

for, when we consider that it is one of Nature's laws that the son shall rise in that quarter, it must strike everybody that young Mark—for so she had named him—had a first-class patent-lever opportunity for getting on in the world.

And he had got on, through all the misfortunes and mysterious ailments of childhood—teething, the inopportune and rash suction of his rocking-horse, and those falls which babies do so much delight in,—from all these, and innumerable other imminent catastrophes, he had escaped, by the skin of his gums, and was now a prominent swell, living at a fashionable watering place, spending his mother's money, going the whole hog, and voting everything a bore.

And, now, I am going to moralize, giving you fair warning beforehand, that any of you who prefer "limp levity to starched seriousness" may hop, skip, and jump over the next half page.

Reverend therefore: if man could only look ahead a little,—if his "hindsight was but as good as his foresight," what a radical change would be worked in the fortunes of individuals. But they can't; the science of fortune-telling is a fraud, and the man who "looks into the future" is under medical treatment for sore eyes.

Each day, as we ply our ordinary vocations, fate stares at us from the sidewalks, meets us at our office door, lurks for us behind the smile of a friend; and yet, blind, or seeing but darkly, we stumble, and, oftentimes, are lost.

The particular fate that was lying in wait for our friend Mark was, however, as we shall see, of a rather fascinating nature than otherwise.

As he stood, idly switching his legs—or, as it has been somewhere graphically termed, "raising cane"—a gigantic boot, placed exactly upon his favorite corn, and a sudden obscurity of vision, caused by his hat descending over his eyebrows, warned him that some one approached.

The next instant an "Holloa, Mark!" caused him to turn his head, to find himself *tête-à-tête* with his old college chum and crony, John de Smythe. It was close on a hundred years since Mark and he had met, and, as a consequence, their meeting was affecting in the extreme. The day was exceeding sultry; overhead, the sun shone down on the gay and festive scene, in his usual incandescent manner; and, with the thermometer at 212° in the refrigerator, it can be hardly wondered at that the two young men

MELTED INTO TEARS!

CHAPTER IV.

"And what have you been doing with yourself, these centuries, Jack?" was Mark's first query, after he had taken stock of his friend, and satisfied himself that appearances, at any rate, favored the supposition that De Smythe was possessed of a moderate quantity of the "filthy lucre" we all profess to scorn.

"To tell the truth, Mark, I have been doing so many things, and so many people, that time would fail me to recount my adventures. But come,—I want to show you a damsel here whose charms have been too much for me, my old friend."

And thus, intellectually conversing, they strolled down the beach, where the graceful Venus, or the classic Minerva, clad in many-colored tunics, disported themselves in the sad sea waves, or playfully toyed with the bounding billows from the blue Atlantic, as they rolled on the sandy shore, or shingled the shells with saliferous seaweed. It was a scene worth the contemplation of an artist. Promenading along the neck of land, which does duty for a beach to the little village of Guessport, might be seen pedestri-

ans of all classes. Stately dames, whose demeanour seemed to indicate that every one else belonged to *de meener* ranks of society; girls of the period, with lips of alabaster and cheeks of a roseate tinge (what, in "Villikins and his Dinah," are described as "uncommon fine young gals"); the gentle swill-cart driver, and the peaceful, though peripatetic, purveyor of periwinkles, formed, like the fifer in a German Band, an artistic "too!" *ensemble*, and served to add a piquancy and variety to the scene, which was as striking as it was animated.

Our two friends, wrapped in each other's society, wandered on, regardless of the busy hum which was going on around them, and finally reached the limit of the sandy patch before alluded to, where their further progress was arrested by a narrow belt of rocks, over the extreme end of which, three or four miles out to sea, the waves dashed with unusual violence. They would have turned back here, and thus the whole after-current of their lives would have been changed, had it not been for a cry which reached them, sounding, to the unpracticed ears of single men, like the shriek of a female in distress.

Lightly bounding over all intervening obstacles, and gracefully vaulting over such trifling things as the heavy boulders which lay scattered round about, our hero and his friend soon discovered the source of the shrieks.

At some little distance from the shore, on an isolated rock, stood a young and pretty girl,—the daintiest of *bottins* enclosed her tiny feet, the most fairy-like hoop-skirt distended the most bewitching of Balmorals, while her attitude, suggestive at once of despair and *deshabille*, was picturesque and pensive.

Her situation was a perilous one. Already cut off from the shore, by two oysters and a large crab, the tears which streamed from her lovely eyes, seemed in imminent danger of totally eye-solating her from the mainland.

In truth, the moment was critical. But our hero was not a man to stand on ceremony at such a juncture. Hastily throwing off his coat and suspenders, he soon bridged the distance which divided them, and, clasping the fair unknown in his arms, boldly braved the dangerous mollusc and the catawampous crab, and safely landed the beauteous being in a trice, (which he had, fortunately, brought with him), on the sand beside him.

And then she fainted,—of course she did. When did "lovely woman in distress" ever wind up in any other manner?—Susan B. Anthony and the Woman's Rights Convention to the contrary notwithstanding.

Gentle restoratives were resorted to, and, after having her boots cut off and a small piece of the skull removed, she recovered her peace of mind, if not her piece of cranium.

But how about Mark, all this time, and his friend De Smythe, who had followed so closely upon the heels of our hero as to seriously injure a new pair of patent leathers which the youthful Di Barkerola had recently invested in.

Alas, poor Mark! Cupid had, indeed, hit the Mark this time, and he was completely knocked over, smashed, clean gone,—anything else that, to your innate genius, may seem appropriately to express the position.

So was De Smythe, too! No more would his heart rejoice in the stiffness of his shirt-collar; no longer would the sit of his coat, or the tightness of his pantaloons, fill his soul with satisfaction and his tailor with dismay! Despair was in his eye, as the cause of all this distraction turned towards the blushing Mark, and, in her most dulcet tones, thanked him for his timely assistance.

"One moment more, sir," she said, "and I might have been the prey of the remorseless waves, or the matutinal