

... which ran through the crowd around
The George' as she descended from her car-
riage for the Ximster ball, while above it
came the shrill exclamation of 'What's the
use of lamps with such eyes as her'n in the
carriage ?

The dear old country fiddles are playing
their somewhat superannuated dance-music
with all the wonted animation and disregard
of the niceties of tune which is so much the
characteristic of provincial bands. There is
a lack of pretty girls, tastefully dressed,
doing their devoir in valse and quadrille, in
the queer old room with its still queer at-
tempts at decoration in those gaudy festoons
of artificial flowers. But a stately young
lady, dressed in white, with green-and-gold
trimmings, seems to bear away the palm and
utterly eclipse her sister Pleides. More than
one murmured tribute to her beauty escapes
the lips of the lookers-on as she whirls by
in the valse or glides in front of them in the
Lancers.

'Who is she?—there's not a girl in the
room can hold a candle to her! By Jove,
she is handsome! Thorough-bred to the
tips of her fingers! She moves like a queen
among the rest, and they are good-looking
girls too, some of them.' And the speaker,
a rather coarse-looking, dark man, a little
the wrong side of thirty, turned for informa-
tion to the knot of men he was lounging
with at the door.

'Haven't you seen her before, Pearman?
No, I suppose you hardly could have done.
She goes out but little—that's Maude Deni-
son.'

'What!—daughter of old Denison of
Glinn?'

'Just so—former owner of all those fat
fat acres which have since fallen into your
respected progenitor's possession;' and a
slight inflection of voice just italicized the
epithet, for Gas Brisden was of a good old
country family, and had little reverence for
the Pearmans or Mannersleys.

Yes, very handsome was Maude Denison.
She was a beauty of the regal order, and her
stately carriage alone would have sufficed to
make men ask 'Who is she?' even without
the rich brown tresses, proud gray eyes, and
regular features. She fully warranted the
rather coarse encomium of 'thorough-bred
to the tips of her fingers.'

'By Jove, I must know her!' said Pear-
man. 'Can you introduce me, Brisden?'

'No; I barely know her myself; by no
means well enough to take such a liberty,'
replied Gas.

It was hardly the truth, for he did know
her, if not intimately, at all events tolerably
well; but Brisden had no great opinion of
Mr Samuel Pearman, and still less idea of
treating as his sponser to handsome
Maude Denison.

'Gad, I must go and find somebody
who can;' and Pearman hurried away.

Apparently he was successful, for shortly
afterward he led out Miss Denison for a
quadrille, during which Mr. Pearman did
his utmost to make himself agreeable. He
was a very earthy piece of clay, by nature
coarse and sensual in his habits; but he had
enjoyed the advantage of a good education,
and was by no means deficient in ability. He
had achieved a certain amount of success
undergoing the friction of such society as he
had encountered, and procured himself an apt
pupil in worldly wisdom. This stood him
in good stead, just now. He insidiously sub-
dued his natural self-assured, boisterous
manner, as he talked deferentially to his
partner. He had seen much of the world;
his remarks on men and manners were
amusing; and when he led Maude Denison

Perhaps my motives are interested ones, and
I am thinking that you might hesitate next
time I demand your kind offices, if I try you
too severely now.'

My dear Maude, you don't surely—
'Yes, your dear Maude does surely think
that you and she have had enough of this.—
Go and see about the carriage, Grenville—
will you, please?' And, despite many as-
saults from young men, who produced cards
on which her name was pencilled, and plead-
ed hard for the fulfillment of the contract,
Maude Denison steadily refused to dance
any more that evening. Grenville Rose saw
them in their carriage, and laughingly de-
clined the honor of the back seat, saying that
he should return as he came, in the dog-
cart, so that no destruction of flounces could
be attributed to him.

It is very curious to watch what trifling
affairs influence the tenor of our lives.
Maude Denison has deemed it of little con-
sequence that she has danced a quadrille with
Samuel Pearman; and yet that dance is
fated to draw many a tear from the proud
gray eyes—to occasion many a bitter tug at
her heartstrings. Grenville Rose has refus-
ed the back seat in the roomy old carriage,
yet, ere thirty minutes are over, his nerves
will be tortured in a way which he is power-
less to resist; he will take his seat in a dog-
cart, with a prevalent impression of having
made a fool of himself, than which nothing,
perhaps, is more galling to the vanity of
man.

The ball is well nigh over. Men are con-
gregating about the refreshment-buffet for
another sherry-and-seltzer, while their vehi-
cles are getting ready. They are talking
over the evening, in the careless way men
are apt to on such occasions. More than one
beauty is discussed. It was not likely that
the *belle par excellence* should be left out of
such converse.

'What a clipper Maude Denison is! said
one young gentleman, somewhat gone in
sherry-and-seltzer, and who had achieved
nothing but distant adoration of the beauty
the whole evening.

'Yes, she is,' rejoined another. 'I never
saw such eyes; and can't she valse, just!
He was also indebted to observation for his
critical commendation of Maude's dancing.
'Ha! here comes Pearman. You can tell
us all about her. Lucky dog! I saw you
got a dance out of her.'

What evil genius put it into Grenville
Rose's head to follow Pearman up to the re-
freshment table I know not; but so it was.
'Got a dance out of whom?' inquired the
last-mentioned gentleman.

'Why, Maude Denison, the belle of the
ball, of course.'

'Yes, I was so far lucky. She's a nice
girl.—Worth a fellow's while to go in for.
Can't have any money though, I
take it.' Grenville Rose ground his teeth
hard. What right had these—cads, I fear,
would have been his word—to breathe Maude
Denison's name?

For once temper got the better of discre-
tion, albeit he was not addicted to foolish
actions. 'I don't know whether you are
aware, sir,' he exclaimed addressing himself
to Pearman, 'that the lady you are
discussing with such freedom happens to be
my cousin?'

'I can only congratulate you on such a
charming relative,' was the unembarrassed
reply.

The blood rushed to Grenville's temples,
and a fierce impulse to strike the speaker to
the ground possessed him; but he felt there
was nothing tangible to resent. With a great
effort he replied, 'I will merely thank you to
speak of her with a little more deference in
my presence.'

'In the first place,' responded Pearman,
'I was unaware that there was a relative of

with your dearest friend—you've quarrelled
and coat-of-arms; he had his cards engraved
'Mr. and Mrs. Pearman, Mannersley';
he sat himself down to wait—but nobody
called.

Money will do and does do a good deal,
but here and there blood respects its rights.
The county were not going to welcome what
they designated as 'a money-grubbing attor-
ney, who was fattening on the necessities of
Harold Denison of Glinn.' The Master of
the Hounds, it was true, called upon him;
but even Pearman could regard that in no
other light but that of a business transaction.
He asked and obtained leave to draw the
covers, gave the solicitor a capital luncheon
on his return visit, but had steadily refused
all invitations to dinner.

In due course of time Mrs. Pearman died.
Whether, chagrined at her position not being
properly recognized in this world, she hur-
ried her departure to another, I cannot say;
but some few years after their establishment
in Mannersley she was laid in her grave.
She left but one son, who at the period of
her death was an undergraduate at Cam-
bridge, but who, now many years older, is
the gentleman who danced that quadrille
with handsome Maude Denison.

Young Pearman has succeeded far better
than his progenitor in making his way in the
county. A generation, you see, makes a vast
difference. We hob and nob with the son,
though we turned our supercilious noses up
at the horny hand of the father. It don't do
to know Giles the weaver who made the
money, and does not the least know what to
do with it; but young Giles, without an idea
in his skull beyond the dissipation of the
hard-won gear—ah! that is very different.
We sip his claret at six guineas the dozen
with infinite gusto. I suppose it is a reflex
law of Nature that the accumulators of wealth
should be generally succeeded by the distri-
butors thereof—a piece of physiological study
that might go far to quiet the apprehensions
of the secretary of the Board of Trade anent
the acquisition of large landed properties in
this country.

Samuel the younger, it is almost needless
to observe, considering what we know of his
progenitors, took to the 'turf,' as kindly as
young duckling to water. Under his father's
guidance, he soon became a valuable coad-
jutor. He was early indoctrinated into all
the mysterious of 'milking,' 'roping,' etc.—
villainous technicalities with which I will
not attempt to bore uninitiated readers fur-
ther than explaining that they are but so many
conjurations of the verb 'to rob.' As the
father advanced both in years and infirmi-
ties, the whole management of the
racing-stud gradually fell into the son's
hands. Though the old man still took
an interest in it, he confined himself
pretty much now to the management
of his estate, and arranging the affairs of the
still numerous 'gentlemen in difficulties'
that sought his beneficent assistance. Lat-
terly, indeed, on account of his failing health
he had been entered and run principally
in the junior Pearman's name, though the
old gentleman's counsel was still sought on
what should be the tactics of the stable.

'Still, although the younger Pearman
had insinuated himself to a certain extent
into the county society, there were many of
the county families who utterly ignored the
solicitor's son. The men of the family
might know him in the hunting field; the
younger sons might go even so far as to drop
in at Mannersley for lunch, when the hounds
or ought else took them that way. But the
woman tabooed him—they would none of
him; and bitterly did Sam Pearman feel
that haughty ostracism. All men have their
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his wife or his daughter. He had married
early in life a lady of good family in his own
county—a sweet, lovable girl, who had ever
yielded to his smallest caprice. It had been
better for Harold Denison had she been con-
stituted of sterner stuff. She never crossed
her husband in word or deed. She wept and
tears in the solitude of her own chamber
when the reverses came. She sacrificed her
own fortune as far as she could. She would
have immolated herself if that would have
tended to the furtherance of the interests of
the man she still loved with all her gush
adoration. That being impossible, after the
manner of such women, she sat down and
wrote again. No word of reproach ever
escaped her lips. She gave up her season in
London; she murmured not when the pony
phæton was put down. She reduced her mil-
liner's bills to the minimum power, and mil-
dled her poor head in vain attempts to con-
trol the expenditure of an arbitrary house-
keeper. She was one of those women who
seem born to suffer. There are many such,
and a brutal husband is usually their destiny.
In this respect she was fortunate, for Harold
Denison, making all allowances for his selfish
nature, sincerely loved his wife. It grieved
him much to curtail the luxuries she had
been accustomed to; but it would never have
entered his head to commence rigid economy
on his side of the ledger.

Maude was their only child, and this per-
haps still more fostered the intense selfish-
ness of Mr. Denison's disposition. A girl
was of course, sure to marry. There would
perhaps, be some little difficulty about the
dot; but that was all. He had none of his
stock to come after him; and though he
little relished the idea of the Denison's of
Glinn being blotted out of the county re-
cord, he could not be expected to feel much
interest for that boyish nephew he had barely
seen. On one point only did poor Mr.
Denison ever venture to contradict her lord's
wishes; that was about Maude. The girl
was all in all to her mother. Maude's
woman's wit had early made her understand
that her father dealt but hard justice in
that quarter, and she was ever ready to flash
forth as her mother's champion. Otherwise
she loved her father very dearly, and
was quite imbued with the family doctrine
of self-sacrifice where he should be concern-
ed.

By the light of a candle, in the solitude of
his chamber, Grenville Rose was tasting all
the sweets of dressing to catch an early
train on a dark February morning. He
had been together a great deal with his
cousin Maude, being, indeed, a ward of Mr.
Denison's. They had romped together
as children, and been fast comely
friends since they had grown bigger. No
love-making had ever taken place between
the pair, yet Grenville was conscious of
being very fond of that gray-eyed damsel. If
you had asked him, 'What, in a comely
way?' he would have answered, 'Yes, of
course.' If you had suggested, 'in a sly
manner?' he would have hesitated, and
said, 'Well, not just that; cousins are dif-
ferent, you know.' Well, they are, as the
old sang says:

"Sisters I have by the dozen, Tom,
But a cousin's a different thing."

Though you and I reader, might have a
suspicion on the subject, it had not yet dawn-
ed upon Grenville's mind that he was falling
in love with Maude. He couldn't bear her
dancing with that beast Pearman, he said to
himself, but he did not admit that there
were several eligible partners whom Miss
Denison had honored with her hand at the
Ximster ball that he had taken almost
equal exception to. In fact, as a rule, he
had only thoroughly approved such as were
married or elderly. Rose was certainly in
no position at present to bethink himself of a
wife.