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# THE LANCET

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## "NO INTENTIONS."

BY FLORENCE MARRYAT.

Author of "Love's Conflict," "Veronique," etc.

### CHAPTER III.—Continued.

And on either side the mirror are displayed photographs in frames: young men and maidens; old men and children: "Dear Lord X—," and the Hon. Richard A—, and Lady Viola." To set Mrs. Quekett off on the subject of her photographs, is to hear her talk "Court Circular" for at least an hour, and finish with the intelligence that, with the exception of his poor dear father, she has never "bemeaned" herself by living in an untitled family before Colonel Mordaunt's.

Miss Mordaunt addresses her timidly:

"How are you this morning, Quekett?—is your head better?"

"Well, miss, I can hardly say before I get up and move about a bit. It's very cold— isn't it?"

"Bitterly cold; the wind is due north."

"Ah! I thought so. I don't think I shall be

"I WANT TO PUT A QUESTION TO YOU, COLONEL."

down just yet. Will you give the cook directions about the luncheon, Miss Mordaunt?—I shall be in time to see to the dinner."

"But the tradesmen will want their orders, Quekett."

"Well, the cook can come up to me for that. I suppose the Colonel won't be home to luncheon."

"I don't know—I can't say. I didn't ask him—but perhaps—I should think—"

"Oh, it's no good thinking, miss. If he hasn't left directions, he must put up with the inconvenience. Were there any gentlemen to breakfast this morning?"

"Well, Quekett, there were one or two—three or four, perhaps; but no one could help it—at least, I'm sure Philip didn't ask them; for Mr. Rogers rode up just as we sat down, and—"

"It could be helped well enough, if the Colonel had a grain of sense. A pack of fellows to eat him out of house and home, and nothing to show for it. I warrant they've cut my new ham down to the bone. And which of 'em would give the Colonel a breakfast before he sets out hunting, I should like to know."

"Oh, Quekett! Philip does dine with them sometimes: it was only last week he received invitations from the Capels and the Stewarts."

"And what's the good of that? Gives everything, and takes nothing in return. And, by-the-way, is it true, miss, that there's talk about Master Oliver spending his Easter here again?"

"I'm sure I don't know. You had better ask Philip, Quekett. I have nothing to do with Master Oliver. I daresay it's a mistake. Who told you about it?"

"That don't in the least signify; but things can't go on like this, and so I shall tell the Colonel. There are some people I can't live in the same house with, and Master Oliver's one. And it won't be the better for him, I expect, if I have to leave through his means."

Miss Mordaunt is trembling all over.

"Oh, Quekett! it will never come to that."

You know how anxious Philip is to make you comfortable, or to do anything to please you, that—that—is reasonable."

"Reasonable, Miss Mordaunt! Well, I'm not likely to ask anything as is not reasonable. I was fifteen years in the service of the Colonel's father, and came to Fen Court, as every one knows, much against my own interests, and only to please those as had a sort of claim on me. And then to be told that Mr. Philip will do anything to please me as is reasonable, is rather too much to put up with." And here Mrs. Quekett shows symptoms of boiling.

"Oh, pray don't say that, Quekett! I daresay my brother never thought of having Master Oliver here; and, if he did, that he will put off his visit to a more convenient opportunity."

"Well, I hope so, I'm sure; for I've no wish to see him hanging about here for a month. And I think, miss, that if this is all you have to say to me, perhaps I'd better be getting up and looking after the house matters myself; for I don't suppose there'll be a bit left in the larder, now that the Colonel has been feeding a pack of wolves at breakfast."

Miss Mordaunt, making no pretence of resentment, flies as though she had been ordered to disappear.

At noon, Mrs. Quekett descends to the house-keeper's room, which—by means of furniture cribbed from other apartments, hot luncheons and suppers, and friends to partake of them whenever she feels disposed to issue her invitations—is as comfortable and convivial a retreat as any to be found in Fen Court. Mrs. Quekett, too, presents an appearance quite in accordance with the presiding deity of a servants' feast. Tall, well-formed, and well-dressed, with a face that has been handsome and a complexion that is not entirely guiltless of aid, she looks fitted to hold a high position among menials—and she holds it a trifle too highly. Her dominant, overbearing temper makes her at once feared and hated in the servants' hall, and each do-



mestic is ready to abuse her behind her back and to rake up old dead scandals, which might well be permitted to lie forgotten amongst the ashes of the past. As she enters her sanatorium, a dish of stewed kidneys and a glass of stout are placed before her, with punctuality; but it is well, as she came down-stairs, that she did not hear the cook ordering the kitchen-maid to take in the "cat's meat" without delay. Somebody else in the kitchen hears the remark, however, and laughs—not loudly but discordantly—and the harsh sound reaches the housekeeper's ears.

"Who's that?" she demands, sharply, "Mrs. Cray? Tell her she is to come here and speak to me."

CHAPTER IV.

Mrs. Cray is a hard-featured, angular woman, with rather a defiant cast of countenance, but she obeys the summons to the housekeeper's room promptly enough, bringing a huge basket, the emblem of her trade, which is that of a laundress, beneath her arm.

"And pray what may you be doing in the kitchen at this time of day, Mrs. Cray?" commences Mrs. Quekett, uncovering the kidneys, "I'm doing what it would be well as every one did, mum—minding my own business."

"Don't speak to me in that tone of voice. You can't have any business here on Tuesday, unless you neglected to send the servants' things home in time again last week."

"No, mum, I didn't neglect to send the servants' things home in time again last week," replies Mrs. Cray, with insolent repetition, "and my business here to-day is to get the money that's due to me; and if that ain't my business, I'm sure I don't know what is. There's three weeks owing, and I'm sure it can't be by the Colonel's wish that a poor hard-working creature as I'm kept waiting day after day in this manner."

"It's your own fault if you are. I've told you several times that if you want your bill paid, you must come up between seven and eight every Saturday evening, and fetch the money."

"And I've told you, mum, that I can't do it; and if you had six children to wash and put to bed, besides grown sons a-coming home for their suppers, and the place to ruddle up, and all with one pair of hands, you couldn't do it neither."

"What's your niece about that she can't help you?"

Mrs. Cray looks sulky directly. "A hulking young woman like that!" continues the housekeeper, with her mouth full of tomtit and kidney, "idling about the village and doing nothing to earn her living, I am quite surprised you should put up with it. Why don't she come up for the money? I suppose she can read and write?"

"Oh, she can read and write fast enough—better than many as thinks themselves above her—but she can't come up on Saturdays, for a very good reason—that she ain't here."

"Not here! Where is she gone to?"

"That's her business, mum, and not ours. Not but what I'm put out about it, I must own; but she was always a one to have her own way, she was, and I suppose it will be so to the end."

"Her own way, indeed; and a nice way she's likely to make of it, tramping about the country by herself. You should take better care of her, Mrs. Cray."

Now, Mrs. Cray, a virago at home and abroad, has one good quality—she can stick up for her own relations; and Mrs. Quekett's remark upon her niece's propensity for rambling raises all her feelings in defence of the absent.

"She's as well able to look after herself, my niece is, as many that wear silken gowns upon their backs—ay, and better too. Take more care of her, indeed! It's all very well to give good advice, but them as preaches had better practise. That's what I say!"

"I don't know what you mean," says Mrs. Quekett, who knows so well that the glass of porter she is lifting to her lips jingles against her false teeth.

"Well, if you don't know, mum, I don't know who should. Anyways, I want my three weeks' money, and I stays here till I gets it."

"You shall not have a sixpence until you learn to keep a civil tongue in your head."

"Then I shall have to send my Joel up to talk to the Colonel about it."

"He will not see the Colonel unless I give him permission. You're a disgrace to the village—you and your family—and the sooner Priestley is quit of the lot of you the better."

"Oh, it's no talking of yours, mum, as will turn us out, though you do think yourself so much above them as wouldn't stoop to eat with you. There's easy ways for some people to get riches in this world; but we're not thieves yet, thank God, nor shan't begin to be, even though there are some who would keep honest folks out of the money they've lawfully earned."

Conceive Mrs. Quekett's indignation.

"How dare you be so insolent?" she exclaims, all the blood in her body rushing to her face. It requires something more than the assumption of superiority to enable one to bear an inferior's insult with dignity.

Mrs. Quekett grows as red as a turkey-cock. "Insolent!" cries Mrs. Cray. "Why, what do you call talking of my niece after that fashion, then? De you think I've got no more feeling for my own flesh and blood than you have yourself?"

"Mary!" screams Mrs. Quekett from the open door, "go upstairs at once and fetch me the washing-book that lies on the side table in my bedroom."

"Oh yes, your bed-room, indeed!" continues the infuriated laundress. "I suppose you think as we don't know why you've got the best one in the house, and not a word said to you about it. You couldn't tell no tales, you couldn't, about the old man as is dead and gone, nor the young 'un as wears his shoes; only you durstn't to, because you're all tarred with the same brush. You think yourself a lady as may call poor folks bad names; but the worst name as you ever give a body would be too good for yourself."

All of which vituperation is bawled into the housekeeper's ears by Mrs. Cray's least dulcet tones, whilst Mrs. Cray's hardworking fists are placed defiantly upon her hips. By the time Mary returns with the washing-book Mrs. Quekett is trembling all over.

"Take your money, woman," she says, in a voice which fear has rendered wonderfully mild, compared to that of her opponent, "and never let me see your face, nor the face of any one that belongs to you again."

"That's as it may be," retorts Mrs. Cray; "and, any way, we're not beholden to you, nor any such dirt, for our living."

"You'll never get it here again. Not a bit of washing goes over the threshold to your house from this time forward, and I'll dismiss any servant who dares to disobey me!"

"Oh, you needn't fear, mum, as I'll ask 'em. There's other washing in Leicestershire, thank God! beside the Court's; and, as for your own rage, I won't touch 'em if you were to pay me in gold. You'll come to want yourself before long, and be glad to wash other people's clothes to earn your bread; and I wish I may live to see it!"

With which final shot, Mrs. Cray pockets her money, shoulders her basket, and marches out of Fen Court kitchen.

This interview has quite upset the housekeeper, who leaves more than half her luncheon on the table, and goes upstairs to her bedroom, in order to recover her equanimity.

"Serve her right," is the verdict of the kitchen, while Mary finishes the kidneys and porter and repeats the laundress's compliments verbatim.

"I'd have given something to hear Mother Cray pitch into the old cat."

"Only hope it'll spoil her dinner."

"No fear of that. She'd eat if she was dying."

And so on, and so on; the general feeling for the housekeeper being that of detestation.

It takes longer than usual for Mrs. Quekett to calm her ruffled dignity, for she is unaware how much the servants have overheard of the discussion between her and Mrs. Cray, nor how much they will believe of it. So she remains upstairs for more than an hour; and when she descends again she has changed her dress; for in a black satin gown, with a blonde lace cap ornamented with pink flowers, who amongst the lower menials would presume to question either her authority or her virtue?

She does not forget what has passed however. It returns upon her every now and then during the afternoon, with an unpleasant feeling of insecurity; and when—the Court dinner being concluded—she makes her way up to Colonel Mordaunt's private sitting-room, she is just in the mood to make herself very disagreeable. The room in question is called the study though it is very little study that is ever accomplished within its walls; but it is here that the Colonel usually sits in the evening, smoking his pipe, looking over the stable and farm accounts and holding interviews with his head groom, kennel-keeper and bailiff.

He does not seem over and above pleased at the abrupt entrance of Mrs. Quekett; but he glances up from his newspaper and nods.

"Well, Quekett! have you anything to say to me? Time to settle the housekeeping bills again, eh?"

"No, Colonel. If I remember rightly, we settled those only last week," replies Mr. Quekett, as she quietly seats herself in the chair opposite her master. "My business here is something quite different. I want to put a question to you, Colonel. I want to know if it's true that you've asked Master Oliver down to Fen Court for Easter this year?"

Why doesn't Colonel Mordaunt act as nine hundred and ninety-nine men out of a thousand would have acted under similar circumstances? Why doesn't he resent the impertinence of this inquiry by the curt but emphatic remark, "What the d— is that to you?"

He is not a timid, shrinking creature like his sister: he could talk glibly enough, and plead his own cause bravely enough, when in the presence of Irene St. John; what remembrance, what knowledge is it that comes over him when confronted with this menial, that he should twist his paper about to hide his countenance, and answer, almost evasively:

"Well, Quekett, I did think of asking him! It would only be for a few days. There's no objection, is there?"

"I think there's a very great objection, Colonel. Master Oliver's not a gentleman as I can get on with at all. The house is not like itself whilst he is hanging about it, with his bad manners, and his tobacco, and his drink."

"Come, come, Quekett, I think you're a little hard upon the boy. Think how young he is, and under what disadvantages he has labored! He is fond of his pipe and his nonsense, I know; but it doesn't go too far; you'll allow that."

"I don't allow nothing of the sort, Colonel. I think Master Oliver's 'nonsense,' as you call it, goes a great deal too far. He's an ill-mannered, impertinent, puny upstart—that's my opinion—as wants a deal of bringing down; and

he'll have it one day, if he provokes me too far; for as sure as my name's Rebecca Quekett, I'll let him know that—"

"Hush!" says Colonel Mordaunt, in a prolonged whisper, as he rises and examines the door to see if it is fast shut. "Quekett, my good creature! you forget how loud you are talking."

"Oh! I don't forget it, Colonel. I've too good a memory for that. And don't you set Oliver on to me, or I may raise my voice a little louder yet."

"I set him on! How can you think so? I have never spoken to him of you but in terms of the greatest respect. If I thought Oliver really meant to be rude to you, I should be exceedingly angry with him. But it is only his fan!"

"Well, whether it's fun or earnest, I don't mean to put up with it any more, Colonel, so, if Oliver is to come here next Easter, I shall turn out. Lady Baldwin will be only too glad to have me for the season: I had a letter from her on the subject as late as last week."

Colonel Mordaunt dreads the occasional visits which Mrs. Quekett pays to her titled patronesses. She never leaves the Court, except in a bad temper. And when Mrs. Quekett is in a bad temper, she is very apt to be communicative on the subject of her fancied wrongs. And tittle-tattle, for many reasons, Colonel Mordaunt systematically discountenances.

"You mustn't talk of that, Quekett. What should we do without you? You are my right hand!"

"I don't know about that, sir, I have had my suspicions lately that you're looking out for another sort of a right hand, beside me."

Colonel Mordaunt starts with surprise, and colors. The housekeeper's sharp eyes detect his agitation.

"I'm not so far wrong, am I, Colonel? The post-bag can tell tales, though it hasn't a tongue. And I shall be obliged if you'll let me have the truth, that I may know how I am expected to act."

"What do you mean, Quekett? I don't understand you."

"Oh, yes, you do, Colonel; but I'll put in plainer, if you like. Are you thinking of marrying?"

"Really, Quekett, you are so—"

"Lord alive, man!" exclaims the housekeeper, throwing off all restraint; "you can't pretend not to understand me at your age. You must be thinking of it, or not thinking of it. What do all those letters to Miss St. John mean, if you're not courting her. There's as many as three a week, if there's one; and when a man's come to your time of life he don't write letters for mere pleasure—"

"No, Quekett, no; but business, you know—business must be attended to. And I was left a sort of guardian to my young cousin, so—"

"Fiddle-de-dee!" is the sharp rejoinder. "You can't stuff me up with such nonsense, Colonel. Are you going to marry this lady, or not?"

"Going! No, certainly not going, Quekett."

"But do you want to marry her? Do you mean to ask her?"

"Well, the thought has crossed my mind, I must say. Not but everything is very uncertain, of course—very uncertain."

"Oh!" says the housekeeper, curtly; and is silent.

"Quekett," resumes her master, after a pause, "if it should be, you know, it could make no difference to you; could it? It would be rather pleasanter, on the whole, Fen Court is a dull place at times, very dull; and you and Isabelle are not the best of friends. A young lady would brighten up the house, and make it more cheerful for us all. Don't you think so?"

"Oh, much more cheerful, doubtless," is the sarcastic reply. "And, pray, Colonel, may I ask, in case of this very desirable event taking place, what you intend to do about Master Oliver?"

"About my—nephew?"

"About your—nephew; yes. Is he to be allowed to spend his holidays at the Court, as usual, upsetting our comfort, and turning the house topsy-turvy?"

"Well, I've hardly thought of that, Quekett. I suppose it would be as—she wished."

"Oh! very well, Colonel. I understand you: and if Fen Court is to be given over to a boy and girl like that, why, the sooner I'm out of it the better. It's hard enough that I should have to look for another home at my time of life; but it would be harder to stay and have a young mistress and master put over my head. Fifteen years I lived with your poor dear father, Colonel, and never a word with any of the family; and when I consented to come here, it was on the express condition, as you may well remember that—"

"Stay, Quekett; not so fast. I have only told you what I contemplated doing. Nothing is settled yet, nor likely to be; and if I thought it would annoy you, you know, Quekett, for my father's sake, and—and various other reasons, how highly we all esteem your services; and I should be most concerned if I thought anything would part us. Even if I do marry, I shall take care that everything with respect to yourself remains as it has ever done; and as for Master Oliver, why, I'll write at once and tell him it is not convenient he should come here at Easter. He wished to visit us this year; but nothing is of more importance to me than your comfort, nor should be, after the long period during which you have befriended my father and myself. Pray be easy, Quekett. Since you desire it, Master Oliver shall not come to Fen Court."

The housekeeper is pacified: she rises from her seat with a smile.

"Well, Colonel, I am sure it will be for the best, both for Master Oliver and ourselves. And as for your marriage, all I can say is, I wish you good luck! 'Tisn't just what I expected; but I know you too well to believe you'd let anything come between us after so many years together."

And more than ever certain of her power over the master of Fen Court, Mrs. Quekett bids him a gracious good-night, and retires to her own room.

When the door has closed behind her, Colonel Mordaunt turns the key, and, leaning in his chair, delivers himself over to thought. Painful thought, apparently; for more than once he takes out his handkerchief, and passes it over his brow. He sits thus for more than an hour, and when he rises to seek his own apartment his countenance is still uneasy and perturbed.

"Poor Oliver!" he thinks, as he does so. "Poor unhappy boy! what can I do to rectify the errors of his life, or put hope in the future for him? Never have I so much felt my responsibility. If it were not for Irene, I could almost—but, no, I cannot give up that hope yet, not until she crushes it without a chance of revival; and then, perhaps—well, then I shall feel unhappy and desperate enough to defy Old Nick himself."

Colonel Mordaunt does not say all this rhodomontade: he only thinks it; and if all our thoughts were written down, the world would be surprised to find how dramatically it talks to itself. It is only when we are called upon to clothe our thoughts with language that vanity steps in to make us halt and stammer. If we thought less of what others think of us, and more of what we desire to say, we should all speak more elegantly, if not grammatically. O vanity! curse of mankind—extinguisher to so many noble purposes: how many really brilliant minds stop short of excellency, stifled out of all desire for improvement, or idea of its possibility, by your suffocating breath! Why, even here is a platitude into which my vanity has betrayed me: but for the sake of its moral I will leave it.

"But why choose Mrs. Cavendish, with her heap of children, in that dull suburban house? You will be bored out of your life."

How often have those words of Colonel Mordaunt returned during the last six months, upon Irene St. John's mind!

How intolerable have the children, the governess, the suburban society (the very worst of all society!), the squabbles, the tittle-tattle, the eternal platitudes, become to her! Acquaintances who "drop in" whenever they feel so disposed, and hear nothing new between the occasions of their "dropping in," are the most terrible of all domestic scourges; the celebrated dropping of a drop of water on the victim's head, or King Solomon's "droppings" on the window-pane, are metaphors which grow feeble in comparison! Irritating to a strong mind, what do they not become to what which has been enfeebled by suffering? And Irene's mind at this juncture, is at its lowest ebb. From having come as a visitor to her aunt's house, she has come to look upon it as her home; for after the first few weeks, Mrs. Cavendish, pleased with her niece's society, proposed she should take up her residence at Norwood, paying her share of the household expenses. What else had the girl to do? What better prospect was there in store for her? Friendless, alone, and half-heart broken, it had seemed at first as though in this widowed house, where the most discordant sound that broke the air was the babble of the children's voices, she had found the refuge from the outer world she longed for. Her father and mother were gone. Eric Keir was gone; everything she cared for in this life was gone. She had but one desire—to be left in peace with memory—so Irene believed on first returning from Brussels to England. But such a state of mind is unnatural to the young, and cannot last for ever. By the time we meet her again, she is intolerant of the solitude and quiet. It does not soothe—it makes her restless and unhappy—that is because she has ceased to bewail the natural grief. Heaven takes care of its own, and with each poison sends an antidote; and the unnatural pain—the pain that this world's injustice has forced upon her, is once more in the ascendant, crushing what is best and softest in her nature.

There is no more difficult task for the pen than to describe, faithfully and credibly, the interior working of a fellow-creature's mind; for it is only those who have passed through the phase of feeling written of, that will believe in it. And yet it is necessary to draw from one's experience for life pictures. An artist desirous to illustrate a scene of suffering and sorrow, need not have suffered and have sorrowed, but goes boldly amongst the haunts where such things are (it is not far to go) until he finds them: so must the author, to be realistic, possess the power to read men's hearts and characters, to work out the mysterious problem of the lives and actions that often lie so widely severed—to account for the strange union of smiling lips and aching hearts—of the light morning jest and the bitter midnight sobbing.

There is no more curious study than that of psychology. O! the wonderful contradictions; the painful inconsistencies; the wide, wide gulf that is fixed between our souls and the world. It is enough to make one believe in M. Rowley's theory that hell consists in being made transparent. One can scarcely determine which would be worse—to have one's own thoughts laid bare, or to see through one's friends.

Irene St. John's soul is a puzzle, even to herself. The first dead weight of oppression that followed her mother's burial lifted from

her mind, the blank sense of nothingness dispersed, she wakes to find the necessity for restraint withdrawn, and (as she told Colonel Mordaunt) the old grief pressing her down so hard, she has no strength to cope with it.

Misses of herself, free to think, and act, and look as her heart dictates, she has leisure to contemplate and dissect and analyse the haunting query, "Why?" Why did Eric Keir seek her company—why ask her friendship—why intimate, if not assert, he loved her?

Was the fault on her side? Had she given him too much encouragement—been too pleased to meet him, answer the tender questioning of his eyes? Or had he a design against her? Was he really so cold-hearted, so shallow, so deceitful, as to affect a part to ensure the empty triumph of winning her—for nothing. In fancy, with glowing cheek and bright feverish eyes, she traces again and again each scene in that sad episode of her existence, until she reaches the culminating point, and hears once more her mother's words, "He means nothing by it all;" and the glow dies out to be replaced by pallor.

And then comes the last question of the anguished spirit—the question that rises to so many white lips every day, "Why does Heaven permit such unnecessary pain? Is there really a Father-heart up there above, beating for and with our own?" I have said that this woman is no weak creature, ready to sink to the earth beneath the first blow from Fate's mallet.

Does this phase of her character belie the assertion? I think not. Strong bodies fight and struggle with the disease under which weak frames succumb, and muscular souls wrestle with and writh under an affliction which feeble souls may suffer but not feel.

When Irene St. John had her mother to support as well as herself, she stood upright and smiled; now that the incentive for action is withdrawn, she bends before the tempest. Then she suffered more acutely; now she suffers more continuously; but acute suffering, with intervals of numbness, is more tolerable than continuous pain borne in monotony. There is nothing now to stir Irene up—to deaden the echo of the question reverberating against the walls of her empty heart; to blind her eyes mercifully to the fact that she has delivered herself over to a love that is not mutual; and that do all she will, she cannot stamp the accursed remembrance from her mind.

She knows all this; it is in black and white upon her soul; she is lowered, degraded, contemptible in her own eyes, and life becomes more intolerable with each rising sun.

It is May before Colonel Mordaunt dares to revert to the proposal he made Irene St. John in Brussels. He has written frequently to her; he has seen her more than once, but there has been a quiet dignity about the girl which forbids him to break the compact they had entered on. He felt, without being told, that to do so would be to mar all his chances of success; so he has only paid Mrs. Cavendish two or three ordinary visits, offered Irene two or three ordinary presents (which she has quietly rejected), and tried to wait patiently until the six months' probation agreed upon should be completed. When it is, Colonel Mordaunt feels as free to speak as he had felt bound before to hold his tongue; now he knows that he will be listened to and answered. For Irene, amongst many other virtues, has no young-lady mannerisms about her, but is, in the best sense of the word, a Woman.

It is a warm, soft afternoon in the latter part of May; the little garden at Norwood is full of springs and laburnum and lilac blossoms; and the voices of the children playing at hide-and-seek amongst the bushes come pleasantly in at the opened windows. Mrs. Cavendish has left the house to call upon some friend, and Irene and Colonel Mordaunt are alone.

"I hope you received your dividends all right this quarter," he commences by saying; for since her orphanhood he has taken sole charge of her small income.

"O, yes! thank you. I sent you cheque to the bank, and there was no difficulty about the matter. You are most punctual in your payments."

"Will you be as punctual, Irene? You have not forgotten, have you? what you promised to give me in May?"

The colour mounts to her pure pale face, but she does not turn it from him.

"Your answer! Oh, no! how could I forget it? Only I wish—I wish you could have guessed it, Colonel Mordaunt, without giving me the pain of repeating what I said before."

His countenance falls.

"Are your feelings, then, quite unchanged? Have you no kinder thoughts of me than you had then?"

"How could any thoughts be kinder than they have been, or more grateful? But kindly thoughts and gratitude are—are not love, Colonel Mordaunt."

"Then you are not yet cured of the old wound, Irene?"

The girl leans her cheek against the window-sill, and gazes with languid, heavy eyes into the open space beyond.

"For God's sake! don't speak of it!"

But he continues.

"Six months' reflection has not had the power to convince you that the most mortifying of all enterprises is the attempt to regain our influence over an errant heart."

"I have never attempted to regain it," she exclaims, indignantly, "I would not take it were it offered me. I have done with the name and the thought of the thing, for ever!"

She looks so beautiful—so strangely as she

did of old, with the hot, angry colour rising and falling in her face, that he is more than ever eager to win her for himself.

"Then, Irene! what are you waiting for? My home is open to you: why not accept it? I am sure you are not happy here."

"O! I am well enough! The children bored me at first; but I am getting used to them, as I am to everything else," with a deep sigh.

"I cannot believe you, Irene. You, who have been accustomed, both during your father's and mother's lifetime, to be feted and amused, and carried hither and thither; you cannot be contented to spend your days in this small, dull cottage, with no better company than your aunt and her governess, and her overgrown boys. It cannot go on, my child; it will kill you!"

"I am tougher than you think. I wish that I were not."

"You are bearing up wonderfully, but you will break down at last. Come, Irene! let me reason with you! You acknowledged just now that all you desire is to forget this disappointment. Why not try to forget it in my house as well as in this?"

She shudders—slightly—but he sees it.

"Colonel Mordaunt! it is impossible!"

"I cannot see the impossibility. I know that you are not in love with me, but I am content to be in love with you. I am content to make you mistress of my fortune and my house, and everything I possess, in return for yourself. It is a fair bargain—if you will but subscribe to it."

"O! it is not fair. You do not know what you are agreeing to—how terribly you might feel it afterwards."

"I am willing to take the risk."

She hesitates a moment; it is very sweet to a woman to feel she is loved so entirely and recklessly and devotedly, that her possession is the only one thing in this world that her lover acknowledges worth living for. It is sweet to be loved, even when we can give nothing in return. A selfish satisfaction that has no part nor lot in the first requirement of the divine passion—self abnegation; but still it falls soothingly upon the wounded spirit that has been rudely thrust from its legitimate resting-place. It is not so sweet as loving, but it is the next best thing, and Irene feels gratitude, and hesitation. After all—can any change make her position worse than it is now?

Colonel Mordaunt sees the hesitation and— forgets the shudder which preceded it!

"Irene! my dearest girl! think of what I say. You imagine that life is over for you; that it can never have any charm again; that it will be all the same if you pass the remainder of it here, or anywhere! Then come to me! Fen Court, at the least, is as comfortable a home as Laburnum Cottage; here you are but a guest, there you will be a mistress; and have —may I not say it?—as devoted a friend as any you will find in Norwood! Will you not come?"

He pleads with as much earnestness as though he had been young; his fine face lighted up as only Love can light up a man's countenance, and his firm hands closed upon her own. The day is nearly won. It is on her very lips to answer "yes," when, from beyond the garden-gates, comes the sound of that most irrepressible of acclimations, the Italian organ, and the air it murders is that of the "Blue Danube" waltzes.

"No!—no!" cries Irene as both hands wrench themselves away from his and go up with startling energy to shut out the maddening strains; "you must not—you shall not ask me that again. I have told you that it is impossible!" and with that leaves him to himself.

Colonel Mordaunt is bitterly disappointed: he had made so sure, he felt hardly say why, that this final appeal would be crowned with success, that the girl's determinate refusal comes on him like a great blow. He can hardly believe that he will really lose her—that she will not return and tell him it was a mistake; and in that belief he still lingers about the cottage—futilely.

Mrs. Cavendish returns and begs him to remain to tea, but he declines, with thanks. The opportunity for speaking to Irene by herself is over, and he is not likely to drive any further benefit from seeing her in the presence of the governess and children. So he returns to his hotel for the night, not having quite made up his mind whether he shall bid the inmates of the cottage a formal farewell upon the morrow, or slip back to Leicestershire as he had come from it—unnoticed. With the morning, however, he finds his courage has evaporated, and that he cannot leave Norwood without at least looking in her fair face again.

"So, after having made a pretence of eating breakfast, the poor old gentleman (all the poorer for being old, and feeling his age at this moment more acutely than any youngster can imagine for him) strolls up to Laburnum Cottage, and enters at the wicket gate.

The lawn is covered with children, playing croquet with their governess and mother, who nods to him as he enters, with an inclination of her head towards the open door.

"Irene is in the school-room," she says, gaily. But Irene is not in the school-room; she has seen him enter, and comes to meet him in the narrow passage, clad in a soft muslin robe of white and black: the shape and folds and general appearance of which he ever afterwards remembers.

"Colonel Mordaunt," she says hurriedly, with heightened colour, and trembling, parted lips, "were you sincere in what you told me yesterday, that you would take me for your

wife, just as I am, without one particle of love in me, except for a shameful memory?"

"Irene, you know I was!"

"Then, take me!" she answers, as she submits to the arms that are thrown about her, and the lips that are laid upon her own.

Women are problems: *cela va sans dire*; though why the problems should remain insoluble is, perhaps, less due to their intricacy than the middle heads who strive to fathom them by beginning at the wrong end. I don't know what reason Colonel Mordaunt may assign to this apparently sudden change in Irene St. John's sentiments; perhaps he attributes it to the effect of deliberation—more likely to the irresistibility of his own pleading; but any way he is quite satisfied with the result.

Mrs. Cavendish is not in the least surprised, but thinks it the very best thing her niece could do; and the governess and children become quite excited at the prospect of a wedding. No one is surprised, indeed, after the lapse of half an hour, unless it be Irene herself; and even she, once reconciled to the idea, tells her own heart that it is fate, and she might have guessed that it would end so, all along.

Perhaps I have even failed in surprising my reader! Yet there had been an impetus, and a very strong one, given to Irene St. John's will that day.

The impetus came in a letter bearing the post-mark of Berwick, where Mrs. Cavendish's daughter Mary was staying with some friends, and which letter her mother had read aloud for the benefit of the breakfast table.

"We were at such a grand party last week" (so part of Mary's innocent communication ran) "at Lord Norham's. I wore my blue silk, with the pearl ornaments you lent me, and they were so much admired. Lord Murraven (Lord Norham's eldest son) was there, and Mr. Keir. Lord M. danced twice with me, but his brother never even spoke to me, which I thought rather rude. However, he is engaged to be married to a Miss Robertson, such a pretty girl, and had no eyes for any one else. They danced together all the evening. Mr. Keir is considered handsome, but I like Lord Murraven best."

"Very complimentary to Mary, I'm sure," remarked the gratified mother, as she refolded the letter. "My dear Irene, I wish you would just reach me down the "Peerage." What a thing it would be if Lord Murraven took a fancy to the girl!"

"Voilà tout."

Irene St. John having once made up her mind to accept Colonel Mordaunt's offer, puts no obstacle in the way of an early marriage; on the contrary, she appears almost feverishly anxious that the matter should be settled and done with as soon as possible; and, as they have none to consult but themselves, and her will is law, the wedding is fixed to take place during the succeeding month. All that she stipulates for is that it shall be perfectly private.

She believes she has strength to go through all that is before her, but she would prefer not testing that strength in public; and her first consideration now is for the feelings of her future husband, that they may never be hurt by some weak betrayal of her own. So all the necessary preparations are expeditiously but quietly made, and when the morning itself arrives (a lovely morning in June, just twelve months after poor Mrs. St. John held that trying interview with Eric Keir, in Brook Street), there are not above a dozen urchins, two nursery-maids with perambulators, and a stray baker-boy, hanging about the wicket of Laburnum Cottage to see the bride step into her carriage. The paucity of Irene's male relations has made it rather difficult to find any one to stand in the position of a father to her on this occasion; but her uncle, Mr. Campbell, takes that responsibility on himself, and has the honor of sharing her equipage. Mr. Campbell is accompanied to Norwood by his wife and two eldest daughters, who, with Mary and Emily Cavendish, form Irene's most trusted bridesmaids; and Miss Mordaunt (to whom her brother, finding all persuasion unavailing, was forced to send a peremptory order to put in an appearance at the wedding) is also present.

She arrived the day before, and up to the moment of going to church has resisted all Irene's endeavors to make acquaintance with her, by entreaties that she will not trouble herself on her account—that she will take no notice of her—that she will leave her to do as she best can by herself, until the girl inclines to the belief that her new sister-in-law is most antagonistic both to the marriage and herself; and little dreams that Isabella Mordaunt's eyes have opened on a new world at the sight of her beauty, and are ready to shed tears at the slightest demonstration of interest on her part. Yet she is too miserably shy and reserved to show it.

There is little time, however, for Irene to think of that just now, or of anything except the matters in hand, through all of which she conducts herself with great dignity and sweetness.

Colonel Mordaunt naturally thinks there never was a lovelier or more graceful bride, and most of those who see her think the same; but Irene's outward comportment is the least noble thing about her that day. It cannot but be a day of bitter recollection to her; but she will not show it. She will not mar the value of the gift which she has freely given by letting the receiver see how little worth it is to herself. She goes through the religious ceremony in simple faith that she will be able to keep the promises she makes; and then she mixes in

the little festivity that follows with as much gaiety as is consistent with the occasion.

Colonel Mordaunt is enchanted with her every look and word and action; the old man hardly knows whether he is standing on his head or his heels; he is wrapt up in the present, and has quite forgotten all that went before it. Even when he finds himself alone with his young wife in the railway carriage, speeding fast to Weymouth, where they are to spend their honeymoon, the vision is not dispelled. It is true that he throws his arm rather awkwardly about her slender figure, and kisses her for the first time as a husband, with more timidity than he would have shown had he been twenty-five years younger. But Irene's quiet, affectionate manners reassure him. She appears to take such an interest in all that is going on around them, and talks so naturally of what they shall do and see at Weymouth, and of the pleasant autumn they shall spend together at Fen Court, that his passing trepidation lest the girl should after all regret the decision she had made is soon dispelled; and, what is better, the days that follow bring no cloud with them to lessen his tranquillity. For Irene is not a woman to marry a man and then worry him to the grave by her sentimental grief for another; she has chosen her present lot, and she intends to make it as happy a lot as lies in her power. She is of an honorable and upright a nature to make a fellow-creature pay the debt of her own misfortune, and especially a fellow-creature who is doing everything in his power to make her happy. And added to this, she is too wise to call in a doctor and not follow his prescriptions. She has married Colonel Mordaunt as a refuge from herself; she never denies the truth even to her own heart; and if she is still to sit down and pine to death for love of Eric Keir, where was the necessity for action which her strong will brought to bear upon her feeble nature. She may break down hereafter; but Irene Mordaunt commences her march upon the path of married life bravely.

She not only strives to be pleased—she is pleased with all that her husband does for her—with the numerous presents he lays at her feet, the pleasant excursions he devises, the thoughtful care he shows for her comfort. She repays it all with gratitude and affection. Yes—Colonel Mordaunt has done well in confiding his honor and happiness to Irene's keeping!

About the same date, in that same month of June, a jolly, genial-hearted old man, commonly known as the Earl of Norham, is seated in the library of Berwick Castle, in her Majesty's "loyal and worshipful borough of Berwick. Lord Norham does not carry out in the faintest degree the idea of a lord, as usually depicted by the heated imaginations of the young and the uninitiated. His appearance alone would be sufficient to put to flight all the dreams of "sweet seventeen," or the ambitious cravings of a maturer age. He is a tall, stout man, of about five-and-sixty, with a smiling red face, a bushy head of gray hair, and "mutton-chop" whiskers just one shade darker; and he is dressed in black and white checked trousers, or decidedly county make: a white waistcoat, with the old-fashioned stock surmounting it; and a brown holland coat. The windows of the library are all open to the air, and Lord Norham is not warmly attired, yet he seems much oppressed by the weather; and to see him lay down his pen every two minutes (he is writing letters for the mid-day post), and mop his heated face round and round with a yellow and red silk handkerchief until it shines again, you would be ready to swear he was a jolly, well-to-do farmer, who had every reason to be satisfied with his crops and his dinner-table. In effect, Lord Norham is all you would imagine him to be; for agriculture is his hobby, and he allows no accidents to disturb his peace. But he is something much better into the bargain—a true nobleman, and the fondest father in the United Kingdom. He lost his wife at a very early stage of their married life, and he has never thought of marrying again, but devoted his life to the children she left behind her. There are only those three, Robert, Lord Murraven, and his brothers Eric and Cecil; and when their mother died the eldest was just four years old. Then it was that all the latent worth and nobility of Lord Norham's character came forth. His friends had rated him before at a very ordinary standard, knowing him to be an excellent landlord and an indulgent husband, and crediting him with as much good sense as his position in life required, and a strict belief in the Thirteen Articles. But from that date they saw the man as he really was—from that moment, when he knew himself to be widowed and desolate, and his unfortunate little ones left without a mother at the very time they wanted her most he took a solemn oath never to place the happiness of her children at the mercy of another woman's caprice, but to be to them, as far as in him lay, father and mother both. The man must have had a heart as wide as a woman's to arrive at such a conclusion, and stick to it; for the temptations to change his state again must have been manifold. But as in some mothers' breasts the feelings of maternity, once developed, can never be rivaled by a meaner passion, so, though far more rarely, it occasionally happens with a father; and from that day to this, when we see him mopping his dear old face with his silk handkerchief, Lord Norham has never staggered in his purpose—more, he has never repented it. Lord Murraven and his brothers do not know what it is to regret their mother. She died so early, that they have no recollection of her; and Lord Norham's care and indulgence have been so close and un-

remitting, that the knowledge that other young men have mothers who love them, and are their best friends, has no power to do more than make them think what a glorious old fellow their father must be, never to have let them feel the want of theirs. Indeed, love for their father is a religion with these young men, who even go the length of being jealous of each other in vying for his affection in return. And with Lord Norham, the boys are everything. His earldom might be wrested from him, Berwick Castle burnt to the ground, his money sunk in a West End theatre, the "Saturday Review" might even stoop to take an interest in his proceedings—yet give him his "boys," and he would be happy. For their sakes, he sows and reaps and threshes out the corn, has horse-boxes added to his stables, and a racquet-court built upon his grounds; the bedrooms heated by hot-air pipes, and the drawing-room turned into a smoking divan. They are his one thought and interest and pleasure—the theme that is for ever on his tongue, with which he wears every body but himself. He lives upon "the boys," and sleeps upon "the boys," and eats and drinks "the boys;" and when he dies those cabalistic words, "the boys," will be found engraven on his honest, loving heart.

He has just raised his handkerchief to wipe his face for about the twentieth time, when the door is thrown open, and a "boy" enters. There is no need for Lord Norham to turn round. He knows the step—trust him for that—and the beam that illuminates his countenance makes it look redder and shinier than before.

"Well, my dear boy!" he commences, before the prodigy can reach his side.

"Have you seen this, dad?" replied Cecil, as he places the "Times" advertisement sheet upon the table.

He is a fine young fellow, just one year younger than Eric, and, as his father puts on his glasses to read the paragraph to which he points, he stands by his side and throws his arm right around the old man's neck in the most charming and natural manner possible.

"Where, my dear boy, where?" demands Lord Norham, ranning his eyes up and down the page.

"There, dad—the top marriage. "At St. John's Church, Norwood, Philip Mordaunt, Esq., of Fen Court, Leicestershire, Lieut.-Colonel in H.M. Regt. 155th Royal Grenades, to Irene, only child of the late Thomas St. John, Esq., of Brook Street, W." Don't you know who that is? Eric's spoon, that he was so hot after last season. He'll be awfully out when he reads this, I know."

"Eric's spoon, dear boy!" exclaims Lord Norham, who is quite at a loss to understand the mysterious allusion.

"Yes!—the woman he was spooney on, I mean. Why, every one thought it was a settled thing, for he was always at the house. But I suppose she wouldn't have him—which quite accounts for the poor fellow's dumps all last autumn. Eric was awfully slow you know, father—he didn't seem to care for hunting or shooting, or doing anything in company. I said at the time I was sure the girl had jilted him; and so she has, plain enough."

"My dear boy, this is a perfect revelation to me!" exclaims Lord Norham, pushing his glasses on to his forehead, and wheeling round his chair to confront his son. "Eric in love! I had not the least idea of it."

"Hadn't you? He was close enough with us, of course; but I made sure he would have told you. Oh, these things must happen, you know, dad; there's no help for them."

"And this girl—this Miss St. John, or whoever she is—refused your brother, you say?"

"No, I didn't say that, father. I know nothing for certain—it was only supposition on my part; but, putting this and that together, it looks like it—doesn't it now?"

Cecil is smiling with the carelessness of youth to pain; but Lord Norham is looking grave—his heart wretched at the idea of one of his cherished "boys" having been so slighted. It is true that he has heard nothing of this little episode in Eric's life; for when he goes up to town a very rare occurrence, he seldom stays for more than a few weeks at a time, and never mixes in any lighter dissipation than an evening in the House to hear some of his old friends speak (Lord Norham was for many years a member of Parliament himself), or a heavy political dinner where no ladies are admitted.

It is all news to him, and very unpleasant news. It enables him to account for several things in Eric's behaviour which have puzzled him before; but it shocks him to think that his boy should have been suffering, and suffering alone—shocks him almost as much as though he had been his mother instead of his father—and all his thoughts go out immediately to the best means of conveying him comfort.

"Cecil, my dear!" (the old man constantly makes strangers smile to hear him address these stalwart young men, with beards upon their chins, as though they were still children) "don't say anything about this to your brother, will you? He will hear it fast enough: ill news travels apace."

"Oh! he's seen it, father: at least, I expect he's seen it, for he was studying the paper for an hour before I got it. I only took it up when he laid it down."

"And where is he now?" demands Lord Norham, quietly. It would be exaggeration perhaps to assert that he has immediate visions of his beloved Eric sticking head downwards in the muddiest part of the lake, but had his imagination thus run riot, he could scarcely have asked the question with more anxiety.

"In his room, I think; I haven't seen him

since. By-the-way, dad, I shall run up to town again to-morrow. Eric says he has had enough of it; but Muiraven and I have engagements three weeks deep. You can't be up again this season, I suppose?"

"I don't think so, dear boy, unless it should be for a week before the House breaks up. And so Eric is not going back again, though it must be very dull for him here, I am afraid."

"Precious slow, isn't it, now the Robertsons are gone?"

"You'll stay with them, I suppose, Cecil?"

"Well, I don't think so. They've asked me, but I'd rather put up with Bob. It's all very well being engaged, you know, father, when you are sitting on a sofa together in a room by yourselves; but it takes all the gilt off the gingerbread for me to be trotted out before a few friends as Harriet's "young man." Bliss is only procurable in solitude or a crowd. Besides a nine o'clock breakfast and no latch-key, doesn't agree with my notions of the season."

"It ought to agree with your notions of being engaged, you young rip!" says his father, laughing.

"No, it doesn't! No woman shall ever keep me in leading strings, married or single. I mean to have my liberty all my life. And if Harriet doesn't like it, why, she may lump it, or take up with some one else, that's what I tell her."

"The principles of the nineteenth century!" cries Lord Norham. "Well, I think she'd be a fool to change you, Cecil, whatever conditions you may choose to make."

"Of course you think so, dad. However, if my lady wants to keep me in town this winter, she'll have to make herself very agreeable. Perfect sin to leave this place for bricks and mortar, isn't it?"

"It seems a pity; just as the hay is coming on, too. I shall persuade Eric to ride over to the moors with me, and see what the grouse prospects are looking like this year."

"Yes! do, father. That'll stir up the poor old boy, Hallo! there's Muiraven beckoning to me across the lawn. We're going to blood the bay filly. She's been looking very queer the last few days. Hope it's not glanders. All right!" with a shout; "I'll come!" and leaping through the open window, Lord Norham's youngest hope joins his brother, whilst the old man gazes after his sons until they disappear, with eyes overbrimming with proud affection.

Then he rises and goes in search of his stricken Eric, with much the same sort of feeling with which a woman rushes to the side of a beloved daughter as soon as she hears she is in trouble.

Eric is in his bedroom—a large handsome apartment, facing the park—and he is sitting at the toilet-table without any apparent design, gazing at the thick foliage below, and the fallow deer that are clustered on the grass beneath it.

He jumps up as soon as his father enters, however, and begins to whistle loudly, and to run his fingers through his hair before the glass, as though his sole object in going there had been to beautify himself.

"Well, dad!" he says cheerfully.

"Well, my dear boy," replies Lord Norham, with a vain attempt to conceal his anxiety; "what are you going to do with yourself this fine morning?"

"I'm sure I don't know. Ride, I suppose, or read, or yawn the time away. Where are the others?"

"Gone to the stables to physic the bay filly. Have you seen the papers, Eric?"

A slight change passes over his countenance—just a quiver of the muscles, nothing more; but the father's eye detects it.

"Yes, thanks!—oh, yes! I've seen them! No news, as usual. There never is any news now-a-days."

"Have you seen the "Times," my dear boy?"

"Yes."

"What! the advertisement sheet—the marriages?"

"Yes: why do you ask me?"

"Because I thought—I imagined—there was an announcement there that would interest you—that would be news: in fact, bad news."

"Who said so?" demands Eric Keir, turning round to confront his father. He is very pale, and there is a hard look about the lines of his face which was not there yesterday; otherwise, he seems himself and quite collected.

But Lord Norham will not betray Cecil: he never sets one child against the other by letting him suppose that his brothers speak of him behind his back; that is one reason why the young men are mutually so fond of one another and of him.

"I imagined so, my dear boy, that's all. Your little *penchant* of last season was no secret, you know, and reading what I do to-day, I naturally thought—"

"You are speaking of Miss St. John's marriage, father, I suppose. But why should that out me up? We were very good friends before her mother died, and all that sort of thing, but—"

"But nothing more! You didn't care for her, Eric?"

"My dear old dad, you are not going to advocate my caring for another man's wife, are you? Of course I liked her—every one liked her: she was awfully pretty and jolly, and *distingué* looking; and if she's only half as nice as Mrs. Mordaunt as she was as Miss St. John, I shall say that—that—Mordaunt, whoever he may be is a very lucky fellow." And here Eric whistles more ferociously than before.

"It is such a relief to hear you speak in this strain about it, my dear boy," replies Lord Norham, who has seated himself in an armchair by the open window; "do you know, Eric, from the rumors that have reached me, I was almost afraid—almost afraid you know, my dear, that you might have been led on to propose in that quarter. You didn't propose to her, did you, Eric?"

"No, dad! I didn't propose to her!" replies the young man, stoutly.

"Then why did you break off the intimacy so suddenly? You used to be very intimate indeed with the St. Johns last season."

"What a jolly old inquisitor you would have made, father, and how you would have enjoyed putting the thumb-screw on a fellow. Why did I break off the intimacy so suddenly?—well, I didn't break it off. Mrs. St. John thought I was there too often, and told me so, and I sheered off in consequence. Afterwards they went abroad, and the poor old lady died, and I have not seen the young once since. That's the whole truth."

"And you didn't like the girl well enough to marry her, then?"

A cloud, palpable, to the dullest eye, obscures for a moment all the forced gaiety of his expression.

"My dear father! I don't want to marry any one."

"That is what puzzles me, Eric. Why shouldn't you want it?"

"There is a lot of time, isn't there? You don't expect a fellow to lie himself down for life at five-and-twenty?"

"No: but it is unnatural for a young man to avoid female society as you do. It can't be because you dislike it, my dear boy."

"I have no particular taste for it."

"But why? they don't snub you, do they? I should think you could do pretty much as you liked with the women, eh, Eric?" with a glance of pride that speaks volumes.

"I never try, dad. I am very happy as I am."

"My dear boy! that is what convinces me that there is something more the matter than you choose to confess. If everything was right, you would not be happy as you are. Look at your brothers! Here's Cecil engaged already."

"Poor devil!" interposes Eric.

"And Muiraven doing his best to be so; although I don't think he's quite such a favorite with the girls as his brother. I'm sure I don't know why, or what they can possibly want more, for you would scarcely meet a finer young man from here to John O'Groat's than Muiraven is."

Eric, recalling Muiraven's thickset figure, round, rosy face (he takes after the earl), and reddish hair, cannot forbear smiling.

"He's an out-and-out good fellow, dad, but he's no beauty."

"He's a different style to yourself, I allow; but he's a very good looking young man. However, that doesn't alter circumstances. If he doesn't marry, it is all the more incumbent on you to think of doing so."

"I shall never marry, father," says Eric, uneasily; "you must put that idea out of your head at once."

"There, again, that's unnatural, and there must be a reason for it. You are graver, too, than your years, Eric, and you often have fits of despondency; and I have thought, my dear (you'll forgive your old father for mentioning it), that you must have encountered some little disappointment early in life, say in your college days, which has had a great effect upon your character. Am I right?"

"How closely you must have watched me," replies the son, evasively.

"Whom have I in the world to interest me except you and your brothers? You are part of myself, my dear boy. Your pleasures are my pleasures, and your griefs become my griefs. I have passed many a restless night thinking of you, Eric!"

"Dear old dad!" says Eric, laying his hand on his father's shoulder, and looking him affectionately in the face, "I am not worth so much trouble on your part—indeed I am not."

"Oh! now I feel inclined to quarrel with you," says Lord Norham; "the idea of your talking such nonsense! Why, child, if it were for no other reason, it would be for this, that every time you look at me as you did just now, your sweet mother seems to rise from her grave and gaze at me through your eyes. Ah! my poor Grace! if she had lived, her boys would have had some one to whom they felt they could open their hearts, instead of closing them up and bearing their troubles by themselves."

"Father, don't say that!" exclaims Eric, earnestly. "If I had had twenty mothers, I couldn't have confided in them more than I do in you, nor loved them more. But you are too good for me, and expect too great things of me, and I shall end by being a disappointment, after all. That is my fear."

"I can never be disappointed whilst you and your brothers are happy; but how can I remedy an evil of which I must not hear?"

"You will harp on that idea of my having come to grief," says Eric, testily.

"Because I believe it to be true. I would never try to force your confidence, dear boy; but it would be a great comfort to know you had no secrets from me."

The young man has a struggle with himself, flushes, and then runs on hurriedly:

"Well, then, if it will give you any pleasure, I will tell you. I have had a trouble of the kind you mention, and I find it hard to throw it off, and I should very much like to leave England again for a short time. Perhaps, after all, it is

better you should know the truth, father, and then you will be able to account for the restlessness of my disposition."

"My poor boy!" says Lord Norham, abstractedly. But Eric doesn't care about being pitied. "What about the travelling, dad? Charley Holmes is going in for his country next election, and wants me to run over to America with him for a spell first. It's nothing of a journey now-a-days, and I could come back whenever you wanted me. Shall I say I'll go?"

"Go, my dear? Yes, of course, if it'll give you any pleasure; only take care of yourself, and come back cured."

"No fear of that," he replies, laughing; "in fact, it's all done already. We can't go through life without any scratches, father."

"No, my boy, no! and they're necessary, too—they're necessary. Make what arrangements you like about America, Eric; fix your own time and your own destination, only make up your mind to enjoy yourself, and to come back cured, my boy—to come back cured."

Lord Norham is about to leave the room as he chuckles over the last words, but suddenly he turns and comes back again.

"I have suffered, my dear," he says, gently; "I know what it is."

The young man grasps the hand extended; squeezes it as though it were in a vice, and walks away to the open window.

His father pats him softly on the back, passes his hand once fondly over his hair, and leaves him to himself. And this is the parent from whom he has concealed the darkest secret of his life!

"Oh, if I could but tell him!" groans Eric; "if I only could make up my mind to tell him, how much happier I should be. Irene! Irene! you have doubled the gulf between us!"

He does not weep; he has grown too old for tears: but he stands at the window, suffering the tortures of hell, until the loud clanging of the luncheon-bell draws him back unwillingly into the world again.

(To be continued.)

#### SHORT COURTSHIPS.

FROM A LADY'S SCRAP-BOOK.

Years ago I was an earnest advocate of short courtships; but since then, having seen more of the world, have changed my opinion, and now think that, in the majority of cases, the longer the courtship the more happiness will fall to the lot of the parties concerned.

It is a singular fact that a man generally requires very different qualities in a wife from those he admires in a sweetheart. While a lover, he expected to see his future wife neatly and stylishly dressed whenever he choiced to call, either morning or evening; and the girl busied her little brain all day in efforts to please his taste. If he left town for a few days, he sent letters full of sweet nothings that filled her soul with joy. Then came delightful rambles in the garden, park, or fields, and hours spent in charming *été-d-été* indoors, when the two souls saw not one but each other in their world of love. Alas, that such bliss must ever be dispelled! Time brought preparations for the approaching wedding, for this devoted couple imagined that their happiness could never be complete until the nuptial knot was tied. So the wedding and honeymoon were soon over, and the parties settled into the matter-of-fact part of life. The bride knows nothing of house-keeping. Since her school days she has spent her time in studying the tastes of her lover, which certainly seemed to incline towards dress and sentimentality. Now, alas! she discovers that his stomach demands food of the best quality, and because she knows not how to cater to his palate, his love seems to be waning. While he is vainly trying to appease hunger with badly cooked food, little does he appreciate the sweet nonsense and holed words which used to be so satisfying to his sentimental nature.

Ah, men are so unreasonable! They expect to find every quality of excellence in the woman they marry, yet have not penetration sufficient to choose the most worthy. To shine in society, to exhibit every feminine accomplishment both at home and abroad, are duties which they require in the woman they marry; and what have they to give in return? It seems impossible that those delicate attentions which characterize the lover should be withdrawn by the husband. The other day, when I heard a neighbor demanding his dinner in not the most pleasant tone, I thought, "Can it be possible that he ever played the ardent lover to that pale, dejected woman whom he calls his wife?" The lover who could scarcely tear himself away from his sweetheart, is the same man who now leaves his wife to spend her evenings as best she may, while he passes the hours elsewhere. Ah, how soon men forget the solemn vow to love and cherish till death! And how many women regret that the charming delusions of courtship were ever exchanged for the unpleasant realities of marriage.

IDYL OF THE FLOWERS.

Pretty flowers that wake and blow  
In the balmy dawn of spring,  
I, who love and miss you so,  
May your gentle praises sing,  
Now that winter blight and frost  
Your frail loveliness have crossed.

Pansy, blue-bell, mignonette,  
Crocus—first-born of the showers,  
Daffodil, the violet,  
Fairest of her sister flowers;  
Rosy, azur, gold, or white,  
Ye are still my heart's delight!

By the ready woodland wells,  
Moss-rimmed, crystalline and cold,  
Fog-gloves hang their painted bells,  
Purple pranked with dullest gold;  
(Three blooms plucked, with wishes three,  
Cureth love's inconstancy!)

And those fairy flowers that shine  
Cloistered in sweet solitude,  
Rosy, scented columbine,  
Darlings of the secret wood,  
After the blue gentians, they  
In my poet heart have away,

In the tangled forest ways  
Where the greenest lichens hide,  
When the laurel's sumptuous blaze  
Kindles all the covert side,  
Ghostly lilies hand in hand  
With the hermit harebell stand;

Or, where interlacing ferns  
Make a sunproof sylvan bower,  
Star-like the pale stone-wort burns,  
And the speckled dragon-flower,  
Merry Dryads love to wear  
Them hood-wise on their yellow hair.

Dainty cups that crowd the bough,  
Jeweled bells that bend the stem,  
All your secret loves I know,  
I by heart have gotten them,  
Babbled then in silvery song  
When the days were sweet and long.

Gentle flowers that bloom and fade,  
As the seasons come and go.  
Hearts, like spring's lost flowers, are laid  
Under winter ban and snow;  
Yet the rolling years shall bring  
Heart and flower eternal spring.

"THAT FATAL LETTER D."

"I shall go to London to-morrow," said Mrs. Whittlebury, in a decided tone, to her husband. "What for, my dear?" meekly demanded Mr. Whittlebury, "What for?" cried the irate spouse. "Why, to see Clara, to be sure." "I can't see the necessity—"

Before he could finish his sentence, Mrs. Whittlebury had sprung into an upright position with such determined energy, that the alarmed husband bounced out of his easy chair and placing that useful piece of furniture as a sort of barrier between them, stood peering over its back in a state of great trepidation.

Mrs. Whittlebury being of an inflammable temperament, and carried away by her impetuosity, was unable for a moment to express her withering contempt for his dulness of appreciation. At length finding breath, she said, with fierce acrimony, "You can't see the necessity!—and when, may I ask, do you ever see the necessity of doing anything except eating and sleeping? Answer me that!" As she delivered this pithy speech, she brought her right hand down several times into the broad palm of her left, with a vigorous action, denoting her own personal conviction that she had given him a poser.

Mr. Whittlebury was physically and mentally of small calibre—in fact, a worthy little unit, who, if he did no good, he certainly never did harm. Easily governed, and kindly disposed to all brought in contact with him, he moved practically and contentedly in his groove of life. His wife's temper certainly was at times distressing to him, but her good qualities counterbalanced that little drawback, and rendered her in his view a perfect model of a wife. "I am waiting for your answer, Anastor Whittlebury," she said, after a slight pause. "I have none to give, Charlotte Ann," he returned, meekly. "I thought not!" cried his spouse, in a tone of triumph. With a deep, satisfied air she resumed her seat, happy in the reflection that she had shown her own individual superiority many degrees higher than the partner of her joys and sorrows. Having won the victory in a battle in which the fighting was all on her own side, she chose to forget her past ebullition of temper, and gracefully requested her lord and master to hand the decanter of sherry, with glasses, from the side-table. "With the greatest pleasure, Charlotte Ann—the greatest pleasure." Away whisked the little man with a cheerful face, returning with the decanter and glasses on a small silver salver. "Shall I pour out my own a glass?" insinuated he meekly.

"And yourself also, Anastor," was the gracious reply. "Heart of gold!—let us clink." The glasses met, sealing a bond of amity; and Mr. Whittlebury retired into the recesses of his arm-chair, and blinked affectionately over his glass, as he sipped the health of his more portentous dame. "Your interruption, Anastor, prevented my direct meaning from having its proper weight upon your rather cloudy faculties," commenced the good lady, in a self-laudatory manner. "If you would only learn to govern your impetuous temper, you would make our home a palace of contentment."

"I am sure, Charl—" A look from his wife checked all attempt at justification, and the mild-tempered nonentity relapsed into silence, and resumed the sipping process. "Clara writes to me that there is every probability, and at no very distant date—mark my words, Anastor, no very distant date—of your worldly responsibilities being doubled." "Good gracious!" cried Mr. Whittlebury, agast; "you don't say so!" "But I do," returned his wife, with increasing solemnity. "In what manner?" asked the trembling little man. "Anastor, do smoothen your ardor!" "I will—I will!" groaned Whittlebury. "You are about to become a—"

"Not a bankrupt?" gasped her husband. "No!" cried the dame, angrily. "What then?" "A grandfather!" cried Mrs. Whittlebury, assuming a sepulchral air. A feeble "Hurrah!" died in its utterance as the happy man's gaze fell upon the solemn majesty of his spouse. The moment was evidently inauspicious and would only tend to disturb the decorum and dignity due to the important announcement. Bewildered and confused by the news, it suddenly occurred to him that the wonderful event had already taken place. As this gleam of intelligence lighted up his face, he commenced winking knowingly at his spouse, who sat rooted to the chair with amazement at his strange conduct.

The more she displayed her astonishment, the harder Mr. Whittlebury winked, giving his little head short sagacious twirls. "I know—I know!" chuckled Mr. Whittlebury. "The man's demented!" ejaculated his astonished wife. "I know—I know! You can't deceive me!" gasped Mr. Whittlebury. "What on earth do you know?" she demanded, in rising anger. "That it's a little boy!" was the triumphant answer.

No pen could describe the look of withering contempt that displayed itself upon the ample countenance of Mrs. Whittlebury at the extraordinary announcement of her husband. For a moment she thought that he must be under the influence of an overdose of sherry, or had suddenly taken leave of his senses—not a very difficult matter to the poor man, if any extra pressure were suddenly placed upon his rather sooty intellects. Whilst he, poor dazed man, stood paralysed with the consciousness that he had made some blunder, his look of triumph had now vanished, and its place usurped with one of blank helplessness; and, when his wife advanced threateningly towards him, his terror was of such a nature that he did not attempt to escape her wrath, but stood like one doomed. At length the volcano burst, as the irate woman stood towering above her diminutive partner. "Anastor!" she thundered: "how dare you jest upon such a subject! You will never be worthy of the proud name of grandfather." "I'll try, Charlotte Ann," mumbled the dejected Mr. Whittlebury. "Anastor!" "Yes, love," he replied, in the same dismal tone. "Cast your benighted orbs upon the mantel-piece."

Mr. Whittlebury did as requested, but failed to discover anything extraordinary. "What is that figure, so chastely executed, emblematical of?" "What figure, dear?" "The figure that surmounts the dial," returned his wife, pointing majestically to a handsome clock in a glass shade that ornamented the centre of the mantel-piece. "It's meant for Time, dear." "Time, Anastor—yes, Time—the all-powerful Time, who alone can tell whether our family tree will live or perish." "Don't speak in that awful tone, Charlotte Ann," pleaded Anastor terrified at the solemnity of her manner. "I must, Anastor. Each tick of that small indicator hastens the great event—"

"Very well, my love;" and in obedience to his wife's command, he retired in a state of great trepidation. Mrs. Whittlebury sat long, contemplating the journey of the morrow. She had but twice visited the great city, and neither trips had added to the congeniality of her temper. The metropolis was too vast, and her place amidst the millions had been too uncomfortable, to desire a residence in London; while, at the village of Stagnantwater, she appeared in society on equality with the vicar's wife, and the few retired tradesmen's families that lived in the neighborhood.

Another fault she had to lay at the door of the city of cities, and that was, an exaggerated notion of its uncleanness; and as her daughter's husband held a lucrative post in the East India Docks, their residence necessarily had to be at a convenient distance. This was, to the mother-in-law a great drawback, as her own inclination led her west, where the air was salubrious, and the locality of wealth less likely to harbor contagious complaints. In her distorted imagination, the east of London, during the summer was nothing less than a charnel-house; nevertheless, she determined, like a true woman, to let neither heat or ailments prevent her doing her duty to her daughter in her coming trial; therefore, she nerved herself in the Spartan resolution of going through perils untold, and battling even with the grim tyrant for the welfare of her own darling Clara.

Great was the bustle of preparation in the usually quiet but methodical residence of Anastor Whittlebury. The servants, though tormented almost to despair by the wild yagaries, worked with a will through the storm of preparation, with the consoling reflection that a gentle calm would reign in the house when their mistress's back was turned. Poor, simple Mr. Whittlebury contrived to keep out of the way of his better half till supper time; when the multitudinous directions inflicted upon him by his partner regarding the coming event, deprived that worthy gentleman of his appetite, and sent him staggering to bed with such a confusion of ideas, as almost to threaten to unseat his reason.

Time, that waits for no man in his progress, saw the departure of the worthy couple, amidst a pyramid of hampers, carpet-bags, hat and bonnet-boxes for the railway station; saw them, to the infinite relief of the porters, snugly seated in a first-class compartment—saw them arrive in the great city—saw the unromantic Mrs. Whittlebury bring an unhappy cabman to task for daring to insist upon his legal fare—saw the luggage packed, the living freight safely ensconced inside, and the dilapidated horse start for his destination. "It's dreadfully warm, Anastor," remarked the estimable lady. "Do you think so?" "Don't you?" cried the excitable Mrs. W. "I was going to suggest the window being closed."

"Good gracious me! is the man mad? Who ever heard of a cab-window being closed in July?" Good, a worthy woman, she quite forgot that the intense heat she had placed herself in was attributable, not to the weather, which was really mild for the time of year, but to her excessive tropical temperament, and the undue exercise of her movements and tongue during the disembarkation of her property from the luggage van to its safe bestowal on the roof of the cab, saving, of course, the disposal of some half-a-dozen small, but highly important parcels in the interior of the vehicle.

"I'm thinking, Anastor," said Mrs. W., after a pause, "that we had better stop at some respectable coffee-house to-night, for fear our sudden arrival causing a fright to our darling, the consequence of which might be fatal." "There's a very respectable house within five minutes' walk, dear, of our girl's house," suggested the mild husband. "Very well, Anastor; but mind, I hold you responsible for its comfort and cleanliness," she added, grimly. "Very well, my dear," meekly rejoined her husband, pleased that the matter had passed away so amicably.

The driver received his orders, and duly stopped at the house indicated, and the worthy couple were soon enjoying a comfortable, but simple repast. Mrs. Whittlebury then put on her bonnet and shawl, gloves, &c., grasped her large umbrella firmly in a manner which intimated to the landlady of the coffee-house that her guest was not a woman to be trifled with, and stalked grimly out, followed by her timid but kind-hearted little husband. After they had gone a few paces, she suddenly stopped, and diving into her reticule, produced a small bag attached to a string, and thrust it into her husband's hand. "What's this, darling?" he asked, in astonishment, fixing his gaze on the small bag. "A bag of camphor."

"What am I to do with it?" "Hang it round your neck, stupid!" "Yes, dear;" immediately doing what he was requested. "An excellent thing, camphor, Anastor," said the lady, approvingly. "Indeed I!" was the dubious response. "Especially in such a crowded place as London." "No doubt," said Mr. W., feeling it his duty to say something. "Where contagious diseases are harbored," continued Mrs. W., "there is no preventative equal to a bag of camphor." Saying which, she brought the ferule of her umbrella down with a

crash of decision upon the pavement, causing the bystanders to regard her with no little astonishment. Presently they turned down through a row of comfortable single storey houses, inhabited principally by the working classes.

A suppressed scream issued from the lips of Mrs. Whittlebury, as she halted, and, throwing her arms wide open, stood in a terror of amazement. Not so her unfortunate husband, who, jogging along quietly by her side, was not prepared to receive the back of his lady's hand suddenly on the nose, which sent the little man flying to his mother earth, where he lay in comical astonishment, wondering what in the name of wonder he had done to merit such treatment.

Mrs. Whittlebury was so wrapt up with what met her gaze, that she was quite unconscious of having floored her husband. "Anastor!" cried Mrs. W., in sepulchral tones. "Yes, my love," answered the sufferer, gathering himself up, but keeping well out of the swing of his lady's arm this time. "Note well that house." "I will." "Do you see nothing there?" "Yes, a dirty window blind." "Pshaw!"

"Shaw!—no, it's Brown on the door!" casting his eyes on the shabby door-plate. "Anastor, sorrow dwells in that house" pointing grimly at the dwelling in a foreboding manner. "No, it's Brown, I assure you! Look at the door-plate."

"How can you jest, Anastor," she said, sadly but reproachfully, "when you see that fatal letter?" pointing to the window. Mr. Whittlebury certainly did perceive a letter of the alphabet attached to the window, but what it meant he was at a loss to conceive. "The solemn appearance of the house, and that symbolical letter, means Death, Anastor, Death!" "You are making my flesh creep up my bones, and down again, by your awful manner, Charlotte Ann!" "Are you afraid of the grim shadow?" she asked, scornfully. "I don't see any shadow," he replied, looking doubtfully at his plump partner's figure. "I mean—Death!"

"No, I can't say that I am," he said, almost boldly. And to do the little man justice, he had no fear of anything beyond the wrath of his wife. Having never done harm to a living soul, he had naturally no doubts. As a good man and Christian, he saw little to dread when called to account by his Maker. His trespasses had been few, poor, simple-minded gentleman, and in his weary pilgrimage he had done many kindly acts, which would tell well when the deeds of all men are scanned. "Anastor, let us cross to the other side," she said, in subdued tones.

They passed on in silence, the arrested by the cry of a child, who was seated on a door-step. Mr. Whittlebury, in a fulness of his heart, made a rapid movement as if he intended to address the child, when his wife drew him back, saying, mysteriously, "Place this in your mouth." "What is it, Charlotte Ann?" "A disinfecting lozenge."

"Will that stop the child's crying?" innocently asked Mr. Whittlebury. "It is not for the child, but you, Anastor." Very good-temperedly the pliant husband swallowed the lozenge, though not without making one or two wry faces, which increased as the flavor of the disinfectant struck his palate, so nauseous was the morsel inflicted upon him. His better-half, meanwhile, swallowed a couple with the resigned air of a martyr, and felt armed for the coming trial. "Can I speak to the little boy now?" inquired Mr. W., timidly. "Yes, Anastor," was the grim response.

Mr. Whittlebury advanced towards the child, and gently placing his hand upon its head, mildly asked what he was crying for. The child essayed several times to answer, but his deep, choking sobs prevented a word being audible. "You mustn't cry my brave little man," cried the moved Mr. Whittlebury, almost brought to tears with the boy's distress. The child raised his diminished head up to the kind face that overhung him, and a mutual sympathy sprang up between the trusting child and the simple, honest-hearted man—a confiding sympathy, that had no doubt of each other's faith and well-meaning, though till the present moment they had been total strangers. The boy, whose heart seemed bursting with grief, appeared to find instant relief in the genial presence of the unknown stranger. "Can you eat candy, Tommy?" suggested Mr. W., with a smile. "Can't I!" answered the little fellow, with a look of expectancy, as he rubbed his swollen face with the back of his hand. "Well, I'll see if I can find some, Tommy," mysteriously diving into his pocket in search of the cherished article. "But my name ain't Tommy," sobbed the child, almost afraid by the confession he would lose the coveted candy. "Dear me! not Tommy, eh, Tommy?" said the good man, with well-feigned astonishment at the portentous revelation. "No—Bob," answered the boy, with a wistful glance at the awardee for sweets. "Bob!" repeated Mr. W., "oh, Bob!" screw-

ing up his right eyebrow as if in deep thought. "Yes, a very manly name, 'Bob.'"

Mrs. Whittlebury began to manifest impatience at the delay of her husband, and longed to hear the sequel of the child's distress, though, in her mind, it could proceed from no other cause than some pestilential scourge that was ravaging the unwholesome East.

At length Mr. W. contrived to abstract from his capacious pocket a good-sized paper parcel, which he commenced to unfold before the expanded orbs of the little fellow, who had almost forgotten his sorrows in the anticipated feast.

"There, my little man!" said the exultant Mr. Whittlebury, placing in the outstretched palm of the child several pieces of rich, sparkling candy.

Bob hesitated for a second whether he ought to beat a retreat with his prize or not; but the kind nod of his benefactor decided him to stay, and fall to with a will, which highly amused the worthy little man. Mr. W. was looked upon as a sort of saint, in Stagnantwater, among the juvenile fraternity of that important village, for he rarely walked its street without a few youngsters running smiling by his side, or hanging to his coat-tails in affection, and they were always rewarded with smiles, and a liberal amount of sweets, with which he was always plentifully supplied when he started upon his constitutional, as he termed it; and it is a question whether his walk did him half so much good as the grateful smiles of his trusting and humble recipients, when he returned light-hearted and happy to his well-spread board.

After giving Bob time, he asked him gently the reason of his grief. The allusion, of course, stopped Bob's mastication of the candy, and the little fellow began to shed tears.

"There, there now; don't cry," said Mr. W., patting his head soothingly.

"No; don't cry, little boy," joined in Mrs. W., in solemn tones.

Little Bob, at the sound of her voice coming so suddenly upon him, started up in fright, and stared at her in amazement, wondering where she came from, as he had only noticed his kind benefactor.

"Don't be afraid, Bob; the lady won't hurt you," reassured Mr. W.

Bob took especial care, though, to keep his benefactor between himself and the austere partner of his cares and joys.

"Now my little fellow," asked Mr. W. gently; "why were you crying just now?"

"Because," sobbed Bob, "Charley's dead!"

"I knew, Anastor, nothing but death hovers round this fatal city," remarked Mrs. W., with a despondent shake of the head.

"When did he die, Bob?" asked Mr. W.

"This morning," blurted out the child, amidst his sobs.

"What was the matter with him?"

"That's what nobody knows?" Bob managed to get out.

"Was it sudden?" questioned Mrs. W.

"Yes, ma'am," was the answer.

"When did it happen, Bob, eh? Come! don't be afraid," said Mr. W.

"Just afore breakfast," answered the child.

"Was he well when he got up?"

"Yes, and as lively as a kitten, that he was."

"And it was sudden you say, eh?"

"I should think it was," sobbed Bob; "we was a sitting down to our breakfast, when Charlie gave a screech, turned round three times as fast as a top, and then went off dead!"

As Bob concluded his rather long speech his grief returned with such vigor that it made his little frame tremble with the emotion.

Mr. Whittlebury suddenly remembered he had a violent cold, and repeatedly blew his nose with so much impetuosity and noise as almost to rouse the neighborhood; though a malicious person living opposite Bob's dwelling, who had watched the whole proceedings through a hole in the blind, boldly asserted that the little man positively sat on the door-step and cried as badly as did little Bob; but of course the reader will take the assertion for what it's worth.

"Little Bob," said Mrs. W., sadly, as she pointed to the letter stuck on the centre pane of the parlor window, "what does that letter mean?"

"It's for the man," whispered Bob.

"You hear, Anastor," sighed Mrs. W.

"Well, well; we must try to be cheerful, Charlotte Anne."

"Cheerful!" groaned Mrs. W. turning up her gaze to the sky.

"When they comes," said Bob, "they'll take away my poor Charlie."

"What a terrible place is London!" murmured the good lady. "Heaven help my darling child!"

"Amen!" earnestly responded the meek husband.

"Come, Anastor, come; our own cares may be greater than we expect," cried the estimable lady, making a move towards her daughter's residence. "Good-bye, Bob, good-bye; there's sixpence for you; tell your worthy mother not to lose heart. I will call and see you to-morrow, and bring a nice rocking-horse."

"I'd sooner have a little dog what would bark," hinted Bob, loudly.

"Very well, Bob," said the warm-hearted Mrs. Whittlebury.

And so the good-hearted friends parted as suddenly as they had met. With many a shudder, Mrs. W. noticed the same foreboding letter affixed to the windows of the houses she passed. Some had the blinds drawn down, others had not.

"Ah!" cried Mrs. W. diamally; "the grim enemy ceases to be a terror to the afflicted Londoner," perceiving several windows with un-

drawn blinds. Silently they pushed their way, till they had nearly reached the dwelling of their child.

"Anastor, I almost dread to turn the corner."

"My love, don't give way so; it's almost wicked to anticipate misfortune."

"I know it is, Anastor, but I can't control myself,"—sighing heavily.

They entered the street, and strode solemnly and slowly towards the house, and their hearts sank within them as they perceived the same fatal letter staring them in the face as they passed on.

"Oh, it's terrible!" groaned Mrs. W. "It has reached even the street wherein dwells my only child!"

"Do calm yourself, my dear," pleaded her husband.

They gained the door.

When, oh! horror of horrors! the fatal letter is marked even on their child's dwelling. With a scream, Mrs. W. stood transfixed, and the beating of her heart almost ceased.

"My child!—my child!" groaned the wretched mother wringing her hands.

Mr. Whittlebury, regardless of his wife, bounded up the steps, and, finding the door ajar, rushed through the passage, and into the arms of his child.

"Clara, my girl, thank Heaven you are living!" gasped Mr. W.

Clara burst into a loud fit of laughter. When she found breath, she said, "What's the matter with my dear old father, to make such a remark?"

Mr. Whittlebury did not stop to answer, but flew back to the door, and, meeting his half-stupefied wife on the step, seized her by the arm, and dragged her along the passage, till she and her daughter met face to face. With a scream, the overwrought mother fell in her daughter's arms and fainted.

Father and daughter placed her upon the sofa in the parlor, and, by their united efforts, soon restored her. With a shudder, Mrs. Whittlebury, gazing from one to the other, began slowly to recover her senses.

"How are you now, mother dear?" said Clara, kissing her tenderly.

"Thank Heaven, you are alive."

"Bless me, if that isn't what papa said! ejaculated the astonished Clara.

"Your husband——" hesitated Mrs. W., afraid to continue.

"Will be at home at half-past four to dinner."

"I am glad of that!" cried the relieved Mrs. W.

"I'm quite at a loss to understand what all this means," said Clara.

"That letter!" cried Mrs. W. mysteriously.

"The letter 'D'?"

"Yes, Clara. Why was that fatal letter placed there?" pointing to the window.

Clara could not control her laughter, but burst forth in a merry peal. The more astonished her parents seemed, the heartier she laughed. When she recovered herself sufficiently to speak, she asked, with a merry expression on her face, "if her mother knew the reason why the letter was placed there?"

"No!"

"You will laugh when you know," she said, with a roguish smile.

"No!"

"Yes, you will, though."

"Incredible!"

"Well, then, mother, that terrible and fatal letter means dust!"

"Dust!" cried Mr. and Mrs. Whittlebury, bewildered.

"Yes; it's the signal for the dustmen to empty the bin. What did you think it was?"

Before Mrs. W. could make a reply, Mr. W. commenced his old process of winking fiercely, with the addition of a kind of defiant war-dance round the room, much to the annoyance of his wife, and the intense amusement of his daughter.

"Anastor!" cried Mrs. W.

It was no avail; for once, Mrs. Whittlebury's influence had no weight, and her good-natured little husband enjoyed his merriment to his heart's content.

Mrs. W.'s pride had received a severe check, and she sat rather humbly as she reflected at the injustice she had attached to the sanitary condition of London, especially the east; and she found, upon inquiry, that London could boast a lower death-rate than any of the large provincial towns.

Clara's husband entered in due time, and dinner over, the mishaps of the day were related amidst great merriment as the wine circulated, and all were as happy as the day was long.

True to his promise, Mr. Whittlebury called upon his young friend, Bob, and found his grief occasioned by the loss of a dog called Charlie, whose predatory propensity caused him to steal a plate of poisoned meat placed purposely to stop his career of plunder. A handsome little black-and-tan English terrier restored Bob to happiness, doubted by his generous benefactor attending to the grateful Bob's education at Mr. Whittlebury's own personal expense.

In time, a little boy appeared upon the scene, and as he grew, found a staunch friend in Bob, the protégé of his grandfather, who had found a lasting friend through the fatal letter "D."

## A MARRIED LOVE-LETTER.

Your letter was received, dear John,  
I write as you request,  
And send the white-winged tidings from  
Our little love-built nest,  
We miss you sadly, night and morn.  
That odious Mr. Dent  
Has called at least a dozen times  
—To dun you for the rent.

You say it seems an age, my love,  
Since last you went away;  
But then it's quite a comfort, dear,  
To know the trip will pay.  
We're saving every penny we can,  
And living very plain;  
I had my pocket picked, last night,  
While walking through the rain.

You count the lagging hours, dear,  
That keep you from my side;  
For, as you fondly say, the wife  
Is dearer than the bride.  
That Miss Modiste has sent her bill,  
I know you'll be amazed,  
I never got one-half the things—  
The creature must be crazed!

The children—precious little pets!—  
Ask daily for papa.  
They all have had such shocking colds,  
I called in Doctor Law.  
He fears that Nettie's lungs are weak—  
She seems inclined to stoop.  
The baby has the nettle-rash,  
And Sammy chronic croup.

And, oh! Mamma and Mr. B.  
Have had an awful fuss.  
Of course she couldn't stay at Em's,  
And so she's here with us.  
The girls have "given warning," love;  
I don't know what to think,  
Unless, as dear mamma suspects,  
They're both inclined to drink.

I'm feeling sad, and far from well;  
But then I know, dear John,  
A long home-letter, just like this,  
Will cheer and help you on.  
I'd like to nestle to your breast  
And have a hearty cry,  
Pray don't forget the grocer's bill!  
God bless you, love! Good-bye!

## ME AND MY DOGS.

JORUM.

There is something very free and jovial in the life of such a dog as Jorum, who came to and went from the village just as he pleased. I feel sure that he must have looked down with a lofty contempt upon all pet dogs with fancy collars—all daintily washed, cleanly creatures, led about by chain or string, and upon the inhabitants of those high-peaked, gable-ended, green kennels in the various yards he passed. He was nobody's dog, was Jorum; and when the new dog tax came in force, but for my well-known dislike to the whole dog tribe, I might have been tempted to pay the required five shillings for making him free. I knew Jorum well, and entertained a certain respect for him; for he was an honest, upright dog, with one exception—he would poach. It seemed strange that he should have led such a vagabond life, for there was good blood in Jorum's veins, though no doubt his ancestors must have married and intermarried with many families; there was many a point, though, in which could be traced his descent, though so dissolving, as it were, into other points, that it required study to thoroughly know Jorum's points, let alone his characteristics. There was a trifle of the length of leg and muscular development of the greyhound, the heavy lips of the mastiff, the heavy front of the bull and its broad chest; while his grey, rugged coat spoke of descent from the Scotch colley. No one could ever have committed himself so far as to say that Jorum was a handsome dog—he was anything but that. But he was a dog of mind and purpose, a dog that the bitterness of life never troubled, and who took things as they came—basked in the sunshine and enjoyed it, shook off the rain-drops of the wet days, and disdained to shiver.

He was nobody's dog; but in turn Jorum had many masters, and would do an odd job for anybody. He would help a drover with his sheep for miles long the road, and then sit in front of him at a roadside public-house, and catch most cleverly the morsels of bread and scraps of cheese rind pitched to him by way of payment; while a small puddle of beer poured for him in a corner would be lapped up with gusto. But the meal ended, and the flock of sheep beyond a certain limit, Jorum turned back, while no amount of coaxing would get him on another step. With drovers, a certain number of miles on each side of the village formed his beat; and the extremity reached, Jorum trotted back. Flaire, the butcher, never thought of going to market without Jorum, who was always to be found waiting outside the shop ready for the butcher on those particular days, ready to fetch home, a bullock, whose paunch Jorum knew would be his reward; and Flaire was always most scrupulous in his payments.

"I'd keep him altogether, sir," said Flaire, "for a more excellent dog never lived; but he won't stop."

Not he. Jorum loved change. Not that he was idle; but his soul revolted at the thought of chains, kennels, and slavery.

Another job of Jorum's was to fetch Mrs.

Temse's cows up at milking-time from off the common, and this task he would execute night and morning with the greatest of regularity, gratefully lapping up the bowl of buttermilk which he had for recompense. There was no driving there, either going or coming back, for a regular understanding seemed to exist between Jorum and the great teaming-uddered cows. Morning and evening, wet or dry, there would be Jorum outside Mrs. Temse's door. "Now, Jorum," she would cry; and up would jump the dog, and trot slowly off down the lane towards the common, where he would be stopped by the gate; but here he would turn off and run up to a cottage door, wag his tail, and look up at the face of any one he encountered; when, his wants being known, generally speaking, a child would run down and open the gate, stopping and swinging till Jorum returned with the cows. The dog could easily enough have got through, but the object was to get some one at the gate to open it when he came back with his charge. And there was no driving here. Jorum would get the cows together, and then slowly march back, the quiet old animals following him, lowing gently, through the gate, along the lane, and up to Mrs. Temse's, where they were relieved of their burden, Jorum the while looking on with critical eye, as if measuring the quantity each cow gave. Then, the order being given and the yard gate opened, Jorum would trot away slowly, looking back from time to time to see that his charges followed, and stirring up a lotterer now and then if she stopped to take a nibble at the green herbage by the lane side. But there was no bullying, barking, and heel-gnawing, for a quiet understanding seemed to exist—the cows knew Jorum, and Jorum knew the cows, often leaping up to rub his old piebald face against their great damp noses, while the grey, soft-eyed old creatures would exhale their odorous breaths with a whiff, and seem to enjoy the attentions. Only let a strange dog interfere, it were well for that dog had he never been pupped, for Jorum would set up the grey hair round his powerful neck, and shake the intruder without mercy. It was Jorum who gave little Pepper so salutary a lesson when he rushed through the flock of sheep.

We had met frequently—Jorum and I—before I could boast of the honor of his acquaintance; when one day he introduced himself to me, and I had a sample of the traits I have endeavored to describe above. I was walking slowly homewards after a constitutional, when I was somewhat surprised to see the great rough fellow come trotting up to me, bowing and smiling, and capering about me in the most peculiar manner. As a matter of course I was somewhat taken my surprise, for the animal's instinct must have taught him how uncompromising a subject I was where dogs were concerned. However, there was such a display of good fellowship in Jorum—of whom I had heard a good report—that I certainly did condescend to say—

"Poor fellow, then!"

I'm sure I don't know why, except that I believed it to be the correct thing, and what I ought to do. At all events, it answered its purpose, for the dog seemed well satisfied, dashing off a short distance, and then charging down to within a few yards, to crouch till I nearly reached him, when he would dash off again, making huge bounds after the fashion of his greyhound ancestors; and I could not help recalling rumors I had heard respecting Jorum doing a bit of courting occasionally for his own especial sport and pleasure. For my part, I still went on at my customary pace, at a loss to comprehend why the dog had come to meet me, and was performing all these antics during my progress. The secret, though, was soon made plain; for having bounded up to me again and again, gazing up in my face with his earnest, intelligent eyes, he suddenly stopped short by Butcher Flaire's gate, looking hard at the thumb-latch and then at me; while when I turned out of the path, smiling at the dog's sense, his tail wagged furiously and he burst out into a long bark of thanks, which only ended when I opened the back gate, and let him bound through.

I had often read of similar displays of instinct upon the part of dogs, but this was the first I had seen; and I soon found that it was common for Jorum to get gates opened in that way.

As to his name, it must not be supposed that it was in any way connected with that of a biblical king. Jorum's name was, I believe, on account of his appetite. Whole Jorum was the correct term; but this was soon shortened into Jorum, by which appellation he was known to every man, woman, or child in Babbley Parva.

He would do a good turn for anybody, would Jorum, so long as it was within bounds; the only exception he made being in favor of the butcher and the visits to market. But he kept steadily to this task, in spite of adverse circumstances. In fact, Jorum did not get on very well at the market town, where Mr. Flaire was in the habit of visiting a certain inn, kept by a particularly particular widow—a decidedly uncomfortable woman, whose idea of the perfection of human bliss lay in a clean floor and a brightly black-leaded grate. Now, considering that the butcher was his master for the time being, it was only reasonable that Jorum should follow him into the inn parlor, and stretch himself out to dry in front of the fire if he happened to be wet—which was often the case—while more often than not his feet were dirty; and, in spite of his instinct, Jorum had no idea of giving his paws a rub on the mat. The consequence was that the landlady vowed

vengeance against the dog and more than once tried to shut him out. But Jorum generally contrived to elude her vigilant eye; and now he would slip in behind the butcher, now before him; and finding that he was not allowed to make the bright fender rusty, nor to make wet impressions of his body upon the white stones, he would make the best of things, and creep under the butcher's chair, where he was at all events safe from molestation. There he would sit and watch the landlady, setting at defiance her endeavors to dislodge him. In fact, he did not mean to be dislodged. He could not help being dirty. Who could that had been tramping through the mire and rain, while the butcher drove, and did not so much as soil his top boots? He was a vagabond certainly, and from choice too, for he could have had more than one comfortable home; but none the less he could appreciate a warm fireside.

"He shan't stoak and mess my place no more," the landlady said at last; and, laying her plans, she trapped Jorum into a back room by treacherously offering him a beef bone. He might have known better—he might have felt sure that it was only a trick; but he had a soul above petty suspicion; and, in the frankness of his heart, he followed the base woman into the back room, where he was attacked by the potboy and a base lad with broomsticks, and compelled to make a sharp fight to get off. But, poor fellow, he was severely drubbed, though not without showing fight most valiantly, and leaving his marks upon his cowardly assailants. It would have gone hard with him, no doubt, if he had not watched his opportunity, and, leaping upon a table, shot right through the window—shivering the pane of glass, of course, to atoms.

"He won't come here no more, though," said the landlady.

And of course he did not enter that inhospitable porch again, but used to take his place opposite the inn, and sit and watch from a stone in a corner until his master once more came out. Hour after hour he would sit there waiting, with the greatest of patience; holding the while, no doubt, a lofty contempt for the treacherous woman who had driven him from her door. One thing, however, was very certain. Jorum bore no malice, but bore the ill of life with the greatest of equanimity.

One way and another, Jorum picked up a very good living, what with milk from Mrs. Temse and the odds and ends from Flaire's. Children, too, would often give him scraps of bread and butter, or treatise, for the sake of seeing him snap them so readily, catching them in those spring-trap jaws of his with the greatest ease. But there was undoubtedly another source from which Jorum drew supplies for his commissariat department—namely, the woods and fields; for there was no mistake about it, Jorum was a most notorious poacher, and, knowing his sins, he would never by any chance face a keeper with a gun. Sir Hector Hook's man had more than once vowed vengeance against him on account of the rabbits in Bosky Wood, while Lord Quarandjellee's men had a shrewd suspicion that Jorum was to blame for the scarcity of hares on courasing days.

They were right enough, for it fell to my lot to catch him in the fact, both with regard to hares and also rabbits. I found him coolly devouring a rabbit one day while fungus-hunting in the wood, my attention being attracted by the sharp, cracking sound of breaking bones; and there he was upon a mossy couch, making a delicate meal of a young rabbit.

I very naturally exclaimed, "Hallo! you sir;" but he only gave me a look, as much as to say, "It's all right—I saw you coming. We're friends, and I don't mind you." There he lay, crunching away, and apparently thoroughly enjoying the marrowy bones he was picking. First he looked at me with one eye, then with the other, as the necessities of the case demanded; but as to appearing ashamed or attempting to fly, that was quite out of the question. However, I was not Sir Hector Hook's keeper and it was no concern of mine if friend Jorum liked to run the risk of having his skin peppered with shot for the sake of a bit of sport on his own account and a dainty meal. So I went on with my fungus-hunting, collecting agaric and boletus, and forgetting my adventure in another five minutes.

The second time I ran against Jorum when poaching happened as I was botanicalising, in a pleasant lane, in autumn. The trees were gleaming with the richest hues, while from overhead was showered down a rain of golden leaves; in the banks peeped here and there the blue petals of the dog-violet, and the pale, star-like primrose, unseasonable blossoms tempted into bloom by the mildness of the season. Now picking a leaf here and a strand there, I was jogging pleasantly along, mentally comparing brick-and-mortar London with the joyous, exhilarating air of the country, when there came a rush, and a hare darted through the hedge, leaped the opposite bank, and, plunging into the damp herbage of the second hedge, disappeared. I had but a flying glance of the soft brown fur, great eyes, and black-tipped ears, laid flat upon pussy's neck, and was stooping once more to cull some floral treasure, when the heavy beat of some animal fell upon my ear; and, directly after, there was a loud rustle, and, with nose down close to the earth, friend Jorum came hurrying through the hedge, just in the same track as had been taken by the hare. He glanced at me as he passed, and seemed to give me a friendly nod; and then, snuffing the track, nose down close to the earth, he followed the trail up the opposite hedge, dashed through the herbage, and he was gone.

"You'll get into difficulties some day, my friend," I thought; and then began to moralize upon the fate of the hare, which must certainly be to be devoured by the dog, who possessed the hound's scent, with the sharp sight and something of the speed of his long-legged ancestors.

No licence, no permit, it seemed ticklish work; and I felt somewhat grieved to see that Jorum had fallen into such vicious habits. Here was the explanation of his love of a vagabond life and dislike to kennel and chain. It was undoubtedly the true love of nature and sport, combined with a fine appetite, which made Jorum hunt; but for all that I could not help predestinating an untimely end for the intruder upon preserved land. I knew that it must come to a sharp report following a quick aim, and mentally I saw poor Jorum rolled over and gasping upon the green turf he loved to roam across. What would Mrs. Temse do? Who would help Flaire to fetch his once a week fattened ox? Who then would become the children's playmate, and catch scraps of bread in their fight through the air, or suffer them balanced upon his nose till the donor said "snap," when they were thrown up and caught? The drovers would look for him in vain; other dogs would come begging round Flaire's door; and some dirty scrub of a boy would drive instead of leading the cows to and from the cow-house. Why, no one could get pigs over the ground like Jorum. You never saw the awkward, obstinate, pig-headed brutes running in all sorts of contrary directions when he had the management; for he somehow contrived to shoulder them along, always getting a leading pig in front, with whom he seemed to have a private understanding.

But my thoughts were premature: keepers still have their suspicions, and Jorum has his occasional hare or rabbit, does his work, and vagabondizes more than ever, while I feel certain that a sleep in which I lately saw him stretched was not natural, but in a great measure due to the puddle of ale he had lapped up after having helped with a drove of sheep. It is a pity that a dog of such excellent understanding should be guilty of wrong-doing; but, after all, one could never help having a certain amount of respect for the wandering dog, due, no doubt, to the openness and gentleness of his character.

By the way, I had composed an epitaph, somewhat prematurely, of course, to be placed over the grave of Jorum. It was a capital affair, and read with amazing fluency; in fact, I was rather surprised myself to find how easy the lines came. It seemed to me that I had heard them before; but I read them over to a lady friend, who immediately exclaimed—

"Exceedingly nice. I always did admire those lines of Byron's!"

Of course, after that I compared them with the epitaph on the celebrated Boatwain, and then burnt the epitaph on Jorum. Long may he live without requiring such a post-mortem honor!

A LIFE-SKETCH.

BY A. C. J.

John Ogden had contracted a very bad habit—a dangerous and a sinful habit. Had any one suggested to him a game of cards to be played for money, he would not have listened; and yet he was growing to be a gambler notwithstanding. His sin was that of betting, and it had so grown upon him that he would bet upon the result of things most trivial or most grave. He was a young man, not more than eight-and-twenty, with a wife and two children—a wife true and loving, and children bright and good. And John was a good, kind husband, and an even-tempered, indulgent father. He was book-keeper in a mercantile house, upon a salary more than sufficient for all his proper wants.

John Ogden's betting had come to be a matter of emphasis and determination. The habit had so fastened itself upon him that he could bet off-hand, and pay a loss, or take a winning, as a matter of course.

"Susan," he said, one evening, with radiant face "I have won ten pounds to-day."

"How," asked the wife, with a shadow upon her face.

"I bet ten pounds on the result of the elections, and I have won."

"Whom did you bet with, John?"

"With Charles Ashcroft."

"And you took his ten pounds?"

"Certainly—why shouldn't I? He fairly lost."

"And you, I suppose, fairly won?"

"Of course I did."

"And you think Charles Ashcroft was able to bear the loss?"

"That isn't my look-out."

"I am sorry, John. I wish you would put away that habit. Only evil can come of it."

"Pshaw!"

"Evil has already come, John. Your heart is growing hard. Time was when you could not have taken ten pounds from a poor and needy family without a feeling of shame and compunction."

"Susan! I don't want a lecture. I know what I am up to. You don't know so much of the world as I do."

And with this John Ogden took his hat and went out—went out like a coward, knowing that if he entered into argument with his wife she would twist him into a labyrinth from which he could only escape by an angry bolt.

Half an hour later Peter Cartwright came in. He was a year or two older than John, and was Susan's cousin—only a cousin by blood, but as they had been brought up from early childhood together they were like brother and sister in life and love. Peter sat down, and chatted awhile, and found his cousin not so cheerful as usual.

"You are not well, Susan?"

"I am well in body, Peter, but sore at heart."

"What is it?"

"I fear not to speak with you freely. I am worrying about John. His habit of betting is taking deeper and deeper root. To-day he has won ten pounds from Charles Ashcroft on the result of the elections. Last week he won five pounds on something else. I know his temperament. He is headstrong and impulsive. Can you not see the danger?"

"Yes, Susan, I have seen it this long time, but have not dared to speak of it. If John were cold-blooded and calculating he might occasionally bet with danger only of doing wrong to those from whom he won money, but at it is, with his impulsive, mercurial temperament, there is other danger."

"I wish you could influence him, Peter."

"I wish I could; but I fear he would not listen."

Cartwright took out his watch, and said he must be going. He had left a friend waiting, and must go back to him.

"I came," he added, "to get John to call up with me. You remember Frank Powers?"

"Certainly," said Susan, with a brightening eye.

"Well," returned Peter, "he is through an accident minus an arm."

"I am very sorry to hear it, and I should like to see him."

"He shall call. He will be glad, I know."

Peter had arisen, and got as far as the door, when he stopped and turned.

"Susan," he said, "I have an idea. Isn't John saving up money with which to pay off the mortgage on his house?"

"Yes. He has paid off a great deal and has almost enough to settle the remainder."

"Don't say anything to him about my call here to-day and say nothing about Mr. Powers."

"But—Peter—"

"Trust me, Susan. I think I see a way to give him a lesson. Hold your peace, and await the result."

On the following day Peter Cartwright met John Ogden, and informed him of the arrival of Mr. Powers.

"And he wants to see you, old fellow. Will you go up with me this evening?"

"Certainly I will," replied John, gladly. "How is he?"

"Comfortable, considering. He has had a hard time of it, though. You knew he had lost an arm?"

"I heard of his accident. And so the arm had to come off?"

"Yes."

"Which—"

"Excuse me, John. I have an appointment to keep at the bank. I will call for you this evening."

"All right. I'll be ready."

And in the evening Peter called, and together the two went to the hotel. They found Mr. Powers in his private room, seated in a big easy-chair, and looking somewhat pale and worn.

"Frank, my dear fellow, how are you?" cried John, advancing.

"John, old boy, I am glad to see you. You'll excuse my not rising. I am pretty well, but not so strong as I have been."

"Keep your seat, Frank. I am glad to see you; and I'm sure you'll pick up in time."

The empty coat-sleeve, dangling over the arm of the chair, was eloquent, and John's eyes moistened as he fixed his gaze upon it.

And yet the conversation flowed pleasantly after a time.

John arose to depart first. He had told his wife that he should not be out late. Cartwright would remain a while longer.

On the day following this visit Peter and John met in the street close by the bank where the latter had come to deposit for his employers. Peter had evidently been waiting and watching.

"Are you going to lunch, John?"

"Yes. Will you come with me?"

"I will if you'll lunch with me?"

"Any way."

The restaurant was near at hand, and while they ate they talked of Frank Powers and his adventures, and also of his mishap.

"He ought to be thankful, though," remarked Peter, "that it was his left arm that was hurt instead of his right."

John Ogden looked up curiously.

"Eh, Peter?"

"I say Frank ought to be thankful that his left arm was hurt instead of his right."

"You mean that for a joke?"

"How?"

"Why, Frank has lost his right arm, to be sure."

"You are mistaken, John. His right arm is safe and sound. It is the left that is gone."

"Peter, are you in earnest? Do you mean it?"

"Are you daft, John? Of course I mean it."

"Do you mean to say that Frank Powers has lost his left arm, and that his right arm is intact?"

"I do say exactly so."

John pressed the ends of his fingers upon his brow, and called up to mind the picture as he had seen it on the previous evening. He remembered just where the empty sleeve had

dangled, and he remembered that the opposite arm had been whole.

"Peter," he finally said, slowly and emphatically, "Frank Powers has lost his right arm!"

"You are mistaken, John."

"Do you think so?"

"I know you are mistaken."

"I'd like to bet you something on it," said John, with a decisive gesture.

"I'll bet you anything you like, my dear fellow, so that you make it an object."

"And I'll bet anything you like," John answered.

"You ain't sure enough to bet a hundred pounds?"

"A hundred?"

"I thought it would shake your confidence in yourself," nodded Peter, with a smile.

John Ogden started to his feet, and brought his hand down with a slap upon the table.

"Dare you bet a hundred pounds, Peter?"

"Yes."

"You'll lose it."

"I am able to lose."

"Well the bet is made then. Will you stay here while I go and get the money?"

"Yes."

John hurried away to the bank and drew out a hundred pounds, and with it returned to the lunch room flushed and excited. A friend of both gentlemen was called, to whom the case was stated.

"I bet a hundred pounds," said John, "that Frank Powers has lost his right arm, and that his left is whole."

"And I," said Peter, "bet the same amount that Frank Powers has lost his left arm, and that his right arm is whole."

The money was deposited in the hands of the friend with instructions that he should pay it to the winner. And then they agreed that the three should go at once to the hotel and there settle the matter.

Twelve months before this time John Ogden would not have bet so large a sum under any circumstances; but the habit had indeed grown upon him.

Arrived at the hotel the three were admitted to Mr. Powers' presence.

"Ah, boys, I am glad to see you. I am feeling much better to-day. John, old fellow, I can get up for you now. How are you?"

And Mr. Frank Powers arose and extended his hand—his right hand—and when John felt its grasp he found it true flesh and blood, warm and pulsating! He staggered back with a groan.

"You will excuse us," said Peter; "but John and I had a little dispute. He thought you had lost your right arm."

"Oh, no," returned Powers, smiling. "Thank Heaven, my right arm is spared me," extending his good right hand; "but this poor stump is all that is left of its fellow," pointing to the empty sleeve that hung by his left side.

John got away as soon as he could. The money was paid over to Peter Cartwright.

"I am sorry you lost your money, John," the latter said, as he put the bank-notes into his pocket-book, "but I think I won it fairly."

"It's all right, Peter." And John tried to smile as he said so, but he could not do it.

A miserable man was John Ogden that afternoon; and more miserable was he when he went to his home in the evening. His wife asked him what was the matter, but he would not tell her; and when she pressed him he was angry. He could not—he dared not—tell her that the money that was to have paid for their precious home had been swept away in a moment—swept away by an act of his own sin and folly.

That night he slept not a wink. On the following morning, pale and shaking, he started to go away from his home without his breakfast. On his doorstep he was met by Cartwright's clerk, who handed him a sealed packet.

"It is from Mr. Cartwright, sir."

"Do you wait for an answer?"

"No, sir."

John went back into his house, and broke the seal, and opened the packet. He found within one hundred pounds in crisp bank notes, and a folded letter. He opened the letter and read:

"DEAR JOHN—With this I send you back your hundred pounds. I won the money as honestly as gambling bets are often won, and yet I did not win it fairly. Frank and I deceived you on purpose. On your first visit his right arm was hidden beneath his coat, and his wooden left arm was strapped on. As he did not rise from his chair the deception was perfect. You found him on your second visit as he really was, only the wooden arm had been laid aside."

"Forgive me, John, and believe that I had an aim in this which Heaven grant may be fulfilled."

PETER.

"P.S.—I should like that this subject should never be referred to between us. Please me in this, won't you?"

"Dear John, what is that?"

Susan had come in, and as she spoke she put her arm around her husband's neck and kissed him. He returned the kiss.

"Not now, Susan," he said, huskily. "I will tell you some time."

"But you will come and eat some breakfast?"

"If you won't ask me any more questions—yes."

The blow had been a severe one, and the effects of the shock did not quickly pass away. But John Ogden revived in time; and when he told his wife the secret of his trouble on that unhappy night he was prepared to give her a great and lasting joy by adding that he had made his last bet.





A SHOAL OF WAC  
By W. D.



OF MACKEREL.  
By W. D.

W. HOLLAND

"THE FAVORITE"

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THE FAVORITE

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 1874.

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS.

We request intending contributors to take notice that in future Rejected Contributions will not be returned

Letters requiring a private answer should always contain a stamp for return postage.

No notice will be taken of contributions unaccompanied by the name and address of the writer (not necessarily for publication,) and the Editor will not be responsible for their safe keeping.

THE POWER OF LOVE.

It is often asserted that love is only the offspring of passion, having its foundation in the baser characteristics of human nature. He or she who has no higher conception of this divine principle can never be elevated by it to that condition in life which it was designed by an all-wise Providence to establish.

What is it that prompts the youth when he goes out from the paternal roof, buoyant with hope, ambition, and energy, to battle with the world? What is it that gives a glow to all his bright anticipations, his visions, his dreams? What is it that nerves his arm in the busy conflict of his daily routine of business and toil?

shines into the soul of one who is just ready to sink into despair! How often it penetrates prison dungeons, and sheds the blessed light of Hope into the heart of the condemned! The warrior on the field of battle wields the sword with renewed vigor and potency when he feels that a loved one prays for him at home; the mariner on the boisterous sea buffetts the storms and billows with greater zeal when he knows that his manly efforts are appreciated and he himself is respected by a dear one on shore.

PRACTICE AND HABIT.

We are born with faculties and powers capable of almost anything—such, at least, as would carry us farther than can be easily imagined; but it is only the exercise of those powers which gives us ability and skill in anything, and leads us towards perfection.

As it is in the body so it is in the mind. Practice makes it what it is; and most, even of those excellencies which are looked on as natural endowments, will be found, when examined into more narrowly, to be the product of exercise, and to be raised to that pitch only by repeated actions.

To what purpose all this, but to show that the difference so observable in men's understandings and parts does not arise so much from the natural faculties, as acquired habits. He would be laughed at who should go about to make a fine dancer out of a country hedger at past fifty.

RUBENS' MASTER-PIECE.

A FRAGMENT FROM A TOURIST'S JOURNAL.

At seven in the morning after my arrival at Antwerp, I went to view the exterior and the interior of the Cathedral, one of the grandest Gothic monuments in Europe. Its lofty arches and long naves seem more like the work of demi-gods than men.

Beyond, in the distance glittered the sluggish waters of the Scheldt, and the flags of a hundred ships were floating on the morning breeze. Turning my glass slowly to the left, I brought beneath my view the museum and the statue of Van Dyck in front of it; the park, the new theatre, and the equestrian statue of the first King of the Belgians on the Boulevard Leopold I.

From this dream through a field-glass I was awakened by nine heavy strokes of the clock, and descended into the Cathedral. "The Descent from the Cross," in the right transept, was already unveiled, and many worshippers standing before it.

Behind her Martha is kneeling, and in front the Magdalen is clasping the bleeding feet and bathing them with her tears. The great drops of blood trickling from the hands over the white drapery; the drooping head, the pale, slightly parted lips, the calm, limp inertness of the limbs, the delicate hues, the unearthly whiteness that the flesh only puts on when life is absent—oh! it is death; but death so natural, so truthful, that it seems life—the life of death.

In this great work, Rubens surpassed his master, Titian. There are no words to convey the soft blending of light and shade, the mystical harmony of color and composition. It must be seen to be understood.

ONE EAR AT A TIME.

Many extraordinary persons who have figured in history as men of action, have had a propensity to do their thoughts rather than speak them, to convey, or at least to enforce, their meaning by some significant action rather than by words.

Sir Walter Scott relates of Napoleon that once, in a sharp altercation with his brother, Lucien, not being able to bow him to his will, he dashed on the marble floor a magnificent watch which he held in his hand, exclaiming, "I made your fortunes. I can shatter them to pieces easier than I do that watch!"

Everybody has heard the story of Canute the Great, who, when his courtiers were extolling his power and good fortune as a kind of omnipotence over nature as well as men, quietly ordered his throne to be set on the sea-beach when the tide was out, and when the waves came rolling in, playing around his seat, and irreverently throwing water and spray over his sacred person, he silently allowed the spectacle to rebuke their silly flattery.

A good instance of this symbolism is related of Alexander the Great. An accusation was once presented to him against one of his officers. When the informer began his statement, Alexander turned one ear towards him, and

closed the other firmly with his hand; implying that he who would form a just judgment, must not abandon himself altogether to the party who gets the first hearing; but, while he gives one ear to the accusation, should reserve the other, without bias or prepossession, to the defence.

If we should shut both ears when we hear an injurious report, in most cases no harm would be done. But the least that fairness requires is to keep one closed and reserve it for the other side. For who does not know (though most people often forget) that there are two sides to every story? If we would only stick to the rule of one ear at a time, it would prevent many a rash judgment, and spare many an injured reputation and many a wounded heart.

APPLES AS FOOD.

Apples, says the *Garden*, afford a healthful and cheap diet. At present they are principally used in the form of puddings, pies, tarts, and sauce, and are also eaten raw, in which state they are more wholesome than when mingled with butter, eggs, and flour. But they are very delicious when simply baked and served at every meal.

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

A SHOAL OF MACKEREL.

The illustration we publish this week over the above title will commend itself to everyone with a taste for pictures. The brawny good-natured fishermen, the smiling lasses, and the irrepressible children form an admirable tableau.

NEWS NOTES.

Louis Riel has been sworn in by the Clerk of the Canadian House of Commons.

The Spanish Republicans are said to have lost 4,000 men killed and wounded in an engagement with the Carlists.

Republican candidates for the French Assembly have been elected in the departments of Haute Marne and Gironde.

Great excitement was created in Paris lately by a rumor of the death of ex-President Thiers, which proved to be unfounded.

General Wolseley has been created a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath, and Lord Gifford has received the Victoria Cross.

A special from Berlin reports that Prince Bismark threatens to resign in consequence of the opposition of the Reichstag to the Army bill.

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cologne has been arrested for violating the ecclesiastical laws. The arrest was made without any demonstration.

The report that Henry Rochefort and Pascal Grousset escaped from the penal colony at New Caledonia, is confirmed. A despatch from Melbourne, says that they, with four other convicts, arrived at Newcastle, New South Wales.

The Lord Mayor of London gave a banquet on the 15th ult. in honor of Sir Garnet Wolseley. Among the distinguished guests present were the Prince of Wales, Prince Arthur, the Duke of Cambridge, Viscount Carlwell, and Mr. Gathorne Hardy.

DECEIVER, GO!

I'll admit that once I loved thee,  
That I deemed thee just and true,  
That my heart has loved no other  
Fondly as it once loved you;  
Yet the ties of love are broken,  
And the vows you made to me—  
From this hour, and for ever,  
You are nothing more to me.

I have found you false, yet lovely,  
I have learned you could deceive;  
And the many vows you made me  
I can never more believe.  
You have tried your power to lead me  
From the paths of duty true;  
But your power, thank God, is ended—  
I shall care no more for you.

Tell me not that it will grieve me  
Now to part with one so fair—  
Mention not your syren beauty—  
Come not with your charms so rare.  
It is vain—I cannot worship  
Aught your glittering wealth might buy,  
And although my hours be lonely,  
I shall spurn thee till I die.

MARION EARL.

The school term was over, and teachers and pupils were alike excited by the prospect of a respite from labor and the delights of vacation. It was Florence Neville's last year. She was going home now to enter society, and take the position in life which was opened to her by her own charms and the wealth and influence of her family.

Florence was beautiful, and, what was better, she had acute perceptions, a bright imagination, a tender heart, and profound sense of her moral responsibility. With all these gifts she could hardly fail of being a creature somewhat apart from her schoolmates. She was a favorite among them, and yet there was always a sense of distance between her and the best-beloved of her schoolgirl friends. Even her teachers held her a little in awe.

There was, however, one exception. Marion Earl was an under-teacher of mathematics. She was a quaint, quiet little body, as void, to outward appearance, of striking characteristics as a woman could well be. But there were curious convolutions in her nature, and somewhere among them was hidden a subtle, imperceptible essence which had the power to hold Florence Neville in thrall. There is a love "passing the love of women;" a strong vital attraction which women may feel for women, or men for one of their own sex, which can so attract and fuse two souls that neither shall be wholly itself without the other. It was this tie which bound the beautiful and elegant Florence to her humbler friend.

They were having their last hour's conversation together in Miss Earl's room. Marion was seated with Florence kneeling by her side, her flowing draperies spread out around her, and her head with its golden coronet of braids laid tenderly upon the bosom of her friend.

"Marion," she said, "this parting is harder even than I thought it would be. It is like letting my own soul go out of my keeping to part from you. I wonder if you care for me at all as I care for you."

For one instant there was silence, and a deep light burned in Marion Earl's eyes.

"I cannot swear that," she said at length. "I do not know how they who are rich and beautiful and envied care for their friends. I only know how one who was shipwrecked and lost, cast up at length upon some desert strand, might worship an angel from the skies who should leave his native bowers to sojourn with and comfort the desolate one."

Florence looked into her friend's face with amazement.

"Why," she said, "is this my quiet Marion who speaks? I never knew you to be impassioned before."

Marion's face had grown pale and quiet again.

"Forgive me," she said, "but your question touched me nearly. It awoke an old doubt which has so often tormented me—a doubt whether, if you knew all, you would still love and trust me as you do."

"It is strange," said Florence, slowly, "that I have never thought before that you must have a past. Your present self has so engrossed me that I have never thought to question you concerning aught in your early life. You are an orphan, are you not? and I think you have said that you had not many relatives."

Marion bowed her head upon her hands.

"You are sure," she said, "that I may trust you with the story—trust your love, I mean? I do not doubt your honor."

Florence looked up and smiled proudly.

"He either fears his fate too much,  
Or his desert is small,  
Who dare not put it to the touch,  
And win or lose it all."

was her answer, and doubtful as might have been the import of it to some ears, her friend understood her.

"Florence," she said, gazing coolly and steadily into her face, "that answer was like you. You are the only brave woman whom I ever met. Pah! The cowardice of my sex disgusts

me. You shall have my story, and I tell you truly that never before has it passed my lips."

The two friends sat together in the golden midsummer twilight till the long and impassioned tale was told. Gradually, as the speaker drew to a close, Florence had raised her head; her eyes glistened, her cheek burned, she withdrew herself from the circling arms of her friend and sat upright; but Marion knew in her inmost soul that the movement was not one of aversion. She ceased speaking at length and Florence bowed her head in silence, her hands clasped tightly the while in those of her friend.

"Heaven forgive me," she said, slowly, at length, "that I have lived side by side with you these past three years, and never known or loved you as I ought. And yet I am sorry that I asked you the question that I did."

"Are you sorry that I told you what I did?" queried Marion, almost impatiently.

"Oh," said Florence, bursting into tears and burying her face upon the bosom of her friend, "it has aged me so. I was a girl when the sun went down. He will rise on my girlhood no more. From this moment I am a woman, and, oh, dear Marion, how sad and heart-sore a woman I can never, never tell."

Marion was silent, her face still pale, her eyes still burning with their deep and lambent fires.

"And you regret it?" she said, at length, with laboring breath, as if speech were no easy task.

"No," she said; "at twenty one must no more seek to be a child. But, Marion, one thing is settled—I cannot leave you here. You are too isolated, too unprotected."

"No," said Marion. "Heaven will take care of me."

"I tell you that while your fate is thus in suspense I will never leave you nor forsake you. If you will not come with me, then here I stay with you."

"Why, that would be absurd," said Marion.

"Not very," replied Florence. "I have often thought of late what my life might be at home: tame, wearisome, monotonous. I know it by heart already. Mademoiselle Perrine leaves this term, and her place is not yet filled. Madame Du Barry will give it to me. My French is good, my music unexceptionable. We are so near town that I could go home frequently. I think I shall stay."

It was Florence's way of managing her friend.

"You know," said Marion, at length, "that I could not be dependent."

"Well, you need not. Grace and Kitty must have a governess. It may as well be you as another. Then I should have your society, your counsel, your affection, and I should know that you were safe."

Marion hesitated. There would not be the freedom in such a life, she felt, that she now enjoyed, but there would be Florence.

"Well," said Miss Neville, who was impatient at her friend's hesitancy, "you shall do as you like, and I will see Madame Du Barry this evening. I would quite as soon stay here."

"But, Florence dear, you know that is impossible. Your parents would never consent."

"I beg your pardon," replied Florence. "I know nothing of the sort. Papa has ideas about the independence of girls—as well as of boys. You know he has put all his sons to business."

Florence was in a mood not to be resisted, and her friend saw it.

"I fear it is wrong," she said, "but it would be so much to me to be always with you."

"A woman who listens is ready to yield," and in five minutes it was settled.

Florence ran in all haste to acquaint Madame Du Barry with her friend's decision and the cause of it.

"You see," she said, "we cannot be separated. Neither she nor I realized the impossibility of it till this evening. So, now, instead of spending a stupid vacation with the scholars who stay over till next term, she is to pack her trunk forthwith, and be off with me, and you are to find her substitute as soon as may be."

Madame Du Barry demurred a little at the short notice, but there was plainly nothing to be done about it, and she wisely yielded at last with a good grace.

The Nevilles were a family of great respectability and moderate fortune. They entertained in good style, though not lavishly. Florence was the eldest daughter, and her entrance into society was anticipated with great eagerness by her parents.

Marion, who was older and more experienced than her friend, knew very well that in the intervals of gay life Florence would find far less time than she at present imagined to spend with her humble friend, yet still they would be in the same house, and whatever happened to the one could but be known to the other, and that was a great deal to both of them.

There was no objection made to Florence's plan in the family circle, and Miss Earl was soon ensconced in the schoolroom, and presiding in her quaint, firm way over the destinies of the two little girls. Florence made a flying trip with her parents to Scotland but returned in September. The season opened early, and one of the first events of importance was Florence's coming-out party.

On the evening in question Florence stood in her dressing-room, the centre of an admiring circle. Mrs. Neville was directing the maid, who was giving the last touches to the elegant coiffure, and Miss Earl, whose taste and touch were far superior to the maid's, was arranging drapery and flowers.

"I am elegant, mamma," said Florence,

with her usual frankness; "there is no doubt in that; but do I please you?"

"To the finest degree, my daughter," was the reply. "There is nothing which I would alter."

"Then I am sure to be self-possessed all the evening," said Florence; "for when mamma is pleased I know that the critics are silenced. Dear Marion, I wish you were coming down with us."

"Will you not at least come down at supper-time?" said Mrs. Neville. "You do not dance, I know, but in the dining-room no one is noticed, and during the remainder of the evening I should be glad to introduce you to one or two old friends, whom I am sure you would enjoy knowing."

"Do, do come down," said Florence; "there's a dear. You know mamma's tact, and I am sure you would enjoy it."

But Marion was not to be entreated. As Florence gathered up her bouquet and handkerchief she kissed her quietly, and said:

"I prophesy for you, dear Florence, a most brilliant success. I should be most glad to witness it, but such a scene would bring up too many old memories."

So Marion retired to her own room, and was soon asleep, while Florence, surrounded by a host of enthusiastic friends, was taking her first taste of adulation and flattery.

It was long past midnight when the door of Marion's room flew open, and a tall figure in trailing, diaphanous robes, eyes brilliant and cheeks burning like a flame, appeared at her bedside.

"Florence, dear," said Marion, "is it you? You are so much like an angel that you startled me."

"Yes, it is I. I could not sleep till I had told you of my success. It has been a most happy evening. Not one thing went wrong, and, oh!—well, the rest will keep till morning."

Marion, waking from a sound sleep, was not certain whether that which seemed strange and unusual in her friend's manner was to be attributed to some unexpected excitement or to her own want of accord with the last hour of the ball. Florence lingered a moment but said nothing which elucidated the mystery, and finally, kissing her friend good night, swept out again with a rush and a rustle to her own apartment.

Marion lay awake for an hour, striving to forecast for her own pleasure the future which lay before Florence. She is too beautiful, too lovely, and too gifted not to make many friends, was her thought. She will marry soon, I have no doubt, and then what will become of her humble Marion? Was it wise, after all, to leave my place in school for the sake of her whim? But then she thought how Florence's heart had been set upon the measure and cherished no more doubts.

Long before Florence had calmed the tumult of her brain Marion was quietly dreaming, and yet an event had happened that evening which was of deeper moment to both of them than the one lying awake on account of it and listening to the strange whispers of fancy, or the other, sleeping the dreamless sleep of virtue and contentment, could possibly imagine.

The evening had been well advanced and most of the guests had already paid their respects to the fair young debutante when Percy Gladwin appeared upon the scene. He was a stranger there, and attended the party as the friend of certain old schoolmates and intimates of Florence.

Mr. Gladwin was a man perhaps thirty-five years of age, tall, dark, and handsome. There was something in his brilliant eyes and his man-of-the-world air which impressed Florence deeply, and after the introduction and the moment's chat which followed it she found occasion to say to Ellen Vernon:

"Who is this handsome cavalier of yours, and whence comes he?"

Ellen replied with a rather patronizing air: "Mr. Gladwin is a friend of my uncle. He is of a very aristocratic family, and is himself of distinguished abilities."

Miss Vernon's manner was such as to make it impossible for Florence to continue her inquiries, and, amid the rush of introductions, the event passed from her mind. Later in the evening, however, she had betaken herself to a quiet corner, for the express purpose of regaining her breath and calming her pulses a little, when suddenly Mr. Gladwin appeared at her side.

"You are fatigued, Miss Neville," he said, "Permit me to conduct you to a quieter place than this, and then procure you some refreshment."

He offered her his arm, which she gratefully accepted, and led her to a corner of the conservatory. Disappearing for an instant, he returned with an ice. It was a commonplace attention, but the air with which it was rendered was not at all commonplace.

Florence was no silly school-girl. Under the judicious guidance of her mamma she had been given a much more extensive knowledge of the world than most school-girls possess. She was quite well enough acquainted with the conventional type of the society man to know that Mr. Gladwin, in power and elegance and the possession of himself, was so far beyond it as to seem almost another order of being. Even this did not express the whole difference between him and the gentlemen to whom she was used. His presence thrilled and almost awed her. He seemed always looking at her across some great gulf of deep and possibly strange experience.

"I would give a fortune," was her constant thought, "just to know that man's history." She feared him, and yet she was fascinated

by him. Their conversation was only of commonplace, but it seemed inclined to prolong itself indefinitely.

At length Mrs. Neville missed her daughter, and made search. She was a little startled to find her tête-à-tête with this dark stranger, but his coolness reassured her.

"The gaieties of the evening were overpowering Miss Neville," he said. "She was literally fainting under her conquests, and I took the liberty of shielding her from the too great stress of her attractions."

Mrs. Neville expressed her gratitude politely, and though, to tell the truth, she was not over well pleased, she could do no other than to accept Mr. Gladwin's escort to the drawing-room.

After that instant Florence missed him from the rooms. Indeed she saw no more of him that evening, but the glamor of his wonderful eyes was upon her, and complaining of fatigue, she kept as much in shadow as possible until the guests began to retire.

The next day Mr. Gladwin called. Mrs. Neville was engaged with other guests, and, as he remained but a moment, she had no thought of danger to Florence. But even that brief call had afforded the practised man of the world an opportunity of deepening the impression of the evening previous.

When Florence went upstairs to dress for dinner she called Marion to her, as was her usual custom, and recounted the incidents of the day. It seemed strange to her, and yet the impulse was irresistible, and she carefully concealed from Marion all knowledge of Mr. Gladwin. If her conscience upbraided her, she stilled it by saying, "It is nothing—an introduction, the offer of a ice, a five minutes' call, that is all."

And yet in her heart of heart she knew it was not all.

The weeks passed on, and, although Florence frequently met her new acquaintance, and always there was a deepening of her first impressions of attraction and mystery, she still hesitated to confide to her friend the story of her interest in Mr. Gladwin.

At length, one day, going into Florence's dressing-room, Marion noticed upon the bureau a glass in which was a cluster of the purple blossoms of the asphodel.

She started and grew very pale; but happily Florence, who was busy with a refractory knot of ribbon, did not notice her change of color.

"Why," she said, "where did you get such flowers as these?"

Florence looked up then, and turned crimson.

"Oh! those?" she said hastily. "I did not mean that you should see them."

Marion was astonished at her manner, for hitherto she had not imagined that Florence had any disposition to make secrets with her. Her face expressed both surprise and sorrow, and Florence hastened to say:

"Oh! it is nothing very wonderful. They were given me last evening by a gentleman—a gentleman of whom I think you have never heard me speak."

In an instant Marion was enlightened.

"I wish," she said, "that you would tell me more about this gentleman."

"Dear Marion," said Florence, "it is nothing. I met Mr. Gladwin at my coming-out party. He is very handsome, very distinguished, and impresses me somehow differently from any other gentleman I have ever met."

"And he gave you asphodel," said Marion, with an effort to be calm. "What did he say when he gave it to you?"

"It is strange that you should ask that question."

"But I wish it to be answered."

Marion spoke with the authority of love, and her friend felt it. And yet she hesitated before repeating the words.

"What he said to me was like a line out of a tragedy," she said. "It was this: 'The men of our house give only asphodel to the women whom they esteem, for they who can drink of our cup must not fear to taste a bitter draught.'"

"Florence," said Marion, almost sternly, "do you love that man?"

Miss Neville was very pale. She was neither a coward nor a weakling, but there was an influence upon her which more and more, she felt, was that of a spirit stronger than hers. She looked into Marion's face with dumb entreaty in her eyes.

"Heaven help me, Marion," she said, "I do not know."

Marion sat by her side, and quietly begged her to be more frank.

"Tell me all about it," she said. "I am older than you, and more experienced. Possibly I shall be able to help you."

"Why, thus it stands," said Florence, half-mockingly, and yet with deepest seriousness at heart. "The gentleman seems in every way an eligible parti, and I fancy he stands upon the verge of an offer. I may be mistaken, but so it seems to me."

"And if he should offer, your heart inclines you to accept him?"

"He impresses me as no one else ever did. When he enters a room I know it, though I am not looking in that direction. If he asks me to dance with him I have no alternative but to obey. Whatever he desires I grant him without hesitation; and yet I sometimes feel that the power he has over me is not the result of a true attraction."

"If all that you say is true, if he were to ask you to be his wife, and there was no higher authority to whom you must appeal—I mean, for

instance, if you were an orphan without ties, you would not hesitate to marry him?"

"Oh, I see what you mean," said Florence. "Why did I not think of it before?"

She shuddered as she spoke, and buried her face in her hands.

At this instant Mrs. Neville entered the room.

"Why, Florence, dear," she exclaimed, "why so sad? Mr. Gladwin is below waiting for you to drive with him. Dress yourself quickly, my love."

Marion stepped out into the hall, determined to obtain a view of the gentleman's face. At that instant the parlor bell rang, and, obeying a sudden impulse, she slipped down the back stairs, and presented herself in answer to the summons.

The room was dark, and Mr. Gladwin, pacing restlessly up and down in the shadows, scarcely observed at all the face of the seeming servant, who stood humbly before him to know his wants.

"A glass of water, if you please," he said, civilly enough.

Marion slipped out, and, meeting a servant in the hall, transferred the order to him. She had seen all that she cared to see; indeed the vision made her quake and tremble. Waiting but a moment to calm the hurried beating of her heart, she slipped up the back staircase, determined to prevent Florence from taking this dangerous drive. But, to her mortification, she found that she was already too late. Florence had gone down the front way, and was already in the carriage. To interfere now seemed impossible, and would, she felt certain, cost her her own life, while it might not save her friend. There was too much at stake, she thought, to risk hasty measures. In order to compass the ruin which her foe so richly merited it would be necessary to know exactly upon what ground he stood.

She went immediately to Mrs. Neville, and inquired concerning Mr. Gladwin's claims and pretensions. Mrs. Neville was in her most complacent mood. She did not mind telling Marion, she said, who was so dear a friend to her dear child, that Florence was apparently on the eve of making a most brilliant match. Mr. Gladwin was a gentleman of unlimited means, of fine family, and most distinguished gifts.

"Pardon me," said Marion, "if I presume. I can only plead my deep interest in dear Florence. Unless Mr. Gladwin should prove to be a man of tenderer mould than some I have met with I fear very much for Florence's happiness."

Mrs. Neville replied, a little haughtily: "Florence will certainly not be required to marry any man against her will, and the husband whom her heart elects, and whom her parents approve, must, I should suppose, all things considered, be the person in whose hands her happiness will be safest."

It was useless to strive to influence Mrs. Neville against him, and yet Marion had no serious fears for Florence. Surely, when she should tell her that it was this man that she owed all the unhappiness of her life, even though she could bring no evidence of her story, Florence would believe her and would abhor him. Yet, after all, she knew his fascinations and his strange, mysterious power and she waited in some anxiety for his friend's return.

It grew dusk, and still Florence was absent. Suddenly a great fear stole into Marion's heart. What if she should never return?

She seated herself at the window of the upper hall, and watched, in almost breathless suspense, for the appearance of the carriage. The short winter twilight faded, and still the truant did not come.

When the dinner-bell rang, and still there was no sign of Florence, Marion could bear the suspense no longer. Calling Mrs. Neville to her room, she begged her to believe that something was certainly wrong.

"Percy Gladwin," she said, "it is not that man's true name? In my youth I knew him well. I was once for two years in his power. I believed myself his wife, for it was not until a seeming priest had blest our union that I would consent to put myself so much in his power as to give him the opportunity to carry me away with him to his home. It is no time to tell you now by what miracle I escaped from his power. Many times he has told me that no woman ever escaped from him and lived; that he would track such a one through tropic heats or Arctic snows, sooner than that she should escape his vengeance. It was the knowledge of this fact which induced Florence to give me a home here. Here, at least, she thought I should be safe."

Mrs. Neville was at first incredulous, but Mr. Neville, less slow to believe ill of his elegant acquaintance, speedily called in the police.

In a half-hour's time it was ascertained that a strange craft, which had been lying at anchor, had toward evening set sail, having first taken on board a party who had driven down the road.

A small steam-tug was sent in pursuit at once, and while Mrs. Neville and Marion were weeping and praying at home the unhappy father and the officers of the law were making all haste upon the track of the villain and his prey.

Meanwhile let us follow the fortunes of Mr. Gladwin and his companion.

"I wish to show you to-day some very fine suburban property, which I have some idea of purchasing for a summer residence. I like to have one residence to which I can escape when I wish to be in solitude. The spot I have in view commands a magnificent view of the water and the opposite shore, and I have somehow taken a violent fancy to it."

Florence, in spite of the warning of her friend, was very much under the spell of her companion's smooth address, and expressed her pleasure at seeing his contemplated purchase.

During that drive Mr. Gladwin exerted to the utmost every fascination which he possessed, and Florence was obliged to confess that she had never before been so highly entertained. He had let in upon her also glimpses of his great wealth; and in the glow of her excited fancy he seemed as noble as a prince.

They reached at length the tract of ground upon which, as he said, Mr. Gladwin had some thoughts of building, and Florence found indeed that the prospect was charming. As they were about to enter the carriage, however, for their return, Mr. Gladwin, discovered to his great apparent vexation, that one of the springs of the carriage was broken.

"This vehicle," he said, "certainly is unsafe. It will never do to risk your precious life in it; especially as my horses are to-day more than usually difficult of control."

He hesitated for a moment, as if in doubt what course to pursue, and then, shading his eyes with his hand from the rays of the setting sun, he swept the surface of the water with an anxious, inquiring glance.

"I have a yacht," he said, "somewhere out there. If now I could signal her, we might go on board and sail up on this incoming tide far more quickly than we could make the journey by land. Ah! there she is," he added, and talking out a pocket glass, he proceeded to verify his suspicion. "Yes, it is the 'St. Cecilia,'" he went on. "Now if I can signal her, we shall be most fortunate."

He drew a silver whistle from his pocket, and blew a long, shrill blast upon it; then pausing for a moment, he gave another, and another. At the third whistle a white flag was flung out from the yacht. Mr. Gladwin answered it by waving his handkerchief, and presently a boat was lowered.

During all this time Florence had experienced some perturbation of mind; still the whole affair seemed so simple that she hardly knew how to account for the misgivings which troubled her. The yacht, meantime, had set sail and approached as near the shore as was practicable. Upon her deck Florence could plainly see a woman's form.

"Why," she said, "there is a lady there."

"Yes," he replied, "I was preparing a surprise for you. Having little occasion for the services of the craft just at present, I have lent it to my brother-in-law, and he with his family are on board. They are making a cruise along the coast."

Florence's last scruple was silenced by this explanation, and when the boat approached the shore she entered it very willingly, saying:

"This will be a delightful adventure. I am very fond of sailing."

When they reached the deck of the yacht, however, the lady had disappeared. Mr. Gladwin hurried her immediately to the cabin, as if jealous lest the eyes of the crew should rest upon her. Excusing himself instantly, she heard his voice soon after, upon deck, giving orders in a language which she did not even recognize, and very soon the flapping of sails and the rattling of cordage made it clear to her that the yacht was being put under full sail.

The cabin was lighted only by a skylight, but pushing through into a small state-room, the door of which stood partly open, she found there a small window, from which she could discern that in place of going homeward they were in fact making all speed in the opposite direction, and that before an outgoing tide and a favoring gale.

Then for the first time Florence realized her situation. This man could be no other than a villain, and a most bold and daring one at that, and she was utterly in his power.

For two hours she sat in an agony of suspense, expecting every moment to hear his footsteps at the outer cabin-door; but Mr. Gladwin was by far too much engaged in making sure his escape to think of minor details now. His craft was but a sailing vessel, light and swift it is true, but any sudden change of wind might put him within easy reach of any swift steam-tug that might be sent in chase.

A few miles farther on he expected to meet a swift steamer of more than dubious character. Once he could transfer his charge to the cabin of the "Water Rover," he would feel safe in his possession, and it would then be time enough to give the rein to passion.

There had been clouds about the sunset, and the night shut down dark and wild. The captain of the "St. Cecilia" paced her deck, in constant watch for the signal lights of the "Water Rover." Meantime the wind baffled him, and he was not making the progress which he desired. It was near midnight when he first descried, far astern of him, a light, and a craft which seemed to be holding swiftly on his track.

Calling his skipper, he bade him watch it with his glass, and see if in darkness he could make out anything of its character.

In a half-hour the man reported: "It is a steam-tug, sir, and she's giving chase."

Just then the watch cried out that the signal-light of the "Water Rover" was visible on the larboard quarter.

Gladwin's first impulse, when he learned that justice was already upon his track, had been to seek his victim and make her feel his power while yet he might; but the announcement that the "Water Rover" was at hand changed his purpose. Once on board his gallant craft, with a half-hour the start of his pursuers, he

could afford to bid defiance to them. Every nerve must be strained to effect that purpose. It was not now the pleasure of an hour which was at stake but his own life. Taken he vowed he never would be.

By what miraculous agency his pursuers had so soon gained tidings of him he could not dream. Indeed so impossible did it seem that he was at times half inclined to believe that there must be some mistake.

Suddenly, however, by one of those mental operations which can never be explained, he recalled the moment when he had stood in the shadowy parlor of the Nevilles, and a servant had answered his ring. He caught again the timid but penetrating look which had been turned upon him, and in an instant the truth flashed into his mind.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed, "it was she. Why did I not know it then? The game is up now if we cannot overhaul the 'Water Rover.' Once on her deck her guns shall blow that steamer out of the water. She shall never go back to bear witness against me. So much I get for breaking my oath never to let a woman escape me. It is my doom. I shall not escape it."

Years before it had been foretold to him that he would meet his fate at the hands of a woman who had escaped from his power, though he did not for an instant waver in his plans, his mind seemed paralysed, and there was no longer the force in his brain or in his arm that was wont to reside there. Yet he strove to rally his powers.

"Many a time," he said, "I have conquered against greater odds. Let me not give way until my time comes."

"The Water Rover" had answered her master's signal promptly, and was approaching the yacht with all speed. The distance between the two crafts was shortening visibly every moment now, but the swift tug was bearing down with an almost incredible velocity. The game was as well understood upon her dock as upon either of the other vessels, and all a father's fond anxiety, backed by the most liberal offers of reward, was made to stimulate the zeal of both officers and men.

As the chase drew near its close, and the chances seemed to favor the fugitives, the wind suddenly veered to a point which barred his progress effectually. A long tack must be made in the very teeth of the tug, which would necessitate a change of course upon the part of the "Water Rover," and a consequent loss of time. The pursuers saw their advantage, and hailed it with three rousing cheers, which were plainly heard on board both the opposing vessels.

At the moment the captain of the yacht saw that to reach the "Water Rover" was hopeless, and he gave orders to scuttle the yacht, while he himself went below.

Florence was in an agony of fear, but the first sight of his pallid and desperate face assured her that there was danger abroad to him as well as to her.

"My beautiful Florence," he said, "I told you that the women who esteemed the men of my line must drink of a bitter cup. You will find how true my words are this night. When we left the shore I thought ere this to have made you mine beyond recall, but that maid of yours has put the hounds upon my track sooner than I fancied, and now you must take a leap with me for your life. There is not time even to take one kiss from your sweet lips. Never mind, sweetheart. With good luck we'll board the 'Water Rover' soon, and then there'll be time enough for love."

Florence was pale as a lily. She hated and feared this man, but in spite of all she had a certain despairing admiration for his strength and his determination.

"What is it," she said, "that you wish me to do?"

"You will permit me to bind this life-preserver about your waist. It is not exactly the cestus of Venus, but it will do you a better service this night. The yacht is scuttled, is already sinking; do you not feel her going down under your feet? A boat is ready, but it may fail us. Hasten now; my hand is upon you, and nothing but death with release my hold. If we drown we go down together."

They had reached the deck, where the seamen were already throwing themselves into the water trusting to be able to swim to the "Water Rover," or to be picked up by its boats, which were being lowered.

At this instant, too, in answer to a signal from its master, the "Water Rover" opened fire upon the tug.

The dismay of Florence was indescribable. It was soon evident, however, that the position of that craft was such that the firing could do but little execution upon the tug, and all the efforts of the outlaws were therefore concentrated upon the task of rescuing the captain and crew of the yacht.

The boat in which were the captain and Florence carried no light, and for a time it seemed entirely probable that it would reach the steamer under cover of the darkness, but Fate was not to be thus cheated of her prey.

Florence, who was growing accustomed to a sense of danger, and whom the sight of allies so near inspired with a despairing courage, sent out over the sullen darkness a cry which she knew would stir one loyal heart.

"Father!" she called, and at the same moment drawing a small pistol which she had found in the state-room, and secreted about her person for use in the last dire extremity, she suddenly pointed it at her foe and fired.

Gladwin was disabled, but not killed, and

again Florence sent forth that shrill, despairing cry:

"Father!"

The pursuers heard it, and, aided by the flash of the pistol, so changed their course that in ten minutes they had reached the boat in which sat the trembling Florence beside the wounded and bleeding outlaw.

Florence was soon rescued. The officers on board the tug were clamorous to arrest her captor, but Mr. Neville interfered.

"Let him alone," he said. "I think his wound fatal. He will be picked up by his men. If we were to take him to town, it would entail explanations, which now we may happily avoid. We shall sail for France in a week's time, and before we return people will have ceased asking questions."

His counsel prevailed, and in the grey light of morning the tug anchored in the harbor, and Florence was restored to her waiting mother and to Marion.

The "Water Rover," unaware of what had transpired, and busy with the search for the captain's boat, suffered the tug to make good its escape; and as the morning dawned, having failed to discover the missing boat, and fearing, after the adventure of the night, to be found in such dangerous proximity to the coast, departed with all haste.

A little later, some fishermen found upon the shore, washed in by the flood tide, the body of a man with a bullet hole in his breast. They took the body on shore and it was buried.

Marion went to France as companion to Florence, and the friendship which had been cemented by events so wonderful remained faithful and firm through their whole lives.

DIVIDED.

Good-night, my love! I hear the snow Slow-beating on my window-pane, And phantoms of forbidden times Are here to vex my heart and brain. I think thou'rt watching with me now, The steady light of Memory's star, Though mountains rise between us; and I cannot make thee seem afar.

I hear thy whisper! And the dreams Of long ago return to me Like birds of song, on balmy wings, Across a wide and stormy sea— Like winsome winds from out the soft, Slow rustling of a wondrous wood, Counting their comforts cool across A sad Sahara's solitude.

I know not if sweet sleep has touch'd Mine eyelids over-wet with tears; I know thee near me! and a seal Is lifted from the grave of years. Again the red young roses shake Their sweets along Life's border-land, Where, timidly, I lean to take Love's snow white lilies from your hand.

Ah, well! It matters not. I knelt This morning, where our darling lies, With love and laughter hidden well Within her closely curtain'd eyes. I could not find the frozen hand, The clust'ring curls I could not see; Yet, light as leaves upon the sand, My kisses fell for thee and me.

And soft I pray'd, as now I pray: Whatever turn his path may take, Be Thou, oh, Father of us all, His shelter for the child's sweet sake!

And so, good-night! I still will watch The steady glow of Memory's star, Though mountains rise between us; and I will not let thee seem afar.

THE UNCLE'S GIFT.

"It's Uncle Jordan," said Mrs. Merrivale. Mrs. Merrivale, three days a wife, peeped over her husband's broad shoulder — she was just able to do it by standing on tiptoe — and saw in the street before the door a cab, from which a stout, bald-headed old gentleman had just alighted, and whence a young man in a jacket was slowly crawling.

This latter looked alternatively from the burden he carried to the face of the old gentleman.

The next moment Jordan was in the room. And the box had been set upon a table by the young man, who instantly retired.

"My dear nephew, how are you?" said Jordan.

"My dear niece, you look as fresh as a rose, and as curious as Eve. You wonder what is in that box. It's my wedding present to you. No one for whom I had not esteem should have received them from my hands. Now this article, the one wrapped in cotton — stand aside, my dear, and let the light fall upon it — this is a lachrymal vase."

"Oh!" cried Mrs. Merrivale, clasping her hands. "Oh, oh, oh!"

"It was found in a monumental urn, discovered in Rome. Your husband, much as I respect him, don't understand these things: you do, I see. You know what it is to possess an ancient lachrymal vase."

For a long time the two enthusiasts pondered over the lachrymal vase.

Then softly, Jordan drew forth another small article.

"In 1785, my dear," he said, "in London, in making an excavation, many Roman antiquities were discovered. This is one of those very articles. I fancy it to be an incense cup. It is a fine work of Roman British art. Look at the figures on the sides; observe the simple but elegant shape."

"Ah!"

Here uncle and niece alike fell into raptures over the incense cup.

"And now," said Jordan, "here's the gem of the collection. A fragment. Certainly an ancient marble. Grecian to a certainty. Here you are; ancient Greece, ancient Rome, and the Roman period of England. Now I knew you'd rather have them than any new bit of shiny silver, wouldn't you?"

"Oh, Uncle!" cried Mrs. Merrivale, "I can't express my gratitude," and she meant it.

Then Jordan, having lunched, departed, and Mrs. Merrivale hastened to enshrine her precious presents under protecting glasses.

A love of relics was part of her nature.

A year had passed since the day when they first stood there.

The young couple were very happy in each other, but business did not prosper as it might.

Only by the closest economy were "both ends" made to meet.

Alida turned her black silk, and made over last season's bonnet, and put down her rebellious feelings, and went to church in them, though she felt very sure that Mrs. Dolman Redingote in the pew behind her knew what artifices she had been guilty of; and sometimes when she looked on Mrs. Redingote's velvets, and remembered her glittering parlor, wished that she could see her "antiques."

Everyone is vain of something.

This was Alida's little weakness.

At last Mrs. Redingote did see them.

She called on Mrs. Merrivale with a subscription paper, and an attendant young clergyman, one Monday morning very early.

The lady began by announcing herself as one of the committee to collect contributions for a fair to be given for the benefit of a society, whose missionaries were to be sent to all the unchristianised portions of the earth.

"Of course, someone must set an example," said Mrs. Redingote. "I've put down my name for what I think right. There's room for yours here, Mrs.—a—Merrivale."

The sum written after Mrs. Redingote's name was twenty pounds. Alida gasped.

She could ill have spared even twenty farthings.

She grew grave, and slowly returned the paper.

"It's a glorious cause," said the clergyman, "one worthy of all our efforts."

"And the pleasure of furthering it," said Mrs. Dolman Redingote, "is immense."

"Indeed, I am sure there can be no greater pleasure," said Alida, sighing. "But you know what the times are, and Mr. Merrivale says we must be very economical just now."

"You know best, of course," said Mrs. Dolman Redingote, coldly.

Alida was ready to burst into tears of shame and regret.

How easy would it be for her to be generous, had she Mrs. Dolman Redingote's purse.

As it was, she must wait and consult her husband, even if she gave a contemptibly small sum.

She said a few faltering words to her guests, saw looks of disapproval on their faces, bowed them out, and returned to fling herself into her chair and burst into tears.

She had been brought up religiously, and her veneration for missionary work was great.

She suffered also from false shame in that Mrs. Redingote should know her poverty.

"And I really have nothing to give," she said, as she wiped away her tears; but, even as she spoke, her eyes fell upon the pride of her heart—the antiques on her mantel-piece.

"Yes, I have something," she said. "The price of those would be a greater gift than any yet given to the mission."

She sighed.

She glanced at the antiquities.

They were a gift; still, being a gift they were her own.

A sudden longing to do her very best and bravest seized upon her.

She would prove herself nobler than she thought herself.

We must all make sacrifices of course, and the greater they are the more meritorious of us; but could she do this, could she?

Yes, she would.

She would never look at those beautiful, wonderful things again.

She would beg some careful persons to put them in a box, and would write a little note, the nicest little note with them, and she would send them to the committee of the mission.

And when she knew they had realised a large sum, she should not regret in the least these wonderful relics of the past, over which she had dreamt so tenderly.

Strong in her determination, she called her faithful servant, Maggie, and gave her directions regarding the packing; and resolutely turning her back upon the treasures which she had renounced, wrote to Mrs. Dolman Redingote, telling her what she had sent, how they were found, and giving her the same minute and careful history of the antiques which her uncle Jordan had given her.

Feminine vanity forbade her to conceal the full value of the sacrifice she had made.

Besides, Mrs. Dolman Redingote would really be ill-used if she were not apprised of the importance of the gift, that she might dispose of it to the best advantage.

The letter was sealed, and the box packed at last; and now for sending them.

A messenger was hired, and to him the embassy was confided, with directions to see Mrs. Dolman Redingote herself, and give the box into her hands only.

The messenger departed, and returning, reported Mrs. Redingote to have been "much obliged."

"She might have written," thought Mrs. Merrivale; "but then I presume she is used to receiving valuable contributions, and very busy. I shall hear what they have brought, of course."

Then Mrs. Merrivale waited.

Days passed.

The fair was held, but no news of the antiquities reached her.

Perhaps they were too valuable to be sold easily.

Weeks rolled by, and there came no note from the secretary, no sign from Dolman Redingote; until at last, driven to desperation, Mrs. Merrivale confided her trouble to her uncle, and begged him to forgive and help her.

She had invaded his study to make the communication, and she thought that she never could forget the look he gave her when she had finished her confession.

"Gave—them—away!" he gasped. "The—antiques. Surely you must have lost your senses!"

"Oh, uncle, dear, think of the good cause!" sobbed Mrs. Merrivale. "Think, dear, souls are worth more than those antiques, precious though they are."

"Hanged if I think—there, there, I'll not say anything wrong; but I can't realize it, Alida. A woman has no business to have anything of the sort. A bonnet now, or a bow of ribbon, or a paltry pin, she appreciates, but—oh, dear, Alida! why didn't you ask me to buy them?"

"I'd have given you anything for them. I really have coveted them all the while. Had you not been a bride, I shouldn't have made you a present like that. Why, good Heaven! where are they? Perhaps I can buy them back now. If they are to be bought back, I'll buy them back. At all events, they shall acknowledge what you have done for them. Such a gift, Alida, probably not ten people in the world had it in their power to bestow."

In silence they walked to the residence of Mrs. Dolman Redingote, and waited in her parlor for her advent.

Mrs. Merrivale sat solemnly on the sofa.

Jordan paced the floor.

At last, a rustle of silk, a tap of high-heeled shoes, and enter Mrs. Dolman Redingote.

"How do you do, Mrs. Merrivale?"

"Good-morning, Mrs. Redingote. My uncle, Professor Jordan."

"Delighted, I'm sure."

"The fair—it went off well?"

"Splendidly."

"Things brought fair prices?"

"Just as I marked them. I marked everything myself."

"And may I ask—the Antiquities? My—my little gift. They sold well?"

Mrs. Redingote seemed to choke down a laugh.

"Thanks," she said. "Yes, I think very well. The little crust one shilling, the gravy boat two shillings."

"Cruet!" cried Jordan. "Gravy boat!"

"The old image was broken when it got here, and I could not find the pieces," said Mrs. Dolman Redingote; "and I think the messenger must have handled it, it was so dirty. I beg your pardon, but I just threw that aside."

"Madam," howled Jordan, "my niece sent you a Roman lachrymal vase, an ancient Grecian fragment, and a British-Roman incense cup. She gave them freely, generous little idiot; but she naturally desires to know their sale."

"I thought it was a crust and a gravy boat," said Mrs. Redingote, rather haughtily. "I presume, since they were in the family so long, you naturally thought highly of them."

"They were rare antiquities, every one of them," shouted Jordan. "Why did your clergyman leave such things to ignorant women?"

"Ignorant," cried Mrs. Redingote. "I'm sure I know handsome things when I see them—look at my parlors; and if they were antiquities, they were awfully cracked, there now."

"Uncle," said Mrs. Merrivale, "we'd better go."

And, saying these words, Mrs. Merrivale bade farewell for ever to her precious antiquities.

The youth, who invested his three shillings in antiquities, the schoolboy, reading having given him faint glimmerings of the value of the lachrymal vase and the British-Roman incense cup, had long ago "pitched his dirty jug and things out of the window," and search for them would be useless.

"And this is the nineteenth century," cried Jordan. "And such a thing could happen."

But it did happen; and that is all one can say about it.

## WEATHER REPORTS.

You bid me search the paper dear,  
For prophecies upon the weather;  
To tell you if you've rain to fear,  
Or if the questionable seer  
Will give us two fair days together.

Why should I vex myself in vain,  
Or bother you, my dear Lavinia,  
With all this tangled cloudy skein  
Of "areas of wind and rain."  
And "partial clearing in Virginia?"

You are the ruler of my skies,  
And make it clear or cloudy weather;  
Within the heaven of your eyes  
I find more sweet uncertainties,  
Then "Probabilities" can gather.

'Tis there I look for threatening rain,  
Or see the gradual, tender bright'ning  
That promises "set fair" again,  
And points due south the wav'ring vane,  
Suddenly lost in storms and lightning.

A moment—and from changeful eyes  
Love beams with such a dewy splendor,  
That in my raptured heart arise  
The wildest "probabilities,"  
Beyond the power of words to render.

Then let me cease the futile quest,  
Nor search the papers for the weather;  
Secure as Halcyon in her nest,  
Careless of wind and storm I rest,  
While we may live and love together.

## THE LOVER'S LEAP.

A CORNISH LEGEND.

"The Lover's Leap," said I, as I stood on the north shore of Cornwall, looking up at a picturesque headland a considerable number of feet above the sea's level, and hanging threateningly over its foamy surface, now there was a full tide. "A name," I added, "decidedly original, and—"

"True," emphatically interrupted the tall, handsome Cornish woman by my side, with whom I had been conversing, and who had been my informant respecting the name of the projection which I had just sketched.

"True?" I repeated, perceiving she was quite serious. "Then, do you remember the origin of the title?"

"Perfectly. I was a child at the time; but it made such a commotion, and was so often repeated, that it would almost have impressed a baby's memory. If you like, I'll tell it to you. It's become a legend here; we relate it to most travellers who care to listen."

Declaring nothing would please me better, I put down my sketch-book, and the Cornish woman and I, seated on a boulder, the sea lapping the beach a little distance off, she began as follows:—

"About thirty years ago there lived in the village yonder, where you are staying, two brothers; they were twins, yet as unlike as the sea is in calm and storm. It is supposed that children so born entertain a strong affection for each other. In that case, William and Richard Redruth were an exception. They were so utterly dissimilar in character, that it would have been impossible to have been otherwise.

"Richard was a handsome, open, generous-hearted, honest young fellow, possessed of that energy and steady application at work which is the foundation of success. William was dark haired, heavy browed, with a restless, roving spirit, a quick temper, and fierce, vindictive nature. Though also a fisher, he earned little; for he never settled steadily to it, but would start off in his boat round the coast, and never be heard of for days. When he returned it was with an empty craft, and a livid, feverish face, as of one who had met and braved perils.

"Different in everything else, unfortunately the brothers had one strong liking in common—this was their love for Margaret Semper, a fisherman's daughter, the beauty of the village, and of so gentle, kindly a disposition, that even William Redruth was an altered man in her presence. He, as well as Richard—with others for that matter, but they do not count—strove to win Margaret Semper's favor. At last she made her selection, and it was not difficult to guess it. Richard Redruth was not only the handsomest and most prosperous fisher in the village, but just the one to obtain the love of such a girl as Margaret. It was to him she gave her heart and hand.

"When the fact of their engagement became known, William Redruth and his boat abruptly disappeared. Days passed; nothing was heard of him, though one old fisherman declared that, happening to go to the beach late, for something he had left in his boat, he there saw the figure of a man very like William, creeping along in the darkness of the rocks. He had called to him, when the shadow had instantly vanished.

"The fisher so stoutly affirmed this, enlarging upon the gliding, shadowy appearance, that many believed William Redruth had put an end to his life, and that his spirit was haunting the place.

"Opinions on the point were divided, when a few mornings later the people in the village were astonished to see Richard Redruth, who

had gone fishing early, returning quickly and unexpectedly to land. Upon his running his boat on shore, he explained that he had got some distance out to sea, when he discovered it was making water rapidly. He endeavored to find where the leak was sprung, but in vain and with the greatest difficulty kept it under while he tacked and made for the village. On examining the boat with the fishers, it was found in a most unlikely place, whilst it was perfectly inaccessible to any one inside the boat.

"How had it come?"

"Richard Redruth looked very grave, but said nothing. The village, however, formed its own opinion, for there were some who remembered to have heard William Redruth exclaim, "If ever Margaret Semper should choose my brother, before their wedding day, one or other shall be beneath the sod!"

"The flaw was mended, a fortnight passed by, and nothing was seen of William Redruth, either his shadow or his ghost, to whichever the Cornish mind tended. He was beginning, indeed, to be forgotten, owing to another excitement—Margaret Semper and Richard's approaching wedding, the day of which had been fixed.

"As I have said, Richard Redruth was one of the most well-to-do fishers in the place; yet each day he worked harder and more untiringly, for he desired to be rich now for Margaret, and no wealth he thought too great for her. Daily his boat was seen to quit the shore, and return with its shining freight, as bright as the silver it was to bring the fearless fisher.

"Even on the eve of his marriage he made no difference.

"This is my last trip, Margaret," he said, as she stood by him on the beach; "to-morrow you will be my own, own little wife! It will be a large freight I shall bring to-night."

"Fondly they embraced, never dreaming how next they should meet; though, when he had gone, and the day stole onward, a vague dread came over Margaret—a dread for him. The holy joy of the coming morning so filled her heart, she feared anything occurring that should now part her and Richard.

"Noon passed, evening drew on, and with it dark, threatening clouds, presaging storm—for hours piled in the west—began as the sun set to sweep up like a funeral pall over the the heavens, while the leaden sea beneath moaned as one in trouble.

"Eagerly, with anxious heart, Margaret scanned the broad expanse in search of Richard's boat. In vain; the white specks which so frequently deceived her were but the crests of the as yet small, though angry waves. "Why did he go to-day?" she sighed—"why on this, the eve of our marriage? The hour has long passed that he named for his return." Then she remembered the circumstance of that mysterious leak, and her anxiety grew in intensity.

"At last, throwing a shawl around her, she stole down unperceived to the shore. It seemed to bring her nearer her lover, as already the darkening evening was shutting the sea from sight at the cottage.

"Apparently, the beach was deserted by all save herself, and with restless spirit she walked along the edge of the waters, her gaze fixed seaward, her ears keenly sensitive to the gradually rising wind, and other sounds that declared a tempest at hand.

"Ignorant of the shadow which had been dogging her steps for some while, and was yet noiselessly following, she climbed the rock.

"Darker, darker grew the evening. The billows broke with a louder sound; the wind wildly tossed her loosened hair and shawl. Where was Richard?"

"Anxiously she gazed out on the storm crest, endeavoring to pierce the gloom. She pressed her hand over her eyes, then turning, prepared to look again, when, with a cry of startled alarm, she sprang back; for, standing by her side, his dark features more threatening even than the night, was William Redruth.

"You fear me, Margaret, and with good cause," he said, coldly. "It is long I have been waiting such an opportunity. Each step you have taken I have followed, until you reached this rock. Margaret Semper," he added, turning towards her, "if you ever leave it alive, it must be after you have sworn to become my wife!"

"Trembling in every limb, but by an effort assuming a calm, undaunted bearing, the young girl answered, "Are you mad, William Redruth? To-morrow is my wedding-day and Richard's. Do you imagine even the fear of death could make me false to him?"

"Then here you perish!—you never shall be his—never!"

"This is folly, William, and unlike you. What harm have you ever received at my hands that you should treat me thus?"

"The greatest—your rejection of me for him."

"A woman can no more control her heart than can a man," she answered. "I loved Richard; I would, if you would let me, love you—as a brother."

"Brother!" he interrupted fiercely; "brother!—yes, I will accept that affection, Margaret Semper, but not from you as Richard Redruth's wife; never—never—never!"

"The wild energy of his manner augmented her alarm, and passing him, she strove to quit the rock, but, catching her wrist, he held her with a grasp of iron.

"No!" he said; "I have sworn it!"

"She shrieked aloud.

"Your cries are useless," he remarked; "the winds and the waves are my allies. Scream as you may, you cannot be heard!"

"Kneeling at his feet, yet in his clasp, she prayed, implored, upbraided, and entreated

William Redruth had but one answer—"Be mine, and you are safe; if not, you die!"

"Oh, William, William!" she wept; "once you said you loved me—can you, then, treat me thus?"

"It is because I love you—because I will never see you his!" he rejoined, hoarsely. "Look, Margaret, and reflect speedily, for the base of this rock is already surrounded!"

"Looking around, she saw with horror his words were true; the waves, with their dancing, mocking crests, were on each side of her.

"Mercy, mercy!" she shrieked.

"For the last time I ask you, Margaret—will you renounce Richard, and be mine?"

"No!" she answered, drooping, exhausted, despairing at his feet. "Rather the cruel death with which you threaten me."

"It is no vain threat, Margaret; the death shall indeed be yours. A few moments, and you will see."

"There was a pause of some seconds, then, before the wretched girl, half insensible from terror, divined his intent, seizing both her hands, he lashed the wrists securely together. Afterwards, releasing her, he said, 'Farewell, Margaret; I failed with Richard, but I cannot miss now. He must wait long for his bride to-morrow.'

"William—William Redruth!" she cried; "do not leave me."

"But already he had sprung into the waters, and she was left on the rock alone.

"It was a fearful time that followed, almost beyond description—certainly, enough to banish reason. Margaret shrieked and prayed. The uproar of the elements sent her words back upon herself, appearing to mock her agony. These frantic moments were interspersed by brief intervals of calm, wherein the past swept before her like a panorama.

"All the while the moments slipped by, and the waves rose higher and higher; at last, one dashed over the rock, and did not retreat. It left her feet in water; the rock was beginning to be covered.

"Wildly, despairingly, she flung out her arms, and prayed for succour—for mercy. Then, kneeling, helplessly wept.

"It was hard to die thus; made harder by the knowledge that the morrow was to have been her wedding-day.

"Now the waves began to break over her, threatening to hurl her from the rock. Madly, she strove to cling to it, but her hands, so tied, rendered her almost powerless. In a few moments all must be over.

"That idea gave her back strength, and, with a last effort, she shrieked aloud in her agony, till the rocks rang with her voice.

"Richard, Richard, aid me! Am I to die thus, never again to see you? Richard, Richard!"

"What was that?"

"She sprang to her feet, every pulse beating with hope, with joy. It was a voice in reply; it was Richard's voice, uttering her name.

"Once more it sounded. It came from above; and raising her face, she beheld on the headland the tall, strong figure of her lover outlined against the dark, leaden sky.

"Her heart sank. Before he could get round to the shore for his boat, all would be over.

"Oh, Richard!—dear Richard!" she called; "be comforted. Seeing you, I can die happy! But help is too late! Farewell—farewell!"

"The figure had gone. Like an arrow it had darted from the top of the headland, and plunged into the sea beneath. Margaret uttered a scream of alarm, then hoped—recollecting Richard Redruth was one of the best swimmers in Cornwall. Love now would make him strong.

"With difficulty keeping her position, each second covered by the waves, she waited. The beating of her heart was as the second-hand on the dial of eternity.

"Ah!—what was that which struck against her so heavily? It was a body—that of William Redruth!"

"With a scream of remorse, Margaret Semper fainted.

"Struggling through the surf, Richard sprang to her relief, guided by that last cry. His arms were already about her, as consciousness departed, and with difficulty he bore her safely to the shore.

"The wedding did not take place the next day, for Margaret Semper was prostrated by a severe nervous fever. But it did take place a few weeks later, and was one of the happiest and gayest in all Cornwall, despite the evil plots of William Redruth, as to whose fate there was no longer any mystery. In springing from the rock, his head must have struck violently against some hidden boulder; for the next morning, when the tide went down, he was found drowned, with a wound on his temple, at the very foot of the Lover's Leap."

#### THE "LADIES' MAN."

By his air and gait, the ultra-fashionable style of his clothing, the killing curl of his moustache, the "look and die" expression of his simpering face, his stream of small talk, and sundry other signs and tokens of a plethora of vanity and a lack of soul and brain, you may distinguish at a glance the individual who plumes himself off upon being a "ladies' man." His belief in his own irresistibility is written all over him. And to say the truth, your ladies' men have some grounds for their self-conceit. It is indubitable that girls do some times fall in love, or what they suppose to be love, with

fellows who look as if they had walked out of tailor's fashion-plates—creatures that by the aid of the various artists who contribute to the "make up" of human popinjays have been converted into superb samples of what art can effect in the way of giving men an unmanly appearance. The woman who marries one of these flutterers is to be pitied; for if she has any glimmerings of common sense, and a heart under her bodice, she will soon discover that her dainty husband has no more of a man's spirit in him than an automatic figure on a Savoyard's hand-organ. But a woman worth a true man's love is never caught by such a specimen of ornamental hollow-ware. A sensible woman is, in fact, a terror to "ladies' men," for they are aware that her penetrating eye looks through them, and sounds the depths of their emptiness. She knows the man indeed from the trumpety counterfeits, and has no touch of the mackerel propensity to jump at a flashy bait, in her wholesome composition. The lady's man shall be permitted to live and die a bachelor. His vocation is to dangle after the sex, to talk soft nonsense, to carry shawls and fans, to astonish boarding-school misses, and to kindle love flames as evanescent and harmless as the fizz of a squib. If, however, he must needs become a Benedick, let him be yoked with some vain and silly flirt, his natural counterpart. So shall the law of fitness not be outraged.

#### THE LITTLE BIRD.

A little bird with feathers brown  
Sat singing on a tree;  
The song was very soft and low,  
But sweet as it could be.

And all the people passing by,  
Looked up to see the bird,  
That made the sweetest melody  
That they had ever heard.

But all the bright eyes looked in vain,  
For birdie was so small,  
And with a modest, dark-brown coat,  
He made no show at all.

"Why, papa," little Gracie said,  
"Where can this birdie be?  
If I could sing a song like that  
I'd sit where folks could see."

"I hope my little girl will learn  
A lesson from that bird,  
And try to do what good she can,  
Not to be seen or heard.

"This little bird is content to sit  
Unnoticed by the way,  
And sweetly sing his Maker's praise  
From dawn to close of day.

"So live, my child, all through your life,  
That, be it short or long,  
Though others may forget your looks,  
They'll not forget your song."

#### MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

**A NICE QUESTION.**—On a time, a question arose in the University of Cambridge, between two doctors of law and the doctors of medicine, as to which ought to take precedence of the other on public occasions. It was referred to the Chancellor, who facetiously inquired whether the thief or the hangman preceded at an execution; and, being told that the thief usually took the lead on such occasions,—“Well, then,” he replied, “let the doctors in law have the precedence, and the doctors in medicine be next in rank.” This humorous observation set the point in dispute at rest.

**MAKING A NICE POINT.**—A committee of eight gentlemen had appointed to meet at twelve o'clock. Seven of them were punctual; but the eighth came bustling in with apologies for being a quarter of an hour behind the time. “The time,” said he, “passed away without my being aware of it. I had no idea of its being so late.” A Quaker present, “Friend, I am not sure that we should admit the apology. It were a matter of regret that thou shouldst have wasted thine own quarter of an hour; but there are seven beside thyself, whose time thou hast also consumed, amounting in the whole to two hours, and one-eighth of it only was thine own property.”

**HOW NAMES CHANGE.**—A Scotchman named Feyerston settled among some Germans in the western part of the State of New York. They translated his name by the sound into the German Feurstein. On his return to an English neighbourhood, his new acquaintances discovered Feurstein in German means Flint in English. They retranslated his name, and the family name became Flint. One of the grandsons settled on the Arcadian coast of the Mississippi, and with the common fate of his family, his name of Flint became translated by the French into Pierre-à-Fusil. His son went north and the last transformation was a re-translation, and Pierre-à-Fusil, his son, became Peter Gun.

**AN INCIDENT OF THE INDIAN MUTINY.**—The 53rd Queens, principally composed of Irishmen, were a fine looking set of fellows, and equally good hands at fighting. This discipline, however, was not by any means perfect, and it was difficult to keep them well in hand. They had been lying under the bank of a road which afforded them but an inadequate protection at the action on the Kalla Muddee, and had, in consequence, lost a good number of men from the fire of the enemy in the toll-house, and all of a sudden, without a word from any of their officers, they rushed forward, and, utterly heedless of all efforts to stop them, made their way into the toll-house, and in a few instants cleared out the enemy. The Commander-in-Chief was terribly annoyed, and rode up to the regiment and pitched into it well; but these wild Irishmen were incorrigible, and whenever he began to speak a lot of them exclaimed, as loud as they could, “Three cheers for the Commander-in-Chief, boys!” until at last he himself was obliged to go away laughing.—*Sir Hope Grant's "Incidents of the Sepoy War."*

**TOUCHY HUSBANDS.**—Women have their faults, it is true, and very provoking ones they sometimes are; but if we would all learn—men and women—that with certain virtues which we all admire are always coupled certain disagreeables, we might make up our minds more easily to accept the bitter with the sweet. For instance, every husband, we believe, delights in a cleanly, well-ordered house, free from dust, spots, and unseemly stains. The painstaking machinery necessary to keep it so he never wishes to see, or seeing, too often forgets to praise. If, then, his wife, true to her feminine instincts towards cleanliness, gently reminds him, when he comes home, that he has forgotten to use the doormat before entering the sitting room on a stormy day, let him reflect, before giving her a lordly, impatient, ungracious “Pshaw!” how the reverse of the picture would suit him—viz., a slovenly, “easy” woman, whose apartments, are a constant mortification to him in the presence of visitors. It is a poor return, when a wife has made everything fresh and bright, to be unwilling to take a little pains to keep it so, or to be properly reminded if forgetful on these points upon which many husbands are unreasonably touchy, even while secretly admiring the pleasant results of the vigilance of the good house mother.

**SHEEP DOGS OF CALIFORNIA.**—The Californian shepherds have a most ingenious system for teaching their dogs to guard the countless flocks of sheep of Southern California. One may wander for miles, and see thousands of sheep, but not a man to watch them, but around each flock are half-a-dozen dogs. These have the entire care of the sheep, drive them out to the pasture in the morning, keep them from straying during the day, and bring them home at night. These animals, says *Forney's Gazette*, have inherited a talent for keeping sheep, and this talent is cultivated in this way. When a lamb is born, if the shepherds have a pup which they want to train, the lamb is taken from its mother, she not being allowed to see her offspring, and the puppy is put in its place, and the sheep suckles it. When the puppy grows old enough to eat meat, it is fed in the morning, and sent out with the sheep. It stays with them because it is accustomed to be with its foster-mother, but it cannot feed with them, and, as they get full, the dog gets hungry. At length, impatient to return, when it hopes to get its meat, the dog begins to tease and worry the mother, and finally starts her towards home, the others follow, and thus the whole flock is brought in. If they are brought home too early, or the dog comes without them, he gets punished in some way; and thus, by taking advantage of their instincts and appetite, these dogs are trained to a great state of perfection, and become invaluable to the owners of large flocks.

**WILL OF A MISER.**—A man named Dennis Tolam, who died at Cork, possessed of considerable wealth, in the year 1769, left a singular will, containing the following testamentary dispositions:

"I leave to my sister-in-law four old stockings, which will be found under my mattress, to the right.

"Item.—To my nephew, Michael Tarles, two oddsocks and a green night-cap.

"Item.—To Lieutenant John Stein a blue stocking, with a red cloak.

"Item.—To my cousin, Barbara Dolan, my old boot with red flannel pocke.

"Item.—To Hannah, my housekeeper, my broken water-jug."

After the death of the testator, the legatees, having been convened by the family lawyer to be present at the time which had been appointed for opening the will, each, as he or she was named shrugged their shoulders, and otherwise expressed a contemptuous disappointment, while parties uninterested in the succession could not refrain from laughing at these ridiculous, not to say insulting, legacies. All were leaving the room, after signifying their intention of renouncing their bequests, when the last named, Hannah, having testified her indignation by kicking away the broken pottle, a number of coins fell out of it: the other individuals, astonished at the unexpected incident, began to think better of their determination, and requested permission to examine the articles devised to them. It is needless to say that, on proceeding to the search, the stockings, socks, pocket, etc., soon betrayed, by the weight, the value of their contents, and the board of the testator, thus fairly distributed, left on the minds of the legatees a very different impression of his worth.

#### SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

**OYSTERS.**—Oysters are in perfection when from five to seven years old. An oysterman can tell the age of a bivalve by counting the successive layers or plates overlapping each other, each of which is termed a shoot, and indicates a year's growth. Judging from the size and thickness which some shells attain, an oyster may be capable of arriving at the respectable age of three-score, and not be the Methuselah of his tribe then.

**THE EFFECT OF SMOKING.**—“Mary,” said an old Cumberland father to his daughter, when she once asked him to buy her a new dress, “why dost thou always tease me about such thing when I am quietly smoking my pipe?”—“Because ye are always best tempered then, feyther,” was the reply.—“I believe, lass, thou’rt reet,” said the farmer; “for when I was a lad, I remember my poor feyther was the same; after he had smoked a pipe or twee, he had g’ven his head away if it had been loose!”

**STRANGE STATISTICS.**—It has been ascertained that out of every sixty-three marriages only three are without children, and that fifty women die to every fifty-four men. Married women live longer than those who spend their lives in single blessedness. The average number of children to each marriage in England is four. The number of married women is only one out of every three, and of man one out of every five. There are three widows to every one widower, but seven widows remarry to every four widowers who do so. Twins occur ones in every sixty-five births. One person out of every 3126 reaches the age of 100 years, and one-half of the world die before the age of seventeen.

**DISTINGUISHING MARKS OF OCEAN STEAMERS.**—Of the New York and Liverpool lines, there are the National line, with the smoke-stacks painted white, with a black band at the top; the Cunard line, red, with a black band at top; White Star line, yellow, with black top; Inman line, black, with white ribbon near top; Gulon line, black, with red ribbon near the top. The French line, New-York to Brest and Havre, has its smoke-stacks red, with a black band at the top; the Hamburg line, New York to Hamburg, all black; North German Lloyd's line, New York to Bremen, all black; Anchor line, New York to Glasgow, all black; Cardiff line, New York to Cardiff, black, with two white stripes around the top; Stettin American line, New York to Stettin, white, with narrow black top; Bristol line, New York to Bristol, black, with red band in centre, and blue and white ball in band; Eagle line, New York to Hamburg, black top, white centre, lower part red.

**HOUSEHOLD HINTS.**—The following suggestions are, of course, intended for the masculine heads of families; but the many unfortunate women who find that on their shoulders rest three-fourths of the cares of the household, can, in case of need, easily put them into use, as time rather than strength is required. Never allow a door to creak for want of oil, or to shut so hard as to require slamming to make it latch. For this purpose pass round once a week at some regular time, say Saturday evening or Monday morning, with a drop of oil on a feather, or on the tip of the finger, and give every rubbing part, latch, hinge, &c., a touch. Scissors, which are inclined to work hard, can also be greatly improved in this way. Ventilation would be more easily accomplished and more certainly performed, and rooms kept with purer and healthier air, if windows were made to slide easily. If not hung by pulleys and weights, let a carpenter add good freely-working catches. Never permit a broken pane in a house. Cellars should be kept constantly clean—as much so as your parlor. It is the easiest thing in the world, if you attend to it daily; and only becomes a heavy task when you allow a month's accumulations to remain undisturbed. It is hardly necessary to add that fevers have been contracted by breathing the miasma created in an ill-kept cellar.

**THE BENEFIT OF PLAY.**—A boy who shrinks from the hardy sports of childhood stands a poor chance of success in life. The playground may be called a mimic world, in which the strongest wins; the weakest must inevitably go to the wall. Thus sports may be made in many ways a valuable training. They may teach a boy moderation, self-command, and self-denial, as well as courage and love of active exertion. And yet, sports may be carried too far; study must not be neglected. Boys must be taught that the principal use of games is as a relaxation in the interest of after-study; that both study and sport are of value only for the effect they have on the mind and character, and for the degree in which they fit a man for after-life, and that in all this study is of an importance infinitely greater than sport. The remedy against the present state of things can only be gradual. A sounder public opinion will soon show itself in altered tones among both boys and masters. Boys as a body will never love books; but they will always honor those distinctions which they see are honored by their parents and by the world. Sports may be trusted to flourish without much encouragement; but studies need all the fostering care which can be employed, and even then illness and stupidity will often be too strong for all the efforts of the schoolmaster. It is not much to ask that he at least should be faithful to his high trust, and that in any controversy of studies and sports, he should stand out as the uncompromising holder of studies.

HUMOROUS SCRAPS.

SYMPATHY is like blind man's buff, because it shows a fellow-feeling for a fellow-creature. ON week days you buy your music by the sheet; on Sunday you can have it by the choir.

LOVE is a thing of four letters, yet sometimes, in a breach of promise case, hundreds are produced.

A YOUNG lady, who has been studying finance, wants to know if the day rate of gold affects the nitrate of silver.

YOUNG lady (at the post-office).—“If I don't get a letter by this mail, I want to know what he was doing Sunday, that's all.

“HUSBAND,” said the wife of a young clergyman, “read me one of your sermons; I feel dreadfully wakeful to-night, and wish to sleep.”

A TEACHER, who in a fit of vexation, called her pupils a set of young adders, on being reproved for her severe language, explained that she only referred to those who were just beginning their arithmetic.

“I ALWAYS have two trustworthy beaux at hand,” said a good-natured spinster to her niece. “Why, where are they now, aunty?” asked the niece. “Here; my elbows.” And she placed her arms akimbo.

A MAN left a bony steed on Main street last Saturday, and, coming back a short time afterwards, discovered that a funny youth had placed a card against the fleshless ribs bearing the notice, “Oats wanted—Inquire within.”

THE most confiding woman lives in Providence. She went to an auction, and, knowing the prevalence of thieves at such places, asked a nice-looking man to take care of her pocket-book, containing eighty-five dollars. He is still taking care of it.

“I SHOULD be glad to accommodate you,” said an Iowa damsel, to whom a young Bostonian had proposed, “but I'm partially engaged already. There's ma, though, who's only thirty-five, and wishes to marry again, and I think she is just now without an engagement.” The young man took the first train east.

THE Philadelphia Item suggests that if they would give whiskey away, nobody would care to drink it. This seems highly probable, and ought to be tried. Doubtless it is the experience of most of us that no man is willing to drink, even by invitation, unless he pays for it.

“A MAN who was buried at Denver eighty-one years ago, was exhumed the other day and found to be petrified. His grandchildren have made arrangements to exhibit the stone at ten cents admission.” This is a nice story to send circulating through the newspapers. Where was Denver eighty-one years ago?

A TOMBSTONE in the Yazoo, Miss., cemetery bears the following inscription:

“Here lies interred Priscilla Bird, Who sang on earth 'till sixty-two; Now up on high, above the sky, No doubt she sings like sixty, too.”

WHAT a horrible idea is the following, considering the present sensible temperance movement:—

“If ever I marry a wife, I'll marry a landlord's daughter; And then I can sit at the bar, And drink old Bourbon and water.”

A MODEST young husband sent the following message over the wires to friends in this city the other day: “See ninth chapter of Isaiah, sixth verse.” The dusty old Bible was hauled down in an instant, and the above chapter and verse were hunted out and found to explain all. The verse reads, “For unto us a child is born—unto us a son is given.”

A YOUNG Transatlantic lady recently issued invitations for a party, and, as usual, inscribed thereon the invariable “R.S.V.P.” One young man did not come, but sent his card with “D. S.C.C.” Meeting him in the street shortly afterwards, the young lady asked him what the mysterious four letters meant. “What did yours signify?” rejoined the young man. “They were French for ‘Answer, if you please.’” “Oh, then mine was English for, ‘Darned sorry can't come.’”

“WHEN at Massachusetts,” writes a correspondent of a contemporary, “I heard a characteristic story of a simple-minded deacon, one of the Pilgrim Fathers. The worthy man was in the habit of drawing his salary in silver every Saturday afternoon, and dispensing it among the poor people on the way home from the treasury—half a dollar to one, a quarter to another, and so on, until he had not much to bring back to his wife. She, mindful of the old saying that charity begins at home, and not at all relishing being mulcted of her dues, instructed the treasurer, when giving her husband his salary, to tie it up in a handkerchief with so many and such tight knots that he could not dispense it in dribbles as heretofore. On arriving at the first house, he fumbled for a long time with the handkerchief, but it resisted his endeavors. ‘Dear friend,’ said he to the occupant, ‘it is evident to me that Providence intended the whole of it for thee;’ and, so saying, he gave the handkerchief to her, and went home to his wife empty-handed.”

OUR PUZZLER.

86. DOUBLE ACROSTIC. Dame Nature with our varied forms Bedecks herself with care: With her we ever fill the place Of jewels rich and rare.

- 1. In every army it is seen— By ensigns there 'tis borne.
2. A wreath of this the victor gets, His forehead to adorn.
3. If up this mountain you would climb, To Turkey you must go.
4. This is a tree that may be found Where rippling streams do flow.
5. The title of a magistrate This one will then describe.
6. Upon the banks of this we try To snare the finny tribe.
7. This is an ill, that you must own In every town does rage; It comes alike to rich and poor, To youth, and to old age.

87. ARITHMETICAL QUESTION. A sum of money is to be divided in the proportion of 3, 4, and 5, so, that 1/3 of the first, 1/4 of the second, £51 0s. 3d., will make it 1/2 of the whole. Find the sum and share of each.

88. ENIGMA.

I am a being, but am never seen, And only by my actions am I known; I lay the tall tree on the village-green, And fifty towers to earth by me are thrown; I swell the organ's pitch and powerful tone; I shake the banner in the face of foes; I roar like thunder, or like grief I moan; I bear o'er mountain tops the winter snows; In man himself I dwell, I'm hot or cold; I bring destruction on my pestle wings; Can enter in the strongest aëtic hold; And carry water to the purest springs; I'm like all men in speaking—harsh or kind; And, like a treasure, am in bags confined.

89. DOUBLE ARITHMOREM.

50A and paaj (a town of Mexico) 1001 and ear, ant (a groupe of African isles) 1000 and oft torn (a town of France) 1050 and see leer (an English town) 5 and Egan's art (a town in Christiansand) 55 and poor sat (a town in Caucasus) 1 and spear (a town of Mexico) 150U and rat hen (a town of Switzerland) 152 try, hop on (a city of Hindostan).

The initials and finals, down, name two British portrait painters.

90. HIDDEN PROVERB.

Each line contains a word, Which, in due order placed, You'll see, as I declare, A proverb can be traced. Ah, yes, 'tis well to see a noble mind Firm in an object—to assist mankind In ev'ry good or ill that man befalls! Toss'd on the sea of life, in wind and squalls, That soon may drive him to a hostile spot, Where cold neglect and blows may be his lot; No friend at hand—how hard must be his fate Should not one heart, at least, be free from hate; If this gives any aid to him in need, It does a good and truly noble deed.

91. SQUARE WORDS.

- 1. A fruit; a tree; a seat; a fruit.
2. A fruit; competent; a fruit; a sly look.
3. A plant; a man's name; a plant; animals.
4. A fruit; tolice; to incite; proper.

92. CHARADE.

My first is a bird, My second a plant; And summer fruit For total I want.

ANSWERS.

- 37. ENIGMA.—A dream.
38. SQUARE WORDS.— 1. STARE OLIVE ETNA TONER LINER TAIL ANKLE INDIA NILE RELIC VEILS ALEN ERECT ERASE
39. CHARADE.—Jack, door—Jackdaw.
40. RIDDLE.—Boots.
41. SQUARE WORDS.— 1. ENARA ILMEN GARDIA SAIMA NOVEL LEAVE ALBERT ARMOR AVOID MADAM REGAL IMBUE REINE EVADE DRAMA MOURN ALDEA NEMEA ATLAS ARENA
42. ENIGMA.—A Lock—of hair; lock of a door or a chest; broken lock.
43. LITERAL CHARADE.—E, N, G, L, A, N, D.
44. CHARADE.—Steamboat.
45. DOUBLE ACROSTIC.—Sikokf, Kinsin, thus; Smolensk, IllimanI, Kianku, OxuS, King-teshIn, FouchoU.
46. REBUS.—Leopard, thus: Lupine, Edward, Orange, Pike, Arm, Robin, Duke.
47. CONUNDRUMS.—1. Because it makes one man many; 2. Because it turns mornng into mourning; 3. Because it's half an ox; 4. Because it turns looks into clocks; 5. Because it is one of two.

CAISSA'S CASKET.

SATURDAY, April 11th, 1874.

All communications relating to Chess must be addressed "CHECKMATE."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ALPHA, WHITBY.—We have not heard from you lately. How's Chess in your vicinity?

SOLUTION TO PROBLEM No. 49.

- White. 1. K to B 6th 2. Mate acc Black. 1. Any

Solved by L. S., Quebec, who pronounces this a "very pretty problem."

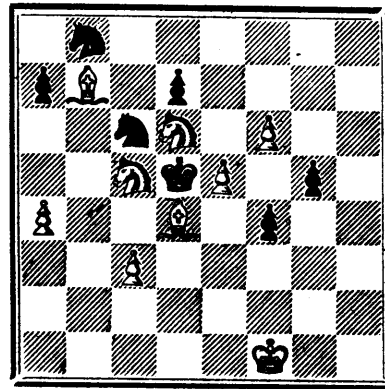
SOLUTION TO PROBLEM No. 50.

- White. 1. Q takes Kt P 2. R to K 5th 3. R to K B 4th, ch Black. 1. P takes Q 2. P to Kt 5th 3. B takes R mate

PROBLEM No. 57.

By ROBT. BRAUNE.

BLACK.



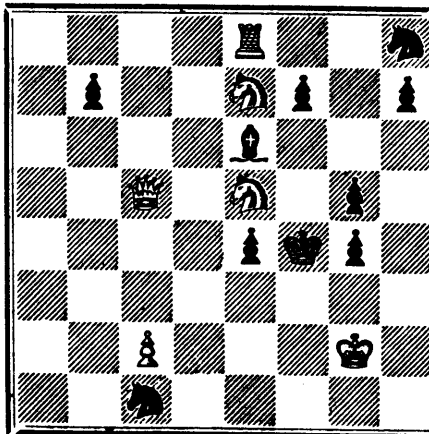
WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

PROBLEM No. 58.

By VICTOR GORGAS.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

GAME NO. 25.

The following game was contested some years ago by M. Kolisch against the Chevalier St. Bon and M. Centurini in consultation. The notes are by Messrs. Whisker and Zukertort and we are indebted for them to the Westminster Papers:

EVANS' GAMBIT.

- White. Kolisch. 1 P to K 4th 2 Kt to K B 3rd 3 B to Q B 4th 4 P to Q Kt 4th 5 P to Q B 3rd 6 P to Q 4th 7 Castles 8 P to K 5th (a) 9 B to Q Kt 5th 10 Kt takes Q P 11 Kt to Q Kt 3rd 12 Q Kt takes Kt 13 B to Q B 3rd 14 B takes Kt 15 R to Q B 1st 16 Q to K Kt 4th 17 Q to K R 4th 18 K R to Q 1st 19 P to K 6th (e) 20 Kt takes Q P 21 Q takes B 22 Q to Q R 7th (f) 23 R to Q Kt 1st 24 Q takes R P, ch 25 Q to Kt 6th, ch Black. Allies. 1 P to K 4th 2 Kt to Q B 3rd 3 B to Q B 4th 4 B takes Kt P 5 B to R 4th 6 P takes P 7 Kt to K B 3rd 8 P to Q 4th 9 Kt to K 5th 10 B to Q 2nd 11 Kt takes Q B P 12 B takes Kt 13 P to Q B 3rd (b) 14 B takes B 15 P to Q 5th 16 Q to Q 2nd (c) 17 P to Q B 3rd (d) 18 B to Q 4th 19 Q takes P 20 B takes Kt 21 Castles Q R 22 P to Q B 3rd 23 P to Q Kt 4th (g) 24 K to Kt 1st 25 K to R 1st

- 26 B to Q B 5th 27 R to Q 3rd 28 Q to R 6th, ch 29 R to K 3rd (h) 30 Q R to K 1st 31 B to Q Kt 6th 32 R to Q R 3rd 33 R to Q B 1st (k) 34 R to Q 3rd (l) 35 R takes B (m) 36 Q to Q R 8th, ch 37 R takes P, ch 38 Q takes Q, mate. 26 R to Q 2nd 27 R to Q Kt 2nd 28 K to Kt 1st 29 B to K 5th 30 Q to Q 4th 31 B to R B 4th (i) 32 K to Q B 1st 33 B to Q 2nd 34 Q to K 3rd 35 Q takes R 36 R to Q Kt 1st 37 Q takes R

(a) Q B to Q R 3rd is a very strong move at this point; better it is considered than the one in the text. (b) Taking the Rook would have exposed them to a very formidable attack. To take one variation, suppose—

- 13 B takes R 14 P to Q R 3rd 14 Q takes B 15 P to K 6th

and gets a great advantage, play as Black may. If instead of 14 P to Q R 3rd the second player brings out his Q to K Kt 4th she is of course driven away by P to K B 4th; and if he move B to K 3rd, Q Kt to Q 4th is a sufficient answer. (c) Having two pawns ahead, the Allies are willing to give up one. But White is too wary to take the K Kt P. Were he to do so Black would Castle on Queen's side and soon commence a strong attack by means of the open K R file. (d) The Allies again offer a pawn in order to enable themselves to Castle. (e) The Allies never recover from the effect of this fine move. The Queen is, in a manner, compelled to take. (f) The Allies have Castled at last, but only in order to encounter a fresh series of troubles. (g) This unpromising coup is really the only resource left the Allies. If they defend the Q Kt P with either Q or R, White checks at Q R 8th, and wins immediately. All this latter part of the game is admirably played by Mr. Kolisch. (h) R to Q R 3rd would not have been of much avail, as the Allies could have moved their K to B 2nd. (i) Black extricate their Bishop; but the relief is but very temporary. (j) White now threatens Q to Q R 8th, ch., and on the Rook interposing, to take Q B P with Rook, checking and winning. The Allies accordingly defend their Q B P. (k) Another fine move. If the Rook be taken White wins at once by checking with the Queen, followed by R takes P, ch. (l) Notwithstanding the precaution, this long threatened manoeuvre comes off at last.

CAISSAN CHIPS.

Though not in the order at first intended we resume the publication of games. A Correspondence tourney under the auspices of the Chess Editor of the Globe is progressing. Some of the games being worthy we shall select a few for reproduction in the Favorite. Of twenty games played between the clubs of Cobourg and Port Hope, the players representing the former place succeeded in winning eleven. The match from the beginning was a very pleasant one and was conducted in a very friendly spirit, as all such matches ought to be. M. T. A. Thompson contributes a quadruple problem in nine moves to the March No. of the Chess Review, but it is said, by the critics, to be "leaky." A quadruple prob., in six moves, the composition of M. W. A. Shinkman, a few of whose fine productions have appeared in the Favorite, graces the title page of the Chess Journal for March. By the way, friend Brownson has greatly improved the appearance of the Journal lately. There is much that is deeply interesting to Chess readers in the current number of the Westminster Papers from which the capital partie we give this week is taken. The new English magazine bearing the title of the City of London Chess Magazine, and from which our problems this week are taken, promises to lead the chess world. Its form is convenient, its typography unsurpassed, its contents superior, we may say unequalled. Under the editorship of M. W. N. Potter, with the co-operation of such eminent chess magistrates as Bird, Blackburne, Horwitz, Lowenthal, Steinitz, Whisker and Zukertort, we could not otherwise than expect a magazine possessing all the excellent qualities, without any blemish, that a chess magazine ought to have. The first and second numbers quite meet our anticipations. Printed and published by W. W. Morgan, 67 Barbican, E. C., London, England. Price, postpaid, 7s. 6d. per annum. It may be obtained also through the booksellers. Numerous flaws having been discovered in the book of Chess Problems recently issued by Messrs. Pierce, we understand they purpose publishing a sheet of errata shortly.

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MISTAKEN IDENTITY.

Man on Fifty Mare. "GENTLY, OLD LADY! GENTLY! NO HURRY!"  
Stout Lady crossing the Ride. "WHO ARE YOU, CALLING ME 'OLD LADY,' I SHOULD LIKE TO KNOW! I DON'T INTEND TO HURRY, I CAN TELL YOU!"



CIRCUMFERENCE.

Tailor (measuring Customer of "Ortonian" girth). "WOULD YOU HOLD THE END, SIR, WHILE I GO ROUND!"



EXTREMES THAT MEET.

AT MRS. LYONS CHACRE'S "SMALL AND EARLY."

Fair Enthusiast. "LOOK! LOOK! THERE STANDS MISS GANDER BELLWETHER, THE FAMOUS CHAMPION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS, THE FUTURE FOUNDER OF A NEW PHELLOPEA! ISN'T IT A PRETTY SIGHT TO SEE THE RISING YOUNG GENIUSES OF THE DAY ALL FLOCKING TO HER SIDE, AND FRANKING ON HER LINE, AND FRANKING ON THE SAD AND EARNEST UTTERANCES WRUNG FROM HER INDIGNANT HEART BY THE WRONGS OF HER WITCHED SEX! O, ISN'T SHE DIVINE, CAPTAIN DANDELION!"  
Captain Dandelion (of the 17th Walkers). "HAW! 'FAIR OF TASTE, YOU KNOW! WATHER FWEFFER SHE WOMEN MYSELF—WATHER FWEFFER THE WITCHED SEX WITH ALL ITS WONGS—HAW!"  
Mr. Millefleur (of the "En Bouquet" Club). "HAW! WATHER A GURBY, SKWURRY LOT, THE WISING YOUNG GENIUSES! HAW—AW—AW!"



AN OLD OFFENDER.

Country Gentleman (eying his Gardener suspiciously). "DEAR, DEAR MR. JEFFRIES, THIS IS TOO BAD! AFTER WHAT I SAID TO YOU YESTERDAY, I DIDN'T THINK TO FIND YOU—"  
Gardener. "YOU CAN'T SHAY—(sic)—I WARR DRUNK YEST'DAY, SE—!"  
Country Gentleman (sternly). "ARE YOU SORRY THIS MORNING, SIR?"  
Gardener. "I'M—SHEEPLY SORRY, SIR!!"



THE TALKERS IN THE STALLS, No. 1.

Man with Mind. WHY ON EARTH DO THESE VENTURED PEOPLE KEEP CLAPPING THEIR HANDS!  
Woman with Mind. PERHAPS IT'S TO KEEP THEMSELVES WARM.



THE TALKERS IN THE STALLS, No. 2.

First Golden Youth. WELL, MOST PLES I KNOW LIKE OF' BOUFFE BETTER THAN ANYTHING, 'CAUSE, YOU KNOW, BETWEEN THE ACTS, A PLS—  
Second Golden Youth. YA—LA—'SACTLY.



RUDIMENTS OF REPARTEE.

Maria Hann. "YAS! D' 'ER KNOW ME!"  
Maud Evangeline. "NO; AND I SHOULDN'T LIKE TO!"