

view. No sooner had he turned his back, than the rogue snatched up the purse and ran off at full speed. The priest followed, in the surplice as he was. The shopkeeper pursued the priest. The priest called, "Stop the thief!" The shopkeeper cried, "Stop the priest." The thief repeated, "Stop the priest, for he is mad!" The people believed no less when they saw him running in public and so habited. Then the shopkeeper grappled the priest, the priest struggled to release himself, until they rolled over each other, while the cheat showed them a fair pair of heels, and escaped with the purse and money.

Impostors often carry on their trade through life, unchecked by conscience or repentance, if not detected and punished by law. Rarely indeed have they the hardihood to face death and futurity with the same systematic falsehood. The following remarkable instance of the latter, with which we conclude, occurs in a book seldom met with called "Memoires de Misson." The author was a French lawyer of eminence, distinguished for his pleadings before the parliament of Paris in behalf of the Protestants. On the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, he took refuge in England, in which country he resided long, and died in London in 1701. He travelled as tutor with an English nobleman, and published, amongst other works, a "Voyage to Italy," and a "Tour in England." The subjoined anecdote is too circumstantially and naturally told to be an invention of the writer.

A comely, respectable-looking man, who had been for many years footman to a Mr. Wickham, a gentleman of fortune at Banbury, in Oxfordshire, came to London, and took lodgings at a baker's, a man well to do in the world, opposite to Arundel-street, in the Strand. The baker being asked by his lodger what countryman he was, replied that he was of Banbury. The other, rejoiced at meeting a townsman, immediately expressed strong regard for the baker, adding, that since he was from Banbury, he must needs know Mr. Wickham, or have heard his name mentioned. The baker, who was very well acquainted with that gentleman's family, though he had been absent from Banbury fifteen or twenty years, was delighted to hear news of it. But he became perfectly overcome by joy when informed that the person he conversed with was Mr. Wickham himself. This inspired him with the most profound respect. The family must be called up for Mr. Wickham to see them, and that they might drink a glass together to their friends at Banbury. The baker did not for a moment doubt his having Mr. Wickham for his lodger; but yet he could not help wondering that neither footman nor portmanteau appeared. He therefore made bold to ask how a gentleman of his estate came to be unattended. The pretended Wickham, making a sign to him to speak softly, replied that his servants were in a place where he could readily find them when required; but that at present he must be very careful of being known, because he came up to town to arrest a merchant of London, who owed him a great sum of money and was going to break. That he desired to remain incognito, for fear he should miss his stroke, and requested the landlord not to mention his name.

The next day the pretended Mr. Wickham went out to arrange measures with another of his own stamp, as to playing their parts in concert. It was arranged between them that the other should pass for Mr. Wickham's servant, and come privately, from time to time, to see his master and attend on him. That same night the servant came, and Mr. Wickham, looking at his own dirty neckcloth in the glass, fell into a great rage at him for letting him be without money, linen, or other conveniences, by his negligence in not carrying his trunk to the waggon in due time, which would cause a delay of three days. This was acted in a loud voice that the baker, who was in the next room, might hear it. The poor deluded man thereupon ran immediately to his drawers, carried to Mr. Wickham the best linen he had in the house, begged the honour of his wearing it, and at the same time laid fifty guineas on the table, that he might oblige him by accepting them also. Wickham at first refused, but with urgent pressing was pre-

vailed upon. As soon as he had the money in possession, he had a livery made of the same colour and fashion as the true Mr. Wickham's, and gave it to another pretended footman, who brought a trunk and box full of goods, as coming from the Banbury waggon. The baker, more satisfied than ever that he had to do with Mr. Wickham, one of the richest and noblest gentlemen in the kingdom, made it more and more his business to give him fresh marks of respect and attachment. In short, Wickham got from him a hundred and fifty guineas, besides the first fifty, for all of which he gave him his note.

About three weeks after the opening of this adventure, the rogue, while enjoying himself at a tavern, was seized with a violent headache, accompanied by a burning fever, and great pains in all parts of his body. As soon as he found himself ill, he went home to his lodging, where he was waited upon by one of his pretended footmen, and assisted in everything by the good baker, who advanced all money that was wanted, and passed his word to the doctors, apothecaries, and everybody else. Meanwhile Wickham grew worse and worse, and about the fifth day was given over. The baker, grieved to the heart at the condition of his illustrious friend, felt bound to tell him, though with much reluctance, what the doctors thought of his condition. Wickham received the news as calmly as if he had been the best Christian in the world, and fully prepared for death. He desired a minister to be sent for, and received the Communion the same day. Never did there appear to be more resignation to the will of God, never more outward piety, zeal, or confidence in the merits of the Redeemer. Next day, the distemper and danger increasing to an alarming height, the impostor told the baker that it was not enough to have taken care of his soul, he ought also to set his worldly affairs in order, and desired that he might make his will, while yet sound in mind.

A scrivener, therefore, was immediately sent for, and the will made and signed in all proper form before several witnesses. Wickham, by this, disposed of all his estate, real and personal, jewels, coaches, teams, racehorses of such and such colours, packs of hounds, ready money, &c., a house with all appurtenances and dependencies, to the baker; almost all his linen to the wife; five hundred guineas to their eldest son; eight hundred to the four daughters; two hundred to the parson who had comforted him in his sickness; two hundred to each of the doctors, and one hundred to the apothecary; fifty guineas and mourning to each of his footmen; fifty to embalm him; fifty for his coffin; two hundred to hang the house with mourning, and to defray the rest of the charges of his interment. A hundred guineas for gloves, hatbands, scarves, and gold rings; such a diamond to such a friend; and such an emerald to another. Never was anything more noble or more generous. This done, Wickham called the baker to him, loaded him and his whole family with benedictions and told him, that immediately after his decease he had nothing to do but to go to the lawyer named in the will, who was acquainted with all his affairs, and would give him full instructions how to proceed. Soon after he fell into convulsions and died. Such was the utterly unaccountable climax of one of the most consummate impositions on record.

The baker first applied himself entirely to carrying out the provisions of the will, omitting nothing that was ordered by the deceased to be done. He was not to be interred until the fourth day after his death, and all was ready by the second. The baker had now time to look for the lawyer before he laid his benefactor in the ground. Having put the body into a rich coffin covered with velvet and plates of silver, and made all the other arrangements, he began to consider that it would not be improper to reimburse himself as soon as possible, and to claim possession of his new estate. He therefore went and communicated the whole affair to the lawyer. This gentleman was indeed acquainted with the true Mr. Wickham, had all his papers in his hands, and often received letters from him. He was strangely surprised to hear of the sickness and death of Mr. Wickham, who had written to him the day before. The film fell at once

from the poor baker's eyes, who saw that he had been bit. We may easily imagine the discourse that passed between these two. The baker, in conclusion, was thoroughly convinced by several circumstances, unnecessary to relate here, that the true Mr. Wickham was in perfect health, and that the man he took for him was the greatest villain and most complete hypocrite that ever existed. Upon this he immediately turned the rogue's body out of the rich coffin, which he sold for a third part of the original cost. The tradespeople that had been employed towards the funeral, had compassion on the baker, and took their things again, though not without some loss to him. They dug a hole in the corner of St. Clement's church-yard, where they threw in the body with as little ceremony as possible.

M. Misson ends this strange narrative by saying:—"I was an eyewitness of most of the things which I have here related, and shall leave the reader to make his own reflections upon them. I have been assured from several hands, that the baker has since had his loss pretty well made up to him by the generosity of the true Mr. Wickham, for whose sake the honest man had been so open-hearted."

CARRIE MORTON.

A TALE OF DOMESTIC LIFE.

BY *** MONTREAL.

"It does seem to me this house is the worst managed in the town," said Harry Morton, as he sat at the breakfast table. "The cakes are heavy, the coffee weak, and the hall is cold enough to freeze one as you pass through. If you would let Mrs. Parsons show you how she cooks or even manages, we would have a little more comfort."

The name of Mrs. Parsons put the finishing touch to the grief of Harry Morton's young wife, to whom these words were addressed. She had heard that name so often for the last year, that she replied with far more spirit than usual, "It is a pity you did not marry her, if a housekeeper was all you desired; for I cannot see that the cakes are heavy, and as to the fire, I heard Kate working at it for more than an hour this morning; the coal must be too large."

"Always an excuse for everything; if two girls cannot do the work of the house properly, do let us keep three or four; any number, but do give me a little comfort at home."

"Why, Harry Morton, I never thought"—then seeing her little girl look up surprised, Mrs. Morton prudently remained quiet, her eyes filling with tears, a woman's privilege when prudence bids her be silent. Once those tears would have touched his heart; but now he only thought—"My home is getting to be a delightful spot surely," and the breakfast was finished in silence.

Mr. M. soon bade his wife good morning; took his little girl kindly by the hand,—it was her first quarter at school,—and in her merry company he forgot what an injured man he was, until kissing her good-bye, he began again to think of the scene at the breakfast table, when a business friend overtook him; and home, with its cares, were for the present quite forgotten.

Not so his wife. She passed through that unfortunate hall, and it did seem cold certainly; but entering her own room, and locking the door, she felt herself to be an unhappy woman. The house was cold—he was right there; but was she to blame, could she be everywhere? Then came the most important question—does he love me? If so, why is he so regardless of my feelings—I never heard my father speak so to his wife; but do I try as hard to please my husband as my mother did hers? I do try to make my home happy, but there is something wrong somewhere. Her thoughts went back to her early home, where love was the guiding star, and she the only child—the idol of the household. Then she thought of her father's death, when her cup of sorrow seemed full; one year later, she stood beside her mother's dying bed. How vividly she remembered that sad scene, and how her mother bade her, if troubles or sorrows darkened her young path, to trust in Him whose love is stronger even than a mother's. "God will