

wretched history and situation. He told his wife that some private affairs required his attendance for a few days at the town of——.

But, say what he would, he could not prevail on her to desist from accompanying him.

On the journey his chief anxiety was lest the clergyman, who was already advanced in years at the memorable scene of the sand-hill, might now be dead. But at the very entrance of the town he saw him walking in the street, and immediately felt himself more composed in mind than he had done for years. The venerable appearance of the old man confirmed him still more in his resolution of making a full disclosure to him of his whole life: one representation, that murder not his first wife, he thought himself justified in concealing; since, with all his penitence for it, that act was now beyond the possibility of reparation.

For a long time the pious clergyman refused all belief to Schroll's narrative; but being at length convinced that he had a wounded spirit to deal with, and not disordered intellect, he exerted himself to present all those views of religious consolation which his philanthropic character and his long experience suggested to him as likely to be effectual. Eight days' conversation with the clergyman restored Schroll to the hopes of a less miserable future. But the good man admonished him at parting to put away from himself whatsoever could in any way tend to support his unhallowed connection.

In this direction Schroll was aware that the dice were included; and he resolved firmly that his first measure on returning home should be to bury in an inaccessible place those accursed implements, that could not but bring mischief to every possessor. On entering the inn, he was met by his wife, who was in the highest spirits, and laughing profusely. He inquired the cause. "No," said she: "you refused to communicate your motive for coming hither, and the nature of your business for the last week; I, too, shall have my mysteries. As to your leaving me in solitude at an inn, that is a sort of courtesy which marriage naturally brings with it; but that you should have travelled hither for no other purpose than that of trifling away your time in the company of an old teshous parson, that (you will allow me to say) is a caprice which seems scarcely worth the money it will cost."

"Who then, has told you that I have passed my time with an old parson?" said the astonished Schroll.

"Who told me? Why, just let me know what your business was with that parson, and I'll let you know in return what was the matter. So much I will assure you, however, now,—that the cavalier, who was my informant, is a thousand times handsomer, and a more interesting companion, than an old dotard who is standing at the edge of the grave."

All the efforts of Madam von Schrollhausen to irritate the curiosity of her husband proved ineffectual to draw from him his secret. The next day she returned home, and, more severe trial to his firmness was prepared for him in the heavy bill which his wife presented to him on his reaching home. Her expenses in clothes and in jewels had been so profuse, that no expedient remained to Schroll but that of selling without delay the landed estate he had so lately purchased. A declaration to this effect was very ill received by his wife. "Sell the estate!" said she: "what, sell the whole resource I shall have to rely on when you are dead? And for what reason, I should be glad to know; when a very little of the customary luck of your dice will enable you to pay off these trifles?"

And whether the bills be paid to-day or to-morrow cannot be of any very great importance." Upon this Schroll declared with firmness that he never meant to play again. "Not play again?" exclaimed his wife. "pooh! pooh you make me blush for you! So, then, I suppose it's all over, and that the scraps of conscience drove you to the old parson; and that he enjoined as a penance that you should abstain from gaming? I was told as much; but I refused to believe; for in your circumstances the thing seemed too senseless and irrational."

"My dear girl," said Schroll, "consider—"

"Consider! what's the use of considering? what is there to consider about," interrupted Madam von Schrollhausen; and, recollecting the gay cavalier whom she had met in the inn, she now set her attempt aside as a separation herself. "Very well," said her husband, "I am content." "So am I," said his father-in-law, who joined them that moment. "But take notice that first of all I must have paid over to me an adequate sum of money for the creditable support of my daughter; else—"

Here he took Schroll aside and the old threat of revealing the murder so utterly disheartened him, that at length in despair he consented to his terms.

Once more, therefore, the dice were to be tried; but only for the purpose of accomplishing the separation: that over, Schroll resolved to seek livelihood in any other way, even if it were as a day-labourer. The stipulated sum was at length all collected within a few hundred dollars; and Schroll was already looking out for some old disused well into which he might throw the dice and, then have it filled up; for even a runaway man his hiding-place not sufficiently secure for such instruments of misery.

Remarkable it was on the very night when the last arrears were to be obtained of his father-in-law's demand—a night which Schroll had anticipated with so much bitter anxiety—that he became unusually gloomy and dejected. He was particularly disturbed by the countenance of a stranger, who for several days running had lost considerable sums. The man called himself Stutz; but he had a most striking resemblance to his old comrade Weber, who had been shot at the sand-hill; and differed indeed in nothing but in the advantage of blooming youth.

Scarcely had he leisure to recover from the shock which this spectacle occasioned, when a second occurred. About midnight another man, whom nobody knew, came up to the gaming-table, and interrupted the play by recounting an event which he represented as having just happened to a certain man, he said, had made a covenant with some person or other that they call the Evil One,—or what is it you call him!—and by means of this covenant he had obtained a steady run of good luck at play. "Well, sir," he went on, "and would you believe it the other day he began to repent of this covenant; my gentleman wanted to rat, he wanted to rat, sir. Only, first of all, he resolved privately to make up a certain sum of money. Ah the poor idiot the little knew whom he had to deal with: the Evil One, as they choose to call him, was not a

man to let himself be swindled in that manner. No, no, my good friend.

I saw—I mean, the Evil One saw—what was going on betimes; and he secured the swindler just as he fancied himself on the point of pocketing the last arrears of the sum wanted."

The company began to laugh so loudly at this pleasant fiction, as they conceived it, that Madam von Schrollhausen was attracted from the adjoining room. The story was related to her; and she was the more delighted with it, because in the re-teller she recognized the gay cavalier whom she had met at the inn. Everybody laughed again, except two persons—Stutz and Schroll. The first had again lost all the money in his purse; and the second was so confounded by the story, that he could not forbear staring with fixed eyes on the stranger, who stood over against him. His consternation increased when he perceived that the stranger's countenance seemed to alter at every moment; and that nothing remained unchanged in it, except the cold expression of inhuman scorn with which he perseveringly regarded himself.

At length he could endure this no longer; and he remarked, therefore, upon Stutz again being a bet, that it was no late; that Mr. Stutz was too much in a run of bad luck; and that on these accounts he would defer the further pursuit of their play until another day. And thereupon he put the dice into his pocket.

"Stop!" said the strange cavalier; and the voice froze Schroll with horror; for he knew too well to whom that dreadful tone and those fiery eyes belonged.

"Stop!" he said again; "produce your dice!" And tremblingly Schroll threw them upon the table.

"Ah! I thought as much," said the stranger; "they are loaded dice!"

So saying he called for a hammer, and struck one of them in two.

"See!" said he to Stutz, holding out to him the broken dice, which in fact seemed loaded with lead. "Stop! vile impostor!" exclaimed the young man, as Schroll was preparing to quit the room in the greatest confusion; and he threw the dice at him, one of which lodged in his right eye. The tumult increased the police came in; and Stutz was apprehended, as Schroll's wound assumed a very dangerous appearance.

Next day Schroll was in a violent fever. He asked repeatedly for Stutz. But Stutz had been committed to close confinement; it having been found that he had travelled with false passes. He now confessed that he was one of the sons of the murderer Weber; that his sickly mother had died soon after his father's execution; and that himself and his brother, left without the control of guardians, and without support, had taken to bad courses.

On hearing this report, Schroll grew rapidly worse; and he unfolded to a young clergyman his whole unfortunate history. About midnight, he sent again in great haste for the clergyman. He came. But at sight of him, Schroll stretched out his hands in extremity of horror, and waved him away from his presence; but before his signals were complied with, the wretched man expired in convulsions.

From his horror at the sight of the young clergyman, and from the astonishment of the clergyman himself, on arriving and hearing that he had already been seen in the sick-room, it was inferred that his figure had been assumed for fiendish purposes. The dice and the strange cavalier disappeared at the same time with their wretched victim, and were seen no more.

MR. PERKINGTON'S DIARY.

Our friend Mr. Perkington, doubtless humiliated at the issue of his designs upon E——, has joined Mrs. P. at Margaret's Bay, and refuses to let his diary be published until next week.

TWILIGHT IN THE NORTH.

"UNTIL THE DAY BREAK, AND THE SHADOWS FLEE AWAY,"
 O the long northern twilight between the day and the night,
 When the heat and the weariness of the world are ended quite;
 When the hills grow dim as dreams, and the crystal river seems
 Like that river of Life from out the Throne where the blessed
 walk in white.
 O the weird northern twilight, which is neither night nor day,
 When the amber wake of the long-set sun still marks his
 western way;
 And but one great golden star in the deep blue east afar
 Warns of sleep, and dark, and midnight—of oblivion and decay.
 O the calm northern twilight, when labour is all done,
 And the birds in drowsy twitter have dropped silent one by one;
 And nothing stirs or sighs in mountains, waters, skies,—
 Earth sleeps—but her heart waketh, till the rising of the sun.
 O the sweet, sweet twilight, just before the time of rest,
 When the black clouds are driven away, and the stormy winds
 suppressed;
 And the dead day smiles so bright, filling earth and heaven
 with light,—
 You would think 'twas dawn come back again—but the light is
 in the west.

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