

There was a moment of deep silence, and then came the fatal sentence:

"Charles Cambray and Nicolas Mathieu are guilty of the crimes of which they stand accused."

Mathieu, on hearing the verdict, showed no emotion whatever: neither restraint nor embarrassment indicated the least affectation of calmness.

Cambray, on the contrary, appeared for the moment violently agitated and despairing—a thousand thoughts rushed through his mind, and weighed upon his imagination.

Their trial was over, and they were brought back to prison, surrounded by a crowd of people.

Cambray, who was ill at the time, pretended that he was too weak to walk, and was therefore conducted in a vehicle.

Several days after this their sentence of death was pronounced with imposing solemnity by the president of the Court, in tones of pity, and in the presence of an expectant but silent multitude of spectators.

The prisoners bore up against the terrible ordeal with firmness and resolution. Cambray maintained a proud and disdainful mien, but, ransing his head, several great tears coursed down his cheeks—tears it would be difficult to say whether of weakness or regret. Mathieu was also at his ease, as much as if he had not had the slightest interest in the event; he amused himself by playing with his hands upon the dock, a spectacle which on another occasion would have appeared insignificant or ridiculous, but which on the present left a sad and painful impression on the minds of all who witnessed it.

The first night of the condemned was one of depression, horror, and mental agony too great either to paint or analyse. Who can inspire the healthy and hopeful with an idea of the desolation experienced by the unfortunate being whose existence is measured by the near approach of death—death branded with infamy, and within an allotted period? Every movement, every thought, every nervous quiver, is to him a step towards the end of his existence, a thread diminished to the cord of existence, and added to that which is destined to launch him into eternity—a voice calling on him to efface the judgment by appearing before his Creator.

Ever before his eyes are walls grated and silent—livid light—enormous doors—guardians—chains—the hangman—and, finally, infamy and death—death—a frightful spec re, which every one has gazed upon, and which every one must experience, and yet the existence of which all appear to doubt, but which the condemned felon is alone destined to meet face to face. Death is already standing before him, inexorable and isle.

Such is the fate of the unhappy being upon whose head the sentence has fallen—the dread certainty within a known time doubles and triples his agony of mind. Had he even the power of convincing himself of the justice of the sentence? but, alas! from the depths of his heart the cry of despair comes to him in the accents of rage. Man,—has he a right to take away human life?—holdest thou not thine from the Creator alone? Thus does he disclaim against society, in spite of crime, and is ushered on to the scaffold, his heart burning with hatred and vengeance. Such is an approximation to the feelings experienced by Cambray and Mathieu, modified by the individuality of each. Cambray's conduct was that of a ferocious beast bounding about in frenzy, shaking chains, yelling, dashing himself down, till, overpowered by exertion, he became calm and reflective, ferreting his brains for expedients to gain sympathy, and, if possible, to lull the storm once more.

Mathieu, more resigned to his condition, and less violent in disposition, retained his calmness and serenity. He nourished no thought of escaping the gibbet, and regarded it as the natural consequence of his crimes.

In the course of forty-eight hours the greater part of their sufferings were over. The elasticity of the mind, that which gives strength and energy to the human character, which familiarises us with every situation, and supports us in the greatest trouble, gradually restored calmness to the minds of our heroes, and permitted

them to spend the day with some degree of indifference, and the night in deep repose. However, both Cambray and Mathieu requested an interview with some minister of religion. Mathieu had a Catholic priest, but Cambray had priests of every denomination, and pretended to adopt the opinions of each, until, at last, the base wretch proclaimed himself repented and contrite—a lamb gathered into the fold.

"COUSIN BELL."

OUR summer vacation was over; and the Sandhurst term again in full swing, when, having accomplished the day's drill and study, I was smoking my midnight pipe in company with Jack Cluney, puffing the forbidden "baccy" up the narrow chimney of our dormitory, while we related the various adventures in the way of sporting, larking, and love-making, which had befallen us since we last parted. When my story was told, Jack drew a long breath ere he remarked—

"Then you are as good as engaged?" I nodded, and he went on. "I suppose you've seen your cousin, and like her?"

"Pretty well. She's only a school-girl, you know."

"And she likes you, of course?"

"I didn't ask her—the governor and her mother will put all that square."

"By Jove! what a cool hand you are, Harry," and Jack looked as if he did not know whether to envy or pity me. "Still, I think I'd rather picked out my own wife, though—after all; I dare say you are right. They manage it your way in France, and—but I think—"

"But come, no buts, Jack," said I, yawning, and proceeding to knock the ashes out of my exhausted pipe.

"By chaste Diana's sacred head.
I vow I shall 'my cousin' wed."

And so to bed. Three thousand a year is not to be sneezed at, and every fellow cannot go in for the sentimental now-a-days. I have been in love half-a-dozen times already, but it don't last long, and I dare say I shall fall in love with Bell some day. Good night, Jack."

And so, with the stoicism of eighteen, I was soon fast asleep. It was quite true, I was as Jack said, as good 's engaged; and how this came about I had better explain. It seemed that some ninety or a hundred years before, the old family property, having fallen to the share of joint heiresses, had been divided; after all this lapse of time, by a singular coincidence, the two halves came into the possession of a brother and sister, each widowed, and each having one child. Hence arose an arrangement between our representative parents, to the effect that I should marry my cousin Bell, and so re-unite the estates. My father told me all about it when I went home, putting it to me in such a plain, business-like way, that I never for an instant thought of making any objection. In fact, it seemed rather a fine thing to be disposed of; and when Jack let the secret out among our fellows, I gained several steps on the social ladder.

I did not see Bell again until the following summer, by which time I was an ensign in her Majesty's—th Regiment, and under orders to join the head-quarters in Canada. I had a fortnight's leave, and as the cottage my aunt had taken was within a mile of the manor, I spent most of my time with Bell. Yet when the parting came, I was no nearer being in love than the day I met her first. We had not quarrelled, simply, I thought, because neither of us cared enough for the other to do so. Not a word relative to the future had passed; and yet I was quite sure Bell knew all about her destiny, and almost as equally sure that she did not like it.

The—th had only to complete its term of foreign service; so by the time Bell had gone through a couple of seasons, I was at home again.

By the death of a sister, my aunt had become guardian to a little girl, Milly Ryan by name, who, at eleven years old, was one of the bright-

est, loveliest girls I had ever seen. We were friends at once; I was "cousin Hal" by adoption, and Milly was my champion, my second, my backer-up. Bell, looking on with scornful indifference while Milly's very impetuosity and enthusiasm made my cousin's coldness more palpable: a coldness which suppressed all my meditated attempts at love-making, and somehow continually reminded me that it was not necessary that we should act as ordinary engaged couples did.

So, though we rode, walked, and drove together, spending most of our time in each other's company, I again went back to my duty, and carried a whole heart with me. When another year had passed, my father began urging our marriage. So I wrote to Bell, asking her to fix a day. She made a very matter-of-fact reply, only asking to defer it for six months; and almost before I had time to think the matter over, tidings of the mutiny in India broke over Europe; and the—th were ordered to prepare for embarkation. I got a week's leave and ran down to Devonshire. Bell looked, I thought, even colder than usual, and listened passively to my enthusiasm about fighting, promotion, and glory. Not so did Milly, whose face was a picture in itself; her colour would deepen, her great eyes kindle, and with every nerve tingling, she would stand facing me as I spoke; sometimes, too, she would crouch down and clasp my arm, whispering—"I love you best of all, cousin Hal; and I wish I was a boy, and then no one could stop me going with you; but girls are such stupid, useless things, they can do nothing."

The night before my departure had come, and somewhat softened by the approaching parting, somewhat piqued by Bell's apparent insensibility to what the increasing intelligence from India convinced everyone would be a sharp and perhaps a long struggle, I talked rather more than I was wont, about the uncertainty of a soldier's lot. Suddenly Milly who had been sitting upon the ground, jumped up, and cried,—

"I'll be a woman when you come back, Cousin Hal."

"Ay," said I, bitterly, "if I ever come back. But many a poor fellow will bite the dust before we leave India again."

Bell's face grew paler, and her eyelids quivered, but she said nothing; until, looking at Milly, who stood with her eyes dilated and her hands clasped, she said—

"You are frightening the child, Harry."
"No he is not," cried Milly, wildly clenching her hands. "He is trying to frighten you, and you won't be frightened, because you don't love him. I believe you would not care a bit if he was killed."

Here Bell got up and walked across the room, and Milly, who had lost command of her voice, dashed away up-stairs, and returned no more.

Put off last words as you will, they must come; and in the dim little drawing-room lighted only by the wood fire, I bade good-bye to Bell with something very like a pang at my heart, and a newly-awakened sensation I hardly knew how to account for. My aunt being one of those women to whom weeping is a necessity, there were plenty of tears; and when I looked back from the threshold I saw Bell kneeling by her mother, comforting her, of course. It was very nice to know the tears were shed in sorrow for me, and I loved my aunt right dearly; but I was not going to marry her; and I confess I would rather have seen the mother comforting the daughter.

Going through the garden, down the walk by the laurels, upon whose broad glistening leaves the moonlight shone like frosted silver, I saw something white standing in my path; and the next instant Milly clasped her hands round my arm, crying,—

"Did you think I was a ghost, Cousin Hal?"
"I believe I did. But what on earth are you doing here alone?"

"Waiting for you. I was in such a rage I dared not stay in the room. So I pretended to go to bed, and came here to waylay you, just to be the very last to say good-bye."

"Good-bye then, Milly. Make haste and