

Charlotte was at her father's side ; in a moment afterwards, Mrs. Sandal, sobbing at every flying step, and still in her night-clothing, followed ; and then servants from every quarter came rushing to the master's room.

There was no time for inquiry or lamentation. Harry and two of the men mounted swift horses in search of medical aid. Others lifted the insensible man, and carried him tenderly to his bed. In a moment the atmosphere of the house had changed. The master's room, which had held for generations nothing but memories of pastoral business and sylvan pleasures, had suddenly become a place of sorrow. The shattered pipe upon the hearthstone made Charlotte utter a low, hopeless cry of pain. She closed the shutters, and put the burning logs upon the hearth safely together, and then locked the door. Alas ! alas ! they had carried the master out, and in Charlotte's heart there was a conviction that he would never more cross its threshold.

After Harry's first feelings of anguish and horror had subsided, he was distinctly resentful. He felt his father's suffering to be a wrong to him. He began to reflect that the day for such intense emotions had passed away. But he forgot that the squire belonged to a generation whose life was filled and ruled by a few strong, decided feelings and opinions that struck their roots deep into the very foundation of existence, a generation, also, which was bearing the brunt of the transition between the strong, simple life of the past, and the rapid, complex life of the present. Thus the squire opposed to the indifference of the time a rigidity of habits, which, to even small events, gave that exceptional character which rarity once imparted. He felt everything deeply, because everything retained its importance to him. All his convictions and prejudices were for life.

Harry's marriage had been a blow at the roots of all his conscious existence. The Sandals had always married in their own county, Cumberland ladies of honourable pedigree, good daughters of the Church of England, good housewives, gentle and modest women, with more or less land and gold as their dowry. Emily Beverly would have been precisely such a wife. And in a moment, even while Harry was speaking, the squire had contrasted this Beatrice Lanza with her ;—a foreigner,—an Italian, of all foreigners most objectionable ; a subject of the Papal States ; a member of the Romish Church ; a woman of obscure birth, poor and portionless, and in ill-health ; worse than all, a public woman, who had sung for money, and yet who had made Harry desert his home and country and profession for her. And with this train of thought another ran parallel.—the shame and the wrong of it all. The disgrace to his wife and daughters, the humiliation to himself. Each bitter thought beat on his heart like the hammer on the anvil. They fought and blended with each other. He could not master one. He felt himself being beaten to the ground. He made agonizing efforts to retain control over the surging wave of anguish, rising, rising, rising from his breast to his brain.