

of a theatre; and Dante may take himself to the other place, and find his own Beatrice there. This is poetical justice with which prose must not meddle; and it gives us some clue to the reason why a mere story comes naturally to an end when the good people in it marry and begin to live happily. The novelist might go on with them till they were grey-headed; but then — ! So, to avoid a consummation which can never be less than melancholy, he leaves them when they enter their heaven on earth, or traverses that region with them only so far as to satisfy himself that their line of heroism is likely to be perpetuated.

It must be so now. About eighteen months from a certain day on which Lord Dalton, passing through the village adjacent to Maldon Priory, heard church-bells ringing, saw carriages rolling about, and put to himself the question—"Why do the villagers fuddle themselves?"—Blanche and Gerald are leaning over a pink and white