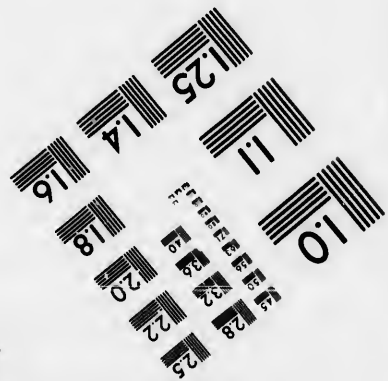
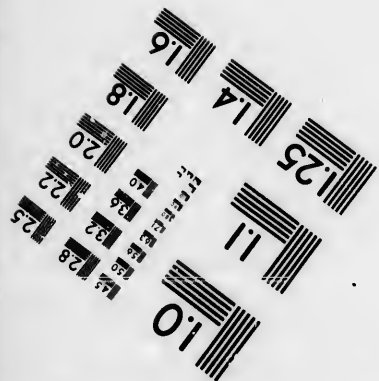
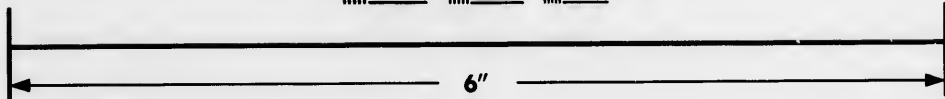
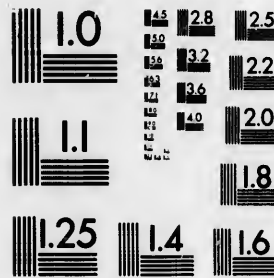


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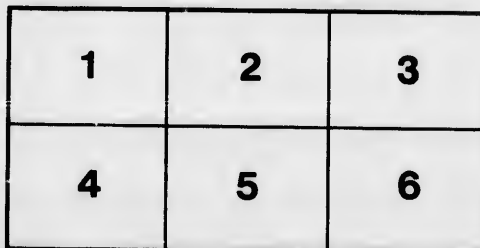
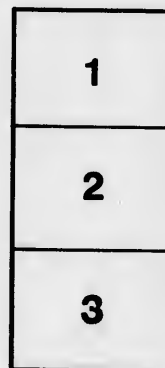
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FRASCATI'S;

OR

SCENES IN PARIS.

"I have had my labour for my travel."

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

PHILADELPHIA:

E. L. CAREY & A. HART—CHESNUT STREET.

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FRASCATI'S ;

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SCENES IN PARIS.

CHAPTER I.

On the morning when he so abruptly left the breakfast-room, in consequence of the cruel attack of the baronet, Manvers had quitted the hotel, and as he had neglected to discharge his bill, that circumstance was industriously published and commented on by Nimbleton. I pitied Emily exceedingly, for it was not without difficulty that she could at all succeed in repressing her feelings, as she heard the conduct of her lover condemned and reprobated by the cold and insensible beings, with whom she was in some degree compelled, by the singular mode of living adopted by her uncle, to associate. How cruel was her position, and how

doubly wretched was she rendered in being obliged to listen to their calumnies, without daring to utter a syllable in justification of his conduct. How galling at once to her pride and to her affection, to find herself under the necessity of veiling her anguish beneath an air of indifference, when she felt satisfied that unmerited misfortune, and not deliberate dishonour, had thus cruelly exposed him to the censure of those whom in his heart he must have despised. Poor girl! even the consolation afforded her by the possession of his picture was now denied her, for the baronet had discovered and taken it from her.

"Ah, Morris!" said he, entering my room on the morning on which he had possessed himself of this pledge, "I fear I shall yet die an unhappy man, for my only hope has now nearly failed me. This is a moment when serious sorrow may be relieved by imparting it to an old and approved friend like you; and to you alone, indeed, could I bear to enter on the subject of my present annoyance. Look at this portrait. It fell from Emily's bosom, and has betrayed her secret, yet vexed as I have been in consequence, I could not find courage to destroy it."

I gazed at the picture for a few minutes, then returning it to the baronet, exclaimed with energy,—“That my dear friend, cannot be the face of a villain! The thing is impossible. I would stake my existence that Manvers is incapable of an act of premeditated dishonour.”

“So I should have thought at one time,” pursued Sir Brien; “but no matter; I shall take Emily back to Ireland immediately.” Then, after a slight pause, he resumed, “Whom do you conceive this Manvers to be?”

“My opinion is,” I replied, “that he is some young gentleman of fortune, who has lost at play all the money he had at his own immediate command; and that his relations, perhaps with a view to reclaim him, deem it advisable that he should be made to suffer the penalty of his folly.”

“Perhaps so,” returned Sir Brien; “but Nimbleton has distinctly said that he is the son of——”

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"I do not believe a word of what Nimbleton has advanced," I exclaimed, interrupting him.

The baronet said no more on the subject, and we changed the conversation.

Meanwhile, Emily secluded herself as much as possible; and from the period when her uncle obtained possession of the portrait, I could perceive that she was subject to fits of depression and thoughtfulness, which seemed to increase with each passing hour. Her cheek was pale, her lips parched; and her eyes swollen with weeping, sufficiently attested, when she made her appearance at the breakfast-table, in what manner she had passed the night. Even when I occasionally prevailed on her to walk out with me, she would preserve the most melancholy silence, simply answering the questions I put to her, and noticing the remarks I made in the most concise manner; and when I ventured to expostulate and to reason with her on the weakness of giving way to her feelings, the involuntary tear rolling down her faded cheek was sure to silence me, and produce nearly similar emotion in myself. No consolation that I offered, no assurances that I gave of Manvers being eventually restored to the good opinion of her uncle, seemed now to have any weight with her; and all she sought was to be alone, in order that she might brood unnoticed over the misery of her condition. I could not have believed that so young, so gentle, so unassuming a creature, could have felt so intensely, and moreover it surprised me how, with few other opportunities than those afforded by their proximity at the *table d'hôte*, Manvers could have succeeded so well in establishing an interest in her bosom. All this was a mystery to me, which even with all my experience and knowledge of the world, I could not resolve.

Emily was not the only person, however, who seemed to be deeply interested in the fate of Manvers. The ironical gentleman manifested an anxiety on this occasion, which was quite at variance with the phlegmatic indifference he usually betrayed; and his concern at the sudden disappear-

ance of the young man was, like Emily's, increased by the fact of all being in ignorance of his present condition. I suspected from this circumstance that he knew rather more of Manvers's family than he chose to admit; but though I once or twice hinted that suspicion to him, he never would acknowledge the fact.

The gossip afforded by the abrupt departure of Manvers, to the curious inmates of the hotel, did not long continue to occupy their attention exclusively, for a new and fitter object on which to exercise their all-nature was now brought forward on the tapis.

Happening to go down stairs one morning earlier than usual, I became witness of a scene which, had not the principal actor been in my debt, would have afforded me more gratification and amusement than any farce I had ever seen performed on the stage. Even as it was, indeed, I could not avoid laughing heartily. In the middle of the courtyard, and surrounded by all the domestics of the hotel, whose object it seemed to be to prevent his gaining the street, stood my friend, Nimbleton, maintaining a vigorous conflict with two women, who were in the act of dispossessing him of a quantity of superfluous raiment. The one, whom I soon recognized to be the porterness, held him by the hair, while the other (the *proprietaire* of the hotel, a female of Amazonian proportions) was actively engaged in the manner just described. In the course of a few minutes she succeeded in stripping him to his shirt, when she retired with her spoils; the porterness then for the first time relinquishing her hold. My curiosity was of course much excited to know the cause of this singular scene, and observing that Nimbleton had now retired in his *undress* into a small parlour adjoining the coffee-room, I immediately went in quest of information, when the following particulars were communicated to me.

The weather at this period I must premise was oppressively hot, so much so indeed, that one could easily have dispensed with a coat, had fashion or custom permitted, even

in the shade. Notwithstanding this extreme sultriness, the major had made his appearance below, and was in the act of issuing from the hotel for a morning promenade, as he said, with his entire wardrobe on his back. This consisted, independently of linen, of two or three pairs of pantaloons, sundry waistcoats, a body coat, his braided frock, a surtout, and over all these a huge woolly dreadnought. In short, from the superfluity of apparel in which the major had invested his person, one would have been tempted to imagine that he had dressed for the character of Sir John Falstaff, or the grave-digger in Hamlet. The side-pockets of his outer coat were, moreover, filled with other moveables, and projected from his hips like the paddles of a steam-boat; and with all this sail hoisted, to use a nautical phrase, he was preparing to depart, when, unluckily, his enormous figure caught the vigilant eye of the porterness, who naturally imagining so much clothing to be somewhat superfluous at such a broiling season of the year, now thought proper to lay an embargo on a vessel that to all appearance was leaving port without a license.

She recollected too that the major had been furnished with his bill a few days previously, and pressed without avail for its discharge; but what contributed most to determine her on detaining him, was the circumstance of her having an unsettled demand of her own against him for letters and commissions. Had it not been for this, she might probably have given herself no trouble about him; but self-interest, that *primum mobile* of human actions, now whispered, that if Nimbleton left the hotel, all hopes of obtaining the amount of her *memoire* must be relinquished. Urged by this consideration more than by any interest in the claims of her mistress, she immediately ran into the court as he was in the act of leaving it. Nimbleton attempted to escape, but in accelerating his movements his hat fell, and while stooping to pick it up, the porterness grappled him by the hair and once more succeeded in getting him into the court, when exercising her lungs to the utmost, she soon drew

around her the several domestics of the establishment, and the more immediately interested *proprietaire* herself.

Among the papers found in a pocket of one of the coats of which the major had just been dispossessed, was a letter of no little importance, which was put into my hands. The following were its contents :

“ Boulogne-sur-mer.

“ DEAR NIMBLETON,

“ As I presume you have by this time returned from Switzerland, I take the earliest opportunity to apprise you that a rich ridiculous old fellow from Connaught, Sir Brien O'Flaherty by name, has just been here. He has set out to-day for Paris, and I have contrived to learn that he intends stopping at the hotel de Londres. However, that is a point you can easily ascertain by inquiring at the *bureau de police*. I must, however, acquaint you with a few of his peculiarities, such as they have been described to me by our friend Ableton Hazard. He is exceedingly vain, and wishes it to be thought that he has ever been a successful candidate for a lady's favour ;—his appetite for praise, too, is insatiable, and there is no flattery however gross and fulsome, that you may not administer to him. He, moreover, prides himself excessively on his knowledge of the world, though, until now, I understand the old fool has never been out of the wilds of Connaught. His party consists of a sister, a niece, and a huge Irishman of the name of Morris, nearly as stupid and as vain as himself. Of the women, it is sufficient that you should know, the sister is a piece of antiquated goods, who is looking out for a husband ; the niece, on the contrary, is an innocent, namby pamby, sentimental-looking creature, on whom you may exercise your love-making talents with success. Hazard says she will have all the old baronet's fortune at his death. Contrive, therefore, to do something in that quarter, but above all things it is essential that you should succeed in ingratiating your-

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self with the uncle. By the by, he has tolerably good legs, and knows it right well. Ply him there, and I will answer for it with my life that you succeed in rendering yourself a favourite. I would have tried the thing myself, had not his speedy departure from this place prevented me; not, however, that I care much about it, for I have now nearly relinquished the *profession*. I employ my abilities chiefly in the matrimonial department, which is the most flourishing I find of all speculations. You see, however, notwithstanding, I omit no opportunity of serving my friends, and in fact, independently of considerations of friendship, I thought it a sin, while too indolent to embark in the chase myself, to suffer so fine a bird to escape without apprising an old brother-sportsman of the direction in which the game was flying. Believe me, dear Nimbleton, with every desire for your success, your sincere friend,

“E. S. C. WATSON.

“P. S. I must not forget to say that young Manvers has been here again within these few days. In fact, I understand he has been seen two or three times following in the wake of this Irish party. Take care that he does not become too intimate with the niece. Should you find that, however, to be the case, nothing can be more simple than to put the old uncle on his guard. Insinuation will do much, but you must first establish yourself in his good opinion, which is only to be acquired by flattery. Manvers I have this instant heard, is off for Paris. I fear he has had too much experience to fall into our snares again; still he is young, and one possessed of your address and pliancy of character might yet give him additional cause to remember him. Tredennick, who goes to Paris on a matrimonial spec, will hand you this. Do not forget the old-fellow's legs.”

Nothing could have yielded me greater satisfaction than the possession of this letter, and I principally rejoiced on account of Manvers, who it must now be evident to the baronet had been basely calumniated by the major. My first step, therefore, was to hasten to his apartment, and af-

ter detailing the circumstance of Nimbleton's recent degradation, to hand him the insolent epistle of Watson.

The rage and mortification of Sir Brien was excessive, until he came to that part of the letter wherein allusion was made to his legs, and then I was sorry to perceive that although he declared he would knock the scoundrel down, should he ever appear in his presence again, he in the next instant glanced at his limbs, with an eye expressive of the utmost self-complacency.

"What a scoundrel this fellow must be!" he exclaimed, glancing again at the letter which, but for the eulogium on his legs, he would certainly have torn into a thousand pieces: "a clever blackguard though, Morris, we must admit. You see," once more looking down, "with what fidelity he has described my principal perfection."

I felt absolutely disgusted at this unpardonable coxcombry of the baronet, and could not refrain from reading him a lecture on the ridiculous and expensive situation into which his insatiable thirst for praise was likely to lead him. Nothing, however, could disturb his composure, and I might have preached till doomsday without convincing him (now that Watson had admitted the fact) that he had not the finest pair of legs in the world.

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CHAPTER II.

ON leaving Sir Brien I met one of the waiters coming with a message from the major, who expressed great anxiety to see either O'Flaherty or myself. I certainly had little inclination to continue an acquaintance with him after what had so recently occurred; however, as I knew the vanity of the baronet would, notwithstanding all my preaching, leave him open to be duped in the event of the message being communicated to him, I thought it most prudent to comply with the request. I therefore descended to the little parlour, where Nimbleton was detained in some sort as a prisoner, and found him pacing the room in his shirt sleeves, with as much apparent indifference as if nothing had occurred.

"Ah, my dear friend!" he exclaimed as I entered the room, "I am very glad to see you. Did you ever hear of such outrageous conduct as that which has been pursued in regard to me? See how they have disrobed me. Positively, had I been a fellow of no character they would not have treated me more infamously. However, I shall make them suffer for this in the end, although from my soul, I pity the unhappy *proprietaire*. Alas! poor woman, she is mad, and all her present conduct originates in jealousy. Yes, my dear friend, she is jealous of me to a degree. Nay, do not laugh, it is a fact. She has conceived a *penchant* for your humble servant, and latterly, I find, has been in the habit of

having all my movements watched. She has taken it into her head that I am about to remove to a hotel of a very beautiful woman, a rival of hers; and this morning, when I asked for my bill, she called me a false, perfidious man, and declared that I had destroyed her peace of mind for ever.— Really, I can't help laughing myself, the joke is too good."

"Well, but major," I observed, taking advantage of the short pause which ensued, "what can her jealousy have to do with your present condition? Or, if you settled the bill for which you say you asked her, how could she possibly commit such violence on your person?"

"Oh! you must know that her bill rather exceeded the amount of what I had in my purse, and I was in the act of going to my banker's for a sum, when the fear of losing me for ever induced this silly woman to lay this ludicrous detainer on the object of her affections."

"Indeed major, were you really going to your banker's? I thought you had closed your account there for the present, and were waiting for a remittance from England. Your memory is treacherous."

"No, yes, no,—oh, now I have it, the remittance arrived yesterday, and I received a note from Lafitte's last evening, to say that it was. Indeed, I felt ashamed at being in your debt so long, and it was as much with a view to procure the amount of your claim as that of the *proprietaire*, that I set off so early this morning. I intended to surprise you with it at breakfast."

"How kind, how considerate to be sure. Pray did you intend to receive your money in notes or in gold?"

"In gold to be sure," replied the major, evidently surprised at the question, "but why do you ask?"

"I have no particular reason. I was only thinking, that if you received it in gold you never could have found your way back here, for certainly the weight, added to that of your whole wardrobe, would have borne down a much stronger man than you; and on such a hot day as this you might have perished of a *coupe de soleil* in the street. Do you usually wear so many clothes in hot weather?"

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"Oh yes, frequently. I have been a great deal in India, and can endure any degree of heat. But this was for a wager, my dear fellow. Had I not been stopped by that silly woman, I should have won a large sum from Rhymer.— But hear me, I have sent for you to beg that you will become responsible to the *proprietaire* for my return. I shall not be gone more than an hour; and I promise you, we shall have plenty of amusement at the expense of my love-sick landlady. 'Tis a romantic circumstance enough, and if touched off by your experienced pen, will furnish subject for a highly amusing chapter in your work. I shall call her in if you will permit me, and I am sure she will not object to your security; but here she comes,—really I shall die with laughing, only see how jealousy disfigures her otherwise good looking features."

"Well, major!" she exclaimed on entering, "all your artifice can now avail you nothing, for out of this house I will not suffer you to stir until you have paid the amount of your bill. Indeed, I know not how I could have been so silly as to have allowed you to get into my debt, after the character that has been sent to me of you from almost every other hotel in Paris. Here have you been for the last four months, and during that period I have not received a sou from you. I should not have cared so much about it had you confined yourself to ordinary expenses; but not satisfied with these, you have been in the habit of treating every person with whom you could manage to pick up an acquaintance here, with the most costly wines in my cellar, and all with a view to make friends as you term it. Why sir," turning to me, "he has prevented me from turning him out of doors at least twenty times, by assuring me that he was about to be married to the widow M'Lofty, to whom he paid his addresses before Colonel Killheiress arrived; and when she discarded him for that gentleman, he leagued with that fellow Tredennick to inveigle her into a marriage with him. Apropos, the other has taken his departure this morning, leaving me a 'forget me not' also; and I have

no doubt it was arranged between them, that they should go off together. You, major, however, have not been quite so fortunate, and though I ought to make you pay the amount of both bills, if you will but give me a thousand francs I shall be satisfied. Recollect, if you do not, I shall detain you until the officers arrive, when you may be certain of being transferred to the galleys for life."

"You see," said the major, turning to me and endeavouring to hide his anxiety beneath an air of indifference, "the woman is evidently deranged."

"Deranged indeed!" returned the angry *proprietaire*. "Do you think then, that I cannot account for your great hurry to be off this morning? Do you imagine that I know nothing of the forgery?"

"Are you not ashamed of yourself, to take such liberties with a gentleman?" vociferated Nimbleton. "Positively, I will never recommend a respectable person to your hotel again; not a friend of mine shall ever cross your threshold after this."

"I trust they never may," she replied, "for if they at all resemble you, they will render me a much greater service by keeping away."

"You perceive the unfortunate woman is inebriated," said Nimbleton, as she now left the room, "still, do you know, I feel for her after all; she will certainly destroy this establishment and ruin herself, but, I confess, I am principally interested for her family. She has no fewer than five children, and yet permits herself to indulge in almost every vice. I declare, her conduct quite shocks me. In the first instance, to entertain a criminal passion for me, and in the second, to drink so early in the morning,—'tis really pitiful! I had no idea that French women were given to drink in this manner.—But do, my dear friend oblige me by passing your word for the payment of the paltry sum she requires; your pledge will be quite sufficient, and I shall be back from Lafitte's in less than an hour." Then, perceiving, that I hesitated, and looked him sternly in the face

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without making any reply, "Do not suffer anything this woman has said to make any impression on your mind; she is as I have already assured you, quite deranged and inebriated—'tis unfair, as well as ungenerous, to pay attention to the ravings of an intemperate, mad woman—just pass your word for—"

"I cannot agree with you, major!" I at length exclaimed, interrupting him. "I cannot persuade myself that the woman is drunk, and that she is not in love with you is evident from the very copious abuse she has just bestowed on you;—in short she speaks of you as I should feel inclined to do myself."

"And how is that?" said the major, with an affectation of surprise and anger.

"How, major?" I returned with a look that caused his glance to sink beneath mine. "Why as a daring and accomplished swindler!"

Nimbleton saw that there was nothing to be gained by looking fierce, and he instantly changed his tone.

"Well, well, Mr. Morris, I excuse the harshness of your epithet, for appearances are I confess much against me at this moment;—even such, I am sorry to say, as to justify even so accomplished a gentleman as yourself in using such reproachful language. Yet, esteeming your character as I do, I shall take a future opportunity of making you change your opinion in regard to me. You shall then find that I am a man of the nicest honour."

"Do you mean, Major Nimbleton, that it is your intention to send me a message, or merely that you will afford me moral proof of your integrity? A man of honour and a man of honesty are two very different characters."

"Surely, my dear friend," replied the major, "you cannot think for an instant that I would quarrel with you? No, Mr. Morris, you have rightly expressed it. I wish to convince you that I am a man of the nicest integrity;—in short, I am anxious that you should esteem me as the first and noblest work of Nature,—an honest man."

"Of which, Major Nimbleton, I have already abundance of proof," I replied, putting Watson's letter into his hand.

He read it apparently with great attention and surprise, and then folding and returning it, declared on his honour that he had never seen it before. "Pshaw!" he pursued, perceiving every mark of incredulity on my countenance, "do not suffer yourself, my dear friend, to be imposed upon by such a shuffling production as that; the letter carries the impress of forgery on its very face, and has no doubt been written by some enemy of mine. We all have enemies in this world;—you have them, I have them, every man has them. Indeed, I have always found that a good character creates more enemies than a bad one in these degenerate days, and for that reason I have never been without them. You see, that strong in my innocence, I can refute the slanders contained in that letter without evincing any of the emotion which attends on guilt. Tear that letter up, my dear fellow, for to attach the slightest credit to its contents, must be a libel both on your understanding and on your benevolence of character."

"Your unblushing assurance, Major Nimbleton, does I confess amaze me! And had I not received such accounts from all who know you, as satisfy me that your claim to a permanent employment in the galleys is indisputable, perhaps you might even now persuade me into a belief of your innocence; but all your shameless self-possession was never of any avail with me. I always divined your true character, and although I suffered you to exercise your powers of flattery on me, I never was your dupe, neither did I ever permit myself to be entangled in your snares. No, sir! I always had too much penetration to be deceived by you, even though this lying letter does say that I am as stupid and as vain as the baronet. Now, sir, are you unmasked?"

"I admit, I confess it all!" exclaimed Nimbleton, now for the first time seriously alarmed, and finding it vain to attempt to impose upon me any longer. "Yet let me be

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seen here but five minutes longer, and my ruin is inevitable. You are I confess the only man I ever found inaccessible to flattery,—the only being who has baffled my science in duping; for, with every pretension to self-esteem and knowledge of the human character, you certainly have less vanity than any man I ever met with. Nay, from the very hour of your arrival in Paris, I studied you as an original, and at once perceived that every attempt to dupe you was likely to prove abortive; but when you did me the favour to read me certain passages of your tour, my despair was complete, for I was not so silly as to believe, that he who could thus forcibly portray the follies and artifices of the world, could ever become the dupe even of one so accomplished in the art as myself. Thus far, I rendered you every justice, and the result has proved that my opinion was not erroneous. I am one, whose history is not the every day history of life; and it is no trifling proof of your penetration and discernment of character, that you should have been enabled, not only to baffle but to unmask him who has made even the most talented and the most wary his prey."

This speech of Nimbleton's somewhat softened the asperity of my feelings towards him, a revolution, I will candidly avow, that was in a great degree effected by the admission with which it was concluded. I now began to consider him as a degraded son of genius, my brother in ability, but destitute of that principle which alone can give value and respectability to talent; and now that the superiority of my tact had been acknowledged by him, who alone had ever put it to so severe a trial, I conceived that to afford him the means of freeing himself from his present dilemma, would be worthy of me not only as a philanthropist, but as a man of letters. I therefore took out my pocket-book, and gave him the thousand francs demanded by the *propriétaire* in discharge of her claims.

The major received the money with an eagerness quite natural to one in his position, exclaiming,—“A thousand

thanks, my dear friend, you have rendered me your debtor for ever! The only way in which I can repay you is by giving you a brief memoir of my life. But there is no time to be lost;—quick, conduct me to your apartment, supply me with pen, ink, and paper, and I shall set to work immediately.”

As the reader may suppose, I willingly availed myself of the proposal. The adventures of Nimbleton I thought offered so complete a picture of a life of deception and intrigue, that every incident in it must afford not only amusement but instruction; and as I was particularly anxious to procure something of the kind for insertion in my tour, it appeared to me that this of all others was the history best adapted to my work. I therefore took the major unperceived to my rooms, placed pen, ink, and paper before him, and cautiously locking the door after me, left him to the prosecution of his task.

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CHAPTER III.

I HAD not been ten minutes seated in the coffee-room, to which I had descended on leaving Nimbleton, when the door was suddenly pushed open, and four individuals rushed eagerly in. These were the ironical gentleman, the *proprietaire*, the portress, and a Bow-street officer. They appeared to expect somebody else, for on beholding me the whole party looked exceedingly surprised and disappointed.

"*Mon Dieu*, Monsieur Morris!" said the portress, raising her hands in astonishment. "How did you get here? Did you not pass us this very instant at the gate?"

"Nonsense, woman. I have not been out of the house to-day."

"What?" she pursued, "was it not you who went out with a handkerchief bound round your face?"

"I tell you once more," I replied, "that I have not been out of the house to-day."

"But, Monsieur, it must have been you, I could not be deceived in the dress."

"What the devil is the meaning of all this?" I demanded, rising in anger from my seat.

"What have you done with Major Nimbleton?" inquired the *proprietaire*. "You know, sir, I left you with him in the next parlour, and he is no longer there."

"And what of that, pray? Am I Major Nimbleton's keeper?"

"This equivocation will not do sir, now," observed the dictatorial Bow-street officer. "I must insist on your telling me where you have secreted him."

"Impudent ruffian !" I exclaimed, now growing seriously angry, "do you know to whom you are addressing yourself?"

"Mr. Morris," interposed the ironical gentleman, "do not be offended." Then, addressing the officer, and pointing to me, "this gentleman is no accomplice. If he knows where Major Nimbleton is to be found, I am sure he will not hesitate to inform us."

I felt somewhat embarrassed at the sound of the word accomplice ; and not chosing, independently of my anxiety for the completion of the memoir, that Nimbleton should be discovered in my apartment, I evaded giving a direct reply, by inquiring of the officer, the nature of his business with the major.

"My business, sir, is to arrest him for a crime, which in England is punished with death. In a word, he has forged on a friend of this gentleman, and I have been sent to arrest him. You will do well, therefore, not to retard the ends of justice, by withholding any knowledge you may possess of his place of concealment."

"Well," I coolly replied, "if he has forged, the hotel is open to your search, and if he is in it, I dare say you will have no difficulty in finding him."

The whole party stared with astonishment, and the officer in particular fastened his penetrating gray eyes on me, as if he would have read every thought that was passing in my mind. Still I was not to be intimidated or turned aside from my purpose. It was of consequence to me that I should possess myself of Nimbleton's adventures ; and reckless of whatever opinion they might think fit to entertain of me, I was resolved not to betray the secret of his concealment. Unhappily, however, while I evaded with the utmost address, the several questions that were put to me, Domingo Rhymer unexpectedly entered the room, and learning the cause of the strange scene that was acting be

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fore him, put an end to the discussion, by declaring that he had seen me conduct Nimbleton to my apartment not half an hour previously.

"So so, sir," said the officer, looking sternly at me, "this must be inquired into. Although this gentleman declares that you are not an accomplice, I must say that the circumstance of your persisting to deny all knowledge of the major's place of concealment at the moment when it is intimated to you, that a warrant on a charge of felony is out against him, looks rather suspicious."

"Death and fury, fellow, what do you mean?" I exclaimed, raising myself to my full height, and extending an arm, which, for muscular proportion, might well have struck terror into a much more powerful man than the Bow-street officer. "Repeat that suspicion again, and by the honour of a gentleman, I will break every bone in your vile body."

The startled officer retreated back a pace or two, and held up his staff of office, as if to guard his head from the threatened blow, while the *proprietaire* and portress, alarmed at my vehemence, nearly overthrew each other in their attempt to escape from the room. The ironical gentleman alone interposed.

"Be calm, Mr. Morris," he said. "You cannot deny that to this person, who is a stranger to you, your conduct must, to say the least of it, appear somewhat mysterious; and as he is in the discharge of an important public duty, he naturally feels desirous of sifting the affair to the bottom. I have already told you," he pursued, turning to the officer, "that I know this gentleman and he is not an accomplice."

"Then if he is not an accomplice," returned the minion of justice, who had now recovered his alarm, "he must be an Irishman, for none but an accomplice or an Irishman would act in so determinedly hostile a manner against one of his Majesty's confidential officers. But," pursued this important personage, "the gentleman cannot certainly object to my examining his apartments. It has been distinctly stated, that the person for whose apprehension I hold my

warrant, was seen entering them, and it is my duty as an officer, to institute a close search throughout the hotel."

"True," said the ironical gentleman. "What you say is perfectly just, and Mr. Morris, I am sure, will no longer object to it, especially as he must feel anxious to convince you, that he is incapable of conniving at the concealment of a felon; and one especially," he concluded, with his wonted sarcasm of manner, "who, whatever may be his artifice and plausibility of character, could never succeed in baffling the deep experience and knowledge of the world, for which Mr. Morris is so remarkable."

"Whether he objects or not," pursued the officer, observing that I took no notice of the hint, "I must insist on searching his apartment. I should prefer doing the thing quietly, and as becomes an officer of my standing and respectability; but if the gentleman opposes violence, I shall be under the necessity of procuring assistance from the police. I have the sanction of the French government to prosecute the search in fulfilment of my warrant, and any aid that I may require, will be afforded me without delay."

This was a piece of intelligence for which I was not prepared. I had all along imagined that the officer had no legal power to arrest Nimbleton from the French authorities, and I knew that without that he dared not make the attempt. Here, however, was a very different story; and as I had no ambition to get into a scrape with the authorities of the country, I even thought it prudent to leave Nimbleton to his fate, and to relinquish the advantages I hoped to derive from the possession of his amusing adventures.

"You will do as you please," I at length observed.

"But, recollect, you will also be responsible for the act of entering my apartment against my desire."

"Oh! as for that," said the officer, moving forward at the moment, "I shall be willing to take all the responsibility on myself. All that I require at present is, that you do not oppose yourself to my search. Can you, sir," he added, addressing the ironical gentleman, "point out the gentleman's

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apartment to me, as I presume he is unwilling to do so himself?"

The ironical gentleman nodded his assent, and they both quitted the room, leaving me a prey to no very agreeable feelings; for now that I was somewhat cooled on the subject, I felt that I had placed myself in rather an awkward position. It was clear that nothing could prevent their discovery of Nimbleton, unless he had the address to escape by the chimney; and it was equally clear, that discovering him there after my recent warm opposition to a search, was a circumstance not a little calculated to excite suspicion in regard to myself. I, moreover, thought of the loss I should sustain in being deprived of the history of his life, and now looked on the several sums I had lent him as being lost to me forever, without a prospect of an equivalent being afforded me.

In this position I continued for more than twenty minutes, when, suddenly, the ironical gentleman and the officer again made their appearance in the coffee-room.

"I regret, sir," said the latter, touching his hat, "that my duty has compelled me to this measure, but it must be a satisfaction to you to know, that suspicion even cannot now attach to you. I have made the strictest search throughout your apartment, and Major Nimbleton is nowhere to be found."

"Still," said the ironical gentleman, with his provoking sneer, "the major, in this, as in every other instance, has left traces of his presence behind."

"What mean you?" I exclaimed, starting suddenly from my seat. "Major Nimbleton not in my apartment! Why, where is he then? What is the mystery of all this?" And without waiting for a reply, I rushed up the staircase with a speed that I had not practised for the last twenty years. What, however, was my consternation on entering, to find my secretaire broken open, and my wardrobe scattered in every direction about the room, while the paper which I had placed before the major, still lay on the table unsoiled

by a single stroke of the pen? Alas! he had not only possessed himself of my whole stock of money, and two of the best suits in my wardrobe, but he had sacrilegiously stolen my white broad-brimmed hat—a hat in which alone I had ever been felicitous at composition; and with these he had evidently fled the instant after I left him, and notwithstanding the precaution I had taken to lock the door. Fortunately, however, in the midst of this disaster, I discovered that my own manuscript was safe. In his eagerness to possess himself of what he deemed most valuable, he had overlooked this most precious of relics; and so rejoiced was I at the circumstance, that I felt half tempted to forgive the robbery he had committed.

Descending soon afterwards to the coffee-room, I had to encounter the whisperings and stifled laughter of the several inmates of the hotel, who had all assembled to hear the account given by the ironical gentleman, of Nimbleton's escape disguised in my clothes. Neither had he omitted the artful manner in which I had been duped by the active major, at a moment when I fancied that he was filled with gratitude for the protection I had afforded him.

The baronet was there also, and he spoke seriously and harshly against Nimbleton. It appeared to me, however, that he might have dispensed with any observations, as shame alone should have prevented him from making any allusion to one who had rendered him so completely his dupe; yet I was sorry to observe, that not even the contemptuous manner in which he had been noticed in Watson's letter to the major, seemed to have cured him of his inordinate vanity. Indeed, the severer parts of that letter had evidently been counterbalanced by the ridiculous mention that had been made of his legs; and these were now fully exhibited to view in a new pair of silk stockings and dress shoes.

Yet, notwithstanding all his folly, vanity, and ignorance of mankind, Sir Brien possessed feelings which it was impossible not to respect, and no one could be more ready or willing to disavow a harshness he had once used, when it

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was made evident to him that it had been undeserved. The innocence of Manvers now stood confessed, in consequence of the postscript appended to Watson's letter. Calling me on one side, he now, with great appearance of concern and uneasiness, put a newspaper into my hand containing a statement, that a young English gentleman, whose name was not given, had, it was supposed, in consequence of severe losses at play, precipitated himself into the Seine on the preceding evening.

"I fear," said he to the ironical gentleman, who was in the act of passing us towards the breakfast-table,— "I fear I have been very unjust towards young Manvers, and that, misled by that villain Nimbleton, I have deeply pained and wounded both his honour and his pride. Do you think," he pursued, shewing him the paper, which I now returned,—"do you think this paragraph can allude to him?"

The old gentleman read the passage that had been pointed out to him with deep attention, and immediately afterwards, in great apparent agitation, left the room without uttering a syllable in reply.

It was evident that, like the baronet, he fancied this paragraph alluded to Manvers, in whom he betrayed an interest much too great to be ascribed to a mere spirit of philanthropy. I, too, felt uneasy, for I could not conceal from myself, that the mind of the young man, when last I saw him, had been fearfully agitated, and that, with a spirit nearly broken, he had looked like one to whom existence is a burden and a shame.

Some time afterwards, I met Emily taking her usual melancholy morning walk in the garden, and so great was the depression of my spirits, that, for the first time, I accosted her without a smile.

"Have you seen *him*?" she asked, with a voice that betrayed the alarm produced in her by my manner. "Oh! tell me Mr. Morris, have you seen him?"

"No, Emily, my love, I have not seen him," I replied

in a faltering tone, and with the same serious expression of countenance.

She became exceedingly agitated, and looking earnestly in my face,—“What mean you?” she exclaimed. “Is he then not to be found?”

“He is,” I replied mournfully and equivocally, “and I hope to see him within an hour.” Here my emotion increased, when I recollected how and under what circumstances I should see him, until my uneasiness became so great that I was compelled to leave her without removing her apprehensions.

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CHAPTER IV.

FILLED with melancholy foreboding I now pursued my way to the banks of the Seine; a number of persons were collected about the margin, and I could perceive that those who left it without recognizing a friend suffered a far different expression to pervade their features than they had worn on approaching it. Alas! what numerous victims are here daily claimed by their mourning relatives! Not even in England, the land of suicide and fog, is self-destruction carried to the extent it is in Paris, and in nineteen instances out of twenty the causes of this melancholy crime may be traced to the fatal indulgence of a passion for play, which neither reason, honour, self-respect, nor a sense of the duties of social life can subdue. Were we to judge from the instances recorded by the press in either country, a very different impression would be made; but it is a remarkable fact, that while no one act of the kind escapes the attention of the English journalist, an instance of suicide is very rarely noticed in the French papers. The motive of this silence is obvious. Subject as the latter are to the censorship, the matter they insert must not have a tendency either directly or indirectly to incur the disapprobation of the Government, and as it is well known that the hourly suicides which occur in the metropolis, originate in the ruin incurred by a devotedness to a pursuit which is encouraged and supported by that Government, to give publicity to them would not only have the effect of bringing it into public odium and contempt, but

of diminishing the number of its victims, for its victims these unfortunate wretches surely are, who first pour forth all they possess in the world into the lap of the licensed gamester, and then pay the penalty of their folly by the forfeit of their lives.

While urging my way through the crowd, in order to obtain a view of the dead bodies, I met the ironical gentleman coming from the Morgue. The expression of his countenance told me at once that Manvers was not among the number of the victims and my own spirits rose immediately. In a few minutes he joined me, and apparently much pleased with the interest I took in the fate of the young man, accosted me with familiarity and openness of manner that I never before observed in him.

"I need scarcely ask you, if we have been deceived in our fears," I said, "since the expression of your features assures me that our young friend is not the individual alluded to in the paper of this morning."

"Thank God he is not," returned the ironical gentleman with energy. "I have examined all the bodies, among which are those of two Englishmen; one of them, no doubt the individual alluded to, is a young man of highly fashionable and gentlemanly appearance."

While he yet spoke a carriage was driven with great fury along the quay, and stopped suddenly before the entrance to the Morgue. In the next instant a young beautiful woman, but pale agitated, and with her hair hanging loosely over her face and forehead, alighted, and with trembling steps crossed the small space that divided her from this theatre of desolation and death. A feeling of commiseration ran at once through the crowd, and they simultaneously drew back to afford her a passage.

"She is alone and a stranger," said the ironical gentleman, "suppose we return to the Morgue, she is evidently a relation of one of the Englishmen, and in the midst of her affliction we may possibly be enabled to afford her some service."

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To this proposal I willingly assented, for I had been much touched by the deep and silent expression of her grief, and I felt there was nothing I could not have undertaken to serve her.

On reaching the interior of the Morgue, a scene of the most painful and pathetic nature met our view. Along an elevated estrade were deposited the cold stiff bodies of such of the dead as had not yet been claimed and removed by their friends, and at the extreme end on the right lay that of the young Englishman already described. At the side of this, and in an attitude of intense grief, reclined the female who had just entered, and who now completely absorbed in attention to the corpse before her, seemed to forget that she was in the midst of strangers. One fair soft hand was passed through the moist hair, and the other grasped the shrunken, cold, and bony fingers of the senseless object before her. Her warm lips, too, were pressed to its livid, hueless lips, and her tears fell fast and scalding on the pallid cheek.

"Oh William, my beloved brother!" she at length exclaimed in a low voice, that was broken by her convulsive sobbings, "how could you leave me thus? I would have sacrificed my own existence to have preserved yours, had you desired it! But, oh God! to rend my heart thus—to deprive your sister of her only hope and stay on earth; how cruel and unkind is this blow! Never, never shall I recover it. Oh, my God!" she resumed after a pause, "he will never speak to me again! His eyes are closed in death. He cannot look upon his sister, who loved and idolized him! His lips no longer smile on me, and his hand replies not, as usual, to the affectionate pressure of mine! All powerful Heaven!" she pursued, pressing her throbbing temples with one hand, while the other still retained its hold of the lifeless fingers, "give me strength to endure this, or grant that I may perish also, for what have I now to live for?"

Every one present was affected; not so much by her words, which few of them understood, but by the deso-

lation and sickness of soul that spoke in her accent and manner, far more powerful than mere language could express ; and I saw two or three rough looking Frenchmen dash a tear from their eyes, as they turned away, incapable of dwelling longer on the distressing scene. I, too, was more affected than I had ever been in my life ; yet in the midst of my concern, a ray of satisfaction shot across my mind. I expected that the stranger had come to claim and weep over the body of a lover or a husband. She had, however, called the unhappy youth her brother, and this, without my being well aware for what reason, now gave me the sincerest gratification.

“ Permit me, madam,” said I, approaching her and bowing respectfully,—“ permit me to make you a tender of my services. If, under the present melancholy affliction by which you have been visited, I can be of the slightest assistance in the world, you have only to command me. Such a scene as this is little suited to one of your delicate sensibility. If, therefore, as I am partly led to infer, you are a stranger in Paris, and know no one to whom you can entrust the performance of a duty which is suited to more robust nerves than yours, I shall have no hesitation to undertake the necessary arrangements.”

The sobbing mourner raised her head from the corpse, and wiping the tears from her inflamed eyes, looked at me a moment with an expression of surprise and doubt.

“ You are extremely kind, sir !” she at length exclaimed, perceiving no doubt, that the offer had emanated from one whose countenance bore every mark of its having been made in the true spirit of benevolence. “ Your offer is, indeed, charitable at such a moment, for, as you have justly surmised, I am an utter stranger in Paris, and have not a friend to whom I can apply for assistance in this extremity. Alas ! this is my only friend—the dear, the beloved brother of my affection, the soother of my sorrows, and the companion of my pleasures ! Oh God ! what is he now ?”

Again she gave way to a paroxysm of grief, and cast herself on the lifeless form at her side, sobbing bitterly.

"Let me prevail on you, my dear madam," I resumed, when the violence of this burst had somewhat subsided, "let me entreat you to leave this place, which, as you must perceive, is little suited to the presence of a delicate female.—Allow me to conduct you to your carriage, and if you will leave your address with me, I pledge myself to convey to you, within twenty-four hours, the intelligence of every due rite having been rendered to the remains of your unfortunate brother."

"What! twenty-four hours, sir? Would you separate me from all that I hold most dear on earth within so short a space of time? No, no, I cannot bear to part from him so soon, even as he is now. It is not twelve hours since he spoke to me, smiled on me, and kissed me, and yet you would have the grave to enshroud him for ever from my view within twice twelve hours.—I thank you, sir," she pursued, after a short pause and in a calmer tone, "for your obliging offer of assistance, but it shall be my own care to dispose of these remains. Alas!" she concluded, as if speaking to herself, "the poorest wretches in England have the privilege of mourning over their dead for a week or a month if they please, and I, poor William, am asked to bury you in a day."

"But, hear me, madam," I replied, taking her hand.—"Do me not the injustice to believe, that either inhumanity or apathy of feeling induced my observation. Alas! not even your excessive love for your brother, not all your wishes, or prayers, or intercessions, can retard the final consignment of his remains to their last earthly abode beyond four and twenty hours. It is a rule, an imperative law of the country in which we find ourselves, and nothing can alter it."

"Oh, my God, what cruelty!" she exclaimed, bursting again into tears, and pressing the lifeless clay to her heart,

"Oh, my brother, my beloved brother, how, how shall I endure this separation!"

"Compose yourself, dearest lady," said the ironical gentleman, now advancing and addressing her for the first time. "If," he pursued, "the advice of an old man can have either weight or influence with you, you will endeavor to moderate this excessive grief, which can have no other tendency than to unhinge your mind and impair your health. What this gentleman has said is but too true. Four and twenty hours is the extent of the period allowed for burial, and as that melancholy office is neither suited to your sex nor strength, you will do well to return home, and avail yourself of the offer which has just been made to you."

"But can I not at least have the body conveyed to my hotel, where every arrangement may be made under my own immediate direction? Who so well can pay the last sad offices to a brother as his sister, and on whom should such a duty sooner devolve?"

"Impossible!" said the old man, "the corpse is not in a condition to be conveyed there; and even if it was, such is the prejudice of the people, that I doubt much if admission would be given to it in the hotel. Take my advice, therefore, and leave the melancholy task to those who are ready to pledge themselves that it shall be performed with the utmost fidelity. Moreover, think how much your feelings must be wounded by the remarks that in all probability will be made on the manner of your brother's death. To one of your susceptible feeling, and possessed of so much sisterly affection, any indignity offered either in word or act to these miserable remains, must be dreadful beyond endurance. Once more, then," he resumed, drawing her gently towards him, "let me prevail on you to depart."

"Do with me what you please," she replied, her tears falling even faster than before. "I will follow your advice; for, alas! I feel that I am incapable of acting for myself.— Yet, let me linger one little moment longer," she pursued, throwing herself again on the body. "Let me once more

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embrace the inanimate form of him, whose love was my only consolation on earth. Oh, William, William! why have you left me thus desolate?"

When this paroxysm had in some degree subsided, she raised herself once more from the corpse, and taking a pair of scissors from her pocket, removed a lock of the dark damp hair, and placed it carefully in her bosom. She then made an effort to rise, but enfeebled and rendered dizzy by emotion, she immediately sank back again on the estrade, and her large dark eyes were closed beneath their long fringes; she had fainted.

The ironical gentleman now drew nearer to her, and passing an arm round her waist, soon succeeded in raising her from the estrade; but in the attempt to lift her from the ground he failed, and I, being a much more powerful man, now advanced to supply his place. With the same ease that I would have carried a young child, I now bore the inanimate form of the fair mourner from the Morgue. The crowd, interested by the scene of grief they had just witnessed, were not yet dispersed, and with the same respect for her sorrow that they evinced at her entrance, they now divided to facilitate the passage of the interesting English-woman. On gaining the exterior of the building, the rush of air brought the blood faintly to her pulse, and as I now approached the carriage she slowly opened her eyes. A sudden start, and an immediate suffusion of her hitherto pallid cheek, now marked her sense of her situation, and she struggled faintly and involuntarily to free herself.

"Where, where am I?" she murmured, "and whither are you conducting me?—but oh, I recollect,—my poor William! Oh, my God! and have I then seen him for the last time?" and her tears again gushed forth with renewed violence.

"Compose yourself, dearest madam," I urged, as I placed her delicate form within the carriage. "I pledge myself to you as an Irishman and a gentleman, that every attention shall be paid to the interment of your unhappy brother's re-

mains. Favour me with your address, and in the course of to-morrow I hope to be enabled to assure you, that every wish you could have formed on the occasion has been anticipated. But, that you may be satisfied," I concluded, taking a card from my pocket, "that so delicate a duty has not been undertaken by one who is at all likely to neglect it, allow me to present you with my name."

She took the card from my hand, and seeing the imposing address of "Rambleton Morris, Esq. of Ronayne Castle," seemed at once satisfied and at her ease. She then drew forth a card of her own, and extending her delicate white, but trembling hand, observed in a tone that thrilled to my very heart:—

"Accept, sir, the warm, the generous acknowledgements of one, who feels that she can never sufficiently repay the kindness which is the more deeply felt, because it is offered in the hour of extreme trial and adversity. When time shall have in some measure deadened the stings of grief, I shall ever be happy to see one who has so powerful a claim on my gratitude. Adieu, sir, I confide the last sad offices of humanity to your care. Oh, my poor, poor brother!" and throwing herself back in the carriage she raised her handkerchief to her eyes, and again gave utterance to her grief. The door of the vehicle was now closed, and she was driven off.

"And she will be happy to see one who has so powerful a claim on her gratitude," I mused, as I followed the receding wheels with my eyes. "And who would not undertake an office that could have a tendency to awaken an interest in such a being? Is it chance or fate that has conducted me to the Morgue this morning? and what is the result likely to prove?"

I was aroused from this reverie by the approach of the ironical gentleman. "You appear thoughtful, Mr. Morris," he observed.

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with so much love for her brother! Did you ever witness such an instance of devotedness and grief?"

The ironical gentleman smiled. "The devotedness and grief are certainly extreme, and I believe quite unaffected."

"How, unaffected!—what mean you, sir? surely you would not do that fair and sensitive being the injustice to harbour a doubt on the subject?"

"I do not for a moment doubt that the grief she expressed was really felt, but—"

"But what, sir?" I asked, perceiving that he paused, as if unwilling to communicate his impression to one who evidently entertained an opinion very different from his own."

"Why then, if I must tell you, the manner of expressing that grief was rather warmer in my estimation, than is quite consistent with the relative positions of brother and sister."

"What do you mean to insinuate, sir?" I exclaimed with an indignation I had never before felt. "Is it because your cold English blood is inaccessible to those emotions, that you are thus induced to draw an ungenerous inference in regard to others? I, sir, have far more liberal sentiments than those."

"True," said the ironical gentleman, with one of his provoking sneers, "and possess infinitely more knowledge of the world. Good morning, Mr. Morris; I presume you will undertake the arrangement of this funeral yourself. It will give you much more favour in the eyes of the fair mourner."

"The old fellow is jealous of my success," I again mused as he stalked away. "He envies the dear felicity I enjoyed in bearing her off in my vigorous arms even as a young child, while he himself could not raise her from the ground. But no matter, I freely forgive him, for jealousy in such a case is excusable;" when, turning on my heel, I hastened to an English undertaker's in the Faubourg St. Germain, whom I gave every necessary instruction for the interment of the unhappy suicide.

CHAPTER V.

My first care on regaining the hotel, was to lock myself up in my apartment, in order that I might indulge without a fear of interruption, in the new train of ideas that now rose confusedly and delightfully before me. Extended at full length in my comfortable fauteuil, with my elbows resting on the capacious arms, my face buried in my hands, and my eyes closed, I again passed in review the several changes in the scene I had just witnessed, and my mind, for the first time in my life, now became seriously open to reflections on the matrimonial estate.

“Good Heaven!” I mused, “what a delight would it not prove, to call so fair and so affectionate a being mine! How charming to have the noble race of the Morrises perpetuated through so divine a channel! To see the admiring crowd gaze upon us as we passed, and cite us as examples of manly strength and womanly beauty. And then the thrilling joy to feel her heart warm against mine, to behold her large dark eyes raised in tenderness and passion to those of the father of her children. Dear enchanting prospect, the realization of which alone is worth living for! With what devotedness of affection, with what abandonment of sorrow, did she weep over and embrace the cold remains of her unhappy brother! And if such is her strong love for a brother, what must she not feel for a husband?—for one whose existence is bound up in hers, whose desires are her desires, and whose pleasures are her pleasures. But oh! above all

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these, how great must be the attachment, how unswerving the constancy, of such a woman. She will, she must be mine. I will throw myself at her feet, and offer up all the homage of my soul. She has said that she is a stranger. Her virgin heart is yet new to the sweet, the perplexing emotions of love, and she will not refuse me. No," I proceeded, starting from my fauteuil, and pacing the room in strong excitement, "she will not refuse me; I will plead my cause so eloquently, that the affection, which has hitherto been her brother's, shall be transferred, with tenfold warmth, to myself, and Ronayne Castle no longer be without a mistress. Then she hinted something in her raving about fortune. 'This will assist in repairing that venerable and princely mansion. I am resolved. The instant I have acquitted myself of the melancholy task I have undertaken, I will call on her, and solicit her to receive me as her future protector through life.'

This point being determined in my own mind, with a facility that is peculiar to me I now dismissed the subject altogether from my thoughts, and drew nigh my writing-table, with the intention of continuing my tour, which was lying open before me, when suddenly I recollected that my composing hat was gone. This, indeed, was a severe and irreparable loss to me. It was ever wont, when I put it on my head, to produce an almost magic effect on my mind, and all the brighter passages of my work had been composed under its powerful and extraordinary influence. The loss of my hat induced me to see whether I had not been dispossessed of certain other articles of apparel, to which I attached a peculiar importance, when, to my great consternation, I discovered that Nimbleton had carried off my Frascati waistcoat; so called from my having been invariably successful at *rouge et noir*, whenever I chanced to wear it. And what contributed to increase my annoyance at this deprivation, was the circumstance of one of the pockets having been furnished with a system of my own invention, for reducing chance to certainty, of which, most unfortunately, I had no

duplicate. Even these, however, were trivial losses, compared with that which I last discovered; for no language can describe the despair with which I was seized on finding that my duelling small-clothes, even those in which I had fought Ableton Hazard, at Boulogne, had been purloined.— I would almost as soon have lost my manuscript itself as my small-clothes, for they had been invariably lucky in every rencontre I had been engaged in for the last six years. Their very shape, too, indicated that they were the small-clothes of a man of honour, and they fitted me so closely, and displayed my athletic limbs to such advantage, that I had never yet ventured into the Tuileries, and other public promenades of Paris, without attracting every female eye, nearly in the same degree that the Highland Regiments were said to have done, on the first entrance of the allies into that metropolis. Nay, the admiration they excited was not confined merely to the ladies, for, according to my friend Bougie, to whom I had once lent them to appear at court, their beautiful shape had attracted the notice of an exalted personage and his son, who had ordered each a pair, precisely of the same pattern, to be made; declaring it to be their intention to review the French troops, in the ensuing autumn, in Morris pantaloons.

Too much irritated and depressed by these several losses, to think of touching my manuscript, I sallied forth from the hotel, endeavouring to drown the chagrin I experienced, by recurring to the hopes I entertained, of eventually creating an interest in the beautiful and fascinating stranger. Without being conscious of the direction I was taking, I soon found myself near the walls of the Louvre, from which O'Flaherty soon issued, with a countenance beaming with pleasure, and his gaze rivited on a piece of tape which he held in his hand.

"Ah, my dear Morris!" he exclaimed, "I am delighted to see you. Will you believe it! I have just been measuring the limbs of the statute of the Athlete, in the Louvre, that model of manly symmetry and beauty, and find that

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the legs corresponds in every sense with my own. Did you ever hear of so singular a coincidence?"

I felt deeply shocked at this glaring illustration of the baronet's inordinate vanity. Being perfectly aware, however, that observation or remonstrance must be in vain, I simply contented myself, with looking a reproach that would have cut any less conceited person to the soul, and then passed quietly on.

On entering the Louvre, I stopped to scrutinize this celebrated piece of sculpture; but notwithstanding I examined it with the utmost attention, I could find nothing so particularly remarkable about it, as to justify the excessive delight manifested by Sir Brien, in discovering that the limbs were of equal proportion with his own. In fact, as far as regarded fulness and muscularity of calf, these boasted legs were far inferior to mine, and I could see no reason why they should be valued so highly as they were.

While I stood musing on the vanity of man, in estimating so highly these advantages of person, which, though not without their merit, are the nevertheless contemptible, when compared to the nobler gift of intellect, I felt myself suddenly tapped on the shoulder, and on turning round, discovered Bougie.

"What, my dear friend," he exclaimed, "you here! How can you be guilty of such an imprudence?"

"What do you mean?" I demanded angrily, "and of what imprudence am I guilty? Explain yourself, if you please."

"Nay, nay, be not offended," he returned. "It was simply a jest of mine; but the fact is, I never laughed so much in the whole course of my life as I have to-day, at a description that has been placarded all over Paris. The likeness it bears to you is the most striking I ever knew. It is impossible not to recognize in it your exact shape, unfashionable costume, and, above all, that uncouth broad-brimmed white hat of yours. Nay, more, your very name appears, a reward of a thousand francs being offered for the

apprehension of Major Nimbleton, alias Rambleton Morris."

"Death and the devil man!" I vociferated, "do you mean to tell me that—"

"Hush!" interrupted Bougie, "do not put yourself in a passion about it. I am fully satisfied that it is not you who are the person meant, and therefore this unlucky placarding cannot in any way lessen you in my esteem. Yet, listen patiently to what I have to relate." We now quitted the Louvre, and Bougie pursued; "I have heard the whole account of your being duped by that fellow Nimbleton, with whom, by the by, you would never have been so intimate had you consulted me. Of his escape from the Hôtel de Londres, disguised in your apparel, I am also aware; and, moreover, of a fact of which I dare say you are yet ignorant, and that is, his having passed himself off for you under favour of that disguise, and not only swindled a jeweller out of a large quantity of valuables, but also committed a forgery in your name."

"A forgery!" I interrupted; "why, he has already committed one in England, and an officer from Bow-street has been in pursuit of him. Nay, he was in the Hôtel de Londres at the very moment when the fellow made his escape."

"What a double forgery!" exclaimed the dancing-master; "then he has a better chance of being hanged or guillotined when he is taken. Upon my word, it must be confessed that you English cut a very respectable figure on this side of the channel. Let me see," he pursued, enumerating with his fingers; "there is that pompous fellow who calls himself Colonel Killheiress; then there is his rival, who is little better, Mr. Tredennick, and the young fellow who went away without paying his bill, and Major Nimbleton, and Mr. Watson, and Mr. Spicer; and (ah, I must not forget,) that vile Methodist parson that travelled with us in the diligence, and who is now under the *surveillance* of the police. Indeed, I am very glad that I am not an Englishman or an Irishman, for these things really do no credit to your country, and —"

Here Bougie was suddenly interrupted by the approach of a small party of *gendarmes*, who, after a short, but apparently minute examination of my person, now seized and conducted me to a stand of hackney coaches, in front of their *corps de garde* in the Place Palais Royal. Into one of these I was instantly hurried, and two of the party took their station on each side of me; another mounted the box with the coachman, and a fourth planted himself on the footboard behind. The coach now drove rapidly off, and by the direction taken, I at once inferred, that I was about to be conducted to the *bureau de police*. Once or twice I asked my companions the cause of my detention, but the only reply I could elicit, while they stroked their long coarse moustachios and drew their cocked hats more fiercely over their brows, was, that I should learn that all in good time. Finding it vain to expect any information from this quarter, I resolved to give myself no more anxiety about it, but to await the issue, whatever it might prove, without apprehension or concern.

At length, after crossing a bridge, which I could only ascertain from the hollow sound of the wheels, my conductors completely intercepting the view on either side with their immense hats, and after driving through one or two arches, which were distinguished in like manner, only by sound, the carriage at length drew up. On alighting, I found that I was, as I had originally conceived, about to be taken before the *chefs de police*. After a few moments of delay in one of the passages, a clerk came to announce that these important personages were ready to receive us, and we now moved forward to a private room, where three men were sitting at a low table covered with papers of various descriptions. The whole party appeared surprised at my presence, and it was evident that they had not expected to see one of my aristocratic bearing, brought before their tribunal in the character of a felon.

"Your name is Nimbleton, I think," said the centre of the three, who seemed, by his manner, to have more au-

thority than his fellows. "A major in the English service, are you not?"

"No," said I, proudly, "my name is not Nimbleton, but Rambleton Morris, Esquire, of Ronayne Castle, in the county of Connaught."

"That is precisely the same thing," resumed the *chef*,—"this paper," glancing at one of the placards which lay before him, "describes you in both names. It is therefore of no consequence to us which you may think proper to reply to. Once assured of your identity, we now come to the facts detailed in this document. Monsieur Nimbleton, or Monsieur Morris, you are now before us on a charge of swindling, and are moreover accused of the more heinous offence of forgery."

"But, sir, I am not Major Nimbleton," I angrily vociferated,—"that person has, after swindling me to a large amount, and robbing me of my wearing apparel, passed himself off for me under favour of that disguise, and assuming my name, has committed those offences which are now falsely attributed to me."

The bold and vehement manner in which I asserted my innocence of this humiliating charge, seemed to produce some effect on the conclave, who now conversed together in a low but earnest tone, occasionally glancing towards me with a look of doubt and perplexity.

Fortunately, at this moment, and when I least expected it, a friend was at hand; for while the officers were yet in consultation, Bougie now entered panting and breathless, from the exertion he had made to reach the *bureau* in time to prevent, if possible, my committal to the *Conciergerie*. He now addressed the presiding *chef*, to whom he appeared to be known, and told him, that I was not the individual set forth in the placard, but one who had equally been a victim of the artifices of the real offender.

Much to my surprise, the *chef* appeared to be perfectly satisfied with this statement, and he at once ordered the *gendarmes* to withdraw; declaring, at the same time, that I

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was at liberty to retire, and apologising for the mistake that had occurred.

Not satisfied with having accomplished my liberation, Bougie now proceeded, much to my annoyance, to hazard his opinion of my character.

"I have known Mr. Morris for a length of time," he observed, with a sort of pitying expression in his glance, as he threw his little gray eyes on me. "His family, with whom I am intimately acquainted, is one of the most respectable in Ireland; and as for himself, I must say, that I consider him a good-natured, harmless creature, whose only failing is a credulity that leaves him open to the designs of those who may take the trouble to render him their dupe; but his want of invention and ability will ever prevent him from being classed in the same rank with Nimbleton." Here Bougie smiled significantly, and putting his fore-finger to his forehead—an action that was accompanied by a shrug of the shoulders—said something, in an under tone, respecting my work.

Much as I was vexed at this liberty, and at the satirical grin that pervaded the countenances of the group when he had concluded, I affected not to notice it; for independently of the impolicy of showing anger at such a moment, I really felt thankful to the blockhead for his successful interference in my behalf.

"Did you observe," said he, as we left the office, "with what ease I managed this affair for you? The fact is, however, that I have great interest with the government. V—— is my intimate friend, and as the police are under his immediate superintendance, I can do with them what I please. I must now bid you adieu," he pursued, "and in all probability we shall never meet again. I am about to leave France on a secret mission to the Court of Spain. It is a delicate affair, and one that requires no ordinary share of address; however, do not mention a word about it, for we diplomatists cannot use too much caution. *Bon jour*—but stay, I knew I had something of importance to communicate

to you. My friends have already worn the Morris pantaloons, and declare they become them vastly. By the by, I am happy to say the Methodist parson is to be sent to the pillory: Farewell."

CHAPTER VI.

THE several mortifications I had experienced through Nimbleton now completely disgusted me with Paris, and I thought seriously of returning to Ireland. Still there was one object of interest which yet detained me; I had acquitted myself of the melancholy office of interring the remains of the unhappy suicide, and the day at length arrived when I was to be received by his interesting and mourning sister. With a trepidation of heart and anxiety of feeling to which I had hitherto been a stranger, did I set out from my hotel to pay this much desired visit. Alas! what timid beings does love render us, when a man of six feet two, and of almost gigantic proportions, is made to tremble beneath its influence like a puling boy of sixteen, whose limbs are fashioned in the mould of a Narcissus! Yet so it was, not that this, it will be believed, proceeded from *mauvaise honte*, or to my having been but little accustomed to success with women, but because it really was the first sincere passion I had ever entertained; and when I was ushered into the apartment of the lady, I verily do think I looked excessively like a school-boy. Her easy manner however speedily reassured me, and in the course of a very few minutes I was as much at my ease with her as if we had known each other for months.

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reader as Miss Stanmore, was dressed in the deepest mourning, which set off her beautifully white and transparent skin to the greatest possible advantage. She was reclining negligently on an ottoman; her long dark hair which she had left unconfined fell in thick profusion over the fairest shoulders in the world, and a hand of exquisite beauty and delicacy held a cambric handkerchief to her cheek. Her large dark eyes bore no traces of recent tears, but they were characterized by a languor and melancholy not less touching, and certainly far more becoming than those more vulgar indications of grief. The attitude I have just described was that of the fair mourner on my entrance, who however instantly quitted it for one she fancied more in character with the decorum necessary to be preserved before a stranger.

Our conversation naturally turned on the melancholy event which had originated our acquaintance, and I was pleased to find that she expressed herself with warmth for the interest I had taken in her position, and for the service I had so essentially rendered her. Of course I was too much of an Irishman to admit that she owed me the slightest obligation, and this led to a host of compliments on either side, that ended, much to my own astonishment, in an offer of my hand and the Morris estates. I naturally looked for some degree of reluctance on her part at the outset of this declaration; but with the most amiable ingenuousness imaginable, she at once assured me that her heart was wholly free, that she felt proud of the honour I had done her, and that as soon as she could recover the excessive grief into which the death of her unhappy brother had plunged her, she would submit her destinies to my guidance. Entraptured with this termination of my suit, I could not refrain from giving utterance to my joy, and I entreated her to name a period not very remote for the consummation of my happiness. At first she hesitated, urged appearances, and the respect due to the memory of her relative in opposition to my wishes, but at length finally overcome by my

pressing entreaties, consented to name that day six weeks for the performance of the marriage ceremony.

Perhaps my readers will be inclined to express surprise that any lady should have been so suddenly captivated by my appearance, as to have given her consent to an union with me, after so very short an acquaintance, especially one whom from her own account I had every reason to believe was immensely rich, and who, in point of beauty of person and elegance of manner, might have aspired to the hand of one of more elevated rank in society than myself. In order to do away with this surprise, I am therefore necessarily compelled to do violence to my native modesty, by giving a full description of my person. I am aware that this system of self-portraiture has of late become disgustingly common among authors; and as few of them can assign any other motive than self-conceit for sending forth their likenesses to the world, society cannot too severely reprobate so shameless and affected a practice. Feeling, therefore, as I do upon this subject, it will not be difficult to obtain belief, when I assert that nothing but galantry and a desire to vindicate the female taste could ever lead me into the indulgence of an encomium on my own person. It must be evident from what I have premised that what in all other authors is perfectly ridiculous, were it omitted in these pages, an offence of the most decided character against galantry and truth. I really scarcely know how to render myself sufficient justice, and yet retain that character for modesty for which I have all my life been remarkable; however I will endeavour to render as unpretending a portrait as possible.

In the first instance I am five feet eleven inches and three quarters in height, a stature which is, I believe, considered by ladies the beau ideal of proportion; my hair, which was once of the most glossy and luxuriant brown, curling and flowing in natural ringlets over my broad shoulders, is now, it must be confessed, a little grey, but that peculiar shade of grey, that imparts at once dignity, philanthropy, and

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VOL. II

mental expression to the countenance. My eyes of the same colour still retain all the fire of youth, and bespeaking a soul warm in friendship, yet impatient of control, are full of that peculiar archness of expression which denotes the existence both of passion and of wit. My head, (for I will not particularize my features,) is such as one would expect to find surmounting the shoulders of an extremely handsome man. Strength, grace, and agility are united in my person, and my legs are infinitely superior to those of my worthy friend the baronet, as well in the proportion and symmetry of the calf as in the beautiful turn of the ancle. As for my foot and instep, they have long been the wonder and admiration of Hoby, who declares that he is obliged to have lasts made exclusively for them. Here I must beg leave to pause, for although the reputation of a lady, for taste, judgment, and discrimination are at stake, I cannot really find confidence to write another word in commendation of my own personal qualifications and merits.

Never do I recollect having been more elated, than when issuing from the hotel of my intended, I traced my steps back to Meurice's, filled with anxiety to communicate my approaching happiness to the baronet, and somewhat curious moreover to perceive how this novel intelligence would be received by the ironical gentleman, whose tauntings with regard to the interesting stranger had so much annoyed me on the morning of our visit to the Morgue.

Sir Brien was sitting in his elbow chair when I entered, with his head leaning on his hand, and evidently indulging in no very agreeable reflections. This was a bad moment to communicate the secret of my happiness with any fair expectation of approval or congratulation on his part; in return, however my own spirits were too much exhilarated to admit of delay. I could not refrain from unburdening my mind of the weight of satisfaction which crowded it, and I was now determined to prove to him, that a man of my appearance might, in regard to beauty, age, and fortune, aspire to something higher than his sister. It was under the pre-

tence of consulting him in regard to my projected marriage, that I now entered on the disclosure with him. Seating myself, therefore, carelessly at his side, I remarked with a tone of indifference :—

“ Do you know my dear friend, that I have some serious thoughts of settling myself in life ?”

“ What the devil do you mean ?” he replied, starting with surprise. “ Surely you have no intention of marrying now that Harriet is gone ?”

“ I can assure you though that I have,” I returned somewhat warmly, for, in fact, I felt humiliated at the idea so pertinaciously entertained by O’Flaherty, that no other woman could be suited to me so well as his antiquated sister; nor was my annoyance at all diminished, when, after I had given this assurance, the baronet raised his hands and eyes to heaven, exclaiming,—

“ Bless my heart, who would have thought it ? Well indeed may it be said, that wonders never cease !”

“ Wonders !” I returned angrily, “ surely Sir Brien O’Flaherty, there can be no great wonder in this ? Although Major Nimbleton has never yet made my legs the subject of his commendation, I dare say they are not more crooked than some that he has eulogized, neither are they less deficient in calf.”

“ Nay, my dear Morris, I meant nothing personal I assure you ; but are you seriously thinking of marrying ?”

“ Seriously,” I returned. “ The fact is, I am anxious to get an heir to that earldom which is, you know, lying dormant in our family, and as I am likely soon to acquire a reputation for literature, that circumstance will of course be the means of reflecting honour on my son. With me, therefore, I am satisfied you will be of opinion that I have no time to lose.”

“ Most decidedly not,” returned the baronet, eagerly and somewhat maliciously, “ you certainly have but very little time to lose if you wish to get a son and heir ; but are you quite sure——”

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"Of what?" I interrupted.

"That the lady whom you propose marrying is not past the age of producing that son and heir."

"She is young and beautiful as an angel," I returned proudly; "do you think, my dear O'Flaherty, that I would bestow the name of Morris on any woman who was not?"

The baronet smiled satirically, "but are you also quite certain——"

"Of what?" I again demanded, rising from my seat and stretching out my tall and vigorous frame to its full height, "surely you do not mean to question my own capability?"

"Oh, no, certainly not," he replied. "I merely meant to ask if you were quite certain of obtaining the title?"

"Certain of it! As much so, my dear friend, as I am of getting an heir to it."

"But how do you know it will be a boy?" pursued the teasing and indefatigable baronet.

"What a silly question you propose; and how can you doubt the fact of its being a boy?"

"All very well, all very well," he pursued; "but who is to be the happy woman?"

"One who is a stranger to you at present, but who will be so no longer than you desire it. Ah, O'Flaherty! if ever you saw an angel in a human form, you will when you see her, admit that she is one."

Here the baronet affected to laugh at the warmth and colouring of the picture which I drew, but it was evident that his mind was torn with jealousy at my success.

"No doubt, no doubt, there cannot be a question of her being every thing that is perfect and beautiful; but by the way, as you speak of the distinction which your literary labours are likely to confer on this intended son and heir, permit me to ask how that journal of yours is getting on? I have not seen you much occupied with it lately;—the beauty of this lady, I suppose, has interfered? Ha! ha! ha!"

The satirical laugh with which this speech was terminated vexed me exceedingly; but, unwilling that he should perceive the effect produced on me by his caustic manner, I replied coolly and indifferently, that my only motive for not continuing my labours was want of subject.

"In that case, then," he eagerly inquired, "why do you not obtain access to the records of the hotel? I dare say, if you could contrive to get a peep into the ledger of the last two or three years' standing, you would find some *accounts* quite interesting enough for insertion in your work."

This suggestion pleased me much, and I at once resolved to avail myself of it. We therefore descended to the *salon* of Madame *La Proprietaire*, where, after some trifling conversation, I artfully introduced the topic on which I was solicitous to enter, by remarking on the immense profits which I said I had understood accrued to her from her English customers.

"Some of them, I grant you, are considerable," she replied; "but I can assure you there are others from whom I have derived infinitely more loss than profit, which nearly equalizes the affair. For instance," she pursued, "there is Major Nimbleton's account.—Not much to be made of such customers as that gentleman! There is also another major, who left behind him nothing but his diary."

"His diary did you say, my dear madame? Pray allow me to look at that diary,—I have a particular fancy for diaries. Will you oblige me with it?"

"With much pleasure," returned Madame *la Proprietaire*, hastening to her *secretaire*, and taking from a drawer a scroll of closely-written paper. "I regret much," she pursued, as she handed it to me, "that my ignorance of the English language has prevented me from reading this *souvenir* of the major, since his lucubrations might in some measure have beguiled me of the unpleasant recollections attached to his unreceipted bill."

Hastily unfolding the paper, the first words that met my eye were, "Diary of an English *Rouge et Noir* Player in

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Paris." "Good!" I exclaimed, "this will do famously! I shall now be enabled to give the readers of my tour a tolerable insight into the habits and practices of the more dissipated of their countrymen in the metropolis." Having thanked the good lady for the prize, of which I now possessed myself, I proposed to Sir Brien that we should retire to a small *bosquet* at the bottom of the garden and peruse its contents. To this the baronet, whose curiosity seemed to be nearly as much excited as my own, instantly assented, and we soon found ourselves quietly installed in our rustic seat. I then carefully assorted the ill-arranged pages of the manuscript, and read as follows.

CHAPTER VII.

"DIARY OF AN ENGLISH ROUGE ET NOIR
PLAYER IN PARIS.

"June 3rd, 182—. Arrived this morning in Paris, with seventeen hundred pounds in my pocket. Being much stupefied with travelling and want of rest, presumed that a walk would be beneficial to me. Dressed accordingly, and sallied forth as every Englishman does on his first arrival here, to Frascati's. Won eight hundred francs. Greatly pleased with my success, presuming that I should always have it in my power to do the same. Met a countryman to whom I lent my winnings. Insisted on his going to my hotel to sup. Drank enormously. Obligated to send my friend off in a coach. Went to bed myself a little inebriated. The wine weak and bad.

"4th. A brother officer who had heard of my being in Paris, called to see me before I was up. Invited him to breakfast with me in the expectation that that would prevent him from asking me to lend him money, which it was evident from his manner was his intention. This was of no avail. Obligated to lend him five hundred francs, as he had formerly been my captain. Sallied forth about three to Frascati's, where we spent the remainder of the day. Met another old friend, who engaged me to dine with him at Very's,

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but as he had lost all his money, considerably asked me to pay for the dinner. Did so accordingly, and lent him more. Drank a great deal too much Lafitte and Champagne; for going afterwards to No. 154 in the Palais Royal, I played without judgment, and lost every shilling I had with me. Invited to supper by a brother officer, and sent home dead drunk in a *fiacre*.

“ 5th. Awoke this morning with a violent head ache and parched tongue, the usual consequences of bad wine. Received a visit from an old acquaintance, who recommended me to try eau de vie as a restorative. Drank some himself and borrowed money from me. Sallied forth for a walk. Moved instinctively towards Frascati's. Staid there all day and saw Parson — lose twelve hundred pounds. Recollected some of his beautiful sermons on morality, preached in — Chapel, and of course determined that gambling could be no vice. Among the highest players this day was a certain merchant, who had retired to the continent on the profits of two or three fat bankruptcies. Saw a Frenchman break a rateau or money rake, and curse and storm in the most furious manner, because he lost a five franc piece. The French all very poor, greedy of money, and intolerably vivacious. Bad taste to shew pique when one loses. *Sang froid*, an indisputable quality in a player. Saw also several very eminent London tradesmen playing at what is called a sporting game, at which however they all lost. Met several intimate friends, who were of course highly delighted to see me. Arranged among ourselves that we should dine together every day during our stay in Paris, and that the man who happened to have the most money should pay the bill. Dined this eay at that first of restaurants, the Café de Paris, and had the pleasure of paying for the dinner myself. Proposed after having swallowed all that was good in the wine way, that we should once more adjourn to Frascati's. Proposition declined by the rest of the party, who all declared they had no more money to lose. Offered to divide the contents of my purse equally among the whole, which was

gladly acceded to. Lost all that remained to my own share in less than half an hour. Retired with a new acquaintance to the Café Richelieu, where I consoled myself for my losses by drinking copiously of eau de vie. Returned once more to Frascati's, and borrowed a sum of money from one of the head waiters. Lost that also. Borrowed more, and lent it to a French countess. Borrowed again and slept out.

"6th. Went as usual to Frascati's this morning, but having no money was compelled to be a quiet and uninterested spectator of the game. Went to Lafitte's for fifty pounds, where I found a letter from a friend, soliciting me to lend him money. Enclosed him five louis and returned once more to the Rue de Richelieu. Won three thousand francs. Paid the waiter; lent one thousand to a friend, and lost the remainder back, together with the sum I had just received at Lafitte's. Dinner hour fast approaching. Reminded by one of the party of the preceding day that we were all to dine together. Went accordingly to Laitaire's, where, after having feasted like princes, I was obliged to request that the bill might stand over until the following day, as all my friends protested they had no money. Pawned my watch, and went to the Theatre Francais. Was informed when the play was over that it was Othello. Should not have known it otherwise, it being so unlike the tragedy of Shakspeare. Went from the theatre to the Palais Royal; lost all my money on the watch. Borrowed some at the door on a valuable diamond ring, and lost that also. Obligated to return home, my friends all declaring they had nothing to lend me, having as they asserted, lost every sou since their entrance. Walked home in the rain, being without money to pay now for a *fiacre*. Drank lots of strong brandy and water, and made calculations on the several cards I had pricked during the day. The result of these was a firm persuasion that it was almost impossible not to win. Determined on my manner of playing the following day. Drank a last glass of brandy and water and went to bed, where my ideas becom-

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ing somewhat confused with new calculations of the system, I soon fell fast asleep.

"7th. Awoke very unwell indeed, and in a high state of fever. Bad brandy of course. Several friends dropped in to see me in the morning, and all waited for dinner. Went to 154 in the evening, after redeeming my watch and ring, with a fresh supply of cash from Lafitte's. Lost my money on my new system, and was again compelled to pledge my watch and ring. Lost that also. Invited by a brother officer to take ice and drink punch à la Romaine at the Café de Foi. Sent home drunk in a coach.

"8th. Had a friend to breakfast, who shewed me his system at *rouge et noir*, which he insisted was infallible, advising me by all means to try it. Asked him who was considered the safest banker in Paris, as I had some money to lodge, having received a letter of credit to a large amount, a few minutes prior to his arrival. Declared that he knew none safer than Lafitte, but as the amount was too great to entrust into the hands of any banker, strongly recommended my carrying it about my person. Advised, moreover, to play high and sportingly with it. Went to Mantte's with him, and drew the amount of my letter of credit, which was a thousand pounds. My friend stared to find this the large amount alluded to. Laughed in my sleeve at his disappointment, but still lent him a hundred; and went to Frascati's, where we remained nearly the whole of the day.— Lost and won alternately. Went, as usual, to dinner with our party, and paid Laitaire's bill of the day before. Drank a great deal of infamous champagne, and returned once more to Frascati's, where I now lost considerably. Went with a friend, to try my luck at the Saloon, and won a good deal at first. Supped afterwards, and lost every thing. Borrowed all I could of the usurers who frequent the place, and, confident of winning, unfortunately gave them my true address.

"9th. Found myself, on awakening from one of the most delightful dreams imaginable, literally without a shilling.—

Rang the bell, and gave directions that in the event of any one calling from the Saloon, the porter should say I had that morning set off for Florence. Had my breakfast brought into my bed-room. Remarkd a written paper stuck in one corner of the *serveitte*, opened it, and discovered that it was my bill. Felt no anxiety on this subject, as I knew I had plenty of friends in Paris, whom I had obliged with various sums, and who would be most happy to lend me in return any money that I might require. Repaired to Frascati's soon afterwards, and acquainted several men whom I met there, with my exigencies. They all exclaimed vehemently against my mania for *rouge et noir* playing, and candidly confessed they were utterly ruined themselves, consequently that it was quite out of their power to render me the slightest assistance. Inquired of several where they purposed dining, and was given to understand they were all engaged with their friends, but hoped to have the pleasure of seeing me some day either the next week or that succeeding. Met a brother officer, at length, who gave me an invitation, and kindly lent me ten Louis. Never once thought of my bill, but returned to Frascati's, although I had positively promised not to do so. Lost the money, as usual, and returned to my hotel in the most disconsolate mood imaginable. To crown my annoyance, was informed by the porter, that a monsieur from the Saloon was inquiring after me. Asked if I had seen a paper that had been sent up with my breakfast in the morning. Replied in the negative; took up my candle, and went to bed.

"Henceforth I abominate dates. Abused the waiter next morning, for having reminded me of my bill. Said I knew it was not customary to be called on to pay so soon, in a fashionable hotel, and desired him to tell the proprietor I was a gentleman, and not at all disposed to be put out of my way. "Little do they know," said I, loud enough for him to hear me as he closed the door, "little do they imagine who I am." Was glad to find that he heard me, as I rather hoped it might be the means of gaining me a respite. Wrote this

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morning to a very particular friend in England, for money, stating that I had not a shilling left to take me home.

"Amused myself, while waiting for his answer, with pricking cards at Frascati's, and reading the English papers at Galignani's, varying both of these occupations occasionally, and beguiling my appetite about the dinner hour, by examining and admiring the several works of art exhibited in the windows of the print shops. At length received an answer from my friend. Pledged my last coat but one to pay the postage. Pitied me much. Declared I was very foolish, and said he could not think of lending me money, to squander away at the gaming tables. Advised me strongly to leave that sink of iniquity, Paris, and return to England. Alas! why did he not inclose me the means of doing so, instead of boring me with his confounded advice. Desired me not to answer his letter, as he was just leaving London for the country, and knew not when he would return. Only an excuse to save postage.

"Paris is, undoubtedly, the worst place in the whole world to borrow money in. One's friends, or those who call themselves one's friends have so good an excuse for not lending, by declaring they have lost every thing at *rouge et noir*. As every Englishman plays in Paris, one cannot positively deny this, whatever may be one's opinion on the subject. Then there is the pretence that they have just written for a remittance, which, however, as their tenants do not pay well, they do not expect to receive for some time.

"Had recourse to another expedient. Watched the arrival of my several friends from England, and applied to them before they could have time to lose their money, or even to alledge that as a plea for not relieving me. Some of these, on being apprised of my destitute condition, forgot not only the names of their hotels, but even the streets in which they were situated; and gave as an excuse for not assisting me at the moment, that being afraid of trusting themselves with money in Paris, they had taken the pre-

caution not to bring any out with them. Others declared they were on the point of setting out for Switzerland, Italy, &c., and had their letters of credit made out accordingly. All had some plea for not lending me money, though all were of course delighted to see me, and regretted exceedingly that being otherwise engaged, or compelled to leave town early the next morning, they could not have the pleasure of asking me to dinner.

“Made it a rule, latterly, to return to my hotel late at night, and leave it early in the morning, in order to avoid being dunned for the payment of my bill. Wrote letters innumerable to all my relations and friends in England, nay, to every person with whom I had the slightest acquaintance, entreating them, each and all to lend me money.— Never received an answer to one of them. Reflected whether I should not call out every man who had insulted me by this neglect. Determined at last that, as there were so many it would be more prudent not. Received a letter from an old Irish friend, introducing his only son to me, with a request that, in the event of the young gentleman having an affair of honour with any of the continental people, I would take care that he acquitted himself in a manner satisfactory to his family, and creditable to his country.

“A great event in my Parisian career. Received a check for a legacy of nine hundred pounds, left me by a maiden aunt, just deceased, who used to make the rosettes for my gorget, and always admired me much in my splendid uniform. Got cash for the check at Lafitte's, and made a great display of my money at the hotel. Was not asked for my bill, of course. One never is, until one has nothing wherewith to defray it. Told the waiter I would not pay it, on account of their insolence. Went, with the whole amount of my legacy, to Frascati's, where I saw Parson—play with extraordinary success. Followed his system, and won largely. Had a levee of friends around me in a moment, each eagerly proffering his congratulations on my success, and concluding with ‘will you oblige me until to-morrow if it is not

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inconvenient?" or something to that effect. Had several to dine with me at the Rocher de Cancailles, where a particular friend of mine, now on his way to the south, for the benefit of his health, had very nearly involved himself in a serious quarrel with the remainder of my guests, by inconsiderately preparing to break up the party at an early period of the evening. An Irish gentleman, in particular, warmly resented this breach of decorum against my hospitality; and declared it to be highly ungentlemanly, for any one to attempt to infringe on the conviviality of such select friends, at a moment when they were just beginning to enjoy themselves together.

"Was introduced, soon after this, by a friend, to the countess's *soirées*. Lost considerably at her *écarté* parties. Dined frequently at Madame La Pain's, in the Rue de Choiseul. Spent the evening there usually at *écarté*. Visited Frascati's daily, and was invited to the anniversary ball, given to all royal *rouge et noir* players, in commemoration of the King of France's birthday. Went in full dress, as expected."

CHAPTER VIII.

"DIARY OF AN ENGLISH ROUGE ET NOIR
PLAYER IN PARIS, CONTINUED.

"THE winding staircase at Frascati's was brilliantly lighted up, and lined with evergreens, laurel, and all the more odoriferous plants and flowers that the season could supply ; while, in the saloon, the soft light emitted by numerous wreath-encircled chandeliers, attuned the heart to a sensation of voluptuousness, that was not at all enfeebled by the full and softened melody of the orchestra, which at the moment of my entrance, was playing an overture, that soothed each sense to pleasure, and thrilled the heart with the most delicious emotions. Neither, while the ear drank in the sweet harmony of intoxicating sounds, was the eye less fascinated or seduced by the graceful movements of the female dancers, whose floating and redundant tresses, and snow-white and half exposed bosoms, were in themselves sufficient to produce the most powerful excitement. Beauty was here arrayed in all the decorations of art ; and that softness of address and well assumed appearances of virtue, wherewith the Parisians of a certain *ton* so well know how to invest themselves, were here eminently displayed as with the glow of healthful beauty on her cheek, the wanton and dark-eyed dancer shot, meteor-like, through the mazes of the quadrille, or performed her part in the more subtle and voluptuous evolutions of the waltz. Not

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a gesture was used, not a word was uttered, at which the strictest propriety could cavil; and while the whole scene was such as to impress the admiring stranger with surprise, and force from him the admission, that woman may be fair and fascinating, and yet be frail; there was nothing but the recollection of the place where they were met, to proclaim to him that her brightest ornament was no more.

"I introduced myself to a partner. She looked the fairest of the fair, and seemed formed by the caprice of nature to fascinate every eye and subdue every heart. I waltzed with her and her movements were elegant and graceful in the extreme. When the dance had terminated, I handed her an ice, and sat down beside her, somewhat touched I confess. Presently, a certain old English baronet, who had left his lady at the other side of the channel, approached my companion, and sighed out a compliment on the exquisite perfection of her dancing. There is nothing, on this side of the grave, that I hate so cordially, as to hear a grey-beard pour forth his sickly homage in the ear of youth and beauty. Age and wrinkles sadly accord with love, in my opinion. Elderly gentlemen, however, very probably think differently on the subject. Be that as it may, it annoyed me not a little to discover the familiarity which seemed to subsist between the baronet and the lady, and I could not arrive at any other conclusion, than that they were old acquaintances. I started from my seat, and hearing the dealer in the adjoining announce '*rouge gagné et la couleur*' several times consecutively, resolved to follow the run. Bowing therefore to the lady, I took my leave, observing that I should do myself the pleasure of calling on her on the following morning. The baronet looked uneasy. She uttered no reply, but casting on me one of her most languishing glances, seemed to say that she should expect me.

"On entering the *rouge et noir* room, I found every seat occupied. Chance, however, soon threw one in my way, for a beautiful and splendidly dressed female, who had lost all her money in opposing the run, now rose like a fury,

and dashing her chair about the room quitted the table.— One of the waiters handed me the seat, and I resumed the place she had occupied. Fancying that the run would continue, I now staked five hundred francs on the red, but lost the *coup*. The game now appeared to be an intermittance of colour, I therefore tried the red once more, and to my sorrow discovered that it was not an intermittance, for again I lost the *coup*. With this I lost my temper also, and pulling out the remainder of my money, I placed it before me. At this moment, a fashionable looking fellow who sat beside me summoned one of the waiters, and pointing to a lady who was playing at the opposite extremity of the table, inquired who she was. On being informed that she was an Opera dancer, he gave the man a Napoleon, observing, 'that will do, I shall certainly take her under my protection.' Then, turning to me, he proceeded to pass several very high encomiums on her beauty, declaring, as he had previously done to the waiter, that he would take her under his protection, even though it should cost him half his fortune. He then alluded to the immense losses he had sustained that evening, and concluded by helping himself to a billet of a thousand francs. I played until I found that, like my predecessor, I was not all in luck, when, like her also, I dashed the chair from behind me, and thrusting my hands into my pockets, paced up and down the room like a maniac.

"I now, in my turn, summoned the waiter, and giving him a five franc piece, inquired the name of the gentleman who had questioned him relative to the Opera dancer.

"'Monsieur Nimbleton,' replied the fellow smiling, or rather grinning sarcastically.

"'The devil it is !' I exclaimed,—'so then, in addition to my losses I have been done out of a thousand francs by that notorious fellow Nimbleton. What a d——d fool !' Almost unconscious of what I was doing, I once more strode into the ball-room, where, after having overturned one or two of the dancers, in an attempt to gain the sofa, I

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cast myself violently down in a lady's lap. A scene of the greatest confusion now ensued, for the lady screamed most immoderately, and every one came flying, even from the gaming tables, to ascertain what was the matter. The fair one, however, was much more frightened than hurt; yet, the awkward predicament into which my vexation had betrayed me checked the violence of my temper, and after I had made a suitable apology to the innocent victim of my anger, I had leisure to feel ashamed of myself. This feeling did not however last long, for I soon discovered that I had not been at all singular in my conduct. Numbers in the course of the evening, did the same; and indulging in monologies of execration at their ill fortune, ran throughout the suite of rooms more like madmen than any thing else. Supper was at length announced, and I retired to the saloon, which is situated at the bottom of the garden. The repast was of the most sumptuous description, and the *cuisine* legitimately French, ornamental dishes being substituted for those of a more sordid kind. Champagne and other rich and exhilarating wines were supplied in abundance to the guests; and before the company thought of separating the treacherous dawn had revealed all the ghastliness attendant on female dissipation. Nay, even the sun rising from his eastern couch, seemed to reflect his rays only in scorn on those who so recently had shone like constellations amid that brilliant galaxy of beauty. Then were revealed in painful contrast, the pale and haggard cheek, and the raven tresses hanging loose and dishevelled from the half-contracted brow, while, overcome with stupor, the eye-lid dropped, and every movement of the frame became more inert and languid with each succeeding moment. How painful and how disgusting was the change thus affected in these fair forms and exquisitely chiselled features, whereon a few hours before my gaze had lingered with rapture and delight! Methought, that even such would be the appearance of angels after a night's debauch, were angels permitted to indulge in the same manner; and pitying their folly in

suffering themselves to be thus seen and exposed, I returned to my hotel with empty pockets and an aching heart.

"Slept all the next day. Left money with the porter to pay for the interment of an unfortunate countryman, who, having contrived to lose every thing he had in the world at Frascati's, shot himself in the apartment adjoining mine.— Nota bene : an hotel in Paris the last place I should wish to die in. By law, every corpse must be consigned to the grave within twenty-four hours after death, but even this short period is frequently abridged by the proprietors of hotels, who, desirous of having the body immediately removed, seldom fail to antedate the period of decease. Then comes the superintendant of the obsequies, who, with a truncheon headed with lead and shaped like a drumstick, as a staff of office, hits the deceased or entranced subject on the pit of the stomach; and after this ludicrous test of vitality, if no reply be given by the individual thus operated upon, he is deemed legally dead. An excellent precaution this to prevent people being buried alive!

"Received a letter from my wife, who complained of my not having written to her, and declared she had been informed by an intimate friend of ours, that I had married again in Paris. Said that she and my children had, in consequence of my neglect, been compelled to take up their abode in the house of that marvel of the creation, a benevolent relation. Could not believe her story from that very circumstance.— Had she said a friend or an acquaintance, I should not have doubted it to the same degree, but relations, we all know, never do these things. Should not, by the way, forget the legacy left me by my old aunt, the rosette-maker. She was an exception, however to the general rule. Determined, notwithstanding, to send my wife some little relief as soon as possible. Placed her letter in a conspicuous part of my secretaire, lest I should forget it altogether.— Went to Frascati's in the course of the day, and lost all the money I took with me. Returned for more, and treated a number of my friends to a dinner at Very's; after which I

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lost all my money at 154. Went once more to my hotel for five hundred francs, but instead of going to the gaming table, repaired to the lodgings of the lady I had danced with at Frascati's ball. Found her every thing that was charming and amiable. Left my five hundred behind. Sent for a hair-dresser. Had my boots cleaned in the Passage de l'Opera, and sallied forth to Frascati's. Borrowed money from the waiters. Lost every sou and went home.

"Gave a shirt and a pair of pantaloons to an English gentleman, an ex-member of parliament, who had been completely ruined this summer by the *rouge et noir*. Paid for the interment of two countrymen whose losses at the saloon had caused them to drown themselves in the Seine. Went to Frascati's, where I played all day. Invited several friends to dine with me at the Cafe Hardy. Returned to the Rue de Richelieu, and in the course of a very short time found myself a beggar. Borrowed money again from the waiters, lost it, and went away. Finding that it would be useless returning there, until I had paid them, I pledged my watch, and went to 154. Won a considerable sum there, then returned to Frascati's, where I paid the waiters what I had borrowed, and lost the remainder. Saw the fellow to whom I had pledged my watch, speaking to the waiters. Asked them soon afterwards for another loan, but they said they had no money. Legacy all gone, and no more good old maiden aunts to leave me a second. Game quite up.

"Received another letter from my wife in the morning. Thought her unnecessarily troublesome and importunate. Would not answer her, but wrote to the relation she said was supporting her, and requesting him to lend me a sum of money. Had a reply by return of post. Declared he would do nothing for me: that I was a bad husband, and unfeeling father, and a despicable and infamous character: finished, by saying I might go to the devil if I pleased. All this I treated with indifference. Felt only that he had not sent me money. Very low spirited in consequence.

“Was not suffered to starve, however, having had the good fortune to meet with a young Englishman, whose father, General Manvers, I had known in India. Saw I was poor, and invited me every day to dine with him. Gave me a hundred pounds at his departure for England, and entreated me earnestly to send part of it to my wife, and pay my bill at the hotel. Assured him that every shilling of it should be appropriated in the way he recommended. Thought better of it when he was gone, and deemed it a great pity that the proprietors of the gaming tables should retain possession of all my money. Resolved to have another trial. Dined at Mountain's, in the Rue de Castiglione. Dinner good, and company select. Found my way, afterwards, to Frascati's, and lost every thing. Had the good fortune to dine with a friend next day, and drank much, though the wines were bad. Went to Frascati's in the evening, but the waiters, finding that I had no money to play, turned me out for being inebriated. Had I been rich, this disgrace would not have injured me in the estimation of my friends, who, on the contrary, would have treated it as an excellent joke, while dining at my expense. The appellation of a queer fellow, would have been the limit of reproach. But now, alas! what a pretext did it prove for denying my relief! How exempt should poverty ever be even from the shadow of a fault! My acquaintance had no sooner heard of the manner in which I had been expelled from Frascati's, than shocked at the disgraceful notoriety I had incurred, they all unanimously determined that it was no longer reputable to be seen even speaking to me. How often does it happen, when penury and misfortune assail the once favoured and courted being, some one of those weaknesses which are common to every child of humanity, is tenaciously remembered by his former friends, and rendered a plea for discontinuing his acquaintance! Alas! I am not wantonly and deliberately bad. Temptation and a vacillating mind have, it is true made me but an indifferent husband, and a careless father, but still I would not do any thing to injure my family for the world. Passed two or three days almost without eating, and thought seriously of reforming my life.”

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CHAPTER IX.

"DIARY OF AN ENGLISH ROUGE ET NOIR
PLAYER IN PARIS, CONCLUDED.

"NOTHING left in the world besides my half-pay as captain, though I have assumed the brevet rank of major while travelling. Too small a pittance this to admit of my sending any portion of it to my wife. Lucky enough to have a rich relation to support her. Bad policy to be too fastidious or too proud, when one is nearly done up in the world.

"Received a letter of assignation from a French marquise, who has fallen desperately in love with me. Appointed to meet her towards dusk in the garden of the Tuileries, and on the terrace next the Seine. Made some delicate allusion to my circumstances which rather annoyed me. Could not bear the idea of submitting to a dependence, which must ever entail a consciousness of self-degradation. A violent struggle between pride and necessity, honour and inclination.—Tore up the letter, and resolved not to keep the appointment.

"Got Lafitte to advance me a quarter's half-pay. Felt as elated as if I had been possessed of thousands, and went to dine at Lataire's. Lent some of my money to a friend. Drank much, and afterwards went to 129, in the Palais Royal, and, like a d—d fool again, lost every thing. Quite at a loss what course to pursue. Hesitated, as I paced up

and down the crowded avenues of the Palais, whether I should drown, hang or shoot, myself. Adopted neither of these expedients, but changed my mind in regard to the assignation with the marquise. Flew to the gardens with desperate impatience. Was too late for the rendezvous. Every gate closed, and not a soul left within. Knew not what to do, for I was utterly ignorant of her place of abode, and therefore felt that all my hopes in that quarter were at an end. Went to bed immediately on my return home, and passed a sleepless night.

“ Heard that a female relative, who had married a man of large fortune, was arrived in Paris. Imagined that I had some claim on her gratitude, as she had been left an orphan in her infancy, and had been entirely brought up and supported by my father, who had, moreover, given her a most accomplished education. Called several times, but was invariably told she was out. Met her accidentally one day, and told her who I was. Pretended, at first, she did not recollect me, as she had not seen me for the last six months; said I was greatly altered indeed in appearance; accused me of being a confirmed gambler, and said that all my friends in England, to whom I had applied for assistance, had cautioned her against me, and strongly advised her to give me nothing; a course she was determined to pursue. Declared that she pitied my poor forsaken wife and children infinitely more than she did me. Asked her if she had ever sent them any thing. Looked confused, and said she had not, because she feared that, whatever might be given to them, would only be transferred to me, and lost at the gaming-table. Turned on my heel, and quitted her in disgust.

“ Went to prayers at the Ambassador's chapel to see if I could meet with any one from England, who was likely to lend me money. Heard an excellent sermon preached in denunciation of the heinous vice of gaming, by a parson whom I had seen playing very high stakes at the *salon* a few nights before. Felt duly impressed of course with the justice of his anathemas, and on my return home without

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having succeeded in the object of my attendance at chapel, sat down to compose a few notes of advice for the benefit of my countrymen on coming to Paris. The following is the substance :—

“Above all other places of public resort in Paris, avoid Frascati’s, and G——’s reading rooms, for there you are likely to meet with more of your countrymen than it may at all times be profitable to know. At all events avoid the former, unless, as a very necessary consequence of the indulgence, you make up your minds to be even as I am now, that is to say, nearly a pauper from lending, losing, and giving dinners to a set of worthless and ungrateful fellows. The first question that will be put to you (presuming, that in violation of the warning thus given now you do persist in visiting that haunt of dissipation) will be, ‘Where do you reside?’ If, however, you value your own quiet and interests, do not on any account disclose the secret. It will not do to say, that you cannot recollect either the street or the name of the hotel, since that has become a hackneyed pretext. ’Tis too shallow to be believed. You must put on an air of confusion and embarrassment, and declare in confidence that you are ashamed to tell, the narrowness of your means occasioned by extensive losses in a chancery suit (a chancery suit is the eternal excuse alledged for comparative poverty by every broken down gentleman in England at the present day) having compelled you to take up your residence in an obscure and unfashionable part of the city; that you are even obliged to be here under an assumed name, and that in consequence all inquiries after you in your own must be ineffectual. If, however, your acquaintances persist in being informed of this name, and the longitude and latitude of your *quartier*, which by the way is not at all likely after the above allusion to the state of your finances, direct him to some petty shabby place as remote as possible from the *rogue et noir* tables. To the proprietor or proprietress of this establishment you must allow so much a month for the trouble of informing your dear

disinterested countrymen that you are just that moment gone out ; however, that you are certain to be back for dinner, as you have ordered it be prepared by such an hour. She may say, moreover, that your dinner bills amount to very little indeed, as you seldom have anything beyond a cheap dish ; still that she is certain you will be happy to see any of your friends. She should however, venture on a few sneers at your poverty, and declare that you never take even *vin ordinaire* with your meals, concluding with a hint that she believes your willingness to receive your friends only springs from a desire to place them under some sort of obligation, in order that you may feel yourself justified in borrowing money from them.

“ Meanwhile you may occupy the most splendid apartments either in the Rue de la Paix, the Place Vendôme, Rue Castiglione, or the Rue de Rivoli ; but if you would not be overwhelmed with an influx of morning visitors, whose custom it is to breakfast with you even though uninvited, cleave to you throughout the day, recommend you to some capital house at which you may be certain of getting the best dinners and the best wines, and finally conclude by declaring they have been disappointed in their expectations of a remittance, and will esteem it a particular favour if you will oblige them only for a few days : if, I say, you would not be tormented to death by these people, you must adopt the expedient I have pointed out above, as the only means of getting rid of them. Should you, however happen to be a physician, you may have recourse to another plan ; you can say that you have just come from England in charge of a testy invalid, whose aversion to visitors is such, that should your dear friends persist in calling on you, it would be the inevitable means of risking the loss of your situation, in which case it would be wholly out of your power at any future period to render them essential assistance. By way of consoling them for this disappointment, however you may state that the invalid has made his will in your favour, and that as you are his only medical attendant, you hope to be enabled shortly to accommodate

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your friends as you would wish. Say anything, hint anything, no matter how bad, against yourself, provided by so doing you can get rid of these leeches. Do not on any account admit that you have received any part of your salary, or even intimate that you expect it before his death. Do these things, and you will do well.

“Let no sober Englishman be silly enough to bring his wife here. Inevitable ruin will be the consequence if he does. She will be eternally running him into expense for trinkets, silks, and Parisian dresses, in order that she may astonish all her female acquaintance on her return to England, by the fancied elegance of her taste. This by the way, is one of the few evils attendant on a Paris life that I avoided.

“If, however, you are resolved on going to the devil your own way, you have only to select one of your own countrymen as an agent on the occasion. The first place to which he will conduct you will be a *restaurateur* of the first class, when, after having eaten and drunk to his soul's content at your expense, he will conduct you to the *rouge et noir* tables, the nearest way to which, from your hotel, he will take due care to explain to you. On the road he will amuse and excite you by the account of the vast fortunes which are every day made in these places by those who have money and boldness sufficient to attempt them, and will perhaps close his brilliant description by adducing, as a particular instance among the many, the almost unparalleled successes of a certain English parson, whose enormous winnings would almost pay his just and numerous debts, had he but the disposition to discharge them. He begins by pointing out the game usually played by his reverence, and you commence operations forthwith under his directions.— If you win, he fails not to call upon you on the following morning before you are up, and bolting into your sleeping room in a violent hurry, informs you that he is exceedingly pressed for money, and concludes with a hint that the trifle which his counsel and direction enabled you to win the pre-

ceding evening will be sufficient for his purpose. As a matter of course the money is to be repaid on the arrival of the first post from England. On the following day he makes his appearance, under the plea, perhaps, of having heard that you were indisposed! is delighted to find that he has been misinformed. Knows not how to apologize for the request he is again about to make, but candidly admits that he is once more without a *sou*, and will feel infinitely obliged to you if you can accommodate him with a trifling amount, until the arrival of the expected post, when the whole shall be repaid. Do not, however, suppose that punctuality in liquidating these loans, should you be generous enough to grant them, will be a characteristic feature in the conduct of the borrower. It is possible that the post may arrive and bring no letter, or that bringing a letter, that letter may contain no remittance, or that the remittance arriving, it may be appropriated to other uses. These things often are.

“This advice, however, is not to be understood as bearing allusion to the majority of Englishmen in Paris, neither is it pretended to be insinuated that all are of the description of character I have just portrayed. No, these remarks apply simply to those wretches whose vile practices have made them exiles from their native land, or rendered them too notorious to admit of their succeeding in procuring dupes any longer at home. Yet these men one incurs great hazard of encountering in Paris. Play often proves the medium of forming acquaintances of the most dangerous description, and in houses appropriated to purposes of play they are ever to be found. But even, independently of these considerations, nothing tends so much to the debasement of the human mind. It makes every man who indulges in it a borrower, and takes from him the power of repaying the obligation he has contracted. The habit of asking, moreover, begets an insensibility to shame, and where shame is not, honour is seldom to be found. Play makes us acquainted, too, with men who have all the appetites which mo-

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ney and absence of moral principle bring to early maturity. When, as is almost ever the case with these men, the means of indulgence are gone, the appetites still remain, and honour and justice are but feebly opposed as barriers to their gratification. The mind, like purer metals, losses something of its native excellence by constant attrition with materials of a baser kind, and I have seen men who, simply from their intercourse, with old and hardened gamesters, have lost that bias to virtue for which, in early life they had been distinguished, and become nearly as depraved and debauched as themselves.

"Dined seldom oftener than twice a week. Felt some consolation of mind, however, from the reflection that my wife and children were living comfortably with their relations. Met a man of large fortune, who had come over with his family for purposes of economy. Said he had not even the price of a dinner at his command, his wife having lost every thing at *écarté* that he had not himself squandered at the *rouge et noir*.

"My clothes becoming very shabby. Met an old friend to whom I had lent money to enable him to run away from England. Accosted him in terms of great familiarity and friendship. Led me under a gateway and addressed me as follows :

"My dear friend, you know that you are very shabbily dressed, and as I have an utter aversion to be seen speaking to shabbily dressed people, you will excuse me if I request that in future you will not appear to know me in the event of your seeing me with any respectable looking person. There is no man living for whom I have a higher esteem than yourself, and I regret exceedingly it is out of my power to assist you with money, yet if my advice can be of any service to you, you may command it."

"Laughed in the fellow's face, turned on my heel, without replying, and went back very low spirited to my hotel. Heard the *propriétaire* desire the waiter not to supply me with any thing whatever until I had settled my bill. Threat-

ened to send for a *commissaire de police* to have me taken up. Must watch an opportunity to steal out. Shall not return of course. Have sent all my little stock of moveables away at sundry times under the cloak of a female acquaintance. Hope she won't deceive me. Greatly dissatisfied with the impertinent demands of the *proprietaire* for money. Never can think of paying her after this; and shall patronize the house no more. - Now, then, I am off, but must leave my journal behind me, as my pockets are full of linen. Hope some future visitor to the hotel may profit by what I have written ——."

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CHAPTER X.

"Poor major!" exclaimed the baronet, as I closed the abruptly terminated manuscript, "he was a generous creature, though a thoughtless one, and notwithstanding his culpable desertion of his wife and children, one rather sinned against than sinning. Madame *la Proprietaire* seemed to say that he was a second Nimbleton, but I confess I think him a very different sort of character indeed."

"Not a doubt of it, my dear Sir Brien," I returned. "Nimbleton appears to have passed his life in the study of making dupes, whereas the unfortunate writer of these notes, with a generosity peculiar to the more liberal and gentlemanly of his profession, has evidently been preyed upon by a set of designing fellows styling themselves his friends, who were the first to abandon and disavow all connexion with him as soon as his means of supplying them with dinners were exhausted."

"Just so," observed the baronet, "and as you perceive, even he was made the dupe of his brother major at Frascati's on one occasion. That circumstance alone, I confess, interests me in his favour. At the same time, to be just, I must say, that if the one was more honest and confiding, the other was also more clever and discriminating. Nimbleton knew not only how to play his part, but how to judge his man."

"True," said I, with a sneering manner that I could ill

suppress, "his discrimination was never more happily exercised than when he bestowed these fulsome encomiums on your penetration of character, and affected to appeal to your superior judgment on every, the most trivial occasion. Never was the gross incense of flattery so happily administered; never was it more liberally rewarded. I think your loans to the *discriminating* major were rather numerous, and to some amount, Sir Brien."

"They were, Mr. Morris," returned the baronet piquedly, "and nearly as extensive I fancy, as the contributions levied on yourself. The major's approval of your journal, which to myself he declared, in confidence, was the most stupid thing he had ever listened to, was not, I fancy, without its reward. You too, I think, lent him several sums of money, as the price of his condescension in hearing it read to him."

This was the bitterest language that had ever passed between Sir Brien and myself, and in the present instance he decidedly had the advantage, inasmuch as I found he was in possession of the secret of my own weakness. I had all along believed that no one was privy to the fact of my having been duped by this most accomplished of swindlers, and I certainly never should have thought of publishing the story of my own folly and infatuation myself. Sir Brien was the last person I should have supposed likely to have been in possession of the truth without taunting me in return for the severe animadversions I had passed on his own extreme credulity in regard to Nimbleton, and now that I made the discovery, I felt exceedingly humiliated and annoyed.

"Well, well, my dear baronet," I resumed after a short pause, "I see you are not ignorant of my weakness; but who would not have been taken in by the plausible manners of this fellow? It must be admitted, that we have both suffered from his artifices, therefore it ill becomes either of us to taunt the other with his credulity; at the same time you must admit that I always told you that Nimbleton would prove a villain, and there is this difference between your conduct and mine, that you suffered yourself to be duped by

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him under the impression that he was a man of honour, while I paid the penalty of his acquaintance under the fair persuasion that he was every thing that was disreputable."

"And this proves," said the baronet smiling satirically, as he left the sentence to be supplied by myself,—

"That I was the greatest simpleton of the two; but let us dismiss this hateful subject from our thoughts altogether. Our connexion with Major Nimbleton reflects too little credit on either of us, not to render it desirable that his name should be for ever banished from our conversation. But to return to the narrative of his brother major. How delighted I am to discover in the only sincere and noble minded friend he found amid the host of those who professed themselves such, the generous yet basely calumniated Manvers. Ah! Sir Brien, I was not deceived in my opinion of his character at least."

"You are right Morris," returned the baronet with emotion, "you always rendered justice to that interesting young man, and I can never forgive myself for the harsh language I made use of to him on the morning of his final departure from the hotel. To say the best of it, presuming he had even been what I then thought him, it was unkind and ungenerous; but the fact is that my temper has become exceedingly sour ever since this trip to Paris was first brought on the tapestry that foolish old sister of mine."

"What an excellent husband," I continued, pursuing the train of my own thoughts, "Manvers would have made for Emily! It is evident they are both much attached to each other, and had his want of fortune not proved an objection. I know no young man who could be found more eligible in every sense to render her happy."

"His want of fortune," returned the baronet impressively, "would have proved no objection whatever with me, had I had reason to think favourably of his character, and was satisfied of the respectability of his birth. Every shilling that I have in the world will be Emily's at my death, and my fortune, thank Heaven, is quite sufficient, not only for her, but

for the man on whom she may bestow her affections. "Would to God," he resumed, after a pause, "that the past could be recalled, for so satisfied am I of the honour and truth of young Manvers, that I would cheerfully give my consent to his marriage with Emily to-morrow."

Delighted to hear this avowal of his sentiments in favour of my young friend, I grasped the hand of the baronet with a violence so expressive of satisfaction, that the old gentleman was compelled to entreat me to recollect that his fingers were not made of iron, to be enabled to resist a pressure which he declared was little inferior to that of a blacksmith's vice.

"Depend upon it, my dear friend," I exclaimed, after releasing his hand, and apologizing for my vivacity, "Manvers is every thing you can desire on the score of character, with the exception perhaps of a slight addiction to play, which his own good sense and the painful experience he seems to have had of the folly and inefficacy of such a pursuit, would soon enable him to surmount. As for his birth, it is unexceptionable, since this manuscript states him to be the son of a general officer now serving in India. It will, it must be a match between him and Emily."

"With all my heart," returned the baronet, "but you forget, Morris, that the young man has absented himself altogether in such a way that it is probable we may never either see or hear of him again. Do not therefore make any allusion to this conversation before Emily. Poor child! she will only be the more pained to find that I have given my consent to her connexion with her lover, at a moment when he is lost to her for ever."

"But he shall not be lost to her," I exclaimed, with an energy that startled O'Flaherty, "if he is among the living, I will find him out. I will cause a description of his person to be advertised in every paper in Paris, and will offer a reward to whomever can give me any intelligence that will lead to his discovery. I have long fixed my heart upon this union, and I am determined not to be disappointed."

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"Upon my word, Manvers ought to feel very much obliged to you, if he knew the deep interest you take in his happiness. Really, Morris, while I admit that I knew I was in error in the estimation I had formed of his character, I must say, that I never saw any human being so completely fascinated by another as you appear to have been by this young man. Were I not fully satisfied of the contrary, I should feel half inclined to suspect that he was connected with you by nearer and dearer ties than those arising from the mere partiality of acquaintance. In short, I should believe him to be of the blood of the Morrisises, and no other than your son."

"My son! Sir Brien," I exclaimed, starting from my seat in amazement at this imputation on my age. "I thank you for the honour you are willing to accord me, but I am not yet sufficiently advanced in years to have a son of the age of Manvers. Moreover," I pursued, determined that he should feel ashamed of his insinuation, "you know I have never been married; and you can hardly suppose, that if I had a natural and unacknowledged son, I should seek to unite him with the niece of the most punctilious man in Ireland on the score of birth, and that man my most intimate friend."

"Pshaw!" rejoined O'Flaherty, with something like confusion in his manner, "how can you suppose me serious in the observation which I made? However," he pursued in a more jocular tone, "whether he is your son or not, I consent to take him for my nephew whenever he may think proper to make the application."

"Spoken like a true Irishman," I returned, grasping his hand once more, but with less violence than before.—
"D—n that scoundrel Nimbleton," I continued after a slight pause,— "but for his vile insinuations against his character, you never would have used the severity of language which drove him forth from our society, and has rendered him perhaps an outcast in the world."

"Amen!" retorted the baronet; "but talking of Nimble-

ton reminds me of his brother major, the hero of this MS. I should like, amazingly, to know what became of the poor fellow at last. Perhaps the good lady of the establishment can give us some account of his history from the period when his journal was so abruptly terminated. Suppose we return the papers, and take the opportunity of inquiring?"

"By all means let us inquire," I replied; "but as for returning the papers, I shall first see whether I cannot prevail on the *proprietaire* to relinquish her claim in my favour. They can be but of little use to her, and I should like much to insert the whole of them in my tour, for I really conceive that they throw a decided light on the general character and occupation of English gamblers in Paris."

"Among which number we ought, in strict justice to class ourselves," observed the baronet good humouredly; "for not even your years, Morris, have proved sufficient to guard us against a folly which may find some apology in youth and inexperience, but which when practised by grey-beards like ourselves, is without the shadow of an excuse. You perceive that I can philosophize on and condemn the principle, even though I am weak enough to yield to the infatuation myself."

How very fond, I thought Sir Brien is of coupling me with himself whenever allusion is made to years, as if he was not a much older man, both in appearance and in fact. I made no remark, however, to the baronet of what was passing in my mind, but chewing the cud of my annoyance, moved on with him to the interior of the hotel.

"*Eh! bien, messieurs,*" exclaimed our loquacious *proprietaire*, as we made our appearance once more in the little back-parlour, where all the important affairs of the hotel were usually transacted, "have you read the major's papers, and if so, is there any thing in them by which I may obtain a clue to the discovery of his friends in England? It is really very hard on a poor industrious woman like me to lose so much money by these *vauriens*, these *mauvais sujets* of *rouge et noir* players, who spend all their mo-

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ney in the gaming houses, instead of paying their just and lawful debts. Were it not for such honourable people as you, I should be utterly ruined; but tell me if his address is any where to be found among those papers."

This and several other philippics were uttered in a single breath, and when she paused from very exhaustion, I ventured to express a belief that the major, although certainly much to blame, was, nevertheless, more the victim of the rapaciousness of others, than the deliberate swindler she had designated him; and I said, that I doubted not he would, soon or late, satisfy the just claims she had on his purse.

"Do not imagine any thing of the kind, monsieur," she pursued; "for if he had possessed any of these honourable feelings and just principles for which you give him credit, he has long since had it in his power to prove them."

"How so?" I demanded. "At the very moment when his journal closes, he appears to have been reduced to the last extremity, and utterly destitute of means. He was then on the point of leaving the hotel secretly, in consequence of having overheard you give directions that a *commissaire de police* should be sent for to arrest him."

"What! did he write all these particulars down?" exclaimed the astonished *proprietaire*. "I should have thought he would have found his situation too critical to have entered into such details at such a moment, but the fact is, the *sang froid* of *messieurs les Anglais* is not to be shaken under any circumstances, however embarrassing.— But to proceed with my story. Just as the *commissaire de police* reached the *Prote Cochere*, with the intention of arresting the major as an adventurer, the latter was detected stealing cautiously from behind it into the street. The alarm was at once given, and he was immediately secured. At that moment a carriage passed in front of the hotel, and a lady who was in it, attracted by the slight tumult which the affair had occasioned, put her head through the window, and saw what was passing. She seemed at once to recognize the major, whose arm was secured in the tight grasp of

the *commissaire*, for having desired her coachman to stop, she inquired what had given rise to this singular scene. On being informed of the true state of the affair, she sent for me, and told me she was an intimate friend of the gentleman and knew his family, who were of the highest respectability. That she had formerly received obligations from a sister of his in England, which made it a duty with her to relieve him from any temporary embarrassment he might now be labouring under, and she hoped I would suffer her to become responsible for the amount of the debt. She said she did not think proper to declare her name, but I might easily perceive by the arms on her carriage (which was indeed the fact) that she was a person of distinction.— Perceiving that I hesitated, she drew forth her purse, and emptying it of its contents, ‘here,’ she pursued, ‘are a hundred francs, the whole amount of what I brought out with me, with the view of making two or three trifling purchases; however, I can easily dispense with these until a later period. Had I anticipated any thing of this kind, I would have provided myself with a larger sum, and your claim should have been settled this very instant. However, if you will accept this *bagatelle*, I pledge myself to call to-morrow about the same hour and defray the whole amount. Of course you will not object to the departure of the gentleman in my carriage, since his situation here must be unpleasant to the last degree, after the scene which his just occurred.’

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CHAPTER XI.

“AH, messieurs,” pursued the *proprietaire*, after a pause, “who would not have been duped by such language, and deceived by such an appearance of candour and sincerity? But what could I do? What could any other person have done under similar circumstances? If I persisted in arresting the major, it could be to no serviceable end, since I was fully aware that he had no money whatever to defray my bill; and though any feeling of resentment I might have entertained against him by reason of his disingenuous conduct, might have been gratified by the ignominy to which he would have been exposed in being turned out of the country as an adventurer and a vagabond, still this would not at all have advanced the interests of my house; and you well know, gentlemen, that with us poor *proprietaires*, who fag and toil unceasingly in the service of others, to neglect our interest would be to draw down certain ruin on our heads. What wonder, then, if I yielded to the solicitation of the strange lady, whose manner and language were certainly such as to convince me that she was not a person of the ordinary class? In a word, I assented to her proposal; desired the major to consider himself at liberty to go where he pleased, and even held the door of the carriage while he ascended and placed himself at her side. From that hour to the present I have never beheld either of them.”

“What!” exclaimed the baronet, “did she not call ~~as~~ she

promised on the following day? Well, how very singular! I did not expect this from such a woman as you have described her to be. But what style of person was this lady; and could you not ascertain her rank from the arms on her carriage?"

"She was a woman of about forty," pursued the *propriétaire*, "and still in all the vigour of her beauty. Her person was commanding, and with a good deal of *embonpoint*; but what principally attracted my attention and prepossessed me in her favour, was the beauty of her mouth and the sweetness of her voice. It was impossible for me, even as a woman, to listen to her, and not be fascinated by her language. As for discovering her rank from the arms on her carriage, I confess I am not sufficiently versed in those things to have obtained any information from them; but her whole manner and appearance were quite enough to have satisfied me that she was a woman of consequence, even if I had not heard the major salute her as *Madame la Marquise*."

"*Madame la Marquise!*" exclaimed both Sir Brien and myself in the same breath, "why surely this must be the lady to whom he alludes in his manuscript?"

"What!" exclaimed the *propriétaire*, "does he actually mention her in those papers which were written prior to the occurrences of that day? If so, the opinion of the lady which I have all along entertained in spite of her failing in the engagement she made with me, is at once destroyed, and I have indeed been grossly and shamefully deceived. But have the kindness, monsieur," she pursued, addressing herself to me, "to let me know exactly the nature of their acquaintance as described therein, for I now begin to perceive that I have been the dupe of both parties, and that the arrival of the carriage at that precise moment before the hotel, was not accidental, but on the contrary the fruit of a preconcerted scheme. Do you know," she concluded, "that this discovery gives me more pain even than the loss of the money, for I had formed so high an opinion of this lady, that it has always been my impression she would one day or other

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prove herself worthy of the estimation in which I had always held her in spite of circumstances and appearances."

"But how, my good madam," inquired the baronet, "could you persevere in that opinion when the lady had so completely violated her word in the first instance? I should have thought that on her failing to call the next morning, as she had so solemnly promised, your eyes would at once have been opened to the deception."

"You certainly have reason to be surprised at the excessive folly and credulity of one who in her situation particularly should have manifested a little more distrust; but you know, sir, we cannot always command our feelings, and the strange lady had left so agreeable an impression on my mind, that I could not, without mortifying my own self-love, endure the idea of my discrimination of character proving so utterly false. Therefore I had all along up to this moment imagined that she had only been prevented from fulfilling her engagement with me by the major, who, out of revenge for the affront I had offered him, was determined not to pay the just demand I had against him. It was too bad," she pursued, "to take in a poor, industrious, hard-working woman like me in this manner; but even that I should not have minded so much, had I not had the additional mortification of being obliged to bribe the *commissaire de police* in order to induce him to let the major go. He said that having once received him in charge as a vagrant, he could not be justified in liberating him until he had appeared before the proper authorities for recognizing and punishing the offence; and as I saw that all he required was a fee, I was even obliged to purchase his acquiescence in my request with a couple of good Louis in gold."

"Still," I observed, "you were remunerated for this disbursement by the hundred francs which *Madame la Marquise* gave you at the commencement."

"Ah, monsieur," returned the *proprietaire*, now thoroughly warmed in her subject, and throwing up her eyes with an expression of regret, "this is the worst part of the

story. You must know I was so completely imposed upon by the manner of the lady, that I would not receive the money, but begged her, as she wished to make some purchases, on no account to put herself to an inconvenience. I said I could very well wait till the following day, when I felt satisfied she would return and defray the whole amount of my bill against the major. She has never however made her appearance since, as I have already told you, and I have now lost all hope of ever recovering a single franc. But it is the fate of every one who like me is silly enough to be soft hearted."

"Soft witted, rather," muttered the baronet to himself, in an under tone. "Pray, madame," he continued, in his natural voice, "did you not say that this lady was a very handsome woman, and still in the flower of her age?"

"Oh! monsieur, one of the finest women I ever beheld," returned the *proprietaire*, whose admiration of the superb stranger did not appear to be at all diminished by her recent conviction of the deception which had been practised on her. "Her face was beautiful, and her form, as far as I could judge of it in the carriage, perfect; but ah! monsieur, it was the mouth and voice chiefly that attracted and fascinated the attention. It was impossible that any one could observe the one, and listen to the other, without being prepossessed in her favour."

"A strange fascination indeed she seems to have exercised over you," pursued Sir Brien, sneeringly; "but as she seems to have been so partial to this penniless major, of course he had certain qualities to recommend him. Was he a handsome man?"

"Oh yes; certainly, monsieur. To render him justice, he was very handsome indeed; one of the handsomest men that ever lodged in my hotel; and I must say in every sense a perfect gentleman in his manners. Indeed, his only fault was not settling his bills with me. Had he done that, I should have thought him perfect; but you know his handsome person and pleasing address were nothing to me, while he ate and drank and slept entirely at my expense."

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"Oh, he slept at your expense, too, did he?" pursued the baronet, attempting to be facetious; "I was not aware of that circumstance before."

"Why, to be sure," returned the *propriétaire*, who was utterly innocent of the crime of understanding the baronet's allusion, "it is evident that since he lodged in my hotel for several months together, and, in fact, from the moment of his arrival in Paris to that of his departure with this lady, he must not only have eaten and drunk, but slept at my expense also. *N'est-ce pas, monsieur?*" turning to me.

I nodded assent, and Sir Brien pursued;—"But what style of man was the major? Was he well made?" and he extended one of his legs, which, ever since Nimbleton's compliment, he had continued to invest in the tightest silk stockings that could be procured. "Which of us did he most resemble in figure? I am curious to know the taste of this very splendid woman to whom you have alluded."

"Oh, as for that!" exclaimed the other, "you may rely upon it she had a most excellent taste, for, in truth, as I have already said, the major, *mauvais sujet* even as he was, was an extremely fine man. Let me see," she pursued, with the musing air of one who is endeavouring to institute a comparison, "I cannot give you a better idea of him than by saying, that in the height and proportion of his figure he resembled *monsieur*," looking at me with a singular expression in her eyes, "*comme deux gouttes d'eau.*"

"Pshaw!" returned the baronet, peevishly, "I did not mean to ask you if the man was a giant, but if he was well made. What sort of a leg had he?" and again he looked down at his own.

"*Ma foi!* monsieur, I cannot say that I ever saw his legs."

"What!" returned O'Flaherty, bitterly, "the man slept for months you say at your expense, and yet you never saw his legs! Somewhat extraordinary, indeed, Madame!"

"Not at all; for the major never exposed his legs like mon-

sieur, and I cannot be said ever to have seen them, since he always wore *un pantalon bien large*.

"Still," pursued the indefatigable baronet, who seemed determined to know whether a leg like his own had captivated the amorous soul of the marquise, "still, I say, you might form an opinion. For instance, do you think it bore any resemblance to mine?" and placing his right foot on a chair, he submitted the limb on which he so much prided himself to the inspection of our hostess.

"Oh *Dieu!* non, monsieur, not at all," she returned with vivacity. "This leg I should call short and thick, while that of the major appeared to me more *potelée* elegant, and taper. *Tenez,*" fixing her eyes on mine, "I should say that even in his legs he bore a more striking resemblance to monsieur than any one I had ever seen."

"He! he! he!" grinned O'Flaherty, endeavouring to laugh, while the fast mounting blood to his cheek proclaimed his vexation and his anger. "This is excellent indeed, excellent, very excellent. I see, Morris, the woman has taken a fancy to your broad shoulders, and is evidently seeking to flatter you in a caprice for her. I give you joy of your conquest, my dear fellow. Pray, does your intended bride at all resemble this good lady in person as she does in taste?"

At any other moment, I should have been seriously angry with the baronet for alluding to her who was so shortly to bear my name, in this cavalier short of way; but, at present, I could only feel pity for one, whose extreme and absurd vanity laid him open at every instant to the irruptions of temper, and whom a dissent from the self-sufficient ideas he entertained of his own personal perfections had, in the present instance, so completely ruffled. Moreover, I felt inclined to make some little allowance for the annoyance he must have experienced in being thus abruptly told, for the first time in his life, that there were certain women in the world who could prefer the elegant and gentlemanly figure of a Morris, to the somewhat short and citizen-like

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one of an O'Flaherty. Too generous also to add to his discomfiture by offering any remark of my own, I sought to turn the conversation, by inquiring of the *propriétaire*, if she had any objection to my retaining the MS. papers of the major, which I assured her contained nothing in any way interesting to herself. I moreover alluded to the possibility of its proving rather an advantage to her than not, that I should possess them, since it was my intention to give them publicity in a journal I was then composing, in which case, should the work ever meet the eye of the major, he might be induced at some future period to prove that he was not altogether destitute of every principle of justice and integrity. "That the major is not naturally a man of bad principle, madame," I pursued, "the very candid account he gives of himself in these notes which have been thrown together from day to day, sufficiently proves. Both my friend the baronet, and myself, have read them with attention from the beginning to the end and it appears to us that the writer is a very different sort of character from Major Nimbleton, although, like him, he has incurred heavy obligations with you, and like him, sought to leave your hotel clandestinely.

"On his arrival in Paris, he had rather a large sum of money in his possession, sufficient at least to have supported him as a gentleman during several months, but unhappily, he seems to have been led into the vile gaming-houses, where he met with a number of worthless countrymen of his own, styling themselves his friends in prosperity, but deserting him the instant they found he had nothing more to lavish upon them. The major has unquestionably been a very thoughtless man, and his extreme imprudence has frequently led him into situations of great embarrassment, which have left his real character open to misconstruction. As I have already said, these papers will, provided you suffer me to take them with me, be published in my journal, and this seems to me to be the best chance you have of ever recovering any portion of the debt in question."

Whether it was the comparison instituted between my-

self and the major that now induced me to espouse his cause, and attempt a vindication of his conduct, or whether it was the compliment paid to my personal appearance by the *proprietaire*, that led me to offer her every consolation in my power, or whether it was from a desire to secure the MS. to myself, I cannot really pretend to say, though each of these considerations very possibly had their due weight with me at the time. Be that, however, as it may, certain it is that I expressed myself with a warmth and energy that seemed to convince her, for she not only instantly assented to my retaining the manuscript in my possession, but even declared that I should confer an essential favour on her by appropriating it to the purpose I had already named.

Elated with the success with which my oratory had been crowned, I thanked the good lady for her obliging assent, and turning to Sir Brien, who all this while had been sulkily turning and examining his legs in every possible position, inquired if he was ready to withdraw.

He made no reply, but pursued his self-sufficient examination with a steadiness and determination worthy of some nobler end.

"I hope I have not been so unfortunate as to offend monsieur?" said the *proprietaire* with an air of submission somewhat tintured with alarm. "When I alluded to his legs, I meant not to say that they were not handsome ones, but that they were less like the majors than your own."

"Offend me woman!" cried O'Flaherty contemptuously, and turning on his heel. "No, no! thank Heaven I am not so easily offended, nor likely to be by your taste or opinion on the subject. "What," he pursued to himself as he left the room, "should a Frenchwoman know about legs, when we know that their own countrymen, are a set of spindle-shanked fellows, who have no more calf than the neck of a black bottle?"

As it was evident that the baronet was in no humour to reply civilly to any remonstrances I might offer on the extreme childishness of his conduct, I left him to pursue his

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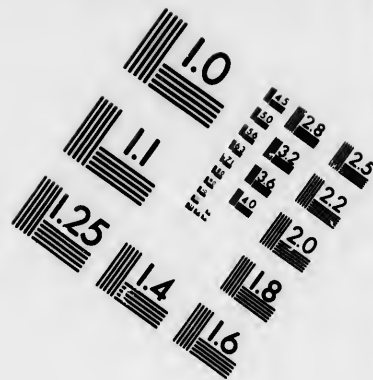
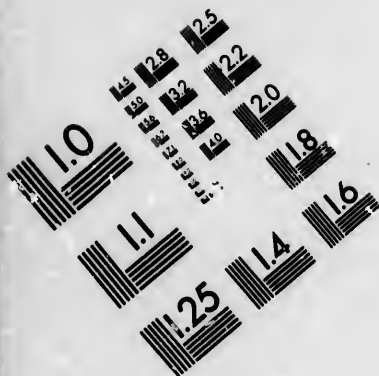
way to his own apartment, while I hastened to mine to deposit the treasure of which I had so unexpectedly become possessed. And thus ridiculously terminated our perusal of the "Diary of an English *Rouge et Noir* Player in Paris."

CHAPTER XII.

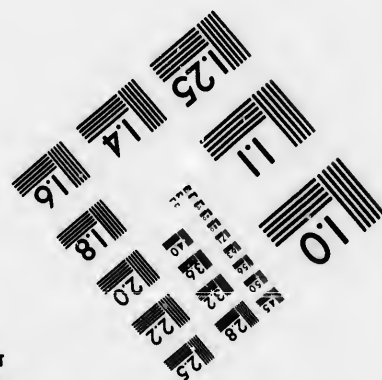
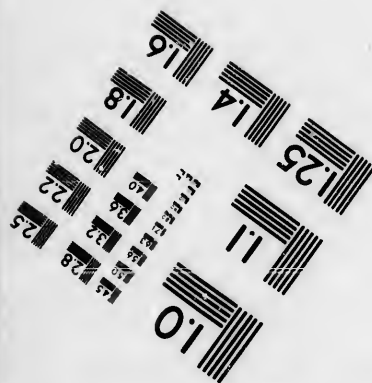
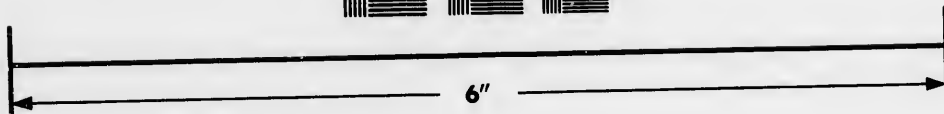
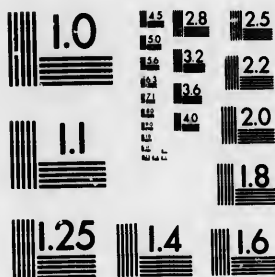
MEANWHILE, my assiduities to the fair mourner who had captivated my heart continued undiminished, and I so successfully prosecuted my suit, that I obtained her consent to become mine at the expiration of a month from the day of her brother's interment. The preference given by our hostess to my legs over his own, had not so completely estranged the baronet from me as to leave him wholly indifferent to the connection about to be entered into by so old and so intimate a friend as myself; and although he could not wholly restrain a certain petulance, arising from the pique he entertained at my good fortune, while he still continued undistinguished by partiality, still he had generosity enough to desire all the happiness and advantage I seemed to anticipate from this union.

"It is true, that I had never condescended to make a single inquiry in regard to the fortune, or sought to ascertain the rank and family of her who was so soon to unite her destiny to mine; but independently of a certain fastidious delicacy which I could not wholly overcome, the style of magnificence in which she seemed to live, and the air of fashion and birth which pervaded her appearance, rendered such inquiry, I thought, utterly unnecessary. Indeed, the only hint I ever derived of either, was from a remark she once made in regard to an English lady of our acquaintance in





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Paris, whom she described as being of mere mushroom origin and possessed only of a pitiful three thousand a year.— This I thought conclusive, since it was but natural to infer, she who spoke so contemptuously of the fortune and family of this lady—the latter I knew to be highly respectable—must have much higher pretensions to both.

So fully, in fact, had I impressed myself with the belief, that I was about to connect myself with a woman of birth and extensive property, that I now gave indulgence to a thousand speculations, and entered into a thousand plans for the improvement of my Irish castle and estates. I shall now, mused I, throwing myself on the sofa one day, after having spent a few hours in tender dalliance at her side, I shall now be enabled to resent the gross indignities that have been offered me during these periods of embarrassment, which are more or less common to almost every Irish gentleman who has any generosity and liberality of heart whatever; and the first lesson I shall teach my son, will be the mode of conduct I pursued in regard to my vile insulters, in order that he may perceive how well his father, by a strict adherence to honour, was in the end rewarded with the power to take ample vengeance on his enemies. He shall know moreover, that nothing but a sense of justice urged me to this retaliation, since those who wantonly insult the sacredness of adversity are monsters and pests to society whom it is incumbent on every virtuous and philanthropic minded man to punish and expose. 'Tis a debt which we owe to our fellow men, and I will certainly do it, if it be only, to use the caustic words of Swift,—

“To burst with envy, spite, and rage,
The Vandals of the present age.”

The stimulating influence of this quotation was in a great degree necessary to confirm me in my purpose, for so much, unhappily, is my nature imbued with the milk of human kindness, that whenever I am desirous of appearing harsh I am compelled to work up my feelings to a corresponding

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pitch of anger and excitement. I had now gained the tone of mind necessary to my purpose, and I thus pursued my reflections.

These people shall, after all, feel my importance; the purse proud wretches who have lost sight of the respect which is due to the ancient family of the Morrisises, whose descent may be traced back to the earliest kings of Ireland. And ah! how will their base hearts crouch themselves with envy, when they behold my beautiful wife, whose immense wealth is the least of all her attractions! As for that old villain, Snubs the miser, who has a mortgage on my estates, and for this reason thinks himself justified in assuming airs of importance in my presence, and affecting to despise my family, talks of his vast wealth in the funds whenever he hears genealogy cited, I shall now make him feel all his inferiority. Mrs. Morris shall not visit his family, neither shall she notice even his amiable daughters whenever she may chance to meet them in society. And then, that cursed attorney, who has so long retained my papers in consequence of non-payment of his long bill of costs! Who would not marry a woman of fortune, if it was only to find the means of showering down vengeance on the head of such a wretch. Moreover, there is that hypocritical priest with whom I fought a duel about a country wench, and who was never known to smile except when he saw a heretic led forth to execution. He shall never put his feet under my mahogany; for though the gourmand was always glad enough to partake of my good dinners, whenever I could command either money or credit, he never had the decency to invite me to his own house, when he knew that my circumstances were somewhat embarrassed. Nay, he even denounced me from the altar as a heretic, for eating meat on Friday, though he had often partaken of the feast himself; but this not before I had ceased to give him the best dinners the country could boast. Him I shall annoy by declaring myself to be a free-thinker, and railing against religion to all the young fellows who may dine at my table. Nay more,

I will read my recantation, and become one of the Established Church, and that I know will vex him more than any thing else. As for the remainder of those who, falsely styling themselves my friends, have been in the practice of insulting me in every company, by affecting to regret that I should have encumbered my estate so deeply through extravagance, gaming, and giving expensive dinners, I will shun them to a man. Not a soul of them shall ever renew acquaintance with my family. In short, I shall cut all my former acquaintance, and mix only with the highest aristocracy of the country.

Still, whenever I give a grand entertainment, I shall make a point of inviting all the poor relations of my *quondam* friends in order that I may be gratified by their abuse of their wealthy cousins. Even those ready money upstart jackalls shall feel my vengeance, who were so often wont sneeringly to say,—“Morris, do you not think it would be infinitely more prudent to sell that old castle and estate of yours; it is evident that you can never redeem them, and you may depend upon it, that while they continue in your possession, your litigious disposition will only tend to involve you deeper in difficulties?” Oh, the wretches!—How often have they made my blood boil with indignation! But now will I revenge myself upon them all. Nay, I will go even further, and oppose Sir Brien at the next election. But no, no, this I will never do—for notwithstanding the frequent sarcasm in which he is prone to indulge, I could not carry an angry feeling from this to Ireland, against one whom I am well persuaded would be the first to render me an essential service, and to say, if I required it, “Here, Morris, is my purse, take from it what you please,” even though he had not another shilling in the world. “No, by Heaven!” I pursued aloud, “so far from opposing, I will support him to the utmost of my ability.” So saying, I sprang from the sofa, and was already, in imagination, delivering an animated speech in his favour from the hustings, when I found myself suddenly and rudely slapped on the

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shoulder. I started as if I had been shot, and turning round, much to my confusion and surprise, beheld the baronet himself. He had knocked at the door, but finding me too deeply engaged in my rhapsody to notice this intimation, had taken the privilege of an old friend, and entered without any further ceremony.

He had listened patiently enough to the plans of vengeance I had been drawing up for the punishment of my quondam friends in Ireland, and no doubt they furnished him with abundant amusement at the moment; but when my feelings burst forth in all the involuntary overflowings of that friendship which we had so long and mutually borne each other, he could no longer contain himself, but throwing all his gratitude, if I may express it, into his right hand, had thus energetically proved the sense he entertained of my sentiments in his favour.

“My dear Morris,” he exclaimed, grasping my hand in his, and suffering his emotion to betray itself in the intonation of his voice, “you are, indeed, a true friend!—a noble and generous one! and I have only now to entreat, that any little pettishness of feeling I may have evinced towards you, may be forgotten. I know I am become a crabbed and unamiable being latterly, but the fact is, that Harriet’s marriage and poor Emily’s melancholy have completely unhinged me. This trip to Paris has done more injury to my temper and disposition than twenty additional winters could have effected, had I remained quietly in Ireland. And what have we gained by it after all? There is that foolish sister of mine married to a fellow calling himself a count, who will speedily have squandered every shilling of her property, when I suppose I shall be called upon to support them.—Then there is Emily become a dull, moping, miserable, pining girl, and all in consequence of meeting some young fellow nobody knows who, who pays her a little attention at a *table d’hôte*, and then runs away and drowns himself, for all we know to the contrary, because he has no longer the means of supporting existence. The stupid dog: if he is a

man of honour and a gentleman, why does he not prove himself such, and leave the accomplishment of his fortune to me, instead of breaking my poor girl's heart in this cruel manner? Oh, Morris, Morris! you cannot think how much these things annoy me; and to crown all my misery, I find that I am in love."

"In love, my dear Sir Brien!" I exclaimed, losing sight of the sympathy I had begun to feel at the commencement of this lamentation, in the surprise and almost ridicule I attached to his concluding declaration, "in love did you say? Can this really be possible? and with whom?"

"Can this really be possible, and with whom?" returned the baronet, repeating my words, and looking any thing but pleased at this expression of surprise. "Why, yes, sir, it is very possible; and what, I should be glad to know, is there so very singular in my being in love, when even you admit that you are under the influence of the same passion?"

This was intended for a "cut and thrust," a "knock down argument," and I suffered the baronet to glory in the fancied success of his retort, for I was unwilling that the good understanding which he had been at such pains to re-establish only the instant before, should again and so suddenly be interrupted."

* * * * *

"Sixty summers!" muttered Sir Brien, whose attention appeared to have been directed solely to that part of my observation, "Give me leave to tell you, Morris, that you are wrong in your estimation of my age by nearly four years. I shall be fifty-seven only next June, and before I count sixty summers as you call them, I hope to have a well grown heir to the O'Flaherty title and estates."

"But I thought you told me only a few days since, that you intended Emily should inherit every shilling of your property?"

"Very true," rejoined the baronet confusedly, "very true, Morris, I did say so, but then I was not aware that I should most likely have an heir of my own begetting. Besides,

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my fortune is large enough to admit of my providing handsomely for Emily notwithstanding."

"This fit of love seems to have come upon you very suddenly, my dear baronet. Pray, may I inquire the lady's name?"

"Guess it."

"Impossible! I might guess for an age, and yet remain as much in the dark as ever. Besides, there is scarcely a lady of our acquaintance here on whom I should think of fixing."

"What think you of the widow M'Lofty?"

"The widow M'Lofty!" I repeated, starting back this time, at least, with the most unfeigned and unqualified astonishment. "Why, surely, Sir Brien, you cannot be serious?"

"I can assure you that I am, though. As serious, indeed, as I ever was in the whole course of my existence."

"What!" I exclaimed, "do you really pretend to say that you are actually in love with the widow M'Lofty, the woman whom you have so often abused and satirized,—nay, even insulted?"

"Gently, gently, Morris, if you please. I am as incapable of insulting any lady as yourself. That I have been occasionally severe with her, I admit, but do you know I now begin to find out the secret of all that asperity of feeling I manifested in regard to her.—If you recollect, she had several suitors in her train?"

"I do, perfectly," I replied, "and I should hardly have supposed, that Sir Brien O'Flaherty would have submitted to the humiliation of aspiring to the good graces of one, who had been pursued by, and had accepted the homage of half a dozen fellows, who in the end turned out to be nothing better than swindlers and adventurers."

This observation I made with a degree of taunt and bitterness, which did not escape the notice of Sir Brien. He looked at me steadfastly for a moment, and remarked—

"By Heavens, Morris! if I did not know that you were

engaged to another woman, I should swear that you were in love with the widow yourself! But, as I said before, I have found out the secret of all that asperity of feeling which I formerly entertained in regard to her. It was nothing but jealousy, downright jealousy. I was angry with her because she found pleasure in the society of these empty-headed and empty-pursed dangles, and I could not refrain from manifesting my spleen."

"And, pray, may I ask if the lady is yet aware of the honour you intend to confer on her?" I inquired peevishly. "And if so, how long is it since she has been made acquainted with this change in your sentiments?"

"Why, returned the baronet, "the whole affair has been the mere result of accident and circumstances; but I will explain it all to you. You must know, that ever since you have been in the habit of absenting yourself in the evening on visits to your intended, the widow M^rLofty has been exceedingly kind and attentive to poor Emily, and almost every evening she passes an hour or two in our apartments, endeavouring to rally the poor child's spirits, and to amuse her with a thousand anecdotes more or less entertaining and original. Now, Morris, you well know, that if my heart is at all assailable, it is through the loved daughter of my gallant and unhappy brother; and any kindness that is shown to her cannot fail to make a corresponding impression on me. In a word, the widow has so contrived to wind herself around my heart, that I think I cannot do better than give her a legal right to watch over and protect that drooping flower; and it is my intention to propose for her seriously to-morrow."

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CHAPTER XIII.

IF I was astonished at this unexpected disclosure, I was no less mortified and disappointed. It may seem inconsistent, that at a moment when I was looking forward to so much happiness in the matrimonial state myself, I should have felt annoyed that a similar prospect awaited one in whose welfare I have already confessed so decided an interest, but the fact was, there were many reasons why this ill assorted marriage was to be deprecated. In the first instance, I knew that a man of the baronet's testy character was little likely to find happiness in an union with one who, in spite of every attempt to conceal it, had as little of the milk of human gentleness about her as himself; neither was it likely, that a woman in whom the blood of excitement was yet warm, would continue long passive under the hands of one whom age and infirmity rendered so unsuited to the duties of a husband. Mrs. M'Lofty was, moreover, an extravagant woman, and whatever her own fortune might be, it was too much to be feared that the ambitious pride arising from the acquisition of a title, would increase that disposition in her to the serious detriment of the O'Flaherty property. I had ever been accustomed to consider Emily as the sole heiress of his estates at her uncle's death; and as, in defiance of all obstacles, I had cherished the hope of yet seeing her united to Manvers, it was not without bitter regret that I now heard the baronet express his determination to pursue a course so

fraught with injury to their future prospects in life. Alas, good reader! I would fain suppress another consideration, and not the least powerful that operated to produce my hostility to this measure, but candour, that strict candour for which the Morrisises have been ever remarkable, compels me to be sincere.

The fact is, that I had always had a secret inclination for the lady myself, and though I had never indulged in any language that could at all be construed into any thing more than the mere courtesies of life; still, I must confess that I had occasionally thrown an expression of tenderness into my eyes, which was not at all lost on the warm and glowing widow. Indeed, this secret intelligence had commenced from the moment when I first beheld her; had continued throughout her several flirtations with Killheirsch and Tredennick, and had been pursued up to the moment of my meeting with the beautiful stranger at the Morgue. It was quite evident to me, that I had only to propose myself to her to be immediately accepted, and, indeed, I had been weighing the affair over in my mind, and considering whether I should make her an offer or not, at the very time when this circumstance occurred.

But methinks I hear the reader exclaim, "Why, when you admit your affections to have been elsewhere engaged, envy another the possession of a woman whom you could so readily relinquish?"

The truth is, I scarcely know why myself, unless it was in the first instance, that I was anxious to 'have two strings to my bow,' so that in the event of any unexpected circumstance occurring to deprive me of my beautiful intended, I might have the rich and amorous widow in perspective as a last resource; and that, in the second, I did not feel very much flattered at the idea of a woman so easily receiving the attentions of Sir Brien, who had once been distinguished by my regard, however imperfectly that regard might have been manifested. Indeed, the only consolation my self-love now derived, was from the admission of the baronet, that

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the kindness of the widow to Emily had only commenced from the period of my acquaintance with the interesting stranger. It was evident that pique alone had actuated her conduct, and she had only commenced a flirtation with O'Flaherty, because she had found herself neglected by me. There certainly was something very consolatory to one's vanity in this reflection, and as I found it vain to contend against impossibilities, the widow being resolved to have a husband at all hazards, I even made a virtue of necessity, and congratulated the baronet on his approaching happiness.

"Just what I expected of you, Morris!" he exclaimed, grasping my hand and shaking it with true John Bull violence; "but do you know, my dear fellow, what it is that has so completely won my love for her in addition to her kindness for my sweet Emily?"

"No, certainly not, how should I know? Unless," I pursued ironically, "it should have been her admiration of your legs."

"You have guessed it, my dear fellow, you have guessed it; but why the devil do you look so satirically? Do you imagine, that because a silly French woman cannot tell the difference, an English woman should not know a good leg from a bad one?"

"Sir Brien, Sir Brien!" I exclaimed mournfully, "are you not ashamed to evince so much childishness and vanity at your age? Forgive me," I pursued, perceiving that his choler was fast rising,—"forgive me if I address you thus, but it really pains me to see my old friend so far forget himself. Alas! if you have no other proof of the widow's affection for you than is contained in this gross flattery, your chances of happiness with her are very poor indeed!"

"Morris," returned the baronet, endeavouring to suppress his emotion, "this is, indeed, very severe language to use towards me, and were you not one of my oldest and best friends, I would reply to it in a very different manner; but it seems you are privileged to give yourself any license you

may think proper. As for the flattery of the widow, she has never once opened her lips on the subject, neither has she made the most remote allusion to my personal appearance."

"How then," I continued, "do you know that she is an admirer of your legs? This, I confess, is a mystery that I do not at all understand."

"Yet is it one that may be very easily resolved," pursued Sir Brien, once more regaining his good humour.— "The fact is, Morris, that although the widow has too much delicacy and good sense to proclaim what actually passes in her heart, the silence of her lips is more than compensated by the eloquent language of her looks. Ah! could you but see her at night seated on the sofa, between Emily and myself, you would then judge of the true nature of her feelings. Often, during a pause in the conversation, do I observe her eyes following every motion of these limbs, the symmetry of which it is evident have not been lost upon her. At these moments, while a deep flush is on her cheek, a sigh will frequently escape from her bosom, and when I anxiously inquire the cause of her agitation, she will start suddenly as if awakening from a dream, and apologizing for her abstraction, by assigning any other cause than the real one, turn once more to Emily, and renew her endearments and attempts at amusement."

Although I did not give the baronet much credit for discrimination in affairs of flirtation, there was every probability that in the present instance he was not far mistaken; for independently of his clear sightedness in all things that appertained to his legs, this was precisely the manner in which I should have supposed that any woman of penetration and address would have attacked his heart. The character of O'Flaherty, altogether, may appear inconsistent and ridiculous, but it is not less natural on that account; and if my reader is disposed to exclaim against the verisimilitude of the picture, I can only reply, that there is not a single personage herein introduced that is not actually in being. With regard to Sir Brien, I can only compare him in

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one particular sense to the celebrated knight of La Mancha, who, reasonable and sensible on all other subjects, only suffered his extreme folly to betray itself whenever allusion was made to topics of knight errantry. In like manner, the baronet never evinced the weakness of his character until his own personal vanity was more immediately interested. Then, indeed, was he a mere helpless child, on whom any one, who at all knew how to administer the unction of flattery, might practice with the utmost security and success.

He now changed the conversation, by inquiring if I had any objection to accompany the widow, Emily, and himself, to the English theatre in the evening.

I replied that I had not, intimating at the same time that I should be glad of that opportunity of introducing Miss Stanmore to the ladies.

Sir Brien expressed his delight at the proposal, and declared that Emily should immediately get herself ready for a morning call. "I am anxious to see this beauty of yours, Morris, therefore if you will go and prepare her for our visit I will endeavour to prevail on the widow to accompany us, and we can then arrange our plans for the evening."

I had already paid my usual morning visit, and knew I should not again be expected; however, as I was aware that since the death of her brother Miss Stanmore had not ventured out, and received no other visitors than myself, on reaching the hotel I did not as usual announce myself through the porter, but bounding up the stairs, tapped gently at the door of her inner apartment.

I was somewhat surprised to hear voices within, one of which struck me as being familiar to my ear. In an instant, however, they were hushed, and I plainly distinguished a shuffling sound of chairs, and then the sudden closing of a door. An utter silence again prevailed, when, finding that my knock remained unnoticed, I ventured to repeat it somewhat louder.

"Come in," said the silver voice of my siren, and in the next moment I stood before her, somewhat embarrassed in

manner I confess, and not at all satisfied with the apparent confusion that lingered on her beautiful countenance.

"Good Heaven! is it you, Mr. Morris?" she exclaimed, rising from the ottoman on which she was reclining, and placing under a cushion of the sofa a book on which her eyes were bent at the moment of my entrance. "Well, how very kind of you, too be sure! I certainly did not anticipate this pleasure, and it is really a charity of you to break in upon my *ennui* by these agreeable visits."

This I thought a singular stiff and formal style of address to a man who was on the point of becoming her husband. However, I made no comment on it, but merely remarked that I had not presumed she had been entirely alone. "I thought I had heard the sound of voices in your room."

"Oh, I suppose you heard me giving directions to my *femme de chambre* about some articles of millinery. She has only this instant left me."

Surely, I mused, it was not a woman's voice, nor one unknown to me, that I heard, but I may have been deceived, and probably the sounds proceeded from the apartment below. "You are no doubt surprised to see me," I pursued aloud, "but the fact is, I am come to announce and prepare you for a call. My old friend, Sir Brien O'Flaherty, his niece and another lady, are coming to pay you a morning visit, and arrange a party for the Odeon."

"How could you be so indiscreet as to assent to any thing of the kind?" she replied, with something like annoyance in her manner. "You know both my reluctance to appear in public, and my unwillingness to receive the visits of any other person than yourself."

"Surely," I observed, with some degree of coolness, "you cannot at all feel surprised that I should be anxious to introduce you to the acquaintance of my friends. Moreover, I should imagine, that as you say you have no female connexions in Paris, you would feel happy in having the niece of Sir Brien as your companion."

"Well, well," she returned, "I perceive the justice and

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propriety of your remark ; and however little disposed I am to mix in society, I will sacrifice my own inclinations to your wishes. When will they be here ?”

“Almost immediately,” I replied. “I left them preparing for the purpose.”

“Then I will merely make some trifling alteration in my dress, and be with you immediately. Meanwhile here is the newspaper to amuse you.”

So saying, she retreated into her dressing room, while I threw myself on the sofa she had just quitted, and cast my eye carelessly over the paper. She had scarcely however closed the door, when an irrepressible feeling of curiosity induced me to examine the book she had so recently been reading. I therefore drew it from beneath the cushion where it had been secreted, and looking at the title-page, found that it was the “Memoirs of Harriette Wilson.”

To say that I was both surprised and vexed at this discovery, is to say little ; but the fact is, I scarcely could render an account to myself of what I actually did feel. The book was of that description that I never should have expected to find in the possession of a delicate female, and least of all should have desired to see perused by one who was so shortly to become my wife. While I yet sat with my hand supporting my head, and indulging in a variety of reflections to which this circumstance had given rise, my attention was suddenly attracted by an object that lay on the floor at the further corner of the room, and which had hitherto escaped my notice. The book fell from my hands, and I continued to rivet my gaze on this new subject of astonishment with a fascination similar to that which is said to be produced by the rattle-snake on its feathered victims.— Surely it must be a dream, an illusion, methought. It never could have found its way here. But no, it is the same ; I know it by its shape, and that particular curve of the crown. I sprang from the sofa, and approaching nearer to it, discovered in reality——. Reader, will you believe it ? Can you guess it ? I give it to you in one ; I give it to you

in ten; I give it to you in a hundred: but you will never divine it. Well, then, I discovered nothing more or less than my broad brimmed composing hat; that celebrated hat of which I had been robbed by Nimbleton on the day of his departure from the hotel.

It may naturally be supposed that after the first transports arising from the unexpected repossession of this, to me precious relic, the next consideration that occurred to me was the manner in which it had found its way here; for what possible connexion there could be between my hat, Major Nimbleton, and Miss Stanmore, I could not possibly divine. While I yet stood like one transfixed, gazing on the well remembered source of all my literary inspiration, which I held at arm's length, even as some fond mother holds her child, when after a temporary absence she is anxious to trace its much beloved features, even at that moment the beautiful mourner once more entered the room. My back was turned to her, but in the reflections of a mirror that stood near me I saw her give a sudden start of surprise. She at once, however, recovered her self-possession, and bursting into a laugh, inquired what I found in that old hat to interest me to such a degree.

"You will no longer feel surprised at that interest, madam," I returned, "when I tell you that this old hat, as you are pleased to call it, is mine; neither will you wonder at my astonishment at finding it here, when I tell you that it was stolen from me by one of the greatest swindlers in all Paris, a certain Major Nimbleton. Pray may I inquire if you are acquainted with such a person?"

"With Major Nimbleton? Certainly not; and I must say," she resumed, with an offended air, "that I think it a very extraordinary question to ask me, after the character you have just given of that person."

"And yet," I pursued, "I thought that it was his voice I had heard on approaching your apartment. That impression, together with the circumstance of my finding the identical hat which he had stolen from me in your apartment,

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ought, you must admit, to have had some little weight with me, and might very well have led me to believe you did know him."

"Mr. Morris," interrupted the somewhat incensed lady, "I was not aware that in accepting those testimonies of friendship which under peculiarly trying circumstances you were obliging enough to tender, that I should consequently have rendered myself liable to the expression of your suspicion or animadversion. I again repeat, that I know nothing of this Major Nimbleton; and as for the hat, I never saw it until this moment. I presume, however, that it belongs to the porter of the hotel, who may have forgotten it after cleaning my apartments in the morning. I shall desire my maid, however, to inquire."

At this moment the bell of the antechamber was rung, and I had merely time to snatch the hand of the offended fair one, and entreat her forgiveness for my unjust observation, when Sir Brien and his party were announced.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE widow and Emily were delighted with their new acquaintance, who in her turn tried every little amiable act to win the esteem and prepossession of her visitors. Sir Brien, too, was in raptures with the fascinating manuers of one, whom he declared to me, in a whisper, to be only inferior to his divine widow, while he warmly congratulated me on the possession of such a treasure. A few hours sooner, and these marks of approbation would have been hailed by me with delight inconceivable; but in defiance of the explanation given, and the air of dignity with which my allusion had been resented, I could not altogether banish certain disagreeable feelings resulting from the recollection of the voice I had heard, and the discovery of my unfortunate composing hat. The association was too powerful to be suddenly dispelled, and I therefore listened to his encomiums with more of pain than of pleasure.

"Well, but my dear fellow," he exclaimed, "how very quietly you appear to listen to my praises of your intended! I can assure you there are very few women of whom I ever formed a more flattering opinion, and yet you are as indifferent to that opinion as any husband possibly could be after six months of marriage. You astonish me, Morris; I thought you were more of an Irishman, and had warmer blood in your veins."

Before I could reply to this attack, which was made while standing apart from the ladies, and at a remote window of

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the apartment overlooking the street, my attention was attracted by the figure of a man issuing from the *porte cochere* of the hotel, with sly and cautious steps, and covered with a hat precisely similar to my own.

"Good Heaven, how extraordinary!" I involuntarily exclaimed. "I did not think there was another like it in Paris?"

"Like what?" eagerly returned the baronet, startled at my abrupt manner, and following the direction of my glance.

"What is it, what is the matter? I can see nothing."

"Did you not see a man pass out of the hotel with a hat precisely similar to that which was stolen from me the other day?"

"What, the composing hat that was carried off by our friend Nimbleton, eh?" replied the baronet, with a chuckling laugh.

"The same, and did I not know that the latter was now safe in this room, I should swear that that which I saw just now was no other than mine."

As I made the observation, I turned to the spot where I had deposited the hat on the entrance of the O'Flaherty party; but what was my surprise and astonishment when I found it was no longer there. It was in vain that I attempted to hide my disquietude, neither could I resist the desire I felt to examine every part of the room, in the hope of quieting my renewed suspicions, by the discovery of the fatal hat. It was nowhere to be found. I threw up the sash of the window, and looked in the direction in which the man had departed; but in vain, he was nowhere to be seen, and I again closed the window, with a violence that startled the whole party.

"Dear me, Mr. Morris, what *can* be the matter!" exclaimed the widow, whose curiosity to discover the cause of my annoyance had hitherto with difficulty been restrained.

"Why, Morris, are you mad?" exclaimed Sir Brien.—
"Why should that old hat of yours give you so much

anxiety? I am sure I never thought it worth the trouble of carrying, and you ought to have been very much obliged to Nimbleton for ridding you of any thing half so antiquated."

"Hat! Nimbleton!" exclaimed Miss Stanmore, who had hitherto appeared not to notice a disquietude that was visible to every one beside. "Pray, Mr. Morris, are you looking for that uncouth article that was here a few minutes ago? If so, I believe my woman can give you some account of it. I desired her to take it down to the porter, to whom I imagined it belonged."

"But I have just seen a person leave the hotel with that identical hat on his head," I returned.

The whole party burst into a loud laugh, at the importance I seemed to attach to a circumstance that to them of course appeared trivial to a degree, while Miss Stanmore proceeded to remark,—

"Nothing can be more simply accounted for. It was no doubt, the porter himself whom you saw leaving the hotel to execute some commission. Surely you might have discovered from the figure, whether or not it was the person to whom you have alluded."

"I saw nothing of the figure, which passed close against the walls of the house," I returned. "I could only distinguish my hat."

"Well," pursued Miss Stanmore, laughing, "since you will persist in it that it is your hat, suppose we ring and have the porter up, in order that he may account for its being in his possession. I dare say we shall find, that if it really is yours, this Major Nimbleton, of whom you have spoken, having found it awkward to retain a purloined article of so conspicuous a character as this, has deemed it convenient to leave it behind him."

"That is to presume, then," I returned, quickly, "that he has really been a lodger in this hotel. Nay, that very recently," I pursued, with emphasis.

"Nothing more likely," returned the lady, coolly. "It

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is very probable that on leaving your hotel, under the circumstances you mention, he came to this, from which in turn he may as speedily have departed, leaving your hat as a memento behind him."

"How stupid I was not to have thought of all this before!" I exclaimed, once more brightening up, and seizing the explanation with avidity. "Yes, there cannot be a doubt of it, and this is the manner in which my unfortunate hat has found its way here."

"Do you know, Mr. Morris," she pursued, with a lurking expression of sarcasm and irony in her manner that I never before remarked, "Do you know that your pertinacity, in affirming this hat to be yours, reminds me of the story of the barber's basin in Don Quixote, which that very sage personage was resolved to consider as nothing more or less than Mambrino's helmet. In like manner, what appeared to you to be a hat of value, and worthy of a gentleman of your fashionable appearance, seemed to me, and would, perhaps, have seemed to any other person than yourself, nothing more than a common piece of white felt, such as is usually worn by the working classes of people in this country, and which might very well have been adapted to the head of a *frotteur*."

This sally, while it occasioned an universal smile among the party, produced in each, no doubt, a variety of strange conjectures and impressions; for they all appeared amazed at the little ceremony with which I had been treated. Poor Emily said nothing, but looked at me and sighed, while the baronet, I thought, felt any thing but regret at seeing me thus ridiculed by one whose affection for me I had more than once given him to understand was excessive. The widow pouted her lip, tossed her head, declared she did not even know what the subject of altercation was, and looking at her watch, announced that it was almost time to go home and dress for dinner.

It was now proposed by Sir Brien, that Miss Stanmore should accompany them back to the hotel, and partake of the

early dinner that had been ordered, with a view of being in time for the first performance at the Odeon. Emily warmly seconded the suggestion of her uncle, and Mrs. M'Lofty could not well avoid expressing a similar desire, though I fancied it was delivered with a reluctance, that I construed in a manner highly flattering to myself. Indeed, it was evident that she looked upon the beautiful mourner, as one who had supplanted her in those hopes she had previously entertained of interesting my affections, and that if she at all affected to find pleasure in the attentions of the baronet, it was more with a view to manifest an indifference she did not actually feel, than from any serious preference she entertained for him.

I was sorry to find the invitation, after a few slight objections, which were at length overruled, finally accepted; for I had resolved, on the departure of her visitors, to come to a final explanation with Miss Stanmore on the subject of our approaching marriage, and to ascertain, if possible, both the amount, quality, and situation of her property. Whether these prudential considerations were suggested by any latent feeling of distrust that had resulted from the occurrences of the morning, I know not, but, certain it is, that I now for the first time felt the policy of ascertaining, not simply this point, but also whether her family was such as to entitle her to so high a distinction, as that of an union with the pure and princely blood of the Morrises. Her acceptance of Sir Brien's invitation, however, put an end to my project for the moment, and I resolved to defer the explanation until the following morning.

The entertainment of the evening was *Romeo and Juliet*,—a piece that contained many scenes highly appropriate to the feelings of certain members of our party, and rendered doubly touching by the spirit and pathos thrown into the principal parts by Charles Kemble and Miss Smithson. I confess I was in no great humour to play the enamoured lover at the side of my Juliet, but I was highly amused at the languishing looks which the baronet occasionally threw on

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Mrs. M'Lofty, whenever some unusually pathetic passage was delivered with emphasis and excitement by either of the unfortunate lovers.

My attention, however, was finally diverted to Emily, who, from the very commencement of the piece, had continued absorbed in that deep and silent interest, which the passionate devotedness and keen sufferings of Juliet so seldom fail to awaken in a delicate and sensitive mind. In her ingenuous countenance might be traced the several passions of hope, fear, pleasure, pain, despair, and love, as those emotions were successively elicited by the ill-fated daughter of the house of Capulet;—but when she at length beheld her hanging over the prostrate and dying Romeo in all the agony of despair and grief, her own cheek became pale as marble, and, in the slight shudder that passed through her frame, I could read the application of this passage to her own position.

“Emily! dear Emily!” I exclaimed, moving to a vacant seat at her side, “you have, indeed, a heart that tells me there must be something of divinity in the pure and generous nature of woman. Providence never intended that the affections of one so gentle and so sensitive should be blighted in their early bud, therefore reassure yourself, for brighter days are yet in store for you. Manvers will yet return to claim you as his own, and you may rest satisfied, that when he does, your uncle’s opinion of him is so far changed by recent circumstances, that provided he be one of gentle birth, (and of this there is but little doubt,) there will be no obstacle offered to your union.”

In an instant the pallid cheek of the amiable girl was lighted up with a rich glow, and turning her blue eyes on mine with an expression of gratitude to which no language can render justice, silently and fervently pressed the hand in which I had confined her own. But, if the blood had mounted rapidly to her cheek, it now as rapidly receded, as casting her eyes along the crowd below, they suddenly rested on a figure at the opposite side of the *parterre*.

Surprised at the sudden change in her appearance, I followed the direction of her gaze, and saw that it was no other than Manvers himself who had attracted her attention. But how altered; alas! how unlike the Manvers I had last seen! He stood leaning near one of the entrances of the *parterre*, enveloped in a large cloak, and covered with a slouched hat, that must have concealed his features from any other eyes than those of love and friendship. Pale, wasted, and haggard, his cheeks bore every mark of suffering and despair, and his hollow, sunken eyes as far as I could judge at that distance, had lost all their original fire and vivacity.

My first impression was to go down and join him where he stood, for I felt that if this opportunity should be lost, I might never again have another chance of ascertaining his place of residence. I therefore rose with that view, but as I was preparing to quit the box, much to my astonishment I beheld Miss Stanmore gazing on the object of my solicitude, with an earnestness and agitation of manner little inferior to that which had been manifested by Emily herself. Struck by this very singular conduct, I paused a moment, irresolute whether to leave the box or remain and witness the result, when a sudden exclamation from Mrs. M'Lofty drew my attention once more to Emily. Every vestige of colour had forsaken her cheek, her lips were pale and quivering, and it was evident that she had fainted.

The temporary confusion arising from this accident, while it in no way interrupted the performance, drew the attention of many of the audience on our party, and at the moment when Emily was removed to one of the back seats for air, I glanced once more at the *parterre* in search of him who had occasioned this catastrophe, but he was no longer there.

Both Mrs M'Lofty and Miss Stanmore were forward in the tender of their services, and I hastened to the refreshment-room, at the suggestion of the latter, for a glass of lemonade. A singular scene awaited me on my return; the pale, but now slowly recovering Emily, was still reclining

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in the arms of Miss Stanmore, while Mrs. M'Lofty was occupied in rubbing her temples and administering her smelling-bottle; the baronet, meanwhile, looking on with an anxiety of manner that well attested his affection for his niece, while it rendered him incapable of articulating a syllable. At that moment, Manvers appeared suddenly at the entrance of the box, the door of which was now thrown widely open. Without any preface or apology, he stooped down and raised the languid form of the delicate girl from the supporting arms of Miss Stanmore, exclaiming at the same time in a deep, hoarse voice to the latter,—“Woman! pollute her not with your infamous touch!”

Before any one could recover from the surprise which this extraordinary conduct and language had excited, the impetuous young man had borne his charge into the corridor, where the current of air passing rapidly through, soon had the effect of wholly reviving her. The first sign of recognition she gave was in the deep flush that suffused her cheek, on finding herself thus unexpectedly in the arms of her lover; and it was evident that she deemed so much pleasure cheaply purchased at the price of her recent agitation.

As soon as she appeared to be perfectly restored, every eye was turned on her to whom the extraordinary observation of Manvers had been addressed. She still occupied the same spot, and, with her cheek nearly as colourless as that of Emily had been only the instant before, and with one arm supporting her head against the side of the *loge*, remained plunged in a state of stupefaction and despair the most painful and complete.

“Where did you meet with that woman?” pursued Manvers, perceiving the astonishment depicted on our several countenances, “and how has she dared to intrude herself into your society?”

There certainly was little to reassure one in this speech, and I confess I felt somewhat nettled at hearing these very harsh allusions made to one whom I had introduced as my intended bride. I therefore replied somewhat warmly;—

"That lady, Mr. Manvers, I beg you to understand, is of my particular acquaintance, and in a few days will be Mrs. Morris."

"Your particular acquaintance! Mrs. Morris! Ha! ha! ha!" exclaimed the young man, with a hysterical laugh.

"Mrs. M'Lofty," said the baronet, who seemed almost stupified with the whole scene from first to last, "if you have no objection, we will return home. Emily is too unwell to continue longer, and I dare say Mr. Morris will take charge of this lady."

So saying, and without suffering either of them to take leave of their new acquaintance, Sir Brien hurried both the widow and his niece along the passages leading to the grand staircase. Manvers followed at a short distance, and I saw Emily, unperceived by her companions, take a folded paper from his hands, which she instantly concealed beneath her shawl.

My first impression was to follow Mauvers and demand a full explanation of his mysterious allusion; but in the present state of Miss Stanmore, I thought it would have been an act of gross inhumanity to leave her alone. It was evident there was something connected with her history which, until duly explained, must terminate our present intimacy; but still this did not less impose upon me the attentions which, as a man of gallantry, I felt myself called upon to bestow. I therefore begged to know, whether she wished to see the performance out, or preferred returning to her hotel.

Without uttering a syllable in reply, she rose from her seat, and grasping my arm with a sort of convulsive movement, hurried rapidly along the corridors. Her cheek was still pale, her eye fixed and lustreless, and her lips closely compressed together. As we proceeded, her agitation increased, and it was with difficulty she could support her trembling limbs. A *fiacre* that had been called now drove up to the front entrance of the theatre. At this moment Manvers, who was lingering at some little distance, approached,

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and without at all subduing his voice so as to make it inaudible to my companion, exclaimed with emphasis;—"If you would avoid shame and ruin, have nothing to do with that wretched woman—it is she who has made me what I am; but at some future period I will tell you all."

"Manvers, Manvers," groaned the trembling woman, "forgive me, oh! forgive me. It is the last request I shall ever make you, for even this very night shall you be revenged."

It may be supposed, that while my astonishment at this singular recognition was by no means abated, my esteem for the lady was not at all increased. I therefore contented myself with simply handing her into the *fiacre*, and desiring the coachman to drive to her hotel. I looked around for Manvers, but he was gone, and in a state of feeling which may be much better fancied, than described, pursued my slow and meditative course home.

CHAPTER XV.

ON regaining my hotel, I found that the party had already retired to rest; but as I knew it would be vain to expect any thing like repose in my present state of excitement and disappointment, I determined to seek refuge from my reflections in the bottle. It was in vain, however, that I sought to stifle the disagreeable impressions which rose rapidly and painfully to my mind and when I had finished my second bottle of *chambertin*, I found myself even more bewildered in conjecture than before. Who and what could this Miss Stanmore be, and what possible connection could there be between her and the unhappy Manvers. That there was some connection however, was evident, and this, from the strong terms of reprobation in which he had indulged, it was equally evident, was by no means of a character to reflect credit on her to whom they had been applied. Then came the bitter and humiliating reflection, that I had proposed myself as the husband of a woman who, instead of being an honour to the noble family of the Morrisises, would in all probability have covered it with disgrace and obloquy; and to add to my mortification, all the beautiful castle building in which I had so recently indulged, all the schemes of aggrandisement I had planned with the supposed fortune of my intended, now came tumbling to the ground, and I foresaw that I was still likely to continue as much the subject of my more wealthy Irish neighbour's pity as ever. Fool that

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I was ! But for this unlucky acquaintance I might have ensured the hand and fortune of the widow M'Lofty, who it was evident only encouraged the addresses of the baronet out of pique and resentment to me. Still it was not too late, and as O'Flaherty had not yet proposed himself, it only required a renewal of my attentions to divert the channel of her partiality once more in my favour. But, if so, how could I justify my conduct to my friend, and might not the baronet, who wanted neither courage nor determination in affairs of this serious character, feel disposed to resent the treachery ? Nay, even as it was, I ran some risk of a rupture with him, for I had not been regardless of the abrupt manner in which he had torn his niece from the presence of Miss Stanmore. It was evident that the observations of Manvers had impressed him, as they did me, with the belief that she was an improper character, and it was by no means improbable that he would make me in some degree answerable for the introduction of such a woman to his niece.

These were the several ideas that crowded on my mind, as I applied glass after glass in fast succession to my lips, until, in the end, they assumed so painful and perplexing a character, that I found every faculty too much awakened, and every nerve too much excited, to hope for repose in the event of retiring to my chamber. The room in which I was sitting communicated by glass folding-doors with the garden, and as I now glanced in that direction, I perceived the strong rays of the moon reflected along the path which led to the arbour at the further extremity. Tempted by the beauty of the night, and hoping to tranquillize my feelings by pacing up and down this avenue, I cautiously opened the casement and sallied forth into the garden. It was nearly two o'clock in the morning, and as I had desired the servants not to sit up for me, every individual in the hotel had long since retired to rest, and were no doubt at that moment buried in sleep.

After walking up and down a few minutes, I seated my-

self in the arbour, which was completely buried in the shade of some overhanging trees, and there once more gave way to the disagreeable reflections which had before assailed me. I had not, however, been seated more than ten minutes, when I fancied I heard a sound similar to that of a man dropping on his feet from a height on a soft and yielding ground. I listened attentively, but the noise not being repeated, I once more relapsed into my train of musing, from which however I was again suddenly aroused through a different organ. Though buried in obscurity myself, I could see every thing before me as distinctly as if it had been noon-day ; for the bright rays of the moon falling on the whole front of the hotel, enabled me to distinguish the minutest object on its surface. Immediately under the window of Emily's chamber grew a poplar reaching to the very top of the building, and so near, that a man might have stepped without difficulty from one to the other. The tree was on that side of the path on which I had heard the sound, so that it was not necessary to cross the broad avenue in order to arrive at it. Suddenly I saw the white and glossy surface of the poplar covered at its base with a dark shade, which gradually ascending, left me no doubt that it was produced by a human form.

My first impression, arising from the apprehension that it was some thief endeavouring to procure admission into the hotel, was to give an immediate alarm, but in the next instant a presentiment of the truth flashed across my mind, and I resolved to await the issue. I knew that if any attempt at a forcible entry were made, I should not only have time to prevent its accomplishment, but, by planting myself at the bottom of the tree, be enabled to prevent the escape of this midnight intruder.

Gradually the form on which I now continued to fix my gaze ascended cautiously and slowly until it attained the height of Emily's window, when an arm was extended, and a signal given, so low that I could with difficulty distinguish it. In a moment or two afterwards the casement was open-

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ed, and the slight figure of a woman, enveloped in a loose white dress that was rendered doubly conspicuous in the light of the moon, then shining brightly on the building, appeared in the opening. That it was Emily herself, I could not have doubted, even had I not recognized in the timid shrinking of person, which seemed to mark her sense of the impropriety of a step which some more than ordinary motive had evidently induced her to take, the delicate and sensitive plant that I myself cherished with all the affection of a father. That Manvers was the being in whose favour this first dereliction from that strict propriety which had hitherto regulated her conduct had taken place, was now evident, and I no longer felt that serious alarm which the form of the intruder had originally excited. Still I could not resist the powerful curiosity which I entertained to ascertain what possible motive could have induced the one to ask, and the other to accord, an interview at this singular hour of the night, when each must have known that, in the event of detection, the reputation of the young girl would have been seriously compromised. Partly impelled by this feeling, and partly by the hope that some disclosure might fall from the lips of the unfortunate Manvers, which might enable me to arrive at a knowledge of his actual position, and to render him some essential assistance, I now quitted the arbour, and stealing cautiously along the edge of the avenue, and under the shadow of the projecting branches, soon reached the foot of the poplar, the intervening foliage of which completely intercepted our view of each other.

Though I had used the utmost caution in my approach, such was the death-like stillness of the night, that the falling of a pin on the avenue might almost have been heard, and but for the slight rustling of the leaves around them produced by the curving of the branches beneath Manvers's weight, I must have been overheard by both. Even as it was, a slight pause ensued for an instant in their whispering conversation; but as I had now gained the foot of the poplar, and remained perfectly quiet, their momentary alarm passed away, and it was once more resumed.

At the bottom of the tree lay the cloak which Manvers had worn at the theatre, and which had evidently been dropped with the design to afford him greater facility in his ascent; but if I had wanted other proof of his individuality, it would have been obtained in the clear but melancholy whispering of his passion and his misery, which now fell upon my ear, and sank deeply into my heart.

"Alas! dearest Emily," he rather breathed than spoke, "how deeply and fervently I have loved you, you can never know: how far worthy of your regard I am, you can never learn; still, believe me when I swear that though miserable and unfortunate,—though wretched, and the victim of appearances,—I am guiltless, utterly guiltless of dishonour. Oh, promise me that you will believe this, or my fate will indeed be one of supreme, of bitter misery."

"Tell me not of your innocence," returned the sobbing girl; "seek not to convince me of your honour; I would stake my life upon both. But why talk thus, dearest Manvers? Never did the shadow of a doubt in regard to you ever flash across my mind; and as for your circumstances, oh name them not. Had you the wealth of the world, you would not—could not—be dearer to me than you are."

"Generous and noble-minded girl! this is nothing more than what I expected of you," returned the impassioned young man. "But ah," he pursued, in a more desponding tone, "it is now too late. A few weeks since, and encouraged by these assurances of your affection, I would have cherished the latent hope of eventually possessing you, but the illusion is now for ever fled, and I am driven to the last refuge which misery such as mine can wring from despair."

"Good Heaven! what mean you Manvers?" returned the agitated Emily; "and why these gloomy forebodings of evil? Alas!" she pursued, bursting into another paroxysm of tears, my own weak strength but poorly enables me to bear up against these afflictions of the spirit, and yet you, Manvers, who ought to support and encourage me, are the first to check my woman's hopes of happiness, even in their infancy."

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"Oh, God!" groaned Manvers aloud. The exclamation rang deeply along the silence of the night, and startled even themselves with its echo. For a moment Emily closed her casement, and retired back into her chamber, while Manvers remained still and motionless as the grave. The lapse of a few minutes was sufficient to convince them that they had not been overheard, when the casement was again cautiously unclosed, and Emily with a finger on her lip, to denote the necessity of greater prudence, once more made her appearance.

"Never," pursued the young man, in a more subdued tone, yet one in which the most complete expression of human misery was now fully rendered; "never did I love you half so well as at this moment; never was I aware until now how necessary you are to my happiness: but, alas! an insuperable barrier is opposed to our union, and this night we shall have met for the last time."

"Merciful Powers! what mean you?" she returned, with the evident excitement produced in one whose natural timidity is lost sight of in despair. "Manvers, you well know that my uncle is rich, and intends me as his heir; and as for the injurious impressions excited in him by that base and designing Nimbleton, believe me that they have long since passed away. Nay, it was only this evening at the theatre, and not five minutes before I first saw you, that Mr. Morris, whom I deeply love and respect for his just appreciation of your character, assured me that my uncle was so far convinced of the injustice he had done you, as to be perfectly willing to consent to our union, provided you could satisfy him that you were of an honourable family. I will not, dearest Manvers, insult you by inquiring if you are; still, only satisfy my uncle, whose nature I well know to be generous in despite of all his peculiarities of character, and I will stake my existence, that if set at rest in regard to his family pride, pecuniary considerations will be with him an object of the least importance."

"Ah, Emily, it is too late!" groaned the unhappy young

man. "But yesterday, and this assurance would have imparted pleasure and delight to my soul, but alas! at this moment it only tends to render my wretchedness more complete. Never,—never did I feel the pang of losing you more bitterly than now."

"For pity's sake, Manvers, explain yourself. What objection can there be to our union, and what mean you by these mysterious allusions? Indeed, indeed, this is unkind of you. You know not what agony of feeling you make me endure. If there are family considerations which prevent you from engaging yourself; at least have confidence enough to repose your secret in my breast. I can endure any thing, every thing but suspense."

"Emily," pursued the agitated lover, "it was for no ordinary purpose that I solicited this interview. Although it should break my heart to tell, and yours to hear, the disclosure that must confirm our mutual misery, with that view am I here. That woman who was with your party this evening"—

"Merciful Powers! what of her?" interrupted the wretched girl, in a tone that marked some wild and fearful apprehension. "What of that woman, Manvers? That there is some dreadful mystery between you, is evident; for ill as I was, I failed not to remark the horror and disgust with which you tore me from her arms. Who is she? Oh, in mercy, tell me."

Manvers spoke not, but the suppressed heavings of his chest told all the wild disorder of his soul too well, not to satisfy his companion that the disclosure when made would completely overwhelm her with affliction. Still she persevered in her demand.

"Manvers, Manvers, if indeed you love me, kill me not with suspense, but let me know the worst. Who is that woman?"

"That woman, Emily," he replied, with the desperation of one who has summoned up all his courage to communicate a secret, the disclosure of which is sure to entail his own wretchedness; "that woman is my wife."

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"Merciful God!" almost shrieked the fainting girl, "can it be possible!" In the next instant the casement was closed, and a sound similar to that of a falling body was heard.

For a few minutes a total silence succeeded, during which I remained plunged in a state of utter stupefaction at the extraordinary admission just made, yet intently watching the window of the unhappy girl.

Several times the unfortunate young man now called in the loudest whisper on Emily, but no answer was returned. "Emily, dear Emily," he pursued, in a more elevated tone, "only one word before we part forever."

His accents, as before, rang distinctly throughout the deep silence which continued to pervade the scene, but still no answer was given, and the casement remained closed as before.

"Ha! I see it all!" he exclaimed in the same tone.— "She hates and despises me; and that without suffering me to enter on a justification of my conduct. This night, however, shall terminate my wretched sufferings, for I can no longer endure so hateful a load of existence. Ah, Emily, you can never know how much and how sincerely I have loved you, neither will you even pity my unhappy fate, since you deem him guilty who is only unfortunate."

As he uttered these words in the most heart-rending tones, he began to descend the tree, and that with such rapidity, that he came gliding upon my shoulders almost before I was aware of his intention. The suddenness of the shock threw me off my balance, and we both rolled together on the cloak which as I before stated he had deposited at the foot of the poplar in his ascent.

In the next instant I felt his hand tightly grasping my throat, but before I could ask him what he meant by strangling his best friend, he was already on his feet, and having contrived to disengage the cloak, suddenly quitted his hold and glided off in the direction by which I had seen him approach.

The instant I found myself free, though by no means pleased with the rough handling I had met with, I hastened after him, and found him in the act of climbing the garden wall. There was no time to be lost. It was evident that he meditated self-destruction, and unless I could succeed in arresting his flight, there was every probability that on the following morning he would be seen and identified only as a corpse. Afraid to call out, lest by doing so I should alarm the hotel, my only reliance was on the chance I might have of seizing some part of his dress before he could succeed in clearing the wall. With this view I sprang forward, but at the very inoment when I extended my arm for the purpose he suddenly disappeared on the opposite side.— Though disappointed in this respect, I did not relinquish every hope. I had ever been considered an excellent vaulter in my youth, and in my maturer years this acquirement had rather been perfected by strength, than diminished by disuse. Resolved to put my powers to the test, I now drew back a few paces, and running at the wall, contrived at one bound to reach the top, when dropping myself down from my hands, I soon reached the opposite side.

Manvers had evidently no apprehension of being followed beyond the extremity of the garden, for he was now pursuing his course leisurely and deliberately. I followed cautiously at a distance until he reached the Place Carousal, when I quickened my pace, and overtook him just as he issued through the archway at the opposite extremity opening on the *quai*.

"Are you mad?" I exclaimed, grasping him by the shoulder with a force that one more powerful than himself would have found some difficulty in eluding; "and have you no fear of the future, that you thus deliberately resolved on self-destruction? Fie, Manvers; I fancied you had more character than thus to yield unresistingly to despair."

"Good Heaven! was it you, then, whom I so rudely encountered in my descent from that tree? Forgive me, Mr. Morris, but I had fancied some prying and inquisitive per-

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son had been sent to watch my movements. Yet what could have brought you to that spot at so late an hour, and what object could you have had in listening to our conversation?"

"No unworthy one, believe me, Manvers," I rejoined impressively, and somewhat touched by the reproachful tones of his voice. "Accident alone conducted me into the garden; accident also made me acquainted both with your movements and those of Emily; but nothing short of the deep interest I felt in your mutual happiness could have induced me to possess myself of the motives which had caused you to adopt so unusual a course."

"I believe it," he returned with energy, "for I am not ignorant that you have all along been my friend, in spite of slander and appearances. Still," he pursued, after a slight pause, "how can you wonder at my wretchedness? Did you not hear me say, that the woman who was with your party at the theatre was my wife?"

"I did, and was greatly thunderstruck at a declaration, which remains yet to be explained. Still I had no time to pause on the surprise with which this intelligence had filled me. I heard your hoarsely muttered threat of self-destruction, and I was resolved to save you. Had you pressed much tighter on my throat, however, you would have had a double murder to answer for at the judgement seat of Heaven."

"Alas! I was so bewildered that I knew you not, neither, had you spoken to me at that moment, should I have recognized your voice. There is much, as you must already have perceived, of mystery in my conduct," he pursued, "however, to-morrow you shall learn all the history of my life and if it should appear that I have been a weak and erring being, at least I trust that I shall not be considered a guilty and dishonourable one. You are one of the very few who have not judged me from appearances, and I feel that I owe you an explanation, which will justify the favourable opinion you have entertained of me. To-morrow, then, you shall hear from me; until then good night, it is getting late, and I feel that I require rest to restore my harassed spirits."

"Not so, Manvers," I returned, emphatically. "I leave you not until we reach your habitation. I have long, in vain, sought to discover your residence, and no consideration shall now induce me to leave you until I become possessed of it."

"But surely, Mr. Morris," he returned, quickly and haughtily, "you would not force my confidence? You would not insist in knowing that which it is my desire to keep secret?"

"And is this all the return you make for my interest in your happiness?" I reproachfully exclaimed. "Manvers I have not deserved this."

"But my habitation is one," he pursued, eagerly, "which is fitted only to those who, destitute in means, and oppressed in spirit, like myself, are glad to conceal their wretchedness among the obscurest of their fellow men. Make some allowances for my pride," he continued, "and compel me not to disclose the full extent of a misery which you may divine, as much from my appearance as from any thing else. Again, let me entreat you to leave me, and to-morrow I will send to you."

"No, Manvers, I cannot, will not, leave you; for I am satisfied that you are not dealing sincerely with me. That your present place of abode may not be distinguished by any appearance of luxury, I can easily believe; but were it the most squalid receptacle of human wretchedness, you would not suffer any considerations of pride to prevent you from disclosing the full extent of your privations to one, who, you must be well assured, feels the utmost interest in your welfare, and would do every thing in his power to alleviate your affliction. Manvers, you still meditate self-destruction?"

An involuntary shuddering of his frame convinced me that I was right; but before he could find time to reply, our mutual attention was arrested by an occurrence of the most painful and exciting interest.

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CHAPTER XVI.

DURING the preceding conversation, we had advanced gradually along the *quai*, and close to the parapet that overhangs the river. We were now about five hundred yards from the Pont Henri Quatre, whose tower-crowned arches were reflected on the placid Seine beneath. The dark and frowning masses of building rising in the small island of St. Louis, immediately beyond, cast the whole of the centre of the bridge into impenetrable obscurity; but on either side, it was thrown into such strong relief by the full rays of the moon, that the most minute object could be discernible. Suddenly a female figure appeared on the abutment, near the colossal statue of the king and hero from whom the bridge derives its name. For a moment it seemed to pause, as if shrinking from the death it was resolved to court, and in the strong light in which it was enveloped, we could distinctly see a handkerchief raised to the face.

At that moment we heard the trampling of men at the opposite extremity of the bridge, whom the glittering of arms at intervals announced to be one of the night patrols. When arrived near the centre of the bridge, the usual challenge was given, and in tones so loud that the figure started from the attitude of absorbing thought in which it appeared to have been plunged. The hands were now raised on high, and the body thrown eagerly forward. A wild shriek, that was echoed from shore to shore, ran piercingly throughout

the gloomy arches, and in the next instant a heavy and sullen plunge was heard in the water. Confused clamours now arose among the watch, and many persons were seen hurrying to either extremity of the bridge, with the view of rescuing the unhappy victim from the death it had too evidently sought. Presently afterwards voices were heard on the beach, and the sound of oars under the dark arches of the bridge, announced that they were already in search of the body.

At the moment when that wild shriek filled the air, Manvers started as if he had been shot. "Good Heaven! I should know that voice!" he exclaimed, "but no, no, it cannot be. Yet, what do we here, while a fellow creature is struggling in the last agonies of death? Unloose me, Mr. Morris, I must insist that you do."

"What! in order that you may imitate the example that has thus been set you? Not I, indeed, Manvers. Were we here alone, and under any circumstances, I would willingly risk my own life to save another from perishing; but as I well understand your purpose, you must not charge me with inhumanity, if I neither render assistance myself, nor suffer you to leave me under that pretence. Much better that one should run the risk of perishing than two."

"But," pursued the agitated young man, vainly endeavouring to free himself from my Herculean grasp, which gradually became more contracted, "how can you, how can I, justify such apathy of conduct, when the life of some amiable, though, perhaps, misguided woman may depend on our exertions to save her?"

"Manvers," I pursued, impressively, "I am not the dupe of your affected commiseration for one, whose fate, so far from deploring, you secretly envy. Why," I pursued, "at the very moment when you are yourself meditating self-destruction, should you seek to mar the purpose of one who may have conceived the same disgust for existence that you entertain? Is this either just or consistent? Do not, however, imagine that I make these observations with any other

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view than to convince you that I am not to be diverted from the determination I have formed. As I said before, were we here alone, I would not hesitate; but you already perceive that there are upwards of twenty persons exerting themselves for the purpose, and if assistance can effectually be rendered, they will succeed without our aid."

"This speech, somewhat prolix I must confess, at such a moment, and under such circumstances, had, however, the effect of proving to my companion that every effort to escape me must be in vain, and he no longer contended the point.

Two boats now emerged from the gloomy arches into the moon's rays, and directed their course to a dark object, that was floating rapidly down the stream. This one of them succeeded in overtaking when at a distance of about a hundred yards from the spot where we stood, and we could distinctly see a human body raised over the side.

"Is she dead?" shouted a voice from the bridge, as the boat now directed its course up the stream, evidently towards the Morgue.

"She is," was the sullen reply; "but how do you know it is a woman? And who are you who ask the question?"

"I drove the lady to the corner of the street here," pursued the same voice. "She told me she would be back immediately, and I have been waiting upwards of half an hour."

"And why in the name of the devil did you not follow her? For what do you suppose a woman would come here at this hour of the night, unless she intended to destroy herself?"

"It was no business of mine," returned the other; "besides, I was obliged to look to my horses."

"Go and see who that fellow is, and take his number," said another voice from the boat in which the body had been deposited.

This order, given in an authoritative manner, and evidently from the person in command of the watch, was obeyed by the men in the other boat, who now directed their course

towards that side of the beach whence the voice had proceeded.

That this intimation was not at all relished by the individual more immediately interested, was evident from the precipitation with which he now quitted his station on the bridge, and sought to regain his coach. The second boat, however, speedily touched the beach, and the men, leaping on shore, were soon up the ascent, when they separated and went in pursuit of the fugitive. The chase was evidently not of long duration, for at the moment when Manvers and I, still continuing our course along the *quai*, arrived at the western extremity of the bridge, we saw a *fiacre* standing near the corner of the street adjoining, and a crowd near it, surrounding a man who was gesticulating violently. Curiosity induced us to approach him, when we found that he was strenuously defending himself from a charge of culpable negligence, which the watch were as positively urging against him.

"Is it not enough," said he, with a degree of fury, "that I have lost my fare by this woman, without being made answerable for her folly in choosing to drown herself?"

"Of what country is she?" pursued the other, "and where did you take her up?"

"I know nothing of her country," replied the man; "but it was an Englishman who put her into my coach, and I took her up at the Odeon."

"Good God!" I exclaimed, aloud, "can it be possible!" Manvers breathed painfully, and I felt his whole frame shivering as he leaned more heavily on my arm.

The whole party started at my exclamation of surprise, which was uttered in English, and a momentary silence ensued.

"Who are you?" at length demanded one of the watch, "and what are you doing here at this hour of the morning?"

"We are Englishmen, and strangers," I replied, "who have been led forth by the beauty of the evening to enjoy a walk on the banks of the river."

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"Rather a singular taste, indeed!" observed another of the party; "for my part, I should much rather prefer my bed at this hour of the morning. Did you see any thing of this affair?"

"We did, we saw her ascend the bridge and throw herself into the river."

"And yet you made no attempt to save her?" pursued this inquisitor. "Do you suffer people to drown themselves in that sort of way in England without offering to interpose?"

"We were at least five hundred yards off at the moment," I replied, "and as your party were already on the bridge, you were much more capable of interposing than we were. We heard you distinctly challenge, however, and saw you the instant after she fell hasten to her rescue in the boats. We therefore knew, that if she was to be saved at all, you could do it effectually without our assistance."

"True," rejoined the same speaker, evidently pleased with this tacit compliment paid to the vigilance of his party; "you are right, we were not long in hastening to her assistance; but the woman must have been half dead before she threw herself in, for it is impossible she could otherwise have been drowned in so short a time."

During this colloquy the coachman, whose attention had been arrested by my English (or Irish) accent, kept continually passing and repassing, evidently with a view of scrutinizing my person. At length he suddenly stopped before me, and holding out his hand, vociferously exclaimed—

"Sir, I must insist on your paying my fare. You are the very gentleman who engaged me at the Odeon to take the lady home. Come, this is very fortunate indeed, for I shall now not only get my money, but have all the responsibility taken off my own shoulders. My fare is twelve francs; quick, sir, for I have no time to lose, it is now nearly three o'clock, and my horses have had no rest."

"Good Heaven, can it be possible!" I exclaimed, almost petrified at the intelligence, and mechanically handing him the amount of his demand; "but how is this? it was scarcely

eleven when the lady entered your coach, and four hours, nearly, have elapsed. What have you been doing in the mean time, and how do you account for this delay?"

"Easily enough," returned the man, gruffly. "When I set the lady down at her hotel, she desired me to return again in two hours, and wait for her about a hundred yards from her own door. I did so, and you know the rest; but I have my money, and that is all I require. Good night."

The watch no longer opposed his departure, and the fellow now mounted his box and drove off, with as much unconcern as if nothing in the world had occurred of more than ordinary interest. When at a little distance, he turned towards the party, and with an air of gaiety exclaimed:—

"The next time I take a lady on a dying trip of this kind, I shall take good care to be paid before hand; for I may not always find a convenient Englishman in the way to settle my claims on her."

The watch now moved in the direction their companions had taken, and the leader having asked me if I wished to see whether the lady was actually the person described by the coachman, I replied in the affirmative, and we all proceeded towards the Morgue.

During the whole of this scene Manvers had not uttered a single word; but it was evident from the frequent change of his features, and the vivacity of his attitudes, that he had heard every thing with the most exciting interest.

"Well," I at length exclaimed, in a low voice, as we followed in the rear of the party, "what think you of this?"

"That the hand of Providence is visible through it all," he impressively returned; "but let us first satisfy ourselves that *she* is indeed the person to whom we both allude."

"I fancy there can be but little doubt on the subject my dear Manvers," I pursued. "It is quite clear, that you have lost a wife and I a bride, but I dare say we shall manage to console ourselves for the loss. What say you, eh? Or do you still persevere in your resolution to follow her example?"

"My dear Morris," he replied, pressing my hand with

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fervour in his own, "it would be vain, it would be hypocritical, to affect any thing like grief at this circumstance. May God forgive the worthless woman, who has precipitated herself with all her vices unexpiated into His presence; but such have been her injuries towards me, that to affect to mourn her fate would be absurd in the highest possible degree. Of her character you will judge when you learn, that while on the point of contracting this matrimonial engagement with you, she must have been perfectly aware of my being alive. But we will speak of this hereafter. Yet, where in the name of Heaven did you first meet with her?"

"Even in that very Morgue in which she is now lying," I replied. "She came to claim the body of her brother."

"Brother!" repeated Manvers bitterly,—"brother did you say? No, her paramour, her vile paramour, to whom she has sacrificed me and my honour for ever. Judge what reason I have to deplore her," he pursued with emotion, "when I tell you, that before I married her he was her lover, and as such continued to the very hour of his death. Do you know how he perished?" he continued with a sort of savage exultation.

"No," I replied; "I never heard, but his death I fancy was attributed to himself. It was supposed that he had ruined himself at play, and had in consequence thrown himself in the Seine."

"Into the Seine he fell, but he did not throw himself in," impressively returned Manvers. "Perhaps I am the only one who can at all give an account of his death."

"My dear Manvers, what mean you? Surely you are not a— a— a—"

"Not a murderer, no! Yet to me may his death be attributed. We met on that very bridge,—high words passed, and a violent struggle succeeded. In his attempt to escape me he sprang upon one of the abutments—the very same from which his guilty paramour leaped this night—his foot slipped; he uttered a shriek, fell backwards, and the heavy

plunge that followed, convinced me that it was not likely to be repeated—I passed on.”

“What! without giving an alarm, without rendering assistance yourself?”

“Without rendering assistance myself, certainly; for why should I have assisted him, who had made me for ever a wretch upon earth?—yet, not without giving the alarm; for as I passed by the Morgue, on my way to my wretched lodging, I acquainted those within of the fact of a man having fallen over the bridge, and they immediately hastened to his rescue.”

I could not blame Manvers, for it was evident that some deep injury had been wrought him, and human nature I knew too well to expect, that in a moment of strong excitation he should have tendered a helping hand to the destroyer of his happiness. I was not sorry however to learn, that if he did not exert himself to save his enemy from the fate which awaited him, he had done all that humanity claimed at his hands, in communicating the danger to which he was exposed.

We had now reached the Morgue, and one of the watch tapped gently at the door, which was immediately opened by his comrades. By the dull light of the lamp, which hung suspended from one of its walls, we could discern the rough figures of three men grouped round the *estrade*, on which the dead bodies are deposited, and through the intervals the garments of a woman, who was extended motionless before them.

“Will you go in?” I whispered to Manvers.

“Not for worlds,” he replied. “I cannot bear to look upon her even in death, but you, who knew her, can satisfy my every doubt on the subject. I will wait here until you return.”

Accordingly I made my way through the crowd to the foot of the *estrade*, where every doubt as to the individuality of the unhappy victim was soon at an end. It was indeed Miss Stanmore, or rather Mrs. Manvers; and what filled me with

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a sensation of almost awe at the inscrutable designs of Providence, her lifeless frame lay extended on the very spot on which a few weeks before she had won my interest, not more by her beauty than by the passionate expression of her grief for the loss of him whom she had called, and I had believed to be, her brother. How changed was now her beauty and how altered the sentiments with which I regarded her! Her features were stiff in death, and the contracted muscles of her face gave an expression of horror to her countenance, which it was painful to behold. Upon that part of the *estrade* on which her head reclined, a quantity of blood mixing with her wet and dishevelled hair, attested, that in her fall from the bridge she had received a wound that had probably greatly contributed to her death, and such indeed was the opinion expressed by those around. It was evident that she had deliberately prepared herself for this unhappy act, for she had substituted a dress of little or no value for that she had previously worn at the theatre, and had divested herself of every trinket and ornament.

Having declared myself to be a friend of the deceased, I now gave my card to the individual who appeared to be at the head of this melancholy establishment; and after intimating that I should send a proper person in the course of the morning to prepare the body for interment, hastened to join my companion, of whose latent intentions I still entertained some little distrust. He was still on the spot where I had left him, and evidently awaiting my return with impatience.

"Well Manvers!" I exclaimed, "it is indeed as I had expected, and that tie which has so long been a clog upon your existence, is no longer—Emily and yourself may yet be happy."

A deep and protracted breathing followed this assurance. It seemed as if an overwhelming load of anxiety had been removed from his heart, and he at length replied with emotion,—

"Morris, it would be vain to dissemble my satisfaction at this moment, for those only, who are bowed down like me in sorrow and shame, can understand the relief now afforded to my heart. God forgive me, if I appear inhuman in this instance; but though I have desired not her death, how can I so far belie the common instinct of nature, as to mourn the dissolution of a tie which alone has interposed between me and happiness? But whither are you leading me?"

"To my hotel of course," I replied; "for I had indeed begun to retrace my steps, hurrying Manvers almost unconsciously along. You forget, that in my pursuit after you I have left the doors wide open, and the candles burning on the table. If we remain out much later, we shall have the house alarmed, and a dozen *gendarmes* sent in pursuit of me; and surely, after having saved your life, you would not desire that any thing half so unpleasant should occur?"

"That you have saved my life is most true," he replied with energy, "since, but for your timely pursuit, the Morgue would have had another victim within its walls. But, as I said before, the hand of Providence is visible in it all; for had we not so singularly discovered that unhappy woman in the very perpetration of the act, which alone could make life valuable to me, though your interference might have delayed, it would not have wholly prevented the accomplishment of my design."

We had now gained the foot of the garden wall. This we soon managed to climb, and in a few minutes found ourselves seated in the room from which I had sallied forth into the garden. It being too late to procure a bed for Manvers, we determined on sitting up all night, and at my urgent request he thus commenced the story of his life.

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CHAPTER XVII.

"I AM a native of India. My father, General Manvers, a brave and enterprising soldier, but ruined in circumstances from an addiction to play, which I have fully inherited from him, was killed in action in that country. Deeply afflicted at the loss of one, whom, in despite of the misery he had wrought in his family, she loved with an affection that continued even and unswerving to the close, my mother died soon afterwards; and I was at a very early age left an orphan under the protection of a maternal uncle. Possessed of great wealth, the affection of this excellent man led him to consider his fortune as being lent only in trust for the son of his beloved sister. And as I had, soon after her death, been sent to England for my education, every luxury that money could supply was afforded me; and at school I was usually known by the designation of the rich young nabob.

"In due course of time I was sent to Oxford, and there, my allowance having been increased to an extent by no means customary at college, I found myself surrounded, flattered and courted by all the more dissipated and fashionable of my companions. Many professed themselves my friends; but though my disposition was as open and my feelings as warm as those of most young men of my years, there was only one among them for whom my heart acknowledged a sentiment of pure and disinterested friendship.

"William Haverfield was the younger son of a family highly connected, and my senior by about three years.— Possessed of an extremely handsome person, he united to the gentlest and most fascinating manners, an appearance of frankness and sincerity, that could not fail to win the hearts of those to whom he attached himself; and as he evidently sought me out from among his companions, I was not backward in repaying the interest he appeared to take in all that related to me. Seduced by the example of my fellow students, and encouraged by the recollection of my uncle's boundless wealth, I had entered with avidity into play, and was eventually a loser of large sums. It was on these occasions that Haverfield exercised all the privileges of friendship, and after remonstrating on the extreme folly of indulging in an amusement which was ever accompanied, even in success, with a certain degree of anxiety, pointed out the almost certain ruin that awaited me if I still continued to persevere in it. Moved by his arguments, and anxious to prove how highly I valued his friendship, I had resolution enough to combat the propensity; and during my stay at Oxford, I never once indulged in any description of gaming whatever.

"On the completion of Haverfield's term of study, he set out for the continent; and it having been mutually agreed that we should meet in Paris, at the expiration of my minority, which would be in eighteen months, we separated with the most cordial feelings of regard for each other, and under a promise to maintain a regular correspondence until that period should arrive.

"Deprived of the society of him whom I had selected as my friend, and to whom I was really sincerely attached, I now almost gave up my former acquaintances. I no longer led the life of idleness I had previously done, but devoting myself with ardour to the prosecution of my studies, soon made such considerable proficiency in them, that at the termination of the eighteen months I had allotted myself I had every reason to be satisfied with the fruit of my application.

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“ During this period, I received and answered several letters from Haverfield, some dated Rome, some Venice, others Naples, &c., all of which breathed the deep gratification he had experienced in visiting these classic lands. He regretted much, he said, that I had not been with him to share his pleasures, and divide his conquests, but as he shortly expected to be in Paris, (thus he expressed himself in his last letter, dated from Geneva, on his return,) he trusted that he would, on my arrival there, have it in his power to introduce me to those, whom he believed he knew me too well to imagine I could behold with indifference. His letter was closed with an earnest entreaty, that I would lose no time after quitting college, in hastening to join him as already agreed upon.

“ My anxiety to visit this vortex of dissipation, was quite as great as that expressed by Haverfield to receive me; but an unexpected circumstance occurred, to prevent my carrying my intention into effect at the moment. Nearly about the period when I proposed leaving Oxford, I received a letter from my uncle, particularly enjoining me to visit Ireland and Scotland before I thought of venturing on the continent, a measure that had been determined on at the completion of my studies. Although a visit to either of these countries was not at all in unison with my wishes, and especially at this moment, when I knew that Haverfield was impatiently awaiting my appearance in Paris, I had too much respect for my uncle's wish, to hesitate in complying with his injunction. The mode, however, in which I resolved to effect this object, was a novel one, yet perfectly in accordance with that spirit of romance, with which my character was in a great measure imbued.

“ I was a tolerable proficient on the guitar; and as I spoke and sang Spanish with facility, and had moreover the dark cheek of the Spaniard, it occurred to me to disguise myself as a minstrel of that soil, and to travel thus equipped through both countries. Accordingly I suffered my moustachios to grow, ordered a suitable dress made of somewhat

coarse materials, and with my guitar under my arm and my wallet on my back, set off from Liverpool, to which place I had travelled by the coach, in one of the steam-packets for Dublin.

"It is not my intention, neither indeed can it be of importance, to detail the many curious incidents and adventures, that occurred to me during my enactment of the wandering Spanish minstrel; nor, in fact, should I have alluded to this circumstance at all, had it not been for the connexion which this part of my history has had with my present existence.

"It was about sunset one evening, that on my return through the county of Connaught, I passed by the gates of a park, which opened on an extensive avenue, leading to one of the finest mansions, as far as I could judge from its external appearance, that I had seen in all that part of the country. Fatigued with my walk and attracted by the beauty of the scene, I sat myself down on a stile that opened into a field immediately opposite the lodge, and partly from distraction, partly from a desire to see whether my music would succeed in drawing forth any of the inmates, I commenced playing a plaintive Spanish air, which had been favourably received both by gentle and peasant in every part of the country I had previously traversed.

"As I had expected, the unusual sounds of my guitar were not long unheeded; for soon afterwards I saw an old man appear at the entrance of the lodge, and direct his gaze towards the spot where I was seated. His whole attitude was that of surprise and astonishment, and well it might be, for not only the instrument, perhaps, was entirely new to him, but the garb and appearance of the performer were such as he probably had never even imagined before. As soon as I had ceased, he made a sign, intimating that I should play another air. Travelling as I did in the character of a mendicant minstrel, I always made it a rule to comply with every request of the kind, and I immediately commenced a favourite bolero. The old man now moved from his original position, and retiring a few paces back into the park, I saw

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him beckon with his hand to some one along a path that ran close under the park walls, and at right angles with the avenue opposite to which I had assumed my station. He then approached the gate, and resumed his examination of my person. In a few minutes, two females made their appearance, at the extreme corner of the lodge, round which they peeped as if fearful of disturbing me by their presence. One of these I could perceive, was of an age little inferior to that of the old man, and of the same peasant class. The other shrinking from observation, was a young girl, whose light and elastic movements and more elegant garb, proclaimed her to be far the superior of her companions in station and in birth.

“When I had ceased playing, the old man motioned me to approach; I instantly obeyed, and as I drew nearer to the lodge, I found the timidity of the younger female to increase. Several questions were now put to me, to all of which I replied in the imperfect English which I had adopted from the commencement of my tour, the better to give consistency to the character I personated. Many were the lamentations of the old woman that so nice a young foreigner should have been compelled to leave his native home and wander in a foreign land in quest of sustenance and food; and as she turned towards her companion that appealing look which seeks the confirmation of an opinion expressed, I saw a tear steal down the cheek of that innocent girl, which has never since been obliterated from my memory.

“The old man now returned into the lodge, and in a few minutes reappeared with a handful of cold meat and bread, with which he motioned me to fill my wallet. Since refusing anything of this kind would subject me to a suspicion of being other than I affected, I took whatever was offered to me, and, in fact, as I hourly encountered a number of famished wretches, who were less fortunate in securing supplies than myself, I had no difficulty in getting rid of my superabundant stock the instant after I had turned my back on those from whom I had received it. It was now twilight,

and as I was anxious to get into some neighbouring village for the night, I threw my guitar across my shoulder, and in broken English wished the party a good night. At this moment the younger female made a sign with her hand for me to stop; then approaching the spot where I stood with trembling steps, drew forth a small purse from which she took the only piece of money that it contained. This she offered to me with such an air of timidity and embarrassment, that I could do nothing but gaze on her beautiful countenance, which every moment became more deeply suffused with burning blushes.

“Well, to be sure!” exclaimed the old woman, ‘what is he looking at, that he does not take the money? I dare say he does not meet with such good luck at every place he stops at. Why don’t you take it, young man?’

“Pray, take it,” repeated the younger female in tones of the utmost sweetness, and extending her delicate white hand. ‘I only wish it were more for your sake.’

“Do you?” I quickly rejoined, ‘then, indeed, shall I prize and treasure it for your’s, and as a remembrance of this hour. Hear me,’ I pursued, perceiving her astonishment. ‘I am not what I appear, but an Englishman and a gentleman, travelling to see the country, whom a spirit of romance has caused to adopt this disguise. I see that I must take the money for the sake of appearances, before your companions, but let me entreat that the purse may accompany it also. *That*, indeed, I shall esteem and treasure beyond all price, and never at any future period of my life shall I gaze on it without recalling the present scene to my memory.’

“The blushes and confusion of the young girl increased even more rapidly than before, at this singular and unexpected declaration, and her eyes were now bent upon the ground, until she seemed to have lost all power to raise them again.

“What is all that gibberish about?” exclaimed the elder female, who, from the low tone in which I had spoken,

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could only distinguish imperfect sounds. 'Why does he not take the money and be off? Come, miss, it is getting late, and the night air will do you no good. There! I hear my master's voice calling for you.'

"Aroused by this intimation the young girl again looked up, but perceiving that my gaze was intently rivetted on her, her eyes speedily sunk beneath mine. Another mandate from the old woman aroused her, and as I now held my hand extended through the iron bars of the gate, she placed both the money and the empty purse in it in such a manner as not to be seen by the others; and then raised her eyes for the last time to mine with a mingled expression of sweetness and trouble that went direct to my heart.

"I had merely time to add, emphatically, 'Never, never, while I have life, will I part with this;'—when the old woman, whose patience seemed to be now quite exhausted, approached us, and passing her young charge's arm through her own, led her along the avenue conducting to the mansion. Once or twice she turned her head to see if I still lingered near the gate, and the instant she observed me, as if ashamed of what she had done, as rapidly resumed her original position. At length her form finally disappeared in the increasing gloom of the avenue, and I turned slowly and sadly away to prosecute my journey.

"For several days this romantic incident took strong hold on my imagination, for although from the peculiarity of the character I had assumed, I had previously been placed in situations of much interest and novelty, not one of them had ever impressed me half as forcibly as the adventure I have just related. Finding, however, the necessity of overcoming a feeling, which my better sense told me it must be absurd to cherish, I endeavoured to arouse my mind and cheer my spirits by the reflection, that I should not possibly ever again behold the being who had so singularly and so insensibly interested my thoughts. In this I finally succeeded, and on my arrival in London—for I had given up my Scottish excursion until some future moment,—I found I had

so far conquered the impression that had originally been made on my mind, as to retain only that tender and soothing recollection which is ever associated with a recurrence to some past and pleasing event.

"At my agents' I found nearly a dozen letters from Haverfield, all entreating me to use no delay in joining him in Paris, which he said was the only place on earth fit for a wealthy and dashing young man like myself to reside in. These varied, otherwise, in tone and in spirit according to their dates. For instance, his first letter announced his arrival in the capital and his entrance into that society to which his numerous letters had introduced him. His second alluded to the beauty and fascination of the women, to balls, parties, operas, &c. His third announced his debüt in the gaming-houses; and all his succeeding letters related to the same subject, and were written in a strain more or less desponding according as he had been unsuccessful or otherwise in his play. The last three, in particular, had evidently been penned under strong feelings of excitement produced by severe losses, and they contained requests for loans, which their writer declared nothing but circumstances of the most disastrous nature could have induced him to solicit.

"Although I could not help lamenting that fatuity which had led Haverfield into the commission of the very vice for which he had so often censured me at college, and of which he had, in fact, in some degree broken me, I lost no time in transmitting the amount he required, assuring him at the same time that his request should have been complied with in the very first instance, had I been in England when his letter arrived. I then explained the ramble I had taken through Ireland, and alluded to my romantic adventure in Connaught, adding, that when I should be altogether recovered from that impression, I might, but not until then, be induced to pay homage to the beauty of those Parisian belles whose charms he had extolled in such brilliant and exciting terms.

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“By return of post I had a reply to this communication. After expressing his warm acknowledgments for the assistance I had rendered him, Haverfield proceeded to say, that he hoped I had not altogether lost my heart to the young Irish girl, as on my arrival in Paris he intended to present me to one who was already much prepossessed in my favour, from the manner in which he had spoken of me.— This individual he said, was no other than a favourite sister of his own, who had recently joined him in Paris, and whom he declared, strange as the assertion might be considered as coming from a brother, to be one of the most fascinating women he had ever beheld. ‘Guard well your heart,’ he concluded, ‘if you intend to preserve it inviolate, for such is the fascination of Louisa, that I find it necessary at every hour of the day to recollect she is my sister, not to love her with passion myself. If, therefore, I feel thus, what will not you, Manvers, who have no such tie to restrain you? Come quickly, for she is very anxious to see you.’

“Need I say that the description thus given me by Haverfield of his sister chased every other consideration from my mind? My imagination was inflamed, my heart on fire, and the very day after the receipt of this letter I set off on my unlucky journey to this capital.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

“ON descending from the *malle poste*, by which I had travelled from Calais, I hastened to Haverfield's hotel. On entering his apartment, I saw him seated carelessly on a sofa, and reading some passages of 'Don Juan' to a lady, whose flushed cheek and sparkling eye fully attested the interest she took in the subject. He immediately threw down the book, and springing on his feet, advanced to meet me with all that warmth and cordiality which had distinguished our former friendship. He then presented me to her whom he had previously described as his sister, intimating, carelessly, that he hoped we should be mutually pleased with each other, for his sake.

“My curiosity had been highly excited, and I was prepared to expect something more than ordinarily fascinating in the person and manner of my friend's sister. Still, even my own warm imaginings had fallen short of the reality, and from the moment that I first beheld her, I felt that it was impossible to resist the power of her beauty. My vanity was, moreover, flattered by the air of trouble and interest with which I thought she received me, for her eyes wore an expression of languor, and her cheek was suffused with a glow, which I then attributed to an emotion in my favour, but which in reality, on after consideration, I was satisfied had been a result only of the impassioned poetry to which she had been attending. You, however, have seen her, for Miss Stanmore and Miss Haverfield are the

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same, and beautiful as she was even yesterday, that beauty was nothing compared with what she was two years since."

After a few minutes' pause, Manvers resumed. "I will not enter into a detail of all the painful and shame-inspiring occurrences which have marked this period of my life.—The disclosure of my weakness and infatuation can be better made in general and concise terms; and as you must already have divined that I have been a dupe, it can only be necessary to say, that at the expiration of three months, after lavishing large sums of money on herself in presents, and on Haverfield by way of loan, I at length found my passion for her excited to such a pitch that I resolved to marry her.

"You will easily imagine that my proposal was not rejected. Haverfield expressed the utmost delight at the idea of an union between two beings so dear to his heart, and when I ventured to plead my suit in the ear of his sister, she whispered that she had long entertained a feeling of preference for me, and would deem herself but too happy in becoming my wife. What could I desire more? Ravished, enchanted with the very thought of the felicity that awaited me, I settled a thousand a year upon her, wholly at her own disposal, and three days afterwards we were married by the chaplain to the embassy.

"No sooner had I taken this rash and inconsiderate step, than I found I had reason to deplore my folly; for I could not conceal from myself that, much as she professed to be devoted to me, my bride ever received my caresses with coldness, and sometimes even with a loathing, that no attempts on her own part could enable her wholly to subdue. Strange and singular as this conduct was, I attributed it to any thing but the real cause; for ah! who could have suspected that the man on whom I had bestowed my early friendship, and on whom I had conferred many obligations, would so far have abused my confidence, as to have imposed his mistress on me as his sister, and led me into the consummation of an engagement which entailed my future misery and

shame? Yet this was the case. The being whom I now called my wife, had been seduced from her family by Haverfield during his tour through Italy, and forsaking every tie to follow the man whom she passionately loved, had consented to live with him under the fictitious relationship already alluded to. Three short months' residence in Paris had been sufficient to dissipate the slight means of Haverfield at the gaming table, and with it to destroy whatever principle of honour and delicacy he might originally have possessed, though much I doubt, indeed, whether he ever could have had any. In this dilemma, as I have before stated, he applied to me, and the readiness and liberality with which I more than supplied his demands, no doubt, suggested to his unworthy mind the possibility of making his mistress the medium of the re-establishment of his fortune. Alas! there was no necessity for this. Had he but made known the state of his affairs to me, I would willingly have shared whatever I possessed in the world with him; but thus to have deceived me, thus to have given the polluted victim of his lust to my arms in the sacred character of a sister! ah! this, indeed, was what I never could have expected, what I never could forgive."

Overcome by his feelings, Manvers now hastily paced up and down the apartment for a moment or two, and having at length succeeded in calming the agitation produced by these humiliating recollections, he again proceeded.

"You will readily imagine what my agony and disappointment were, when, for the first time clasping her against my heart who had so long awakened my idolatry and my love, I found myself the possessor of her exciting beauty, but alas! not of her affections. Cold and insensible as the marble Medicis, whose proportions she might well rival, she received my caresses without emotion; and with averted eye, suffered rather than listened to all those eager outpourings of my passion, which were wrung from me by the intenseness of my own happiness.

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tives which had induced her to yield herself up an unimpassioned victim to my arms, I at first attributed her behaviour to the newness of her position, and the modesty of her nature; but alas! each succeeding hour tended only to render her more apathetic, and to remove from my eyes the flattering veil which had so long obscured my true perception. Yet little did I dream that she loved another, still less, that that other was the man who called her sister and me his friend. Little did I imagine that while her person was given to me, her thoughts and desires were his, who had bestowed her on me at the altar, and that even at the moment when she was most mine, her licentious soul was revelling in the recollection of past pleasures, and the anticipation of new, with him whom she hourly, momentarily, fondled, and on whom she bestowed that endearing appellation, which she well knew must set every suspicion aside.

“Stung with disappointment and pained beyond measure, I complained to Haverfield of the coldness and indifference of his sister. He affected surprise, wondered how any woman could fail to love me, and especially his dear Louisa, whose passion, judging from the warmth of her affection for him, he had supposed would have been of no ordinary kind.

“Ah! how contemptible do I feel in my own eyes,” pursued Manvers, mournfully, “when I recollect how he must have triumphed in his deceit, and laughed at my credulity, as I remarked in reply, ‘that I would give worlds, were they mine, to be loved by her even with the affection with which she loved him.’

“Rendered miserable by this singular conduct of my wife, I followed the wily suggestions of Haverfield, and now sought a temporary distraction in dissipation; which, he said, would in all probability have the effect of arousing his sister’s jealousy, and rendering her more tenacious of my affection. Prior to my marriage he had never, even by indirect allusion, sought to awaken any of my former propensities, indeed, without the most glaring inconsistency, he

could not have done so ; but now that the connexion I had formed was indissoluble, he gradually threw off the mask, and in such a manner as not to excite any suspicion of his true intention. He began by declaring, that at college he had no idea of the fascination of play, or he would not have been so rigid a censor of an indulgence which, if not pursued to a ruinous extent, he admitted he had discovered to be harmless in itself. Still, public gaming houses he declared to be his aversion. For his own part, he said, that though he had certainly lost large sums of money at some of these tables, he had ever held them in abhorrence, and had now wholly given them up ; but as play was an amusement which had its peculiar fascination, he had latterly become the member of a small and select private club in Paris, where it was indulged in to a moderate extent.

“To this club he now offered to introduce me, under the pretext that it would dissipate my momentary domestic annoyances. He was well assured, he said, of Louisa's affection for me, and he thought, that my absenting myself occasionally would have a tendency to awaken a sentiment which soon or late would develop itself in all its power. The caprices of women, he added, were not to be explained or accounted for ; but for his own part, he thought neglect was the only efficient means to be adopted to bring them to their senses. He pledged himself therefore, that provided I would leave her for a short time as much to herself as possible, and assume an appearance of gaiety and indifference while in her presence, I should not long have to complain of her apathy and want of tenderness.

“Though I had found Haverfield strangely altered in character, as well as in manner, since my arrival in Paris, and more especially so since my marriage, I yet believed him to be as much my friend as ever, and resolved to follow the counsel he had given me. Accordingly I suffered myself once more—with a weakness and vacillation of purpose that can find no excuse but in my extreme misery—to give a loose to that passion for play, which was in

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some degree hereditary within me, and which, like a river which has long been dammed up, now burst forth with redoubled violence.

“When I tell you,” pursued Manvers after another slight pause, “that that notorious swindler Nimbleton, who passes himself off for a major in the British army, though he never was any thing more than a needy adventurer in the Spanish South American service; when I tell you, that he and the fellow who styles himself Edward Sylvester Cunningham Watson, together with your *friend* Hazard, of Boulogne, and the *soi-disant* Colonel Tredennick, who is also nothing more than a self-elected Spanish chief, were among the principal personages of this club; you will readily understand to what a set of sharpers the perfidious and ungenerous Haverfield now introduced me. To say that I was soon stripped of all I possessed, and all that I could raise, is only to state what you must have already anticipated; but this I had in the end rather reason to rejoice in than to regret, for though almost impoverished through my folly, it enabled me at length to open my eyes to the infamous deception that had been practised on me.

“It had been settled at my marriage, that the whole affair was to remain a profound secret until I received an answer from my uncle, to whom I had written for his consent. In the event of his opposing no objection, it was to be made public, but until that assurance was given, the secret was to remain with ourselves, at least until I attained my majority, of which I still wanted nearly twelve months. This proposal had originated with Haverfield himself, who said it would be much more prudent to await the result of my application, since, being in a great measure dependent on my uncle’s will, whose sole heir I was however well known to be, he might, in the event of my forming an engagement that did not meet his approbation, ultimately change the disposition he had made in my favour. He knew, that on my becoming of age, it was the intention of my uncle to settle three thousand a year on me during his

life, and as one thousand became his pretended sister's by the marriage settlement, over which I was to have no control whatever, it was not his interest to divulge that which, if known, might prove the means of defeating the principal object he had in view. Not one therefore of his associates was at all aware of the connexion which I had formed; not that they were ignorant that the woman whom he had passed off to me as his sister was no other than his mistress, and that she was a principal actor in the farce herself, but that they believed Haverfield merely encouraged a *liaison* between us, in order to render me more effectually his dupe. Too wily to run the risk of a betrayal, he had not even hinted at the possibility of such a step; and this will account to you for the silence Nimbleton has all along preserved in regard to that particular subject. Had he been at all aware of this fact, he would long since have communicated it; but this both the interest and policy of Haverfield had withheld from him. My majority once gained and the marriage settlement secured beyond a possibility of its being withdrawn, it was his intention to fly with the guilty partner of his infamy far beyond my reach, where they might reap in security the fruits of the damnable artifice they had practised upon me.

“Day after day, while slumbering in this delusion, I found the coldness and repugnance of my wife increase, while the tenderness of her manner towards him whom she called her brother, was less restrainedly manifested.—Nay, often even in my presence would she throw her arms around his neck, call him her ‘dear, dear William!’ and declare, if ever she should be separated from him she must indeed be the most miserable wretch on earth. At first I paid no attention to these outpourings of her affection, but gradually they made an impression on my mind, and that the more readily, because I fancied that my presence ever inspired her with a certain feeling of disgust. Judge the horror and anguish of my soul, when I first admitted the belief that the woman who had pledged her faith to me at

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at the altar, was filled with an incestuous passion for her brother. Yes, even this I thought more probable, than that the man who possessed my confidence and friendship should have thus cruelly betrayed and deceived me.

“About this period I received a letter from my uncle, forbidding me positively to enter into any engagement whatever for the present, and declaring, that if I did so without his consent, the allowance he had originally intended me should be withheld. This letter I communicated to Haverfield, who read it with every mark of impatience and disappointment, and from that moment there was a visible change in his manner and conduct towards me. With my wife it was otherwise. She, I thought, rather rejoiced than otherwise at the intelligence, and she now sought every opportunity of being along with her infamous paramour.

“Accident first discovered to me the extent of my shame. Returning home one evening from a dinner party much earlier than I had intended, or was expected, I saw Haverfield ascend the staircase before me. He too had dined out, and had repeatedly observed in the course of the morning, that he should not be home till late. Struck by this circumstance, the horrid suspicion I had already conceived once more arose to my mind; and I determined to satisfy myself of the truth. All the servants were in the lower part of the hotel, and I had no difficulty in stealing unperceived and unheard to the door of the *salon*. Ah! what was my despair, when I heard the voice of the woman I had so much loved, breaking out in deep and passionate exclamations of her love; entreating him not to subject her longer to the embraces of one whom she detested in proportion to the affection she bore to himself, and urging him instantly to fly with her to some remote spot, where they could indulge their mutual feelings without restraint! ‘Cruel William!’ she pursued, ‘you know I only consented to play this part—to endure this hateful marriage,—for your sake. With the view of acquiring a settlement which would place us both far beyond all dependence on the world, and repairing your ruined for-

tunes, have I done this violence to my feelings. But it is now become intolerable. Ah! how can I endure the embraces of one man when my soul is devoted to another? It is impossible that I can longer keep up the deception. The very loathing that I entertain for his presence must betray me ere long, and what shall we have gained? You perceive that his uncle is averse to the connexion, and should he by any means discover the secret, all expectation from that quarter will be at an end. What signifies, the settlement he has made upon me, if the means of fulfilling that engagement are withheld from him? That he is nearly ruined I am well aware; but surely you must have profited by it in common with the rest? With that and the jewels he has given me, which are in themselves a little fortune, we may yet live comfortably and happily; and your own fond Louisa shall no longer know the pollution of another's passion than her Haverfield's.'

"To these words succeeded the most eager kisses on the part of Haverfield, which were as passionately returned by the shameless victim of his seductive arts. Merciful Powers, what were my feelings at that moment! My heart rose to my throat, a film overspread my eyes; I could scarcely persuade myself that I was not the subject of some delusion. The pause that succeeded aroused me from the momentary stupor in which I was plunged. I burst open the door: every thing was confirmed. With flushed cheek, dishevelled hair, and disordered dress, she lay clasped to the heart of her infamous paramour, and my shame and dishonour were made manifest even as though they had been traced in characters of fire. Had I been armed, I should have shot them both. As it was, I stood in the opening of the door, watching and enjoying, with a sort of fiendish exultation, the confusion of their position and their vain attempts to hide themselves from my gaze. At length I staggered across the room, and grasping the cowering villain by the throat, I demanded in a low hoarse tone, whether the infamous woman at his side was in reality his sister. Trembling with fear

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and shame, he declared that she was not, and falling on his knees, besought me to forgive him for the deceit he had practised on me.

“ ‘Forgive you, monster!’ I exclaimed wildly, and spurning him from me with my foot; ‘yes, when I have sent a bullet through your accursed heart, but not before. Scoundrel as you are, you must still have honour and courage enough left for this! But it is not my intention to pollute myself by holding further communion with so infamous a wretch! You shall hear from me, Mr. Haverfield.’

“ Scarcely conscious of what I did, I paced the streets like one bewildered. It was nearly mid-night when I gained the lodgings of a friend, to whom I instantly imparted the cruel secret of my shame. But I cannot bear to linger on these details. Suffice it to say, that early on the following morning he was the bearer of a hostile message to the perfidious Haverfield. Will you believe it?—The villain had gone off during the night, and with him the shameless wretch to whom I was bound by a tie that death alone could sever. She had taken away not only all the jewels and trinkets I had given her, but also a considerable sum that I had received a day or two before, and every thing of value belonging to me.

“ It would be useless to dwell on the rage and disappointment of heart with which I received this intelligence, or the bitter regret I now entertained that I had not inflicted some dreadful chastisement on the dastard even at the very moment of detection. No one, however, knew whither they were gone, nor could the slightest clue be afforded me by any of the people in the hotel, who simply stated that they had been driven off in a *fiacre*, without any directions as to its destination being given in their presence.”

CHAPTER XIX.

“Sick at heart and broken in spirit, I quitted Paris, in the hope of deriving some distraction from travel; and passing through the south of France, visited Spain and Portugal, whence I finally embarked for England. Vain however was the attempt. For several weeks, even after my return to London, I remained secluded from all society, and shunned with care all those companions of my happier hours whose presence was at all likely to recal the memory of the villain who had so basely ruined my peace of mind. I had scarcely been six weeks in town, however, when I received an anonymous letter, stating that the wretched woman whom I had married was no more. This intelligence, pleasing as it was, I did not, could not believe; but when I at length beheld the event announced in the several London newspapers, I no longer doubted the fact. Oh, what a load was taken from my mind! It seemed as if a mountain weight of infamy was removed from my soul, and my feelings once more began to resume their wonted elasticity. To satisfy myself of the fact, it was necessary that I should return to Paris and make all possible inquiry on the subject. I accordingly made every preparation for my departure, and as a considerable remittance had been forwarded from India to my banker for my yearly expenses, I provided myself with letters of credit to the full amount on a house in Paris.

“The evening prior to my departure I lounged into the

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pit of the Opera, where I had not been many minutes before I discovered in the first tier of boxes a party that completely riveted my interest and attention. When I tell you that it consisted of Sir Brien O'Flaherty, his sister, and his niece, you will easily divine that in the niece I instantly recognized the young and interesting Irish girl who, in my ramble through Connaught, had excited so vivid an interest in my mind. She also knew me immediately, for when our eyes met, her cheek became suffused with blushes, and her confusion was evident. Nor was this at all dispelled, when on my taking out the silk purse which she had given, and which I had always kept on my person, she at once knew it for her own. Oh! how did I at that moment and in the same breath curse the fatality and treachery which had caused me to forget her, and rejoice in the dissolution of a tie which would now leave me free to enter into any other engagement! All the tenderness and romantic interest with which I had for a length of time after that adventure continued to linger on the recollection of her artless manner and simple yet touching beauty, now returned with increasing power, and as I knew that my family was such as to offer no objection to a connexion with her own, however elevated her rank might be, I cherished the hope of eventually possessing her, provided the intelligence I had so recently received from Paris should prove true. But, to be brief. I followed the party to their carriage observed by Emily alone. My own cabriolet was in waiting. I sprang into it, and desiring my servant to keep his eye steadily fixed on the carriage, was enabled to trace it to its final destination. It stopped at — Hotel, in Brunton Street. As soon as the party had alighted, I drew up, sent for one of the waiters, to whom I was well known, and from him received the pleasing intelligence that it was the family of Sir Brien O'Flaherty, who had very recently arrived from Ireland, and were preparing to set off for Dover early on the following morning on their route to Paris. Delighted with the information, I desired my man to secure post-horses immediately,

and to be ready with my *cliaise* at an early hour: We arrived in Dover nearly about the same time, and as I had taken the precaution to inform myself previous to my leaving town of the hotel at which they intended to stop, I was enabled to take my measures accordingly. *Once or twice only I ventured to show myself before Emily, and the *naïve* and touching confusion of her manner satisfied me that she was anything but displeas'd at the step I had pursued; nor was her satisfaction less manifest, when she subsequently discovered that I had taken my passage in the same steamboat.

"This, my dear Mr. Morris," pursued Manvers after a pause, "is a summary of my unfortunate history up to the moment when we first met. Little of interest afterwards occurred until I had been several days in Paris. Day after day I found my affection for Emily increasing, and was gratified to find that my attention had awakened a corresponding interest in her own bosom. Still I was wretched; for although I had made every possible inquiry after Haverfield, and had even inserted advertisements in the newspapers with that view, I could obtain no clue to his address whatever. The fate of my wretched wife was therefore involved in obscurity, and until I could have positive proof of her death, I felt that it would be madness to declare myself more openly. To add to my wretchedness and disgust, I saw that scoundrel Nimbleton,—one of those harpies who had contributed to my ruin,—insinuate himself into the confidence of the baronet, without my being able to warn him of the danger he incurred. I felt that I was completely in the power of this villain, and that with a breath, if I exasperated him, he could for ever destroy all my hopes of happiness. It is true that he knew not I was the husband of the woman who had been imposed on me as his associate's sister, but he was well aware that an intimacy subsisted between us, and this I was constantly in fear he would make the groundwork of a general charge of immorality, which would utterly ruin me in the estimation of Sir Brien. Whether by this or other means, how well he succeeded you must perfectly recollect.

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Stung to the soul by the baronet's coldness, and rendered desperate by the ill-success which had attended my inquiries after Haverfield, and my attempts to ascertain the truth of the statement which had been conveyed to me in England, I once more gave loose to my wild and unbounded passion for play. I betted high, lost large sums, and when under the influence of this excitement, drank of the most intoxicating liquors. At the gaming-table I observed I was constantly haunted by an individual who is not unknown to you, and who not only artfully encouraged me to play deeply, but also contrived to borrow large sums of money from me, not one of which he would ever repay or even acknowledge, when at a later period I applied for an inconsiderable portion of it under the plea of actual and immediate distress. I perceive that your curiosity is excited in regard to this person, who, I have already said, is not unknown to you. It is no other than the individual whom I have only heard designated by the name of the 'ironical gentleman.' You start, as I expected; but it is not the less true. It is to this man chiefly that I owe the ruin of my fortunes since I have been last in Paris. He has stripped me of even more in the shape of loans than I have actually lost at the gaming-table itself. Several weeks ago, I applied to my banker in London for a loan, but from him I received a peremptory refusal, stating, that a letter from India had arrived from my uncle, declaring that he had heard of the life I had been leading in Paris, and was resolved not to allow me another shilling.

"It was about this period when I had been stripped of every thing, that this same ironical gentleman, so I have since learnt,—intimated to the proprietor of the hotel that my circumstances were in the most embarrassed state, and that I had but little prospect of retrieving them. The alarm thus excited in the establishment may be easily imagined. Bills and demands for money were sent in so rapidly and so unceremoniously, that my situation became irksome to a degree; and as the only means of avoiding these cruel humiliations, I resolved to quit the hotel altogether. Every

hope of ever possessing Emily had vanished with my fortune, and though that lingering and vague expectation of which a lover can never entirely divest himself still lurked about my heart, I could not but perceive, that even if that tie which I had hitherto found the only bar to my happiness was no longer in existence, in the present hopeless state of my affairs it were vain to indulge in such a visionary expectation.

“You will easily imagine under what painful impressions I quitted this hotel? for I well knew that Nimbleton, whose designs on the baronet's niece were too palpable to be mistaken, would leave no means untried to injure me in his estimation, and to tax me with a dishonour, which my own singular conduct in a great degree presumed. ‘Alas!’ I thought, ‘even Emily herself will believe me guilty; and in a few weeks at the latest, I shall be entirely forgotten by her who has awakened a sentiment of affection in my heart, pure even as her own innocent mind could desire it to be.’

“I now took up my residence in an obscure abode in the Faubourg St. Germain, from whence both pride and shame prevented me from issuing forth except at night. During the first few days of my entrance into this wretched lodging, I occupied myself with writing letters to some of my old college friends, to whom I had lent money in the days of my prosperity, and one to my uncle. To the latter I confessed all my folly and imprudence, and entered into the history I have now given you, detailing every particular of my conduct, and entreating his pardon for failings that had grown chiefly out of inexperience, and a too great reliance on the honour and sincerity of others. I concluded by saying that I was in the utmost state of destitution and despair, but that I would endeavour to support my present hateful existence until I should receive his answer to my appeal. This letter I forwarded to my uncle's banker and correspondent in London, from whom I had hitherto received my allowance, and by whom I had been so inhumanly refused assistance on a recent application. Time passed on,

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and with it disappeared the very few resources I had left. My watch, two or three rings, and some other trinkets, went successively to the Mont de Pietè, and the proceeds of these were not such as to support me for any length of time.

“Finally, the only article of value left me, was a miniature of my mother, set in precious stones, which I had constantly worn round my neck since a child. One evening I was somewhat rudely pressed for the amount of a small bill for things furnished me in the hotel, and having no money to pay it, I sallied forth, with a sort of desperation, to a place in the Palais Royal where I usually left my pledges. Five Louis were given me on the miniature, but as I could not endure the idea of being separated from all that was left to remind me of my poor mother, I immediately ascended into one of the gaming-rooms, in the hope of winning a sum sufficient to pay the bill, in which case I could redeem the picture.

“After playing with an anxiety and a caution known only to those who are driven to the last extremity, I at length succeeded. With a lightness of heart that I had not known for some time, I hastened to possess myself once more of the loved relic. But it was now late, and the shop was closed. In an evil hour I ascended once more to the *rouge et noir* table. Fortune was opposed to me, and I again lost what I had so recently won. I looked at the remaining five Louis, thought of the price at which they had been obtained, and in a state of strong excitement rushed from the place.

“In crossing the Pont Neuf on my return home, I saw an Englishman, whose figure I thought I recognized, in the dim light afforded by the lamps during a somewhat foggy night. He was on the opposite side of the bridge, and I crossed over to meet him. It was Haverfield, who was evidently returning from one of his nightly orgies, for he was partially intoxicated. ‘Villain! scoundrel!’ I exclaimed, grasping him by the throat, ‘have I found you at last?’ The sound of my voice recalled him to his senses, and he struggled hard to disengage himself. With a violent effort he

succeeded; and drawing a card from his case, offered it to me, saying, that if I had any thing to require of him, I could find him at the address thereon written. I called him a contemptible coward, accused him of having screened himself on a former occasion from my vengeance, and dashing the card from his hand, again attempted to grasp him by the throat. Finding himself hemmed in in one of the niches of the bridge, without a chance of escape, he sprang suddenly upon the parapet. His mingled intoxication and alarm threw him off his balance, he staggered,—fell,—and in the next instant I heard his body plunge heavily into the tide beneath my feet. You are aware of the rest.

“Scarcely had I given intelligence at the Morgue, that a man had thrown himself from the bridge into the river, when it occurred to me that I was still in utter ignorance with regard to the fate of my wretched wife, and I now bitterly repented that I had not satisfied my anxiety on this subject before I had had recourse to violence.

“The recollection of the card he had offered me now flashed across my mind, and I hurried back to the fatal spot. It was still there, and by the dull light of the lamp, I read the address, which was at the hotel ———, in the Rue de la Paix. ‘If she be yet alive, she is there,’ I thought, as I pursued my melancholy way home. You will admit that my sufferings must have been great, and my heart, not naturally callous, cruelly hardened, when I acknowledge, that the fate of the man who had once been my bosom friend, did not awaken even a regret within me. It was sufficient for me to feel that I had not meditated the catastrophe which had occurred, and I satisfied myself with the reflection, that to his own guilt and alarm alone was his death to be attributed.

“At an early hour I sallied forth in quest of a commissioner whom I had been in the habit of employing. To this man I gave the card, desiring him to ask of the porter, if there was not a lady there, a friend of the gentleman whose name was on the card. In the event of his saying

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that there was, he was to insist on seeing her immediately, and to tell her that the person to whom it belonged was then lying dead at the Morgue. You may judge with what agony of suspense I awaited the return of my messenger, fearing and hoping alternately, yet without being conscious of any particular motive for either of these sensations. At length he came, and my misery was confirmed. There was a lady, a relation of the deceased, there. He had seen and spoken to her, and she had received the intelligence with every expression of the wildest grief. Oh! what was the desolation of my soul at that moment, for I now plainly perceived that some new artifice had been intended, in the announcement of her pretended death, and that the last faint hope I indulged in had vanished for ever! Determined, however, to satisfy myself with my own eyes, I resolved to await her arrival at the Morgue. Wrapping myself up, therefore, in my cloak, which I almost constantly wore at night as a disguise, I lingered behind one of the walls of the *quai*, whence I might see her approach, without being perceived myself. I did not wait long; the wretched woman loved her seducer too well not to fly to him on the wings of agony and despair. I saw her alight from her carriage, and with tottering step, blanched cheek, and disordered mien, enter the Morgue. Though I knew that my heart would ache at the sight, I could not forbear following to witness the expression of her wild despair. I mixed with the crowd, and beheld the whole scene. I heard her call him, as she was wont to do, her dear brother,—her loved William. I marked the frantic agony of her exclamations and her sobs, and every pang that she felt was a portion taken from my own wretchedness. Soon afterwards I saw you and the man who has so basely plundered me approach her——

“Stop, Manvers,” I exclaimed, interrupting him for the first time, “you must really be in error respecting this ironical gentleman, for he it was who expressed the utmost concern, when a paragraph in the paper of that morning stated that a young Englishman had drowned himself in the

Seine, in consequence, it was supposed, of severe losses at play. He was the first, too, of our party who went to the Morgue to examine the body; for when I went down for the same purpose, I met him coming out, when he set my fears at rest by assuring me that it was not you. At that moment we beheld your unhappy wife alight from the carriage, and we also followed her; but saw you not. You are aware of what passed afterwards."

"This, indeed," resumed Manvers, "is singular enough, and accords but little with his former conduct in regard to me. However, I can never be persuaded that he had not some selfish motive for this affectation of interest in one whom he had greatly contributed to reduce to the last stage of misery and despair. However, to proceed with my story, I saw you and this ironical (I should say rascally) old gentleman, approach her. I knew not whether you were acquaintances or strangers, urged by a common instinct of humanity to tender assistance to a suffering woman; neither, indeed, did I take time to satisfy myself. It was sufficient for me, that I knew she lived, and my infamy still unwiped away. Fearing to betray myself by some unguarded expression, I withdrew, and in a state of agony beyond all power of language to describe, retired to the wretched hovel to which my destiny had consigned me.

"There is a point in human wretchedness, when religion and morality are sometimes insufficient to preserve us from the wild and guilty suggestions of despair. For several days after this event, I meditated suicide. I had nothing to live for, and death appeared to me arrayed in any other arms than those of terror. Still I was anxious to receive a reply to the letter of contrition I had written to my once indulgent, but now highly exasperated uncle, and I resolved to defer my fate until I knew whether he had in fact abandoned me for ever. 'It is,' I thought, 'but to have recourse to death at last, and as I have hitherto borne my sufferings so long, a few weeks more of life can make but little difference.' This was the determination I had formed, and over

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“Meanwhile my circumstances became more and more embarrassed. The money I had obtained on the miniature was long since gone, and I found myself at length reduced to one meal a day, and that, Heaven knows, not of the most substantial description. Last night I took a case of silver mounted English razors to my old friend the *commissaire*. They were the last articles on which I could expect to raise any thing, except my cloak, which however I was determined not to part with under any consideration, as it served to shield me from the impertinent observations of those who had known me under very different circumstances. Five francs was all that I could obtain on them, and with this slender sum I left the place, a prey to those wretched feelings which may be supposed to assail the man who perceives that his last resource against poverty and want has been expended. In crossing the Place Odeon, on my way home, a carriage passed me, in which I thought I distinguished the baronet. Curiosity induced me to approach, and with a beating heart I saw your party alight. Alas! I little knew, at that moment, who the wretched woman was who composed one of the group. Her back was turned to me, and her figure was otherwise so enveloped, that it was impossible I could distinguish it, neither, indeed, did I give myself the trouble to think, for my gaze was bent on Emily alone.

“For some minutes after you entered, I continued standing on the same spot, uncertain what to do. The money I had just received was barely sufficient to provide me with a couple of wretched meals, still I could indulge myself once in gazing on her whom I truly loved, and this pleasure, melancholy as it might prove, must be far beyond the gratification of a mere physical want. The wild idea at that moment occurred to me to solicit a last interview, and this decided me. I hastily traced a few lines in pencil, and resolving to watch an opportunity of handing them to her as she left the house, I entered into the pit.

"Of what followed, you are aware," proceeded Manvers; "but you can form no idea of the hell of misery I felt, when in the person of this new addition to your party I discovered my infamous wife. When Emily, overcome by her emotion, fainted, I darted from the pit into the corridor leading to the boxes. Here, however, I was detained for a moment, for the fellows would not let me pass until I had deposited what remained of my last mite as the difference of price between those two parts of the house. When I reached the box, the pure and innocent girl whom I loved without a possibility of her ever becoming mine, was reclining in the arms of her whose very touch was pollution. You saw me tear her from thence, and you wondered at my madness. How much more mad did I think you, when you declared, that the person whom I had thus insulted was to become your wife in a few days! I laughed convulsively; for I saw at once that you were, like myself, the dupe of a wretch who would not have hesitated even at crime to accomplish her ends, and my only source of astonishment was, that she could have forgotten her paramour so soon.

"With what occurred subsequently you are acquainted. I contrived to hand my note to Emily in her passage down the corridor, and I waited impatiently for the hour which was to give her to my gaze for the last time. My intention was to regulate my future conduct by the result of this interview. It was imperative that she should know that the woman who had now become her associate was my wife, and I had prepared myself for a full disclosure of every thing relative to this unfortunate connexion. 'If,' I thought, 'she listens to the avowal with patience, I may yet, provided my uncle does not cast me off from his affection for ever, procure a divorce which will enable me to form a new engagement. If not, indeed will the crisis of my fate have arrived.'

"You heard all that passed between us," concluded Manvers, grasping my hand with energy. "You were a witness of my despair, when I found, that after the melancholy

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avowal of my situation, the window of Emily was closed against me, and my numerous appeals no longer attended to. When I sprang across that wall, it was with the view of terminating my wretched life. Had you not followed me, my fate would have been sealed ere this, and on the platform of that Morgue which we have just quitted, even at the side of the wretched author of all my misery, might you have beheld me extended in a few hours. Little would you have deemed that we had ever been connected by so close a tie as that of marriage; but, as I have before observed, the hand of providence is visible through it all. Time alone can determine, however, whether I shall have cause to rejoice in, or to regret this prolongation of my existence; but to deny that I find a weight of misery removed from my heart, would be to be guilty of the grossest hypocrisy.—Should my uncle relent, I may yet know a cessation of suffering; but so accustomed have I been to disappointment and adversity, that I scarcely know what to hope or what to expect.”

CHAPTER XX.

It was broad day-light when Manvers completed his melancholy history, and he now prepared to leave me to return to his lodging in the Faubourg St. Germain. With some difficulty I dissuaded him from his purpose, and he at length finally consented to retire for a few hours to rest in the hotel. This he was only induced to do after I had wrung from him the promise that until he should hear from his uncle, he would consider my purse as his own, and draw from it whatever he might find necessary to his comfort. A room was vacant contiguous to my own, and to this the porter, who was now up, conducted the exhausted and really emaciated young man.

It was some time before I could sleep. My imagination was so full of the extraordinary events of the night, that fa-

tigued as I was in body, I found it impossible to tranquilize my mind sufficiently to admit of my reposing my senses in forgetfulness. At length, however, exhausted nature claimed her right, and I finally sunk into a profound slumber, from which I did not awaken until long after the breakfast hour. As I passed by Manvers's room, on descending to the parlour, I looked in, and found him also enjoying a repose nearly as profound as my own had been; but his countenance was so changed, his cheeks and eyes so hollow, that had I not known it was he, I should have found difficulty in recognizing the handsome Manvers I had seen only a few weeks before. Unwilling to disturb him in the first profound rest that he had in all probability tasted for many a long and weary night, I cautiously re-closed the door, and descended to the breakfast room.

Neither the baronet, the widow, nor Emily were present, and I inquired of a waiter where they were. The young lady, he said, was unwell, and had not been down to breakfast at all. The widow had gone up to her room, and the baronet was then in the garden with a monsieur, whom, from his description, I knew to be the ironical gentleman. Hastily swallowing a cup of coffee, I threw on my hat, and sallied forth to join them.

I was fully prepared to encounter the indignation of Sir Brien, in consequence of what had been elicited at the theatre the preceding night; but I at the same time resolved to pay off this attack with usury on the ironical gentleman, and to insist on an explanation of the extraordinary conduct he had manifested towards an unoffending young man, whose generosity and confidence he had repaid with the most glaring inhumanity and ingratitude. 'Screwing my courage up to the sticking point,' I therefore prepared myself to receive the first rude fire of the baronet, with that sort of dogged air which one usually assumes when under the apprehension of a not wholly unmerited attack of the kind. On reaching a path that ran at right angles with the principal walk leading to the arbour, I discovered them both at one of its extremities, intently engaged in some papers, which the

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ironical gentleman was reading. The noise of my approach caused them to look up, but what was my surprise, when, instead of indulging in the ebullition of anger I had expected, the baronet approached me with a smile of satisfaction, exclaiming at the same time :

“Here is Morris himself. I dare say he can give us some information in regard to him.”

“Information,” I returned, almost astounded, yet by no means displeased at this unexpected address. “What information, and to whom do you allude, Sir Brien?”

“Why, to young Manvers, certainly. You saw him last at the theatre, and of course he has told you where he resides. This gentleman is most anxious to know where he is?”

“That gentleman most anxious to know where he is!” I repeated, casting a glance of stern and bitter reproach on the old man. “And pray with what view, may I ask, sir?”

“With a view to his happiness, Mr. Morris,” said the ironical gentleman, now addressing me for the first time.—“If, therefore, you are acquainted with Mr. Manvers’s place of residence, I trust you will not withhold it from one of his best friends.”

“One of his best friends!” I muttered, half aside and sneeringly. “Yet stay, perhaps the old fellow has had a touch of remorse, and is now anxious to make restitution of the numerous sums he has borrowed from him. Besides, there can be no harm in confounding them together, and surely the old man cannot be such a scoundrel as to deny in his presence the obligations he owes him.” “If,” I pursued aloud, “this gentleman is really, as he professes to be, the friend of Mr. Manvers, that will be best proved by the result of their interview. Meanwhile, Sir Brien, if you will detain him here but twenty minutes I will engage to produce the subject of his inquiry.”

I immediately hastened to the apartment of my young friend, whom I found dressing, and communicated the desire expressed both by the baronet and the ironical gentle-

man, to see him without delay. Manvers was nearly as much surprised as myself, but fancying that it was some new plan of the latter to injure him in the estimation of Sir Brien, was by no means so sanguine as myself in regard to the result. When we reached the garden, he had evidently worked his feelings up to a high pitch of excitement; and on approaching the extremity of the path, where the old gentleman still lingered waiting our arrival, without deigning to notice the ironical gentleman, he inquired, somewhat haughtily of the baronet what his commands were, and with what view he had requested to see him.

"My dear Mr. Manvers," replied O'Flaherty, advancing and taking his hand, "I had two principal motives for this request. The first was, that I might entreat your forgiveness for all my former unkindness and harshness of opinion. The second," pointing to the ironical gentleman, "that I might have the pleasure of introducing you to your uncle."

"My uncle!" exclaimed Manvers, starting back with a surprise that was almost equalled by my own,—“surely you do not mean—are you indeed, sir, my uncle?”

"Even so," said the old man, much affected at the emaciated appearance of his nephew. "I am indeed that uncle to whose care and affection you were consigned by a dying sister. That you should not recognize in me the being who received you an orphan to his bosom, with the intention of making you the sole heir to his wealth, I can easily believe; since it would be difficult to reconcile the conduct I have recently pursued towards you with the testimonies of affection that you once so lavishly had experienced; but I had a motive for this, Henry, and as some affairs called me to England, I had an opportunity of ascertaining in secret what your actual pursuits and occupations were. I heard of your extravagance and attachment to play, and I wished, if possible, to make you sensible of the infamy and danger attendant on such a ruinous propensity. I wished to fit you for the enjoyment of riches, by making you feel what the stings of poverty were; and even at the sacrifice of a part of my property, I resolved to make you writhe beneath the fatal

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consequences of this indulgence, before you had a wife and children to leave destitute in the world. With a view to the accomplishment of this purpose, I denied myself that care, those comforts which my age and infirmities required, and assumed a feigned name and character, that I might follow you here. I borrowed from you at the gaming tables as a brother gambler, and requited your generosity with ingratitude, to show you what you had to expect from those in whom the principle of play was engrafted; and when I had at length succeeded in making you acquainted with the wild and distracting feelings of the ruined gamester, I left you to writhe under those feelings until the lesson should have produced a salutary effect; and in order to close up every avenue against relief, I wrote to my banker, desiring him to refuse in the most peremptory terms any application you might make to him, either on my account or as a private loan from himself. My plan succeeded, but alas! my poor Henry, I feared at one moment that I had carried the affair to too great an extremity. When you absented yourself from the hotel, I felt the most serious alarm for your safety, for I had not been regardless of the extreme dejection of spirits under which you laboured during the last few days that preceded your departure. Then only did it occur to me, that you might be driven to the last sad refuge of the destitute and the heart-broken. Morning after morning, whenever I heard of any act of suicide, I visited the Morgue, in the constant apprehension of recognizing your body among the number of its victims; and this, indeed, was the severest punishment for the cruel trial to which I had subjected you, that I possibly could have experienced. Numerous inquiries did I secretly institute throughout Paris, but though I had succeeded in making myself master of all your former haunts, it was in vain that I sought to discover your present abode. Latterly I began to imagine that you had quitted Paris altogether, and I only yesterday determined on returning to London in the course of the ensuing week. This letter however, which arrived by the English post of this morning, entirely changed my plan. It is the same which

you addressed to the care of my banker for the purpose of being forwarded to India. Owing to some mistake it had been suffered to lie several days in their office, and was only transmitted to me, as I have already said, by the post of this morning. Deeply indeed have I been touched by the affecting recital of your misfortunes, and well am I satisfied that the contrition you have expressed for your fault is sincere. Forgive me then, Henry, if I have been unnecessarily rigorous in the discharge of what I conceived to be an important duty, and as the only recompense I can make, let me assure you that there is every prospect of your future happiness. My friend the baronet here is aware of the unhappy connection you have formed; but as we are both of opinion that it can easily be annulled, you may rely upon it that no expense shall be spared to effect this object. This tie, which is the only barrier to your happiness, shall no longer fill your youthful days with misery and despair."

"Thank God it exists no longer!" cried Manvers, quite overcome with the excitement of his feelings, and throwing himself into the arms of his uncle, which were already extended to receive him. "Oh, my uncle! this happiness is too much."

Both Sir Brien and myself were deeply affected at the scene, and as for me, I confess my heart swelled with pride and exultation at this sudden change in the fortunes of my young friend, whose romantic history, repeated only a few hours before, still vibrated on my ear. Leaving the uncle and nephew to indulge in their hitherto pent up feelings, and to enter into mutual explanations, the baronet and myself now sauntered, arm in arm, towards a distant part of the garden. I ventured to inquire after Emily, whose health, I said, I had understood was not quite so well as usual.

At this question O'Flaherty stopped short, quitted my arm, and turning suddenly round, exclaimed in his usual abrupt manner:—

"By the way, Morris, that reminds me of a question I have to ask you. Who, pray, is that Miss Stanmore, to whom you introduced my niece and, let me add, my intended

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wife? The illness of the poor girl I am confident has arisen altogether from the scene that took place in the theatre last evening. Who is the woman, and what has she to do with Manvers and you at the same time?"

My object at present was to keep the baronet in good humour, that Manvers at least might not be a sufferer, and I well knew that nothing was more likely to effect this point, than to make myself appear in a ridiculous light. I therefore told him, that the lady he had seen last night, to whom I had plighted my faith, and with whom I had expected shortly to be united, was no other than the guilty wife of Manvers, of whom the ironical gentleman had spoken to him.

Great as was the surprise of O'Flaherty, as I had expected, his delight at my disappointment was greater, and he now burst out into a loud laugh, at the idea of my having suffered myself to be duped in this manner by a needy adventuress, under the belief that she had really admired me for my personal attractions, and loved me for myself.

As the vulgar expression has it, I suffered him 'to have his fling,' so that with the affectation of some little mortification, I finally succeeded in restoring his good humour, when he jocosely observed:—

"I should think it high time that a stop should be put to this lady's career, who has a fancy for husbands whenever she can meet with a dupe. Perhaps the mortification attending her divorce from Manvers will have the effect of curing her of these singular caprices."

"There will be no divorce in this case," I rejoined; "therefore the lawyers will be spared some trouble, and the old gentleman more expense. The wife of Manvers is at this moment a corpse."

"Good Heaven! you astonish me!" exclaimed the baronet. "Will these mysteries never cease? And what is the meaning of all this? Why surely I left her with you in perfect health last night!"

"True; but as the Scriptures have it, 'in the midst of life we are in death;' however, as I perceive your curiosity is

excited, I will even enter into an explanation of the whole affair."

To this the baronet willingly assented, and having seated ourselves in the arbour, I commenced as interesting an account as I could render of every thing that had occurred during the night, not forgetting the scene between the lovers which had led to the desperate resolution taken by Manvers.

The naturally good heart of O'Flaherty was sensibly touched at my recital; and as he brushed a tear, of which he seemed ashamed, from his eye, he observed, with an emotion that I had never before remarked in him, "Poor fellow! young as he is, his life has indeed been one of trial and misfortune; but, as he himself observes, the hand of Providence is visible in his preservation. Had accident, or rather destiny, not brought you to this seat, enabling you to discover this singular meeting between him and Emily he certainly would have accomplished his purpose. Nay, even then his intention would only have been defeated for the moment. Had not the recognition of your person by the driver of the *fiacre* led to a discovery that the unhappy victim, of whose fate you were both spectators, was no other than his guilty wife—if wife such a being could be termed,—his motives for self-destruction would have been in no way diminished. Thank Heaven, however!" he concluded, warmly grasping my hand, "you have been the means of preserving the life of one of your fellow-creatures,—nay, perhaps of two,—for much I doubt whether my gentle Emily would have survived the loss of one to whom she seems so tenderly attached. You look surprised, my dear Morris; but I have heard the whole of Manvers's early history read to me out of that letter of contrition which you saw in his uncle's hand, and I am aware of the early and romantic attachment they formed for each other during his minstrel wanderings through Ireland. The old gentleman and I have had a long conversation on the subject this morning, and as the family are of the highest respectability, I had consented, at his earnest solicitation and provided a divorce could be obtained without any very great

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publicity, to bestow my dear, sweet girl upon the object of her heart's affection. The unexpected event, however, which you have just announced, removes every difficulty, and makes me feel more comfortable than I otherwise should have done; for you know, Morris, that though I love my Emily's happiness more than any thing else in this world, I still am not a little tenacious of the opinion of the world."

"Generous Sir Brien!" I exclaimed, with a warmth of friendship that I had not felt for some time; "this is indeed worthy of yourself; and the gratified feeling of your kind heart will be your best reward. But tell me, is Emily aware of this present happy change in her prospects?"

"Not at all. I have not seen her to-day; and in fact it is only since breakfast that Mr. Welmore, for that is the name of our ironical gentleman, has at all communicated with me on the subject."

"Then let me be the first to announce these tidings to the dear girl. Let me have the joy of preparing her for this unexpected change in her prospects."

So saying, I hastened to the hotel, scrawled two or three nearly illegible lines on a scrap of paper, and sent them up by a servant, with a request that Miss Emily would read them immediately, and join me in the drawing-room. The purport of these was to acquaint her that I had some delightful intelligence to communicate to her, and that the sooner she made her appearance, the sooner she would be made happy.

As I expected, I did not wait long. In a few minutes the anxious girl joined me in the drawing-room. Her cheek was pale, yet slightly tinged in one or two places with the hectic tint of excitement and expectation. She looked eagerly and inquiringly towards me. I flew to meet her, pressed her anxiously to my heart, and imprinting a kiss upon her brow conducted, or rather carried her, for she was now too much agitated to walk, to an ottoman at a distant part of the room, and then in a few words I hastily recapitulated all that passed during the night, and concluded the whole with the assurance just given me of the intentions of her uncle.

Never shall I forget my feelings at that hour, as the gentle and affectionate girl, all gratitude and tears, threw her arms around my neck, and gave a loose to the hitherto repressed emotions of her heart. To say that I wept myself, is to say little; for no one could have witnessed the pure abandonment of her feelings without sharing to a certain extent in the luxury of her grief. Gradually, however, she became more calm, and as Mrs. M'Lofty now made her appearance, I hastened once more to join the baronet in the garden. He was still seated in the arbour, and alone.

"Well, have you seen her, Morris?" he inquired; "and how has she received the intelligence of which you were the bearer?"

"Oh, my dear friend," I exclaimed, "I would not for any consideration on earth have lost the opportunity of witnessing such pure and fervent devotedness in a female heart! Positively she has made me as much a child as herself, for the warm expressions of her gratitude have touched me to the very soul."

"Indeed! then I certainly will not suffer myself to be outdone in my claims on her affection either. Where is she, —where did you leave her?"

"In the drawing-room with Mrs. M'Lofty."

Manvers and his uncle now approached us, when the baronet, suddenly rising from his seat, advanced to meet them. He then passed his arm through that of the former, and they both pursued their way into the hotel.

In a few minutes Sir Brien again made his appearance, and accompanied, but not by Manvers. Mrs. M'Lofty was with him, and his countenance wore an expression of triumph and satisfaction.

"Well, Morris, you see I was resolved not to be outdone in generosity."

I said nothing, though perfectly well contented that in this instance at least it should be the case.

Dinner was ordered in the private apartments of the baronet, and at a late hour in the day we were joined by Emily and Manvers. What the nature of their long conference had been, was not stated by either; but if we might judge

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from their looks, it had not been attended by any results that threatened the dissolution of the good understanding that was supposed to exist between them. A slight shade of melancholy, arising from the peculiarity of his immediate position, might be traced on the brow of Manvers, but this had not the appearance of being likely to last any great length of time. Mr. Welmore was happier and less ironical than I had ever seen. The spirits of the baronet were more exhilarated, and the looks of fondness which he turned occasionally on the widow more soul-touching than ever. As for the lady herself, I thought her attention was more directed to me than to the baronet, but as my own feelings were entirely wrapped up in the happiness of my young friends, I paid little or no attention to the circumstance.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE last sad rites of humanity having been paid to the remains of the unhappy suicide by the uncle of Manvers, it was determined that we should all leave Paris in the course of a few days for Sir Brien's seat in Connaught, where it was intended the nuptials of the lovers should be celebrated with all the pomp and circumstance peculiar on such occasions to the kingly name of O'Flaherty, and after a certain decent period had elapsed, not of grief, for there could be none, but of sacrifice of private feeling to public opinion. If one might have judged from the renewed and somewhat uncouth attentions of the baronet to Mrs. M'Lofty, it had entered into his plan that more than one marriage should take place on that occasion, for he spoke of his future heirs with such vivacity and assurance, declaring at the same time that they should in no way interfere with the happiness and interest of his dear little Emily, that I at length began to feel not a little piqued, and I seriously reflected whether it would not be a mutual advantage to all parties that I should attempt

to supplant my friend in the estimation of that most worthy lady.

“In the first instance,” I mused, “the marriage of O’Flaherty must to a certain extent, however little he may intend it, interfere with the prospects of this young couple, and much of the fortune originally designed for his niece must pass into the hands of the widow. As for his having heirs, there is very little chance of that; still widows are often much more rapacious than heirs, and this will never do. So far, I argued, the case is in favour of my young friends. Next came my own private reasons for defeating the object of the baronet. O’Flaherty is rich, and by no means in want of an increase of fortune; now I am poor, and do require that increase most indisputably. O’Flaherty is infirm, and consequently without any prospect of having a family; I am young, that is to say, in the full vigour of life, sound, and healthy, therefore quite certain of having a numerous offspring. Now the widow M’Lofty is rich enough not to require additional wealth in the man she marries, and if I may judge from appearances, she would prefer one who could spend her thousands in a dashing and gentlemanly manner. Ergo, it follows, that I am the most proper man of the two; and as all parties will be benefited by the exchange, (even Sir Brien himself, when he comes to reflect seriously and dispassionately on the subject,) I cannot do better than console myself for the disappointment I have so recently sustained, by laying close and immediate siege to the widow’s heart.”

No sooner had I reasoned myself into this resolution, than I resolved to act on it instanter. That very evening, therefore, I pressed my suit so closely, and accompanied my impassioned appeal to the heart of the amorous widow with so many tender squeezes of the hand and deep drawn sighs, that she must have been something more or less than woman had she withstood them. With a faltering voice and blushing cheek, she told me that she had long loved me in secret, but that the preference I had given to Miss Stanmore had awakoned all the pique and jealousy of her soul, to which alone was to be attributed the encouragement she had given

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to the baronet, who, she was pleased to add, had little chance of rivalling me in her esteem. "Ah!" she concluded, with one of her most languishing looks, "had it not been for that accidental rencontre between Manvers and your intended at the theatre, even now perhaps you would have been at the feet of that perfidious yet unhappy woman, breathing those vows of passion which you have so quickly transferred to me."

This, indeed, was a speech to which one less experienced in these matters would have found some little difficulty to reply. My presence of mind, however,—or what other malignant persons might term great assurance,—seldom forsook me in a case of extremity, and I immediately protested in the most solemn manner, that it was only the despair I had entertained of ever rendering myself agreeable to one who had already received and discarded the attentions of so many lovers, that had induced me to cultivate the accidental acquaintance I had formed with Miss Stanmore, or rather, as she had turned out to be, Mrs. Manvers.

There are few women, at least I have met with few, who are proof against these, to them, flattering explanations. Mine was not lost on the present occasion, and I succeeded so well in re-establishing myself in the good graces of the lady, that my success inspired me with a new thought, which I resolved to reduce immediately to practice.

I had seen the widow slip through the hands of so many lovers during the short period of our acquaintance, that notwithstanding my confidence in my own merits, I felt rather apprehensive of the result, unless I profited immediately by her disposition in my favour. I moreover dreaded lest, on arriving in Connaught, she should find the snug and comfortable seat of O'Flaherty preferable to the ancient, naked, and almost dilapidated walls of Ronayne Castle. I therefore told her that I should briefly enter on a statement of my affairs and family, and if she did not find these objectionable, should feel myself the happiest man in the world if she would accord me the privilege of calling her mine on the following day. "A license may be procured early in the

morning," I urged, "and the ceremony can be performed a few hours afterwards at the chapel of our ambassador."

Mrs. M'Lofty blushed, looked confused, smiled, turned her eyes up to mine, then down on her lap, but said nothing.

This augured well, and I proceeded,—

"You must know, my dear madam, that I possess an ancient castle, and a somewhat large estate, in the country of Connaught, and without at all affecting to boast of family, may safely assert, that I am descended from some of the earliest kings of Ireland. It is true, I am of a long line of ancestry, each generation of which managed to help themselves pretty liberally out of the once rich revenues attached to the family estates; still there is enough left to support the name in a style becoming a private gentleman, although far from sufficient to enable me to revive the earldom, which now lies dormant."

"An earldom did you say, Mr. Morris? And can you really have it revived in your own person?"

"Unquestionably," I replied, "provided I had but the means of doing so. Nay, so little doubt is there in regard to my claim, that on my own estate I am universally known and addressed by the peasantry and tenants as my Lord—. Were I married, I should most certainly claim the title immediately."

"And your wife would then be a countess," remarked Mrs. M'Lofty, reflectingly.

"Without a doubt, and one of the most ancient in the kingdom; nor do I know any lady who would reflect greater honour on that title than yourself. Tell me, then," I pursued, with increasing energy, "will you consent to be privately married to-morrow? You appeared surprised at my saying privately; but the fact is, I do not wish the baronet should be undeceived in regard to the interest with which he believes he has inspired you, lest in his irritation he should do something to disturb the tranquillity and good understanding of the whole party. When Manvers and Emily have once been joined in those bonds which no human caprice can tear assunder, we will then avow our secret mar-

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riage, and the same clergyman who performs the ceremony for them shall officiate for us likewise. We shall then be bound to each other by a double tie and in the face of the whole county of Connaught, whose brightest gem will be its beautiful and dignified countess."

To this proposal, after some little hesitation, which I could clearly perceive would soon be overruled by my eloquent powers of persuasion, the widow finally consented, and I left her at a late hour glowing with love, and filled, with visions of aggrandisement, to dream of the brilliant lot that awaited me, in a connexion with a woman whose wealth was said to be almost unbounded, she having been left a widow at an early age by an old East India director, who had amassed an enormous fortune in trade.

At an early hour on the following morning I was up and dressed, and having obtained some days before the address of an English notary in the Rue de Grammont, I hastened to procure the usual license. This part of the affair was soon arranged, and the notary at my request despatched one of his clerks to the residence of the officiating chaplain, requesting his immediate attendance in the chapel of the embassy. I then returned home, and having, as I had expected, found the widow prepared to set out, gave her to understand that every thing was ready, when she took the opportunity of saying at the breakfast-table that she was going out to make some little purchase, and asked if I would accompany her in her carriage, which was already in waiting in front of the hotel. I of course replied in the affirmative, and after swallowing a cup of coffee, we set out on our matrimonial excursion, without any one individual of the party having the remotest suspicion of the affair.

At the entrance of the bazaar in the Rue St. Honoré we alighted, and sent the carriage home, with an order to return again in an hour. No sooner was it out of sight, than we turned the corner of the Rue Luxembourg, took a *fiacre* from the stand there, and in it proceeded to the ambassador's chapel. Every thing was in readiness: the clergyman, his clerk, and the young man who had been desired by the notary to remain and give the lady away, were the only

persons present. In a few minutes the awful ceremony began and in less time than I could have fancied such an important event could have been accomplished, I had all the fearful responsibility of a husband saddled on my shoulders. Fearful I mean of course in the abstract, for what fear could enter into my feelings, who now suddenly found all my dreams of love and ambition realized? As we stepped once more into our crazy *fiacre*, I believed myself to be the happiest of men, and I was quite satisfied that Mrs. Morris, the countess in perspective, was the very happiest of women. On reaching the bazaar, we found that the carriage was not yet arrived. This enabled us to make some trifling purchases as a covering to the true nature of our expedition, and we returned home as we had left it, without a single suspicion being excited. I confess that I burned with desire to communicate my good fortune to O'Flaherty, but the dread of putting him out of humour, and perhaps producing some unfavourable change in his sentiments towards Manvers, prevented me. Not, of course, that Manvers had had any thing to do with the affair, or was at all to be blamed, but I knew the capricious nature of my old friend too well, not to apprehend that his resentment might be visited as much upon the unoffending as the guilty. That an explosion would eventually take place, I was well aware, but this would be after he had it no longer in his power to divide the lovers; and as far as regarded myself, I confess I was always willing enough to procrastinate evil as long as I possibly could.

At length arrived the morning of our departure, and every countenance among our Irish party, even to the very domestics seemed brightened at the prospect of returning to their beloved Emerald Isle. We had breakfasted, and the carriages, closely packed before and behind and on the roof with luggage, were already in waiting before the hotel, when our attention was arrested by the sight of many persons standing in the doorways and looking out of the windows of the opposite houses. We immediately ran out into the court to see what was the matter, and grouping around the *porte cochere* of the hotel, soon perceived that it was a gang

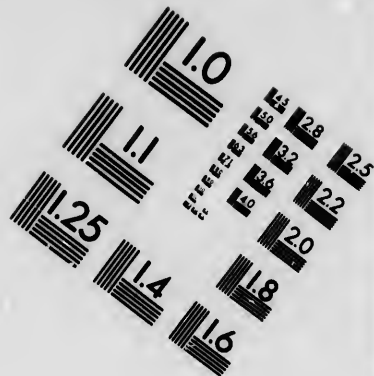
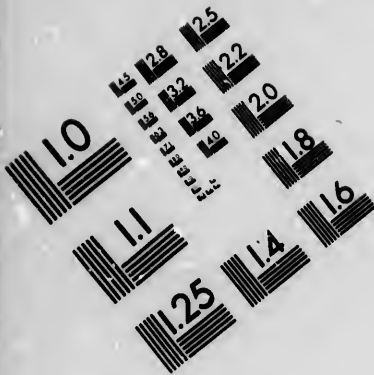
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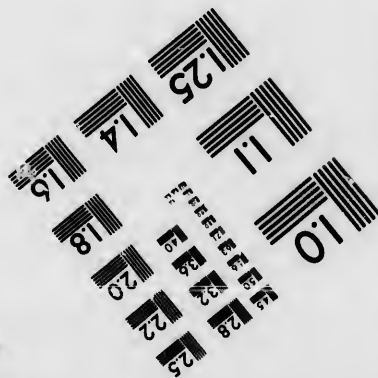
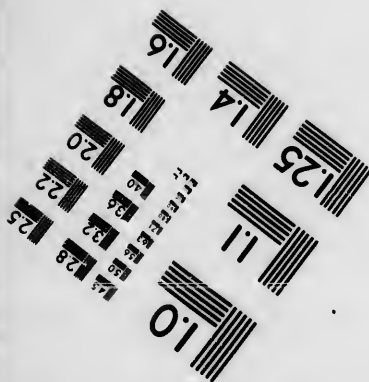
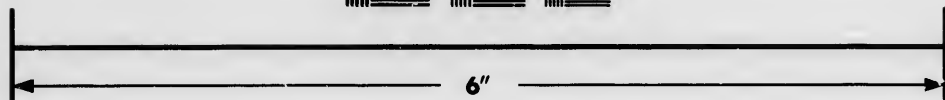
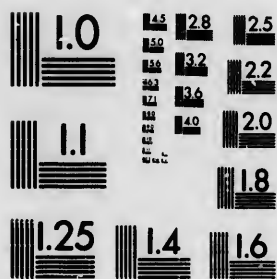
of convicts, escorted by a detachment of *gendarmerie*, who were leaving the Bicêtre on their route to the hulks of Toulon. Suddenly I was seized with a sensation of stupor as I beheld, amid that confused mass of criminals and soldiers, an object that riveted my gaze, even as though it had possessed the fabled powers of the basilisk. I passed my hands across my eyes;—looked again,—but it was no vision. At every pace of this slowly moving procession it became more visible, and at length in all its beauty, whiteness, vastness, originality of shape, and broadness of brim, burst fully on my astonished sight my unfortunate composing hat. For some time I could not distinguish the small face that was almost lost between its broad brim and the high swelling collar of a rough dreadnought coat, but at length the large whisker and piercing eye made themselves apparent, and as I had already anticipated, my friend Nimbleton showed himself from beneath.

With the utmost hardihood and effrontery, and much to the amusement both of his fellow-convicts, the *gendarmerie*, and those whom curiosity had attracted, he now nodded familiarly to the baronet and myself. "Legs good as ever I see, Sir Brien, eh!" holding up his finger and thumb to his eye, in imitation of one who uses a glass. "Comfortable sort of thing, this hat of yours, my dear Morris. It answers a double purpose; both to conceal one's features, and to keep one's head warm at night; to say nothing as to its power of reminding one of one's friends. Short work, this, indeed! Old Cox managed to hunt me out at last for that forgery. Arrested two days ago; tried yesterday; packed off to the galleys this morning. Don't manage to despatch these things so quickly at the Old Bailey. By the way, I have, still a little money left in his hands; could you oblige me with five Naps for a check on him? Shall want them very much indeed. No means, I understand of rasing the wind in the hulks." Seeing that I now turned away in disgust from him, he assumed a different tone, exclaiming, with a chuckling laugh, "Well, so you had a narrow escape from the matrimonial noose? Poor fellow! what a silly dupe, with all your affected knowledge of the world, you have been. Depend upon it, your vanity will





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cause you to be taken in yet by some scheming adventuress, or my name is not Nimbleton. By the by, do not forget to mention my adventures in that silly tour of yours; it will make your readers laugh when your own attempts at wit must be sure to fail."

The insolent observations of Nimbleton were only drowned in distance; and the *chaine* having now passed the hotel, the remainder of our party joined us, fully accoutred for the journey. It had been arranged that Mr. Welmore, the baronet, and the widow (for such I will still call her) were to travel in her carriage, and Manvers, Emily, and myself in Sir Brien's, and we were now only waiting for my beloved wife, who had not been seen since breakfast.

"Run up, my love," said the impatient baronet to Emily, "and see what can detain Mrs. M'Lofty; I dare say you will find her in her room."

Emily instantly set off, as desired, but she had scarcely passed the threshold of the door, when she met the object of her search, weeping bitterly, and escorted by two suspicious looking men.

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed the baronet, what is the matter? Are you unwell, my dear madam? Pray let me assist," and he advanced to offer his arm.

"Is that your husband, madam?" asked one of the men sternly.

"Husband! what does the fellow mean?" cried O'Flaherty. "That lady has no husband, sir. What do you want with her?"

"But the lady says she has a husband, and surely she ought to know best. Come, madam, we have no time to lose; our orders are peremptory in regard to you; but if you have a husband, that indeed alters the case."

"Oh, indeed! that does alter the case then, does it?" I exclaimed, now advancing with every feature glowing with indignation at the insult thus offered to me. "Know then, sir, that I am that lady's husband."

"Ha, ha, ha! excellent!" roared the baronet. "Why, Morris, that is an excellent device of yours to get our friend out of the scrape, whatever it may be, and she and I are

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both very much obliged to you. However, all responsibility must in justice rest with me, who am so soon to be blest with the title you have assumed. I am that lady's husband," turning to the same man; "at least, that intend to be."

"Pray, madam, will you be kind enough to inform me which of these gentlemen who are laying claim to the honour of possessing you is in reality your husband?"

"That is my husband," at length exclaimed the sobbing lady, holding her handkerchief closely pressed to her face with one hand while she pointed to me with the other.

"Good Heaven! madam,—how, when, where, what do you mean?" exclaimed O'Flaherty, excited beyond every thing I had ever previously witnessed.

"She is quite right, Sir Brien; that lady is indeed my wife; and not forty-eight hours have elapsed since we pledged our faith to each other at the altar."

"Then, sir, without further preamble," pursued the man who had hitherto spoken, "as you acknowledge yourself to be her husband, I arrest you for her debts."

"Debts! What debts, fellow?" I exclaimed. "You must be mistaken in the person altogether. This lady, sir, is a woman of large fortune."

"I am glad to hear it for your sake," returned the man with imperturbable gravity; "meanwhile, however, until we have more satisfactory proof of this fact than the mere assertion of the lady, you must excuse us if we lay your person under contribution."

"Mrs. M'Lofty,—Mrs. Morris I mean, can you explain the secret of this affair? For my part, I am perfectly lost in astonishment. But what are these fellows about?"

"Acting under my instructions," returned the man. "That carriage which, but for my timely notice of this lady's departure, would in a few hours have been beyond all reach, has not yet been paid for, and I am now seizing it under the direction of my employer."

"So ho!" exclaimed the baronet, recovering somewhat from the stupid surprise into which this scene had thrown him, "this way blows the wind, then! God bless you, my dear Morris, I wish you well out of this scrape, but this

comes you see of treachery and perfidy. I shall be glad however, to see you soon in Connaught with your bride."

"But stop a moment, my dear O'Flaherty. Surely," I exclaimed, seeing him preparing to ascend his own carriage, "you are not going to leave an old friend in this predicament! I cannot raise the money to pay the amount of these debts, which are altogether nearly fifteen thousand francs, and surely you can lend me that sum until I raise the amount on my Irish estates?"

"Not a doit, Morris, shall you have from me. Talk of leaving an old friend in a predicament, indeed! A pretty sort of predicament you have left me in, to be sure, by depriving me of the woman I had intended for my own wife!"

"You shall have her with all my heart!" I exclaimed. "The marriage is not yet consummated, and we can be divorced immediately. Take her, my dear O'Flaherty, I waive all claim to her whatever."

"Thank you, thank you," he returned pettishly, "but I have no particular fancy for divorced women. Emily, Manvers, get into the carriage instantly."

Though deeply pained at the scene they had witnessed, and unwilling to leave me in my present embarrassed situation, the fear of offending the baronet induced them to comply. I saw Manvers, however, cast a significant look at his uncle, who had taken his seat on the dickey, from which he had been a silent witness of all that passed. As soon as the door was closed on O'Flaherty, the old gentleman stepped from his seat to the ground, and concealed himself for a few moments until the carriage had driven off. He then took the principal of the two men aside, and having said something in a low tone, they went into the hotel together. In a few minutes they both re-appeared, when a receipt in full for all demands on Mrs. M. Lofty, alias Morris, was put into my hands by the officer, for such I now discovered him to be. How much are our feelings regulated by circumstances! I thought not now of the humiliation and bitterness of having been duped in my expectation of being suddenly become possessed of a large fortune, but I rejoiced that I had escaped

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an incarceration, perhaps of years, for the debts of her whom I had believed to be so wealthy.

"Not a word my dear sir!" exclaimed the old gentleman, seizing my extended hand, and preventing the burst of acknowledgement that was already on my lips. "This is but a trifling service in comparison with that which you rendered me in preserving my nephew's life. Besides, when we are all completely settled in Connaught, you will find leisure to repay me."

The post-horses that had been taken from the *now* paid for carriage were once more put to, and I had again the pleasure of handing the lady in, though not, I confess, with the same *empressement* that I had evinced a day or two before.

Nothing could exceed the surprise of O'Flaherty when on reaching the termination of the second stage he beheld our carriage drive up alongside of his own, and saw the old gentleman whom he had believed to be comfortably seated on the dickey bow to him from the window of ours. By this time his pique and annoyance had considerably abated, and perhaps a few unpleasant feelings arising from the recollection of early associations, and a slight shade of compunction for the harsh and abrupt manner in which he had quitted me, had somewhat tended to cool his anger. After one or two stiff and unsuccessful attempts to open a conversation with me on indifferent subjects he at length succeeded, and gradually his heart began once more to thaw into something like the familiarity of his wonted manner, so that by the time we had reached Boulogne he appeared to have forgotten his disappointment altogether, though I could occasionally see him glancing at his legs with an expression that seemed to say, "Well, who would have thought that a woman who had once admired these could ever bestow her hand upon another!"

Our stay in London was short, so that in ten days after our departure from the gay city of Paris, we finally reached the seat of Sir Brien, in Connaught. As we entered the noble park gates, Manvers and Emily looked significantly at each other and then at me. Ah! what tender recollections must have crowded on their minds at that moment,

and how must the heart of the former have throbbed with wild exultation, in beholding as an affianced bride at his side the young and artless creature, who had taken a deep and unchanging interest in him even as an unknown and wandering minstrel. How too must she have rejoiced in seeing, introduced beneath the paternal roof, and with the sanction of him who was to her ever as a father, him whom she had loved even in that humble character, and whom when known under different circumstances, she had continued to cherish and esteem in spite of calumny and slander, with her heart's purest and most devoted affection.

Reader, you will rejoice to hear that they have now been some months married, and are considered the handsomest and most affectionate couple throughout all Connaught. The baronet continues to reside with them, and the old gentleman, Mr. Welmore, has purchased a large estate immediately adjoining. As for myself, I have little to add, except that Ronayne Castle has been in no way improved by my marriage with the widow, whose great fortune has dwindled down, I am sorry to say, to three hundred a-year. Still the rites of hospitality are far from being neglected, and according to general old Irish usage, the stranger is ever welcome within our gates. Whenever you feel disposed to visit the county of Connaught, therefore, fail not to pay us a visit; and if you are not entertained in that princely manner which might be expected from the imposing appearance of our venerable castle, you will at least be satisfied with the attempts we make to keep up the dignity of the name.

By the way, I had nearly forgotten to state that poor O'Flaherty is a sad victim to the gout. Still, as he has been more than once a witness of the little differences of opinion which occasionally arise between Mrs. Morris and myself, he is frequently heard to exclaim, while under the sharpest agony of his complaint,—“Thank God it is no worse!—Thank God it is no worse! Better far to have the gout even, than such a wife! There, there, even that reflection soothes my pain. Now, then, I feel much better.”

THE END.

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