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(ORIGINAL.)

BEATRICE; OR, THE SPOILED CHILD.

A TALE.

BY E. M. M.

Continued from our last Number.

"To be wroth with what we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain."
•••

"Have you not love enough to bear with me,
When that rash humour, which my mother gave me
Makes me forgetful."

Shakspeare.

WHEN Mary found herself once more in the solitude of her own chamber, she gave full vent to her feelings, which for so many hours had been painfully suppressed.

"He is my brother now," she exclaimed, as she paced the room with agitated steps; "and in that relation alone I must learn to love him. Thou, oh my Father, wilt help me to do so," she continued, looking up to heaven with streaming eyes; "wilt help me to rise above every care, every thought that would impede my progress in the Christian's path—from henceforth I devote myself to Thee; accept me, I implore Thee, and never suffer me to yield again so entirely to an earthly affection, for oh it has been ensnaring and full of bitterness; yet has it taught me mine own weakness, mine own vileness in Thy sight, therefore is the mortifying trial salutary. It has passed, and I thank Thee. I thank Thee that my secret has been divulged to no one—that I have been spared that humiliation at least. Look down with an eye of compassion on Thy servant, humbly kneeling before Thee—contrite—penitent at the foot of the Cross, and shed the light of Thy countenance upon me—say to me: 'Arise, Mary, thy sins be forgiven thee; then shall I have strength to proceed on my way, for the chain is broken which bound me to earth, and I am free—free to serve Thee faithfully my Lord and my God.'"

Mary rose from her knees, after this petition, a new creature—for when did the penitent plead in vain to that merciful Being, who is ever more ready to hear than we are to pray. The strength she needed was graciously bestowed upon her, and in less than a month subsequent to the marriage of her sister, peace had dawned upon her soul, and happi-

ness shone in her path like glittering sunbeams, when the tempest is over. Yet some anxious fears she could not help indulging on account of the young Beatrice, who she knew had been immersed in a constant round of gay pleasure, since first she had left her childhood's home, for Norwood Abbey, and that a perceptible change had in consequence taken place in her thoughts and feelings, which Mary lamented to see were now entirely given to the world and its vanities. In Colonel Brereton she felt that she would meet a steady and determined guide—one from whose intellectual and gifted mind she would reap much that would tend to strengthen hers; but this was not enough, for while his heart was untouched by the power of vital religion, and in utter ignorance of its extreme sinfulness in the sight of God, how could he lead her to the fountain of living waters, from whence she might draw and receive spiritual strength for the performance of her duties.

"But the hand of God is not shortened," would the pious Mary say, as she pondered on these things. "Mighty to save—can he not bring light out of darkness—beauty and order out from the awful chaos."

It was at this period that, to her infinite astonishment, and while confiding her fears and anxieties for the beloved Beatrice to Mr. Mortimer, that she first discovered his attachment for herself. More than ever humbled in her own opinion by her recent disappointment, the thought that any one could love her, was strange yet pleasing. She had always experienced for the amiable minister a high respect and regard, but now when his sentiments, betrayed in an unguarded moment, were laid open before her, at first she pitied—then she listened—she wept—she trembled—and in time she loved—but knowing, as she did, the value that her parents attached to wealth, she felt that to afford him any hope would be only cruel. This he dared not aspire to. He had met the sweet smile which told him he was not indifferent to her—he had pressed the coveted hand between both his, and the heart of Edward Mortimer bound-

ed with a delight as new as it was free from the slightest taint of worldly ambition.

Mrs. Annesley soon recovered from her temporary dejection, caused by the absence of her most beloved child, the reflection that her brightest hopes for her advancement in life were consummated in her union with the heir of Sir George Brereton, acting as a talisman to restore her cheerfulness; and she wasted hours in the indulgence of golden dreams, wherein she beheld Beatrice the adored and admired, shining as a star at the court of her sovereign, while she yearned for the period of her return with her husband, who had promised to spend a few weeks at Annesley Park, that she might discourse with her upon all those schemes, which were to realise this ambitious desire. She had received several letters from her, overflowing with expressions of her happiness, and her praises of Claude, accompanied by vivid descriptions of the beautiful places they had visited. She had dwelt on their delicious moonlight rambles, their excursions on the waters, and the books they were reading together, adding that "she did not find it at all difficult to obey."

"There now, Mr. Annesley," said the mother, carrying her letter in triumph to her husband; "am I not a true prophetess? did I not always say that my blessed child would make an obedient and excellent wife?"

"Light showers may be expected towards the middle of this month," muttered Mr. Annesley, who was at that moment intently studying a new almanac; "and heavy storms with thunder and lightning at its close. What did you say, my dear?" he added, looking up suddenly.

"What did I say? Bewildered, moon-struck, cold-hearted man that you are," replied the indignant Mrs. Annesley; "your indifference to things so deeply interesting, would move a saint to anger. What are your poor weak brains engrossed upon now, may I ask?"

"The state of the weather, my love. And so Beatrice is very happy. Let me see when does the moon change."

Mrs. Annesley, too much provoked to risk her voice, at these words flung out of the room, slamming the door so violently behind her as to shake every glass case in the study of the man of science, who merely said:

"A most correct and valuable almanac this; I declare the storm has already commenced. Mercy on us, what a tremendous wind; quite a hurricane I vow."

Who can express the joy of the fond and devoted mother, when, after an absence of three months, Beatrice was once more clasped in her embrace, or who describe the happiness of the young creature herself as she gazed on each familiar face—each spot endeared to her from her childhood.

"Yet beloved as you all are, I would leave you

again and again for this one," and she clung fondly to her husband, who stood by her side, his eyes resting in tender admiration upon her.

Mary viewed them both in affectionate pride and gladness, nor did she shrink as before from the fraternal salute of Colonel Brereton, for calmed and hushed as a summer evening were her feelings now; and fervent the prayer she ejaculated that the happiness she beheld might be founded on a firmer base than the shattered fragments of a shrine dedicated to the idol Pleasure.

The first few weeks after the return of Colonel Brereton and his bride were spent in receiving the visits and congratulations of the friends of Mr. and Mrs. Annesley, a novelty that rather amused Beatrice, until she found that Claude usually made his escape from them, when she too became weary of sitting beautifully dressed, to listen to their compliments and prosings; and one day, perceiving him walking towards the wicket gate, she rushed down the steps of the balcony, and, running after him, bounded over the gate just as he had passed through it.

"How, Beatrice, is this the conduct of one who aspires to the respected title of matron?" enquired Colonel Brereton, smiling, as he caught her hand; "why have you left your friends?"

"Oh, because they weary me to death, treating me as if I were as old as themselves, and saying that now I am become a married woman, they suppose I will give up balls and dancing. Claude, do you think I shall ever be a fat old woman like Lady Clayton—what a horrid thing it would be?"

"It would indeed, dear," replied Colonel Brereton, laughing; "but see, Antonio is leading round my horse—if you would like to ride, I will wait till you are ready."

"Oh, thank you a thousand times! I will not detain you five minutes," and she scampered off to change her dress.

While strolling on the lawn, awaiting the return of Beatrice, Colonel Brereton was joined by Mrs. Annesley, who had been anxious for many days to address him on the subject nearest her heart, but had found no opportunity to do so. She commenced it now by telling him that a box from London had just arrived, addressed to Mrs. Claude Brereton, containing a splendid court dress.

"Indeed!" replied Colonel Brereton, carelessly. "I was not aware that she had ordered one."

"I ventured to do so during her absence," rejoined Mrs. Annesley, smiling; "as I felt assured your first wish would be to present your wife to her sovereign, previous to her entering into the gaities of a town life."

"Then you have quite mistaken my intention, Mrs. Annesley, which is to take her down to Norwood, on our leaving this. I have no desire to plunge so young a creature as Beatrice into such scenes of

dissipation, I assure you," said Colonel Brereton, very gravely:

"Is it possible that you speak in earnest, Colonel Brereton?" observed Mrs. Annesley, with quickness. "It cannot be your intention to immure Beatrice in the country at this season, I trust?"

"She has expressed no other wish herself, Mrs. Annesley, and while I see her so perfectly happy in the pursuit of her own innocent amusements, I would not wish to change them," returned Colonel Brereton, with increasing gravity.

"This is really insufferable! most provoking!" retorted Mrs. Annesley, while a nervous tremor began to agitate her whole frame; a sacrifice to which I cannot consent; and I shall certainly speak to Beatrice upon the subject."

Colonel Brereton now paused, while an expression of severe displeasure darkened his fine countenance. "Mrs. Annesley," he said, "I do not conceive it to be your wish to sow the seeds of discord between me and my wife. I must request that you will not interfere to disturb our peace, else must I immediately remove her."

Mrs. Annesley could no longer conceal her indignation. In a voice shrill from the irritation she felt, she replied:

"I shall certainly interfere, Colonel Brereton, whenever I see the welfare of so dear a child in peril. Good heavens! only conceive the advantage an introduction to your great friends in town would prove to her at her age. How can you be so obstinate?"

"Precisely because my opinion differs from yours," retorted Colonel Brereton, with wonderful self-command; but, fearful of losing it, he turned upon his heel, adding: "What can detain Beatrice? we shall be late for our ride." He then entered the house, and proceeding to his wife's dressing-room, found her, with Norris and her woman Melford, trying on her dress. Rendered impatient by the remarks of Mrs. Annesley, he said, rather hastily: "Beatrice, I wish to God you would make haste; you know that I detest dancing attendance!"

Beatrice gazed on him, astonished. Had she known that, like most men, he expressed himself impatiently to her because another had annoyed him, she would have sought to soothe him, by a kind and gentle answer; but, unfortunately, she was herself vexed at the moment, by her dress not fitting exactly as she liked; and provoked still more at being addressed by him in a tone of such authority before her women, she replied, pettishly:

"I do not wish you to wait for me. Pray take your ride; I cannot come now!" Then turning to Mrs. Annesley, who had followed Colonel Brereton into the room, she added: "Do see, mamma, how sadly this fits me. I shall be obliged to send it back to have it altered! Is it not provoking?"

"Not at all, my love," rejoined Mrs. Annesley, with a quivering lip; "Colonel Brereton has no in-

tention that you should be presented this year, consequently your court dress may be laid aside."

"No intention that I should be presented? Why that is the chief object of our going to town, is it not?"

"You are not going to town, my dear love. Your sposo informs me that your summer will be spent at Norwood Abbey."

"At Norwood Abbey! at that dark gloomy pile! indeed then it shall not, I am determined," returned Beatrice, in a tone of the deepest disappointment.

Colonel Brereton started. He gazed on her a few moments, inexpressibly shocked and mortified; then, with a kindling eye, and a countenance in which reproach, passion, and wounded affection were all blended, he hurried from the room, and immediately afterwards she beheld him from the window mount his horse, and ride away, attended by Antonio. Instant contrition for her inadvertent speech now assailed her, and she would have given worlds could she have recalled him—but it was too late—and bursting into a passionate flood of tears, she threw herself into a chair, and continued sobbing like a child, to the infinite distress of Mrs. Annesley, who began to repent her unwise interference; while Norris, looking significantly at Melford, whispered: "I thought the calm would not last much longer. It was a mercy that she did not threaten to box his ears; I expected it every minute."

Several hours elapsed before the return of Colonel Brereton, and when at last he did appear, he retired at once to his dressing-room, with some letters which had arrived during his absence, desiring Antonio to admit no one to him. Mary had in the meantime flown to her sister, who she found in much agitation. She had learnt, with concern, from Norris, the cause, and she strove to console her by every means in her power.

"Oh, Mary! do you think he will ever forgive my unkind speech," sobbed the poor Beatrice. "Had you seen the look he cast upon me when I made it, you would not wonder at my sorrow; but it was all mamma's fault: she has been holding up to my view, ever since our return, the delights and advantages to be derived from a spring in town, so that I was not prepared to meet the disappointment."

"And yet how worthless and insignificant they must now appear to you, my dear sister, when placed in the same balance with your husband's affections," replied Mary, clasping her in her arms. "I am sure you would give them all now for one of his approving smiles."

"Indeed, indeed, I would, Mary."

"Then let that reflection be present with you another time; above all, remember that such pleasures are not in accordance with the commands of God, who has told us to 'Come out from the world,' to separate ourselves from its vices, its follies, which

corrupt the heart and estrange it from him, and follow after those things which shall bring peace at the last. May I yet see the day, dearest Beatrice, when you will think thus; when it will be your joy to follow in the footsteps of your dear Redeemer, who suffered not the agonies of the Cross that you might waste your precious time in midnight revels, and in scenes of vanity, but that you might prepare to meet him who has purchased for you eternal life, by the shedding of his own blood. Oh, my sister! if you loved him as he ought to be loved, you would rather shun those places where his holy image cannot enter than seek to go amongst them; but, alas! pride, and the love of worldly distinctions charm our evil nature, even while we behold their mutability. How suddenly the high and the noble, as well as the lowly and the poor, are cut down by the iron hand of death; how all their ambitious hopes, to attain which they have spent their whole lives, are in one hour cut off! Does it not appear madness then to follow after shadows, which fly as we advance to catch them, rather than covet a solid and permanent happiness? to grovel on the earth for pebbles, when we ought to be seeking for pearls?"

"I know that you are right, dear Mary," returned Beatrice, after a pause, during which she had ceased to weep; "and I always feel tranquil when listening to you. I am determined I will strive and follow your advice, and I will begin by going to Claude, and assuring him that I will never thwart a single wish of his again."

She left the room for the purpose as she spoke, while Mary mentally said:

"My sweet sister, until you learn that the power rests not with yourself, but with God, your resolutions are unavailable. His special grace must be given, His spirit renew you, ere any change can be effected in your proud rebellious heart, which I much fear needs the rod of affliction to humble it."

"Long and heavily passed the day to our young heroine, who, on being refused admittance to her husband, entered the drawing-room before dinner, with a countenance saddened and overcast. Colonel Brereton had sent an apology to Mr. Annesley for his not appearing at dinner, saying that he had received letters containing painful intelligence, which would oblige him to leave Annesley Park on the morrow. When this additional anxiety was made known to Beatrice, by her father, who very naturally questioned her on the subject, her grief could not be controlled. She flew from the room, regardless of the remarks she elicited from the guests who had been invited to meet her, determined to seek an interview with her husband, and to hear the truth. At the door she met Antonio, carrying a lamp, who she desired to acquaint his master that she wished to see him. The boy hesitated; but on her urging him he obeyed her. Without waiting his return, she sprang into the room,

when he retreated precipitately from it and closed the door upon her. She looked timidly towards Colonel Brereton, who was sitting in his dressing gown, engaged in writing letters; and as the rays of the lamp fell upon his face, Beatrice perceived that he was pale as death, while the firmly compressed lips gave to it the most severe and stern expression. She noticed, with trembling agitation, that his portmanteaus were packed, evidently for a journey. She drew towards him, and kneeling down by his side, attempted to take his hand, while she said:

"Claude, pray forgive my unkind and thoughtless speech?—bitterly have I repented it—and tell me, I implore you, what intelligence you have received, and whether you are really going away, for this suspense is too dreadful to bear?"

The touching melody in her voice first called his attention towards her. He turned and met her deep blue eyes fixed eagerly upon him. His countenance instantly relaxed, as with one hand he raised her, and replied:

"Beatrice, I am not angry—but I am grieved. Why have you disturbed me: I wished to be alone?"

"Oh, do not speak so coldly! Call me your own darling Beatrice, and say, is it I who have grieved you, Claude?"

Colonel Brereton passed his hand over his eyes for an instant, and then rejoined:

"Not altogether. My father is ill, dangerously ill, I fear, and I must start tomorrow morning for the Abbey."

"Ah, my dear kind Sir George! That is indeed sad, sad intelligence!" replied Beatrice, deeply moved; "but you will take me with you? will you not?" she continued, anxiously.

"What! to that dark gloomy pile? Oh, no, never."

"Ah! if you love me, do not repeat my cruel words!" cried Beatrice, throwing herself on his bosom. "You cannot think that I really meant them?"

"Then why utter them, Beatrice?" said Colonel Brereton, very gravely; and taking her hands in his. "The impression they have made upon me can never be forgotten, neither shall I ever believe again that you are attached to the spot where first we learnt to love each other."

"Then you are very wrong, very unkind!" returned the now sobbing Beatrice. "You know that when I am vexed I say a thousand things which I bitterly regret afterwards."

"It may be so; but of this, rest assured, that for every incautious, angry word you utter, a link is broken in the chain that would bind me to you. If you value this, you will act with more reflection henceforth. Now go, for I have many letters to write this night."

"Oh! do not send me from you thus!" cried Bea-

trice, clinging to him, while her countenance expressed the agony of her feelings. "This coldness is worse than death! Tell me that you will only this once forget, and I never, never will say aught that can offend again?"

"I cannot tell you what is untrue; be satisfied that I forgive."

"Then kiss me, dearest Claude, and promise to take me with you tomorrow? I will be ready at any hour you name?"

"The first part of your request is more easily granted than the last," replied Colonel Brereton, with a faint smile, as he pressed his lips to hers. "You cannot go with me tomorrow, since I start at early dawn, and it will depend on the state in which I find my father how soon you can follow me. I will write to you on my arrival."

This was sad news for poor Beatrice; but submit to it she felt that she must, since she had sense enough to see that Colonel Brereton was not one to be moved from his fixed purpose. She gazed on him for several minutes through her tears, then clasping him round the neck, and laying her beautiful face down upon his breast, she said, convulsively:

"I never knew till now the depths of my affection: all my pride yields before it. I would scorn to entreat another as I have been entreating you, and yet how vainly."

A slight look of triumph lighted up the features of Colonel Brereton, as she uttered this. He strained her fondly in his arms, then repeating his wish that she would leave him, he led her to the door.

"And shall I see you no more tonight?" she asked, sorrowfully, on his opening it for her.

"Probably not; my letters will detain me long. In the morning I will come to say farewell."

Resistance was useless, and with a heart oppressed almost to bursting, Beatrice left him and sought her own apartment, where she found Melford waiting to undress her. This was soon completed, when she sat down on a chair near the window, unwilling to retire to bed, lest sleep might steal over her senses, and her husband be gone ere she awoke. Her reflections were full of bitterness and self-reproach. She could not compose them sufficiently to pray, and she listened to every chime of the clock with an excitement which increased as the hours, one by one, passed away. At length her eyelids were so weighed down with watching, that exhausted nature could bear no more, and she had just fallen into a gentle slumber, when a voice calling out "Beatrice" roused her in alarm.

"No! no! no! he is not gone! I shall see him again!" she exclaimed, wildly starting up, and stretching forth her arms. In the next instant she became conscious of the presence of her husband, who was standing before her equipped for travelling.

"Ah, then you are indeed going, and without me.

Claude, this is being too severe!" cried the agonizing girl, clasping her hands.

"It is unavoidable, my beloved, therefore bear it bravely," returned Colonel Brereton. "But how is this! have you never been in bed? Beatrice, dear, that was wrong. For God's sake and for mine, take care of yourself. Remember that all my fondest hopes are now centred in you."

"You have taught me to make this my pillow, and how could I rest upon any other," replied Beatrice, as her head now reposed on the bosom of her husband."

"My blessed wife! may it ever be yours," he returned, caressingly; "believe that to quit you at this time is as severe a trial to me as it can possibly be to you; but duty demands the sacrifice."

The carriage was now heard dashing round to the front door. Poor Beatrice, it was a painful moment for her, and fast fell her tears. Colonel Brereton, distressed to witness hers, strove to soothe her in every way in his power. He carried her over to her bed, and laid her upon it, entreating her to remain there till she became more composed, then embracing her again and again, he hurried from the room, and hastening down stairs, threw himself into the carriage, and drove off at a rapid pace.

The moment the affectionate Mary heard that he was gone, she hastened to her sister, who she found in a high state of fever; she summoned Mrs. Annesley in great alarm, when every remedy that affection could prompt was offered, the whole house being in attendance on this idolized child, who, perfectly unaccustomed to be crossed in her wishes, could ill sustain the present check her happiness had received. The angry feelings Mrs. Annesley had indulged in against Colonel Brereton, were now softened, that she knew the cause of his sudden departure, while the too probable realization of her ambitious desire to behold her daughter as Lady Brereton operated to soothe her ire, not that she dared own this even to herself; though an acute observer might have discovered it in the consolations she applied to Beatrice, who truly and sincerely mourned the dangerous illness of the kind-hearted Sir George Brereton.

"It is very sad, my dear love, certainly, to think that we may lose good Sir George," she said, "but old men, you know, cannot live forever, and it is only just and right that they should pass away and leave their place for others."

Mary felt a chill at her heart, on hearing this worldly speech, but she made no comment, while the natural tears of the young Beatrice, only flowed more copiously at the bare supposition that she might never behold him more, from whom she had experienced all the kindness and affection of a father. At the close of a week she received a letter from Colonel Brereton, breathing in every line the

most devoted love for herself, and stating that his poor father was yet alive, and perfectly conscious of his presence, from which he seemed to derive much comfort; he could as yet fix no period for her rejoicing him. This letter, the first she had received from Claude, she carried in her bosom by day, and placed beneath her pillow by night, with all that romantic enthusiasm peculiar to her character. A few days had scarcely elapsed ere another reached her, whose deep black border before she had opened it with trembling hands and read the two lines it contained, announced to her that the good Sir George Brereton had been gathered to his fathers. The sorrow she felt on the occasion was genuine and heartfelt, while Mrs. Annesley strove to check the secret exultation she felt as she kissed her daughter, styling her Lady Brereton, a title which redoubled the grief of the innocent girl, who was doomed, however, to hear it repeated by the whole household within an hour after the intelligence had arrived; so great is the love for worldly honours in the human heart, even while they are seen tottering on their lofty pinnacles, falling to the ground each day, and crumbling into dust within the narrow tomb.

Beatrice now began to feel impatient for the summons that was to call her to Norwood Abbey, but until the last sad honors had been paid to the remains of the venerable Sir George, her husband did not choose to expose her to the deep and solemn melancholy which reigned in the house of death. He then wrote to her to set out, his letter accompanied by an invitation to Mary from Lady Brereton, who, in the depth of her woe, had expressed a wish to her loved and faithful Lady Julia Russel, that she would come to her; but unfortunately the young baronet being now a married man Lady Julia had no inducement; she therefore pleaded her inability to fly to her adored friend, as her nerves were unequal to the shock of beholding her in her affliction, to whom she offered all those common-place condolences, which, to a heart bowed down under its bereavement, are sickening and but a mockery. "Send for Mary Annesley; she will not fail you in the hour of need," were the words of her son; and he was right, for three days subsequent to the summons, the sisters were within the old hall of the Abbey, and Beatrice clasped in the embrace of her husband. In his countenance were visibly portrayed the sorrowful hours he had past since last they had met. Little was said by either, as he conducted them to his mother, who they found changed beyond all they could have conceived. Dressed as she was in that most mournful garb of the widow, with the lines of care deeply traced on her noble brow, she looked as if years, instead of weeks, had fled; yet so softened and subdued were her manners, in contrast to their former proud and forbidding coldness, that as the sisters were alternately folded to her bosom, they felt that

for the awe with which she had once inspired them, they must now replace love.

It was in a season like the present, when pleasure had been banished by affliction, that the beautiful character of Mary shone forth in all its perfections. Hitherto, Sir Claude Brereton had only beheld her in society, where—

"If she mingled in the festive train,
It was but as some melancholy star
Beholds the dance of shepherds on the plain,
In its bright stillness present, though afar."

No sympathy being felt by her in the crowd, and the glare of the gay throng, from whom she gladly turned away, to give her whole time, her whole thoughts, to cheer and afford comfort to the grief-stricken Lady Brereton, who soon learnt to value and estimate her as she deserved, and to derive strength and consolation from her deeply pious and interesting conversation. Mary found that to permit her to talk freely upon the subject of her loss tended much to soften its poignancy, and most patiently she listened to her for hours, while at the same time she gently strove to lead her attention to the blessed promises contained in the gospel, and which are especially addressed to the mourner, and the contrite sinner.

The religion of Lady Brereton had been too much confined to forms—punctilious in her attendance at church, and in the due performance of every outward manifestation of her creed—yet had her heart remained proud, worldly, and arrogant, and in utter ignorance of its own sin in the sight of God, until touched and humbled by the heavy bereavement she had sustained in a good and kind husband. This at once taught her the utter worthlessness of all that pomp and state which had been her idols, while it gave her a yearning desire to fill up the aching void in her affections. The Bible, which had seldom been opened, save at stated intervals, was now seldom out of her hands, and those passages which in her prosperity she had read without dwelling on them, or even comprehending their value, so powerfully addressed themselves to her feelings, that a stream of light, as it were, burst on her troubled soul like the sudden sunshine over the Egyptian darkness, and dispelled all that before was gloomy and doubtful, while it taught her that her God was indeed a God of love, who to know was wisdom, who to trust was peace. From the presence and society of her son, Lady Brereton also derived much comfort and support, since he took the entire charge of her affairs, nobly fulfilling the promise he had made to his dying father, to watch over his widowed mother, and shield her from every care, every anxiety in his power. Indeed few were better calculated to hold the responsible station he now filled, for with a sound judgment he united that determined will which

never permitted him to swerve from any purpose he had once formed. Unusually grave, stern, and reflective, for so young a man, yet, as it has been seen, could he suspend even to tenderness where he loved ; he wanted only the torch of religion to be kindled within his breast, and he would have been one who for his God would have bravely died the martyr's death ; but at present the flame dimly burned, while pride, indomitable pride, reigned triumphant. His patience and forbearance towards the faults of Beatrice surprised himself, as well as others who had beheld him under the influence of passion ; but then her beauty and numerous attractions, now in the zenith of their power, seemed to claim these, while her devoted affection, unreasonable though it sometimes made her in what she exacted from him in return, called forth a corresponding warmth in all his feelings towards the young and lovely creature, united as she now was to him by a tie so endearing. Even Lady Brereton had learnt to make many allowances for the capricious humours of this spoiled child, to whom her heart seemed drawn, as she remembered the affection Sir George had always manifested for her.

"I am free to confess to you, dear Mary," she said, one day when they were lamenting together the errors in the education of Beatrice, "that I felt deep regret and disappointment when Claude first announced to me his attachment for your sister, as I could not but foresee much unhappiness to them both. I did not then reflect that sorrows are the appointed means used by our Heavenly Father to bow down our rebellious wills to his. But now I know it," she continued, with a deep sigh, "therefore I can no longer repine that they may fall to the lot of my noble son, when the end produces such blessed results. In years, Beatrice is almost a child. May we not therefore hope that the Lord's hand may be stretched forth to draw her into the knowledge of the truth. How humbling is the reflection that the tempest broke over my grey hairs, and me still walking, thoughtlessly, and arrogantly presuming on my good works as the means of my acceptance, rather than on the merits of my Redeemer. Ought I not then to have patience with one of her tender years, when the Almighty has shewn so much towards me ? The pious precepts of Mr. Mortimer, you say, have been, under Providence, very valuable in bringing you to reflect on the deep importance of divine things. Surely your regard and esteem must be great for one who has proved himself so incalculably precious to you."

"They are indeed great, dear Lady Brereton," replied Mary, while the crimson glided over her before pale cheek at the mention of his name ; "but I grieve to say that we shall all too soon lose the benefit of his improving society, as he leaves us on my brother Herbert's going to the military college next month."

"And are you aware if he has obtained any other situation when that takes place ?" inquired Lady Brereton.

"A permanent curacy has been offered to him," returned Mary. "I think he intends to accept it, as he is deeply anxious to work for his Divine Master ; but I regret, for the sake of his family, who depend much upon his support, that in point of emolument, he will reap very little."

"I am sorry for it," returned Lady Brereton ; "so valuable a person ought to have a wide field to display his zeal in a good cause. I must speak to Claude concerning him. He has the highest opinion of him, and has frequently expressed a wish to serve him."

No more was said upon the subject ; but on the following day Sir Claude Brereton placed in the hands of Mary a letter addressed to Mr. Mortimer, in which he presented to him a valuable living in his gift, vacant by the death of the aged minister, who had held it for many years, and desiring her to convey the glad tidings herself. To describe the surprise, the agitation, and the joy of Mary would be as superfluous as it is impossible. Her cheek flushed and became pale alternately, till unable to conceal her feelings, she burst into tears.

"Why, Mary, this emotion betrays a deeper interest for Mr. Mortimer than I imagined you entertained," said Sir Claude, with a quiet smile. "Nay, you need not deny it, for I assure you it rejoices me, since I have long known of his attachment for you."

"You have known it ?" exclaimed Mary, starting, while her confusion painfully increased ; "impossible !"

"Yes, indeed, my gentle sister," rejoined Sir Claude, pressing her hand ; "it scarcely required my penetration to discover his feelings during my first visit at the Park, even had he not owned them to me, when I rallied him upon the subject."

Mary looked down on hearing this, while thoughts seemed crowding on her mind, when again she raised her eyes she met those of Sir Claude rivetted intently upon her, and, with hesitation, she said :

"Your noble generosity has so taken me by surprise, that I am ill prepared to meet it calmly. Pray pardon me, while I hasten to communicate my happy news by this day's post."

She hurried from the room as she uttered this, while Sir Claude looking after her, murmured to himself :

"Poor Mary, there was a time when another than Mr. Mortimer held the first place in that kind warm heart of thine, and if a fairer casket had onshrined the treasure it would have been claimed, for you are good and gentle ; but unfortunately the eye of man must be gratified, even at the risk of his happiness ; and my beautiful Beatrice, how I know not, contrived to gain that ascendancy over me, which your merits failed in obtaining. Yet as all things

are wisely directed in 'this best of all possible worlds,' I must believe in the dear choice I have made I cannot have erred."

It was judged necessary to the health of Lady Brereton, which seemed much impaired, that she should for a while seek change of air, and quit those scenes that at present only fostered melancholy reflections, to proceed to Lymington, in the neighbourhood of which Sir Claude possessed a very beautiful villa within view of the sea. Mary, who had promised not to leave her until her spirits were more recovered from the severe shock they had received, consented to accompany her, with Sir Claude and Beatrice, who, to say the truth, began to think she was not so wrong in calling Norwood Abbey "a dark gloomy pile," for the absence of all that gaiety she had been accustomed to witness within its walls, ere the viol and the harp were hushed, rendered it at times but a triste abode to one of her gay disposition, particularly as Sir Claude, occupied as he now was with graver matters, could not afford her so much of his undivided attention as formerly. She consequently heard, with unfeigned delight, that she was to quit its retirement for the cheerful sea; nor could she conceal her feelings, which were expressed in her looks, her actions, her words. These were, however, checked on the day of their departure, when she beheld the hall lined with the domestics, all attired in deep mourning, to bid farewell to their lady, who, supported by her son, passed through them, unable to return their affectionate expressions of regret, save by bitter sobs. Tenderly did Sir Claude assist her into the carriage, followed by Mary and Beatrice, now weeping floods of tears. They formed a melancholy group, and it was a relief to the whole party when the deep and sombre shades of the beautiful Abbey were left far behind.

Towards the close of an autumnal evening, they reached Lymington, after a journey of some days, during which they had halted at the several places en route. The picturesque appearance of the place perfectly enchanted the romantic Beatrice, who by this time had recovered her wonted spirits, and she gazed on the magnificent sea as it burst upon their sight, and listened to its solemn murmurs while dashing its mighty waves against that shore they dared not pass, with all the enthusiasm of young and happy feelings, keenly alive to the beauties of nature. On turning to her husband to see whether he participated in them, she met his eyes affectionately watching her animated countenance. The smile and pressure of his hand, which followed, was the answer she most coveted, and she continued making observations to him upon the passing scene, until they turned off the high road into a sequestered path that led immediately up to the house, a pretty dwelling, surrounded by a piazza, on whose white columns sweet-scented plants and creepers twined their slender tendrils.

In this calm and delightful retreat, Lady Brereton soon revived so much as to take an interest in the plans which Sir Claude had drawn out for its improvement, more to amuse and beguile her thoughts than to please himself; and she would carry her chair out upon the lawn, to superintend the planting of trees and shrubs, while she inhaled the invigorating breezes from the fresh blue sea, in company with Mary, who would read to her, or assist her in her various fancy work. Nor was Beatrice wanting in her dutiful efforts to cheer the widowed mother of her beloved husband, who never thought she looked so engaging as when, with affectionate solicitude, she would win her from her chamber into the garden—beguile her of a smile with some sportive sally—or fly to execute the slightest wish she expressed.

The neighbourhood of Lymington was at this time extremely gay, being filled with visitors, who had come either on the plea of health, for the love of change, or from idleness, and very weariness of the dissipations of a London life. Among the last was Lord Stepney, who Beatrice encountered one morning when riding out with Sir Claude. She started, and turned pale on perceiving the angry frown that instantly darkened the brow of her husband, who passed without taking the slightest notice of him, an insult which his lordship returned with a smile of cool contempt and a quick glance of recognition on herself.

"I wish you would tell me your reason for disliking Lord Stepney, Claude?" she then said, as they quickened their pace: "to me it appears inexplicable, after having met him as a guest in your own house."

"Where he came uninvited by me," replied Sir Claude; "but never shall he presume to enter door of mine again, and so I told him on that very night you allude to."

"Then you quarrelled with him after all. Ah, Claude, why did you deceive me?"

"I did not fight him," returned Sir Claude, smiling.

"I am so sorry that he is here," said Beatrice, after a pause. "I hope we may not meet him again."

"Why so? You have no need to fear a thing like him; a pitiful wretch who I would spurn as an adder from my path!" rejoined Sir Claude, whose firmly compressed lips betrayed his indignation.

"There is a freedom in his manners, certainly," said Beatrice; "but he is handsome, and I cannot think him an object for such unreasonable hate as yours."

"Unreasonable, say you? Listen, while I faintly sketch to you one of his villainies, possibly it may change your opinion. Amongst my father's tenants lived an aged woman and a widow, whose only bright possession was a daughter, a sweet merry creature—a May-bird like yourself, my Beatrice,

and as innocent, till that cruel, cold-hearted wretch crossed her path like a venomous serpent, and destroyed her. She could not survive her shame. She died heart-broken, leaving an infant to curse the author of his being. Now what think you of him? Will you let him clasp your waist in the gay waltz again, and pour into your ear words of flattery and folly, mistress mine?" and the eyes of Sir Claude flashed fire as he asked the question.

Oh! no, no! he is altogether unworthy, and I grieve that I ever permitted him to ——."

"Say no more," hastily interrupted Sir Claude; the thought is madness; and had you been my wife at the time, your disobedience would have cost you something. His lordship imagined that I had forgotten, and was induced by Lady Westerham to accompany her to the Abbey. Report says that he is engaged to one of her daughters. God knows she will find ample cause to repent her choice; but those who covet titles and wealth seldom look beyond the outward man."

"And what became of the unhappy mother of that unfortunate?" inquired Beatrice.

"She is a maniac in a lunatic asylum," replied Sir Claude, abruptly. "Now let us hasten on, for the subject is one I dare not dwell upon: never revert to it again."

When it became known that the young and beautiful Lady Brereton had arrived at Lymington, many flocked to pay their respects to her—amongst them Miss Gaveston, under the matronly title of Lady Stormont. Beatrice, who had not forgotten the annoyance she had innocently occasioned her, could scarcely meet her with civility, particularly when she perceived the animated pleasure beaming in her countenance, as she placed both her hands in those of Sir Claude, and looked up in his face with one of her provokingly sweet smiles.

"I should like to box her ears," said Beatrice, mentally, while her little foot beat quickly on the floor. "Why cannot she keep her insinuating looks for her own husband. I have no patience with such flirts."

Beatrice was still more provoked, when, after the departure of the strangers, her sister Mary began praising the beauty of Lady Stormont, who she termed a very sweet creature.

"I believe her to be extremely amiable," returned Sir Claude. "Stormont was fortunate in his choice."

"You think so—do you?" retorted Beatrice, unable to suppress her feelings. "I hate the affected thing; and I will not return her visit, I am determined."

"Then I will have the pleasure to return it for you, dear," said Sir Claude, while Mary looked all astonishment at the vehemence with which her sister continued to utter many silly, thoughtless expressions against the unoffending lady; till Sir Claude, rising to quit the room, said in a tone of

gravity: "Beatrice—beware!" This recalled her to herself, and she burst into tears.

"Why, my dear Beatrice, what am I to understand from such extraordinary conduct," enquired Mary; "why take such a prejudice against Lady Stormont. How wrong you are to express yourself so unwisely before your husband."

"I cannot help it, Mary; I detest her for looking up in Claude's face, as if she wished him to kiss her. She has quite a trick of it, and then she appears so sweet and gentle, when, I have no doubt, she can be in a passion as well as another."

"Oh, you silly, silly child," replied Mary, smiling; "we must really banish you back to the nursery until you get more wisdom. Now let me ask what have you gained by speaking so slightly of Lady Stormont to Claude? Have you changed his opinion of her? No. May you not rather have induced him to think you both unkind and unchristian, which would be a far greater evil to you than his admiring her, merely as a pleasing or a beautiful woman. I am sure the way in which she came forward to you to introduce Lord Stormont was most friendly."

"The little insignificant wretch, because she can have no fears about him, unless I might have been tempted to play at leap-frog with him," returned Beatrice, tossing her beautiful head.

"Then it appears you entertain fears for Claude. Ah, Beatrice," as her sister deeply blushed; "beware of jealousy—it is the darkest passion that can enter the human heart, and the most dangerous—it drives out every holy, every happy feeling, and reigns like a demon with despotic sway."

"Mary, you never can have loved, else would you know how impossible it is to feel all that I do for Claude without being jealous of his slightest admiration of another, though I would not have him aware that such is the case for worlds."

"Then you are a very selfish little being," returned Mary, whose countenance had exhibited some slight confusion at the remark. "A true affection ought to be united to entire confidence when it is placed on a deserving object; and I am sure Claude has never given you any reason to doubt him."

"Oh! Heaven forbid, for if he had ——." And Beatrice, unable from the intensity of her emotion at the bare idea of such a misfortune to say more, pressed her hands with violence together, and actually ground her teeth, to the alarm of Mary, who started as she beheld her.

Having once yielded to such thoughts our heroine felt them more uneasy to her each day, until she hated the very name of Lady Stormont, who had called them forth. She returned her visit, however, with Sir Claude, as she did not choose that he should go without her. They found her in a beautiful little romantic cottage, surrounded by every luxury and elegance, and looking herself extremely lovely, as

she rose from her embroidery to receive them with the same sweet smile and apparent pleasure she always evinced on meeting Sir Claude. At first she tried to lead Beatrice to converse, but when she found that her attempts were unavailing, she turned to Sir Claude and began talking of past days, their meetings at Almacks, and of persons who were utter strangers to Beatrice; they then turned their conversation upon literature, and here it was that Sir Claude eminently shone.

Lady Stormont had written a few things herself, and gave into his hands a small volume, of which she begged his acceptance; he received it with such an air of gallantry that the patience of Beatrice, which had been long tried to the utmost, now gave way, and starting up she wished her good morning in the most abrupt manner, and instantly left the room. She sprang into her carriage boiling with passion—followed by Sir Claude; the moment the door was closed upon them she seized the unlucky book, which he had opened to look into, and tearing it into a thousand fragments, threw them out of the window.

“Good God, Beatrice, are you deranged! What is the matter?” exclaimed Sir Claude, in astonishment.

“I am only scattering Lady Stormont’s *fugitive pieces* to the winds—how dare she offer you any thing to keep for her sake, I could have killed her, the hateful creature, with her soft, insinuating, artful smiles.”

Fearful was the agitation of Beatrice as she uttered this, one kind word from Sir Claude would have instantly soothed and reassured her, but what man under such provocation would have said that word? certainly not her husband—who grasped her arm with a force he was scarcely aware of, and in a voice hoarse from suppressed anger, sternly said:

“If this is the conduct I am to witness in one so nearly allied to me, the sooner we part the better. I shall leave you, madam, till you are restored to your senses,” and ordering the servants to stop, he alighted from the carriage and walked away with rapid strides, though Beatrice, with a flood of repentant tears, besought him to remain. In grief and terror at his words she proceeded home, where, on arriving, she fled to her room, and yielded unresistingly to the violence of her emotions. Hours passed and no one came to her, until the entrance of Melford to dress her for dinner; she was pacing the room, wringing her hands and bitterly weeping.

“What can have happened my lady,” exclaimed Melford, who was much attached to her; “shall I call Sir Claude?”

“Oh, no, no! where is my sister, Miss Annesley?”

“She has only just returned with Lady Brereton from their drive. I met her in the hall, where Sir Claude was giving orders to Antonio to have the

horses ready this evening. I did not hear for what purpose.”

“Ah, Heaven! he is going away?” cried Beatrice, frantically clinging to her attendant. “Melford, Melford, we must prevent this! Oh, if you love me assist me, I implore you?”

“I will assist you to my latest breath, my dear sweet lady; only tell me how,” replied Melford, much affected.

“Find out where he is going, and the hour, and whether Antonio has orders to attend him—fly instantly, for I cannot endure this suspense,” and Beatrice sank exhausted into a chair, while Melford hastened to obey her. She soon returned, saying that Antonio did not know where his master intended going, but that he was to accompany him at eight o’clock.”

“Then it will be dusk, thank God. Melford, I will attire myself in the page’s dress and will go with him; nay, do not offer any remonstrance, for I am determined upon it, and it is you who must help me to arrange it.”

“Oh, my lady, impossible?” returned Melford. “Pray think better of it, to demean yourself in such a way it would be quite shocking—and then consider, my master would surely discover you and be so displeased with Antonio.”

“Say no more, since I am resolved,” replied Beatrice, who, now that the wild idea had once entered her head, adhered to it inflexibly.

Melford continued to expostulate, representing the risk it would be to herself, and adding that she was sure Antoine would never consent to it, as he dreaded so much the displeasure of his master; this last objection was over ruled by Beatrice, who charged her not to breathe a word of her intention to the page, who, she desired might be locked up at the appointed time, until after the departure of Sir Claude. It was useless to oppose one so self-willed, and after a few more fruitless endeavours to dissuade her from venturing on so mad an enterprise, Melford found herself obliged to yield, and to convey her lady’s apologies to Lady Brereton, for her not appearing at dinner, as she was suffering from a violent headache; this message brought the affectionate Mary to her sister’s bedside.

“What can have caused your indisposition, my darling,” she enquired, bending over her. “I began to fear that you had had some disagreement with Claude, for he met us on our return home with a countenance disturbed, and wholly unlike his own, and without addressing me, he desired to see Lady Brereton in private. I hear he is going to Lyndhurst this evening.”

“I have not seen him for some hours,” replied Beatrice, evading her sister’s enquiries. “I wish to keep quiet in the hope of relieving my head, which aches sadly; if I am able I will join you in the evening.”

"Then do try and obtain a little sleep dear," said Mary, tenderly throwing a shawl over her, and kissing her pale cheek. "I shall give orders that no one comes in to disturb you."

She then softly left the room, while a faint smile passed over the face of Beatrice at the deceit she had practised upon her kind and unsuspecting sister. She now awaited anxiously the return of Melford, who had promised to come with one of the pages dresses; she watched the sun's decline with feverish impatience and listened to every foot-fall; at length when the long shadows were departed, and all without looked gloomy as she could desire, Melford entered and said with evident perturbation:

"Now my lady hasten, for the hour is drawing near; Mrs. Crampton has enticed Antonio into her preserve closet, where she has locked him in. I was obliged to confide in her, particularly as I knew she would do any thing to oblige you. But pray take care that Mrs. Pry does not see you, else I am sure she would soon discover you. Oh how I do wish your ladyship would give up your intention; I do so dread the consequences."

"Silence," cried Beatrice springing from the bed, "offer no more advice, but help me to dress; you shall see how well I shall become the doublet and hose."

Melford prepared to obey with a sigh, and in a few minutes Beatrice stood forth in the character of the page, her golden locks secured under the small Greek cap, which Antonio usually wore; the excitement of the moment had called back the truant colour to her cheeks and rallied her courage, and she descended the back stairs with the trembling Melford, and proceeded at once to the stables, where the horses were standing in readiness.

"Come you master page," said one of the grooms in a surly tone as the supposed boy advanced; "you are always a precious time dressing that pretty person of yours. I have a mind to make your dainty ears tingle for keeping me waiting, and he d—d to you."

Beatrice smothered the indignation she felt at this salutation, and received the horses in silence leading them out of the yard round to the front entrance. Sir Claude was standing on the steps evidently most impatient. Lady Brereton had followed him to the door, and was striving to soothe him.

"Now do see Beatrice before you go, Claude," she said, "it will grieve her so much, to hear that you are gone; make some allowance for her youth and inexperience, my son."

"I cannot see her tonight," replied Sir Claude, "she might only tempt me in my present humour to say or do that which I should afterwards repent. Antonio you young rascal, how is this," he continued, "you are a quarter of an hour past your time; did I not order you to be ready at eight o'clock sir?"

Beatrice muttered some indistinct reply, as she turned away her face.

"What are you grumbling at sirrah," rejoined Sir Claude hitting her a smart stroke across the shoulders with his whip, "you feel that, do you, let it make you remember another time—come, quick sir, let us begone."

He vaulted into his saddle as he spoke, and bending low to address a few more words to his mother, who lingered on the steps, he galloped off, while Beatrice mounting the other horse, and touching her cap respectfully to Lady Brereton, hastened after him, a smile on her lip, and a look of triumph beaming in her eye, at this successful commencement of her spirited adventure.

(To be continued.)

THE OLD HOLLY TREE—A SONG FOR CHRISTMAS.

BY MRS. TRAILL.

Oh! the old holly tree is a beautiful sight,
Its leaves are so green and its berries so bright,
It is gay in the winter and bright in the spring,
And the old holly tree is a glorious thing.

When the branch of the forest is naked and bare
The old holly glads us with foliage so rare,
The dark glossy leaves they are pleasant to see,
Oh! the old Christmas holly's a beautiful tree.

Spring blossoms are lovely and summer flowers gay
Yet the chill winds will wither and fade them away,
But the rude blasts of autumn and winter they rave
In vain round the holly, the holly so brave.

Oh! it shadows the altar, it hallows the hearth,
'Tis an emblem of holy and innocent mirth,
It gladdens the cottage, it brightens the hall,
And the old holly tree is beloved by all.

Though "the brave old English gentleman" no
longer now is seen,
And customs old have passed away as things that
ne'er had been,
Though wassail shout is heard no more, nor misle-
toe we see,
Yet they've left us still the holly green, the bonny
holly tree.

REFORM.

HE that looks back to the history of mankind, will often see that in politics, jurisprudence, religion, and all the great concerns of society, reform has usually been the work of reason slowly awakening from the lethargy of ignorance, gradually acquiring confidence in her own strength, and ultimately triumphing over the dominion of prejudice and customs—*Parr's Characters of Fox.*

LINES

WRITTEN ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE LOSS
OF THE STEAMER LEXINGTON, WHICH WAS
DESTROYED BY FIRE IN LONG ISLAND SOUND,
ON THE NIGHT OF THE 13TH OF JANUARY,
1840, AND ALL ON BOARD PERISHED.

A year hath paced its round,
Since parting from the strand,
Went forth that gay-trimmed, gallant barque,
Bearing a happy band.

Her swift keel's foamy track,
Brightened the wintry wave,
And none, who thronged her crowded deck,
Dreamed of a watery grave;

While on to meet her doom
With fatal haste she sped;
On, till the sun his last pale ray,
O'er the green waves had shed.

Sweet childhood with its joys,
Youth with its promise fair,
And manhood nursing golden schemes,
All, all were gathered there.

But none of peril thought,
No dim and shadowy dread,
O'er that ill-fated company,
Its wings of darkness spread.

Why came there not a voice,
Old Ocean, from thy caves,—
A warning and prophetic cry,
Borne on thy heaving waves,—

To warn of coming doom
That mother and her child,
And him, who at the altar served,
God's servant undefiled?

To tell that fated band,
Buoyant with day-dreams sweet,
How soon the kindling fires would burst,
That gleamed beneath their feet.

But ah, no sound was borne
Upon the night-wind's breath;
No voice from Ocean's coral caves,
Of danger told, and death.

Fondly her sleeping child,
The mother bent to kiss,
Secure as in her curtained room,
Her home of love and bliss.

When sudden burst a shriek,
Pealing its death-notes high,—
Oh, who may tell the agony
Of that wild, frenzied cry!

Around them raged the flames
With fierce un pitying power;
And dark beneath, the wintry waves,
Insatiate to devour!

Not on the battle field,
Nor on the weltering deep,
When o'er the lone dismayed wreck
The angry surges sweep,—

Such agony intense,
Rends the despairing heart,
As racked the terror-stricken souls
In that devoted barque.

For 'mid the din of war,
And on the faithless deep,
When to the wreck the sailor clings,
Hope will her vigil keep:

But here, what pale despair,
What burning thoughts of home,
Fraught with no bland and blessed hope,
Lent horror to their doom!

No blessed hope, said we?
Ah, earth had none to give;
But midst the terrors of that hour,
A voice of love said "live!"

Mother, it lent thee strength,
When round thee helpless clung
Those blossoms of thine earthly love,
Fair creatures, soft and young.

It whispered to thy soul,
That all its treasured love,
Its fervent hopes, its yearnings deep,
For joys this world above,

Were not to perish here,
Beneath the icy wave,
But with fruition full be crowned,
In realms beyond the grave.

And thou,* oh man of God,
Friend of the human race!
Amid that wreck of life and hope,
What thoughts in thee had place?

We may not, cannot doubt,—
Death to such faith as thine,
Was but the portal opening wide
To joys untold, divine.

Thy soul had thirsted long,
For draughts of knowledge high,
Drawn from a purer, holier fount,
Than earthly springs supply.

* Rev. Charles Follen, L. L. D.

Now it shall thirst no more,
 Quaffing that blessed stream,
 Which glads the city of our God,—
 O'er which His glories beam.

A year hath passed and gone,
 Since in their watery bed,
 Unshrouded lay the loved, the wept,
 With Ocean's countless dead.

Yet let no selfish wish,
 In our fond hearts have birth,
 To win those lost ones back again,
 To the poor joys of earth.

To our weak erring sight,
 God moves in mystery;
 His voice is in the mighty deep,
 His pathway in the sky.

Enough for us to know,
 His chastenings are in love;
 And though with tears we kiss the rod,
 Firm be our trust above.

E. L. C.

January 13, 1841.

THE NIGHT BEFORE THE DUEL.

ONE evening I was alone in my room, meditating on my chances of life and death in a duel which I was to fight next morning with one of the first swordsmen in the university, (it was to be a mortal combat, owing to circumstances which I will not relate, and at that time I scarcely knew the difference between *carte* and *tierce*), when Rudolph Von Hohenhausen suddenly broke upon my musings. He was one of those whose sparkling manners lead the superficial observer to conclude them all gayety and good humour, but upon closer scrutiny you perceive the demon lurking beneath. His visit that evening was peculiarly ill-timed and unwelcome, but perfectly in accordance with his character.

"Aha!" he began, "so you are to fight tomorrow, are you? Have you made your will and bade good-bye? for here's an end of ye! There is something peculiarly amusing in talking to a man who speaks for the *last* time. How feel you? Queer? eh?"

"So queer that if I am not killed tomorrow I shall give you a chance of killing me next day.

Rudolph did not heed me. "I wonder where he'll pink you," he continued. "Your antagonist usually thrusts at the heart, for that, he says, is the most certain death, and he shows his science by its being the most difficult part to reach. But he has got a spite against you, so he may torture you by slow degrees."

Thus my companion went on, eyeing me intently as though already feasting his sight on the broad red wound in my breast. I felt a thrill of pain wherever

his eye rested. I was often on the point of bidding him quit my room, but there was something as riveting and attracting in him as in the basilisk.

Hohenhausen spoke in this strain till a chill of horror crept over me, and yet, withal, he instilled an excitement into my feelings that vented itself in boisterous gayety. I asked him to stay, and called for wine. Rudolph seemed pleased.

"Well, comrade," he exclaimed, "I like you. You are the first who has ever asked me to stay with him under similar circumstances. I have talked to many till they were pale and sickening with horror, and their eyes gleamed upon me with an inexpressible loathing; and when at last I have said good-bye, I have seen the poor devils rise as though freed from a nightmare. Let me tell you, the time for finding out a man's character is the evening before he fights a duel. Now here's to an easy death," Rudolph cried, filling a bumper.

I could scarce suppress a laugh at the absurd, though horrid toast. Gayety was the deity of the hour, but a gayety like that of the *Mænad*. We proceeded to talk fantastically, telling the most absurd stories of duels and murders, interspersed with allusions to my own case. In time, however, he ceased his banter, and seemed even to take an interest in me, which he expressed by the kind speech of, "You are a good fellow, after all. If you are to die in a duel, a brave hand should do the deed. You will die game. Now see if you cannot pink him and reserve yourself for *me*. I was myself once in the same situation you are now in, and yet I escaped; challenged by a first-rate swordsman, who, though myself not ignorant in the conduct of my weapon, was infinitely my superior. I sat alone in my room the evening before, like you, and you shall hear what happened.

"As I have said, it was late, and I was alone in my chamber. The room where I usually spent the evening was a large, gloomy, gothic-looking place, not unlike this, with a huge old mirror, one of the spoils of a revolution, at one end of it, as that may be; but the one I allude to was a curious old mirror, in a ponderously carved frame; and as it had no doubt witnessed the murder of its possessor, and horrors which it ought never to have seen, I used to sit before it of evenings, listening to the wind howling in gusts, and gazing intently on its dingy surface, till I thought the reflections of all that had passed before it were again apparent, and murders and crimes of all descriptions jostled each other alternately off its cloudy space.

"On the evening I have already mentioned, methought, as I was before the mirror, that the events of my past life glided in review athwart it. Yes, I saw them all sweep before; the hours of my past life and actions, the visionings of my conscience. That was the most dreadful hour of my life, but it has never returned! Ha, ha! it cannot! Deep in

the central back-ground of the mirror I beheld a sunny spot, apparently at an interminable distance. Oh ! it would have taken years to reach it, years of youth and strength. A dull film seemed instantly to pass before it, but I felt a longing to travel thither, and I gazed, and I gazed on it intently and wistfully. After a time it grew more distinct and more near; a distant murmur broke on the silence of my chamber, and gleams of light shot athwart the cloudy glass, and lo ! I beheld a thunder-storm slowly rolling away over a princely park. It was my own ! The sun shone forth with a gladsome gleam, and through the porch walked lightly a joyous girl and kissed the tears from the blue eyes of the violets that bloomed clustering along the rich parterre. A pale, broken-hearted woman joined her, and then confided the orphan to my care ; and I swore to protect the lovely child, young as I was. A brightness came over the scene (those days of sunny innocence) —a brightness so intense that my weakened, vitiated gaze could bear its light no longer ; but through it beheld the death-bed of that heart-broken mother, and I heard her bless me as her departing spirit confided in my protection. Then the light vanished. Storms by sea and perils by land, wild scenes I had witnessed in my travels that spoke not to the heart, and scarce clung, or but confusedly, to the bark of memory, swept across the accusing glass. But the storms rolled by, and once again the smile of summer rested on my own old hall. I saw again the joyous girl. I kissed her, but alas ! not as I had done ! She, too, clung fondly to me. That hour sealed her fate ! She was still gladsome and gay, but not as before ; at times the pensive shade of sorrow stole over her brow, but that shade was the shadow of her destroyer that fell upon her heart. The destroyer was I, and I cursed myself in that hour ; but I can forgive now ! Time flew fast, the shadow deepened, the tear gathered in her eye, the rose faded on her cheek. She wandered unheeded and uncared for in that lordly park. No one sought her in the gloomy hall. The poor outcast complained not, for she had no friend to confide in, no relative on earth, and I—I whom she had loved so fondly—I had betrayed and ruined her, and was far away !

“ A lovely evening of late autumn gleamed in the mirror ; I beheld her step forth from her lonely chamber. She passed across the hall ; my menials taunted her ; she heeded them not, but walked out into the park. The cold frost was on the earth, and the leaves broke harshly beneath her fairy tread ; the sun set and it grew cold ; the sea lay calm and white beneath the moon, like a shroud wound round a dead world. She wandered to the shore—for my domain stretched along the coast—she reclined on the beach and sighed, and the waves answered her ; she wept, and the sea-dew fell around her ; she stretched forth her arms—alas ! poor girl ! she em-

braced eternity ! for the ocean wound his cool waves around her, and imprinted a death-kiss on her fevered lip !

“ Again I returned from my wanderings. I heard the story of her death, and my conscience smote me heavily ; but after a time it was forgotten, and many a gay scene rushed across the mirror. It brightened into a glittering saloon ; the high-born and proud were assembled ; in the midst of the gayety entered a lovely pair : the one a beautiful bride, her husband a high-spirited young noble, whom I had once known. I suppose I paid his bride too great attention, for he was rude to me. I insulted him ; I could not bear his having that lovely girl. He was loath to fight me ; he was too happy—to die ; but I forced him to the contest—he fell !

“ The scene changed. The lustres vanished, but the morning light rested on a wood. In that wood was an old oak-tree—a tree of centuries. Beneath its boughs lay a dying man ; he gazed upward at the sighing branches with a failing eye, they almost hid the blue of heaven from his sight ; even thus in his mind lovely visions of earth passed athwart his hopes of eternity ! The youth gazed on me with a melancholy and forgiving look. I remembered it long. He too had just been united to a lovely woman. They were parted now, but the friend of his early days stood by him still. He closed his eyes, and on the old oak-tree was carved the words—‘ Here fell my only brother !’ The bride died mad—ay, mad ! Poor thing ! I never like to think of that !

“ That accursed mirror showed me numberless other scenes, but the form always changed to the dying and the dead, till at length they settled into a solitary chamber. Within sat a haggard, pale young man. His brow was furrowed, not by years but care. His eye was sunken with wo. Well I knew him—he was a gambler. By his side sat a beautiful woman ; but she too was like the pale lily nipped by untimely frost. She fixed her pensive eyes on me till I could scarcely believe it was a vision I beheld. The man glared on me with a frenzied look, till mine own quailed beneath it. But I could not turn away. Again I had wrought this misery. Caspar had abjured gaming when he was nearly ruined ; but he met with me, broke his pledge, and lost his all ! Despair was in his heart as he re-entered his wretched home, and that home was now visioned before me. The low, sweet voice of his sorrowing wife stole on my ear. She strove to comfort him, but he would not be comforted ; she caressed him, but he repulsed her. ‘ Good night, my love !’ he exclaimed with fervour, ‘ we shall meet again !’ She started at the strange adieu, but he gazed calmly at her and she left him. Calmly he re-seated himself, and remained in silent thought with a rapt expression of countenance, as though quietly meditating over the action he was about to commit. The eye of the phantom was fixed upon me with a glassy stare ;

as deliberately it raised its arm. Louder to my startled ear than a thunder-burst rang the report of a pistol. It was like the voice of a god shouting a curse! The smoke rolled away, and the mirror was a blank.

"Why do you look thus? What have I done more than others do? I have killed my man; yourself are going to fight tomorrow. I have ruined a gamester; retributive justice. Again I would do the same. But I am hated, it is said; and wherefore? Because I have the good sense not to go melancholy mad; and instead of cutting my throat, or shooting myself for shadow or substance, I enjoy life as well as others—and intend to *live*. But to continue.

"I sat thus combating with conscience, my eyes fixed intently on the mirror, till its blank space seemed a tablet, whereon the Almighty would trace my doom in characters of fire! A strange feeling seized me, I confess. I felt I was powerful above common mortals. *There was a combat within me.*

"I continued looking at the mirror, half in apprehension, half in pride, when two frightful objects suddenly started from the opposite side into its central space. They were ghastly, and horrible to behold. A cold chill came over me. I gazed in trepidation, for strangely they resembled *myself*. The one was dreadful and fiend-like, the other was beautiful; but the expression was of such heart-rending melancholy in its wan countenance, that I felt as though I could have wept. These objects were close to my chair, or rather to its reflection; and, with a start of horror, I turned my head to see if they were really in my chamber. Good heaven! what a fearful apparition! They approached, even as if they had walked from the mirror! With more of agony than I thought the human brain capable of sustaining, I remained motionless in the attitude in which I had risen. There stood those fearful shadows gazing at me! I felt it was my good and my evil genius; and I saw the despairing melancholy eye of the former quail before that of the demon, that gloomed upon it with a fierce annihilating frown. They were engaged in a death-struggle for mastery. The beautiful spirit seemed appealing to me for aid. A strange contrariety of emotions and wishes assailed and bewildered me. I hesitated—turned away my eyes, and lo! when I looked again, one figure alone remained! It was surely my very self. Satan, in all his glory, could not be more triumphant. The calm sweet shadow of my better genius had faded quite away. The evil genius had obtained the mastery, and a sensation of reckless triumph filled my breast. I was joyous and glad; the sickly fancies that had haunted my mind were gone; the weak promptings of dastard conscience were forever banished. Now I felt sustained, upheld; I could move as a superior among my fellows.

"I turned to the mirror boldly; I cared no more for its fleeting shadows. Lo! as I looked, its fastenings gave way, and, with a sudden crash, the sheet of glass fell shattered in fragments to the ground. I welcomed the omen, though I thought that in every broken piece I beheld the eye of the demon fixed upon me! The next morning I fought the duel; our weapons were swords. Poor fools! they knew not of the preceding evening. I felt invincible—I was so."

Rudolph now rose from his seat, and left me with a demoniac smile. I felt relieved, as though a fiend had left me. A calm serenity took possession of my soul. I no longer feared the morrow, but with tranquil confidence looked forward to the protection of a good spirit. If Rudolph had seen an evil spirit, might I not believe that an angel visited my solitude? For what but an angel could have brought such peace to my heart? With calm feelings I looked forward to confront my foe. I feared him not; I feared not death; I did not brave it; the fault would not be mine.

But I was spared the trial—for a kind heaven caused the blade of Werner Von Ederthal to disable my formidable antagonist in a previous encounter.

(ORIGINAL.)

LOCAL TALES—NO. I.

A PETERBORO' LEGEND.

BY HENRY SILVESTER.

I could have hoped—as men say when pathetic—

Tho' matrimony is, I know not how,

Grown sadly out of date in places now,

Nay, used with licence—not at all poetic;

I could have hoped, at Peterboro' it had been

Enjoyed by storekeepers and other men.

But Smith was sad; it was, he owned, his lot

To have a wife; or rather, he might say,

He had a wife, and yet he had her not;

Now, tho' he might be happy either way,

He was, he must confess, extremely loth

To bear the blessed benefit of *both*.

It had so chanced that morn a year had flown,

Since fair Bess Brown could to a husband own;

And yet, 'twas confidently whispered, that

Words oft ran high ere from their bed they rose;

So high, indeed, they did not stickle at

Reporting they had reached the verge of blows;

But then to speak the truth, folks certain were,

She went on as no patient man could bear!

However, on her honour she'd declare it,

She couldn't, and she wouldn't longer bear it;

So up she got and hurried on her clothes:

Talk'd of her sex—her wrongs—her injuries;

Cursing *aloud* her stars—(he—*silent*—*HIS*.)

In a most desperate passion off she goes.

With quite a Christian fortitude he bore

Her absence from his bed, in full conviction,
An hour or so—the storm would soon blow o'er,
Or should the worst (as people say), befall,

And some calamity o'ertake his Bess,
The powers above, he said, he thanked for all
He'd bear it like a man, and nothing less :

With that he turned about, before he rose,
Just to indulge a solitary doze.

She came not ; he got up ; the hours passed by
And brought no Mrs. Bessy to her home ;
Morn. noon, and night, nay midnight e'en drew
nigh,

And still she came not ; whither could she roam ?
That question often asked he of his breast ;
But he was tranquil still, and *hoped the best* !

Now Smith, tho' late, was, o'er his final meal,
Ling'ring expectant of the accustomed yells ;
In fancy hears the appealing, pealing, peal,
More furious shake his metal, than the bells !

But no ; the moments brought his spouse no nigher,
And tho' hope still kept quite as high—p'rhaps
higher,

Patience was even at the ebb, and so
He swore that he'd no longer think about her,
But quietly retire to bed without her,
And soon prepared accordingly to go.

But hark ! the long expected peal ; it came,
A very dirge to his unsettled brain ;
Another and another still succeeds :
"Holloa ! holloa !" he cried, "why what's the row ?
What in the world can you be wanting now ?
This ain't a doctor's !" yet he still proceeds

To undo the casement of his upper story ;
He *thought* it was his wife ; now he'd a whim
That as he'd stay'd for her, she should for him ;
He thought the sounds, too, anti-amatory.
He oped the sash, and, after a brief doubt,
He took it in his head to thrust it out.

'Twas a strange sight ; all bustle stir and babble,
Some bore a torch while some a litter bore ;
What it contained perception was not able
With accuracy to catch ; with hideous roar,
He bellowed out, half rapture,—half despair—
"Holloa ! holloa ! why who the devil's there ?"

Only with this the knockers ceased their strife ;
And now, with something like stentorian lungs,
A hundred voices roar'd—"your wife !—your wife !"
Hope in a moment in Smith's breast unbungs
Her cask of spirits,—yet appearances
Must be kept up, and he was up to his.

"My wife ?" he cried, "well ; what sirs, what ?
pray speak !"

No spokesman volunteered from out the lot,
"Well what of her, pray say—what is it, what ?"
Another shout ; "she's fallen in Lytle's creek !"
"Good heavens, and drowned ?" he couldn't still but
doubt ;
'Twas strange this falling in and falling out.

"Is it true, gentlemen," in note forlorn—
"Alas ! and is it true my wife is gone ?
Is she then dead ? your looks declare it so ;
Well," here vociferation broke in—"No !"
"Not dead ? not drowned ? then, hang me, why this
fuss ?"

"No, but she would have been, sir, but for us."
Smith felt a strange depression, "Well, proceed,"
"Yes," cried the spokesman, "yes, but you must
know
You owe her life to our exertions ;"—"Oh !"

"Come ; let her in !" Smith scorning all dictation,
Kept stationary in his airy station ;
The shouts increase, "come down and let her in !"
"She must to bed !" Then with a satyr's grin
He spoke, "so gentlemen, it seems I may
Consider that I owe my wife to you ;
Thanks were misplaced for such an act, I do
Most piously desire there'll come a day,
That in the self same creek your wives may fall
And I perform this service for you all !"

He turned away ; and muttering, crawled down
stairs,
" 'Tis pity folks can't mind their own affairs !"
Peterboro', 1841.

CHASTITY.

How large a portion of chastity is sent out of the world by distant hints—nodded away, and cruelly winked into suspicion by the envy of those who are past all temptation of it themselves. How often does the reputation of a helpless creature bleed by a report—which the party, who is at the pains to propagate it, beholds with much pity and fellow-feeling—that she is heartily sorry for it—hopes in God it is not true ; however, as Archbishop Tillotson wittily observes upon it, is resolved, in the mean time, to give the report her pass, that at least it may have fair play to take its fortune in the world—to be believed or not, according to the charity of those into whose hands it shall happen to fall.—*Sterne.*

WAR.

THAT men should kill one another for want of something else to do (which is the case of all volunteers in war) seems to be so horrible to humanity, that there needs no divinity to control it.—*Clarendon.*

(ORIGINAL.)

THE ROYAL ELECTION.

A TALE OF THE OLDEN TIMES—BORROWED FROM THE EARLY HISTORY OF POLAND.

BY SUSANNA MOODIE.

Continued from our last Number.

CHAPTER V.

THERE was a proud feeling of self-dependence swelling in the proud heart of the blacksmith, as he forced his way through Jews and Gentiles, Pagans and Christians, and stationed himself near the bridle rein of the princess, whose colour went and came as she encountered once more the dark, bright eyes of the handsome peasant.

"Who is that man?" asked the Weyvode of his haughty son-in-law elect.

"The insolent peasant who insulted us this morning," returned the Lord of Cracow, "who, in addition to his impudence, dares to thrust himself into our company. Ho! my men at arms! seize this vagabond, and thrust him hence!"

"Let the knave stay," replied the prince; "I am his debtor. He shall not be driven from this spot until I have rewarded him for the service he rendered to my daughter."

"Your highness is anxious to court popularity," said the nobleman, with a sneer.

This speech was in an under tone, and fortunately unheard by him to whom it was addressed, while the Princess, bending forward from her horse, whispered to the Lady Azilla:

"Look at that man, sweet coz! is he not handsome? Among this moving mass, there is not such another noble countenance."

"Nature has been unusually bountiful to the serf," returned Azilla. "But your highness should not cast your eyes so low."

"I cannot do that," said the princess, laughing. "He is above the height of common men."

"Be more cautious, dear cousin," returned Azilla. "Your betrothed views this peasant with jealous eyes. Did he suspect that you felt so much interest in him, it might cost the handsome rustic his life."

"May Heaven forbid!" said Riza, turning very pale. "My Lord of Cracow could scarcely dare to fear a rival in this hind."

"The rest of the conversation between the ladies was drowned in a long flourish of trumpets, and the herald rode into the ring. The rabble made a desperate rush, and every body pressed eagerly forward to hear the names of the candidates. This was succeeded by a breathless pause. The first name pro-

nounced by the herald was Lechus. The poor blacksmith was so wrapped up in his visionary speculations, that he forgot that there were other individuals, and even other blacksmiths in Poland, of that name, and he cried out in anxiety:

"Now, by the bones of my father! he surely does not mean me?"

"You, slave!" said the Lord of Cracow, looking down from his richly caparisoned steed with infinite contempt upon his plebeian neighbour. "Methinks a regal mantle would hang daintily on those brawny shoulders."

Lechus surveyed the mean person and sordid countenance of his titled namesake with equal scorn, and turned away, muttering to himself: "You are but a sorry fellow in my eyes. A crown would fit that brainless head of thine as awkwardly as a kingly robe would my shoulders."

"Lechus, Lord of Cracow," continued the herald, "your name stands first upon the list of brave and distinguished noblemen who here offer themselves as candidates for the throne of Poland, now vacant by the death of the good King Premislaus. The states and the people find themselves unable to judge individually the respective merits of the noble candidates, and unanimously agree that the contest shall be decided by a horse race, to take place early on the morrow, on the plain without the gates of the city. The ensigns of royalty being first placed upon the stone pillar erected by King Lechus, the glorious founder of the city, the candidates shall start, at a given signal, from the river Pouderie, and the horseman who first gains the pillar, and holds up the crown before the assembled multitude, the people will declare their king."

The herald's proclamation was received with such boisterous shouts by the crowd, that the princess' horse, unused to such a rough salutation, and rendered very irritable by his wounded foot, began to rear and plunge in a desperate manner. The hand of the blacksmith was instantly upon the bridle rein, and his voice soothed the chafed and impatient animal into its wonted obedience. The princess looked her thanks, but uttered not a word. The old Weyvode, who was much pleased with the frank and honest expression of the blacksmith's countenance, called him to his side.

"What is your name, young man?"

"Lechus, your highness."

"Your occupation?"

"A blacksmith."

"Who was your father?"

"Ladislaus, chief of the the tribe of Istwitz, on the Russian frontier."

"Indeed, young man! I knew your father well. He was a brave man and served under my banners during the last Russian war. How comes it that his son has sunk so low?"

"Alas, sire," said Lechus, colouring and looking down, "I have been unfortunate and extravagant. I have lost the wealth my father bequeathed to me, but not my good name. I am poor, but honest, and have not injured any one but myself."

"I believe you," said the Weyvode; "and for the service you rendered my daughter this morning I am willing to serve you. Will you give up your present mean profession?"

"Willingly, my lord, if I can find a better."

"I need a groom to superintend my stables—will you serve me?"

"No, my lord!" said Lechus, raising his proud eyes from the ground, "I prefer the independent life of a blacksmith."

"Think again Lechus," said the princess, bending forward from her horse. "You may not meet with such an offer every day."

"Princess, I have been the chief of a tribe. I cannot stoop to serve any man."

"Well," said the Weyvode, "if you will not accept my offer, I shall not attempt to combat your foolish pride. Take this purse of gold, it will help to improve your present mean condition, and it is but a small recompense for the service you rendered my child."

"I do not need your money, Prince Boleslaus," said the blacksmith. "I am out of debt, and can earn more than I want to support life. I am sufficiently rewarded by your thanks, for the trifling assistance rendered to a lady whom I would die to serve." He cast one long, tender look at the princess, and strode slowly and sorrowfully away, the proudest and most independent man in that vast assembly. Had he known the thoughts that were passing that moment through the mind of the beautiful Rixa, he would have been happy. He knew them not, and left the scene of noisy tumult, with folded arms and downcast eyes, a sad and altered man.

As he sauntered down one of the deserted streets, vainly regretting his humble station, and pondering over the Tartar's offer in the morning, he was overtaken by two horsemen, in earnest conversation, and he recognized my Lord Lechus in the foremost rider.

"Yours must be a fleet steed, my lord," said his companion, "to beat that of the old Weyvode. His

black mare, Chinga, was a present from the Cham of Tartary. Her match is not to be found in Poland."

"I am aware of the circumstance," returned the Lord of Cracow; "but I tell you that my steed will beat them all."

"You are too sanguine," said the other. "If your chance of royalty depends upon the fleetness of your horse, the old man's will beat you hollow."

"Tush!" said Lord Lechus. "The crown is as surely mine as if it already encircled my temples. I will sow the earth with such goodly seed, that it will not fail to bring forth golden fruit."

"What can he mean?" said Lechus, as the noblemen rode slowly forward. "There is some notable stratagem concealed under the speech of yon dark knave. Oh, that I could fathom the mystery."

Lechus had scarcely reached his rural forge, and resumed his working dress, when he was accosted by a serving man, in a rich livery.

"Master blacksmith, can you sell me some iron spikes?"

"How many do you want?" said Lechus.

"All that you have," rejoined the other. "Several hundreds my master told me to buy."

"I have not more than two hundred made," said Lechus; "but I could furnish you with a large number tomorrow, by this hour."

"That will not do," said the man. "My master wants them tonight. I will, however, take what you have got; so be speedy and count them out directly. You see I have the money in my hand."

"Who is your master?" asked the blacksmith, as he counted out the huge nails.

"The Lord of Cracow."

"And what can he want with so many iron spikes?"

"That's neither here nor there," said the man. "He commissioned me to buy them, and I make a point of neither betraying nor asking my master's secrets."

"Follow that rule," said Lechus, "and if your master were ever such a rogue, you may continue an honest man."

There was something in the man's manner, as he examined the spikes, that struck Lechus as remarkable; but he forbore to ask further questions. The man went his way, as little Valdo came running up to the forge.

"Well, master, here I am, quite safe. I have heard the proclamation and seen the twelve kings; I hope you will let me go to the horse race tomorrow?"

"Yes," said Lechus; "but you must do me a little service this afternoon, if you expect a holiday tomorrow."

"Well, master."

"Do you see that pompous fellow in red?" said Lechus, pointing after the serving man. "He is heavily laden with spikes that he has just purchased

of me. I want to know what he means to do with them. Follow him closely, but do not awaken his suspicions. See where he leaves them, and come back and report your observations to me."

Valdo seemed to consider his master's commission almost as good as a holiday, and he ran off at full speed, and was soon at the heels of the serving man, who never suspected a spy in the ragged urchin, who bounded and capered like a wild goat in his path.

"Here, my lad, do you want a job?" said the man.

"Not I," returned the boy. "I hate work, and master has given me a holiday."

"I will pay you for your trouble."

"Will you indeed?" said Valdo; "that alters the matter. I love money, though I hate work; and to get the one, I am often obliged to do the other. What do you want me to do for you?"

"To help me to carry these spikes; they are boundedly heavy."

"And what will you give me?" said the boy, pressing nearer.

"This piece of silver," said the other, holding up a small silver coin, about the value of an English penny. "It will make you a rich man."

"Done," said Valdo. "Give me the cold iron."

The serving man gave him a bundle of fifty or sixty spikes, and desired him to follow as fast as he could."

"What can you want with all these long nails?" said Valdo.

"I will shew you that presently," replied his companion, and turning from the road that led to the city, he took a bye-path that conducted them to the plain that had been appointed by the herald for the race course. The man carefully walked over the course, and to the no small surprise and amazement of Valdo, began to stick the spikes at regular distances over the ground, carefully concealing the sharp points, which were placed uppermost, among the long grass. One part of the field he left free, and Valdo, who assisted him in planting the spikes, asked, with a broad grin, "why they did so?"

"To catch foxes," said his companion. "When they tread upon these spikes they will stumble and fall."

"What a number of foxes you must expect to catch," said Valdo.

"Ten or eleven will answer my master's purpose," returned the man. "He wants to line his mantle with their skins."

"I wish him luck," said Valdo; "but they must be silly foxes to be taken in such a gin."

"You know nothing about it," returned the other; "and you must promise me, young chap, to say nothing about it, or you may chance to lose your ears."

"A good motive for making me hold my tongue," said Valdo, putting up his hand to feel his ears, then

drawing his old cap tight over them, he ran off at full speed, without turning once round to answer the vociferous cries of his comrade, who called loudly upon him to come back.

Valdo was out of breath when he came up to the forge. He found his master sitting upon a stone in a dejected attitude. At the sight of the lad he roused himself, and tried to shake off the depression of spirits that overwhelmed him.

"What news, Valdo?"

"Oh, master, I am so hot," said the boy, wiping his wet face with the back of his hand. "I have run so fast, and I am so tired, and so hungry."

"Is that all you have to tell me?" said Lechus. "I could have guessed all this without asking. Did you follow the man with the spikes?"

"No," said Valdo, "I went with him; and, oh, master, you'll never guess what he did with the spikes—no, not if you were to try for a thousand years. He stuck them all over the race course to catch foxes."

"Ha! ha! ha!" shouted Lechus, "I see it all now. For your life, Valdo, do not mention this circumstance to any one. The day is far spent—it only wants an hour of sunset—go into the cabin, and get your supper. For my part, I am in no humour to eat; I will go and look at the traps."

This plan was no sooner formed than executed. Lechus sauntered along the banks of the river, until he reached the plain which had been named for the important spectacle of the morrow. He carefully examined the ground, and found it set with the sharp spikes, which could not fail to lame any horse that trod upon them. One path alone was clear, which Lechus doubted not was reserved for his haughty namesake.

"If I do not proclaim this man's villainy before the assembled multitude tomorrow, may my hand be struck from my shoulders, and my name descend a common by-word to posterity. Lechus the first has sown the seed, who knows but Lechus the second may reap the harvest, without the aid of the Evil One!"

The blacksmith returned to his forge with a heart somewhat lighter than he had set out in the morning; and, flinging himself on the ground at the foot of the great stone, he wrapped himself up in the tattered remains of a fur cloak, that, like the wearer, had seen better days, and composed himself to sleep.

Fancy soon hurried him into a thousand busy scenes. He dreamed that he was one of the candidates for the crown, and the foremost in the race; that he rode the old Weyvode's black mare, Chinza; and was crowned king of Poland by the fair hand of the beautiful Rixa, till these delightful visions were abruptly dispelled by a heavy blow on the anvil. He started up, and discovered, by the bright

beams of the moon, the Tartar, in his high red cap, standing before him.

"Lechus!" he exclaimed, in a stern tone, "have you well considered my proposals?"

"I have!"

"And your determination?"

"Is to die a blacksmith! or live an honest man!" replied Lechus, turning himself upon his flinty couch. "So, good night!"

He had scarcely pronounced the words, when the Tartar vanished with a yell, which, to the ears of the blacksmith, appeared a combination of every discordant and appalling sound. A rumbling noise, like the distant shock of an earthquake, convulsed the ground; and when Lechus awoke the following morning, he found the great stone rent in twain, and his tools thrown to a considerable distance. The transmuted wedge of iron was likewise transformed to its original baseness.

"So much for the devil's helping one at a pinch," said Lechus. "I thought he could not deceive me in this, and reckoned my fortune already made. If the iron could find a voice, it would laugh at me for my folly."

CHAPTER VI.

WHILST Lechus slumbered soundly in the old cloak, with the rude stone for his pillow, and the clear vault of heaven for his canopy, a hundred torches banished the bright cold beams of the moon, from the halls of Boleslaus. The feast was spread, and the sounds of music and revelry floated far into the deep silence and repose of night.

The Weyvode was in excellent spirits. He knew his mare to be the best horse in the kingdom, and as his election depended upon the fleetness of her legs, he deemed the crown already his own. The Lord of Cracow, too, was unusually eloquent. He knew his steed was no match for Black Chinza, but relying upon his own cunning, he laughed in his sleeve at the certainty of victory. The other candidates, too, were there, all fed by vanity, and entertaining the most sanguine hopes of success. All the rank and beauty of Poland were assembled in that vast hall; and the wine cup circulated, and the jest and song went round: and light forms bounded through the mazy dance to the sounds of joyous music, and if sad and anxious hearts were among that gay assembly their looks belied them. But these were for the world: the world is false—and false are the looks and actions of its votaries. Envy, and avarice, and ambition, and disappointed love were there—and dark and evil passions lurked beneath forced smiles and courteous speeches.

The princess engaged in all the festivities of the evening; and amidst the crowd of beauty round her shone pre-eminently beautiful.

Anxious to escape from her own thoughts, she

danced and flirted with all the younger candidates for royalty, and only appeared grave and cold when addressed by her plain and haughty bridegroom. Lord Lechus appeared unusually anxious to attract her attention. After vainly endeavouring to secure her hand for the dance, and always finding her engaged to some more fortunate cavalier, he at length succeeded in placing himself beside her, whilst she partook of some refreshments.

"You are determined to use your power, Lady Rixa, in making me miserable," he said in a reproachful tone. "As your betrothed lord, I surely deserved a preference?"

"Perhaps so, my lord; but women love power, and mine is of such short duration now, that I could not resist the temptation to use it."

"To abuse it," returned the nobleman, with some acerbity of look and manner. "Your highness knows your power, but you may carry your neglect too far. What I sue for tonight as a favour, tomorrow I may demand as your king."

The eyes of the princess flashed fire as she raised them with an indignant glance to his face.

"You may demand, my lord, but never can command what is no longer in my power to give."

"You do not mean to say, madam, that you do not love me?"

"I did not say it," returned the princess, with a bitter smile; "but you have guessed my thoughts."

The Lord of Cracow started to his feet and looked at the proud damsel with such a fixed stare of surprise and incredulity, that, vexed as she was, the princess found it a difficult matter to restrain her mirth. She hated him—and felt pleasure in tormenting him.

"You cannot be in earnest, madam?"

"I was never more so."

"Impossible!" exclaimed the bridegroom elect, flinging himself into his seat, and fixing such a glance of stern regard on a boar's head that hung opposite, that in a few minutes the expression of his own harsh features very nearly resembled in ferocity those of the grim Savage."

"My lord, what ails you?" cried the princess, with an affected air of alarm. "I never saw you look so ill before."

"It is very common for those who never look well to look ill," said the jester, who had overheard the conversation, and came up opportunely to the relief of the princess. "Why, my lord! my lord! unbend your angry brows. The fiend has bewitched you, and changed your noble features into the semblance of a grisly bear."

"Desist from your folly, Zouski; the Lord of Cracow is in no humour for trifling," returned the princess. "He cannot take a jest even from the mouth of a lady." She coloured and looked down, as she concluded the sentence—confounded and

ashamed at the duplicity which tempted her to treat as a joke, words which had been spoken in bitter earnest.

"There is many a true word spoken in jest," said the nobleman, "and you may find too late, madam, that you have carried your joke too far."

The princess replied to this threat with a disdainful smile, as they were joined by the old Weyvode.

"The music waits for you, Rixa. Art tired already with the dance? If my heels were as light as they were thirty years ago, I should be up and doing."

"As the heels grow heavy, uncle, the head grows light," said Zouski. "My Lord of Cracow's heels are so heavy and his wit so light, that they cannot jump in unison."

"I never dance, your highness," said Lord Lechus, "when my chance of enjoyment depends upon a capricious partner."

The Weyvode looked enquiringly at his daughter. "Lord Lechus is right," said the princess, carelessly; "I am tired with dancing, and feel in a very contrary humour tonight. Women are allowed to change their minds, I have heard, ten times in the course of an hour. I have only availed myself of the privilege claimed by my sex."

"Forgive my daughter," said the Weyvode, turning to his proud rival; "she has been a spoiled child. Had her mother lived, she would have been more discreet."

"Make no excuses for me, dearest father," said the princess, who began to feel that she had acted very imprudently. "I frankly own myself in fault. My lord, will you accept my hand for the dance?"

She turned upon the sullen lord, the light of her beautiful countenance, and held out to him her small lily hand with a smile so bland, that his anger was softened, and he condescended to accept the fair pledge of peace. As he led her off to the upper end of the hall, the Weyvode followed them with his eyes, then turned to the jester, with a sigh: "My poor girl! Zouski, that man will never make her happy."

"I hope not," said the jester. "I would rather marry the bird of beauty myself, than see her so mated. Your highness has indeed cast your pearls before swine."

"I did for the best," returned the Weyvode. "I feel that I did wrong. But he may win the crown after all. The dignity of royalty may reconcile her to her lot."

"Uncle," said the jester, "do you think that the eagle suffers less the pangs of hunger than the other birds of the air?"

"No, boy," returned the prince; "but he has more fortitude to bear it."

"Did he tell you that?" said Zouski. "Oh! uncle, uncle. Pride may teach men to conceal their sufferings, but it cannot lessen them. Grief that is

often on the lips is soon forgotten, but sorrow hidden, breaks the heart in which it has found a tomb."

"Did you hear my Lord of Cracow speak of the horse race tomorrow?" asked the Weyvode, anxious to change a subject fraught with painful regret.

"Lord Lechus never speaks of that which most engrosses his thoughts," said Zouski; "like the rest of his foolish compeers he hopes to win. But I trust for the good of the country, that the black mare may prove the better horse."

The old man laughed heartily, and confident of success, mingled once more with the gay throng that filled his spacious halls.

The first rays of the summer sun glanced through the painted windows upon the marble floor before the revellers retired to rest.

With a sad and swelling heart the princess retired to her chamber, and after divesting herself of her heavy ornaments, and losing her bright hair from the bands which confined it, she cast off her cumbersome upper garments, and wrapping a rich Indian shawl around her, she sank down on a pile of rich cushions, and fell into deep thought.

Her waiting woman stood at a little distance watching all her motions with an air of silent endurance, as though she wished her task concluded, and herself dismissed to slumber.

"Where is my cousin?" said the princess, at length raising her head.

"Asleep, your highness. It is very late. The sun is already up."

"Too late to sleep now," returned Rixa. "Go to your bed, Minna."

The woman hesitated.

"I shall not undress—do as I bid you."

Minna retired, wondering what new whim possessed her beautiful and capricious mistress.

"How can I sleep?" exclaimed the princess, stepping into a sort of balcony that surrounded her turretted apartment. "How can I sleep when the sun is rising which seals my fate—the fate of Poland. Oh, that mine eyes could pierce the clouds which surround the future; and that I could know what would be the result of this important day—whether my father or that dreadful man will be King of Poland. I cannot, will not be his wife," she continued, wringing her hands and raising her eyes, streaming with tears towards the glorious heavens; "I will die first: yea—if I fall by mine own hand. Oh, that there were a way to escape from this cruel doom—that heaven would help me in this mine hour of need."

"Ask not the aid of heaven," said a soft voice at her elbow. "Heaven is deaf to the prayers of those who, wanting moral firmness, have sacrificed their earthly happiness at the shrine of power. God is truth—and as wide as the heavens are from the earth, so broad is the line of demarcation which separates truth and falsehood. The being who medi-

tates self-destruction, because she has, by her own free choice, placed herself in an erroneous position, must not ask success of the majesty of heaven."

"Who are you?" said the princess, "who, thus suddenly, and personally unknown to me, become my monitor?"

"Well am I known to thee, princess," returned the Tartar, for it was he; "there is not an action of thy brief life, nor a thought of thine heart but is open to my inspection. It is because I know thee that I now present myself before thee?"

The princess turned towards the stranger, and fixed her eyes enquiringly upon his face. A secret chill crept through her frame, but the beauty of those haughty features; the bright, searching, unearthly glance of those deep seated eyes; and the wild, picturesque, and splendid costume in which he was arrayed, rivetted her gaze by a sort of magic to his face.

"Whence are you?" she at length faltered out. "What brings you here?"

"I came from my own country, where I reign absolute monarch over multitudes so vast that their number is only known to me," returned the Tartar. "I came to help you in your hour of need, if you will deign to accept my services."

"I fear you!" returned Rixa, drawing back, and trembling violently. "You are a great magician?"

"You have guessed rightly, princess."

"In what manner would you serve me?"

"Ask your own heart?"

"Fear has paralyzed it," returned Rixa. "I have nothing now to ask."

"Think again?—I know your thoughts better."

"Then spare me these questions," said the princess, haughtily. "Why put me to unnecessary pain?"

"It is my part to enquire, princess, yours to answer. Proud as you are, I am your master."

"Who gave you that power?"

"Yourself."

"It is false! I know you not! Begone."

"Nothing more true. Your own rebellious thoughts against the majesty of heaven have conjured up a mighty spirit, and you tremble when he appears before you. Be not alarmed—I am willing to serve you."

"I do not require your aid."

"Then follow your own counsel, and become miserable. The feast is spread; the wine cup is crowned; the delicious buds, which, this morning, are wet with dew, shall expand ere noon to form the bridal wreath, and Rixa, the chosen of Lechus, shall be Queen of Poland."

"Despair and death!" returned the princess, clenching her hands together in an agony of grief. "Stranger, whoever thou art, save me from this wretched doom?"

"It is thine own choice."

"Oh, never! never!"

"With whom would'st thou change thy destiny?"

"With the meanest peasant in the realm, so I were free—and free to make my own choice."

"And that choice would fall —. On whom, princess?"

A burning blush crimsoned the fair cheek of Rixa. She turned away and would have sought her chamber, but some supernatural power seemed to chain her to the spot.

"Princess, look in this mirror and tell me what thou seest?"

The Tartar took a polished steel mirror from his bosom and placed it in her hands. One drop of pure black liquor occupied the centre, but as the princess looked at it, it began to expand until it nearly covered the surface of the steel. Still as she gazed, figures began to flit over it, and anon she beheld the blacksmith's forge, and the whole scene that had been enacted on the preceding day.

"What dost thou see?"

"That which I fain would never recall."

"And which is ever uppermost in thy thoughts?"

"Too true," said Rixa, with a sigh.

"Now look again."

She did as her mysterious companion bade her—and the crowd which had occupied the market-place were faithfully delineated to her astonished gaze; there again she beheld her own fair form, and the handsome blacksmith at her bridal rein. She looked upon the mirror until tears blinded her eyes.

"Look again."

"I dare not," said the princess, returning the mirror; "I have seen enough."

"Yet once again."

Impelled by curiosity, the princess took the magic mirror with a trembling hand. The keen eye of the Tartar was upon her.

"What dost thou see?"

"Nothing."

"Wipe away your tears and look again. What do you see now?"

"That which can never be realized."

"Declare it."

"No; I cannot. It is too good to come to pass."

"I can bring it to pass; but on a certain condition."

"What is it?"

"A mere trifle."

"Declare it?" said the princess, eagerly.

"Will you promise to comply?"

"Not until I have heard your proposal."

There was a pause, during which the Tartar had returned the mirror into his bosom, and stood with his dark, keen eyes, fixed upon the princess.

"Speak," said Rixa.

The Tartar drew nearer: "Do you wish what you have just seen to come to pass?"

"I would sacrifice my life to that effect!"

"Nonsense!" said the Tartar. "I wish I could learn you ladies to speak the truth. Of what use would the fulfilment of your wishes be to you, deprived of the power of enjoyment. Do you believe in a future state?"

"Who doubts it?"

"Many," said the Tartar, with a laugh. "What cannot be defined is always uncertain. Had you never any doubts on the subject, lady?"

"Yes; but, in truth, it has seldom occupied my thoughts."

"You can have small regard for that which is hardly worth a thought," said the Tartar. "Now if you will give me the reversion of this uncertainty, I will make you happy in the way you desire."

"You speak darkly."

"Nothing can be plainer," returned the Tartar; "I am willing to give you every happiness which you can desire upon earth, if you will make over to me the feeble hopes you entertain of an uncertain hereafter."

"Sell my soul!" cried the princess, starting back, with a scream of horror; "for what?"

"You know," returned her provoking companion.

"Is my proposal so very terrible to one who would have lost it just now for nothing, and flung back body and soul, as a worthless gift, in the face of her Maker?"

"I have sinned!" exclaimed the princess, sinking upon her knees. "Father of earth and heaven! have mercy upon a poor, weak, erring woman, and save me from myself and from this dreadful being!"

She raised her head. The Tartar was gone; and the broad beams of the sun, glancing among the flowers, and playing at bo-peep through the green leaves that surrounded the balcony, refreshed and shot strength into her fainting heart.

CHAPTER VII.

How beautifully that morning dawned upon the world—upon the busy, anxious, care-worn sons of earth—and few among the many, whom the calm resplendent beams awoke to life and consciousness, cast one look upwards in gratitude to God, or felt one spark of enthusiasm swell their hearts for all the blessings which that light revealed. Happy, indeed, are those to whom the Father of souls has given a quicker sense of the sublime; who know and reverence him in his works; and perceive in the excellence of his creation a breathing type of his eternal perfection. Blessed are they, for they enjoy happiness which the world is ignorant of—which all its worthless baubles cannot purchase—which it can neither give nor take. This love of nature is confined to no particular rank: it forms an essential part in every poetic mind, and contains in itself the very essence of poetry. Education may improve, but it cannot produce this sentiment; it must be

born with the possessor, and is an inspiration from heaven.

In spite of the weight of care, with which a few brief hours had loaded the mind of Lechus, he stood forth in the open day pouring his soul upwards in adoration to the great Author of his being, as the glorious sun rose in full majesty upon the slumbering world.

At that remote period, Christianity was little known in the northern parts of Europe, and the mass of the people were still involved in the mists of paganism. Christianity itself was but a refined species of idolatry, loaded as it was with all the ignorance and superstition of the early ages; a feeble emanation from the glorious light which was dawning upon the fair regions which lay in darkness and the shadow of mental death. Start not, gentle reader, when I tell you that my hero was not a Christian. A rumour thereof had reached his ears, but it was but a rumour; and as its sublime truths had never been revealed to him, he was not accountable for his erroneous faith. Still, with the eye of a poet, our poor blacksmith looked through nature up to nature's God, and felt and acknowledged, by the impressions which her beautiful countenance made on his heart, that there was another and a better world, a future state of rewards and punishments.

Whilst Lechus was wrapped in his contemplations, and pouring forth his unpremeditated prayer to the throne of light, our old friend, Ora, approached his forge.

"What are you thinking about, Lechus?"

"I cannot explain my thoughts," said the blacksmith, "and you would feel very little interest in them if I could."

"I think I can guess," said Ora, with an arch smile.

"I am sure you could not; and if you did, Ora, I should not be complainant enough to own them."

"Oh! what have I got here?" said Ora, disregarding of the last speech of her companion, as suddenly stooping down she lifted from the ground a gold bracelet, richly set with precious stones. Oh! what a beautiful raree show. Master Lechus, my fortune is made. Do you see that?" and she held up the glittering prize, and looked triumphantly at her quondam admirer.

"Yes, and know it too," said Lechus. "It belongs to the princess. Give it to me, Ora, and I will restore it to its rightful owner?"

"A very likely story, indeed," said Ora. "How should you know any thing about it, or to whom it belongs?"

"I tell you," said Lechus, angrily, "I do know, for I saw it upon her arm before her horse threw her yesterday morning; and if you keep it, Ora, you may chance to get into a scrape."

"Who said I meant to keep it, rude fellow! But

I will restore it myself, and get the reward for my honesty, without turning it over to you."

The hope of once more beholding the beautiful idol, whom he had set up in his heart, induced Lechus to entreat Ora to let him restore the bracelet himself to the princess. "Dearest Ora," he said beseechingly, "do grant my request. I will not only give you any reward I may receive from the princess, but I will add something from my own little store."

"Humph!" said Ora. "What makes you, Master Lechus, so anxious to go to court. I do not think that you would make a very grateful courtier."

"Perhaps not, Ora; yet I have a great desire to see the princess, and hear her speak again."

"What good will that do you, Lechus? I am sure that she would neither look at you, nor speak to you."

"But I should see and speak to her."

"What pleasure could that give you?"

"Oh, a great deal; her voice is so soft; her face so beautiful, that it makes me forget that I am only a poor blacksmith whenever I look at her, or hear her speak."

"For shame, Master Lechus!" said Ora, beginning to whimper, "you say these things on purpose to vex me. I am sure I am much handsomer than her; why she looks like wax, and has hair enough upon her head to stuff a cushion. Now harken to me, Lechus, and then say if you dare; that I am not in the right?"

"At eve upon our village green,
A fairer maid you oft have seen,
Though unadorned in courtly dress,
Yet rich in native loveliness;
Whose joyous steps, and sparkling eye,
Have made the hours like moments fly.

"And oft young love on wandering wing,
Has paused to hear that maiden sing,
And hov'ring o'er her moon-lit bower,
Has bade your heart confess her power;
Whilst song and dance, and merry lay,
Beguiled the weary night away."

Though passionately fond of music and singing; the blacksmith's ear was out of tune, his eyes blind, and insensible to the charms of the pretty girl, who was trying her best to win back his wandering heart, to what she considered its lawful obedience. Deaf-blind—and inattentive to all that was passing around him, Lechus was too intent upon procuring an interview with the princess, to heed poor little Ora and her song. Love is very selfish. I have no doubt that Ora thought Lechus so.

"Ora," said the blacksmith, "it is seldom I ask for any favour beyond a kiss, which a young girl can modestly grant, without being much the loser;

but in this instance, you would greatly oblige me if you would grant my request. Will you let me accompany you to the palace, and identify the bracelet, as the same I saw upon the arm of the princess?"

"I will," said the little flirt, somewhat relenting, "if you promise to dance with me the first dance, in the festivities of the evening, or provide me with a better partner."

"Agreed," said Lechus, joyfully; "my pretty Ora, you are my good angel. Let us be gone. If we do not see the princess in a few minutes our errand will be overlooked amidst the bustle and tumult of the day."

In spite of the early hour, the streets were already alive with people, hurrying to get convenient situations to witness the race for power, and Lechus and his gay companion, had some difficulty in forcing their way through the crowds which surrounded the palace gates, and still greater difficulty in gaining admittance within its walls. It was in vain they requested permission to speak with the Lady Rixa; they were pushed from right to left, by the busy domestics, without the least ceremony, and their request was neither heard nor regarded. How long they might have continued in this uncomfortable situation, is uncertain; had not Zouski, in full costume, crossed the hall, and his eyes, always on the alert to discover something new, rested with great satisfaction on the handsome person of Lechus; and his very pretty companion.

"What a beautiful man," whispered Ora. "Do you see the grand cap upon his head? Is he one of the kings?"

"Tush, woman; 'tis the prince's jester, and that crown upon his head is the fool's cap; when he makes a wise speech he rings those bells, and the courtiers clap their hands and call it folly. Hush, here he comes."

"Well young people," said the jester, "what business have you here? If you seek for wisdom, she is to be found, the wise man says, in the streets, but if she utters her voice in Cracow, I am sure that there are none but myself fool enough to listen to her."

"Oh, dear, sir," said Ora, making a very low curtsy, "I have not the pleasure of her acquaintance. I am only a poor country girl, and this is my neighbour Lechus, the blacksmith; a very honest man, and a good workman withal."

"Friend," replied the jester, narrowly examining the frank countenance of Lechus. "I may spare myself the trouble of lighting a candle at noon-day in order to search for an honest man. If thou art not honest, thy face betrays thee. Thou art worthy to be the chief of good fellows; the king of blacksmiths. What can'st thou want with the princess?"

"To restore to her a jewel which she yesterday

dropped at my forge," said Lechus, "and which this young maid fortunately picked up."

"Follow me," said the jester. "Your honesty deserves a reward. I will bring you to the princess."

With downcast eyes and cheeks crimsoned with blushes, Ora instantly obeyed the summons, but Lechus drew back. A sudden tremor shook his athletic frame, and fear, for the first time, found entrance in his heart. He who had laughed at the threats of the Lord of Cracow, and his men at arms, now trembled at the thought of approaching the woman he adored.

"Come along, man—what ails you?" said the jester. "Since you have enlisted yourself under my banners, it is but right you should wear my colours. Take this," he continued, putting his cap upon the blacksmith's head; "it doth greatly become thee. It will make thee see things as they are, and give thee marvellous courage in speaking the truth."

Lechus dashed the gay cap indignantly to the ground, and would have trampled it beneath his feet had not the jester regained it with an extravagant bound.

"Out upon thee, black varlet! for abusing what you lack taste to appreciate. Now, by Phaeton and his restless steeds! thy head will never be adorned by a lighter crown."

"It suits the weight of the brains for which it has been prepared," said Lechus; "my skull is too hard and heavy to be swayed by a feather."

"Thou would'st do honour to the motley for all that," said the jester; "there are few men wise enough to know themselves fools. I have paid thee a great compliment, an thou had'st wit enough to understand it."

"Compliments paid over the left shoulder, are always the most sincere," said Lechus, laughing; "but I am not philosopher enough to relish them. Were I an able-bodied man as thou art, I would rather win my bread at the rude trade of a blacksmith than revel on dainties by playing the fool in the halls of princesses."

A deeper glow of colour brightened the cheeks of the jester, and his broad brow contracted into a frown, but his anger was but for a moment. The cloud passed without a storm, and the sunshine of good humour again laughed in his eyes.

Gaining courage from his conversation with Zouski, Lechus no longer hesitated in following his humorous guide into the presence of the princess. And there she sat at the head of the board, as pale and as fair as a marble statue; on one side supported by her princely father, on the other by her haughty lover. Though only just after sunrise the huge table groaned beneath the substantial meal which constituted the breakfast of that period. Deeply pondering over her conversation with the mysterious stranger, Rixa let the viands offered to her by her lover pass unheeded by, and raising her

head with the bustle occasioned by the entrance of the fool and his companions, she started into consciousness when she beheld the object of her thoughts before her.

"Sir fool! whom have you there?" said the Weyvode, who felt very dull from the silence of his daughter, and the taciturnity of his intended son-in-law. "Is this maiden thy wife or thy sweet-heart?"

"My sweet-heart to be sure," said the jester, holding the poor, blushing Ora, by the hand, and leading her up to the Weyvode. "Dost thou not admire my choice? Is she not a pretty piece of still life. See she has some grace too—how deeply she blushes. This is her discarded lover, who has promised to perform the marriage ceremony, and in virtue of his craft rivet the chain. Wilt thou, good uncle, bestow upon the bride a marriage portion?"

"Out upon thee, graceless varlet," said the Weyvode. "Would'st thou rob the poor blacksmith of his pretty wife?"

"Please your highness," said Lechus, colouring in his turn; "the fool hath not spoken in truth. Yon damsel is neither my wife nor my sweet-heart, but a neighbour's daughter, to whom I am occasionally civil. Thank God I am a bachelor, and so I mean to remain."

"Thou thankest God for a small mercy," said the jester. "Had she been thine thou would'st have obtained some good in right of thy wife, seeing that she would have been thy better half; whereas thou art at present perfectly graceless—thy face as black as thy forge, and thy heart as hard as thy anvil."

"Run not thy head against the anvil, sir jester," said Lechus, vainly endeavouring to suppress a laugh, "lest you find it too light for the encounter."

"Would'st thou have me fling my head in thy face to sharpen thy wit?" said Zouski.

"My fist in thy belly," retorted the blacksmith, "would teach thee not to boast of what thou dost not possess."

"Gramercy! for thy courtesy, rude fellow!" said the fool. "Thou art not accustomed to the society of the great."

"It was my misfortune to keep bad company once," said Lechus. "Great rogues, and great fools, are names used to express the same things."

"Dost thou call me a rogue, fellow?" said the jester, strutting up to Lechus, with an air of defiance.

"The rogue acts a part to conceal his real character;" said Lechus, "and so dost thou. Therefore thou art both rogue and fool. I as an honest man only treat thee according to thy folly."

"Well done, blacksmith!" shouted the jester, cutting a number of fantastic capers. "I give thee joy of thy new calling. Uncle, I will abdicate my cap in favour of the blacksmith, and should I die during the reign of the new sovereign, when God shall please to send us one, I will bequeath to him the cock's feather, together with my old jests.

"Thy stock in trade is worn out," said Lechus. "I will give thee a new set which will promote thee to a royal fool. I am too independent to wear a crown I do not merit."

"A truce to this idle talk," said the Lord of Cracow, impatiently, who by no means, relished this last joke of the blacksmith. "My pretty damsel, what did you want with the princess?"

"Please you, sir," said Ora, dropping a curtsey almost to the ground. "I can't speak to great folk, but my neighbour Lechus can; ask him."

"And did'st thou bring this sturdy fellow to be thy mouth-piece," said the Weyvode laughing. "Thou hast chosen a discreet interpreter. Blacksmith, what hast thou to say for thy companion?"

"Lady, is this thy jewel?" said the blacksmith, advancing and kneeling not ungracefully at the fair Rixa's feet. "You lost it, if I mistake not, at my forge."

"I did so," said the princess, looking down upon the animated and upturned face of the handsome rustic. Their eyes met, a slight tremor shook her frame, as she continued: "your honesty deserves a reward—keep it for my sake."

"A gift so splendid were useless to a poor fellow like me. I dare not accept your favour, lady."

These words were accompanied by a glance, which rendered their double meaning perfectly intelligible to her to whom they were addressed.

He laid the beautiful toy respectfully at her feet, rose from his humble posture, and was about to retire. The princess called after him. "If thou wilt not accept the jewel for the many services thou hast rendered me, give it to the young damsel for a marriage portion."

"Ah, dear lady," cried the simple girl, "I would rather have a new gown."

This declaration shook the hall with a simultaneous roar of merriment; even the grim Lord of Cracow condescended to smile.

"And a fine new gown thou shalt have," cried the fool. "I will give it thee myself. A fine green gown; amidst the new mown hay; it will become thy rustic beauty amazingly."

"Silence," shouted the Weyvode, at length restraining his mirth. "Young people, draw near and listen to me. Hear what I will do for you?"

With rather a sullen air the blacksmith led his former sweetheart up to the canopied seat of the Weyvode.

"Damsel, do you love this man?"

"I did once," said Ora, looking very lovingly at the fool, and very slightly at Lechus.

"What made you change your mind?" asked Boleslaus, a little disappointed at the ill success of his match-making.

"I found all the love on my side," said Ora; "so I thought I made a bad bargain of my heart, and

would transfer it to another, as soon as I could find one to my mind."

"Thou didst wisely," said the Weyvode. "And who is the lucky man?"

"Oh, my good lord, I can't let you into my secret. But you may guess."

Another burst of laughter greatly discomposed poor Ora. She wondered why every body laughed, and not being able to guess the cause, laughed like the rest.

"I verily believe," said Zouski, cutting a caper round the bewildered girl, "that I am the happy man; my pretty lamb-chop will you have me?"

"Ah, thank you, sir," said Ora, with another curtsey. "I am so much obliged to you."

"Thou art grateful for naught," said the fool, "I said not that I would have thee."

"Thou art a naughty man!" said Ora, beginning to weep; "I admire the gay dress more than thee."

"A sad proof, that thou wouldst wear the nether part of it, an thou wert my rib," said Zouski, "which is an indignity that I would by no means endure; for being bone of my bone, thou wouldst expect that we should play the fool together, while the old maxim tells us that a man and his wife should never wear the cap and bells at the same time."

"Ah, rare folly!" cried the blacksmith, making a low bow to Zouski. "Sir Motley! I wish thee joy of thy wife."

"Brother," quoth the jester, "I am not fool enough to pick up the rose thou hast discarded."

"You won the confession of her regard under false pretences," said Lechus; "and were I king of Poland, you should wed the maiden, or lose your head."

"Cap and all?" said the jester, with such a ludicrous grimace of woe that Ora herself was the first to laugh at it.

"Well," said the Weyvode. "I cannot get thee a husband, pretty maid, but I will give thee ten gold pieces for a wedding portion, and, I warrant thee, it will give thee a better choice than either of the twain who affect to despise thee. Come up in the evening and the money shall be faithfully paid. The blacksmith will think better of the match by that time."

The princess, likewise, promised Ora a gay new dress, and a gold necklace, which made the sickle damsel forget her mortifications in any extacy of joy.

"And how shall I reward thee," said Rixa, in a low voice to the blacksmith.

"By keeping the jewel thou wouldst transfer to me, safe in thine own lovely bosom," returned Lechus. "Lady, I wish you happy—farewell."

"Farewell! proud man," sighed the princess, to herself. "I would that thou wert Lord of Cracow."

(To be continued.)

BORDER LEGENDS.

NO. II.

THE POACHERS.

BY A MONK OF G—— ABBEY.

Was that wild start of terror and despair,
 Those bursting eye-balls and that wilder'd air,
 Signs of compunction for a murder'd hare.

Sir W. Scott.

IN a beautiful and sequestered valley, surrounded by barren and precipitous crags and heath-gathered hills, with here and there a tuft of stunted copse-wood, fringing the dark and rugged bed of a nameless mountain torrent, which in hoarse and ceaseless murmurs, winds its devious way, till it finds the narrow and hidden outlet to the adjoining plain, stand the remains of one of the most magnificent establishments of monkish power and pride in the North of England. The great western tower of the church, which is still nearly entire, is all that has survived the ravages of time, and the fiercer rage of blind fanaticism, and forms a striking monument of picturesque grandeur, seldom equalled, especially when contrasted with the ruin and desolation at its base, marring the fair face of that green valley, or, with the wild scenery that surrounds it. Kirkstall Abbey, although a more extensive ruin, because a considerable portion of the body of the church still remains, is by no means to be compared with it, in point of architectural design, or beauty of finish, or, even in magnitude, if we may judge from the corresponding portions which can still be seen.

Our tale, however, has little or no connexion with these noble ruins, further than that the scene of it lies in the manor that belonged to this ancient abbey, in the palmy days of its splendour, the boundary of which was defined by the distance the great bell of this very tower, that yet remains, could be heard; and though the bell has long since ceased to toll, other land-marks of a less dubious and indefinite character have been established, and the manorial rights have fallen into the profane hands of the heretic, who holds not as sacred the precincts of this once holy sanctuary.

The little brook we have mentioned, which generally leads its way so quietly through the intimate ravines of the fantastically shaped rocks, now hiding, and anon obstructing its sparkling current, on the melting of the snows upon the mountain sides, or after heavy rains, changes its character immediately, to a boisterous uncontrolable torrent when it,

“Boils, and wheels, and foams, and thunders through,”

rendering the ford, a few miles below, not only difficult but dangerous, unless particular attention is paid to an exactly defined line, along a smooth ledge of limestone rock, as even as a cut-stone pavement, which dips at a considerable angle with the horizon up the stream, so that when the water is in this turbulent state, the slightest deviation in that direction would carry a horse beyond his depth; and on the other hand this ledge is abruptly broken off, forming, with other strata beneath, broken in like manner, a fearful cataract, down which, any benighted traveller, unfortunate enough to pass so near the “force,” as it is there emphatically designated, as to be caught within its sweeping influence, is hurried to immediate and remediless destruction.

The ford was in this dangerous state one dark and rather tempestuous night in the month of March, 17—, when Tom Smith, one of the boldest and most determined of Lord L——’s game-keepers, who had been more than ordinarily active in apprehending poachers, left his house to go over on horseback to an appointed place of rendezvous, where others were to meet him on the first *suspicious* night, in order to assist in taking, on the abbey manor, one of the most desperate gangs that had ever been known in that part of the country, to have betaken themselves to this dangerous and predatory employment.

“Beware of Rosegill Ford, Thomas,” said his wife, as he vaulted into his saddle at the door; “but you will see by Dobson’s shop windows to get across.”

“Yes, if they’re lighted,” said the keeper, carelessly, and to soothe her fears, he added, “I could play at blind-man’s buff in the middle of it if the force raged with ten times the fury it does tonight, but this biting frost has quieted its roaring a little, or we should hear it more distinctly;” but he was addressing himself to a heedless listener, for he had touched a chord that thrilled with more fearful foreboding through her trembling frame.

“The flood is furious,” she said to him, and her voice faltered as she spoke; “but, oh, beware of those terrible Dobsons!”

“They will have to beware of me,” said he, as his wife handed him his light fowling piece, which he

slung across his shoulders; "they will have to beware of me, for if the rascals are uncauth'd, and the bait I have laid I think will have taken, it will be strange if the old fox and all his cubs regain their cover; an my name be Tom Smith, but some on 'em shall have a scratch for it." His head was a little turned to one side as he said this, and a slight nod betokened not only the confidence he felt in his own prowess, but the pleasure he anticipated in that night's adventure; it was indeed esteemed by him like life from the dead. "Good night, sweet-heart!" he added, in a more affectionate but not less gay tone and manner, at least as far as met the eye and ear,—“good night! Thy brother and his wife will aid in passing the lonely hours till midnight, and if I come not then, wait not for me, as it will be *uncertain* when I shall return;” and he galloped off towards Rosegill Ford.

It will be necessary for the developement of our tale that the reader should be made acquainted with the Dobsons already alluded to. They consisted of the old man and his wife, three sons and a son-in-law, as one of the gang was called, who had married a base-born daughter of the old woman. The ostensible mode of gaining a livelihood by this tribe, was weaving the homespun of the neighbourhood, chiefly of the coarsest description. Their shop, containing four or five looms, stood upon the very verge of the rivulet a little above Rosegill Ford, from which a door opened upon a rude foot-bridge consisting of the small trunk of a tree, flattened a little on the upper side, and thrown across from the threshold to a rock, jutting into the bed of the brook, nearly half way from the opposite side. This bridge, although the only approach to it, in one direction at least, was through Dobson's shop, and although constructed ostensibly for the benefit of his business and the convenience of his customers, yet was freely open to all who did not send their woof to his rivals. If, however, they were weavers by trade, they were mole-catchers by profession; the reader may guess what else by practice. When the weaving business was slack they made frequent and distant excursions to the manors they had engaged to rid of these obnoxious vermin, and it was always night when they returned, laden with the spoils of their underground enemy, *et cetera*, according to the account sometimes spontaneously given by the old man himself, who seemed anxious to convey an idea that the mole-skins filled their wallets, with the exception of a few necessaries; yet greater importance was always attached by his auditors to the *et ceteras*. On such occasions this bridge was particularly convenient, as the manors they were concerned in all lay on the other side of the brook, and it was even hinted by some that it had been constructed more for secrecy than convenience.

On the evening already mentioned, when their daylight task was done, the candles were lighted,

but the busy shuttle was neglected and at rest; and in its stead, the scraping and scouring of screw guns, the mending of nets and gins, the filling of shot bags and powder horns, &c. busily and cheerily occupied all hands. The old man, I call him so more to distinguish him from the rest than from his age, for he was not old, was rather above the middle size, with arms and legs disproportionately long for his body; his face deeply pitted with the small pox, his forehead prominent and lowering; his small blue eyes deeply sunk, and a slight squint in one of them; his eyebrows shaggy, and of a sun-browned white, and nearly meeting over his sharp and pointed nose; his hair and bushy, shapeless whiskers, of a fiery red, slightly sprinkled with grey; and altogether he was the most perfect personification of inordinate conceit, deep cunning, and depraved, remorseless villainy, that could be imagined. Felon was stamped upon his forehead; and his sons were so like him, that with the exception of a few wrinkles, and the slight mixture of grey with their carroty locks, the portrait might well pass for theirs too.

The old man was still the main-spring of the set, and it was his cunning, which in his own vain conceit he miscalled wisdom, that directed the complicated affairs of the establishment, and he was seen on this occasion, walking to and fro with arms a-kimbo, questioning one, commanding another, and laying down the plan of that night's operations to all; not, however, in the order we mention, nor in any other, but in a desultory mixture. But we must give a specimen.

“Ned did t' hear owt about t' blacksmith when ta teuk Hogherd's web heame at mwornin', eh?” and he winked knowingly with one eye as he saw his ingenious allusion to the keeper's name was understood. “Aye, aye! just ower-heard a whisper meant for thy awn ear,—a trap! a trap!—you think they'll gang, eh?—does that new scraper wark weel? any hoo he'll hardly risk t' foord to neet. Auld deaf lugs tak care o' t' leets when we're away.” This was the endearing soubriquet by which his poor wife was usually designated, in consequence of labouring under the infirmity implied. “See that muzzy's weel fainted, and breet inside o' her!” this was his own favourite fowling piece. “Ye're sure they beath gang to spend t' neet wi t' blacksmith? well! yes! I's determined! niver mind, he sal hav a leed supper, if he does come! Yes I will!” These were sotto voce ejaculations addressed more to his own musings than to those around him. “You Dick tak care o' t' auld abbey and niver mind bogles; them meshes is ower big man: if ta hears a fliskering amang t' daws, be sure some body else is theer, and sound t' hulet, mind lads nin o'ye forgit that nor t' auld sleat quarry:” and again he manifested symptoms of satisfaction with his own ingenuity in contriving a signal which was hardly likely to be noticed by their enemy in the vicinity of the old ruin, it being

so usual a resort of the bird whose voice, well imitated, was to be their signal for flight, while that was practicable, or for defence when it was not.

"And," he continued; "see that Brutus does'nt git his supper till his neet's wark is over—puer dog I had forgotten he was kilt—where was my auld een at I suddent have hit the dog I aimed at; but I'll nail him yet, may be to-neet!" And a fearful and dark expression of savage ferocity overshadowed his thin and wiry visage, which seemed to cast a damp upon the spirit of the party, and for a moment all were silent: when he resumed in a more serious tone and manner, evidently pursuing the train of thought he had been accidentally led into. "Mind lads ye're nin o' ye taen, fire first, and aim at the heed or breast; niver mind, ye may as weel be hang'd for a sheep as a lamb: aim hee, lads! yes! gie them a leed supper!" this was a favourite expression of his.

As the clock in the neighbouring church steeple tolled ten, they all sallied forth, like a band of fierce banditti, and certainly they were little better. They had to wind their way through a path so wild and romantic, and where so many awful sights had been seen, that few, if any of them, hardy and fearless as they were, would have cared to have traversed it alone at such an hour. As it was, more than one were startled with imaginary signs and sounds. They, however, reached the old abbey without other accident, where Dick was to keep his lonely watch, as this was the point from which an attack was most to be apprehended: and after again reminding him of the signal and the place of rendezvous when it was given, and pressing him not to neglect it, whatever might be his own danger, they dispersed to pursue the object of their journey. They had left him but a few minutes when they were alarmed with the well imitated hooting of an owl, when all bent their way in eager and fearful haste to the old slate quarry, anxious to learn the cause of the alarm, when Dick informed them that he had distinctly seen Jack Bennet! another of Lord L's keepers, standing in the great doorway of the old tower. Jack Bennet! exclaimed two or three voices at once, Jack Bennet never went out of his house till he was carried, after the hurt they said he got one night last harvest. This, Dick, who was the youngest of the party, did not know, but it was more than enough to prevent him from returning to his post: and though others of them laughed at his silly fears, as they were pleased to call them, none was willing, under a pretence that he could be more usefully employed elsewhere, to take his duty. Jim, the eldest of the party, took no part in the conversation, but stood leaning against a ledge of rock, pale and trembling, and hardly conscious of what was passing; he felt, he said, some sudden and acute pain, which was over by the time he was noticed. It was now settled that the old man himself, whom ghosts could

not frighten, should become their sentinel, when they re-commenced their work; but in less than half an hour, the same hoo-oo-oo was again heard. "Jack Bennet, again!" exclaimed Jim, and fainted. His mother-in-law, who was with him, tried not to revive him, but actuated alone by a selfish fear for his own safety, hastened to the slate quarry, to add by a recital of the circumstance to the consternation of his companions. The old man, however, when he arrived, relieved them from all apprehension, by informing them, that the old owl had taken it into her head to give the signal, this time, herself, and before the words were well out of his mouth, she repeated it in a longer and louder strain, when Jack Bennet's name was again distinctly heard in a wild shout from the hills. This was not to be longer endured; the night's sport was abandoned, and they commenced their journey homewards.

During the portion of the night thus occupied by one party, there was another, to which we must now refer, that was not idle.

Smith, when he arrived at Rosegill Ford, dashed, at once, into the swollen flood, and with the help of the dim light, from the partially screened windows of Dobson's shop, as his guide, he reached the opposite banks in safety. He paused a moment to listen to the noisy rattle of their looms, but not a traddle was moving; it was possible, however, it might be drowned in the roaring of the boiling cataract, and he could not get nearer the house, to ascertain this, without the risk of being discovered by their watchful dogs, if they and their masters were still at home, which he suspected was the case, from the lights he saw in the house as well as in the shop, and as it was material to his purpose to ascertain this beyond a doubt, he instantly thought of a plan to accomplish his object, and galloped off to carry it into effect.

Further up the valley, about a mile and a half from the ford; it might indeed be called the head of it, as a mountaneous ridge of rocks extended across it, to the high lands on the opposite side, with an immense rent in the centre, as if formed by an earthquake, to afford an outlet for the brook from the valley, immediately above it. Through this gap also was a narrow road, which had been cut out of the solid rock, rendering the precipice, apparently, more abrupt and perpendicular than it had formerly been; and as this was the only communication with the abbey manor, the Dobsons, if they intended going there, must pass this way. Tom Smith's object, pursuant to the plan he had formed, was to gain these heights, and await their arrival, but in doing this, a circuit of some distance had to be made, which induced him to scramble up the narrow and rugged sheep path, with the more eager haste, lest he should be too late; and his fears were far from groundless, for, just as he had quietly seated himself in a small chasm, at the top, tangled with

weeds and bushes, he saw five dark figures gliding silently and stealthily along the road, some forty or fifty feet beneath him; but their forms seemed so magnified in the dim star-light, as to appear, in his excited imagination, to be much nearer. One of their dogs too, growled a little as they approached the narrow pass, while the last of the party paused an instant, as if to listen, and then passed on; but that instant was a fearful one to Smith. He said to one of his comrades afterwards, he thought they might have heard the very beating of his heart. As soon as he was certain they were at a safe distance, he hastened to the house where he was to meet his two allies; only one had arrived, whom, after waiting some time, he had directed to meet him in two hours, at the pass we have mentioned, and rode off beyond it in search of the other: not doubting but that they would have still a long time to wait, before the Dobsons returned from their night's toil, to encounter the fierce conflict that awaited them.

True to his engagement, the person Smith had left arrived at the place of rendezvous, somewhat within the time appointed, where he met their other ally, whom Smith had gone in search of, who was at a loss to imagine how he could have missed him. They waited patiently, some time, not doubting but he would soon return; but hour after hour passed away, adding apprehension and alarm to their surprise at his absence. It was odd too that they had seen nothing of the poachers, as the morning was beginning to dawn; and this gave a darker shade to the mystery, they in vain endeavoured to develop. Was it possible, suggested one, they could have returned, and met the keeper alone; if they have, the other replied, e'er this, his wife's a widow: but this, they thought again, was not possible, as the night was so favourable, and no one to molest them. But daylight, which was fast approaching, would clear up all: in this conjecture, however, they were any thing but correct; for in less than an hour after they had made it, Tom Smith's horse was found grazing on the banks of the rivulet, without his saddle, and with his bridle broken and entangled under his feet; and shortly after the lifeless body of his rider was found, washed up on a ledge of rocks, a little below the "force."

The news, for any thing that broke in upon the dull monotony that reigned with such uninterrupted sway throughout that peaceful valley was considered as such, ran through the parish, with the rapidity of a signal for a highland gathering. A good deal more importance was attached to the fatal accident, apparently, than if any other person had been drowned. Some hidden mystery was evidently connected with it, in men's minds; for whenever they spoke of it, they reverted also to the fate of Jack Bennet, another keeper, who had died, rather suddenly, the preceding autumn, from some hurt he had received, in a scuffle with certain persons who

were well known to be poachers. But the more reasonable would urge, that they could have had nothing to do with his death, whatever they had to do with Jack Bennet's. The Dobsons did not indeed join in the absorbing topic of conversation, which had excited such deep and general interest; but their enmity to all keepers, which they did not scruple to express, sometimes in the most violent and unmeasured terms, sufficiently accounted for their want of sympathy with the common feeling on this melancholy occasion.

On the evening of that ominous day, a coroner's inquest was held upon the body, when little, if any thing, was elicited, to increase or diminish the suspicions already entertained.

The deceased could not well have got to the ford, in crossing which he appeared to have met his death, if he had gone where he intended, without returning through the pass where he saw the Dobsons; but he might have changed his purpose,—who now could tell?—or, the Dobsons might have met him alone; or, they might not have been out at all that night. There was one extraordinary circumstance which, in their eager search for more unequivocal marks of violence upon the body, did not escape notice, although it tended only to involve their conjectures in a darker labyrinth of mysterious confusion. This was a slightly blackened mark round the ankles, as if a hand had firmly grasped them in his last agony. The jury, after a brief consultation, brought in their verdict,—“accidental death.” This silenced, if it did not satisfy, those who were most forward in giving utterance to their suspicions in curses and denunciations upon the poachers.

About the time this melancholy occurrence took place, whether owing to the feeling it gave rise to, or to the increasing wealth of the small labouring farmers around, enabling them to purchase cloth of foreign manufacture, or to the real or supposed superiority of distant weavers, or to whatever other cause, the Dobsons' custom began visibly and alarmingly to decline, and the more severely did they feel this, as the price of bread stuffs became higher than usual. Besides all this, one of their largest and most lucrative mole-catching ranges was taken from them. In a word, every man's hand seemed against them. Poverty and wretchedness had now marked them for their own. The most violent and vindictive feelings were continually breaking out into mutual recriminations, embittered by the reflection that each had contributed his share to bring down upon this devoted family the full measure of their misery, as they then thought it; but had they been able to turn aside even one fold of the dark curtain of futurity, and obtain but a single glimpse into the dim vista beyond, they would have seen that their cup of woe was not yet full, and that they must drink it to the very dregs. This state of things could not, and would not last. Some dreadful crisis was evidently

approaching: probably an explosion which they might not all be equally interested in deprecating. It was indeed, as the old woman had been heard to exclaim, a terrible, a "fearsome" life they led. Although, from the infirmity which gave rise to the brutish designation with which she was frequently saluted by her godless family, she was happily unconscious of half their bickering strife, yet was there enough that did reach her dull and deadened senses to convince her that they led a "fearsome" life.

As we are not pretending to give a detailed and succinct history of this family, but only of such their doings as appear to be connected, in some way or other, with our story, we must pass over a period of some twenty years, and traverse, not only the wide Atlantic beyond "the still vex'd Bermoothes," but a considerable portion of this immense continent, before we can proceed.

On the breaking up of the ice, on a small river in the solitary wilds of the far west, a groupe of the migratory inhabitants of that section of the country had assembled on its right bank, impatiently waiting an opportunity to be ferried over: amongst them were two horsemen, unencumbered with families or household stuff, who on that account were the first to obtain a footing on the rude and unwieldy scow, and as some "fixing," as it is there termed, had to be done on the opposite landing place, for the debarking of the wheel carriages, the sturdy ferry-men pushed off with their scanty freight. The strangers, for such indeed they seemed, as well to each other as to all around, after paying their fare, mounted and rode off together along the only path they could discover over the rolling prairie, which extended its desert loneliness in all directions, as far as the eye could reach.

"Do you think the Winnebagoes are out?" said the foremost traveller, carelessly, after riding some time in silence, and now only asking the question to break it; but not receiving an immediate answer, he turned his head to scrutinize more minutely the appearance of his unsociable companion. In his figure, he was tall and thin, but athletic withal; his eye, which was deeply sunk in his head, was dark and lowering with a subdued fierceness that seemed once to have been fearful, and whose peering and stealthy glance conveyed a feeling of that dislike which is allied to fear, as it gleamed, rather than flashed, upon the speaker, from beneath its shaggy brows. His face was of the paleness of the dead, and the wrinkles upon it told of more cares than years. He was, in short, a man whose society would rather be shunned than courted even in the desert. The bold and reckless young man, for such he was, who asked the question, which had been superseded, even in his own memory, by far other thoughts, was instantly impressed with the idea, that he had seen his sullen looking companion before; and a chilling sensation of horror, which he could neither define nor repress,

seemed intimately connected with it. And they rode on together for some time before any further attempt was made by either party to renew, or rather commence the conversation.

There are two (there may be twenty) extraordinary contradictions in human nature, both of which were exemplified on the present occasion. The one is, that when men feel it peculiarly incumbent upon them to be silent, they must talk: the other is, that if there is but one solitary subject upon which prudence forbids them to touch, that, when they do speak, will inevitably be the topic. Instead of answering the question put to him, the oldest of the travellers proposed another evidently originating from his own absorbing reflections. "Are you from Galena, may I ask?" "I am," was the prompt reply from his astonished companion: "and may I inquire," he continued, "how you came to ask the question, since I do not appear, just now, to be coming from that quarter," turning upon him, as he said this a more searching look, from which he appeared to shrink, but soon regained his self possession as he answered by some common place remark about the public attention being so entirely engrossed with the rich lead mines so lately discovered there: when another long silence ensued, which neither seemed disposed to disturb.

The sun had just set, and the last tinge of gold and purple upon the light fleecy clouds had no sooner given place to a sombre grey, than one star after another in quick succession shed upon our lonely wanderers a feeble and flickering ray, and it was night—darkness was around them on the wild and pathless prairie:—if they felt an indefinable dislike for each other's society in the daylight, it was mingled with fearful imaginings now, which increased with the gathering gloom; when the sudden appearance of a twinkling light from a settler's hut was hailed by both as a deliverance from an overwhelming oppression, which could hardly have been longer endured.

Hospitality, in all new and thinly inhabited settlements, is as striking a characteristic as it is amiable and convenient; those honest and industrious people evidently remember that they themselves were once pilgrims and sojourners in a strange land; hence food and shelter is freely afforded to any one benighted near their dwellings, not as a boon grudgingly and niggardly bestowed, but as a tax upon them, which, if, they pay not cheerfully, they conceive they have no right to withhold. Our way-worn travellers therefore hesitated not to consider themselves at home for the night. And when they had seen their horses properly disposed of, and made a hearty supper themselves, upon Indian bread, and steaks from the carcass of a newly killed buffalo, broiled upon the hot embers, dried skins of the same animal were spread for them upon the floor, near the fire, and they betook themselves to repose for the re-

remainder of the night—"To sleep, perchance to dream." Fatigued and weary as they were, a deep and refreshing sleep did soon fall upon them both, which was not, however, very long enjoyed before it became disturbed by mysterious and frightful dreams, bearing a confused but decided affinity to their waking reflections during their long and silent ride through the prairie together the evening before, claiming doubtless, with their hot and hearty supper, a closer though less striking a connexion.

Among other wayward wanderings of his dreaming thoughts, the younger traveller fancied himself swept by the ice down the river they had lately crossed, till they reached an awful cataract, when just as they were on the brink of the fall the scow struck upon a ledge of rocks and remained stationary: and anon he was on horseback, breasting the surging rapid gallantly, and evidently gaining the shore, till a dim light from a small window on the farther bank, led him to turn, in the darkness, to the very edge of the precipice again, when he saw his danger and obtained a firm footing to avoid it; then he became suddenly so paralyzed with fear that he could not move a step, for at that instant he perceived his father's murderer at his bridle rein, who turned upon him one fierce and withering look, and hurled him headlong into the foaming abyss beneath; down—down went horse and rider; but ere he reached the boiling waters at the bottom, he awoke, and endeavoured to shake off the effects of his oppressive night-mare, and was congratulating himself that it was not an awful reality, when he was confused and bewildered again on hearing his name distinctly pronounced by his companion, coupled with the muttered but exulting exclamation, "you'll not find me now! I'm safe,—I'm safe!" then clasping his long bony fingers firmly together, and extending the palms of his hands as much as possible, so as to form a cavity, into which he blew, between his thumbs slightly separated, and produced a sound in exact imitation of the hooting of an owl, exclaiming, when he had done so, "Ah! there's the signal again;" and then was still, save the contortions of his written countenance, which appeared more fearful in the flickering light of the dying embers, in which they were seen by his awe-struck companion. I have found you at last, thought he, as he listened to the renewed mutterings and broken exclamations of the disturbed sleeper: "No no! drown him yourself—hold him down,—if I touch him, there 'll be a mark of blood,—dost ye see? my hands are bloody!" and he held forth his outspread fingers, as if to shew that there *was* blood upon them, and his companion actually saw that they were red, and he covered up his face in horror, for he thought those vulture looking talons were about to clutch him in their bloody gripe, and he shrieked for very agony.

To account for this extraordinary rencontre between young Bennet and his father's murderer, it

will be necessary to refer to the morning on which Tom Smith was found drowned below the "force," at Rosegill Ford.

A short distance below Dobson's shop, where the rivulet makes a sudden turn to the right, on the very spot where a beautiful cut stone bridge now enables the benighted traveller to cross in safety the maddening torrent in its utmost fury, stood, at the time we refer to, a small lone cottage thatched with heather, its solitary window looking up the stream above the bend, thus commanding a full view of the cataract and the ford, so often mentioned in this true and faithful narrative. In this cottage lived two poor old people, Richard Langly and his wife, who obtained with unceasing industry and pinching frugality, a scanty subsistence by the humble occupation of peeling rushes, which are still much used in that part of the country for candles. On the fatal morning in question they were both busily employed in their usual and monotonous employment by the light of their turf fire, while it was yet dark, when just as the day began to dawn, their attention was directed with fearful and intense interest to the ford, where they saw two or three men on foot, and one on horseback in the very middle of the river, as if engaged in a violent scuffle, and shortly after they saw the horse gallop off without his rider, yet still the strife continued. The grey light of the morning had now sufficiently advanced to afford them a more perfect view of the fray; when they recognized one of the Dobson's and his brother-in-law, and distinctly saw them seize the other person, whom they knew not, by the collar, one on each side, and after a furious struggle to get him down into the water, and as it was not deep, to hold up his feet until he was drowned, when they relinquished their grasp upon his ankles, and he disappeared a moment from their view. In another they saw a dark object, which they supposed to be his body, come down the fall, and all was over in less time than it has taken to tell it. The poor old people were so terrified they knew not what to do. Their rushes lay neglected on the old settle in the chimney corner, the preparations which had made some progress for their simple breakfast were forgotten, the oaten cake was burning unheeded on the "girdle:" the roaring of the "force," which, from their habitual proximity to it during half a century, they had never heard, now came down upon them in the balmy breath of that beautiful morning with painful distinctness, mingled in their excited imaginations with unearthly voices; the bright sunlight when it first glanced upon the clean swept hearth through their solitary window, appeared pale and dim; the blue tinge upon the distant mountains seemed to gather blackness as they looked at it. They neither spoke nor moved, but continued their steady and fixed gaze upon the ford and the fall, as if still watching the deadly struggle in the troubled waters. How much longer this state of

partial paralysis might have continued is uncertain, had the spell not been broken by the sudden entrance of a neighbour into their cottage, who came for a live coal from their fire to re-kindle her own. They both started from their kneeling posture at the window, which was too low to admit of their seeing the ford in an upright position, and the woman thought she had disturbed them in their morning devotions; and as they appeared, from their absent and confused manner, to consider her visit an unwelcome one, she made it as short as the object of it would permit. The moment she was gone, they began to deliberate upon what they should do. To alarm the neighbourhood was their first and best resolve; but the dreaded vengeance of those terrible poachers frightened them from it: and they determined at last, as their safest course, to say nothing about it.

They would, and did live for years, with the dreadful secret upon their minds, but they dared not die with it; they might, however, put off the evil day on which they *must* divulge it, and they did so for years, but they were now becoming very old,—the grave was opening before them: the “silver cord,” though alternated and stretched to its utmost extent, did not break last year, and may not this—and still they put it off, and might, perchance, have continued to do so, till it had descended with them to that land where all things are forgotten, had not accidental circumstances brought about what the old people considered a premature discovery.

One day when the old man was out on one of his rounds to sell his rushes, and to hear and tell the news of the parish, he was asked by almost every one, if he had heard that the Dobsons were going to America. Now, whether impressed with some vague idea of bloodguiltiness, laying at his door, if he allowed the murderers thus to escape, or annoyed that news of such importance should have so widely spread without his instrumentality, perhaps both circumstances conspired together, to elicit from him, in an unguarded moment, the assertion that he knew something that would stop some of them, if he chose to tell it.

Two days after this a magistrate called at the little cottage to enquire what that something was, and that same evening one of the Dobsons was apprehended for the murder of Tom Smith some twenty years before; the brother-in-law would have shared the same fate, but he was not at home, and never returned, and, as no one ever heard of him afterwards, it was supposed he came to a violent end by his own hands. The oldest brother also was missing, whether to get away from the distress and poverty coming upon the family, or from his guilty conscience, or, from a fear that something might transpire at his brother's trial, or execution, if found guilty, that would compromise his personal safety, or from whatever other cause, he had left his native place and gone, none, at the time, knew whither.

From the indelible impression of awe, and fear, and suspicion, which the coroner's inquest upon the dead body of Tom Smith had made upon the minds of the then living generation of men, when they were but children, which time only had tended to involve in a darker cloud of mystery, the trial of the younger Dobson created a deep and intense interest. We do not, however, intend to weary the reader with a detail of circumstances common to all cases of the kind, but we may mention how confident and bold, and sure of acquittal the prisoner seemed when first brought to the bar; how he wondered what the old Langley would possibly have to do with the case, and how his surprise was turned to horror and dismay, when they gave so succinct an account as the eye witnesses of the whole transaction.

The prisoner was found guilty, and paid the penalty—blood for blood. When on the fatal scaffold, he not only acknowledged the justice of his sentence, but gave something like a history, not only of his own crimes, but of those of the whole family, especially of the murder of Jack Bennet, by his oldest brother, whom he stated to be, at the precise period, working in the lead mines at Galena, in the Illinois Territory of the United States of America, where, he declared, he knew that justice would overtake him. His words were truly prophetic and awfully fulfilled.

Jack Bennet's son was present at the execution, in the hope of hearing something that might throw light upon his father's murder, and, in little more than two months, he was at Galena, in search of the perpetrator, whom if he had seen, from his altered appearance, he had not known; but fear and apprehension gave to James Dobson a more acute perception, for he saw and knew the avenger,—and fled. Young Bennet, after a fruitless search for him, did not long remain. It appeared afterwards, that they had each taken a different and circuitous route, which brought them accidentally together at the ferry, as already mentioned, where Dobson, from some cause or other, did not immediately recognise him, although he had some misgivings about his identity; hence his impolitic question, excited by his fears, “are you from Galena?”

A few words will serve to wind our faithful history. From the hut of the settler, in the far west where we left him, James Dobson went out at day-break, to a clump of trees, and shot himself, and was buried by young Bennet and the settler, where he died. As they turned him, uncoffined, into his rude grave, they could not help observing that his hands were besmeared with his own blood.

The youngest of the family, the first sentinel at the old abbey, on that ominous night, who had been guilty of no overt act of felony, also immigrated to this continent, and became a successful settler. His old mother had long been dead; and his wretched father, bowed down with age and infirmity, and left

alone in his poverty, when he saw that every man's hand was against him, determined to come to America to his rich son; he sold his idle looms, and did so,—to ask him for a morsel of bread, which was denied him, and he went home again, or rather back again, for there alas! he had no home now,—no house to shelter him even for the short space that he needed one.

This cruel and unnatural conduct had a serious effect upon his health, and he did not long survive it, but how or when he died none ever knew. Long after he was missed, as a wandering mendicant in the neighbourhood of his former exploits, a dead body, supposed from the clothing to be that of old Dobson, was found in the dilapidated chamber of the ruin we have mentioned, but it could hardly be recognised, the face was so mutilated, as if by some bird of prey, which no one hesitated to believe was the old owl of the abbey.

ETIQUETTE.

In an unfrequented and thinly peopled part of the country, towards the western borders of Warwickshire, there chanced to be let furnished two large substantial houses, distant about a mile and a half from each other. It happened, also, that two families of distinction came at the same time, and for reasons as cogent, though somewhat different from those of the absentees, took possession of both. The one family consisted of four fair daughters and a youthful son; the other of a son, now of age, and of two younger sisters. The head of the one house was Sir Marmaduke Dyer; the chief of the other, Sir Frederick De Vere. The dwelling-houses of which we have spoken stood alone upon a superficies of fifteen miles square: they faced each other—but there was no immediate route of accommodation between them—and a market village and a parish church lay far away to the rear of both.

The families whom we thus introduce to the reader were equal in rank, pretty much upon a par with respect to the style of their respective connections, and, for a wonder, pretty equal in wealth. Lady Dyer was a woman of elegant manners, and of first-rate accomplishments, and her daughters were her counterparts, as far as regards initiation into the usages of the *haut ton*. Lady De Vere was all this repeated, the son was handsome and well esteemed, and the girls were pretty. Both families, indeed, consisted of persons who were by nature, habits of thinking, and manner of life, perfectly suited to one another. Indeed, more agreeably amalgamating materials could nowhere have been found. They were in a manner born congenials, and their breeding was in harmony with all the other features of their condition.

There is a small, still voice, or rather a pretty loud one, that proclaims every thing to every body, wherever there are but a few inhabitants scattered

over a solitude. The families could tell to the scanty guests who came from afar in order to fulfil their long-promised visits, the whole history, character, and condition of all the individuals who composed the household of each other respectively. But their *personal* knowledge was a blank; the parties were not acquainted; no, not in the least. They had never met even upon material ground; they had, perhaps, tracked one another through the queen's drawing-room, and that never on the same day. Unluckily, too, they went each to separate churches, and in their drives and pastimes they chose a contrary direction; for in this each was simply guided by the fear of being suspected of seeking for the good graces of the other.

A year and a day passed. The families tired, as every body does, of their own particular coterie. In a word, both families longed, and eventually prayed, to be permitted to sympathise and to reciprocate with one another. As we can but too well guess the enmity or the inclining dislike of the different persons whom we encounter in our worldly pilgrimage, so there happens to breathe an air that tells us we are coveted, though it is very rare that we may be beloved. The families were aware of the good intentions of each other; and situated as they were upon a wide and almost dreary solitude, and both of equal and unexceptionable rank and character, both sighed for the hour when they might be permitted to express their mutual good wishes and regard. But there came the dilemma—*who* was it that should adventure the first move? Alas! the heads of both families shuddered at the bare idea of being for a moment suspected of descending from their dignity; sympathy, kindness, benevolence, what were they when placed in immediate opposition to the claims of punctilio and pride?

Another year passed, and they had never met. Both families, especially the younger branches, mourned their solitude, especially in wintry weather. Both sighed for that pleasing relief which we so often experience in the presence of a fellow being not constantly shut up with us in the same house. Still, notwithstanding the good inclinations of all the parties, there was not even a casual symptom of an approach. The grand misfortune, equal to any, indeed, ever planned by a book of fate, lay in their having unluckily arrived in the country at one and the same time. Had it been otherwise, the first comer, on ascertaining the quality of his neighbours, which have hastened, no doubt, to compliment the second. What, then, was to be done?

Sir Marmaduke Dyer sat one evening rather late over a tray heavily laden with social comforts, in company with the country physician; and having kept his birth-day, Sir Marmaduke was in a mood uncommonly facetious; the rest of the family had dispersed. "I wish so much," he said, "that Lady Dyer had had the pleasure of Lady De Vere's ac-

quaintance. I know them to be a most respectable family, and, by the way, through the grandfather old Sir Willoughby's marriage with a sister of the first Marquis of Mountford, I find that I am, though rather in a distant degree, connected with them myself. Such delightful neighbours, too!—they might prove quite an acquisition; but I don't know them, and there is no master of ceremonies at the neighbouring village."

"And is that all?" returned the friendly visitor, in a voice of sudden glee, and beguiled completely by the cordiality of the Baronet's opening words. "Why, my dear sir, I shall take you to call on Sir Frederick De Vere myself, any day; I am most intimate with him."

"Thank you," drawled the Baronet in response: "but the truth is, I have got very little time upon my hands just now. By the way, doctor, do you ever find any difficulty in making out your way when it grows late?—the moon, has waned, I fear, by this time."

The doctor rose, a half-scared young man, who always did his best, but always at the wrong time. "Well, good night, Sir Marmaduke."

"Good night," returned Sir Marmaduke coldly, hastily resuming his seat.

A servant came to wait for orders. "Is he gone?" yawned Sir Marmaduke.

"He is, Sir Marmaduke; and the night is wet."

"Just so. Now, Gregory, you will take care that that man be not admitted for the next three months, unless, indeed, Lady Dyer or any of the others get indisposed. He is a great goose. Call Stevenson;" and the Baronet, still brooding over the unintentioned attack upon his dignity, and the still more serious one upon etiquette, murmuring indistinct things, retired.

It happened at this very time that Sir Frederick De Vere, the head of the other house, had had a lingering sickness. His daughters, fatigued with their long attendance, were gone to Cheltenham; the son was gone to grouse-shooting in the north. Lady De Vere disliked ecarté, and chess, and music; she disliked every thing, and she seldom talked; she was solemn—that was enough; and of course Sir Frederick grew weary. His next neighbour, Dyer, was a most agreeable man, and a perfect gentleman; politics the same, religion ditto; no cause, no fear of feud; was no bird of passage, and might comfort a few lonely hours—his son had expectations. So communed Sir Frederick De Vere. But another motive prevailed: he thought himself handsome, and he wearied to pay compliments to the Misses Dyer, who were esteemed beauties. Lady De Vere was different from all other women. She loved that her husband should be, in vulgar parlance, "thought of" by others of her own sex. Sir Frederick determined to make a push. He had an old or rather an intimate friend in the Earl De Camp.

He wrote—"My dear De Camp, if you know any thing of Sir Marmaduke Dyer, who is my neighbour, get me introduced. I write to you, as you are one of those good sort of people who know every body. In haste, yours truly, F. DE VERE."

An answer came—

"Dear De Vere, you have hit upon the proper chord. I know Sir Marmaduke intimately; I shall write to him tomorrow, and desire him to call on you."

The baronet had mended still more effectually out of his long illness, and his notions of propriety, and more especially of *etiquette*, had grown afresh.

"Church and State!" he internally exclaimed, "what in the world have I done? Dyer must see through my manœuvre at once, for De Camp could not, without a hint, have started forward at such a rate." He rose with new found alacrity, and rung a peal. "Get me," he said, half out of breath, "get me an express on the instant."

He wrote again to the Earl De Camp—

"What have you done? You have committed me with Dyer. You have been insufferably rash; and all that I can say is, that, if he calls upon Lady De Vere through your letter, she shall not be at home. I make over to you that cob, which I find has not sold; otherwise it might have eaten itself up.—Yours truly,

"F. DE VERE."

The fears of Sir Frederick De Vere were fortunately allayed. Another letter came from the Earl De Camp—

"Dear De Vere, you certainly are crazed; however, I have not sent my letter to Sir Marmaduke I was dressing for a ball, when I recollected what I had promised to do for you; and it was awkward to interfere with the arrangements of my valet. Luckily the next day brought your express. Pray live at home at ease, and believe me yours,

"DE CAMP."

"P.S.—I like the cob, and I don't like the cob." Another hurried year passed on. A public ball was struck up, to take place in the country town; and it was announced that Sir Marmaduke Dyer and Sir Frederick De Vere were to appear as stewards, and their ladies as patronesses. Meet, therefore, they must. The day came. But, oh, misfortune! Sir Frederick De Vere, in making a false step, had sprained an ankle—Lady De Vere was confined with a bad cold. Here then was a complete finish to the anticipated meeting. Another year, and then another passed away: game keepers had exchanged quantities of pheasants for quantities of something else; gardeners had given up white moss-roses in order to secure blackberry-coloured narcissuses; horses were put to pasture for a night, and the use of empty coach-houses sought for, and readily granted. Nevertheless, all this friendly and even intimate intercommuning came to nothing. Each family

shrunk as from a viper at the mere idea of taking advantage of any of these conciliatory circumstances. They even suspected the suspicions of each other, and there they paused. The demon *etiquette* was ever at their elbow, prompting them to stem the outgushing of their naturally kindly affections. He was too successful in his assiduities.

For five mortal years were human beings, intellectual, accomplished, friendly, and social, thus kept at bay, and detained in comfortless ignorance of one another, through the mere idea, the vague nothing of *etiquette*; and *etiquette*, insubstantial as it was, was likely to see them all departed from off the face of the earth, and no trace remain. Indeed two deaths had recently occurred in both of the families; a daughter of each had grown consumptive, and sunk beneath that foe to loveliness and youth. No black-edged cards had, however, been sent; no reciprocal inquiries had been made; pride and suspicion seemed in this instance to overmatch even the awful occurrence of death itself.

At length a fire broke out. The accident, as it is called, took place at Sir Frederick De Vere's; the family, simply escaping with their lives, were conveyed in safety to the neighbouring mansion of the Dyers. The meeting took place under rather interesting circumstances, and further acquaintance did not destroy the illusion: the parties when once known became one and every thing to each other; but—that fearful, that all-prevailing *but*—all too late; the only son of Sir Frederick became enamoured of the lovely daughter of Sir Marmaduke. Alas! she had engaged to marry, within a month, a man whom she had uniformly detested. The son of Sir Marmaduke, now grown to man's estate, fancied the younger daughter of Sir Frederick. Alas! she also was engaged to espouse an Irish colonel of Foot, of whom she knew nothing. The new-found lover himself must shortly follow his regiment abroad. Sir Marmaduke Dyer and Sir Frederick De Vere were become on the instant the greatest possible friends; personally they esteemed each other, and mentally they agreed upon every thing. The ladies—ah! wonder fulfilled!—the ladies also became attached to each other. All was, however, too late. The lease of Teasedale House, the residence of Lady Dyer, was out, and she and hers were all departing. Sir Frederick and Lady De Vere must also move. The fire had driven them forth, and they must be gone. The Dyers went north, the De Veres went south. The families were obliged to separate, and that in the height of their mutual regard. They who when met had so fondly and so truly loved, parted as all must, and we fear with but feeble hope to meet again. Such is one of the many examples we could name of the power, the tyranny, of **ETIQUETTE**.

ENNUI,

OR THE WEARISOMENESS OF INACTION.

THE ennui, or the wearisomeness of inaction, as a more general and powerful spring of action than is imagined. Of all pains this is the least; but nevertheless it is one. The desire of happiness makes us always consider the absence of pleasure as an evil. We would have the necessary intervals that separate the lively pleasures always connected with the gratification of our natural wants, filled up with some of those sensations that are always agreeable when they are not painful: we therefore constantly desire new impressions, in order to put us in mind every instant of our existence; because every one of these informations affords us pleasure. Thus the savage, as soon as he has satisfied his wants, runs to the bank of a river, where the rapid succession of the waves that drive each other forward make every moment new impressions upon him: for this reason, we prefer the objects in motion to those at rest; and we proverbially say, that fire makes company; that is, it helps to deliver us from the wearisomeness of inaction. Men search with the greatest eagerness for every thing capable of putting them in motion; it is this desire that makes the common people run to an execution, and the people of fashion to play; and it is the same motive in a gloomy devotion, and even in the austere exercise of penance, that frequently affords old women a remedy against the tiresomeness of inaction; for God, who by all possible means endeavours to bring sinners to himself, commonly used with respect to them that of the wearisomeness of inaction.

A man of literature had for his neighbour one of those indolent people who are the pest of society; who being tired of himself, went one day to pay a visit to the man of letters, who received him in a very agreeable manner, and with great politeness continued tired of him, till being weary of staying any longer in the same pack, the idler took his leave, in order to plunge somebody else. He was no sooner gone, than the man of learning returned to his studies and forgot his vexation. Some days after he was accused of not having returned the visit he had received, and taxed with want of politeness; upon which he, in his turn, went to see the idler: "Sir," said he, "I am informed that you complain of me: however, you know that it was being weary of yourself that brought you to me. I, who tired nobody, received you as well as I could; it is then you who are obliged, and I who am taxed with unpoliteness. Be yourself the judge of my proceedings, and see whether you ought not to put an end to compliments that prove nothing, but that I have not, like you, occasion for visits; and have neither the inhumanity to plague my neighbour, nor the injustice to defame him after I have tired out his patience."—*Helvetius*.

A CHAPTER FROM WACOUSTA.

THE ESCAPE.

It was the eighth hour of morning, and both officers and men, quitting their ill-relished meal, were to be seen issuing to the parade, where the monotonous roll of the *assemblée* now summoned them. Presently the garrison was formed, presenting three equal sides of a square. The vacant space fronted the guard house, nor one extremity of which was to be seen a flight of steps communicating with the rampart, where the flag-staff was erected. Several men were employed at this staff, passing strong ropes through iron pulleys that were suspended from the extreme top, while in the basement of the staff itself, to a height of about twenty feet, were stuck at intervals strong wooden pegs, serving as steps to the artillerymen for greater facility in clearing, when foul, the lines to which the colours were attached. The latter had been removed; and, from the substitution of a cord considerably stronger than that which usually appeared there, it seemed as if some far heavier weight was about to be appended to it. Gradually the men, having completed their usual preparations, quitted the rampart, and the flag-staff, which was of tapering pine, was left totally unguarded.

The "Attention!" of Major Backwater to the troops, who had been hitherto standing in attitudes of expectancy that rendered the injunction almost superfluous, announced the approach of the governor. Soon afterward that officer entered the area, wearing his characteristic dignity of manner, yet exhibiting every evidence of one who had suffered deeply. Preparations for a drum-head court-martial, as in the first case of Holloway, had already been made within the square, and the only actor wanting in the drama was he who was to be tried.

Once Colonel de Haldimar made an effort to command his appearance, but the huskiness of his voice choked his utterance, and he was compelled to pause. After the lapse of a few moments, he again ordered, but in a voice that was remarked to falter:

"Mr. Lawson, let the prisoner be brought forth."

The feeling of suspense that ensued between the delivery and execution of this command was painful throughout the ranks. All were penetrated with curiosity to behold a man who had several times appeared to them under the most appalling circumstances, and against whom the strongest feeling of indignation had been excited for his barbarous murder of Charles de Haldimar. It was with mingled awe and anger they now awaited his approach. At length the captive was seen advancing from the cell in which he had been confined, his gigantic form towering far above those of the guard of grenadiers by whom he was surrounded; and with a haughtiness in his air, and insolence in his manner, that told he came to confront his enemy with a spirit unsubdued by the fate that too probably awaited him.

Many an eye was turned upon the governor at that moment. He was evidently struggling for composure to meet the scene he felt it to be impossible to avoid; and he turned pale and paler as his enemy drew near.

At length the prisoner stood nearly in the same spot where his unfortunate nephew had lingered on a former occasion. He was unchained; but his hands were firmly secured behind his back. He threw himself into an attitude of carelessness, resting on one foot, and tapping the earth with the other; rivetting his eye, at the same time, with an expression of the most daring insolence, on the governor, while his swarthy cheek was moreover lighted up with a smile of the deepest scorn.

"You are Reginald Morton, the outlaw, I believe," at length observed the governor, in an under tone, that, however, acquired greater firmness as he proceeded,—“one whose life has already been forfeited through his treasonable practices in Europe, and who has, moreover, incurred the penalty of an ignominious death, by acting in this country as a spy of the enemies of England. What say you, Reginald Morton, that you should not be convicted in the death that awaits the traitor?”

"Ha! ha! by heaven, such cold, pompous insolence amuses me," vociferated Wacousta. "It reminds me of Ensign de Haldimar of nearly five and twenty years back, who was then as cunning a dissembler as he is now." Suddenly changing his ribald tone to one of scorn and rage:—"You believe me, you say, to be Reginald Morton, the outlaw. Well do you know it. I am that Sir Reginald Morton, who became an outlaw, not through his own crimes, but through your villainy. Ay, frown as you may, I heed it not. You may award me death, but shall not chain my tongue. To your whole regiment do I proclaim you for a false, remorseless villain." Then turning his flashing eye along the ranks:—"I was once an officer in this corps, and long before any of you wore the accursed uniform. That man, that fiend, affected to be my friend; and under the guise of friendship, stole into the heart I loved better than my own life. Yes," fervently pursued the excited prisoner, stamping violently with his foot upon the earth, "he robbed me of my affianced wife; and for that I resented an outrage that should have banished him to some lone region, where he might never again pollute human nature with his presence—he caused me to be tried by a court-martial, and dismissed the service. Then, indeed, I became the outlaw he has described, but not until then. Now, Colonel de Haldimar, that I have proclaimed your infamy, poor and inefficient as the triumph be, do your worst—I ask no mercy. Yesterday I thought that years of toilsome pursuit of the means of vengeance were about to be crowned with success; but fate has turned the tables on me, and I yield."

To all but the baronet and Captain Blessington

this declaration was productive of the utmost surprise. Every eye was turned upon the colonel. He grew impatient under the scrutiny, and demanded if the court, who meanwhile had been deliberating, satisfied with the guilt of the prisoner, had come to a decision in regard to his punishment. An affirmative answer was given, and Colonel de Haldimar proceeded :

"Reginald Morton, with the private misfortunes of your former life we have nothing to do. It is the decision of this court, who are merely met out of form, that you suffer immediate death by hanging, as a just recompense for your double treason to your country. There," and he pointed to the flag-staff, "will you be exhibited to the misguided people whom your wicked artifices have stirred up into hostility against us. When they behold your fate, they will take warning from your example; and, finding we have heads and arms not to suffer offence with impunity, be more readily brought to obedience.

"I understand your allusion," coolly rejoined Wacousta, glancing earnestly at, and apparently measuring with his eyes, the dimensions of the conspicuous scaffold on which he was to suffer. "You had ever a calculating head, De Haldimar, where any secret villainy, any thing to promote your own selfish ends, was to be gained by it; but your calculation seems now, methinks, at fault."

Colonel de Haldimar looked at him inquiringly.

"You have *still* a son left," pursued the prisoner, with the same reckless manner, and in a tone denoting allusion to him who was no more, that caused a universal shudder throughout the ranks. "He is in the hands of the Ottawa Indians, and I am the friend of their great chief, inferior only in power among the tribe to himself. Think you that he will see me hanged up like a dog, and fail not to avenge my disgraceful death?"

"Ha! presumptuous renegade! is this the deep game you have in view? Hope you then to stipulate for the preservation of a life every way forfeited to the offended justice of your country? Dare you to cherish the belief, that, after the horrible threats so often denounced by you, you will again be let loose upon a career of crime and blood?"

"None of your cant, De Haldimar, as I once observed to you before," coolly retorted Wacousta, with bitter sarcasm. "Consult your own heart, and ask if its catalogue of crime be not far greater than my own: yet I ask not my life. I would but have the manner of my fate altered, and fain would die the death of the soldier I was before you rendered me the wretch I am. Methinks the boon is not so great, if the restoration of your son be the price."

"Do you mean, then," eagerly returned the governor, "that if the mere mode of your death be changed, my son shall be restored?"

"I do," was the calm reply.

"What pledge have we of the fact? What faith

can we repose in the word of a fiend, whose brutal vengeance has already sacrificed the gentlest life that ever animated human clay?" Here the emotions of the governor almost choked his utterance, and considerable agitation and murmuring were manifested in the ranks.

"Gentlest, said you?" replied the prisoner, musingly; "then did he resemble his mother, whom I loved, even as his brother resembles you, whom I have so much reason to hate. Had I known the boy to be what you describe, I might have felt some touch of pity even while I delayed not to strike his death blow; but the false moonlight deceived me, and the detested name of De Haldimar, pronounced by the lips of my nephew's wife—that wife whom your cold-blooded severity had widowed and driven mad—was in itself sufficient to ensure his doom."

"Inhuman ruffian!" exclaimed the governor, with increasing indignation; "to the point. What pledge have you to offer that my son shall be restored?"

"Nay, the pledge is easily given, and without much risk. You have only to defer my death until your messenger return from his interview with Pontecac. If Captain de Haldimar accompany him back, shoot me as I have requested; if he come not, then it is but to hang me after all."

"Ha! I understand you; this is but a pretext to gain time; a device to enable your subtle brain to plan some mode of escape."

"As you will, Colonel de Haldimar," calmly retorted Wacousta; and again he sank into silence, with the air of one utterly indifferent to results.

"Do you mean," resumed the colonel, "that a request from yourself to the Ottawa chief will obtain the liberation of my son?"

"Unless the Indian be false as yourself, I do."

"And the lady who is with him?" continued the colonel, colouring with anger.

"Of both."

"How is the message to be conveyed?"

"Ha, sir!" returned the prisoner, drawing himself up to his full height, "now are you arrived at a point that is pertinent. My wampum belt will be the passport, and the safeguard of him you send; then for the communication. There are certain figures, as you are aware, that, traced on bark, answer the same purpose among the Indians with the European language of letters. Let my hands be loose," he pursued, but in a tone in which agitation and excitement might be detected, "and if bark be brought me, and a burnt stick or coal, I will give you not only a sample of Indian ingenuity, but a specimen of my own progress in Indian acquirements."

"What, free your hands, and thus afford you a chance of escape?" observed the governor, doubtfully.

Wacousta bent his steadfast gaze on him for a few moments, as if he questioned he had heard aright.

Then bursting into a wild and scornful laugh: "By heaven!" he exclaimed, "this is indeed a high compliment you pay me at the expense of these fine fellows. What, Colonel de Haldimar afraid to liberate an unarmed prisoner, hemmed in by a forest of bayonets? This is good; gentlemen," and he bent himself in a sarcastic reverence to the astonished troops, "I beg to offer my very best congratulations on the high estimation in which you are held by your colonel."

"Peace, sirrah!" exclaimed the governor, enraged beyond measure at the insolence of him who thus held him up to contempt before his men, "or, by heaven! I will have your tongue cut out!—Mr. Lawson, let what this fellow requires be procured immediately." Then addressing Lieutenant Boyce, who commanded the immediate guard over the prisoner,—"Let his hands be liberated, sir, and enjoin your men to be watchful of the movements of this supple traitor. His activity I know of old to be great, and he seems to have doubled it since he assumed that garb."

The command was executed, and the prisoner stood, once more, free and unfettered in every muscular limb. A deep and unbroken silence ensued; and the return of the adjutant was momentarily expected. Suddenly a loud scream was heard, and the slight figure of a female, clad in white, came rushing from the piazza in which the apartment of the deceased De Haldimar was situated. It was Clara. The guard of Wacousta formed the fourth front of the square; but they were drawn up somewhat in the distance, so as to leave an open space of several feet at the angles. Through one of these the excited girl now passed into the area, with a wildness in her air and appearance that riveted every eye in painful interest upon her. She paused not until she had gained the side of the captive, at whose feet she now sank in an attitude expressive of the most profound despair.

"Tiger!—monster!" she raved, "restore my brother!—give me back the gentle life you have taken, or destroy my own! See, I am a weak defenceless girl: can you not strike?—you have no pity for the innocent. But come," she pursued mournfully, regaining her feet and grasping his iron hand,—"come and see the sweet calm face of him you have slain:—come with me, and behold the image of Clara Beverley; and, if you ever loved her as you say you did, let your soul be touched with remorse for your crime."

The excitement and confusion produced by this unexpected interruption was great. Murmurs of compassion for the unhappy Clara, and of indignation against the prisoner, were no longer sought to be repressed by the men; while the officers, quitting their places in the ranks, grouped themselves indistinctly in the fore-ground. One, more impatient than his companions, sprang forward, and forcibly

drew away the delicate hand that still grasped that of the captive. It was Sir Edward Valletort.

"Clara, my beloved wife!" he exclaimed, to the astonishment of all who heard him, "pollute not your lips by further communion with such a wretch; his heart is as inaccessible to pity as the rugged rocks on which his spring-life was passed. For heaven's sake,—for my sake,—linger not within his reach. There is death in his very presence."

"Your wife, sir!" haughtily observed the governor, with irrepressible astonishment and indignation in his voice; "what mean you?—Gentlemen, resume your places in the ranks. Clara—Miss de Haldimar, I command you to retire instantly to your apartment. We will discourse of this later, Sir Everard Valletort. I trust you have not dared to offer an indignity to my child."

While he was yet turned to the officer, who had taken his post, as commanded, in the inner angle of the square, and with a countenance that denoted the conflicting emotions of his soul, he was suddenly startled by the confused shout and rushing forward of the whole body, both of officers and men. Before he had time to turn, a loud and well-remembered yell burst upon his ear. The next moment, to his infinite surprise and horror, he beheld the bold warrior rapidly ascending the very staff that had been destined for his scaffold, and with Clara in his arms!

Great was the confusion that ensued. To rush forward and surround the flag-staff, was the immediate action of the troops. Many of the men raised their muskets, and in the excitement of the moment, would have fired, had they not been restrained by their officers, who pointed out the certain destruction it would entail on the unfortunate Clara. With the rapidity of thought, Wacousta had snatched up his victim, while the attention of the troops was directed to the singular conversation passing between the governor and Sir Everard Valletort, and darting through one of the open angles already alluded to, had gained the rampart before they had recovered from the stupor produced by his daring action. Stepping lightly upon the pegs, he had rapidly ascended to the utmost height of these, before any one thought of following him; and then grasping in his teeth the cord which was to have served for his execution, and holding Clara firmly against his chest, while he embraced the smooth staff with his knees and feet closely compressed around it, accomplished the difficult ascent with an ease that astonished all who beheld him. Gradually, as he approached the top, the tapering pine waved to and fro: and at each moment it was expected, that yielding to their united weight, it would snap asunder, and precipitate both Clara and himself, either upon the rampart, or into the ditch beyond.

More than one officer now attempted to follow the fugitive in his adventurous course; but even

Lieutenant Johnstone, the most active and experienced in climbing of the party, was unable to rise more than a few yards above the pegs that afforded a footing, and the enterprise was abandoned as an impossibility. At length Wacousta was seen to gain the extreme summit. For a moment he turned his gaze anxiously beyond the town, in the direction of the bridge; and, after peeling forth one of his terrific yells, exclaimed, exultingly, as he turned his eye upon his enemy:—

“Well, colonel, what think you of this sample of Indian ingenuity? Did I not tell you,” he continued, in mockery, “that, if my hands were but free, I would give you a specimen of my progress in Indian acquirements?”

“If you would avoid a death even more terrible than that of hanging,” shouted the governor, in a voice of mingled rage and terror, “restore my daughter.”

“Ha! ha! ha!—excellent!” vociferated the savage. “You threaten largely, my good governor; but your threats are harmless as those of a weak besieging army before an impregnable fortress. It is for the strongest, however, to propose his terms. If I restore this girl to life, will you pledge yourself to mine?”

“Never!” thundered Colonel de Haldimar, with unusual energy. “Men, procure axes; cut the flag-staff down, since this is the only means left of securing yon insolent traitor! Quick to your work: and mark, who first seizes him shall have promotion on the spot.”

Axes were instantly procured, and two of the men now lent themselves vigorously to the task. Wacousta seemed to watch these preparations with evident anxiety; and to all it appeared as if his courage had been paralysed by this unexpected action. No sooner, however, had the axemen reached the heart of the staff, than, holding Clara forth over the edge of the rampart, he shouted:—

“One stroke more, and she perishes!”

Instantaneously the work was discontinued. A silence of a few moments ensued. Every eye was turned upward,—every heart beat with terror to see the delicate girl, held by a single arm, and apparently about to be precipitated from that dizzying height. Again Wacousta shouted:—

“Life for life, De Haldimar! If I yield her shall I live?”

“No terms shall be dictated to me by a rebel, in the heart of my own fort,” returned the governor. “Restore my child, and we will then consider what mercy may be extended to you.”

“Well do I know what mercy dwells in such a heart as yours,” gloomily remarked the prisoner; “but I come.”

“Surround the staff, men,” ordered the governor, in a low tone. “The instant he descends, secure him: lash him in every limb, nor suffer even his insolent tongue to be longer at liberty.”

“Boyce, for God’s sake open the gate, and place men in readiness to lower the drawbridge,” implored Sir Everard of the officer of the guard, and in a tone of deep emotion that was not meant to be overheard by the governor. “I fear the boldness of this vengeful man may lead him to some desperate means of escape.”

While the officer whom he addressed issued a command, the responsibility of which he fancied he might, under the peculiar circumstances of the moment, take upon himself, Wacousta began his descent, not as before, by adhering to the staff, but by the rope which he held in his left hand, while he still supported the apparently senseless Clara against his right chest with the other.

“Now, Colonel de Haldimar, I hope your heart is at rest,” he shouted, as he rapidly glided by the cord; “enjoy your triumph as best may suit your pleasure.”

Every eye followed his movement with interest; every heart beat lighter at the certainty of Clara being again restored, and without other injury than the terror she must have experienced in such a scene. Each congratulated himself on the favourable termination of the terrible adventure, yet were all ready to spring upon and secure the desperate author of the wrong. Wacousta had now reached the centre of the flag-staff. Pausing for a moment, he grappled it with his strong and nervous feet, on which he apparently rested, to give a momentary relief to the muscles of his left arm. He then abruptly abandoned his hold, swinging himself out a few yards from the staff, and returning again, dashed his feet against it with a force that caused the weakened mass to vibrate to its very foundation. Impelled by his weight, and the violence of his action, the creaking pine gave way; its lofty top gradually bending over the exterior rampart until it finally snapped asunder, and fell with a loud crash across the ditch.

“Open the gate! down with the draw-bridge!” exclaimed the excited governor.

“Down with the draw-bridge,” repeated Sir Everard to the men already stationed there ready to let loose at the first order. The heavy chains rattled sullenly through the rusty pulleys, and to each the bridge seemed an hour descending. Before it had reached its level, it was covered with the weight of many armed men rushing confusedly to the front; and the foremost of these leaped to the earth before it had sunk into its customary bed. Sir Everard Valletort and Lieutenant Johnson were in the front, both armed with their rifles, which had been brought them before Wacousta commenced his descent. Without order or combination, Erskine, Blessington, and nearly half of their respective companies, followed as they could; and dispersing as they advanced, sought only which could outstrip his fellows in the pursuit.

THE FOREST RILL.

BY MRS. MOODIE.

Young Naiad of the sparry grot,
 Whose azure eyes before me burn,
 In what sequestered lonely spot
 Lies hid thy flower-enwreathed urn ?
 Beneath what mossy bank enshrined,
 Within what ivy-mantled nook,
 Sheltered alike from sun and wind,
 Lies hid thy source, sweet murmuring brook ?

Deep buried lies thy airy shell
 Beneath thy waters clear ;
 Far echoing up the woodland dell
 Thy wind-swept harp I hear.
 I catch its soft and mellow tones
 Amid the long grass gliding,
 Now broken 'gainst the rugged stones,
 In hoarse, deep accents chiding.

The wandering breeze that stirs the grove,
 In plaintive moans replying,
 To every leafy bough above
 His tender tale is sighing ;
 Ruffled beneath his viewless wing
 Thy wavelets fret and wimple,
 Now forth rejoicingly they spring
 In many a laughing dimple.

To nature's timid lovely queen
 Thy sylvan haunts are known ;
 She seeks thy rashy margin green
 To weave her flowery zone ;
 Light waving o'er thy fairy flood
 In all their vernal pride,
 She sees her crown of opening buds
 Reflected in the tide.

On—on !—for ever brightly on !
 Thy lucid waves are flowing,
 Thy waters sparkle as they run,
 Their long, long journey going ;
 Bright flashing in the noon-tide beam
 O'er stone and pebble breaking,
 And onward to some mightier stream
 Their slender tribute taking.

O such is life ! a slender rill,
 A stream impelled by Time ;
 To death's dark caverns flowing still,
 To seek a brighter clime.
 Though blackened by the stains of earth,
 And broken be its course,
 From life's pure fount we trace its birth,
 Eternity its source !

While floating down the tide of years,
 The Christian will not mourn her lot ;
 There is a hand will dry her tears,
 A land where sorrows are forgot.

Though in the crowded page of time
 The record of her name may die,
 'Tis traced in annals more sublime,
 The volume of Eternity !

PRIDE.

WITH regard to the provocations and offences, which are unavoidably happening to a man in his commerce with the world, take it as a rule—as a man's pride is, so is always his displeasure ; as the opinion of himself rises, so does the injury, so does his resentment : 'tis this which gives edge and force to the instrument which has struck him, and excites that heat in the wound which renders it incurable.

The proud man,—see ! he is sore all over : touch him, you put him to pain : and though, of all others, he acts as if every mortal was void of sense and feeling, yet is possessed with so nice and exquisite a one himself, that the slights, the little neglects, and instances of disesteem, which would scarce be felt by another man, are perpetually wounding him, and oft times piercing him to his very heart.

Pride is a vice which grows up in society so insensibly ; steals in unobserved upon the heart upon so many occasions ; forms itself upon such strange pretensions ; and, when it has done, veils itself under such a variety of unsuspected appearances, sometimes even under that of humility itself ; in all which cases self-love, like a false friend, instead of checking, most treacherously feeds this humour, points out some excellence in every soul to make him vain, and thinks more highly of himself than he ought to think ;—that, upon the whole, there is no one weakness into which the heart of man is more easily betrayed, or which requires greater helps of good sense and good principles to guard against.—*Sterne's Sermons.*

EXCELLENCES OF KNOWLEDGE.

THERE are in knowledge these two excellences ; first, that it offers to every man the most selfish and the most exalted, his peculiar inducement to good. It says to the former, "Serve mankind, and you will serve yourself;" to the latter, "In choosing the best means to secure your own happiness, you will have the sublime inducement of promoting the happiness of mankind." The second excellence of knowledge is that even the selfish man, when he has once begun to love virtue from little motives, loses the motives as he increases the love, and at last worships the deity, where before he only covered the gold upon its altar.—*E. L. Bulwer.*

EVERY VICE HAS ITS APPROPRIATE PAIN.

HE who lies under the dominion of any one vice, must expect the common effects of it ; if lazy, to be poor ; if intemperate, to be diseased ; if luxurious, to die betimes.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE.

BY GUINNESS.

FROM THE QUEEN'S COUNTRY DANCES.

ARRANGED FOR THE LITERARY GARLAND BY MR. W. H. WARREN, OF MONTREAL.

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a 2/4 time signature. The lower staff is in bass clef with a 2/4 time signature. The word "for" is written above the first measure of the bass staff. The music features a melody in the treble staff and a bass accompaniment in the bass staff.

The second system of musical notation continues the piece with two staves in treble and bass clefs, maintaining the 2/4 time signature. The melody and accompaniment continue across these measures.

The third system of musical notation continues the piece with two staves in treble and bass clefs, maintaining the 2/4 time signature. The word "fr" is written above the first measure of the bass staff. The melody and accompaniment continue across these measures.

The fourth system of musical notation continues the piece with two staves in treble and bass clefs, maintaining the 2/4 time signature. The melody and accompaniment continue across these measures.

The fifth system of musical notation concludes the piece with two staves in treble and bass clefs, maintaining the 2/4 time signature. The word "8va" is written above the first measure of the treble staff, and the word "P" (piano) is written below the first measure of the bass staff. The melody and accompaniment continue across these measures.

8va

(ORIGINAL.)

PRAYER,

WRITTEN FOR A SISTER, AT HER REQUEST,
WHEN IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.

BY AUGUSTUS NIPCHEESE, ESQ.

Oh Lord my God, in mercy hear,
And to my plaintive cry give ear,
For I am helpless, frail and weak,
And in thy strength my refuge seek.

When all the sweets of life seem fled,
And clouds are gathering o'er my head,
When fears on fears successive rise,
Make me submit, for thou art wise.

Though sickness, pain, and slow disease,
Have banished pleasure, rest and ease,
Still let me in thy goodness trust,
For thou art gracious whil'st thou'rt just.

Keep me from fretting at thy will,
And give me strength to praise Thee still,
To kiss the rod, to love the smart,
Which wounds the body, heals the heart.

Oh! cleanse me from each low desire,
And warm me with celestial fire,—
May all my wishes point to Thee,
Thou God of spotless purity!

Oh Lord my God, in mercy hear,
And to my plaintive cry give ear,
For I am helpless, frail and weak,
And in thy strength my refuge seek.

Montreal, 1841.

GOOD THOUGHTS.

BY AUGUSTUS NIPCHEESE, ESQ.

Good thoughts are ministering angels sent
To point a pathway to the firmament;
The brazen serpent raised amidst our grief,
On which to look and find a sure relief;
The bow of promise in our mental sky,
And pledge of after immortality!

A WISH.

BY AUGUSTUS NIPCHEESE, ESQ.

Oh, to be good and pure as aught that's made,
One gleam of sunshine all untouched by shade;
Pure as idea of a child can be,
His first idea of a Deity,
And good as infants 'ere idea springs,
To teach them of this world's imaginings.

A THOUGHT.

BY AUGUSTUS NIPCHEESE, ESQ.

I.

See how the many tinted clouds
Suffuse the ether with their light,
Yet fade as daylight ~~shakes~~ away,
Lost in the deeper shades of night!

II.

So shall my life, whate'er of good
Or beautiful its path illumine,
Be shadowed by the wings of death
And fade into the silent tomb!

OUR TABLE.

LIVES OF THE QUEENS OF ENGLAND—BY AGNES STRICKLAND—VOL. III.

THIS volume is full of interest—melancholy interest, it is true,—for the lives of the unfortunate women, who, in the early days of England's history, were fated to become Queens, seems to have been almost uniformly made up of miseries—there being, indeed, little to distinguish one from the other, save the method by which they respectfully suffered.

The memoirs contained in this volume are those of Isabella and Catherine of Valois; of Joanna and Margaret of Navarre and Anjou; of Elizabeth Woodville and Anne of Warwick,—all of them memorable from the sorrows which encompassed them, and tracked them, one after the other, to the grave.

We can scarcely imagine a better lesson for the ambitious, and those who yearn after the tinsel of royalty, and the trappings of the great, than a perusal of this volume, in which the inefficacy and the insecurity of such gauds are so conspicuously shewn, by the simple detail of the lives of those who seemed by their position placed beyond the danger and the reach of circumstance; but who, when misfortune overtook them, were only rendered more miserable by that high position which seldom admitted of their sympathy and support, which, in a more humble sphere, might, under similar trials, have aided in lightening the overpowering weight of grief.

Isabella of Valois, the first of the subjects treated of in this volume, was the heroine of a peculiarly touching drama. Married while yet a child, scarcely beyond her ninth year, to the second Richard, she came to her royal home, amid all the pomp and circumstance which the rude hospitality of those early days deemed fitting for the fair Queen of a great realm. Her proud welcome was but the sunshine before the storm. Her wasted youth was spent amid the turmoil of party strife,—the war of the rival factions whose struggles for the mastery made England for years the theatre of blood and crime. Before her thirteenth year she was a widow, without a single tie to bind her to the land to which she had come wooed, by rich promises of happiness and splendour.

Rejecting the proposals of Henry the Fourth, who anxiously desired a union between the virgin widow and his son, Isabella turned her thoughts to France, to which she shortly after returned, without retinue, wealth, or hope. Seven years after she was married to her cousin of Orleans, and in the succeeding year, being then scarcely twenty-two, she died in giving birth to a daughter. Her husband, who ever after mourned her loss, was taken prisoner at Agincourt, and brought to London, where he remained for twenty-three years a captive in the Tower, during which he wrote many touching verses to the memory of the lost Isabella.

Joanna of Navarre, consort of Henry the Fourth, was miserable in a different form. Her misfortunes commenced at the close of those of Isabella. At Agincourt many of her kinsmen were slain or taken captive, yet was she obliged to witness, if not to share, in the pageant which commemorated their fall. This was the beginning of her sorrows. Afterwards she was doomed to a weary captivity, apart from friends and kindred, accused of witchcraft, and stripped of every thing she possessed. Before her death she was restored to partial liberty, but never to happiness, adding another melancholy instance to the many which had gone before, of the valueless character of empty though lofty titles.

Catherine of Valois, mother of the warrior race of the Tudors, was not more blest than those who had preceded her in grandeur,—and in care. No strong affections ever bound her to her husband, the fifth Henry, whose nature had little in common with hers; and when he died, she sought some consolation in the love of Owen Tudor, a Welsh soldier, to whom she was privately married. We quote a paragraph in relation to this somewhat romantic attachment:

“While Owen was on guard at Windsor on some festival, he was required to dance before the queen; and making too elaborate a pirouette, he was not able to recover his balance, but fell into the queen's lap, as she sat upon a low seat, with all her ladies about her. The queen's manner of excusing this awkwardness, gave her ladies the first suspicion that she was not entirely insensible to the attractions of the brave Welshman. As her passion increased, and she indulged herself in greater intimacy with the object of it, those of her ladies who could take the liberty remonstrated with the queen, and represented how much she lowered herself, by paying any attention to a person who, though possessing some personal accomplishments and advantages, had no princely, nor even gentle alliances, but belonged to a barbarous clan, reck-

oned inferior to the lowest English yeoman. Upon which the queen declared, 'that being a Frenchwoman, she had not been aware that there was any difference of race in the British island.'

"Afterwards, communicating these strictures to her lover, he held forth very eloquently concerning his high-born kin and princely descent, and the queen concluded by requesting him to introduce some of his family at her Court in Windsor Castle. 'Whereupon,' says Sir John Wynne, 'he brought into her presence John ap Meredith, and Howel ap Llewellyn, his near cousins, men of the goodliest stature and personage, but wholly destitute of bringing up and nurture, (education); for when the queen had spoken to them in divers languages, and they were not able to answer her, she said, they were the goodliest dumb creatures she ever saw;' a proof that Catherine knew several languages, but had no skill in Welsh."

Her marriage did not bring happiness with it. She was forced into retirement, and robbed of her children, immediately after their birth, and death came to her as a welcome visiter, when she was yet young, not having reached the termination of her thirty-sixth year.

Margaret of Anjou, daughter of the Prince of Troubadours, the imbecile King René, was no exception to the general rule. Her life commenced redolent of the brightest hopes, which, one by one, faded from her grasp, her death bringing to her release from miseries too great to bear. The following is a direful picture :

"The home to which her father welcomed Margaret was at that time at Reculée, about a league from Angers, on the river Mayence, where he had a castle that commanded a view of the town, with a beautiful garden, and a gallery of paintings and sculpture, which he took delight in adorning with his own paintings, and ornamented the walls of his garden with heraldic designs carved in marble. It was in such pursuits as these that René, like a true Provençal sovereign, sought forgetfulness of his afflictions. But Margaret's temperament was of too stormy a nature to admit of the slightest alleviation to her grief. Her whole time was spent in painfully retracing the direful scenes of her past life, and in passionate regrets for the bereavement she had undergone. The canker worm that was perpetually busy within, at length made its ravages outwardly visible on her person, and affected a fearful change in her appearance. The agonies and agitation she had undergone turned the whole mass of her blood; her eyes, once so brilliant and expressive, became hollow, dim, and perpetually inflamed from excessive weeping, and her skin was disfigured with a dry, scaly, leprosy, which transformed this princess, who had been celebrated as the most beautiful in the world, into a spectacle of horror."

The wife of Edward the Fourth, Elizabeth Woodville, was also fated to almost unmixed misery; ending her life in a convent, her heart wrung with grief for her children, murdered or destitute.

The last of these memoirs is that of the weak and miserable Ann of Warwick, Queen of the tyrant Richard, whose griefs were, if possible, more poignant than those of her immediate predecessors. While her tears were yet warm for her murdered husband, she gave her hand to that husband's murderer. From such a union what but woe could be anticipated? Bitterly she repented her madness, and expiated her sin by a miserable death before she attained the age of thirty-one.

Such are the materials of the volume, for our acquaintance with the contents of which we are indebted to the English reviews, the work not having yet been received in Canada. We are, however, convinced from former acquaintance with Miss Strickland's writings, that ample justice will have been done to the materials furnished her. When copies shall have been received, for disposal here, we shall not fail to apprise the readers of the *Garland*.

WACOSTA, OR THE PROPHECY.

WE have already more than once alluded to this interesting and elegantly written novel, by Major Richardson, now so generally known in these Provinces, by his publication of "The Canadian Brothers," and have consequently spoken in high terms of the book, as one possessing far more than an ordinary share of interest to the general reader, rendered yet more impressive to the Canadian by his proximity to the scenes of its most striking incidents, and the fact that its author is himself not only a resident but a native of the colony,—almost, we grieve to add, the only one of whom much is known in any country besides our own.

"Wacosta, or the Prophecy," is a tale of the early wars of Britain with the French, or rather with their Indian allies, on the frontier of the then British Colonies—now the Independent States of America. The interest of the tale is hinged upon the thirst of vengeance inherent in human nature, and is worked out with consummate skill, gathering interest as it advances from page to page through the three volumes, during which the excitement it gives birth to scarcely for a moment fails, until the gradual fulfilment of "The Prophecy," which is not, however, fully accomplished with the termination of the novel, enough being left unfinished to form a

connecting link between it and the Canadian Brothers, which may be looked upon as a sequel to Wacoosta. A chapter which we have copied, will give an idea of the forcible character of the style, and the absorbing interest it possesses.

We have noticed this book at present, in order to inform our readers that a limited edition, very beautifully printed in England, has been received by the author, in Brockville, a few copies of which will be sent for sale to this city, and to the principal towns in either Province.

THE MONTHLY REVIEW—EDITED BY JOHN WAUDBY, ESQ.

THE first number of this periodical, the expected appearance of which we recently noticed, has been for some days past upon "Our Table."

The *Review*, as it professes to be, is almost wholly devoted to the discussion of political subjects, in its expressed opinions professing to concur in the views entertained by the Governor General, with whose confidence the Editor seems to be extensively honoured. In this point of view it must possess great value indeed to the intelligent reader, of what shade so ever may be his political creed; for whatever the views of Government may be, a great point is gained when the reasons from which they spring have been fully and clearly explained. Their opponents may then more readily meet them by fair and forcible argument, by which the feelings and wishes of all having an interest in public measures may be more easily and efficiently consulted, and modifications effected before any projected change shall actually take the form of law.

Among the articles, however, which are eight in number, there are two which have no relation to any particular political subject, one of them under the title of "British America," the other "The Literature of a New Country." The first of these articles is an eloquently written treatise on colonization in general, treating particularly of the British Empire in America, a subject with which the writer appears to be thoroughly familiar, having at his command an apparently inexhaustible flow of language, in which to give utterance to the rich thoughts which course spontaneously through his mind.

The object of this article is to strengthen the desire among the people to perpetuate the connexion between Great Britain and her American Colonies, a design which it is eminently calculated to achieve, portraying as it does, the magnificence, the power, the beneficence of the Parent State, and the anxious desire at all times evinced on the part of the Metropolitan Government to advance the prosperity of her gigantic offspring.

It is unnecessary, however, that we should enter at length into the merits or contents of this number. The *Review* itself will be very generally read, and copies of the best articles will be multiplied so generally as to place them within the reach of every person in either Province, who wishes to peruse them; but we cannot resist, in the meantime, the temptation to extract from one of the articles we have named one or two passages, peculiarly applicable at the present moment, when separation from the Mother Country is openly discussed, at the same time remarking that so much writing to prove what should *not* be doubted is not unlikely to aid in producing the effect it deprecates:—

Let us regard ourselves as a *British Colony*, exposed to the well known difficulties, and enjoying most of the acknowledged advantages of a young and unexhausted country. Foremost in the stirring history of all modern enterprise, first in every achievement in which activity, skill, and perseverance were the ingredients of success, stands the British, or, as it is more generally termed, the Anglo-Saxon race. On the American continent, it has laid the foundations of a great society, sown the seeds of empires yet to come, and rooted out the wilderness, to make way for the development and perfection of all that is great and noble in the progress of human industry. From the icepeaks of Labrador to the Mexican Cordilleras, its settlements are struggling, not merely into existence, but into power and influence. The Coral Islands of the Pacific bear witness to its unwaried perseverance; the fifth continent of Australia resounds with its voices of busy life; and the richest portion of the Golden East, beneath its stimulating influence, bends her exhaustless energies to deeper and broader efforts in the field of commercial enterprise. We speak of the vast and mighty republic on our southern shore, in these general remarks, as peopled from the same source, guided by the same pre-eminent spirit of social, intellectual, and political improvement, as any actual integral portion of the British Empire. Strictly speaking, it is no more to us than Russia or Austria; but in the broad reflections of humanity, it must ever be to us a member of the one great family; as a scion from the one root; a fellow labourer, not a rival, in the struggle for moral supremacy. But for all practical purposes, the Canadas must look on themselves as integral parts of Great Britain, as much the inheritance and dominion of our youthful Sovereign as the fairest vale beneath the ramparts of her royal

Windsor. From the distance at which we lie from the centre of her mighty empire, we cannot enjoy exactly the same political institutions as her Yorkshire and Middlesex subjects. We are compelled to have a Parliament of our own to manage our local affairs, and a Representative of her Royalty has to wield some of her authority and prerogative, the honoured medium through which the light of her sovereignty shines on her faithful lieges. But with this exception—a difference more in name than in deed—we stand on the same broad foundation of popular right and privilege as the denizens of the British Isles. No claim, no immunity, no birthright of liberty can be claimed by one of the latter to which we cannot substantially attain. No case of oppression or personal wrong can possibly occur, in which the sufferer cannot at once appeal to the same all-powerful and ever ready protectors of life, character, and property, the laws and constitution of England, with the same facility and certainty of redress that would greet the residents within the very shadow of Westminster Hall, or within hearing of the independent voices of Saint Stephen's.

But tear down the "Meteor flag" from the rocky crest of Cape Diamond; strike it by the waters of St. Clair, the rapids of the Niagara, and the pine forests of Toronto; let the last voice of a British trumpet ring through the cliffs of the St. Lawrence, as the last of her recalled soldiery floats down that lordly river;—and in what condition is Canada left? She has two courses—one to endeavour to maintain a stand as a free nation; the second, to add another star and stripe to the motley banner of the neighbouring Republic. Should the first be her choice, necessity would immediately order the equipment of a sufficient land and naval establishment to protect the young state—to save the infant empire from being strangled in the cradle. A tenth of the force now gratuitously employed by England, for the defence of her North American sovereignty, could not be maintained by independent Canada for twelve months, without increasing tenfold the taxation of every individual in her bounds. Now, she enjoys ample protection for nothing; then she would have it, unstable and doubtful at all times, at a cost fearful and overwhelming to a country of her slender population and undeveloped resources. The rending of her ancient allegiance might be gilded by the flash and transient glitter of a new order of things; her independent existence might float awhile on the restless waves of a hasty popular enthusiasm; it might spring up in the air with the fierce bound of the fire-work, "rising like the rocket, but falling like the staff;" but when the temporary fever subsided, and men came to reflect on what they had abandoned and what they had gained, it needs but little gift of prophecy to foresee the fearful responsibility which the country would have taken from her parent and placed on her own young shoulders, or to tell that the fatal and increasing burden of a public debt, necessarily incurred, and incurred abroad, must weigh down her energies, and draw heavily on the slender means of the struggling husbandman, to ensure to him that protection without which his life would be embittered by perpetual anxieties, his property the prey of the bandit or the pirate, and he himself like the wretched peasant of the dark ages, constantly called on to spring to arms at some sudden alarm of insurrection or invasion—his hand alternately on the broad-sword and the plough, and defensive weapons his inseparable companions at his ordinary rural avocations.

The Literature of a New Country is another splendid article, rich in original and striking thoughts, explaining the position in which we at present are, and the causes which of necessity make us so little known in the world of literature, and pointing to a future, neither improbable nor distant, when a more elevated position may be taken in the Republic of Letters by the Colonial World. From this article we make a very short extract:—

Fancy and Fiction, with the filmy offspring of their fantastic dreamings, have but little to do with the matter of fact, sober, plodding routine of Colonial existence. Public business interferes with their development; popular taste asks for a coarser but more palatable stimulus; acquisitiveness despises, prejudice sneers at them. But with the altered circumstances of this rapidly improving country, these exotics may yet flourish. We are told, that when the early settlers first planted some of the fruit trees of their native land in their Canadian gardens, they blossomed at the period to which they were accustomed in the European spring. The frosts of this severe climate soon withered their untimely efflorescence, but the vegetable instinct soon suited its operations to its changed circumstances, and after one or two more seasons had given experience to the strangers, they became perfectly acclimated, and blossomed and bore fruit as freely as if born in the rude soil to which nature so beautifully adapted them.

So will it be with literature and the arts in our new country. Now they are strangers totally unknown, or introduced and planted but to wave and shiver in the cold blast of our rude climate. Like the transplanted fruit trees, they too may acclimate themselves, and a golden harvest reward the exertions of the fostering hands that cultivated and cherished them.

Years, too, cannot pass over, without changing the face of the country itself. Its natural roughness must disappear before the march of improvement; its now inclement skies will moderate their rigours; and as great a physical amelioration must be in store for the Canadas, as that which has converted the cold and stormy regions described of old by Tacitus, into the fair and smiling fields of modern Germany.

With this imperfect notice of the first number of the *Review*, we cordially commend it to the patronage of the public. It is published in Toronto, at the office of the *British Colonist* newspaper,—very handsomely printed, in a style nearly resembling the *Garland*, although in a larger type. The terms are very moderate—four dollars per annum, payable half-yearly in advance.

THE CANADA SPELLING BOOK—BY ALEX. DAVIDSON.

To the author of this valuable addition to the school books of these Provinces we are indebted for a copy, which on examination, we feel confident in pronouncing one of the most complete of its description that we have seen, embracing within itself the rudiments of an intellectual, moral and religious education; for, properly judging that the feelings and habits impressed on the mind in youth are almost certain to guide in maturer age, the author has inserted a series of prayers, breathing sublime and yet simple thoughts, such as may be easily comprehended and understood by the child, whose character is in the process of formation.

The book is neatly printed, by Rowsell, of Toronto, and consists of two hundred and twenty-four pages. We are glad to learn that every probability exists of its being adopted as a class book in the best of our Canadian schools—in a short time, indeed, we doubt not it must come into universal use.

THE DRAMATIC MERCURY.

A SOMEWHAT novel journal is about to be commenced in New York, devoted principally to reviews of the Drama, and the Arts. Mr. A. D. Patterson, who is to be the Editor, is by general consent acknowledged to possess all that is requisite to render it a valuable periodical of its kind. We have no doubt that the thirst for novelty and the talents of its editor will ensure the *Dramatic Mercury*, an ample share of patronage.

FINE ARTS.

WE have much pleasure in recommending to those of our readers, who are lovers of the fine arts, a beautiful specimen of paintings, the production of a lady whose professional talents are well known to many in this city. The subject is "The Gipsy Mother," sitting under the "random bield of a sheltering wa'," as Burns hath it, her infant in her arms, and looking the very personification of rustic health, beauty, and enjoyment. From the well known badges of the wandering tribe, the worn red cloak, sunbrowned features, and nondescript head-attire—it is easy to recognize the Gipsy. Much skill has been displayed by keeping out of view the disagreeable accompaniments which too often mar the pleasure of the beholder of the living reality. There is no rude vulgarity to be seen, no affected simplicity, neither constraint nor awkwardness—nothing like squalor, or tawdry ornament,—but a beautiful calm expression of satisfaction and innocent archness, that at once proves the skill and delicacy of the artist. She looks you not in the face, nor is she sitting like one who has called up a look conscious of being observed and anxious of being admired. Her eyes seem slightly turned upward, or, as if fixed upon an object at some distance; she is not smiling, nor is she sad, but the sedate, thoughtful expression of her face is lighted up by a quick joy, as if she were thinking of the child in her arms and its loved and absent father. It would be difficult, however, to decide, what is the predominating characteristic of the countenance, which expresses health, innocence, beauty, simplicity tempered with archness, exposure to the envious elements, and at the same time the chastened tenderness of a mother for her beloved child. Although we are fond of children, we should not have been sorry had the red cloak been thrown over the very "little dear," which distracts attention from the mother—and rather interferes with the effect of the piece.

Truly the Art of Painting is a noble Art—producing the mightiest effects, with the simple and almost incorporeal elements of light and colors; on the rigid and harsh, laying a foundation for the soft and gentle; uniting opposites and even defects, so as to make a perfect whole; arresting the fleeting glory of a frail flower, or the evanescent blushes upon the cheek of beauty, and fixing them on canvass, to remain forever. Nay more, it is possible—and no one who has studied the face of the Gipsy Mother will deny it,—it is possible so to mould and shape matter that the invisible, ethereal *mind*, may shine forth, transparently and almost tangibly.

We are glad to be informed that Miss Deming will remain in this city for some time, devoting herself to the available part of her profession—miniature painting—and we are sure that an inspection of the "Gipsy Mother," as well as of her other productions (at Sharpley's Bookstore) will be a surer recommendation to those who may wish to avail themselves of her talent, than anything we can say.