

and vaults, which prove Dunraven to have once been a religious house, might allow us to conjecture that possibly the monks of the olden time had thus hollowed out a secret entrance to the world beyond their walls.

Whatever might have been the purpose for which it was originally designed, the present Lord of Dunraven quickly found its use. Sceldom did the gates of the old castle unclose to admit cheerful guests, yet often were the windows seen gleaming with lights, and often were the sounds of revelry borne on the midnight breeze to the humble cottages of the tenants. Guests came and went like shadows.—Night often closed upon the solitary inmates of the castle, and morning broke upon them as solitary as the evening had found them, yet, between the midnight hour and the cock-crowing, strange forms had flitted across the lofty banquetting-hall, and wine had flowed in full streams around the plentiful board. The servants marvelled at these things, but they dared ask no questions. One domestic alone—a diminutive and swarthy boy, who knew no other language than the strange guttural speech in which his master addressed him, and who never replied except by signs, seemed to possess the confidence of Mr. Vaughan. He was the sole attendant at these midnight orgies, and it is not strange that the ignorant peasants should have imbibed the notion that the Lord of Dunraven dealt in wizard lore, and that his guests were the ghostly habitants of another world. The boy they regarded with fear and horror, as the attendant imp of the mysterious lord, nor was the feeling diminished by the malicious looks and gestures of Malek, who, finding himself an object of dislike, delighted in terrifying them by opening his expansive jaws, and displaying a mouth garnished with long sharp glittering teeth, but destitute of the least remnant of a *tongue*.

Time passed away; nothing had occurred to give form and consistency to the vague suspicions which had been excited in the minds of all the neighborhood, towards Mr. Vaughan, and yet the dislike and distrust of him was unbounded. It was said that a strange and suspicious-looking vessel was often seen hovering around the coast of Glamorganshire; and those who rejected the supernatural from their belief, traced Mr. Vaughan's mysterious visitors rather to the ship, than to the place of departed spirits. But whether he was engaged with smugglers or pirates, was not to be discovered, and men dared not draw down his resentment by too close an inquiry, for, notwithstanding

their dislike of him, there yet existed one common ground on which the neighbours all met, and in which they had an equal interest.—Strange as it may seem, all who lived on that dangerous and rock-bound coast, whatever might be their rank or station, were literally *wreckers*. The spoils cast up by the sea, were, by common consent, the property of him on whose manor they fell, and many a rich treasure was thus acquired by the proprietors of land on the sea shore. About five miles from Dunraven may still be seen a tall watch-tower, near to Saint Donat's Castle, where a sentinel was always stationed to give notice when a ship in distress appeared, in order that the lord of the castle might take possession of such of the wreck as should be driven ashore.—Whether the beacon light which often blazed on the watch-tower, was placed there for the benevolent purpose of warning vessels from the iron coast, may well be doubted, for, certain it is, that, previous to the return of the Lord of Dunraven, almost every vessel that suffered shipwreck on those rocks, went ashore on Saint Donat's manor. What a horrid custom is that which thus offers a premium to cruelty, and makes the land more perilous to the shipwrecked mariner, than the cruel sea from whose yawning jaws he has just escaped. Who does not blush for human nature, when he remembers the scenes which have been enacted, not only on the savage coast of Cornwall, but even on the dangerous shoals of our own sea coast, in these days of enlightened humanity?

The good fortune of the Lord of Saint Donat's, changed with the coming of the crafty Dunraven, and he was doomed to see from his high tower, the remnant of many a 'rich argosy,' strewn on the rocky beach of his neighbour's manor. Mr. Vaughan held no parley with his neighbours on the subject, but he gathered up spoils of gold and merchandize, and even the rude garments stripped from the swollen limbs of the drowned, were collected into his storehouse. The Lord of Dunraven had undergone the change which often converts the spendthrift into the miser. He had been a reckless prodigal, flinging his gold like pebbles in his path, until he had been sorely pinched by poverty and distress. He had seen himself deserted by the friends of his prosperity, as soon as his money was exhausted; and he had lived to win rank among men, and love among women, by regaining his lost wealth. All the passions of his evil nature, therefore, seemed concentrated and condensed in the