO ALEXIS VON PUHL.

ASTOR HOUSE, *Sept. 1, 1843*.

MY DEAR NEPH-LING: I congratulate you on the attainment of your degree as "Master of Arts." In other words, I wish the sin of the Faculty well repented of, in having endorsed upon parchment such a barefaced fabrication. Put the document in your pocket, and come away! There will be no occasion to air it before doomsday, probably, and fortunately for you, it will then revert to the Faculty. *Quiescat adhuc*—as I used to say of my tailor's bills till they came through a lawyer.

And now, what is to become of you? I do not mean as to what your grandmother calls your "temporal welfare." You were born to gold-dust like a butterfly's wing. Ten thousand a year will ooze into your palm like insensible perspiration—(principally from investments in the "Life and Trust"). But your *style*, my dear boy—your idiosyncrasy of broadcloth and beaver, satin and patent-leather—your outer type—your atmosphere—your cut! Oh, Alexis!

But let us look this momentous matter coolly in the face.

America has now arrived at that era of civilized aggrandizement when it is worth a gentleman's while to tie his cravat for the national meridian. We can afford to wish St. James street "*bon voyage*" in its decline from empire. We dress better than Great Britain. *Ilium fuit.* The last appeal of the universe, as to male toggery, lies in the approval of forty eyes lucent beneath twenty bonnets in Broadway. In the decision of twenty belles or thereabout, native in New York, resides, at this present crisis, the eidolon of the beau supreme. *Homage à la mode Manhattanesque!*

But, to the sanctum of fashion there is no thoroughfare. Three persons, arriving at it by the same road, send it flying like "Loretto's chapel through the air." Every man his own guide thither, and his path trackless as a bird's alley to his nest! I can but give you some loose data for guidance, and pray that "by an instinct you have" you may take a "bee-line" of your own.

Of course you know that during the imitative era just past, there have been two styles of men's dress—the Londonish and the Parisian—pretty equally popular, I should say. The London man dresses loose above, the Paris man loose below—tight hips and baggy coat in St. James street—baggy trousers and pinched coat on the Boulevard. The Englishman puts on his cravat with summary energy and a short tie—the Frenchman rejoices in a voluptuous waterfall of satin; and each, more particularly in this matter of neckcloth, abhors the other. John Bull shows his shirt-collar till death—Monsieur sinks it with the same pertinacity. English extravagance, fine linen—French extravagance, primrose kids.

Something is due, of course, to the settled principles of art. By the laws of sculpture, the Frenchman is wrong—the beauty of the male figure consisting in the breadth of the shoulders and the narrowness of the hips—and this formation shows blood and breeding, moreover, as to have small hips, a man's progenitors must not have carried burdens. So—for me—trousers snug to the barrel, and coat scant of skirt, but prodigal above. Decide for yourself, notwithstanding. There *is* a certain *je ne sais quoi* in bagginess of continuation—specially on a tall man. It only don't suit *my* style!

And, as to cravat, I have the same weak leaning toward Bond street. The throat looks poulticed in those heavy voluminousnesses. Black diminishes the apparent size, too, and the more shirt-bosom visible, the broader the apparent chest. It depends on the stuff, somewhat. Very rich billows of flowered satin look ruinous—and that the ladies love. But in every other particular, if you *will* wear these eclipsers of linen, you must be as lavendered as a lily at dawn—compensatory, as it were! And if you show your collar, for Heaven's sake let it follow the curve of your jawbone, and

not run athwart it like a rocket aimed at the corner of your eyebrow! I am sensitive as to this last hint. The reform was my own.

One caution—*never* be persuaded that there is such a thing as a fashion of hat! Believe me, the thing is impossible! Employ an artist. George Flagg has a good eye for a gentleman's belongings, and he'll make a drawing of you with reference to a hat. No hat is endurable that will not look well in a picture. Ponder the brim. Study how the front curve cuts the line of the eyebrow. Regulate it by the expression of face common to you when dawdling. See if you require lengthening or crowding down—physiognomically, I mean. Low crowns are monstrous vindictive. Bell crowns are dressy—white hats rowdy. And, once fixed in your taste by artistical principles, be pretty constant through life to that hat. Have it reproduced (rigidly, without consultation with your hatter), and give it a shower-bath before wearing. Unmitigated new hat is truly frightful. Orlando Fish takes your idea cleverly, touching a tile of your own.

As to the Castaly of coats, I am driven to believe that the true fount is at Philadelphia. One marvellous coat after another arrived at Saratoga while I was there, and to my astonished research as to their origin, and there was but one reply—"Carpenter." What may be the address of this Carpenter of coats, I know not yet. But I shall know, and soon—for he builds to a miracle. Trousers, as you know, are sent home in the rough, and adapted by perseverance. They are a complex mystery, on the whole. Few makers know more than a part in the science of cutting them, and you must supply the rest by clear expounding and pertinacious experiment. The trade is trying, and should be expiative of crime in the "sufferer."

There is but one simple idea in boots—patent-leather and straight on the inside. But, by-the-way, to jump abruptly to the other extremity, how do you wear your hair. For Cupid's and the Grace's sake, don't be English in *that*! Short hair on a young man looks to me madhousey. Ugh! Straight or curly, leave it long enough to make a bootlace for a lady! And see that it looks threadable by slight fingers—for if you should chance to be beloved, there will be fingers unemployed but for that little endearment. So at least I conjecture—bald myself, and of course, not experienced authority.

But, whatever you decide, don't step into the street rashly! Keep yourself "on private view" for a few days after you are made up, and call in discreet judges for the benefit of criticism—an artist or two among them for the general effects. First impressions are irrevocable.

Adieu, my boy! Caution!—and ponder on Balzac's dictum: "*Les femmes aiment les fats, parceque les fats sont les seuls hommes qui eussent soin d'eux-mêmes*."

Your affectionate uncle,

CINNA BEVERLEY.

P. S. A short cane—say as long as your arm—is rather knowing, now. Nobody carries a long stick, except to poke at snakes in the country.

NEXT to eating, drinking, loving, and money-making, the greatest desire of human beings seems to be to discover the lining of each other's brains; and the great difference between authors and other people seems mainly to consist in the faculty of turning out this lining to the view. But in this same lining there are many plaits, wrinkles, and corners, which even authors scarce think it worth their while to expand, but which, if accidentally developed, create an interest, either by their correspondence with other people's wrinkles, or by their intrinsic peculiarity.

Let us see if we can give a sketchy idea of the rise and progress of literary celebrity in London; or, in other words, the climbing into society, and obtaining of notice by men who have a calling to literature. Sterne's method of generalizing, by taking a single instance, is a very good one, and we will touch here and there upon the history of an individual whom we know, and who, after achieving several rounds of the ladder of society, is still, we believe, slowly making his way upward—or downward. Let us call him Snooks, if you please, for we cannot give his real name, and still speak as freely as we wish to do of his difficulties in mounting. Snooks was a Manchester boy of good birth, brought up to business—his position at home about equal to that of a merchant's son in New York. He began writing verses for the country papers, and at last succeeded in getting an article into the London New Monthly, and with this encouragement came up to town to follow literature for a livelihood. With a moderate stipend from his father, he lived a very quiet life for a couple of years, finding it rather difficult to give away his productions, and quite impossible to sell them. There was no opening at the same time through which he could even make an attempt to get a footing in desirable society. In the third year he became proof-reader to one of the publishers, and being called upon to write anticipatory puffs of works he had examined in manuscript, he came under the notice of the proprietor of one of the weeklies, and by a lucky chance was soon after employed as sub-editor. This was his first available foothold. It was his business, of course, to review new books, and, as a "teller" in the bank of

fame, he was a personage of some delegated importance. His first agreeable surprise was the receipt of a parcel in scented paper, containing the virgin effusions of a right honorable lady, who, in a little note, with her compliments to Mr. Snooks (for she had inquired the name of her probable critic through a literary friend), begged a notice of her little book, and a call from Mr. Snooks when he should have committed his criticisms to paper. Snooks was a man of very indifferent personables, his hair of an unmitigated red, and his voice of a very hair-splitting treble; but he had a violent taste for dress, and a born passion for countesses; and he wrote most unexceptionable poetry, that would pass for anybody's in the world, it was so utterly free from any peculiarity. This last quality made him an excellent verse-tinker, and he was the man of all others best suited to solder over the cracks and chasms of right honorable poetry. He wrote a most commendatory criticism of her ladyship's book, quoting some passages, with here and there an emendation of his own, and called at the noble mansion with the critique in his pocket. By this bridge of well-born vanity, paying the humiliating toll of insincere praise, he crossed the repelling barrier of aristocratic life, and entered it as the necessary incumbrance in her ladyship's literary fame. Her ladyship was "at home" on Thursday evenings, and Snooks became the invariable first comer and last goer-away; but his happiness on these Thursday evenings could only be called happiness when it was reconnoitred from the distance of Manchester. He went always in an irreproachable waistcoat, fresh gloves and varnished shoes, but his social performances for the evening consisted in his first bow to her ladyship, and her ladyship's "How d'ye do, Mr. Snooks?" After this exciting conversation, he became immediately interested in some of the *bijoux* upon the table, striding off from that to look at a picture in the corner, or to procure the shelter of a bust upon a pedestal, behind which he could securely observe the people, so remarkably unconscious of his presence. Possibly toward the latter part of the evening, a dandy would level his glass at him and wonder how the devil he amused himself, or some purblind dowager would mistake him for the footman, and ask him for a glass of water; but these were his nearest approaches to an intimacy with the set in which he visited. After a couple of years of intercourse with the nobility on this footing, he becomes acquainted with one or two other noble authors at the same price, frequents their parties in the same way, and having unequivocal evidence (in notes of invitation) that he visits at the West End, he now finds a downward door open to society in Russell square. By dint of talking authentically of my lady this, and my lord the other, he obtains a vogue at the East End which he could only get by having come down from a higher sphere, and through this vestibule of aristocratic contempt he descends to the highest society in

which he can ever be familiar. Mr. Snooks has written a novel in three volumes, and considers himself fully established as one of the notabilities of London; but a fish out of water is happy in comparison with Snooks when in the society of the friends he talks most about, and if he were to die to-morrow, those very "friends" would with difficulty remember anything but his red head, and the exemplary patience with which he submitted to his own society.

The fact is, that the position of a mere literary man in England, in any circle above that to which he is born, is that of a jackall. He is invited for what he contributes to the entertainment of the aristocratic lions and lionesses who feed him. He has neither power nor privilege in their sphere. He dare not introduce a friend, except as another jackall, and it would be for very extraordinary reasons that he would ever name at the tables where he is most intimate, his father or mother, wife, sister, or brother. The footman, who sometimes comes to him with a note or book, knows the difference between him and the other guests of his master, and by an unpunishable difference of manner, makes the distinction in his service. The *abandon* which they feel in his presence, *he* never feels in *theirs*; and we doubt whether Thomas Moore himself, the pet of the English aristocracy for forty years, ever forgot, in their company, that he was in the presence of his superiors, and an object of condescension.

Now we have many people in this country, Americans born, who are monarchists, and who make no scruple in private conversation of wishing for a defined aristocracy, and other infrangible distinctions between the different classes of society. In the picture they draw, however, they themselves figure as the aristocrats; and we must take the liberty, for the moment, of putting them "below the salt," and setting forth a few of their annoyances. Take the best-received Americans in London—yourself, for example, Mr. Reader! You have no fixed rank, and therefore you have nothing to keep you down, and can rise to any position in the gift of your noble entertainer. As a foreigner, you circulate freely (as many well-introduced Americans do) through all the porcelain *penetralia* of the West End. You are invited to dine, we will say, with his grace, the Duke of Devonshire. There are ten or twelve guests, all noble except yourself; and when you look round upon the five other gentlemen, it is possible that, without vanity, you may come to the conclusion, that in dress, address, spirit, and natural gifts, you are at least the equal of those around you. Dinner is late in being announced, and meantime, as you know all the ladies, and are particularly acquainted with the youngest and prettiest, you sit down by the latter, and promise yourself the pleasure of giving her an arm when

the doors are thrown open, and sitting by her at dinner. The butler makes his appearance at last, and the lady willingly takes your arm—when in steps my Lord Flummery, who is a terrible "spoon," but undoubtedly "my lord," takes the lady from you, and makes his way to the dinner-table. Your first thought is to follow and secure a place on the other side of her, but still another couple or two are to take precedence, and you are left at last to walk in alone, and take the seat that is left—perhaps between two men who have a lady on the other side. Pleasant—isn't it?

Again. You are strolling in Regent street or the park with an Englishman, whose acquaintance you made on your travels. He is a man of fortune, and as independent in his character as any man in England. On the continent he struck you as particularly high-minded and free from prejudice. You are chatting with him very intimately, when a young nobleman, not remarkable for anything but his nobility, slips his arm into your friend's and joins the promenade. From that moment your friend gives you about as much of his attention as he does to his walking-stick, lets your questions go unanswered, let them be never so clever and enjoys with the highest zest the most remote spoonyosities of my lord. You, perhaps, as a stranger, visit in my lord's circle of society, and your friend does not; but he would as soon think of picking my lord's pocket as of introducing you to him, and, if you begin to think you are *Monsieur de Trop*, and say "good morning," your friend, who never parted from you before without making an engagement to see you again, gives you a nod without turning his head from his lordship, and very dryly echoes your "good morning." And this, we repeat, the most independent man in England will do, for he is brought up to fear God and honor a lord, and it is bred in his bone and brain.

We could give a thousand similar instances, but the reader can easily imagine them. The life of a commoner in England is one of inevitable and daily eclipse and mortification—nothing but the force of early habits and education making it tolerable to the Englishman himself, and nothing at all making it in any way endurable to a republican of any pride or spirit. You naturally say, "Why not associate with the middle classes, and let the aristocracy go to the devil?" but *individually* sending people to the devil is of no use, and the middle classes value yourself and each other only as your introduction to them is aristocratic, or as their friends are approvable by an aristocratic eye. There is no class free from this humiliating weakness. The notice of a lord will at any time take the wind out of your sails when a lady is in the case; your tailor will leave you half-measured to run to my lord's cab in the street; your doctor will neglect your fever for my lord's cold; your friend will breakfast with my lord, though engaged particularly to you; and

the out-goings, and in-comings, the sayings and doings, the stupidities, impudencies, manners, greetings, and condescensions of lords and ladies, usurp the conversation in all places, and to the interruption or exclusion of the most grave or personal topics.

Understand us, we grudge no respect to dignities or authorities. Even to wealth as power, we are willing to yield the wall. But we say again, that *a republican spirit must rebel against homage to anything human with which it never can compete*, and in this lies the only distinction (we fervently hope) which will ever hedge in an American aristocracy. Let who will get to windward of us by superior sailing—the richer, the handsomer, the cleverer, the stronger, the more beloved and gifted—there was fair play at the start, and we will pay deference and duty with the promptest. But no lords and ladies, Mr. President, if you love us.

MISS ALBINA M^{c}LUSH.

I HAVE a passion for fat women. If there is anything I hate in life, it is what dainty people call a *spirituelle*. Motion—rapid motion—a smart, quick, squirrel-like step, a pert, voluble tone—in short, a lively girl—is my exquisite horror! I would as lief have a *diable petit* dancing his infernal hornpipe on my cerebellum as to be in the room with one. I have tried before now to school myself into liking these parched peas of humanity. I have followed them with my eyes, and attended to their rattle till I was as crazy as a fly in a drum. I have danced with them, and romped with them in the country, and perilled the salvation of my "white tights" by sitting near them at supper. I swear off from this moment. I do. I won't—no—hang me if ever I show another small, lively, *spry* woman a civility.

Albina McLush is divine. She is like the description of the Persian beauty by Hafiz: "her heart is full of passion and her eyes are full of sleep." She is the sister of Lurly McLush, my old college chum, who, as early as his sophomore year, was chosen president of the *Dolce-far-niente* Society—no member of which was ever known to be surprised at anything—(the college law of rising before breakfast excepted.) Lurly introduced me to his sister one day, as he was lying upon a heap of turnips, leaning on his elbow with his head in his hand, in a green lane in the suburbs. He had driven over a stump, and been tossed out of his gig, and I came up just as he was wondering how in the d——l's name he got there! Albina sat quietly in the gig, and when I was presented, requested me, with a delicious drawl, to say nothing about the adventure—"it would be so troublesome to relate it to everybody!" I loved her from that moment. Miss McLush was tall, and her shape, of its kind, was perfect. It was not a *fleshy* one, exactly, but she was large and full. Her skin was clear, fine-grained, and transparent: her temples and forehead perfectly rounded and polished, and her lips and chin swelling into a ripe and tempting pout, like the cleft of a bursted apricot. And then her eyes—large, liquid, and sleepy—they languished beneath their long black fringes as if they had no business with daylight—like two magnificent dreams, surprised in their jet embryos by some bird-nesting cherub. Oh! it was lovely to look into them!

She sat, usually, upon a *fauteuil*, with her large, full arm embedded in the cushion, sometimes for hours without stirring. I have seen the wind lift the masses of dark hair from her shoulders when it seemed like the coming to life of a marble Hebe—she had been motionless so long. She was a model for a goddess of sleep, as she sat with her eyes half closed, lifting up their superb lids slowly as you spoke to her, and dropping them again with the deliberate motion of a cloud, when she had murmured out her syllable of assent. Her figure, in a sitting posture, presented a gentle declivity from the curve of her neck to the instep of the small round foot lying on its side upon the ottoman. I remember a fellow's bringing her a plate of fruit one evening. He was one of your lively men—a horrid monster, all right angles and activity. Having never been accustomed to hold her own plate, she had not well extricated her whole fingers from her handkerchief, before he set it down in her lap. As it began slowly to slide towards her feet, her hand relapsed into the muslin folds, and she fixed her eye upon it with a kind of indolent surprise, drooping her lids gradually, till as the fruit scattered over the ottoman, they closed entirely, and a liquid jet line was alone visible through the heavy lashes. There was an imperial indifference in it worthy of Juno.

Miss McLush rarely walks. When she does, it is with the deliberate majesty of a Dido. Her small, plump feet melt to the ground like snow-flakes; and her figure sways to the indolent motion of her limbs with a glorious grace and yieldingness quite indescribable. She was idling slowly up the Mall one evening just at twilight, with a servant at a short distance behind her, who, to while away the time between his steps, was employing himself in throwing stones at the cows feeding upon the Common. A gentleman, with a natural admiration for her splendid person, addressed her. He might have done a more eccentric thing. Without troubling herself to look at him, she turned to her servant and requested him, with a yawn of desperate *ennui*, to knock that fellow down! John obeyed his orders; and, as his mistress resumed her lounge, picked up a new handful of pebbles, and tossing one at the nearest cow, loitered lazily after.

Such supreme indolence was irresistible. I gave in—I—who never before could summon energy to sigh—I—to whom a declaration was but a synonym for perspiration—I—who had only thought of love as a nervous complaint, and of women but to pray for a good deliverance—I—yes—I—knocked under. Albina McLush! Thou wert too exquisitely lazy. Human sensibilities cannot hold out forever!

I found her one morning sipping her coffee at twelve, with her eyes wide open. She was just from the bath, and her complexion had a soft, dewy

transparency, like the cheek of Venus rising from the sea. It was the hour, Lurly had told me, when she would be at the trouble of thinking. She put away with her dimpled forefinger, as I entered, a cluster of rich curls that had fallen over her face, and nodded to me like a water-lily swaying to the wind when its cup is full of rain.

"Lady Albina," said I, in my softest tone, "how are you?"

"Bettina," said she, addressing her maid in a voice as clouded and rich as a south wind on an Æolian, "how am I to-day?"

The conversation fell into short sentences. The dialogue became a monologue. I entered upon my declaration. With the assistance of Bettina, who supplied her mistress with cologne, I kept her attention alive through the incipient circumstances. Symptoms were soon told. I came to the avowal. Her hand lay reposing on the arm of the sofa, half buried in a muslin *foulard*. I took it up and pressed the cool soft fingers to my lips—unforbidden. I rose and looked into her eyes for confirmation. Delicious creature! she was asleep!

I never have had courage to renew the subject. Miss McLush seems to have forgotten it altogether. Upon reflection, too, I'm convinced she would not survive the excitement of the ceremony—unless, indeed, she should sleep between the responses and the prayer. I am still devoted, however, and if there should come a war or an earthquake, or if the millennium should commence, as is expected, in 1833, or if anything happens that can keep her waking so long, I shall deliver a declaration, abbreviated for me by a scholar-friend of mine, which, he warrants, may be articulated in fifteen minutes—without fatigue.

THE NEED OF TWO LOVES.

In the village of Rockybrook there was one beauty who did not look as if she were born there. Eyes as dark as hers might have been found among the other belles of the neighborhood—features as regular, and skin as fair, for a brunette; but there was a certain character in the complete presence of Lilian Tevis—face, form, movements and general air—which seemed to breathe of another climate, and to be imprinted with the habits and associations of another country and race. She was unconscious, apparently, of possessing any advantage over her companions, either in looks or mental qualities, and the peculiarities of her manner would have been attributed, probably, by any one of the neighbors, to great natural reserve, and to a near-sightedness which might easily make her unaware of what was passing around her. Her father was a Quaker farmer, in good circumstances, and her mother was an enthusiast in that poetical and spirit-nurturing religion, so that Lilian's education, though simple as it could well be, had conspired with her timidity to turn her thoughts in upon herself, fostering most the imaginative and dreamy side of her nature.

In the assorting and coupling by the village gossips, Lily Tevis was invariably named with the son of "Contractor Brown," almost the only young man in the vicinity who "had been to college." The contractor was a stern father, and had taken his son into business after giving him an education, exacting such service as kept him well out of the way of love and leisure. To go to the city, or to the backwoods, at a minute's warning—to pass a month on horseback overlooking workmen—to toil one week, night and day, over estimates, and, the next week, climb hills with surveyors and engineers—was a kind of life that promised, at least, as his father expressed it, "to take the nonsense out of him." A dread of this "nonsense" indeed—a vague dislike of everything that "didn't pay"—was the key to most of the paternal advice, which had been distributed along through the boyhood and youth of young Brown, and it had gradually formed his mind to a habit of trusting nothing to utterance, or to the knowledge of others, which would not bear the scrutiny of this practical standard. Shut off from sentiment, however, the high health and spirits of Frank Brown found expression in exuberant gayety of manner; and, whenever in the society of the village

belles, he was invariably so good-humored and merry, that it passed for the only possible shape of his natural disposition. Such he was thought to be—and such only—even by Lily Tevis, who, notwithstanding, had a preference for him, over all the young men she had ever seen; and, without any definite avowal of love, she had tacitly accepted his preference as shown in slight attentions, and felt affianced to him by some unseen chain of reciprocated feelings and sympathies. She frankly and gladly received the news of him, when he was absent, (brought to her by those who thought her and young Brown "the same as engaged,") and received the especial smile of the contractor, when he spoke to her on the road, with no special sense of its misapplication.

But, though she thus let the outer world, and the feelings which belonged to it, take their course, there was an inner world in which Lily felt more at home, and to which her thoughts turned oftenest during her many hours of solitude. Of this world of poetry and imagination, her chamber door was the entering porch; and the key of that white-curtained sanctuary shut out behind her the visible world, with its associations and affections, as if the threshold had been guarded by an angel. Here were her books. Here stood the table at which she sat to read and dream. The window opened upon the long roof of her mother's pantry and store rooms, which had been boxed in and floored, and converted into a terrace for flowers. It was consistent with Mrs. Tevis's religion, and the unconfessed poetry of her nature, to encourage her daughter in habits of seclusion and privacy, and this terrace of flowers, visited by no other eye than Lily's and her own, seemed to her like the field of spirit communings, in which she wished her beloved child to meet the unseen company that is ever about us. It had gradually become the understood custom of the household to observe a deference toward Lilian, with regard to the hours when she was accustomed to be alone; and the privacy of that chamber, and of the garden-walks around under the terrace, were looked upon as sacred. With the reserve of character which this was calculated to deepen and render more sensitive, and with the increasing quickness of perception as to the want of harmony between the rude world without and the gentle world within, it was not wonderful that Lilian Tevis became the imaginative being that she was, or that her new thoughts and emotions, in this more ideal of her two worlds, should have been as secret as this story will show.

It had sometimes crossed Lilian's mind, that the thoughts and occupations on which she set the most value, were those in which Frank

Brown had no share—for his conversations, when in her presence, were usually divided between news and fun—but she had felt no need, up to the time when our story commences, of looking beyond his preference and attention, for companionship or sympathy. A new light had lately broken in upon her, however. In one of the periodicals which graced her well-stored table, a new writer had made his appearance. Poems, over the signature of "Ernest," came, in successive numbers, and, from the very first which she had read, they had singularly riveted her attention. Without being finished as elaborately as those of other writers, they had a certain close truthfulness to her own emotions, and to the instincts of her own nature, which made them seem like words she might have uttered in her sleep, or revelations, that she might have made from her inmost being, in the clairvoyance of magnetism. Though she had, herself, never written in verse, and though the subjects were such as she had never talked upon, and the language new, and with no imitation of any other poet whom she had read, there was recognition in her heart for the truth of every line. She had a spirit kindred to the writer's, whoever he might be; and whether or not he had seen and known her in other worlds, (as she could scarce help believing,) he was now the interpreter of her soul.

For the successive numbers of the periodical in which appeared the poems of "Ernest," Lilian waited with feverish impatience. Each new one seemed truer and deeper, in its voicing forth of what her soul had, hitherto, only left unsaid. She committed them to memory with the first reading of them, and they haunted her, waking and sleeping, in her walks and in her dreams. Toward the writer, whoever he might be, she began to feel the confidingness of intimacy and friendship. That, in some spirit-guise or other, he visited her mind, and could be made conscious of what therein responded to his own beautiful thoughts, was a conscious feeling in her bosom which amounted to a conviction. It was with a resistless desire to record and retain the mementoes of this intercourse, that she first took pen and paper. She had no intention to send the letter to "Ernest" which she then wrote. That one of these transcripts of reverie was afterward sent to him, enclosed to the editor of the periodical to which he was a contributor, and that it resulted in an actual correspondence, in which neither knew the real name of the other, was a reality which came about, Lilian scarce knew how. She had followed the dictation of timidity in using a fictitious signature; and, in arranging to receive the replies through a channel which would not betray her residence, she was prompted by the dread of seeming forward and strange to those who would not understand the nature of the correspondence. With the beginnings

thus explained, the two following letters, from a more advanced stage of the epistolary acquaintance, will, perhaps, be read comprehendingly:—

ERMENGARDE TO ERNEST.

All asleep around me, dear Ernest, save the birds and insects to whom night is the time for waking. The stars and they are the company of such lovers of the thought-world as you and I, and, considering how beautiful night is, nature seems to have arranged it for a gentler and loftier order of beings, who alternate the conscious possession of the earth with those who wake by day. Shall we think better of ourselves for joining this nightingale troop, or is it (as I sometimes dread) a culpable shunning of the positive duties which belong to us as creatures of sunshine? Alas! this is but one of many shapes in which the same thought comes up to trouble me! In yielding to this passion for solitude—in communing, perhaps selfishly, with my own thoughts, in preference to associating with friends and companions—in writing, spiritually though it be, to *you*, in preference to thinking tenderly of *him*—I seem to myself to be doing wrong. Is it so? Can I divide my two natures, and rightfully pour my spirit's reserve freely out to you, while I give to him who thinks me all his own, only the every-day affection which he seems alone to value? Yet the best portion of my nature would be unappreciated else—the noblest questionings of my soul would be without response—the world I most live in would be utterly lonely. I fear to decide the question yet. I am too happy in writing to you. I will defer it, at least, till I have sounded the depths of the well of angels from which I am now quenching my thirst—till I know all the joy and luxury which, it seems to me, the exchange of these innermost breathings of the soul can alone give.

You are waking, Ernest, I well know. With this fragrant air and this thought-stirring moon, you would not sleep. I have requested you to keep me in ignorance of where you are—whether far away or near—and of all that could modify or conflict with my fancy's conception of you. But, wherever you are, the lustrous orb that throws a beam in at my window, throws another to your upward eye, and by these electric threads, joined in the luminous circle of the moon, thought passes between us. Oh, how beautiful were the words in which you clothed one of these thoughts—your thought and mine—in the poem which came yesterday! How adorable is the gift, thus to be able to transfer them, in unchanged eloquence, from the inarticulate world of reverie to the language in which others can share them! Angelic poet! Glorious master of two existences, and beautiful in both!

Accept my appreciation and my homage! Listen to me, over this arch of moonbeams, built radiantly between us!

Ah me! these are strange words that I have written. My flushed cheek betrays to me that my spirit draws my heart along with its dreamtide! I should not write to you with this trembling hand, and these impassioned syllables. I must drop my curtain and shut out this moon, and still my disturbed spirit. I will try to sleep. Good night, Ernest, and may the calm angels that watch over us, bring to you the inspired visions for which you wait, and tranquil dreams to

Your spirit worshipper,

ERMENGARDE.

The letter which follows was not in reply to the foregoing. It was written after several had been exchanged on the subject to which it mainly refers, as best explaining the feelings entertained by the writer toward her whom he addressed:—

ERNEST TO ERMENGARDE.

You refuse to let me once rest my eyes upon you. I can understand that there might be a timidity in the first thought of meeting one with whom you had corresponded without acquaintance, but it seems to me that a second thought must remind you how much deeper and more sacred than "acquaintance," our interchange of sympathies has been. Why, dear Ermengarde, you know me better than those who see me every day. My most intimate companion knows me less. Even she to whom I, perhaps, owe all confidence, and who might weep over the reservation of what I have shared with you, had she the enlargement of soul to comprehend it—even she knows me but as a child knows the binding of a book, while you have read me well. Why should you fear to let me once take your features into my memory, that this vague pain of starry distance and separation may be removed or lessened?

I must see you. I *have* thought, as you know, that we could realise a presence by exchange of thought—that the eyes need have no part in the interchange of minds. I even took pleasure in believing—that I had, in this common-place and material world, one viewless link—one friendship with a spirit, of whom my mortal eyes knew nothing. But I was wrong. I feel, now,

that I have more need than others to see you, since I know, more than others, what your features should confirm and interpret. There is a point, in mere intellectual appreciation, where the heart irresistibly comes in, and demands to see, with real eyes, the form in which is enshrined such an idol. That the reverse is also true—that mere thoughtless affection comes to a point where the mind demands that it, too, shall have something to worship—is a more frequent discovery in intimacies. But I will not misrepresent my present impulse by coldly reasoning upon it. It is struggling in my heart, and pleading earnestly to see you. Will you longer deny me, dear Ermengarde?

By your sweet confirmation of the truthfulness of my poem, in your last letter, I was deeply touched. There was that in it which I felt to be simply sincere, and which proved to me that I have in you the treasure without which a poet cannot live—entire appreciation by one mind and heart. I had wanted this—oh, how painfully and deeply—till you first wrote to me! Criticism, and success over competitors had satisfied me that what I wrote was truly measured, but I needed to know that it was also *felt*, and that I was loved for writing it. The world's admission of the poet's merit is vague and cold. There are hours when he can neither realize nor believe it. But in the sweet praise of one to whose heart his meanings have gone home—one who recognizes, by the inner woof of her own spirit, the fibre from which his charmed words were spun—one who sees his better nature when she looks upon him, and thinks of his best gifts first, at the moments when he comes up to her memory—in such an appreciator, kind and ever ready to encourage and commend, the poet feels his best happiness bound up. He turns to her from the world. He thinks of her in sadness. He writes with her sweet eyes looking on. Other affections may employ his instinctive tenderness, and his gay and thoughtless hours; but, in his soul's retirement he asks for an interpreter who can enter with him—for the sweet reader of what common affections never reach.

I feel that you will not persist in refusing me. With thoughts so genial and sympathetic as yours, there must be a heart of kindness beating in unison, and I cannot long plead earnestly in vain. Tell me but where you are, and by what name you are known to those who are so blessed as to look upon you, and I will fly to your side, or arrange to meet you, with as guarded delicacy as you will. Only let me once see you—once take and treasure your living image in my soul's memory—and I ask no more. Hear me, dear Ermengarde, and let me write myself, not alone your unseen poet, but

Your friend, ERNEST.

There was an arrival of two Quaker ladies and a young gentleman at the Astor—(Mrs. and Miss Tevis, and Mr. F. Brown, as it read on the register)—one lovely evening in June. The ladies had come down from Rockybrook "to shop," and as Mrs. Tevis had chanced to hear that "friend Frank" was also meditating a journey to town, she had bespoke his protection and company, though (a little to her surprise) Lilian had not seemed positively pleased when this accidental good fortune was first announced.

Spite of Lilian's perverseness, however, Frank had succeeded in making the journey agreeable—his high spirits and privileged ease of manner, acting with their usual charm on the quiet reserve of the lovely Quakeress, and, to the mother's eye, all things flowing with a full tide in the current of an understood affection. Lilian had had many a restless misgiving, notwithstanding, as she sat on the steamer's deck, listening to the amusing chat of her presumed lover. She was going to town on a concealed errand. It was after writing a reluctant assent to the fervent plea of her secret correspondent for a meeting, that she had expressed the wish for a journey, which had led her mother to discover some necessities that were before unthought of, for a shopping visit to New York. Mrs. Tevis needed seldom more than a hint to anticipate or guess at her daughter's wishes, and she had foreshadowed *this* one, with that unconscious maternal clairvoyance, which all who have had such mothers will understand.

Lilian felt, by no means, certain that she should not confide her secret to Frank before its purpose was carried out. She longed to do so. Her deeply cherished habit of affection for him seemed to claim a confidence on the subject as his right, while, on the other hand, she both feared his disapproval, and dreaded that he might fancy it to be a coquetry intended to bring him to an avowal. That she had secretly corresponded with another, had admired that other for exactly the qualities which Frank seemed entirely deficient in, and that she was about to see his rival, and weigh, one against the other, the attractions of the two—were truths which could be made to wear a very culpable aspect, though an almost irresistible instinct prompted her to divulge all. She had not owned to herself that she loved this unseen poet. It was the theory by which she kept up her self-justification, that a friendship growing out of mere interchange of thoughts, need not interfere with the constancy of an affection founded on such intimacy as hers with Frank. She sighed only, in trying to separate the two, that their qualities were not combined in one. That a lover who had the winning and attaching every-

day qualities of Frank Brown, could not also be a high-souled poet, alive to the loftier and more elevating converse of the soul, seemed to her in accordance with that universal imperfectness of human allotment, over which philosophers and bards have, from time immemorial, made moan. She only hoped that in this secret intellectual intimacy, she was not cultivating an ideal preference which would make her real love seem poor and insufficient. How the two—Ernest and Frank—would compare, as real men, was the problem which entirely occupied her, at present, and which the interview of the next morning was most excitingly to solve.

———

The breakfast of the three visitors from Rockybrook, at the Astor House table, was inexplicably embarrassed by reserve, on the day which was to bring Lilian and Ernest for the first time together. Mrs. Tevis concluded that the lovers had had a quarrel. After making several efforts to enliven the conversation, she discreetly gave it up, biding her time for an explanation. Lilian looked flushed and restless. She feared momently that Frank would propose some engagement which would make it necessary to plead other occupation for that day. He was, fortunately, silent as to the disposal of her morning, however. His own business in town seemed to be the only matter in his thoughts. They rose from table and separated, to Lilian's infinite relief, with only a mention of meeting again for dinner.

To be disembarrassed of her mother's presence, by sending her out to make some purchases, upon which she pleaded want of spirits to accompany her, was Lilian's first move after breakfast. She did this with a self-reproach and unwillingness which almost brought her to an outpouring of her heart's whole secret to her mother, but the undercurrent of her destiny prevailed. With a kiss and a careful injunction to her that she should take a book and read away her melancholy mood, Mrs. Tevis closed the door upon her daughter, and she was left to the fulfillment of her engagement, without dread or interruption.

It lacked but a few minutes of eleven, when Lilian descended to the ladies' drawing-room of the Astor. She found it, as she had presumed she should do, and as it usually is at that hour of the morning, deserted. The deep window looking out upon St. Paul's leafy church-yard, was unoccupied, and it was here that she was to sit, as the clock struck eleven, and, with a book pressed to her lips as an indication that she was "Ermengarde," and that "Ernest" was at liberty to approach and address her

as an acquaintance. Everything looked fortunately conspiring to give pleasure to the interview. Not a guest had chanced to remain, to overhear the conversation which would needs be embarrassing enough, even were they alone; the shutters had been closed to a twilight dimness by the servants; and the air of the morning was of the genial and sweet temperature which favors the interchange of the sympathies. The lovely and trembling Quakeress of Rockybrook thought she never had breathed air more delicious—in a city though she recognized its balm.

It lacked one minute to eleven. Was she watched? A head was certainly thrust past the opening of the door, and as certainly it seemed to her that it was the quick movement of her lover's. How unspeakably embarrassing would be his entrance at that moment! How should she explain her interview with a stranger? By what name—knowing only the name of "Ernest" for him whom she expected—should she introduce to Frank Brown the person with whom he would find her in conversation? Alas these were difficulties against which she had neglected to provide. The punishment of her culpable concealments seemed now to be inevitably upon her. Her heart, for that minute of suspense, came to a stand-still.

Eleven! She closed her eyes and pressed the book to her lips, and, with her face turned away from the opening door, awaited the approach of an entering and hesitating step, which she overheard as the slow clock pealed out its heavy reverberations. How should she speak! Her breath choked with the quick pantings in her throat. She crowded the volume convulsively to her lips, and dropped her head in utter confusion upon her bosom.

But the step was near her. One whom she did not dare to look on, had approached, and now stood silent and motionless behind her. Another moment of stillness that seemed an eternity to Lilian, and she felt a warm breath upon her temple.

"Ermengarde!" said a low voice, and, to her sudden and utter consternation, a kiss was impressed upon her cheek, and an enclosing arm drew her into its embrace!

"Frank!"

"Lilian!"

And the revelation of the mystery dawned on the mind of the astonished girl, for, in a voice of half-mischief, and half-tenderness, he said:

"Not Frank, but 'Ernest!' "

In the tight clasp of the lovers to each other's arms, which occupied the next minute, there was not much explanation—but there was no end to their wondering, afterward, how they possibly could have been so in the dark as

to their respective inner characters, how they should have lacked the confidingness to mingle intellects as well as amusements and idle nothings, and how they could have thought themselves lovers with the reserves which they had cherished for other sympathies and admirations. It served them as a lesson in the capability of one love for all the interchanges of mind and heart, and taught them what might have been deferred till it was far more difficult to learn—that *it is best to be sure, before going abroad for new varieties of happiness, that the material for what we desire is not in the bosom that already belongs to us*. As a wife to the poet and to the man, Lilian easily and well played her part, and it was hard for either to tell in which of the two characters of the other, life found its more urgent want replied to.

THE FARM AND THE FIRESIDE;

OR,

THE ROMANCE OF AGRICULTURE,

BEING

HALF HOURS OF LIFE IN THE COUNTRY, FOR RAINY DAYS AND WINTER EVENINGS.

BY REV. JOHN L. BLAKE, D.D.

AUTHOR OF FARMER'S EVERY-DAY BOOK; THE FARMER AT HOME; AND A GENERAL BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY.

COMMENDATIONS OF THE PERIODICAL PRESS.

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The aim of the author has been to throw over labor, home and agricultural life, their true dignity and charm; to introduce the farmer to the delights and privileges of his lot; to embellish the cares of toil with those kindly sentiments so naturally associated with the country and its employments. It is a pleasant book—one that will enliven the fireside, elevate and purify the thoughts, and, at the same time, impart a great deal of valuable agricultural knowledge. We know not how the natural trains of

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From the Northern Christian Advocate.

The venerable author of this work is entitled to the warmest thanks of the public for his numerous and valuable contributions to our literature. He is truly an American classic. We have been conversant with his writings for the last twenty years, and have always found them both useful and entertaining in a high degree. His writings on Agriculture contain much real science, with numerous illustrative incidents, anecdotes, and aphorisms, all in the most lively and pleasing manner. By this means the dry details of farming business are made to possess all the interest of romance. The style is clear, easy, and dignified; the matter instructive, philosophical, and persuasive. This work is an eloquent plea for the noble and independent pursuit of Agriculture.

From the National Magazine.

We return our thanks for the new volume of Dr. Blake, “The Farm and the Fireside, or the Romance of Agriculture, being Half Hours and Sketches of Life in the Country,” a charming title, certainly, and one that smacks of the man as well as of the country. Eschewing the dryness of scientific forms and erudite details, the author presents detached, but most entertaining, and often very suggestive articles on a great variety of topics—from the “Wild

Goose" to "Conscience in the Cow,"—from the "Value of Lawyers in a Community" to the "Objections to early Marriages." The book is, in fine, quite unique, and just such a one as the farmer would like to pore over at his fireside on long winter evenings.

From the New-York Recorder.

"The Farm and the Fireside," is a most interesting and valuable work, being a series of Sketches relating to Agriculture and the numerous kindred arts and sciences, interspersed with miscellaneous moral instruction, adapted to the life of the farmer.

From the Germantown Telegraph.

We have looked through this work and read some of the "Sketches," and feel a degree of satisfaction in saying that it possesses decided merit, and will commend itself, wherever known, as a volume of much social interest and entertainment. The sketches comprise "Country Life" generally—some of them are just sufficiently touched with romance to give them additional zest; while others are purely practical, and relate to the farmer's pursuit. We regard it as a valuable book, and are sorry our limits will not admit of bestowing upon it such a notice as it really deserves.

From Harper's New Monthly Magazine.

This work is a collection of miscellaneous sketches on the Romance of Agriculture and Rural Life. Matters of fact, however, are not excluded from the volume, which is well adapted for reading in the snatches of leisure enjoyed at the farmer's fireside.

From the True Democrat.

Dr. Blake's publications are all of a high order, and are doing a most important work towards refining the taste, improving the intellect, and rendering attractive the various branches of Agricultural science. Indeed we know no author who has so successfully blended the romantic, the rural and beautiful with the poetical, the useful, and true, as has Dr. Blake. This is a peculiar feature of all his works. His style is plain, simple, and perspicuous; and, with unusual tact and judgment, he so manages to insinuate himself

upon you, that you are at once amused, delighted, and instructed with the subject he is discussing. In this respect he relieves the study of agricultural science from the abstruseness of technical science, and thus renders himself easily comprehended by all classes of readers.

From the New-York Evening Post.

The author's object is to improve the soil through the mind—not so much to place in the hands of farmers the best methods of raising large crops —for these he refers them to Leibig's Agricultural Chemistry, and to treatises of the like description—but to make them feel how useful, agreeable, and ennobling, is the profession of agriculture, and, above all, how profitable the business must become when skilfully and economically carried on. These money-making considerations are, we suspect, the best moral guano that can be applied to the farmer's spiritual soil. The author writes well of the countryman's independence, the good effect of fresh salubrious air upon his health, and the moral influence of his every-day intimacy with nature upon his mind.

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Misspelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

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[The end of *Fun-Jottings; or, Laughs I Have Taken A Pen To* by N. (Nathaniel) Parker Willis]