

of the soil, which is more indurated than the alluvial deposition of the marshes."

Here the speaker was interrupted by a faint cry from his patient, who he found had fainted. After the usual application had succeeded in recovering him from the swoon into which he had fallen, upon the confirmation of his worst fears, Edward remained a long time silent and seemingly apathetic. At last he said :

"Dickson, do you believe that 'coming events cast their shadows before'?"

"No such thing," answered the doctor, who was not much given to sentiment or superstition; "the fact is, the human mind, influenced by cerebral excitation, is apt to give a feverish colouring to the suggestions of fancy, ever ready to draw irrational conclusions, and discerning amongst its visionary jumble, a vague prophesy of the future."

But the patient shook his head, as if unconvinced by the metaphysical argument of the other.

"The nerves," resumed the doctor, enlarging with the loquacity of his profession, while he wiped the point of his lancet with a silk handkerchief, "the nerves, to employ a vulgar figure, bear the same relation to the body as one's creditors do to the individual. As long as the vital power can afford a sufficient recompense for their labours in its behalf, and is capable of discharging its obligations with punctuality, a mutual understanding exists between the two, which induces a cordial interchange of favours. Thus the nerves enable the body to carry on its various functions comfortably and correctly, and in return receives a tone, an elasticity, which is indispensable to health. But mark the change, the moment that, from sudden prostration, imprudent outlay, or a variety of causes, the supply ceases, or is irregularly transmitted; then these medullary cords, like a legion of vipers, start up to annoy and persecute the poor wretch, already a sufficient object of commiseration."

The doctor took another pinch. "What is to be done in such a case?"—he spoke feelingly.

"Thrash the dirty blackguards widin a hair's breadth o' th' devil," muttered Dennis, who was examining his masters soiled trappings at the other end of the room.

"Again I repeat," continued the doctor, "what is the *modus operandi* in such a crisis? The alternative is obvious, *ex necessitate rei*. You apply to a friend, who steps in with generous intention, and arranges matters—restoring the confidence, allaying the irritation of the parties, by the application of those remedies

which are capable of effecting the best and quickest compromise. Now, in this position, my young friend," and here the speaker's heart swelled with the thought, for with all his faults he was a kind man—"in this glorious reiteration stands the sublime profession of which I am a humble member. 'Tis our duty, *deo juvante*, to bind the broken reed, to administer to the wants of the bankrupt body, to correct the morbid irritability, the vitiated qualities of the arterial and nervous systems by means of emollients, sudorifics, refrigerants, sedative narcotics, and counter irritants, *cum multis aliis*," ("the dead languages," quoth Dennis,) "which the science of ages hath bequeathed as a priceless legacy to her disciples."

The doctor looked up as he finished his discourse with a warm glow upon his pleasant countenance, while, at the same time, he tapped, in a peculiar manner, the side of his box with the third finger of his right hand, as a prelude to the refreshing of his olfactories, after his laboured and voluminous illustration. But the complacent smile quickly vanished, and the suffusion faded when he noted the abstraction of his patient's thoughts; and leaving a few directions with Dennis, he took a rather precipitate leave, in no very enviable mood; for he very much doubted whether Edward had listened to one word he had uttered.

Who could picture to himself the lover's anguish, as hour after hour he lay upon his pallet watching the shadows creeping imperceptibly on the wall, and wondering at the deep silence around, when his heart and brain seemed bursting with intolerable agony. He thought till "thought grew almost madness," of his blighted hope, his sudden bereavement. The face of the loved and gentle Clarence seemed at one moment to beam before him in all its radiant beauty, then, like the change of a hideous dream, he beheld her in the grasp of ruthless savages, borne away, away, into the lairs of the wilderness; and that wild cry for help—will it ever cease to haunt his memory? O God! why is he here? Is there no aid, no power to save his own—his betrothed, from the horrors of captivity, or a violent death? Then, as the consciousness of his own helplessness, and the utter folly of attempting to track the savages in their native woods, forced itself upon his mind, his head would drop again on the pillow; and, as though mental suffering had destroyed itself with its own intensity, or existed as a thing distinct from perception, leaving the faculties prone to receive an impression of, and attach unusual importance to, the most