

"might then be inquired by the malignant," said Miss Jones, "why Mr. Cleland is not extinguished."

"Because he is extinguished by Miss Jones' ardeurs."

"But the soul, I suppose, like a candle, can only be extinguished by want of air; and Mr. Cleland can never want abundance of airs."

"Certainly not, while he is played upon so skillfully by Miss Jones."

"By-the-by, Cleland," said I, "they have lately made some extraordinary improvements in the soul in New-England, by which it has become possessed of marvellous powers. By means of these new-invented souls, a woman sitting in one house knows what is passing in the house of another at a distance; and is able to tell the contents of a written paper which he has never seen."

"I doubt the novelty of the invention," said Cleland. "As to knowing what passes in a neighbour's house, it is not surprising a New-England woman should do that; 'tis but a new version of the old quality of curiosity, and shows what stores of knowledge the long exercise of that faculty has given them. And in former times, to know the contents of written papers that were never seen, it has only been necessary to assemble the priestesses of *Joaze* around the table, and to propitiate that divinity by a cup of tea."

"Mr. Cleland," said a lady, "as you deny that the music which we have heard was inspired by any soul, will you not favour us with a performance to have one?"

Cleland approached the piano, and presently broke out with a ridiculous *buffo* song, full of humour and a satire more diverting than refined. The company laughed, but I thought his mirth was not won without some expense of dignity. Mrs. Dashkoff, as she paid her compliments to him at the conclusion of it, I thought, indicated as much; for her thanks were expressed with a particularity which seemed to show that he had condescended a good deal in order to amuse.

Miss Keppel, with her commanding beauty and intellectual air, was standing by the pianoforte alone. She seemed to regard the conversation which I have described, and the manner which followed it, with calm and distant contempt. Indeed, there was little in one or the other which could interest or please the cold and passionate soul of Mary Keppel.

Cleland rose from the instrument and approached her. There was an unwonted sneer and irony upon his face.

"Is not that a creditable display?" said he.

"Very good, undoubtedly, in its way," she replied, deliberately. Then paused for a moment, and added with a searching and impressive tone, "But it is quite worthy of the exalted spirit and lofty intellect of Mr. Cleland?"

My friend seemed to feel the reproof deeply, but threw off the feeling by an effort.

"Oh," said he, "'tis thus I amuse myself. I live but for trifles; the world and its honours I despise unutterably."

"First, *prove* that you *can* gain them," she replied, "as I believe you can, and then you may sincerely despise them."

"I detest, I scorn the world," said Cleland, who seemed vexed beyond his control.

"There is an order of souls who are 'too proud to be vindictive,' too great to feel contempt, who stoop not to note affronts and count insults with the world; who rise to the clear regions of moral grandeur and dignified virtue; and who, freed from the petty passions of common life, enjoy a glorious rest in the consciousness of honourable toil. What is life but a perpetual struggle between the greatness of the soul and the belittling influences of the world? See you not, that if you yield to littleness, the world has vanquished you? Shall wounded greatness take vengeance on the world by destroying itself? In this earthly strife there is but one way to win the triumph; and that is to be calm under every smart, to be great under the keenest wrongs—ever to preserve your soul in dignity. You condemn the paltriness of the world; can you not rise to the feeling of sympathy for its errings? You speak of hate; can you not feel the more exalting power of love?" and her voice broke upon the word. "But if the gentleman and purity of Henry Cleland is departed, where is his intellectual pride?—where his manliness of heart?"

These words were spoken low, but in a deep tone and a voice that quivered with passion.—They were heard by none of the company but myself, and I was asleep; besides I was talking to somebody, by very intelligent somnolent nods. An old fellow like myself was authorized to feel a paternal interest and curiosity in the heart-affairs of these young persons. As a man of honour, I feel no remorse at being a listener; as I communicate such secrets to nobody—but the public; and never make any use of them—except to print them. It was plain that there was a secret history between these young people; and when there is that in the case, I always feel as much curiosity as Mr. D'Israeli himself. My friend seemed to