Silently, as if it had been a funeral procession, they moved on, and as Margaret entered the sitting-room adjoining the kitchen, where a couch offered itself on which to place that helpless burden, Mrs. Stukely noiselessly turned off in the direction of the upper rooms.

Her thoughts in a maddening whirl, beset with a strange fear of that stern, dark-browed soldier such as she had rarely felt before, she stood for a moment with clasped hands and a look of utter despair on her hard, grim features.

"Was it worth while," she asked herself, "to try flight? It might be. Her disguise was ready, and she could hasten from Tremaine Court across the fields, taking a short, concealed cut through the woods, and succeed, perhaps, in reaching and leaving the station unobserved. Her plan had been already deliberately formed, decided on, it only remained for her to carry it out."

Her mind thus made up, she proceeded with noiseless celerity to execute her project.

After investing herself in her disguise, she opened her bureau and drew thence a capacious pocket-book, filled with bank notes, and a small chamois skin bag, in which she had secreted all the jewels some time previous, with a view to flight. At that moment the door opened, and Christopher Stukely appeared on the threshold. With the bound of a tiger he sprang towards her, and strove to wrench bag and pocket-book from her grasp. Fiercely she struggled to retain them, for without money what became of her plans for flight? The ticket-of-leave man, however, who was troubled with no dainty scruples or delicacy, wrenched and twisted her hands as if he intended pulling the very joints asunder, till finally, when they were all bruised and bleeding, he succeeded in possessing himself of the objects they held with so tight a grasp.

"What were you about doing with these, you wild-cat?" he questioned with a terrible imprecation. "About making away with them, I'd wager. Well, they're safe here, any how," and he pushed them down into his capacious pocket.

"What have you got in that bag there?" and he snatched at her travelling satchel, which stood on a chair at hand, and dragged it open by main force. "More plunder, I'll be bound. Ah, you're a deep one!" he muttered, with a look of intense malevolence, as his glance rested on the blue spectacles and brown veil, whose purport he comprehended at once. "So you were making off with yourself, were you, my lady? Well, I'll watch you better for the future, I vow. Not for love of you, you may swear, but that it's my will and pleasure to keep you to wait on me. See," and he tore the veil to shreds and crushed the spectacles beneath his heavy boot. "You'll have to fit up your bag anew before taking your intended start."

The woman watched him in sullen endurance. She knew by his blood-shot eyes and thick utterance that he was in a mood when resistance would probably be little better than madness. Ah, she was caught in toils from which she saw no chance of deliverance. Even if she escaped the scaffold to which that stern, merciless Colonel Atherton would surely seek to consign her unless Lillian Tremaine, by a species of miracle, was restored to life and health, she could not escape the companionship of the loathing and hated ruffian whose name she bore. Passively she proceeded to take off bonnet and mantle, turning a heedless ear all the while to the mocking taunts and gibes with which her companion continued to apostrophize her. The chill breath of despair was creeping over her heart, and, under its absorbing influence, hope, courage and energy were fast dying out, but no token of her mental suffering appeared beyond the gray shade that gradually overspread cheek and lip.

"Get some breakfast for me, curse you!" he at length said, as he turned to leave the room. "I'll take a half-hour's smoke on the grass outside, and let it be ready, hot on the table, when I come in, or it will be worse for you."

A strange sinister smile wreathed the woman's lips, but she made no reply.

(To be continued.)

RULES FOR RAILROAD TRAVELLERS.

BY "GRIS."

Always attend to checking yourself. If you feel like swearing at the baggage-master, check yourself. If you haven't a trunk full of clean clothes to check, you at least should be adequate to check-shirt.

When you vacate your seat for a moment, leave a plug hat in the seat. Some one will come along and sit down on it, thereby preventing your hat from being stolen.

Have just the change ready for the conductor. Any conductor who properly understands his duty to himself and family had rather have the change than a ticket. It has been decided by law that a conductor is not obliged to make change, although that is often all he can make.

Passengers cannot lay over for another train without making arrangements with the conductor. If a man has been on a "train" for a week or so, no conductor should allow him to lay over for another on any account.

Ladies without escort in travelling should be very particular with whom they become acquainted. They needn't be so particular with those with whom they are unacquainted.

Keep your head and arms inside the car windows, if you would keep your head and "carry arms."

Never talk loudly while the train is in motion. It hurts your lungs and disconcerts the engineer.

No gentleman will occupy more than one seat at a time, unless he be twins.

A gentleman should not spit tobacco juice in the cars where there are ladies. He can let it drive out of the car window while the train is at a station, if the platform is crowded.

Always show your ticket whenever the conductor asks for it. If you get out of humor about it, don't show it.

Never smoke in a car where there are ladies. Get the conductor to turn the ladies out before lighting your cigars.

Never use profane language in the car. Go out on the platform. Profanity is never thrown away on a brakeman.

If you cannot sleep yourself do not disturb the "sleepers."

Look out for pickpockets! Pickpockets are never in the car, you know, so you have to *look out* for them.

Provide yourself with sleeping-berths before starting. No careful man will start on a journey without a good supply of sleeping-berths. [N. B. Those put up in flat bottles are the best, as they are easily carried in the pocket.]

Always be at the railroad station in good time to take the train. Better be an hour too early than a minute too late, unless you are on your way to be hung.

We learn from a note lately read before the Paris Academy of Sciences, that the use of morphia in combination with chloroform is believed by some physicians of high standing to lessen the danger which ordinarily accompanies the administration of the latter drug.

GROWING OLD.

BY MAX.

Across the street upon the window panes,
I see the splendour of the dying sun;
O'er half the earth his matchless glory wanes,
The day will soon be done.

The day that never can return to me,
Like all my years that lie so far behind:
I seem as one upon a great calm sea
Borne by a steady wind.

I seem to hear the voices on the shore
Grow fainter as the vessel sails along;
And now I listen, but I hear no more
Than the sea's great song.

Life's ocean never was so calm as now,
This peace requites me for a thousand ills;
O joy! to keep my look out at the prow,
For the eternal hills.

O Fame! O Love! O Work of bygone years!
I would not care again to reap and toil,
With fevered brain and sometimes blinding tears,
To share the wine and oil.

Tho' work is blessed, and tho' love is sweet,
Yet still there is a time to be at rest;
To fold the hands and place the weary feet,
And this to me seems best.

My boyhood's friends have drifted from my sight,
It may be they are nearer home than I;
Or landed safe to hail with deep delight
The meeting in the sky.

I had within the past a happy dream,
But love is mine again on earth no more;
Her skiff went with the current of the stream,
And she hath gone before.

My ship goes smoothly on the great calm sea,
My day star setteth in a flood of gold:
The scenes of earth are fading fast from me
For I am growing old.

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TO THE BITTER END.

By Miss M. E. Braddon.

AUTHOR OF 'LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET,' ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—*(Continued.)*

Clevedon lawn at beat of gong was a pretty sight. There were all the elements of an agreeable picture—balmy summer weather, snow-white tents, many coloured flags fluttering gaily in the sunshine, a crowd of happy people, an atmosphere of eating and drinking, and for a background the fine old red-brick house, its stone mullions and cornices, and quaint pinnacles standing out in sharp relief against a sky that was bluer than the skies that canopy an English scene are wont to be. But fair as the scene might be without, perhaps the hungry villagers crowding into the tents thought the scene within much pleasanter. What could be more picturesque than those ponderous sirloins; those Gargantuan rounds, with appropriate embellishment of horse-radish and parsley;—those dainty fowls—fowls even for the commonalty—those golden-crusted pies, with pigeons' feet turned meekly upward, as in mute protest against their barbarous murder, pies whose very odour from afar off was to distinction savoury; that delicate pigling, slain untimely; those forequarters of adolescent sheep, which were still by courtesy lamb; those plump young geese, foredoomed to die before their legitimate hour? What contrast of colour could be more delightful than that presented by the mellow Indian-red and burnt-sienna hues of the meat and poultry against the cool tender greens of the salads, the golden yolks of eggs in rings of virgin white, the paler gold of the gigantic French loaves, baked on purpose for the festival, from which a man might cut a quarter of a yard or so without making any serious difference in the bulk of the whole?

At one end of the tent, and conveniently near the chairman's elbow, there was a small colony of beer-barrels, and a stack of wines and spirits, as neatly arranged and as amply provided as in the lazaret of an East Indiaman. Over these it was Mr. Harcross's duty to preside, assisted by the under butler.

He found himself seated in his place presently, amidst a tremendous shuffling of feet, and scrooping of benches, and whispering, and subdued tittering, and the guests arranged themselves, under the all-directing eye of the Colonel, who had appointed himself commander-in-chief or generalissimo of all the tables.

"Silence, if you please, ladies and gentlemen! silence for grace!" he roared in stentorian accents, which might have made his fortune as a toastmaster; whereat a very mild-looking gentleman, with a white cravat and long straight hair, whom Mr. Harcross had not observed before, rose at the other end of the tent, and invoked a blessing upon the banquet, which was almost as long as his hair. Directly it was over there arose a general gasp, as of relief, and then a tremendous clattering of knives and forks.

The Colonel walked round the tent, calling attention to the different viands.

"There's a magnificent sirloin yonder, ma'am, roasted to a turn," he said confidentially to a ponderous matron; "I should recommend *you* a plate of *that*. And if you, my love, have any taste for roast goose," he went on to a blushing damsel next but one, "there's as fine a bird as ever was hatched just before you. Which gentleman on this side of the table will undertake to cut up a goose?" And so on, and so on, with variations, continued the Colonel, till he had made the round of one tent and shot off to do his duty in the other.

Mr. Harcross, in a much more subdued manner, made himself agreeable to the company. He saw that all glasses were duly filled with sparkling ale, or the more sustaining porter; he administered sherry to the fairer sex, and kept an eye even on distant dinners. The rural population proving unequal to the manipulation of carving-knives and forks, he sent for one joint after another, and demolished them with a quiet dexterity which, to these wondering rustics, appeared a species of legerdemain. He did more carving in half an hour than he ever remembered to have accomplished in his life before, since his lot had fallen in the days of vicarious carving, and he contrived to keep up a running flirtation all the time with the young lady seated on his left hand. He had an old woman in a black bonnet on his right, the most ancient female in Kingsbury parish, who was reputed to have used the first mangle ever seen in those parts, and to have been the last person to ride pillion.

This honourable matron being stone deaf, the attentions of Mr. Harcross were necessarily confined to a careful provision for her creature comforts. He supplied her with tender breasts of chicken and the crumbiest pieces of bread he could obtain, and devoutly hoped that she would mumble her share of the feast without choking herself. Having performed these charitable offices, he was free to devote his conversational powers to his left-hand neighbour, who was young and handsome, and was, moreover, the very young person he had seen engaged in a flirtation with Weston Vallory.

Mr. Harcross was in that mood in which a man is ready for any immediate amusement, however puerile, that may serve to divert his mind from painful memories — for any excitement, however vulgar, which may help to numb the slow agony of remorse. There was no pleasure to him in talking shallow nonsense with this low-born beauty, but the rattle and the laughter and the wine made up some kind of relief. He took a good deal more wine than he was accustomed to take at that time of day; he talked more than he was in the habit of talking, until he shone out in a gentlemanly way at the eight-o'clock dinner; and the talk and the wine together kept him from thinking of Richard Redmayne. He did not glance round the table with fearful eyes, dreading to see that fatal unknown figure appear, Banquo-like, amidst the revellers. That most unwelcome discovery which he had made by means of Mr. Holby the farmer had left only an undefined sense of discomfort—a feeling that there was trouble near.

Miss Bond, in the mean time, was very well pleased with her position and surroundings. In the first place, it was a grand thing for her to be in the post of honour, next the gentleman-steward, to which place she had drifted in the general confusion, while more timid maidens hung back upon the arms of kindred or lovers, waiting to be pushed into their seats; and in the second place, it was a pleasant thing to have disappointed Weston Vallory, who had expressed his desire that she should sit next him in the tent with the red flags; and lastly, it was a still more delightful thing to inspire jealousy and gloom in the breast of her faithful Joseph Flood, who had been released from his duties in time for the banquet, and who sat divided from his betrothed by half-a-dozen banqueters, glaring at her savagely, in silent indignation at her coquetry.

"This is the fine gentleman from London that she talked about," he said to himself; and in his estimation Mr. Harcross suffered for all the sins of Weston Vallory. "I reckon she'll scarcely open her lips to me all the afternoon, as long as she can get him to talk to."

Miss Bond was conscious of her lover's baleful glances, and improved the occasion, bringing all her fascinations to bear upon Mr. Harcross. The rustic feast would have been a slow business without this amusement. There was a great deal of talk, and still more laughter, inextinguishable laughter, at the feeblest and most threadbare jokes. The conversation was that of people who seemed to have no memory of the past, no consideration for the future—a people existing as entirely in the present hour as if they had been bovine creatures without consciousness of yesterday. Their little jokes, their friendly facetiousness had a mechanical air, and seemed almost as wooden as the clumsy furniture of their cottages, handed down from generation to generation.

Mr. Harcross's previous experience of this class had been entirely confined to the witness-box; but he found that as in the witness-box, so were they in social life. "And yet I suppose there are fine characters, or the material for fine characters, among them," he thought in one of the pauses of his flirtation, as he contemplated the curious faces — some stolid and expressionless, some solemn and important, some grinning with a wooden grin. "I suppose there is the same proportion of intellect amongst a given number of these people as among the same number of men bred at Westminster and Oxford, if one could penetrate the outer husk, make due allowance for the differences of habits and culture, and get at the kernel within. Or is the whole thing a question of Blood, and mankind subject to the same laws which govern the development of a racehorse? I wonder how many dormant Bunyans and Burnses there may be in such an assembly as this."

He had not much time for idle conjectures at this stage of the entertainment, for the toasts followed one another fast and furiously.

The loyal and ceremonial toasts, "Sir Francis Clevedon, Lady Clevedon, and Miss Clevedon," "Colonel Davenant," "John Wort," the steward, "Mr. Holby," the oldest and most important tenant, who had condescended to take a seat at this inferior table, when his rank entitled him to the best place at the superior board—all these and sundry other toasts were proposed in discreet and appropriate language by Hubert Harcross, with much secret weariness of spirit; and after every toast there was a long lumbering speech from some one in acknowledgement thereof. Mr. Harcross thought these people would never have done eating and drinking, that this health-proposing and thanks-returning would never come to an end. It was only half-past three when all was over, and he came out of the tent amidst the crowd with Jane Bond by his side, but it seemed to him as if the business had lasted a day and a night.

The local band had brayed itself breathless, and had retired to refresh itself in one of the tents; and now the band from London began to scrape its fiddles, and tighten the strings of its violoncello, and juggle mysteriously with little brass screws in its cornets, preparatory to performing the newest dance music for the rest of the afternoon.

"You must keep the last waltz for me," said Mr. Harcross, casting himself on the grass at the feet of Miss Bond, who had seated herself on a bench under the trees. "I feel as if I should not be equal to anything before that. What a relief it is to get into the open air and smell the pine trees after the atmosphere of that tent! I felt the thermometer rising as it must have done in the Black Hole."

"I don't know how to waltz," replied Miss Bond, casting down her eyes. "Father has always set his face against dancing; but I know the Lancers and the Caledonians. I learnt the figures out of a book."

"Then we'll dance the Lancers," Mr. Harcross said with a yawn, "though it is the most idiotic performance ever devised for the abasement of mankind. What would Dog-ribs or Rocky Mountain Indians think of us, if they saw us dancing the Lancers? I believe the Dog-ribs have a dance of their own, by the way, a dance of amity, which is performed when friends meet after long severance, and which lasts two days at a stretch — a dance which, I take it, must be something of the Lancer or Caledonian species."

He closed his eyes, and slumbered for a few minutes peacefully, as he had often slept in law-courts and committee-rooms, while the band from London played a good honest country dance. He had no very precise idea of the duties of his steward-ship, or what more might be required of him. He might be wanted to dance with the oldest woman of the party, or the youngest, or the prettiest, or the ugliest; but he was not inclined to give himself any farther trouble, and if Colonel Davenant had any new task to impose upon him, he would have to come and find him. There was a soothing sensation in the touch of that soft warm turf, in the odoriferous breathing of the pine trees, stirred gently by a light summer wind. He thought of that other holiday afternoon at Clevedon, and a vision of Grace Redmayne rose before him in her pale young beauty. O God, if he could have opened his eyes to find himself at *her* feet! He thought of those two mournful lines which Southey quotes in the *Doctor*:

> 'Oh, if in after life we could but gather
> The very refuse of our youthful hours!'

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"THOU ART THE MAN."

At three o'clock the gentry went to luncheon in the great dining-room. They had been arriving from one o'clock upwards, and had spent the interval in sauntering about the upper part of the lawn, gazing from a respectful distance at the happy rustics very much as they might have done at animals in cages. It is possible that this amusement, even when eked out by conversation and croquet, and enlivened by the strains of the local band, may have somewhat palled upon the county families, and that the signal for the patrician banquet was a welcome relief. However this might be, the spirits of Sir Francis Clevedon's friends rose perceptibly in the banquet-hall. Incipient flirtations, which had only budded feebly on the lawn, burst into full blossom under the influence of sparkling wines, and that delightfully bewildering concert of voices produced by three-and-twenty different *tête-à-têtes* all going on at once. Georgie was eminently happy as she sat opposite her adored Francis, at this their first large party, for she felt that the fête was a success, and the eye of the county was upon them.

All the windows were open, and the cheering from the tents on the lawn mingled not unpleasantly with the merry confusion of voices within. Is was a nice thing to know that those poor creatures who were not in society were for once enjoying themselves.

"How strange it must seem to them to taste champagne!" said the pretty Miss Stalman to her latest admirer; "I wonder if they are afraid it will go off and blow them up, like gunpowder."

"Don't know, I'm shaw," replied the gentleman: "but I should imagine they were hardly up to it. They'll take it for a superior kind of beer. Champagne is a question of education, you see. Ther are people who believe implicity in any wine that'll blow a cork out of a bottle."

It was nearly three o'clock when Mr. Redmayne presented his card of admission at the south lodge, guarded to-day by an official from the Tunbridge police-office, who gave him a secondary ticket, printed on pink tissue paper, which was to admit him to the tenants' marquee."

"You'd better look sharp, sir," said this official in a friendly tone; 'the tenants' dinner was to begin at three o'clock punctual."

"I didn't mean to dine," Richard answered dubiously; "I only came to look about a little."

"Not go in to dinner, Mr. Redmayne?" exclaimed the policeman, who knew the master of Brierwood by sight; "and it's to be as fine a dinner as ever was eaten. Sure to goodness, you'd never be so foolish!"

Mr. Redmayne gave him a nod and went on, pledging himself to nothing. He thought he could stroll about on the outskirts of the crowd, and see as much of the festival as he cared to see, without joining in any of the festivities. But when he came to the lawn where the revelry was held, he found himself pounced upon by the ubiquitous Colonel, who was marshalling the tenants to their places, and who seized upon his pink-paper ticket and examined it eagerly.

"No. 53," he exclaimed; "the seats are all numbered. If you'll follow those ladies and gentlemen, sir, into that tent. Keep your ticket, the stewards are inside. Go on, sir, if you please." And not caring to remonstrate, Richard Redmayne went the way Fate drifted him, and found himself presently seated at the board between two strangers, cheered by that inspiring melody, "The Roast Beef of Old England."

The dinner in the tenants' marquee did not differ materially from the humbler banquet of the villagers. The viands were of a more epicurean character: there were savoury jellies, and raised pies, and lobster salads, as a relief to the rounds and sirloins, and there were no such vulgarities as goose or sucking-pig. There were tartlets and cheese-cakes, and creams and blancmanges, and glowing pyramids of hot-house grapes and wall-fruit, for the feminine banqueters, and there were sparkling wines and bottled ales in abundance. There was the same crescendo of multitudinous voices, and the jokes, though somewhat more refined than the humour of the villagers, had the same rustic flavour.

Richard Redmayne had of late found it easier to drink than to eat; so he did scanty justice to sirloin or savoury pie, but made up the deficiency by a considerable consumption of champagne, a wine he had learnt to drink in his gold-digging days, when the lucky digger was wont to "shout"—that is to say, pay the shot —for the refreshment of his comrades. He sat in moody silence, amidst all that talk and laughter, and drank and thought of his troubles.

They had been brought sharply home to him by the presence of John Wort, who sat at the bottom of the table, while Colonel Davenant took the chair at the top. He had not spoken to the steward since that night in his office, and the sight of him set him thinking of his wrongs with renewed bitterness.

"*He* knew the man," he said to himself. "He brought him to my house. But for him my little girl might be with me to-day."

It was a bitter thought, not to be drowned in the vintage of Perrier or Moet. The man went on drinking, uncheered by the wine, growing gloomier, rather as he drank.

The toasts had not yet begun. Sir Francis was to bid his guests welcome before that ceremony was entered upon. It was about half-past four, when there was a little buzz and movement at the entrance of the marquee, and a great many people stood up, as if a monarch had appeared among them.

Richard Redmayne looked up listlessly enough, not having the keen personal interest of the tenants, to whom this man's favour was to be as the sun itself, diffusing light and heat. He looked up and saw a tall slim young man coming slowly along on the opposite side of the table, stopping to speak to one, and to shake hands with another, and ready with a pleasant greeting for all; a darkly handsome face, smiling kindly, while all the assembly stood at gaze.

After that one careless upward glance, Richard Redmayne sat staring at the new-comer, motionless, may almost breathless, as a man of stone. Had not those very lineaments been bitten into the tablet of his mind with the corroding acid of hate? The face was a face which he had seen in many of his dreams of late. The face of a man with whom he had grappled, hand to hand and foot to foot, in many a visionary struggle — a countenance he had hardly hoped to look upon in the flesh. It was the very face which he had pored upon so often, in that foolish toy, his dead girl's locket. He had the thing in his breast to-day, fastened to his watch ribbon.

"What! was *he* the man?" he said to himself at last, drawing a long slow breath.

Was this the man—Sir Francis Clevedon? In that sudden light of conviction, Richard Redmayne began to wonder that he had never guessed as much as this: the man who came to Brierwood, recommended and guaranteed by John Wort; the man who had free access to Clevedon, and whom Wort had seemed anxious in every respect to oblige. He remembered that stormy interview in the little office at Kingsbury, and John Wort's endeavour to shield the delinquent. Yes, the murder was out. This hero of the hour, upon whom all the world was smiling, was the destroyer of his child.

The savage thirst for vengeance which took possession of him on this discovery was tempered by no restraining influence. For years past all his thoughts and dreams and desires had tended to one deadly end. Whatever religious sentiments he had cherished in his youth — and very few young men with innocent surroundings are irreligious — had been withered by this soul-blasting grief. Nor had his Australian experience been without an evil effect upon his character. It had made a naturally careless disposition reckless to lawlessness. Of all the consequences which might tread upon the heels of any desperate act of his he took no heed. He reasoned no more than a savage might have reasoned; but having, as he thought, found his enemy, his whole being was governed by but one consideration, as to the mode and manner of that settlement which must come between them.

He sat in his place and meditated this question, while Sir Francis Clevedon made his way round the table. It was a somewhat protracted journey, for the Baronet had something particular to say to a great many of his tenants; he had set his heart upon holding a better place in their estimation than his father had held, on being something more to them than an absorbent of rents. He talked to the matrons, and complimented the daughters; and had a good deal to say about harvest and hopping, and the coming season of field sports, to the fathers and sons. What a herd of sycophants those people seemed to Richard Redmayne's jaundiced soul as they paid their honest homage to the proprietor of their homesteads, and what a hypocrite the squire who received their worship!

"Does he mean to break the hearts of any of *their* daughters?" he thought, as he saw the matrons smiling up at him, the maidens downcast and blushing.

Sir Francis was close behind him presently, and paused for a moment to glance at that one sullen figure which did not move as he passed —only for a moment, there were so many to speak to. The man's potations had been a trifle too deep, perhaps.

The man drank deeper before the banquet was over. He went on drinking in his gloomy silent way, during that lengthy ceremonial of toast-proposing. Sir Francis had stood at the end of the table by John Wort, and made a cheery little speech to set them going, and then had slipped away, leaving the Colonel, who loved all manner of speechification, in his glory. How he hammered at the toasts, heaping every hyperbolical virtue upon the head of his subject!—that honourable, noble-hearted, worthy English farmer, Mr. A., whom they all knew and esteemed, and whom it was a proud thing to know, and an impossible thing not to esteem, and who, &c. &c.

> 'As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
> Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm;
> Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
> Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

What little gushes of sentiment welled from the kindly Colonel's lips; what scraps of poetry more or less appropriate, but always applauded to the echo; what swelling adjectives rolled off his fluent tongue; and how the champagne corks flew, and the honest brown sherry —a sound sustaining wine—shrank in the decanters!

Richard Redmayne sat it all out, though the talk and laughter, the cheering and jolly-good-fellowing, made little more than a mere Babel sound in his ears. He sat on, not caring to draw people's attention upon him by an untimely departure; sat on drinking brandy-and-water, and having no more fellowship with the feasters than if he had been the skull at an Egyptian banquet.

At least the revelry, or this stage of the revelry, was over, and the tenants left their tent. Dancing had been in full progress for some time among the humbler guests, and the wide lawn in the evening sunlight presented a pretty picture of village festivity; the music of an old-fashioned country dance was sounding gaily, a long line of figures threading the needle —the women in bright-coloured gowns and ribbons, the men with gaudy neckerchiefs and