

ground, had I not sprung up and caught her in my arms. I laid her softly in the *fauteuil*. It was the morning twilight. The silence was profound. The boundaries of the room were still dim and indistinct. Is it any wonder that I was in some considerable degree of perplexity as to whether I was not still in the land of dreams?

"Madam," said I, "if you are a vision, it is of no consequence; but if not, I want particularly to get out."

"Offer no injury," she replied, in a tremulous voice, "and no one will molest you. Take what you have come for, and begone."

"That is sooner said than done. The doors and windows below are locked and bolted; and beneath those of this room the area is deep and the spikes sharp. I assure you I have been in very considerable perplexity the whole of last night;" and drawing a chair, I sat down in front of her. Whether it was owing to this action, or to my complaining voice, or to the mere fact of her finding herself in a quiet *toit-a-toit* with a housebreaker, I cannot tell; but the lady broke into a low hysterical laugh.

"How did you break in?" said she.

"I did not break;" it is far from being my character, I assure you. But the area window was open, and so I just thought I would come in."

"You were attracted by the plate! Take it for Heaven's sake desperate man, and go away!"

"I did take some of it, but with no evil intention—only by way of amusement. Here it is;" and going to the sofa, I drew off the cover, and showed her the plate.

"You have been generous," said she, her voice getting quaverous again; for the whole must have been in your power. I will let you out so softly that no one will know. Put up in your pockets what you have risked so much to possess, and follow me."

"I will follow you with pleasure," said I, "were it all the world over;" for the increasing light showed me as lovely a creature as ever the morning sun shone upon: "but as for the plunder, you must excuse me there: I never stole anything before, and please Heaven, I never will again!"

"Surely you are a most extraordinary person," said the young lady suddenly, for the light seemed to have made a revelation to her likewise: "you neither look nor talk like a robber."

"Nor am I. I am not even a robber—I am nothing; and have not property in the world to the value of these articles of plate."

"Then if you are not a robber, why are you here?—why creep in at the area-window, appropriate other people's spoons, and get locked up all night in their house?"

"For no other reason than that I was in a hurry. I had come home from Barcelona, and was going in to my guardian's, next door, when your unfortunate area-window caught my eye, with the plate on the table inside. In an instant I was over the rails and in through the window like a harlequin, with the intention of giving the family a pleasing surprise, and my old mistress, sister Laura, a great moral lesson on the impropriety of her leaving plate about in so careless a way."

"Then you are Gerald, my dear Laura's cousin, so longingly expected—so beloved by them all—so?"—Here the young lady blushed celestial rosy red, and cast down her eyes. What these two girls could have been saying to each other about me, I never found out; but there was a secret, I will go to death upon it.

She let me out so quietly, that neither her father nor the servants ever knew a syllable about the matter. I need not say how I was received next door. The governor swept down another sob with another guffaw; mamma bestowed upon me another blessing and another kiss; and Laura was so rejoiced, that she gave me another hearty cry, and forgot to give me another lecture. My next four years were spent to more purpose than the last. Being less in a hurry, I took time to build up a flourishing business in partnership with Laura's husband. As for the baronet's daughter—for we must get everybody into the concluding tableau—why there she is—that lady cutting bread and butter for the children, with as matronly an air as *Wester's Charlotte*; she is my wife; and we laugh to this day at the oddity of that First Interview which led to so happy a *dénouement*.

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THE EMPIRE OF JAPAN.

With what measure you mete it shall be meted to you again, is a solemn annunciation from the lips of Him who spoke as never man spoke; and in the every-day scenes of life we are continually reminded of its *Divine original*. If that measure be good, then peace and comfort will fill the soul; but if it be evil,—rejoice not though sentence against an evil work may slumber, for the evil day cometh when it is least expected. We see this in the various movements which are engaged in, either to effect the objects of a selfish ambition, to use a delegated power in the suppression of truth, or in the securing at all hazards of that monopoly of authority which an erroneous imagination may lay claim to. We require not, therefore, to journey to Japan for the illustration of this principle; but as we intend to present that peculiar country in its present somewhat anomalous phase, it is necessary to allude briefly to circumstances that transpired some hundred years ago, and which left, as an inevitable result, the strangely unnatural, restrictive condition, of their social economy alluded to in our last number. It will be remembered that we had moored our warm-hearted English sailor in the port of Bungo, in the island of Kiosoo, the most western of the three islands of Japan Proper. He could form no idea of what had become of the other four ships, nor did he ever learn, so that in all probability they had foundered at sea. Many of the men on board Adams's ship had died, and the remainder, including the captain, were so sick, that not more than five of the crew were able to walk upon deck when they reached the harbour of Bungo, which at that time was open to all who chose to enter it. But the Portuguese, as we stated, had got a footing there. Xavier and some of his companions had planted the Portuguese religion there, and many thousands had been converted to the Portuguese faith. They planted their feet on the island fifty-eight years before, and now, having had so long exclusive advantage of the trade with this Empire, they imagined that they alone should be left to possess it. The Spaniards and Portuguese at this particular epoch, by virtue of a Papal bull, claimed all the New World, and the greater part of the old, and would not willingly allow a share of the trade to any other nation in Christendom. If the ships of these haughty nations

found any weak or unarmed vessel on the coast of South America, or elsewhere in these foreign seas, it was seized as contraband, and the crew treated as thieves and smugglers. During a long series of years a sort of buccaneering process was carried on, so that the adventurers to the South Seas took the precaution to arm their ships, and they generally were able to give a "Holand for an Oliver," and frequently succeeded in capturing their invaders and plundering their ships. It was no wonder, then, that the residents endeavoured to represent to the Emperor of Japan that Adams and his comrades, who had now arrived, were pirates, and urged him to put them to death. They failed, however, in the result, and not many years afterwards, their conduct met a direful retribution, when their whole race was banished from the island. Even now, their name and their religion, after the lapse of 250 years, is still gall and wormwood in the Empire of Japan. But we must not forestall the event. Adams having come to anchor, many of the Japanese came on board the ship, as the sailors had no force to resist them, and they stole whatever they could lay their hands upon. As to what took place on the following day, we will allow Adams to speak for himself, as recorded in Mac-Faulan's Japan, an interesting work recently published by Putnam:—

"The next day, the King of that island sent soldiers aboard, to see that none of the merchants' goods were stolen. Two or three days after, our ship was brought into a good harbour, there to abide till the principal King of the whole country had news of us, and until it was known what his will was to do with us. In the meantime we got favour of the King of that place to get our Captain and sick men on land; and we had a house appointed us in which all our men were laid and had refreshing given them. After we had been there for five or six days, a Portuguese Jesuit, with other Portugals and some Japanese that were Christians, came from a place called Nangasacki, which was ill for us, the Portugals being our mortal enemies, who reported that we were pirates, and were not in the way of merchandizing.

"The evil report of the Jesuits and Portuguese caused the Governor and common people to think ill of us in such manner that we looked always when we should be set upon crosses, which is the mode of execution in this land for piracy and some other crimes. His daily more and more the Portugals incensed the Justices and the people against us. And two of our men, as traitors, gave themselves in service to the King, being all in all with the Portugals, having by them their lives warranted. The one was called Gilbert de Ganning, whose mother dwelleth at Middelburg, who gave himself out to be the merchant of the goods in the ship; the other was called John Abelson Van Owater. These traitors sought all manner of ways to get the goods into their hands, and made known unto them all things that had passed in our voyage."

It will be seen from this pleasing sketch, that it was not the natives of Japan that Master Adams had to contend with. Their civil polity sanctioned all religions alike; not that, however, of the Portugals. They wished a monopoly in religion as well as in trade, and they used every means to represent the strangers as heathens and blasphemers. But, fortunately, the case was submitted to the Imperial Court, then at Osacca, and the Emperor was pleased to order that Master Adams, with one of the mainers, should be brought before him. It would be a pity to abridge the interview, so we will again give the words of the worthy pilot.

"So taking one man with me, I went to him, taking my leave of our Captain and all the others that were sick, and commending myself into His hands."