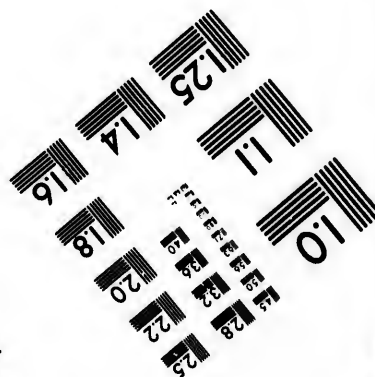
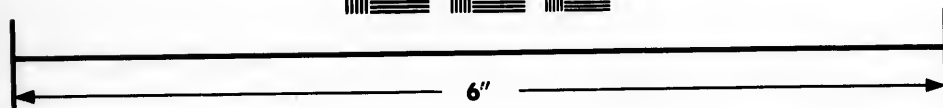
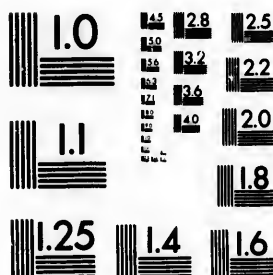


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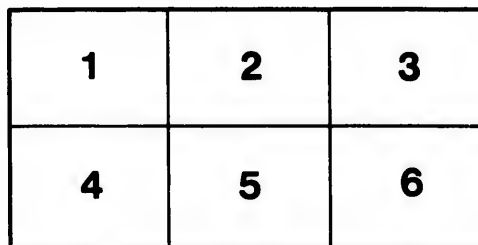
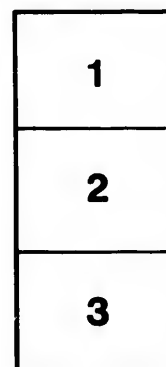
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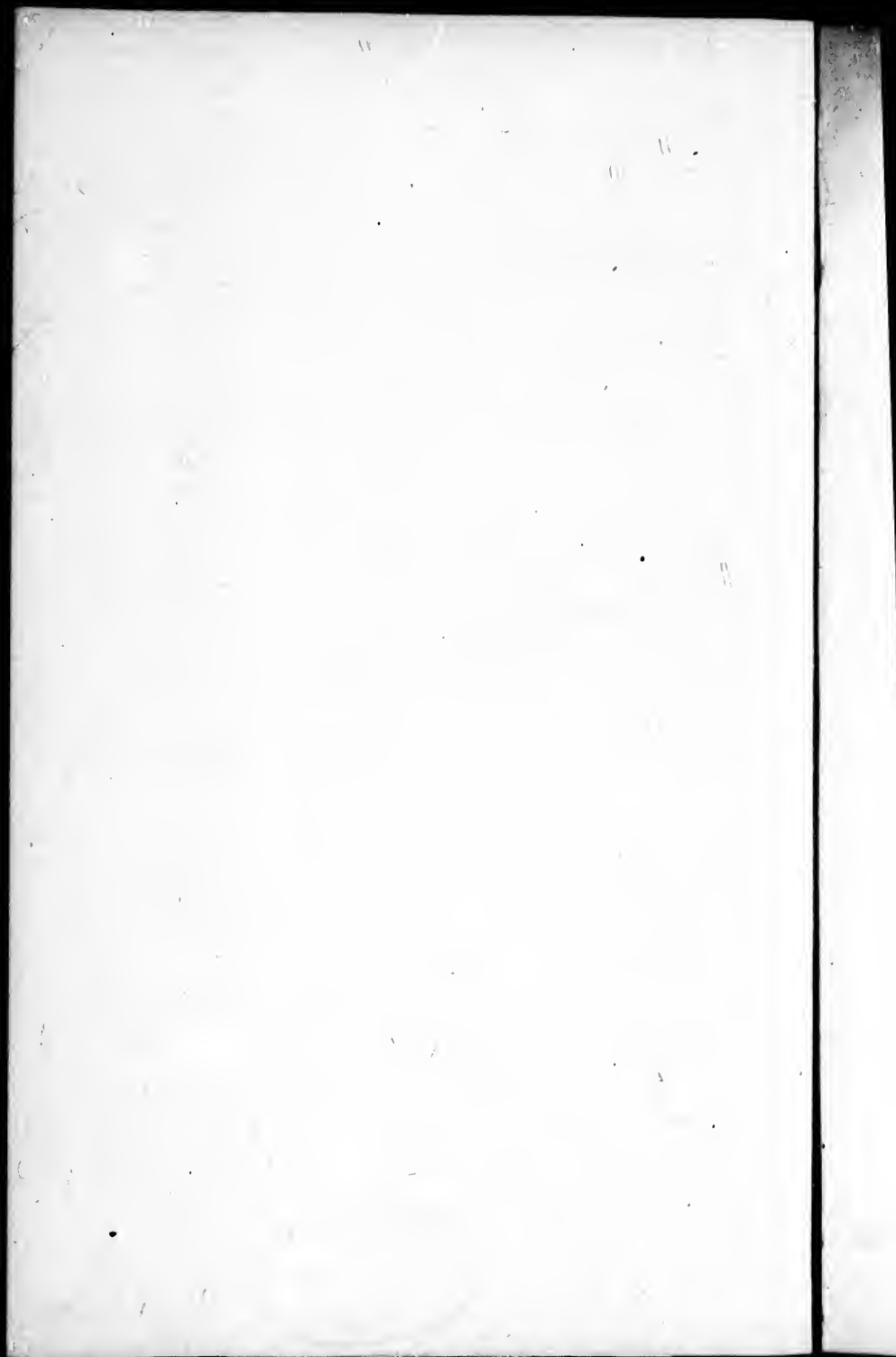
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OR,

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BOGLE CORBET;

OR,

THE EMIGRANTS.

CHAPTER I.

DOUBTS.

THE intelligent conversation of Mr. Beans made the evenings delightful, for Mr. Canes' approaching ball had somehow the effect of suspending all ordinary visits in the neighbourhood. During the whole time I remained at Prospect Pen, we were not once interrupted by a stranger; even the daughter of my host did not give the social apartment much of her company, being chiefly engaged in her own room writing letters for a ship in the bay that was on the eve of returning to England, and in preparing a dress for the festival of her friend.

The depressing heat of the day rendered the exercise of riding too much for me, but in the mornings and evenings I had some agreeable shooting on the skirts of the wood adjoining the plantation. Into the woods themselves I never ventured, having a judicious apprehension of the reptiles by which they were said to be dangerously infested. Nor was the game that offered itself very inviting, for it chiefly consisted of talkative green parrots, which held general meetings in a large tamarind-tree near the house, where they ever appeared to have so many important topics to discuss, that I fancied the assemblage could be nothing less than representatives in Parliament; and sometimes, instead of firing, I became a groundling, and listened uninstructed to their debates.

But of all the things I was most averse to injure were the monkeys, a numerous community of which had established themselves among the cliffs and loose rocks of a precipice in the vicinity, from which they made thievish incursions to plunder Mr. Bean's shaddock orchard. One of them, an austere carl, whom I had scared from an orange-tree that he had taken pos-

session of, as soon as he escaped over the rail which surrounded the garden, flung an orange at me with such dexterous aim as to hit me with no inconsiderable vigour right in the face. I had my gun at the time, but to fire at a thrower of stones required the reading of the riot act, and would have been little less than murder. It might have subjected me to the mittimus of no graver-looking justice.

But notwithstanding the deliberative assemblies of the parrots, and the judicial monkeys, Jamaica is not the land of field sports; nor though the avarice of man has rendered it interesting both by its importance, and the species of labour with which it is tilled, can it ever become congenial to the student or the artist. I could see no inducement to think of remaining, though the thought once or twice occurred to me; and Mr. Beans, with a happy illustration in himself, more than once pleaded the force of habit in reconciling a man to far less agreeable countries and climates.

My repugnance was not, however, altogether the offspring of conceit or dislike, but strengthened by an event which I shall presently have

occasion to describe. In the mean time a grateful remembrance of the universal kindness with which I was treated, constrains me, as it were, to speak only of those incidents which contributed to my gratification. Other visitors may foster the prejudices associated with the West Indies, and descant on the oppressions and sorrows which taint their bright and verdant shores; but for me to speak of aught else than of the frankness and friendship which flourishes as vigorously there as the ever vernal vegetation and never failing fruit, would be to incur the guilt of sullenness towards myself, notwithstanding that dismal event which, like the shadow of a cloud on a sunny field, still sullies my recollection.

On the day prior to Mr. Canes' ball, Miss Beans early in the morning rode over to see the preparations in which her friend was engaged: she wished to be alone, and requested that neither her father nor I should accompany her, but invited us to meet her as she returned in the evening. The old gentleman, without any other remark, softly patting her cheek,

at once assented for us both, and said she was a kind-hearted girl. I did not exactly understand his expression, but it struck me as something which implied that she had another purpose in making the visit, of a gentler character than merely to inspect the preparations.

In the evening, agreeably to her appointment, we met on the road, when her melancholy and altered looks showed that she had been affected by some unhappy occurrence. Mr. Beans, in a soft, yet anxious manner, inquired for her friend, but instead of making any reply, she mournfully shook her head. Ever impressed with a wakeful apprehension of the rapid maladies of the country, I asked her rather earnestly as we rode along, whether any accident had happened to Miss Canes. She made me no reply, but turning to her father, said aloud,

“ Poor Louisa is not happy—she has taken no interest in the preparations, all is the work of that insolent Bessy—alas ! her sufferings must not continue—they will kill her if not prevented, and I can give no advice.—Do you think

Mr. Canes would allow Louisa to stay with me?—I am sure, if you could imagine what she feels, you would readily let me ask her.”

Her father seemed pleased with what she proposed, and said he would take some opportunity of speaking to Mr. Canes on the subject; and coming round from the right-hand side of the road to me, Miss Jemima being between us, he lowered his voice, and with a tone of regret, subjoined,

“ Here is a sad example of the consequences to which we are exposed, by having no place of proper education in the island. Louisa Canes is a delicate and sensitive girl, qualities which her father does not appreciate as he should—the five years she has spent in England have ruined her for the society of Jamaica. She either ought not to have been sent home or kept there, which Canes can very well afford to do. Poor Louisa! I saw the shock she received on the evening when she first landed. What has she been saying, Jemima, that you look so dejected?”

“ Little,” replied Miss Beans, “ very little; —she sits all day in a desponding state—her

sighs and tears come thicker than her words—my heart was like to break for her—her mind is evidently running on some sad thought.”

“Perhaps,” said the old gentleman lightly, she may have left a lover behind !”

“Oh, no, I should have heard of that—all the passage she was as happy as a kitten, and anticipating a thousand pleasures that she has not found.—Her grief is a Jamaica plant.”

“She has been too sanguine, and it may be but a fit of disappointment.”

“She has been disappointed,” rejoined the young lady, with a deep sigh—“would you believe it?—she has made her will.”

“Her will !” cried I ; “what does she intend ?” The exclamation escaped me unconsciously, but it had the immediate effect of causing both the father and daughter to stop their horses for a moment. Mr. Beans then returned to his former position on the right-hand of Miss Jemima.

“We must not, my dear,” said he to her tenderly, “let this matter rest ; low spirits make a fatal disease in Jamaica ; I will speak to Mr. Canes at the ball to-morrow night, and

we will have her at Prospect Pen as soon as possible."

By the time we had in this manner discussed the subject, we reached the house, and Miss Beans, on alighting, retired to her own chamber, and we saw no more of her that night. Her father also had letters to write, and soon after went into his study. I was thus left alone to my own meditations, which the communication from Miss Beans rendered far from comfortable. In a word, my imagination was saddened; all sorts of disastrous images, and apprehensions filled it; and I fell into that mood of mind which has since grown to habitude with me, but which in those days was only occasional. Let me, however, hasten to the sequel, which, even after the lapse of so many years, I still cannot think of without a shudder. At this moment, the hideous circumstances rise before me, with all their original distinctness, singularity, and sorrow.

CHAPTER II.

THE FESTIVAL.

PROSPERITY, as the estate of Mr. Canes was called, lay some five or six miles distant, nearer the shore than Prospect Pen. It was a valuable property, with a large mansion, one of the best residences in that part of the island. All the country side had received invitations; the splendour and opulence of the preparations excelled every thing of the kind in the memory of the oldest inhabitants. The whole exterior of the house, jalousies, and piazzas were all on purpose newly painted, and every establishment for many leagues around was laid under contribution for the loan of plate, china, and glasses, London porter, and English preserves, to embellish and enrich the supper.

I went in the same carriage, an open car, with Mr. Beans and Miss Jemima; their domestic servants, to assist, all dressed in their gaudiest, had set off some time before.

On approaching Prosperity House, every thing indicated festivity. The sun was gloriously setting; the field negroes belonging to the property, with many others from the neighbouring estates, were assembled near the house, joyously talking and laughing all together, every one as black and shining as if freshly come from under the brushes of Day and Martin. It is impossible to conceive a more *riant* and happy scene.

Several of the negro women wore red slippers, which, with their white dresses, made them like magpies with red feet. A long row of little children, piccaninies, fifty at least, were dancing naked, hand in hand, to the sound of a fife, which an old negro, who had evidently belonged to a regimental band, was playing, and a lame negress kept time with one stick on a drum, made of half a large gourd or calabash. A ship's ensign was displayed from a tall flag-staff in front of the house, and four cannon stood beside

it; six or seven carriages like our own were driving to and from the door, others enlivened the more distant road : it seemed as if the revelry of the scene derived some peculiar zest from the black complexion of the crowd, and the mirth was undoubtedly increased by the gay loquacity and prattle of their simultaneous tongues.

We reached the door just at sunset ; a salute from the guns round the flagstaff roused the echoes far and wide, and with the sound of a conch, and the ringing of a bell on the offices, announced that the entertainment was about to begin.

The interior of the house was brilliantly lighted ; a band of black musicians began to play just as we entered, and the rooms were delightfully refreshed with limes and flowers. But beyond the *materiel* of the ball and banquet, there was little within the house to exalt enjoyment.

The company consisted entirely of whites, collected far and near, and the assemblage afforded but few resemblances to beauty. The matrons were dun and bilious, with wide

mouths, cany teeth, hollow eyes, and necks that needed all the beads and jewelry with which they were hooped and garnished. The young ladies, in mitigation, had youth, and some of them a pale pretension to gentility; but the men,—a mingled multitude of all ages, rough talkers and loud laughers,—with plenty of noise, supplied the want of urbanity, while the disposition to be pleased contributed to the happiness of all.

But Mr. Canes was not evidently in the best humour; he received us with more of the gravity of an undertaker at a funeral, than the satisfaction of a father rejoicing in the possession of an amiable and accomplished child. I thought him even sullen, and remarked on the unrepressed coldness of his manner to Mr. Beans, who was equally with me disconcerted at a humour so different from the general anticipation of the company. In the course of the evening it was however accounted for: there had been some difference in the morning between his daughter and the quadroon Bessy, in which he had taken a part against Miss Canes. From whatever cause this had arisen,

Bessy presumed upon it, and insisted on being of the company, notwithstanding the usage of the country towards people of colour rendered it an insult. This, however, Mr. Canes would not allow, and an altercation had ensued between them, which completely disturbed his temper for the night.

Perhaps we might have but slightly regarded the ill-breeding with which he exposed himself to his guests, had there been nothing else to excite attention; but the appearance of Miss Canes, thoughtful and absent as Miss Beans had described her, was a source of deeper solicitude. She plainly shunned her companion, and seemed as if the necessary little civilities she had to perform were a burthen. She moved about, absent and repugnant, and occasionally without cause, rushed across the ball-room, and then suddenly halting, looked around as if she had just awakened, with such piteous solicitation in her eyes, as made her dejection exceedingly touching.

I was particularly introduced to her by Miss Beans, but she appeared as absent at that moment as if listening to some distant sound.

Her friend looked at me mournfully, and shook her head. Soon after we observed her in tears;—such was the lady of the festival!

It was manifest that something lay heavy on her mind: I advised Miss Beans to seek her confidence, and she went towards her to entreat her to retire. Miss Canes seeing her approach came forward a step or two; and said calmly but solemnly—

“I see your anxiety—but give yourself no trouble—It will soon be over—this night, this night!”

Miss Beans was greatly agitated. It was obvious now that her friend had some mysterious cause for sorrow, and when she returned to me we both concluded, from the disturbed appearance of the old gentleman, that they were affected by the same anxiety. I was weak enough at the moment, notwithstanding the jocund enjoyment of the negroes, to fear that they both dreaded an insurrection on the estate; but Miss Beans, with more discernment, was convinced the grief of her friend sprang from a cause, not of terror, but of sadness; nor were we left long to doubt.

In the course of a few minutes after, the unhappy young lady was missed—the servants knew not where she was gone—she was not in the house—her father's sullenness changed into alarm—all the guests were amazed—the dance and the music were interrupted, every one went to the veranda in front of the house, where Mr. Canes, in accents of distraction, called aloud for her by name, and wrung his hands, as if he anticipated some appalling result. There was then a pause to hear if any voice would reply, when the crack of a pistol behind the house, occasioned a universal shout of horror, and all ran to where the sound had come from. I was the first to reach the spot. But the spectacle I beheld, rises, as I then saw it in the moonlight, —I am so shaken as to be incapable of saying more.

The weapon, the event, and the occasion, seemed to invest this deplorable catastrophe with a supernatural character. The ladies, without returning to the house, fled weeping to their carriages—the gentlemen followed, with awe and silence. The negroes gathered round me with lamentations and tears—some one brought a

table-cloth and spread it over the remains—and soon after, lights and torches, with the dumb-struck negroes around, completed a scene of consternation and grief that tongue nor pen shall ever adequately describe.

CHAPTER III.

NEGRO CHILDREN.

AFTER having remained with Mr. Beans about ten days, on account of the shock his daughter had received by the extraordinary fate of her friend, and by which he was obliged, in a great measure, to forego her society for that time ; I at last left Prospect Pen for the sugar estate of Plantagenet.

Among the other friendly peculiarities of those days in the hospitality of Jamaica, was the freedom with which gentlemen allowed their houses to be considered by the friends of their friends. The road was not marked by milestones, or inns, but by good fellows ; so that, although the journey was but forty-seven miles, it took me three days to perform it ; and I dare

say, had it taken months, I should have only increased the warmth with which the shortness of my visits were complained of. I did, however, reach Plantagenet, and on the third day was there received by my relation, with that frank heart-in-hand-kindness which exists nowhere more gratifying to the stranger than in the West Indies.

I had heard of Plantagenet so often, that I had pictured to myself, as I supposed, a tolerably correct idea of it; but instead of beholding that beautiful and romantic scenery which had so often been represented to me, I found it consisted of a small plain, as level as a lake, chiefly covered with sugar-canes, and bounded on the south by a rocky mountain, shaggy with bushes, and plumed with trees of primeval growth and magnitude.

The dwelling-house of my cousin, Mr. Buchanan, had recently been renewed; but I was told it was in a style much inferior both in size and elegance to the old mansion. The work-houses were also in a state of being restored, they were, however, declared by every stranger, who came to see them, among the best in the island.

This, with the conversations I had held with Mr. Beans on the state of West Indian property, led me to conclude that Plantagenet estate was becoming, like many others around it, more truly only a commercial concern, than that sumptuous residence which it had been in the days of earlier possessors. It was evidently regarded no longer as a manorial home, but a station of business; the prudent proprietor having some years before retired to a paternal inheritance he had in England.

My kinsman had heard of my misfortune; some of the rumours circulated by the Possies had reached him by the Clyde ships, and it was not until our acquaintance had ripened into friendship, that he would believe I had not been the means of ruining an excellent man, who had unfortunately placed too much confidence in me. However, this bias was overcome, and he not only acted towards me as one kinsman should do to another, but exerted himself among his acquaintance to appoint me their agent in London. In this his endeavours, though he did secure a number of respectable constituents, was not equal to his expectations; for in his different

applications, he found many of the more recent planters were obliged, by the terms on which they had borrowed money, to make the consignments of their sugars to particular houses; nevertheless my journey to the North side enabled me, before my departure for England, to console myself with the prospect of a decent, though not a great income.

I had not, however, been actuated in my visit to Plantagenet by any hope of such success; I went thither entirely, I may say, from sentimental motives. So capricious is fortune to many of our views, frustrating the best-laid schemes, and creating, as I may say, in the words of the poet, "life under the ribs of death." In point of feeling, I was, if one might really venture to speak out, disappointed; and yet I had no reason; for as I grew better acquainted with the neighbourhood, and the associates of my cousin, I found myself far more at home than I should have been in Glasgow.

All the Negroes of my father's time, when they heard of my arrival, came in flocks, like cawing crows to a new field, to see me. Their gabble, and the vast things they had to tell of

former times, was often exceedingly amusing; the kind-hearted creatures, though, like the rest of mankind, not so satisfied with the present as the former time, were yet more to be indulged for their affection, than to be chided for their familiarity. So much loquacity and mirthful impudence as they uniformly evinced, was totally irreconcilable with all those stern and gloomy ideas that, among the English, who have never inquired into the subject, are associated with slavery. But I must not say more on this point, lest I should be suspected of extenuating the state of a labouring community protected in all the evils incident to humanity, far more effectually than the poor of England are by parish officers, and those who regard distress as a crime.

I should ill, however, have availed myself of my opportunities, did I not speak of some of the habits of the Negroes. My foster-sister, as I may call the daughter of Baba, although she was several years younger, had, just before my arrival at Plantagenet estate, become a mother. That undecaying affection with which I must ever think of Baba, induced

me to visit her, for her recovery was languid : Mr. Buchanan accompanied me to the house appropriated for new mothers and their infants, where she lay still confined.

On our entrance there was great joy, and, as usual, much garrulity and infantine cries among the inmates of this lying-in-hospital ; poor Rebecca, the name of the slave, was still languid ; but when she heard I was coming, she cried out for her ebony baby, and presented it to me instead of to my cousin, and laughed and fondled over it, as if to convince me it was the fairest and loveliest thing in all the world—but every body knows that the crow thinks its own bird the whitest. Mr. Buchanan, as well as myself, was greatly amused with this instance of maternal love, and the innocent simplicity of the pride and joy with which it was accompanied.

When we had remained as long as the chief matron deemed it proper in conversation with Rebecca, I then inspected the apartment more particularly—a large room, with a number of couches round the walls, in which nine mothers were reposing in different stages of recovery ;

their offspring all naked, lying like human tadpoles on their backs in baskets, and some of them in trays beside them. A few were covered for protection from the flies and musquitoes with transparent gauze; twenty-one children were in the room, and according to their respective ages, from the baby of a few days to the little devil of twelve months, were of all hues, from the mahogany of the youngest, to the elder imps of legitimate jet.

But although the room presented a diverting scene, it was not without a sight that awakened compassionate emotions. On one of the maternal beds lay a twin, as I was told. The poor mother was not however there, she had died in giving them birth; and, but for the interested arrangements, it may be thought, of Mr. Buchanan, the orphans would probably have perished on the field. The other boy, screaming to the utmost stretch of his lungs, was sprawling on the lap of an old Negress, who was stuffing him with arrow-root as if she had been filling a black-pudding.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NEGRO.

As we were leaving the lying-in hospital, we met at the door a young negro with a basket in his hand. I walked on, not conceiving there was any thing remarkable about him, while Mr. Buchanan stopped to make some inquiries : on rejoining me, he said,

“That good creature has interested us all ; he is not one of my negroes, he belongs to the neighbouring estate of Perseverance, but his wife belonged to us. She was the mother of the twins you saw, and died in labour.”

“In what respects,” said I, “is he interesting ? I did not, however, particularly observe him ; he only momentarily attracted my

attention, as being of a better figure than we commonly meet with."

"He is not only so," replied my cousin, "but, though black, is a gentleman of Nature's making. It is, however, by the loss of his wife—she was worth to me a hundred pounds—and by the regular attention he pays to his children, that he has interested all our sympathies. His master, Mr. Logan, allows him to visit them every day, so much has he been pleased with his feeling and conduct. But I must tell you the love-story of poor Scipio.

"He is indeed, as you casually noticed, a very handsome negro, and really of a princely mind. He did not originally belong to this parish, but to Lochaber, an estate considerably farther eastward, which was sold by order of the mortgagees about two years ago. Some of the slaves were disposed of apart from the property; Mr. Logan bought him, and Yarico, who afterwards became his wife, was of a lot that luckily fell into my hands. She was absolutely, though no Hottentot, an African Venus, and had as many admirers among the other

negroes as a carcase at home has of crows; but Scipio and another sable suitor, Billy, were the favourites. Billy happened to be the companion of Scipio, and except in their suit for the love of Yarico, there had never once arisen the slightest disagreement between them.

“When the mortgage on Lochaber was foreclosed and the negroes culled for sale, it happened that Scipio, Billy, and Yarico were found to be in separate lots, and that the lot to which Scipio belonged was to go with the estate. They were thus destined to be separated. It is in such circumstances only that the slave’s life—let your philanthropists say what they will—can fairly be regarded as having any hardship so great as those of the labourers in England. But you have worse than it—a man may be dragged among you to prison for only a few pounds of debt—is not that slavery?”

As my cousin was thus diverging into his chief topic at all times, the vindication of what he commonly called West Indian servitude, to express the condition more appropriately than he thought was done by the harsher epithet

slavery, I recalled him to the history of Scipio, by inquiring how he became the property of Mr. Logan.

"In that," said he, "lies the proof of Scipio's magnanimity. Billy, in being deprived of the chance of cultivating the favour of Yarico, was desirous of remaining among his comrades on Lochaber. The same feeling affected Scipio differently. No longer likely to be able to continue his addresses, he cared not what became of himself—'Every ting was noting,' as he said almost in the words of St. Preux, 'where Julia was not ;' and in consequence he agreed with his friend Billy that they should exchange lots, since he was so anxious to remain. With some of that shrewd management which the negroes occasionally display, they accomplished the exchange, with difficulty however, for Scipio was worth more than Billy, and it was the object of the attorney of the mortgagee to sell the best negroes separate from the inferior, who were to go with the estate. It thus came to pass that Logan obtained Scipio at the same time when I bought Yarico—you will say a fortunate though unforeseen arrange-

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ment for them both. But it was not in consenting to be the sold slave that Scipio emulated the greatness of his namesake.

“When Billy found how the chances had turned up, he became frantic—if a negro could despair, I would say he did—and in his grief ran to Scipio, and implored him to pray Mr. Logan to change again the bargain. I was present when they came to him. Scipio stated their case with the most touching and simple eloquence, to the effect that whichever of them Yarico should prefer for her husband should go with Mr. Logan. Logan, as you know, is not a man fit for managing negroes properly; he has been bred at Oxford, and is too romantic; and he was, in consequence, so taken with his part in the drama, that he consented. But Yarico was capricious, for although Scipio was by far the finest fellow of the two, she preferred Billy. Scipio, however, like a black gentleman as he is, submitted with firmness to his fate, but also with sadness, for he wept with the bitterest sorrow, and yet made no complaint.

“Just in this crisis a very odd accident

happened: whether the agitation of the competition had been too great for Billy, or he had been previously unwell, Yarico had scarcely declared her preference, when he dropped down in a fit, from which he never effectually recovered; in less than a week he died, and, like the Ephesian matron, Yarico mourned deliriously for four-and-twenty hours, and then accepted the faith and troth of Scipio. To do, however, the capricious lady justice, she proved the best of wives to her husband, who, ever since her death, has been quite broken-hearted. And Logan, who is as romantic as ever, is indulgent to his grief; he permits him to come daily to the children, and Scipio never comes empty-handed. The piccaninies are yet too young to partake of what he brings, but he has ever something nice for old Sheba the nurse, and sits for about half an hour with her, during the whole time never speaking, but looking steadfastly, perusing, as I may say, his ebony idols."

"What a pity they are not white!" said I inadvertently, for I was really affected by the

story, and the picture of Scipio contemplating his motherless babies; at which Mr. Buchanan laughed heartily, saying,

“Don’t you think the heart may be as kind under a black skin, as a white?”

I felt a little ashamed at this, and by way of softening the absurdity which had escaped me, told him the story of the old lady with her birds, and the terms in which she used to revile the black steward of the packet.

“But,” said he, “gravely, do you think the negroes a different and inferior race?”

“I only think,” replied I, being by this time pretty well acquainted with his character, “that they are black and we are white. I never said any thing of their inferiority; on the contrary, I think all men are much like dogs,—one breed may be different from another, and each have distinct peculiarities, but it does not follow in that distinction, that there should be any inferiority imputed. The bull-dog is not so obviously made for speed as the greyhound, and yet he is superior in those watch and ward qualities for which the other is so little distinguished.”

Mr. Buchanan was puzzled, and I exulted in my logic : several times after, during the remainder of my visit, I was amused with the amplification he made of my remark, and the manner in which he applied it in vindication of " West Indian servitude : " a subject on which I have never been able to form a decided opinion ; for although, abstractedly, all philanthropists are agreed as to the political rights which ought to belong to the negroes, an insight of their dispositions, and of the condition they so happily enjoy, " must ever give us pause," and it makes, undoubtedly, " their calamity of so long life," if calamity it be, compared with the condition of other labourers elsewhere.

CHAPTER V.

A HOMEWARD VOYAGE.

HAVING made arrangements with the friends of Mr. Buchanan, and received accounts of the state of our affairs from Messrs. Crooks, Bullion and Co. of Kingston, which were far less promising than I had hoped for, I took my passage in a Clyde ship from Montego Bay. Had I yielded to my own prejudices, I should have gone to London at once, as it was there I intended to become West India merchant, but the anxiety to communicate the true state of Corbet and Possy's assets to their creditors, induced me to go first to Glasgow.

This passage was of a different description from the pleasant airing I had enjoyed outwards from Falmouth. The weather was gloomy and

boisterous ; I was torn to pieces by indisposition for several days, and was only roused from my intolerable subjection to the sickness, by one of the seamen crying, "a bloody sail on the larboard bow," which I literally believed might be some wreck upon the water, but which, when I went on deck, I saw was only a vessel that had the black look of a privateer ; ' bloody ' was but a metaphorical epithet of the sailor's own coinage, who belonged to Cork, and was, of course, rich in the figures of Paddy poetry. That innocent alarm, for so it proved, had, however, the good effect of putting an end to my illness, and I have since been of opinion that sea-sickness is more subject to the resolutions of the will than any other malady.

Our ship, the *Corronade*, Captain Crosstrees, was a running letter of Marque, the most disagreeable vehicle for a voyage of all of the ark genus. The slovenly apery of man-of-war exactitude was sometimes laughable, but in general afflicting. The second time I went on deck after my fright, I was so weak as to be under the necessity of sitting down on one of the guns, at which the mate, one of the most

pragmatic officers that ever trod on oak, whispered to me that such freedoms were not permitted in the discipline of the ship; and that night I was obliged to allow my cot to be taken down in the cabin, that, in case of an alarm, all might be clear for action. During the whole passage, these warlike orders and precautions were unceasing. Had the enemy's cruisers been as thick as the shipping at Billingsgate, we could not have been more vigilant; but, nevertheless, with all our care, there were occasional moments of relaxation. The redoubtable mate's watch one night, as we entered the chops of the Channel, offered an instance of this: we were steering close to the Irish coast, the wind being off the land, rather a smart breeze. It was dark, and the weather very hazy, when lo! a rough voice from under the starboard quarter hailed us for a rope. "Hollo!" cried the disciplinarian, in consternation;—it was a man-of-war's barge, come to impress, and which, with the usual dexterity of these sharks, had reached us unnoticed, by coming up from leeward. Two of our best-looking seamen were taken away, and I moralised on

Negro slavery, wondering how, among the bumpkins and philanthropists of England; it should have been so much forgotten that charity begins at home.

The same squally weather which had prevailed during our passage, continued still to attend us in St. George's Channel, accompanied with intervals of foggy calms. We at last reached the Mull of Galloway, where a sudden change took place. The atmosphere, so often thick, cleared into brightness, the boisterous wind grew merciful, and although winter reigned in the air, the crystal transparency which revealed every hill and headland of the most romantic landscape in the world, was to the sight as pure and cool as water to the traveller coming from the desert. All on board rejoiced in the prospect of home; the cocks in the hen-coops crowed with unwonted bravery, and even the ship-dog looked over the rail-way and snuffed the peat-flavoured breeze as it came at easy intervals from Ireland. We expected to reach Greenock, our port, in the course of the evening, but at sunset another change came on.

The sun set in a dim and drowsy haze, Goat-

field was capped with clouds, and the aspect of the Argyle and Cowal mountains became dark and sullen; soon after, the wind blew strong from the East, not exactly in our faces, but it was gusty and variable.

"We shall have wind enough before we get in," said the Captain; "I wish we had more sea-room."

We soon after saw Plada light, like a red portentous star, low in the horizon; but the same thick weather of which we had so often complained returned, and it soon disappeared, and with it all the features of the land on both sides of the Frith. Captain Crosstrees, without betraying any fear, was evidently troubled: presuming, perhaps, that we should early pass the Cumbraes, he had no particular note, nor even the man at the helm, of the direction in which the Plada lighthouse, bore from us at the time when we lost sight of it. This troubled him—it was an oversight in case of accident for which he might be blamed; and it was the more vexatious, as the mate, whose watch it was, ought to have been more observant. Still, as the weather, though obscure, was

far from stormy, it was not felt then as an important omission.

I was surprised at the professional indifference with which the incident was regarded: to me it seemed a prognostication of evil; for although it is certain that accidents, both by sea and land, often occur without warning, yet it is rare indeed, when they are foreseen by signs, that a blindness to the omens is not one of the most remarkable.

I felt that night, and still feel it as often as it recurs to mind, an unaccountable superstitious dread—a fear without warranty. There was no visible danger—the wind was not high—the waves dashed, it is true, darkly, and no star peeped through the universal gloom of the heavens. In this state of things a small vessel passed. It seemed to me as she came towards us, that she had a black and hearse-like appearance: just as I thought so, the dog, which had kept his station at the gunwale, uttered a long, hollow, and sad howl, and ran cowering under the windlass—one of the sailors kicked the appalled brute for its prophecy. I thought to myself he should not have done so;

but it is the fate of all seers and admonishers, to be despised or condemned for their foresight by the world.

The wind was rising, the land nearing on both sides, and the captain as he walked the deck, frequently inquired if the Cumbræ light could be seen.

"It was near this spot," said he to me, "where the great ship of the Spanish Armada sank, with all her racks and instruments of torture."

"It is then a dangerous place?" was my answer, not in any degree comforted by his information.

"It may be so in a gale of wind," was his equivocal answer, with a command, in the same breath, to take in sail and close-reef the fore-topsail.

A sailor soon after called out in a voice of alarm, that he saw the Fairlie windows. He was right; we had mistaken the channel, and were on the east side of the Little Cumbræ, steering into the bay, and would in less than ten minutes have been on shore on the Southenan sands.

"'Bout ship!" was the instant cry, and in the course of few minutes we were in the Mid Channel, which, although narrow, on that side of the island is safe. The wind almost in the same moment blew out more favourably, and the moonlight soon breaking through, we reached Greenock before day-light, without accident.

CHAPTER VI.

CHANGES.

LEAVING my luggage in charge of the captain, to be forwarded after me when it had passed the custom-house, I set off for Glasgow immediately on landing, and on my arrival there, waited at once on Messrs. Mickelwham, Shuttles and Co., the principal creditors of Corbet and Possy, from whom I heard, with inexpressible sympathy, that they too had fallen under the disasters of the time. The devastation, as it may well be described, of which we were among the earliest victims, had continued for some time, and was wide in its range, but its progress was then arrested, and trade had again shown symptoms of revival. The

bud and blade had re-appeared, although the winter was still not over and gone.

Considerably vexed, I then went to Mr. Pullicate, who had continued to prosper, and heard from him, with no small degree of indignation, that not only Micklewham, Shuttles and Co., but several others, particularly Spindles, Smith and Co. imputed their embarrassments to the stoppage of our concern, while their own overtrading was the very fountain-head and cause of that event. It was of no use to grieve. My resentment, however, against Possy was rekindled, for I could not but ascribe to his plausible folly the aspersions which had been with impudent assurance first propagated against me by him and his gawky wife. I may be pardoned for the severity with which I speak of them, particularly of the lady, when it is considered how much in a commercial community the wives thoughtlessly circulate the shreds and patches of the unfortunate intelligence which they sometimes glean from their weak and talkative husbands.

Greatly distressed by what I had heard of the misfortunes, reported to have been caused

by ours, I resolved to make my stay in Glasgow as brief as possible ; and I also resolved to make the Possys sensible that I was not unacquainted with their calumnies by taking no notice of them whatever. I offered no contradiction to their tales, convinced that time would vindicate the truth ; but it was an effort of severe anguish to persist in that forbearance.

After having explained to our creditors the satisfactory state in which I found every thing at Kingston, in the management of Crooks, Bullion and Co., and how unnecessary it would have been for me to interfere with them, ignorant as I was of the methods of dealing with the Spanish traders, I set myself earnestly to obtain my discharge, that I might be clear to receive the consignments from Jamaica. In this I met with the wonted liberality, but not in every instance, for some of the smaller creditors ascribing, in the old-fashioned style, our failure to riotous living, because we had been a little above their own condition, took the opportunity of lecturing me on frugality ; and others would not consent at all, until they saw certain other names at the paper. To do jus-

tice to the wary and consistent Eric Pullicate, he was of great use to me in this business, and a sense of gratitude for his endeavours materially allayed the harsh feelings in which I was sometimes disposed to think of him.

During my residence in Glasgow at that period, I carefully abstained from making any new friends; but to my old ones I was irresistibly attracted, I may even say impelled. In all this there was undoubtedly some worldly defect, but my heart was erased of its skin by what I suffered, and it is only in this revision of my life, that I am taught the weakness with which at that period I at once hid and cherished my pride and sensibility.

My old home with Mrs. Busby, though the distance was inconvenient, became my home again. She knew my disposition, and applied her counsel so judiciously while I remained with her, that the shafts which might have rankled into wounds, were extracted with but slight pain. Dr. Leach, to whom I occasionally paid a forenoon visit, continued the same odd and incapable person:—whether misfortune or a better knowledge of the world had made

me sharper-sighted, I seek not to ascertain ; but I thought him declining into dotage, and often, in spite of reason, I repined that he had not been a man of firmer texture than to yield so easily as he had done during my wardship, to his colleague.

Of Mr. Macindoe, the original impression continued unimpaired. I did, as I freely confess, resent the clumsy cunning with which he treated me at the period of our failure, but it abated with time, and I was able again to participate in his cobble with much of my early enjoyment. When I had nearly accomplished my liberation from the claws of the Glasgow creditors, one afternoon, as we were enjoying the punch together, I told him of the business promised to me from Jamaica, and his surprise on the occasion can only be adequately described by employing his own words.

“ Mr. Bogle Corbet,” said he, “ this is wonderful news—a gazette extraordinary from the war ! Ye surprise me—I am confounded : but we must fill up the cobble again, on the strength of the glad tidings. Well, you’re a

broken —, but ye must excuse me—an auld friend has a licence—You in that des-jacket condition—to be a West India sugar, rum, logwood, and pimento merchant. Wonders will never cease! I prophesied that ye would be my Lord Provost; but now I see ye're ordained for a Lord Mayor. Whittington and his Cat: Job! Job! whose latter end was better than his beginning. Mind when ye're fairly settled, and tell your correspondents to send me a hoggit of rum—middle runnings—the best and oldest. Don't you think this would be the better of another spoonful? Well, I'm in a consternation; our gude wife will yet get a grey parrot, the green are all dummies; but this is a confirmation of the old proverb, that the darkest hour is aye before the dawning."

To understand this properly, the reader should be told that the West Indian merchants were still at that time, in Glasgow, regarded as the chief grade of the mercantile community, however much they may have since fallen from their high and palmy state; and the surprise of Mr. Macindoe proceeded from that considera-

tion. Indeed, he was so amazed the whole of the afternoon, that he could not sufficiently express his congratulations, and, as the punch ebbed, his astonishment increased.

“ Really,” said he, “ it shows us what it is to have a good name for business—at bottom—let evil speaking say what it will. But mind when ye write about the hoggit of rum, to say from yourself—that I’ll be none the worse of a barrel of limes—nor Mrs. Macindoe of a firkin of tamarinds—do you think I may tell her the news?—Dear me!—when at the school I was fond of roasting cushoo nuts—Heh, Sirs, that was lang syne! but old age makes us, they say, twice bairns, and may be I’ll soon be at the years of roasting cushoo nuts again—they grow in Jamaica. And Muscovy ducks are queer creatures going about the door of a country-house: they turn up the side of their head wi’ pawkie e’en—like Mary Gray’s in the old ballad of Bessy Bell. You have, Mr. Bogle Corbet, surprised me this day. Here’s may the worst of our days be past!—take off your glass. That’s good punch, and it’s now your natural drink—it’s mother’s milk to you—

Bogle Corbet, after all, a Jamaica merchant !
This beats print—Well, there's no telling what's
ordained for us—'bode of gowden gown and
ye's get the sleeve o't,' is an auld saying and
a true. Just let me squeeze another lime—ye
must allow me—it's no every day we have such
a crack of consequence. By the by, talking of
limes puts me in mind of the fine green sweet-
meats that come from Jamaica—no doubt ye
will be getting complements of them—But,
after all, the hoggit of rum will be the best—
Taste that."

CHAPTER VII.

REMINISCENCES.

ON my return to London nothing remarkable occurred for some time ; but my old acquaintance, Dr. Lembeck, the friend of Sir Neil Eccles, called several times upon me, and always inquired particularly how I was getting my affairs settled. The same inquiry was so often repeated, that at last it struck me as something odd, and not made without design ; but I took no other notice of it, than by simply saying my discharge was signed by nearly all the creditors. He was one of Sir Neil's executors, and it occurred to me that, knowing the relationship in which my wife stood to the Baronet, he was surprised that his old friend had not left me any legacy. I was

surprised I must confess too; but so many interesting occurrences were about me at the period of his death, that the omission did not make so deep an impression as it would have done in a period of less inquietude.

In the mean time, my Jamaica friends were quite as good as their promise. I received from them several important consignments, from which I derived a respectable income; but the chance of making a fortune, or of even saving to the extent of my original little capital, was not in it. A change however, in consequence, was induced on my condition. My friends, connected with the manufacturers, gradually became strangers—not, however, owing to any alteration in their sentiments towards me, but to the different directions in which our respective pursuits lay.

My time was less occupied with business than when I had greater affairs to superintend; and I had more leisure to cultivate the acquaintance of that class of town-men, as they are called, who with small regular incomes and literary tastes, are only to be found in London, the most agreeable ingredients of intelligent society.

I had not, however, been above three years in the enjoyment of this state of things, when I began to apprehend that my Jamaica constituents were affected by the exigences of the times. One of them applied to me to negotiate a mortgage for him, which I readily effected, but it was taxed with an obligation to consign his sugars to a house in which the party who advanced the money was interested. This was the first instance in which I saw, having no capital myself, that my business would only remain with me so long as assistance was not required. The circumstance, however, did not disturb me at the time, as I was then on the eve of my second marriage, with Urseline Ascomy; and perhaps, after what I have said of her in the account of my journey to Falmouth, when I went to Jamaica, the reader will be curious to hear how it came to pass; as, without doubt, there was nothing in my first accidental introduction to Mr. Ascomy's family, to lead any one to expect that such a connexion would ever be formed. It was really an affair of destiny, and I can never yet imagine by what otherwise unaccountable influ-

ence it was brought about. She was a choice, after long search and consideration, preferred over others in that sort of indifference, which proceeds from having the power of selecting but one, where many are presented. I think it is Lady Delacourt, who says, that she chose her Lord, as a gown, after looking at many patterns, fixing at last on any one, to save herself from farther trouble. Her Ladyship's case was mine.

One day, as I happened to pass along Piccadilly, I met the two Miss Ascomys with a gentleman. An immediate recognition mutually took place: they rejoiced to see me, nor was I less so to see them; and yet there was nothing particularly attractive about them. Their pelisses were of dark brown, lined with green; a contrast of colours, which, by some inscrutable association, always reminds me of a toad; and which to this hour I consider abhorrent to Iris, and to be the most vulgar juxtaposition that millinery or painting can express. Their straw-bonnets were out of fashion, and were adorned with broad pink ribbons and flaunting bows; in a word, they

were unlike any thing in dress which the metropolis at that season could afford ; but they had been particularly civil to me, and I thought only of their kindness.

As they were on their way to Bond-street, I walked with them, and when we entered more into the crowd, Miss Abigail went forward with the gentleman, and Urseline remained with me.

We had not proceeded many paces, when, as if I had been an old friend, she informed me that her sister was to be married to the Reverend Mr. Tythe, the gentleman with whom she was walking ; and that they had come to town with their father to make some necessary purchases for the wedding. I did not feel myself entitled to this confidence, nor did I greatly admire the young lady for being so communicative to a stranger. But this was not the only instance in that promenade which led me to observe that much worth may be blended with little delicacy. Just as we passed the bottom of Conduit-street, although it was then about four o'clock, my fair companion's garter

fell loose, and without remark, she stepped aside and tied it.

There is certainly no moral crime in a young lady tying her garter in one of the great thoroughfares of London; but on points of such etiquette, I am particularly nervous. I hold the sight to be rank indecorum out of a dressing-room; judge, then, what were my feelings on that occasion towards Miss Ursey, as her father called her. Gratitude, however, for her surgical aid in dressing my wounded forehead overcame all scruples, and we continued to walk together,—till her sister happened to notice some article in a window which she wished to purchase. The price exceeding her means at the time, she applied for assistance to the purse of *Magna Ursa*, my companion, but was flatly refused aloud, because it was more than she could afford, and it was covetous to think of buying it at all.

Now it happens, that covetous is one of those delinquent remembrancers of the Ten Commandments, which constantly reminds me of the peccable nature of the human race, and I hate to hear it. That, however, was not so

much the cause which roused my antipathy at the time, as the exposure of their poverty; a condition in itself sufficiently mortifying without being bared to the contemptuous and pitiful gaze of the world. There must indeed always be, in my opinion, an innate predilection to a base estate with those who speak lightly and freely of the greatest evil of life. Neither man nor woman, who has a just respect for the feelings of others, will ever remind them of their poverty, and no delicate mind will disclose its own proximity to beggary; for to tell the world that you are poor, is only a coarse way of bespeaking charity. It is needless, therefore, to say, that Miss Urseline did not carry my heart by storm—indeed so far was she from it, that all my prejudices rose in arms against her; and had the weird sisters themselves, in the shape of a lawyer, clerk, and parson, menaced me with her for a bride at the altar, my repugnance would have been invulnerable. But yet Miss Urseline Ascomy was not a bad creature, although inheriting some of the most disagreeable qualities her sex is subject to. She rarely could give a

direct answer—was obstinate and self-willed—
and even the more she was in the wrong, the
firmer she resisted the right. I have known
her persist against the evidence of her own
senses, rather than retract an opinion; all these
qualities undoubtedly predicated that she was
not endowed with the sweetest graces for a
wife—and yet she is mine!

CHAPTER VIII.

A NEW ACT.

MY Jamaica business afforded far more leisure than Corbet and Possy's, and my acquaintance was, by the means of Dr. Lembeck and Mr. Woodrife, extended among a circle of their friends, from whom I imbibed a more general taste for reading, without acquiring a particular bias for any subject. Thus it happened, that at the time when my acquaintance was renewed with the Ascomys, I was become somewhat of a town man; for I had no desire to embark deeply in business—I saw that the state of society in England prognosticated the coming on of difficulties to young men entering the world, and that although the French disasters in Russia were

then thickening by every post, the circumstances of our own country were also becoming day after day more perplexing.

It may be thought that in yielding to the inactivity which this opinion of things encouraged, I betrayed my own interests—but it should be recollected that the scheme of my life, though it was not of my own contrivance, had been blighted, and that adversity, whether it come of ourselves or of our neighbours, is mildew on exertion. I could not redeem the past—the state of the times did not encourage me to attempt it, and disappointment had castigated my desires into moderation. But whatever the reader may think of me at that period, I am bound, by what I have herein undertaken, to relate only the truth—the best truth, however. It cannot in reason be expected that I should speak ill of myself.

Mr. Ascomy, as I have already mentioned, was a gentleman of rather odd peculiarities; but take him from his philosophy, he had many excellent and amiable qualities. I dare say he had talents too—many of his friends thought so, but his eccentricities always appeared to

me so predominant, that I was never able to discover in what his talents consisted. Common civility, after meeting his daughters in the street, required that I should visit him at his lodgings; and hearing from them that he seldom went abroad, especially at night, I resolved to call when it was probable, as strangers in London, they might have an evening engagement; so much had my predestined spouse by her foibles displeased me, that I shrunk at the idea of cultivating more of their acquaintance.

Accordingly, in the course of a few nights after our rencounter, I went to pay my respects to the old gentleman, in Norfolk Street, Strand, where they had their lodgings. The young ladies, as I had hoped, were not at home, and Mr. Ascomy I found engaged in a serious discussion with a literary acquaintance, one Mr. Moth, whom I had several times met with at Dr. Lembeck's, a person of great reading and little capacity—a learned man—but it was in all sorts of learning save that which could have been of the slightest use.

My appearance, and the kind reception vouch-

safed to me by my old acquaintance, interrupted their erudite colloquy for a few seconds, but when the customary reciprocities had been performed it was resumed, and was as void of all interesting knowledge as words grammatically strung together could possibly be; but it excited me, by its very vacuity, as an exhausted cupping-glass raises the muscles, and I was greatly amused to hear how men could talk so much and say so little. It is mortifying to minds of a philosophical bias, as those two worthy gentlemen believed theirs to be, to discern how much, even in argument, the practical man of business is superior to a mere theorician, and how far more ably he jumps to the conclusion, while they are pioneering among the weeds and entangling briers of unimportant preliminary distinctions. The remark, however, is not made with reference to the excellent disputants who have given rise to it, but to all of the two classes alluded to. How much of logic is really useless!

After I had sat upwards of an hour, now and then lifting a fallen loup in their argument, the young ladies came in, attended by Mr.

Tythe. This made the party too numerous to be entertained by the discourse of one speaker, and in consequence we fell into conversational groups, by which I happened to become associated with Miss Urseline, who, after my heavy travail in the desert sands of her father's discussion with Mr. Moth, was a fountain gushing from a rock; in plain terms, a young woman possessed of a competent household modicum of good sense. When I retired for the evening, it seemed to me that I had not done justice either to her merits or those of her sister Abigail, when the recollection of them had occasionally risen in my remembrance, as Campbell says, taking the thought first from Lord Bacon and afterwards from Blair's Grave—

“Like angel visits, few and far between.”

But part of the line is not applicable, for except the “few and far between,” the allusion to angels may be judiciously omitted. However, certainly that evening, whether conjured by the contrast of the nothingness in the previous controversy to the unaffected justness of her observations on some of the sights she had

been to see, her genius kithed to me in a very sagacious conversible manner. She evinced far less pertinacity in opinion than the recollection of the first impression of her character had taught me to ascribe to her; showed several purchases she had made, creditable to London liberality, and interspersed her discourse with solid and substantial apothegms of a domestic nature, which sufficiently exculpated her from all the guilt of blue.

Not ever having had the good fortune of seeing much of domestic life, save only for one bright moment with Anella, the importance of frugal housewifery to the comfort and happiness of man, never appeared so emphatic before. I had a just enough conception of a pound, and its aliquot parts, of the number of pence in a shilling, as well as the farthings in a penny, but of their relative value, I am almost ashamed to say, I was in a primitive state of princely ignorance; and I felt the full extent of my deficiency, when Miss Urseline, showing me a piece of muslin which, by the mark on the end, I discovered had been manufactured by my old ally, Eric Pullicate, "in-

quiring if I thought it not dirt-cheap at half-a-crown a yard?" I was only able to answer, that it looked much like what in my time was marked by our foreman, the very maker, at that rate. This the complaisant reader will no doubt allow was exceedingly funny, for Miss Urseline laughed very heartily at my stupidity, telling me that she had bought it for one-and-nine-pence the yard, and, debonairly insinuating a compliment to herself, in order that I should see how dextrously she had managed in the negotiation, she assured me that the shop-keeper, as he himself had told her, had not for many years broken a ticketed piece, and only did it to her, as he perceived she was from the country, and it was the interest of the trade to encourage country customers. I looked at the stuff again—it would have been dear at a shilling. But in these circumstances, and with such topics, my interest in the character and dealings of Miss Urseline commenced, and so much did they engage my attention, that I never once during the evening recollected the public atrocity of the garter—an incident, as I thought at the time, more astounding than

Lady Salisbury's accident at King Edward's ball, when the Order was founded. But I must be cognisant of the existing powers; Mrs. Corbet is still alive, and nothing, if not critical, and to keep peace in the house, must say that I did think a woman who would look twice at the two sides of a shilling before she parted with it, was very much the right sort of wife to make a bright hearth with a narrow income, to which the aspect of the times was not auspicious.

CHAPTER IX.

COURTSHIP.

MY courtship with Urseline Ascomy was too important to be cursorily passed over. It is manifest, by what has been stated in the preceding chapter, that the romance of life was then becoming a little flat and stale with me, and that increasing years, and decreasing means, were prompting to economical expedients; but my native candour would not suffer me to equivocate towards the woman whom I thought would make a suitable wife to my circumstances; and accordingly, I honestly told her, when I solicited the favour of paying my addresses, that we had both too many nicks in our horns to be pastoral in our love, without

running the risk of being foolish. She quite as frankly assured me that she thought so too.

"But, Bogle Corbet," said she, "for the sake of a family custom, I must tell my father, and when you obtain his consent, which I can encourage you by saying will not be refused, the time and place will be at our own choosing."

I seriously confess that I was not prepared for such plain dealing. I did expect a little more maidenly affectation; but replied, after a sentence or two, "that friends should not stand on ceremony to each other."

"It would be very surprising if they did," replied the young lady; (she was then on the wrong side of thirty,—verging to forty, between ourselves;) "but at weddings, births, and burials, it is wholesome to observe old customs, that we may not be spoken of."

"True!" was my answer, having at the moment an ugly remembrance of how little she seemed, in what she either did or said, to care how she was spoken of; but before I could add a word, she shut my mouth with the following most satisfactory observation.

"Not that I care for what they say of me,

for it is exceedingly troublesome to be always looking behind to see how you are noticed, and fumbling with your gown to catch the eyes of the world."

Now that word fumbling I did not like, it was unbecoming, ill chosen, vulgar, and I wonder still, how she could not find another more appropriate ; it was, however, as dust on the balance, compared to her other sterling qualities, so I passed it over as an inadvertency ; but more experienced consideration induces me to say, that I suspect it came from habitude.

"But," said she, resuming the topic, which my dislike of the term a little disturbed ; "you must let me speak to papa about the settlements, before you say a word to him on that subject."

I stood aghast ; and she continued,—

"Nay, I know it is not the custom for young ladies to do so, but we are speaking of a life and death matter, to which the settlements are but secondary ; and as you are not a man of a mercenary disposition, and papa's head is as full of crotchets as a fig is of seeds, leave the business to me."

"Good Heavens!" cried I, aloud, subjoining softly to myself, "Is this woman to be my wife?"

"Well," said she, mistaking the cause of the interjection, "if you do not approve of my interfering, I shall not; but, Bogle Corbet, it is a thing that makes me anxious; I should ill endure to be thought the cause of injuring my sister; I want but my fair share of papa's fortune. Now I know that he thinks you a man careless of your money, for we have often spoken of that; and he will not be outdone by you in generosity, and it is on that account I fear his warm-hearted folly will lead him to forget that I am not his only child."

I certainly not only forgot the odious word so unfitly applied, but took hold of her hand, and made some stammering solicitation for pardon.

"No, no, Bogle Corbet," was her reply; "you have asked me, and I have, in my plain way, given you a dutiful answer; so no more parlevooring, but let us take the course that our consciences will hereafter approve. I would never like you, if for your own sake, or even

for mine, you would in the settlements let papa, who never thinks of to-morrow, do injustice to my sister."

"You cannot imagine such a thing of me," cried I, a little piqued.

She looked, and then smiled, adding, "you best know the sordid secrets of your own heart, Bogle Corbet; but I would rescue you from temptation. I know well my father's head," and stretching out her hand to me, while a tear glistened in her eye, said, "I do not think you mean, but you will take what he offers, and I am sure his vanity will offer too much. Let us not, Bogle Corbet, begin our connexion by permitting even to be proposed any settlement which my sister or Mr. Tythe may think unfair towards them."

The reader, by these slight remembrances of our only conversation as lovers, will perhaps see more of the character of my second and present most worthy wife, than by a more elaborate description, and discern something too of the causes of that regard which began in circumstances so little likely to terminate in a union which has now existed many years,

agitated with difficulties, and darkened with anxieties, but without one moment of diminished confidence. In fact, from the day of my marriage with Urseline Ascomy, I became a new man.

In recalling the recollections of my youth, something of the original sentiments in which the most important transactions came to pass, necessarily return upon me, and I am again for a time restored, as it were, to the feelings of former years ; but that epoch is now over, and I have hereafter to speak of the struggles and transactions of a man fighting with adversity, and tracing, in all the movements of a variegated life, how truly he has ever been but a cog on one of the great wheels of the social system, directed by no effort of his own. I have not, however, yet done with my second courtship.

The incidental notice of my wife's regard for justice, and her sisterly love for Mrs. Tythe, have led me to allude to matters of subsequent occurrence, but the fond interval before the marriage claims to be more circumstantially described.

What took place between her and Mr. As-

comy, after I had been formally accepted, when she went to consult him respecting her settlement, Curiosity, though an earnest impulse never prompted me to inquire; but it was satisfactory to her, and I attended the old gentleman's appointment on the subject, with no other feeling than a passive acquiescence to accede to the result. Judge, however, of my surprise when, on entering his room, I found Mr. Moth there, invited to be a witness, and the town attorney of Mr. Ascomy, with two spacious engrossed parchments before them, sealing wax, red tape, pen, ink and paper, and all the other cobwebs and trumpery of legality suitable to such an occasion before them.

I said nothing, but took a seat, expecting the man of law would read the document as usual aloud; instead of this, however, Mr. Ascomy turning towards me, and composing his features as much as possible into an aspect of wisdom, said with grave solemnity—

“Mr. Bogle Corbet, in this deed, and in contemplation of the intention on your part towards Urseline Ascomy, my daughter, I have made an assignment of certain monies and properties

to trustees for your mutual benefit, and for the benefit of the children which, with God's help, you and the said Urseline propose to beget."

The sly man of documents smiled, and Mr. Moth interposed, saying,

"Mr. Ascomy, there is no need to be so particular, Mr. Corbet knows very well the intent of the deed."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Moth," replied the philosopher. "There are occasions when not to be particular is to be neglectful; one of the faults in conduct which you know Aristotle ranks next to the vices."

"In that," said Mr. Moth, "the sage has not displayed his characteristic perspicacity, because, the obvious distinction between negligence, which is the better term, and a vice, consists in——"

"True, true," cried Mr. Ascomy impatiently; "I know what you would say, but for all his acumen, no doubt there is an error in what he says, for negligence may, under certain circumstances, be absolutely a virtue; surely to neglect to perform a vicious action is no approximation to vice."

Mr. Charter the lawyer interposed. "We must leave Aristotle till another day," said he.

"I crave pardon," rejoined Mr. Ascomy, "we must; but I could not help giving my friend Moth a touch with my switch in passing. Mr. Bogle Corbet, in this deed I have assigned a just share of my worldly possessions for the use of you and yours, but for good and substantial reasons, best known to myself, I do not choose to tell you the amount thereof, so before you know what it is, will you accept and sign the deed?"

"Undoubtedly," was my answer, drawing my chair nearer to the table, and taking up a pen; Mr. Charter seeing the movement spread the parchments which I signed at once, while Mr. Ascomy in unspeakable consternation sat in silence, frustrated of making a speech he had doubtless conned.

CHAPTER X.

SETTLEMENTS.

MY knowledge of Mr. Ascomy, and his amazement at the readiness of my acquiescence, convinced me that I had disappointed him of making a fine speech prepared for the occasion. I had some suspicion it would have that effect, and, perhaps, there was a little prankfulness mingled with the manner in which I acted; malice it could not be called, but the consequence returned upon my own head, with unforeseen astonishment.

Urseline had in her conversation with him, the better to gain her end, after duly intimating that Mr. Tythe was not of a disposition, nor possessed of influence enough to raise

himself higher in the Church, advised him, as if to outstrip me in generosity, to make the deed of settlement, and to have it prepared without speaking to me at all on the subject; insinuating, that to make his own magnanimity the more apparent, he ought not to inquire what I intended to settle. How she accomplished this I never very clearly understood, but the result was as I have described it. In truth, I possessed nothing to settle; I had only a respectable income, part of which was laid aside for a policy on my life, effected in contemplation of the marriage. It was not a heavy sum; but it served to lessen the amount we had to spend, which was also lessened by a reservation set apart for the prospective contingencies always deemed to be in the rear of a wedding. I beg attention to this, because I am reluctant to take up the time of the reader by enlarging upon the causes that, in combination, hastened on a decision which could not be averted.

The apparent indifference with which I consented to the settlement Mr. Ascomy made on

his daughter, greatly disconcerted him by exciting another cause, quite as important as the frustration of his eloquence.

He had prepared himself to answer some objection, which he anticipated that I, as a man of business, would probably make to sign a paper without knowing its contents; but the abrupt mode which had been adopted to conclude discussion was unexpected, and had the effect of greatly molesting his quiet. He was aware of my circumstances, knew that the addition he was providing could not be unimportant, and reasoned upon the seeming carelessness I had shown like—a philosopher. In a word, he concluded upon two most uncomfortable inferences to himself; the first was, that whatever he gave with his daughter, was much more important to me than he or she had imagined; and second, that I was greedy to get it, and that it was the sole object I looked to in the match: nor was this conceit unplausible, for he had noticed my impatience at the occasional inadvertencies of Urseline's language, and the lectures and admonitions which her disregard of the etiquettes and the observances

of society frequently provoked. It is true, a man of the world would have discerned in it only anxiety to see her more worthy : a suitor for wealth would have been none offended with such ripples and surface blemishes ; to such a candidate for her fortune, they were too small to be seen. Accordingly, notwithstanding his disposition to overrate my generosity, the true cause of all the misunderstanding, he became, from the moment I had set my hand to the deed, persuaded that in my heart I was mean and mercenary.

His second inference was still more erroneous, and had more of the musty "unfanned" air of the library about it than even that.

"If Bogle Corbet be not mercenary and mean, he must be a prodigal fool, and my ill-fated daughter will be reduced to beggary by his Timon-like profusion—Poor girl ! an arid doom awaits her ; methinks I see her falling into want—and perhaps with children—unhappy offspring of pennyless parents ; there they go in the cold and humid days of winter, in windowed raggedness, without shoes—their heels red with chilblains —merciful heaven !

can I endure this? I must break off the match if the one inference be correct, and if in that inference I be wrong, I must ensure a sufficient separate maintenance for the fated Urseline, to avert the inevitable consequences of the other. What care and anxieties parents must endure! For a time the mother's love is grievously tried by the passionate baby, yelling to the pitch of its voice, and spurring with its feet like drumsticks, frightening her sleep—to say nothing of the other condiments that make the miseries of a nurse's lot and lap: such are a mother's cares in infancy, chiefly nocturnal. But these are light to those of gabbling childhood. If a Miss, she has a doll; it sulks when she sings; and then the poor mother assures her to no purpose that it is but of wood—the termagant demoiselle knows better! If a Master, he has a trumpet, perhaps a drum: the peace of the house is gone; and with paper cap and sword,—his elders have but fur—he struts a hero, and fights with Hotspur in the mirror—smash, it lies in fragments; or haply his sister fences with him, and, with a stamp, his foil has made her beauteous

right eye as blind as an oyster. These are but the mother's cares ! then comes the sire's ; of which, to guess at but for an imperfection of their variety, read all histories ; the wars of kingdoms, battles, elopements, marriages, divorces, duels, bankruptcies, and broken hearts—these make not half the moiety of the disasters that stuff with restless ecstasy a parent's pillow."

Such was probably the troubled current of Mr. Ascomy's reflections on that occasion, all flowing from the pure well-head of affection ; and it requires no very difficult calculation to determine where, with the guidance of his good nature, it would end. However, nothing more particular occurred at that time, the inference touching my sordid views in seeking the marriage gradually became doubtful, and ultimately the apprehension of prodigality entirely predominated. The precise effect came, however, to no issue till after the wedding-day, when, on the following morning, he came to me with a deed, by which he had settled on my wife, in addition to the fair half of his whole property, secured by the marriage settlement, an annuity, chargeable on the other half until

the youngest child, the offspring of the marriage, should be twenty-one years of age. Thus the very event which Mrs. Corbet had, from her knowledge of his humour, been so anxious to avert, came to pass in consequence of the measure she had deemed most likely to avert it.

The conduct of Mr. Ascomy in this proceeding sprang from an egg of his own imagination; and, although I have had never any solid reason on the part of my wife to regret the marriage, yet the connexion, owing to his folly, has never ceased to give me pain. When Mr. Tythe and his wife came to hear of the second settlement, they were angry with a just cause; and, regarding the partiality shown to mine as unkind, they ascribed it to some influence I had exercised over the old gentleman. The reader is, however, not more innocent than I was of the instigation ascribed to me, and both my wife and myself endeavoured in vain to induce Mr. Ascomy to alter the second deed. It was, however, speaking to the wind, to ask him to make any change. Every thing I did, became a motive to him to adhere to an opinion which, as he alleged, was framed on the

soundest principles, deduced from considerate observation. It must be thus manifest, that without any action of mine calculated to produce perplexity, I was involved in a whirlpool of troubles, arising from the fears and eccentricities of others. It did not, however, affect my domestic situation. Both Urseline and myself, finding our income arising from my Jamaica Agency sufficient, never looked at her father's unworldly deeds, and it so happened that I was not induced to act on them: we contented ourselves with our own legitimate income, and never once attempted to ascertain to what extent the improvident kindness of her father reached.

There is, however, one point in the confluence of my circumstances at that period, which ought not to be left unnoticed. The habits and dispositions of Mrs. Corbet were not fitted for London society; she had been accustomed to the unrestrained freedom of a country life, and was teased in the performance of those little indescribable etiquettes which, at least, smooth the wheels of intercourse, where manners are considered as scarcely less import-

ant than the more valuable qualities. At first I thought time and observation would amend her in this; but the age of forming new customs was gone by, and I was compelled to bear with her ways as well as I could. It did not, however, require any very strenuous effort, for the shadows of past events were still black and chill upon me, and that disposition to evade society which has since become a second nature with me, was then gradually taking effect.

CHAPTER XI.

DOMESTIC TROUBLES.

I CANNOT altogether say that my second marriage, during the few years we remained in the metropolis, was a happy one ; but whether the fretful annoyance in which it kept me arose from any fault in our own management, or from causes exterior to ourselves, I am not disposed to inquire. Certain it is, that Mr. Ascomy suspected me of a predilection for prodigality, and that Mrs. Tythe complained among her country friends of having suffered unjustly by his partiality to me ; although, in fact, she suffered nothing ; and Mr. Tythe was in the receipt of all the advantages of a good living, more than adequate to supply the desire of their frugal wishes. Of him I knew

comparatively little; I never became anxious for his intimacy; and therefore I can only say, that he was a steady, sober, corpulently-inclined parish priest, a little too dogmatical and pompous; his habits acquired as a teacher in early life never having been counteracted by any natural vivacity. I therefore cannot say that our estrangement from them ever had any material effect upon me: I should have been as well pleased had we remained on good terms, but I was very easy under his unwarranted displeasure.

It was different with Mr. Ascomy. In him I did feel a particular interest; his oddity, pertinacity of opinion, and the constantly erroneous conclusions of his understanding, were never-failing subjects of curiosity, heightened to a prodigious degree by his imaginary belief in my extravagance; for the manner in which it was ever peeping through his angular gentleness was indescribably amusing, the effect being always immeasurably beyond the cause.

One day as we were coming from the city together—the weather was oppressively warm—I had been much fagged by a sale of sugars,

and worn out in spirit by some little unpleasant circumstances which had occurred at the sale; after walking a short way along Cheapside, without consulting him, I called a coach. He instantly expressed the utmost surprise that I should think of doing so on such a fine day, and directed my attention to the beautiful shadyness of the south side. He was, however, induced to embark with me, but all the way home he descanted most sapiently on the force of habit, and found that our fare was equivalent to thirty-six pounds ten shillings a year. It was no doubt so, had it been a cost of every day; but as I seldom took a coach, certainly not above once a quarter, his strictures little disturbed me.

When we reached the door he went straight into the house. I felt my pocket, and had but a shilling of change remaining; the footman had none at all, and went to borrow from his mistress; she was equally void, and Mr. Ascomy was applied to. Such manifest symptoms of poverty in all the house, and such prodigality, deeply affected him. At first he denied pettishly that he had any change—then

he recollected—and finally lent the lad a shilling, on condition that HE would repay it. Such an afternoon! It was to me an entertainment worth more than half a guinea paid for the pit of the Opera House to hear Catalani, then in all the blaze of her beauty and the glory of her voice. My wife, not very well, retired in hystèricks, believing that the end of all things was at hand.

On another occasion he was still more teasing. In now and then giving a dinner to a few friends in our frugal way—for we never could do so otherwise, and were always most absurd, moreover, when we attempted it; sometimes remnants of claret were saved by Mrs. Corbet—the bottom drops, as she called them, being collected, and, when full, corked up. Now I detested this, for of all wine under the sun claret is the least that can bear to be dribbled with. It happened, however, one day when Mr. Ascomy was with us, and the weather being warm, I ordered a cool bottle of claret. This was a notable opportunity for my wife to produce her drops. Accordingly one came. It was vinegar—off it was sent—and I saw Mr.

Ascomy fall back in his chair and look towards his daughter dejectedly.

The second bottle, for anything I know, was vitriolic acid ; the first was the balsam of life to it. I was provoked, and scolded—at the same time I could scarcely keep my gravity at the trepidation of Mr. Ascomy, while my wife, offended at hearing her drops so despised, endeavoured to defend them. I made no other answer, but insisted she should taste the stuff; she did so, and was unable to swallow it, consenting at once that another bottle of fresh should be drawn. But what a storm at that moment burst upon our devoted heads ! Mr. Ascomy started from his seat, forbade the servant to obey, and poured forth such a tirade upon his daughter for yielding to my prodigal habits, that really my titillation was almost passing into a more prickly humour, when he hastily retired into another room, considering our doom inevitable.

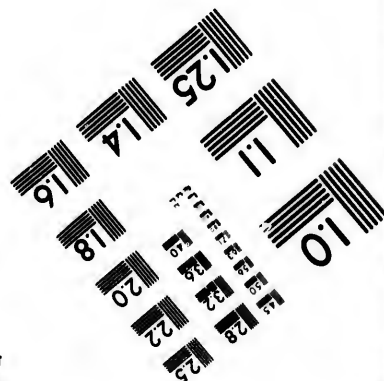
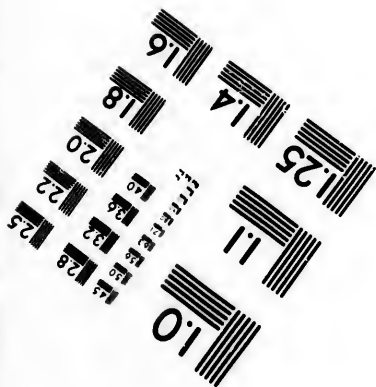
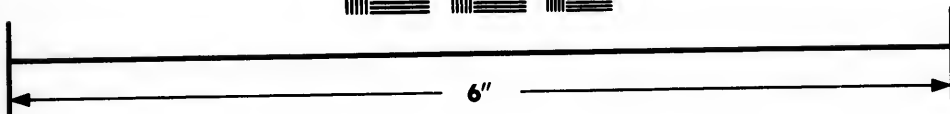
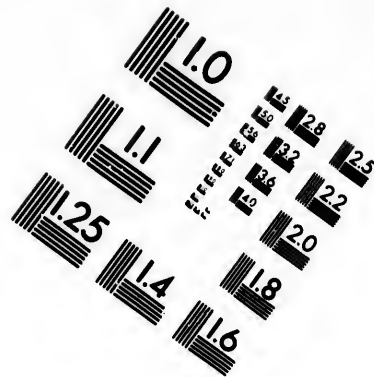
Phantasies of these kinds had, without exaggeration, a serious effect on our household comfort. By this time we had several children, and when the old man had retired to ponder on

the destruction, one of the most impudent of the urchins went and complained to him, that his brother had broken his drum, which I had given him two shillings to buy; and the other justified himself by saying, it was done in revenge, because he had accidentally broken the ears off the three-guinea rocking-horse—all comment on such enormities were, however, spared; for in the midst of such world-wasting disasters, in came a friend to tell me—as friends are fond of being messengers of bad tidings—that one of my chief Jamaica correspondents was in treaty with a West India house for a mortgage on his property, by which I should lose my wonted consignment of his sugars.

Being aware of the fact, and of the necessities which had brought it on, the news did not surprise me; I had indeed meditated sufficiently on the loss it would occasion to myself before, and accordingly spoke of it with as much indifference as a twelvemonth's widow of the merits of her deceased lord.

The coach, the claret, and this formidable event, all on the same day, constituted, in the opinion of Mr. Ascomy, a phial of wrath, such





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as had not been poured on any single house since the opening of the Seals; after my friend had croaked his tidings and departed, the old gentleman remained to sympathise and condole with us.

All his wrath at the wine was quenched, the shilling enormity was forgotten, and his heart overflowed with compassion and love. He made much of the unfortunate children; caressed the young ones with tears in his eyes, and gave a shilling to reconcile the two antagonists, who, with their hereditary propensities to spend, no sooner received the gift, than forth they sallied, and brought in two stupendous fine tops, which they exhibited with the exulting glee of young hearts gratified, to his unspeakable sorrow. The most ludicrous occurrence of all, however, took place after the brood had been sent to bed—if one may venture to apply such an epithet to an office so holy. He proposed that we should read prayers. This duty, laudable at all times, was almost the last to be expected from Mr. Ascomy, who being a philosopher, entertained of course the

most enlightened views respecting the inefficacy of religious rites and ceremonies.

The reader will see how our life in London, with an income gradually suffering from the decay of the West Indian prosperity, was thus rendered far from felicitous ; and in what manner the comforts of the hearth may be embittered even by the kindest and best friends, who without reference to the feelings of those whom they would serve, allow themselves to be overborne by their own unrepressed fancies.

CHAPTER XII.

APPREHENSIONS.

ALTHOUGH the happiness of my own house was frequently disturbed by the whims of Mr. Ascomy as often as he visited us, generally three times a week,—for after my marriage, his daughters being then removed from him, he spent the greater part of his time in London—yet still it could not be said that my life passed without agreeable recreation, and much of it was owing to him. His acquaintances were numerous, chiefly among that set of odd and erudite characters, who constitute the regular audiences of societies and lectures, and the guests at his occasional dinners may be described as selected from the curiosities of

human nature. Mr. Moth, his favoured friend, was uniformly invited, and, I believe, was the only individual ever there with whom I could not become acquainted.

In many respects that gentleman was unlike every other person—he had read a great deal,—his talk was all from books, but it was about as intelligent and instructive to me as a dictionary. It was dry words, and I never could dove-tail two of his sentences into common sense. His mind, in fact, was like a sportsman's shot-bag, filled with small, detached ideas, each of little value in itself, but capable of producing a strong effect when applied collectively. Yet, except in the vanity of fancying himself possessed of eminent conversational talent, he well deserved the epithet of worthy, and in their confidential affairs, all his friends had great faith in the strictness of his integrity. To Mr. Ascomy he was the right hand; and although I never sought his intimacy, in consequence of his inherent loquacity, his reputation for respectability in all his conduct, begat in me as much seeming respect as in any of

those numbered among his friends. He was in consequence, one also of my visitors, but not so frequent as some others.

One day, soon after Mr. Ascomy had been grievously molested by some ruinous symptom that he had discovered in my economy—for it has always been a habit with me to be punctilious in the little etiquettes and equipage of the table—Mr. Moth called. After talking some time about nothing, in our usual manner, he suddenly requested to speak with me in private. Mrs. Corbet, who was present, having nursery duties and discipline to perform, immediately retired, casting a marvelling look at me as she passed, concerning the cause of such solemnity on his part.

“I hope,” said he, the moment she had disappeared, “that we shall not be liable to interruption; for in the midst of important business, it is really unfortunate to be interrupted; especially too, if that business happens to be, as mine is, interesting, and by its bearings calculated to influence the order and tendency of a man’s affairs. And yet, on such occasions, interruptions are common in

my experience, and I have observed that when they do occur, they always fall out in the critical moment, and mar the transaction in the most unaccountable manner ; proving, indeed, to a demonstration, that accident is one of the main weapons with which Providence, or Destiny, achieves its greatest results."

To obtain any thing satisfactory from Mr. Moth, it was necessary to humour his peculiar habit ; so to bring him to the business, I at once assented to the profound solidity of his remark, and assuring him that I apprehended no interruption at that time, solicited him to proceed.

"No doubt," he resumed, "you are well aware, that since the conclusion of the war, there has been a remarkable revulsion in our domestic affairs. The great excitement produced during the late hostilities, has occasioned that extreme lassitude in all the faculties and functions of the nation from which we now suffer ; commercial difficulties are multiplied and agricultural distress has reached an extremity unknown before : the moneyed interest alone flourishes. In this crisis of public

circumstances, my friend, your father-in-law, has not the good-fortune to be among the stockholders, but is a member of one of the two depressed classes, namely, the agricultural interest; and his estate, as you well know, lies in Wiltshire. Now it is to that fact that I would solicit your attention."

I assured him that I was all ear, that he had greatly awakened my attention, and that I hoped, without any disparagement to my own firmness, I might add he had roused my feelings.

Pleased to hear he had been so successful, he resumed.

"I ought not, therefore, to augment your alarm by any prolongation of preliminaries, but proceed at once, as the Puritan divines used to say in the reign of the martyred Charles, to the marrow of the matter—which is to apprise you that Mr. Ascomy has of late found his rents so ill-paid, that his income has fallen into arrear, and that he must consent to a reduction.

"I fear," replied I, "that all the landed

interest, sooner or later, must come to the same conclusion."

"But," said he, "are you aware of the consequences to yourself? Mr. Ascomy will, in that case, be no longer able to afford above one half of the income he has settled on you and Mrs. Corbet."

"Let him give himself no uneasiness on our account," was my answer; "we can do very well without it: for some time we have been speaking of retiring to the country, and it will only hasten on our determination."

"It is to be regretted, Mr. Bogle Corbet," replied he, "that you consider such an important affair so lightly; it will greatly tend to abridge your enjoyment in many little pleasant expenses."

"No doubt it will, and the news comes at rather an inconvenient season, for my Jamaica correspondents find their embarrassments increasing; the price of produce is falling, and the cost of working their estates increasing. The West Indian character not being distinguished for the prudence of forethought, they

have made no provision for their altered means ; two of my friends have already been obliged to apply to abler agents for mortgages. But I must bear my share of the general blight of the times."

" You greatly surprise me," said Mr. Moth, " at the equanimity with which you submit to misfortune : but Mr. Ascomy told me, indeed, that you reflected less on pecuniary vicissitudes than most men. It will, however, allay his anxiety to hear that you and Mrs. Corbet were preparing to retire a little way out of town. I hope you do not intend to go too far, for if you go beyond the short stages, the loss of time spent on the road, and the expense of coach-fares, will consume more than all the saving you can possibly effect. Under the motives that you are so commendably actuated by in this crisis, a convenient distance will no doubt be your study."

" I have thought a good deal on the distance, Mr. Moth. Any thing between five and ten miles will do exceedingly well."

" My good Sir, that will cost you, as Mr. Ascomy justly apprehends, a great deal."

"Not so much as he probably fears; both Mrs. Corbet and myself have made our calculations, and by keeping a chaise we shall at least save fifty pounds a year." As I made this answer, I could observe a slight shadow of amaze pass over his countenance, and he was obviously disconcerted; for, after a few sentences to no direct purpose, he rose and wished me good morning.

Perhaps in that conversation I indulged my habitual irreverence too far; but, in truth, the communication from Mr. Ascomy had been long foreseen, and so often expected, that my wife, with characteristic prudence, had been preparing for the event, by never allowing our household disbursements to exceed my own income. Had she acted otherwise, mischief must have immediately ensued; for the deficiency occasioned by the diminution of my sugar consignments, began to affect our savings, and was the suggesting cause of our deliberations respecting the proposed removal from town. It was not, however, the sole cause; for the fears on account of my prodigality of Mr. Ascomy, constantly prompted by

his reflections on the reduction of his own income, were really become afflictions to our household comfort ; we could not appease them by any explanation, and all that could be done was to render his access to interfere with our domestic proceedings a little more inconvenient to himself.

CHAPTER XIII.

A LEGACY.

OUR removal to the country took place rather suddenly. One of my acquaintances was induced, on account of the ill health of his lady, to go abroad with her, and having a country house which he had tried to let without success for some time, made me an offer of the use of it during his absence for the amount of the taxes. This was in many respects a Godsend ; for it was much less expensive than I expected to find any fit residence, and far superior to the kind of place I was in search of. But Mr. Ascomy looked only at the house itself ; and although the rent should have been the main consideration with him, he yet loudly descanted on the style of the place, without noticing that it led to no change

F 2



in our ordinary establishment. On one occasion he carried his animadversions so far, that we were on the eve of quite quarrelling. It is astonishing how much this sort of friendly interposition often ruffles the comfort of families. On me, however, it frequently failed to produce the effects it ought to have done; for I permitted Mr. Ascomy to indulge himself, amused by the ludicrous arguments with which his remonstrances were generally supported, and the shallow plausibility with which he backed them, by circumstances which had no relation whatever to the case. I remember on one occasion he attempted to demonstrate, and with some ingenuity too, that the decay of the value of Jamaica property was an effect deducible from the invasion of India by Alexander the Great, the sugar-cane, as he said, having been originally brought from that region.

We had not, however, been long settled in our rural habitation, when one Sunday forenoon Dr. Lembeck came to me. I was not surprised at the visit, we had always been on terms of agreeable intimacy, but it was perhaps a little sooner than might have been expected.

It was not, however, till he apprised me of his having come on business, that I thought of making any observation on his being there at all.

Taking from his pocket several papers, he said: "I am now at liberty to perform what I hope is a pleasant duty to us both. This sealed letter was left by Sir Neil Eccles—you will see by the direction—not to be opened by his executors during the life of one Mrs. Elizabeth Eglesham, and until they had ascertained that all her debts had been fully paid."

"Alas! is poor Leezy dead?" cried I.

"Yes; did you know her? Had I suspected that, I would perhaps have spoken to you of the letter before, for I have never ceased to wonder why you had not been remembered by Sir Neil in his will. She died some time ago, but left no debt; on the contrary, she had some trifle of savings; and I have come to open the letter as directed by the will and superscription."

He then broke the seal, and read special instructions to his executors, from a kind of codicil to his will, to pay over to me the thou-

sand pounds which he had set apart for the use and annuity of Elizabeth Eglesham.

I am not sure that there was much cause for any excitement of sensibility in this occurrence, beyond the surprise to me of the legacy; but when I informed the Doctor of poor Leezy's story, he was more deeply affected than I could have previously imagined from his character, and I suspected that there was something not unlike it in his own history. However, certain it is, that though a calm, intelligent, worldly man, he soon after left London, and going back to his native place, he married there an old widow lady—for he was by this time an aged man himself, and it was said they had been earnest lovers before her first marriage, which had taken place soon after he went to India.

To me the legacy was most acceptable, owing to the circumstances already related, of the diminution in my annual income, arising from the falling off in my West India business, and the change in the rents of Mr. Ascomy's estate. That same night I held a bed of justice on the subject with Mrs. Corbet, and after an elaborate consideration of all the chances in

our own prospects, as well as of the auguries in the aspect of the times, we agreed that the thousand pounds, with the interest accruing from it, should be set aside, never to be touched but on the most imperative occasion. It was found money, and was not a sum of such magnitude as to justify any change in our domestic arrangements; accordingly, apart from all we had otherwise, it was regularly invested on satisfactory security.

This was one of the most judicious, blind anticipations of my life; for in the course of a few days after, another of my correspondents dropped off. Perhaps, had his determination to seek another agent been earlier communicated, I might have been induced to lend the amount of the legacy to him; for a thousand pounds was what he wanted, and occasioned the transfer of his business from me.

The reader will however, I fear, be tired of these frequent allusions to the state of my commercial connexions. They are, however, necessary, to explain how it happened, that without any direct error of my own, I have been obliged to adopt the measure I am now pur-

suing, and that, but for accidents over which I had no control, I might have at this moment been suffering great hardships. But I shall say no more at present on that subject. He will see around him, by the altered condition of many, a sufficient illustration of my inevitable fate as participating in the fortunes of the kingdom—and I have a more various task before me in the personal narrative of the incidents which subsequently ensued.

The most remarkable was a visit from Mr. Macindoe, soon after I had received the legacy, with a relation of his, a shrewd gausy carl, a kind of gentleman farmer, whom he had accompanied to London partly in curiosity, but chiefly, as it turned out, to claim my service for his friend Mr. Mashlim. By this time all my recollections, which had been sharp and pungent of Mr. Macindoe's conduct as a curator and friend, were much mellowed. Experience had spread her softening varnish over the pictures of Memory, and in consequence, although I could no longer receive him with juvenile hilarity, he was yet as one whom I had known in a different state of being—I was

unaffectedly pleased to see him. I remembered his social cobbles and desultory speeches, but I could perceive that after our first meeting he was struck with a kind of awe at the change which had taken place in my appearance. I was no longer the spruce young man, his ward, but a sedate, full-grown gentleman, with half a dozen children, and in physiognomy not unspared from the crowfoot marks of anxious thought. At the first moment he addressed me with his wonted jocose familiarity, but I soon saw the grave effect which the change had upon him. He became gradually serious—an awkward ceremonious demeanour was substituted for his natural heartiness, which, however, ever and anon peeped out, like a child's laughing face from behind the mask of an uncouth old man, and was to me inwardly diverting.

After introducing Mr. Mashlim, and explaining how I might materially assist his views, he began to remind me of former affairs, from time to time forgetting the awe he had sympathetically assumed on seeing me. I had not for many years seen or heard aught of my

Glasgow old acquaintance, and on inquiring for them, especially for Eric Pullicate, he began with a methodical deference to tell me not only of him, but of every thing else in which his skipping and flying fancy could think I retained any interest.

"Yes," said he; "Mr. Pullicate has left many of his betters behind him. He is now possessed of an inordinate substance, a sagacious man; but his wife gets the wyte of a turn for being a wee outing; if it had not been for her—he was na a man to buy a silver-plate tureen, let alone two of them, one for the head and one for the foot. 'Deed, I dinna wonder to see you surprised that he should have such grandeur in his house. Your old foreman, first an inferior, then an equal, and now a superior! It's very vexatious, Mr. Bogle Corbet, I'll allow; but then ye have seen more of the world, and for all his outlay he has not the genteel contrivance that you have to make his bigging at Webends such a pleasant house and policy as this. But, man, old Miss Leezy Eglesham—ye'll mind her—she's dead, and we had a sough about a gathering

she had left, and made you her heir. Gude, and it be so, quo' I when I heard o't; but no doubt, it was but the wind of a blown bladder. As for Doctor Leach, honest man, ye owe him a debt of gratitude for the pains he took with you when he was one of your doers; for, Mr. Bogle Corbet, to speak in the language of an old friend, ye were then a real obtrapolous laddie. I'll never forget the story of your Edinburgh Jenny Flexions — worthy Mrs. Busby never liked to hear of that joke. she has a leil heart to you yet; but she's now an old leddy, and a sore subject with the sciatica in her hip—but she hears from you whiles, which is most dutiful of you, for she was to you a mother—I may say a grandmother, which is naturally of a more indulgent disposition."

At this juncture the servant announced dinner, and we adjourned, Mr. Macindoe somewhat suppld into his pristine freedom.

CHAPTER XIV.

FRUGALITY.

I HAVE already given the reader to understand that my wife was not the most particular of the fair sex, and took too little pains sometimes about the matters of the table, to please my fastidious taste. This by ourselves occasionally led to sage lectures from me, on the surprising inattention with which some people regarded as trifles many things that others felt were essentials to happiness. But in the whole course of our union, she had never been so remiss as she was on that day when Mr. Macindoe and his friend Mr. Mashlim came to take "pot luck" with us.

In the best regulated families, accident will now and then occasion a wasteful accumulation

of cold meat, and it so happened that this was the case with us on that day. I must not, however, disguise my own share of the blame, for the servant had apprised me of the state of the larder; but instead of describing the condition of the articles there, he only told me of their respective names. There was mutton, ham, and turkey, with pastry, and beef to roast. Now, as I loathe a miser's feast as much as a spendthrift's last banquet, I thought the roasting of the beef would be superfluous, as there were to be only four of us; so I interdicted it. Mrs. Corbet, without being much surprised at my economical humour, thought likewise that I did not, as she said, intend to be particular, and most notably resolved that it was an opportunity on which she might pass off a bottle of her stale drops with impunity. Being, however, conscious that the *matériel* of the larder was not in the plumpest condition, she deemed, with her wonted address, to make up for all defects, by ordering the table to be arranged with more than common neatness. It thus happened that I, most innocently, became the victim of her stratagem.

The footman, being something still of a bumpkin, and unsophisticated by any knowledge of the town, thought with a knavish simplicity, that the skeletons and well-picked state of the bones he had been directed to set out, showed, even with all the cook's plentiful garnishing of parsley, rather too much of the charnel-house, and accordingly he placed them under covers, though it was midsummer and they were all cold.

On entering the dining-room with my friends, I was delighted with the promise in the display, and sat down with them in great good-humour; but imagine my astonishment, when I beheld, as the covers were removed, dish after dish, presenting a spectacle as appalling as a feast in Samaria, when a cab of doves' dung was sold for five pieces of silver. We were but four, and yet the collective luxuries of the banquet would not have sufficed for a moiety to one. Mr. Macindoe looked with the despair of Tantalus, and gazed around the table, seeing no choice.

This disappointment was, however, speedily

overcome by ordering steaks to be cooked from the beef, and in the mean time we agreed to console ourselves with a glass of wine. This was leaping out of the frying-pan into the fire—the drops were sour; and to increase the provocation of the moment, Mrs. Corbet, at the discovery, and to anticipate my wrath, burst into an immoderate fit of laughing, and assured Mr. Macindoe, that it was all owing to my letting her suppose that he was only an old friend. The whole English language might have been laid under contribution, and such an offensive combination of words applicable to the occasion could not have been selected.

“I see,” was his reply, “that we have taken you at an unawares: but this is excellent bread; the bakers in England are just wonderful at baking good bread.”

“Mine is, however, all eaten,” added Mr. Mashlim.

By this time the steaks were cooked, and a supply of fresh wine had in some degree mitigated my displeasure; but the effect of the

first impression did not so soon quit the imagination of my old curator, who in his own house allowed neither scant nor want, though in the service there might be sometimes a lack of that order to which my sensitive taste had so strong a predilection. But gradually he grew more comfortable, and said to Mrs. Corbet, as he took wine with her,

“That ’s rational drink.”

The bones, however, were not to be forgotten, and as his spirits rose, he perpetrated a most atrocious pun on her making some apology for the dinner.

“Never say a word about it, Madam,” was his reply, “for we can all say with truth, that it was a wonderful bony dinner.”

What Mrs. Corbet said in reply I was not master enough of my chagrin to observe, but it must have been something very brilliant, for they became mightily gracious, and in their own opinion, no doubt, witty ; for she ever afterwards spoke of him as “a most funny man,” applying the epithet even when at his death, soon after his return to Scotland, he left her

a legacy of five hundred pounds, assigning as a reason in his will for his doing so, that it was as a memento mori, which he begged of her to accept for her good humour at the coming together of the bones. But I should finish my account of the feast.

As soon as Mrs. Corbet had retired, he began to explain to me the chief cause of Mr. Mashlim's business in London.

"Ye know, Mr. Bogle Corbet," said he, "that the farmers are all growing to dribs—straw without ears—and my cousin, Mr. Mashlim here—he's not just a full cousin, and he's no so far off as a second, being sib by a degree nearer, his father's the connection,—for several harvests with the same crop, he cannot make his plack a bawbee, the which is melancholious to all parties; for what will gentlemen do that get no rents, and what will ye do with your sugar and rum?—Man, that was a prime hoggit ye sent me; the gude wife keeps a bottle o't in a corner for your next visit, when I hope all things will have come into season again, though really I think we're in the dead of winter at

this time, which is the cause of Mr. Mashlim coming to London, to see what can be done better here."

"Here!" cried I, in amazement; "what can he do here?"

"You know, Sir," he replied, with a shrewd sinister smile, "Mr. Macindoe's way; but I have only come, looking a thought before me. Ye see, the tack of my farm will be out, Martimas twelve month, and so I have just come to try my hand with the Government anent it."

"With the Government!" I exclaimed, my wonder increasing.

"Ye should observe," interposed Mr. Macindoe, "that he's on the rove; we have had a great clatter among us about emigration to America."

"Deed, Mr. Corbet," rejoined his friend, "it is just that; and I have come to see if the Government will be wheedled to give me a farm at the first cost, if I should take it intil my head, when my tack's out, to rouse all, and push my fortune in a foreign land."

"But ye should tell him how ye have been instigated to think of this," said Mr. Macin-

doe; and adding, "I'll tell you, Mr. Bogle Corbet,— he sees that the murrain has seized upon trade as well as the country cattle, and so he begins to think—for he's a long-headed carl, this same Watty Mashlim—there where he sits so doucely drinking the bluid red wine—as, according to the auld song, the King did on Dumfermline throne—that it's full time to set off for another and a better world. My advice, however, is to make himself sure of the Kingdom of Heaven before——

"No, to make an interruption on Mr. Macindoe," said Mr. Mashlim, "I fancy, like many others, that for a time the farmers have had their day; so having four stout gets of our own, the youngest in his fifteenth, with twa-three mouly pennies in the foot of a stocking, I have taken a notion that maybe we might do worse than dibbling our potatoe in America."

In this manner the project was broken to me, and my aid requested.

CHAPTER XV.

A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

AT this period I did not go often to town. I had no occasion for a counting-house, but used, when necessary, that of Messrs. Bottle Samples, and Co. my brokers in Mincing-lane. Being however desirous to serve my old curator in the business which had brought him with his relation to London, I resolved to take lodgings for a week, and at Westminster, as more convenient than in the city. Accordingly they stayed with me for the night at Oakhill, and I accompanied them on the morning.

Mr. Mashlim had brought letters to several Members of Parliament, requesting their assistance in promoting his views; but not being

determined with respect to the exact direction of his intended emigration, they were premature, and a cause of unnecessary trouble. Had he been fixed in his plans, no doubt the gentlemen would have been useful, and have given him weight with the Government; but he conceiving that they were wise in their generations, and acquainted with all things, made use of the letters to solicit their advice as to where he should go; and for aught I know to the contrary, they talked to him of Ophir, whence Solomon brought gold and peacocks; and the island of Serendib, with which they were as well acquainted as with any of our own colonies. At last, one of his letters, "more lucky than the rest," introduced him to the celebrated Mr. Bletherington, one of the most constant orators at that time in the House of Commons.

This gentleman was distinguished in the opinion of his friends for the universality of his knowledge, and in that of his adversaries, for his disposition to meddle with every thing. The silent members, who make the best impression on the deliberations of the House by

their votes, considered his mind as made up of shreds and patches, and many of them dreamt dreams when he waxed most vehement in his oratory. A Scotch friend of mine called him "the wisdom pock," in allusion to those nursery-bags, in which buttons, rags, and balls of thread, with all kinds of odds and ends are collected for the exigencies of a numerous family. He had heard that Government was enticing emigrants to proceed to a region in South Africa, flowing with milk and honey, respecting which the most circumstantial and satisfactory information had been previously obtained by the Colonial department. "Prodigious pains," said he, "have been taken to ascertain the excellence of the soil, the admirable local conveniences, the crystalline purity of the springs, the abundance of fuel, and the congeniality of the climate to the European constitution, especially to that of Scotchmen in general, and the inhabitants of the Highlands in particular." He therefore advised Mr. Mashlim to inquire about this new Judea, in Downing-street, and, the better to insure him the fullest information respecting all the advantages of

this land of promise, he gave him a letter to an influential gentleman in the Colonial office, his own multifarious engagements connected with business coming on in the House, rendering it impossible for him to see the Secretary of State on the subject.

The gates of Paradise were thus opened to Mr. Mashlim; and even Mr. Macindoe, when his cousin related to him what had passed with Mr. Bletherington, and the felicity that awaited the emigrants to South Africa, for whose welfare and prosperity Government had taken such extraordinary pains, and with such solicitude had formed magazines of all things necessary to the planting of a colony, regretted his advanced life, which alone prevented him from sharing in the blessings so abundantly showered on that delightful land.

Knowing something, as I have intimated, of the character of Mr. Bletherington, I had not quite so strong a faith in his eloquent exaggerations as my friends. I, however, threw no cold water on their satisfaction at his account of the new settlement, but with

something of an invidious pleasure, took an interest in promoting the hopes which it had kindled, and was to disappoint.

I had discerned in the native shrewdness of Mr. Mashlim, that he had ballast enough to enable him to carry all the sails he would set with safety, and that, although he might for a time trust too confidently in the notions of a loquacious Member of Parliament, there was yet a check in his homely good sense, sufficient to correct any error in his purposes before execution. I had, therefore, the less compunction in assenting to the different devices which both he and Mr. Macindoe proposed, in order to effect an advantageous arrangement with Government, preparatory to his emigration, even when I perceived the improbability of their accomplishment. There may have been something blameable nevertheless in doing so at all, but I was now growing sharply observant, and had arrived at the important conclusion that it is not judicious to disturb human happiness, although evidently built on folly. How much of all enjoyment is phantasy !

But that the delinquency of seeming to sanc-

tion the preposterous imaginings of my two friends may not be thought to have been greater than it really was, I ought to afford the reader some means of judging.

Mr. Mashlim, in delivering his letters, was regularly accompanied by my curator, and it was evident that at first he relied a good deal on his judgment. This arose from a common and simple mistake. Though near relations, they had not before their journey to London been much acquainted, but an idea somehow prevailed among their mutual connexions, that Mr. Macindoe was a singularly-experienced and adroit person, and in consequence had been solicited by his cousin, a younger man, only skilled in farming affairs, to be his pilot and adviser.

For some time the family belief in the talents of Mr. Macindoe had, no doubt, an influence over the superior understanding of the other, but it must have been obvious to whoever saw them together, that the latter would soon attain his natural ascendancy. In a distinct perception of this inevitable result lay the head and front of my offending, and was the very cause

and origin of that acquiescence in their inappropriate notions, which I seemingly yielded, especially to the suggestions of Mr. Macindoe. My guilt as an accessory, as far as respected measures likely to be of serious consequence, was not, however, great; for it was only in minor things, and matters of no pith or moment, that I indulged myself at their expense; and as an instance, I may describe what took place on the evening when Mr. Mashlim received the letter from Mr. Bletherington to the Under Secretary of State.

He had called with it himself in going to the House, at the King's-Arms in Palace-yard, where we lodged; a circumstance which conferred on it immense importance in the eyes of my Scottish friends, who by a natural inflexion of reasoning concluded that such a proceeding implied the vast deference due to such a dignitary, and they were both loud and large in their laud of the kindness of Mr. Bletherington.

"But," said Mr. Macindoe, "it's an admonishment, Mr. Mashlim, how we should behave on the occasion, for this is not an ordinary upcast of

common business. You must put your best foot foremost, both to do honour to Mr. Bletherington for making so much of you, as to give you such a recommendation, and to do credit to yourself."

Not in the smallest degree conceiving to what proposition this was the exordium, I seconded the sentiment, and I am sure the reader himself might with a conscience void of offence have done so too; and with all imaginable gravity Mr. Mashlim at once acceded to the propriety of the suggestion, but, not very clearly comprehending in what way he should act, he inquired; with a fascinating naïveté, how he could put his best foot forward.

"Nay," replied Mr. Macindoe, "I jealousy it will cost us both a penny. The new coat ye got for the jaunt will do well enough, though being made at the farm by a travelling tailor, it may not just be in the latest London cut; but ye'll have to be at an outlay for silk stockings, and to get a barber to weed your hair—how did I forget to tell you of that before, for it's really in a very kintra-like toosy condition. Ye'll no' have black breeks. It was a

feedum in our gude wife to put mine in the trunk, but I would not be at such expense; just buy a pair of white silk stockings, and they'll serve you for an honesty with any sort of breeks."

As this was said with perfect sincerity, I rejoined with a face as much of the same cast as possible.

"I do not think white silk stockings are now much worn in the forenoon at interviews with official gentlemen; yellow or red, or some other serious colour, will be more suitable."

"I would rather put on dark grey, if it would do," replied Mr. Mashlim; "for either red or yellow is overly tulip-like for me."

"I don't think that would be grand enough," was my Jesuitical answer; "but you can reflect on it till the morning."

"At any rate," interposed Mr. Macindoe, "we must both have white gloves."

"Nay," cried Mr. Mashlim, "I'll never do that—something more douce will better become me. White gloves! God's sake, it's no a wedding; but as ye say, Mr. Bogle Corbet, we'll consider of it till the morn's morning."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE COLONIAL OFFICE.

NEXT morning Mr. Mashlim came early into my bed-room before I was fully dressed: his appearance was sedate and thoughtful.

"Well, Sir," I cried immediately, on seeing him, "have you fixed on the colour of your stockings?"

"I have been troubled about it," was his sober and considerate answer. "Surely you could not be serious when you spoke of red or yellow. I never heard of such a thing: to be sure, our farm's out of the world. But although I have only a small experience in Parliamenting, I'll be plain with you, Mr. Bogle Corbet; from all that I have seen of Members of Parliament, I have a notion that Statesmen

are the only things that seem greatest at distance ; and really I cannot work myself into a proper fear of this Secretary of State. In short, Mr. Bogle Corbet, though in a way Mr. Macindoe may have an experience, I doubt he's not much more acquaint with Secretaries of State than myself. It has been as far from his line as mine ; and so in this matter I would beg your own advice, for I am loth to make a play-actor of myself, even for a gude bargain."

This was as I anticipated, and it is therefore needless to say, that I told him to think nothing about the colour or quality of his hose, but to dress as his own good plain sense directed him, and to expect nothing in the gentleman he was to see, but a common man like himself—perhaps, in some respects, no superior. His mind was instantly relieved, but it was far different with Mr. Macindoe.

" When we assembled to breakfast, he came in, equipped as fine as for an evening party, smelling of lavender-water—the most vulgar of scents—with new yellow gloves and a solemn countenance. His address, as Thomson the poet would have said, derived from his finery.

some "secret sympathetic aid." His air was formal, and intended to be courteous, but being newly cut, reminded me of the freshly polled head of a bumpkin from under the hands of a village tonsure, and did not seem fitting. He spoke in ponderous well-concocted sentences, made up of all the polysyllabical words in his vocabulary; delivered dark and oracular responses to the most common-place questions, and was altogether the most amusing personification of "*Much Ado about Nothing*," that could be imagined.

By the appearance of Mr. Mashlim, he concluded that it was not his intention to dress until after breakfast; and we both secretly, by anticipation, enjoyed the surprise that awaited him, especially as he studiously avoided all familiarity. He bowed in the most egregious manner at the commonest civilities—spoke of princes and the concerns of nations with elaborate profundity, and alluded to the debate in the House of Lords of the preceding evening, assuring us that the Lord Chancellor spoke with ineffable judgment and sensibility; but that a noble Earl, one of the ever-prominent obstacles to his Majesty's Government, made use of the most nefa-

rious excrescences in the conglomeration of an opaque argument; at last he reminded Mr. Mashlim that *tempus fugit*, and looked with solemnity at his watch.

The transmutation which he beheld in his cousin, had the effect on Mr. Mashlim of making him more master of himself. He saw the insensible absurdity of adopting new manners, and dissolved all his Spanish castles by telling him he was prepared to go at the time suggested. A stare was practised and a remonstrance attempted, without effect; at last, the glass-coach Mr. Macindoe had ordered for the occasion, drove up to the door, and they set out for the Colonial Office.

Much, however, to my surprise, they were a considerable time detained there. I expected that their letter would be but received, and a time appointed for seeing them; but propositions on emigration were at that time acceptable to the Colonial Department, and they were at once admitted to an audience.

"When we arrived there," said Mr. Mashlim, "the gentleman was not come, and we were shown into a parlour to wait."

"Dear me," interposed Mr. Macindoe, "but you is a real mean place: the Radicals have something to wonder at, seeing such like rooms for all the taxes we pay."

"We had not, however, been long in that patience chamber—as a pawkie gentleman, a Mr. Solomon, from Quebec, called it, who was there on State business too," resumed Mr. Mashlim—"when we heard a bustle, and I looked out and saw a tall, black, avis'd, genteel man, in a blue coat, with clean gloves, running up the stair, talking loud in a hurry, and the man in the lobby let us know that our friend-to-be-at-court was come; so we sent in the letter, and were most cordially received."

"Do you know," interrupted Mr. Macindoe, "he was a most plain man, and no star on his breast!"

"He spoke very discreetly," said Mr. Mashlim, "though a wee hasty catching my thoughts before they were well cleckit, and inquired in a most particular manner if the labour market in our part of the country was not overstocked? I told him, that at the last

market-day, there had been rather a scant of shearers at the Cross of Glasgow, the harvest being nearly over; which puzzled him in an extraordinary manner. But when I told him, how the crop had been earlier, and that the work being over for the season, there was an uncommon number, considering the time o' year, he was exceedingly pleased. 'But where does the unhappy superabundance of labour go in quest of employment?' said he; and 'quo' Mr. Macindoe, they turn beggars; which he was evidently delighted to hear; but observed with sobriety, that 'pauperism is a natural secretion evolved by an inanition of employment.'

"To convince him," said Mr. Macindoe, "that we understood his remark, I replied it was so—for it was just as certain as the heart-burn after a surfeit; and he jocosely replied, that there could not be a better illustration."

"We then," resumed Mr. Mashlim, "had a solid crack concerning the state of things in general in Lanarkshire, which he spoke of as one of the most important manufacturing districts, and after various outs and ins all about it, he directing his chief discourse to me, who

he saw was a practical man, but now and then speaking to Mr. Macindoe, in an explanatory manner, like the marginal notes in a Ha' Bible, —inquired what I thought would be the consequence, 'if, in the superabundant state of the labour-market, that superabundance was not drained off.' Yon man, Mr. Bogle Corbet, has something in him, for I couldna' off-hand give a free answer. Howsomever, when I had thought awhile, I said that the rich would have to come nearer sidy for sidy with the poor; at which his eyes glowed as if they would have kindled candles with gladness, and he said that was the very thing: and then he asked, if to send the superabundance out of the labour-market by emigration, was not the only way of preventing revolution to the existing circumstances of the country? Really, Mr. Bogle Corbet, the matter was as plain to me as a pike-staff, and I told him so. 'Od, Sir, if he hasna hit the nail on the head, he's no far frae doing it; for if we have no work for the laborous man, he'll soon think it his duty to make work for himself—and what will come of all our lords and landlords then?"

"It's a new fangled fancy," said Mr. Macindoe.

"Hoot's, cousin," replied Mr. Mashlim, "dinna say that, for the stated gentry are now ready to think what they hae is a right, but we all ken it is only a permission, a privilege. I'm of yon man's thought—we're no sure that a change among us would be to the better—and it's wiser to stick to the ill kent, than to seek the gude unkent."

"Then why," said I, "should you fall into the notion of emigrating?"

"Just because I dinna want to be in the straemash, for a straemash there will be, and must be ere long. The labourers will live whether the gentry will let them or no."

"Noo," subjoined Mr. Macindoe, "I did not like much of yon conversation, for although it's very well for an officiality to be jocund in order to gather information, it's no right; no legitimate man of the Government will ever condescend there until, but will make himself respectit by his own natural information. What would either the Duke, or Lord Archi-

bald say, if they heard of laborous men holding up their snouts, and asking them to take less rent, that the farmers may pay more wages? Gude sake! ye might as soon ask the landlords to give their farms for nothing to the farmers. That would be an agricultural distress indeed!"

"But what have you done in your own affair?" was my inquiry.

"Its a Gude's truth, we never had time to think o't, for yon man was so eydent about his emigrations and world-to-come visions, that we could not slip in a word edgeways," said my worthy curator; "but after pumping our brains—though little he could get from mine—he said he would send for Mr. Mashlim in a day or two; the which might be the way of State contrivances, but it was not overly circum-spect to me, who he could not but have the instinct to know was not minded to go to Southern Africa as well. And this, you see, is all we have yet gotten for dressing ourselves so debonair. To be sure, on that head, Mr. Mashlim has nothing to say; but if I had known what I know now, I would have been at no

such pains. And if yon's the way that the *jeux d'esprits* of Government conduct themselves no better than decent mercantile men, all the world's grandeur is a gone dick, and Whig and Tory but other words for imposthumes in the State."

CHAPTER XVII.

MISCELLANIES.

THE man who, by the strength of his purse or principles, can afford to respect the world at its just value, will endure without complaint a great deal of calumny and injustice. I am led to make this remark, by the recollection of an occurrence which happened to the party at the King's Arms, on the ever-memorable day of Mr. Macindoe's visit to the Colonial Labyrinth.

Among other inducements which had brought him to London in his old age, besides that of friendship to his cousin, was to see sights and taste dainties, and it had so happened, that much as he had heard of turbot, or as he called it, "terbet," he had never seen that fish; accordingly, being resolved to distinguish the

great interview by something extraordinary, in addition to an abundance of good things, he ordered one of the best turbot that could be got, and in the fullness of his generosity said he would treat me, and authorized both Mr. Mashlim and myself to bring a friend, while he proposed to invite a Captain Platoon, of the 150th, with whom he had become acquainted while the regiment lay in Glasgow.

Knowing the delight that my old friend Mr. Woodriffe took in odd characters, and how much the extravagant humour of Mr. Macindoe was likely to excite his conversational powers, while the sagacious shrewdness of Mr. Mashlim would, in an equal degree, interest his more serious judgment, I requested him to be my guest. Mr. Mashlim brought the celebrated Mr. Adage, then just come to town to publish one of his books. I believe in my heart, that it was chiefly to see these two distinguished persons that my Curator gave us the dinner, although the visit to the Colonial department had all the credit of it. For in order to match these two gentlemen, he had also a literary guest, whose distinction in the republic of

letters arose from being bone and flesh of his wife, a lady who had the reputation of being indigo of the deepest tinge: Captain Platoon himself was a brave, plain, rough soldier, with science and intelligence enough to know that the sun was not a red-hot cannon-ball, cast at Carron or Woolwich.

Mr. Macindoe being, as I have already mentioned, a little chagrined that, notwithstanding his silk stockings, he had not found himself regarded with all the awe to which such intellectual accomplishments ought in his opinion to have entitled him, was during the dinner rather taciturn, and when he did speak it was in brief sentences, of a disparaging tendency with respect to the Ministry of that time. His habitual Toryism prevented him from inflicting on the King's Government his thorough opinion, that the British nation were fools to submit to be ruled by what he called the wally dreggles of the Pitt and Dundas clecking;—an erudite Scottish metaphor allusive to the weakest and most helpless of the callow young of that eyrie, whereof Pitt and Dundas had been the parent birds. But as the viands showed

marks of the knife, and the wine challenges multiplied, his garrulous good-humour returned, and his political sarcasms were at last sheathed in jocularly.

Greatly, however, to my disappointment, Mr. Woodriffe did not appear to relish the desultory extravagance of Mr. Macindoe; perhaps the reader may think that he only showed his ascribed discernment, and my curator afterwards told me, that he was but a man that had obtained by chance a name for being clever;—get the name, said he, of being an early riser, and you may lie-a-bed all day. I assented to the acumen of this remark, and said it might be so; such things were common enough in the world; the only wonder about them was, how the stupid ever acquired such reputations.

Mr. Adage during dinner said little, save two or three apposite apophthegms, and the Captain took his wine like a sponge, or an honest fellow who had been three years on the Peninsula, and seen devilish hard service at Badajos, or, as Mr. Macindoe pronounced it, according to the best Trongate authorities, Badadgeos. When the dessert, however, was

placed on the table, we naturally fell into conversational groups, and it was my good fortune to draw out Mr. Adage into more familiarity.

He was, without question, a man capable of writing very good books, but if what he said be correct, the fates preserve me from ever having any thing to do with such a trade! He had, however, one weakness, common enough among authors; he thought literature the first of professions, and was not a little disconcerted by a dry remark on the subject from Mr. Woodriffe, when descanting on the glory and power of authorship.

"Ay," said Mr. Woodriffe, dryly, "it is, however, but only the secondary and inferior of mankind that make it a profession; no great man ever only wrote books, he did something more; and none of the few who have affected the destinies of the world, have written books at all." There was, probably, something disagreeable in the manner in which this notion was received by the party, and discerned by the quick perception of Mr. Woodriffe, for he soon after left us, and Mr. Macindoe and Mr.

Mashlim, with Captain Platoon, formed a group by themselves, and I had then Mr. Adage to myself.

I have already more than once intimated, that after my return from Jamaica, my associates were chiefly men of literary habits. It had happened, however, though they were so, that I had never formed any acquaintance with professed authors; I knew the most distinguished as across-the-table friends, but whenever a man has put forth a book on any theoretical subject, all social discussion with him is at an end. He has thrown the gauntlet to the world, and is ever prepared at all points to defend his challenge. The discovery of this necessary and unpleasant truth made me rather shun than seek the companionship of the writing literary. Besides this, I also had discovered that authors were not the best judges of books, and that probably the soundest judgments on the merits of literary works are formed by those who only read.

Mr. Adage was not, however, of this opinion; he was only an author, a good and ripe scholar, it is true, but he could see nothing so

splendid in man as literary genius ; all practical talent was to him as something operative and mechanical ; even oratory, that rules law and nations, he considered as inferior ; and invention, that adds power to dominion, and multiplies the means and varieties of enjoyment, had in it, according to his way of thinking, an alloy and sediment, compared with the intellectual element embodied in words.

It was with reference to what passed with him, that the observation at the beginning of the chapter was made, for although in conversation he was not distinguished, he yet gave me a great many reasons why authorship was the highest of human vocations, all of which tended only to prove that it was one of the meanest. With some it might be pursued from taste, for by a judicious ordinance of Nature, there are men innately qualified for all callings ; but where it happens to be taken up as a money-making expedient, he was obliged to admit, that even with the most successful, the best of the earning was but vacant fame.

I was the more curious to learn from him the craft and mystery of the trade, because at

this time, with my waning income and waxing family, it had come two or three times into my head, that having so long eschewed commercial speculations, I might try my hand at something like a work on political economy ; an easy inborn science, on which those who understand it least are commonly the most fluent writers. The events which, however, prevented me, will come more regularly forward as I proceed with my narrative ; in the mean time I should not dismiss my conversation with Mr. Adage thus lightly, for although it was on his part evidently intended to magnify the dignity of book-making, and by corollary himself, it had considerable influence on the resolution I was soon subsequently obliged to adopt.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A CONVERSATION.

"THE time," said Mr. Adage, "has been, when certain established canons of criticism enabled the world to determine the permanent merits of books; but now feeling is the sole rule, and authors are praised and condemned by Like and Dislike. These are the pillars in the pleasure-house of the Philistines, and woe awaits the Samson who attempts to pull them down."

I admitted that there was some truth in the remark, yet, as the canons of criticism had been formed by what had previously been Liked and Disliked, it did not appear very obvious that the mere feeling and taste without principle, by which modern critics are guided, was very erroneous. "We have now more variety,

I suppose," said I, "of new objects of criticism than had our predecessors, and the rules for determining their respective merits have not yet been formed."

"It may be so," replied Mr. Adage; "but the disadvantage of allowing feeling to come in where only principle should be admitted, is manifest to contemporary authors. Persons of all capacities are allowed to wound the finest minds. 'Critics,' said the satirical Byron, 'are all ready made;' and certainly there is no reason in Nature why an idiot, or a presumptuous boy, who can just read, should not be allowed to decide on the lucubrations of experience and learning. Moreover, nothing is so easy as to find fault; and hence it is, that the greatest fault-finders are the weakest of men.—The rule applies to critics."

I perceived that Mr. Adage had suffered as well as his Lordship from the reviewers, and soothingly observed, that literature was exposed to the same corrosion from malice, to which merit, in every thing of human origin, is liable."

"To more," he replied, eagerly; "to much

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more; and it is that which dims the glory of the brightest profession of man. It is not satisfactory to say that the reviewers are young men, who by their years and experience cannot have acquired much actual knowledge, however egregiously they may have been applauded at school or college. To say so is invidious, for one ounce of native malignity goes farther in the composition of a right critic, than all the pedant can instil."

"But are critics," said I with simplicity, "always young? Youth has about it something generous and confiding—a modest diffidence in giving offence, and respectfulness towards elders, are also of the attributes of youth?"

"Age," replied he, with a sarcastic smile, "is, I admit, necessary to render a critic sufficiently acrid; but the petulance of youth is almost as bitter; certainly I have known pert boys write reviews as maliciously as envious old men. But with youth I admit there is hope, as sour green oranges ripen into the sweet and golden. It is not, however, from either youth or age that authors suffer; they are brightened by the refuse of themselves, as

diamonds are polished only by their own dust ; and it is this consideration that makes the condition of an author unhappy ; for critics are authors, although it is not until they have failed in their attempts to be originals, that they become palatable to the public. In proportion as an author has been disappointed, his acrimony as a critic is evolved ; but the most vexatious of all the incidents of an author's life arise from the infirmity of human nature !”

“ Indeed, Mr. Adage, how may that be ? Do not all the friendships, affections, and partialities come in aid of an author, as well as of any other man ? Do we not see the young poet taking flight from his cloisters, followed by the songs and gratulations of his companions ?”

“ Rather,” said he, “ pursued and pelted with stones. There may be occasional instances when boys become admirers of their companions, but it rarely happens ; the invidia of the human heart is generally manifested, and the most difficult obstacles in the path to eminence are raised by early friends.”

“ You are severe, Mr. Adage ; to hear you say so, one would be inclined to conclude that

you were a mortified author, and yet all the world knows the reverse."

"You are polite to say so; but nevertheless, what I have said is true. If you have some dear companion of your schooltime, who was apt when you were languid and growing, and then stood above you in the class, only publish, and you shall soon find that you have made an occult enemy for life. He certainly will not openly decry you, regard for himself will save you from that; but he can look queer, and tell in what parts his old friend the author has not showed his wonted acumen. For a critic commend me to an early friend, to an old school-fellow."

"You terrify me," said I; "for the causes of invidiousness in early friends becoming adversaries as critics, apply with peculiar force to professional acquaintance."

"Don't speak of them," exclaimed Mr. Adage, "don't speak of such. Physicians, clergy, and lawyers, are professionally authorised to put forth books; and a merchant may be permitted by his fellows to write a pamphlet; but for a man who has been bred to commerce of

any kind to attempt more, is high treason in the republic of letters ; all the legitimate host of scribes are at once in arms against him, backed by the whole mass of his fraternity. It is an unfortunate fact, that nothing so stirs the latent envy of a neighbour as the putting forth of a book. A single work, a book of travels may be tolerated—they will buy that ; but will they buy a second book ? No, no ; it is the fulcrum on which they will erect their engines of detraction ; a third is an actual crime, and then they lament as if the books were written expressly for their approbation, and not for that of the world. If you look sharply around, you will see how invidiously friendship works ; there is really nothing so mysterious to the early associates of some men, as for them to see book following book from their old comrades, although they never buy one, especially when the authors happen to be poor, and yet apply not to them for assistance to pay for books that in their opinion ought not to sell."

"You are satirical," said I, somewhat disheartened at hearing this : "surely it is not expected that authors, more than any other per-

sons, should be dependant on the charity of friends? If books do not sell, the evil of publication will soon cure itself: muslins will not be made if they cannot be sold, nor will books be printed if they will not sell."

Mr. Adage looked a little disconcerted at this; it was treading on the toes of his vanity, and it escaped from me inadvertently, which I regretted, as it had the effect of making him turn his head, and enter into conversation with Mr. Mashlim. I regretted it the more, as it was evident, notwithstanding his professional conceit of himself, that he possessed both knowledge and shrewdness. Perhaps, however, I ought not to have thought so much of our conversation being interrupted, for the interruption left on me a salutary impression that I could never shake off. It had the effect of deterring me from ever attempting authorship. I had certainly not many early friends of such capacity and acquirement as to make me stand in awe of their strictures, and as to the spite or envy of my former commercial acquaintances, it surely constituted no such bugbear as should make me afraid—still, when I reflected on

what I had seen in the world, it seemed at least an indiscretion to incur the hazard either of detraction or of injustice, and this decided me.

I thought often and often of some of Mr. Adage's remarks, and the more I thought of them, they seemed the more worthy of being considered ; and yet for a time I still adhered to the notion I had formed of trying my hand at authorship. Prudence in the end, however, prevailed. I laid down my pen, and when the diminished state of my income, arising from the reduction in the rental of Mr. Ascomy and the decay in my Jamaica business, again recalled my literary intention, I recollected the occasion and the incident which had given rise to the remarks of Mr. Adage. This recollection became associated with the idea of Mr. Mashlim, and the cause which had brought him to London. The motive which led me to think of writing thus became changed into a thought of emigrating ;—the abandonment of the one intention was parent to the other, yet how dissimilar !

CHAPTER XIX.

HIDDEN TRUTH.

UNACCOUNTABLE fancies often molest the most prosaic minds. Among others which sometimes sadden me with their visitations, is a persuasion that a pre-ordered arrangement inscrutably exists between the fortunes of individuals who have no apparent connexion. It came upon me for the first time while in London with Mr. Macindoe and his relation ; but I was long averse to acknowledge to myself the existence in nature of a fact so mysterious.

Every man who enjoys the inclination and leisure to compare his observations, must have discovered, that accidental meetings with particular persons are always followed by good or

ill fortune. No possible reason can be assigned for this, nor how an individual without any discernible connexion with the event which affects you, should yet really be the augury and index of its coming.

When in business with Mr. Possy, I was disturbed whenever I happened to meet Eric Pullicate unawares, or in places where he was not expected. His appearance on all such occasions never failed to awaken alarms concerning our affairs, sometimes to a preposterous degree; and as often as any apprehension of misfortune darkened my imagination, his image always rose before me. To every influential occurrence of my life he seemed destined to be a witness, and still I am unable at this moment to discover that he ever exercised the slightest predominance; unless the invitation to become a member of the weavers' nocturnal club may be regarded as such,—an incident, it is true, by which my line of life was cast too hastily into that stream whence I drew only sufferings. It was not, however, till in London with my old curator, that I was startled into the belief that his appearance was the omen of the

presence of my evil genius, and even then the conviction was flashed upon me by a casualty of the commonest kind.

On the morning subsequent to the entertainment which Mr. Macindoe had given us, I was sitting after breakfast alone in our parlour at the King's Arms, with the newspaper. It contained an account of a trial, which turned on an accident that tended to inculcate an opinion not unlike what I have just stated. Being at the time, both from the aspect of my own affairs and the condition of Mr. Ascomy's property, disposed to yield, certainly not to dejection, but to anxiety, I laid down the paper, and ruminated, with my forehead on my palm, resting my elbow on the table.

In that situation, all the impressive incidents of my past life glided in phantasy over my imagination; with each of them Eric Pullicate was present, and just in proportion as my fortunes seemed to fade, a brighter augury as constantly shone upon his. It was on that great day of his early prosperity when he banqueted the peer, that the irremediable calamity of Anella's loss was communicated.

I was recounting to myself at the moment the various times in which his lot had been ever, as it were, in the opposite scale with mine, and adjusting the reminiscence of many trifling occurrences, in which, in proportion as the circumstance of the occasion dwindled with me, it was augmented with him. I had just said to myself, it is curious that this man, possessed of qualities which I cannot but respect, never comes upon me suddenly, without making me feel a secret inward dread—when the waiter opened the door and showed in Eric Pullicate.

Undoubtedly his appearance surprised me; an acute shudder vibrated through my frame, and although, in all my reflection on our intercourse, I could not trace to him one single event by which my happiness had in any degree sustained detriment, I yet felt an involuntary aversion at the sight of him—an antipathy, which reason condemned, and experience could not extenuate. But in the same moment my better feelings revived, and I welcomed him with the outward cordiality due to one whom I had so long known.

It was his first journey to London; he was

now a man of great opulence, and having fixed on retiring to an estate which he had a short time previously purchased, he had brought his wife to see the metropolis, while their mansion was preparing.

"And," said he, "I could not but seek you out among all my friends and correspondents, for do you know, as Mrs. Pullicate says, we never meet but some good befalls me."

The remark was in accordance with my own thoughts, and the topics of my rumination; but without laying any particular stress on my words, I replied,

"Indeed! how does she come to think of that?" and added, with a mental equivocation, "I am glad to hear you say so."

"In truth," replied he, "it's in a manner a truth, but how it happens is more than I can tell; but no farther gone than ye'steen, when we put up at the hotel, as we were sitting talking in moderation of auld things, says she to me, 'It's a most desperate odd thing, Eric, that we never forgather with Mr. Bogle Corbet, in an unbidden way, but our prosperity shoots out a new sprout.'"

"I always thought," said I, "that Mrs. Pullicate was naturally a shrewd lady; but has she not observed also, that I have had a different tale to tell as often?"

"No," he replied; and he looked at me with one of those keen sinister glances for which he was always remarkable, and which, without words, conveyed a suspicion. It was obvious that, although his wife had not made such a comparison of our respective fortunes, he yet suspected I had.

It was this incident which effectually led me to conclude that some connecting and occult influence exists between the fortunes of individuals, and that Eric Pullicate's lot and mine were parts of one machine, in which, with similar movements, we had different offices to perform. Nothing, however, occurred to me immediately on that sudden meeting, and I did my best, during his residence in London, to entertain him as his unimpeachable character justly had a right to receive from an old friend; but about two months after, a most striking coincidence in verification of my mystical persuasion took place.

I received letters by the mail from Jamaica,

and one of them from Mr. Logan contained an account of the death of my relation on Plantagenet estate—my friend, the patron of my second course of mercantile adventures, and the protector of my interests among his neighbours. The tidings altogether, independently of my regret for his own worth, were painful; and the event, though not the greatest I had met with, was yet calamitous, and was the cause to me of many evenings of sorrowful reflection.

One night as I was sitting by myself, Mrs. Corbet being engaged with some of the manifold cares which a growing family necessarily multiplied, the singularity of Mr. Pullicate coming into the room at the very time when I was occupied in comparing the course of our respective fortunes occurred to me, and I went for Mr. Logan's letter, the date of my cousin's death having escaped my memory. Let the sceptical reader hear me in what doubtful mood he may;—the event took place on the very day, and, making allowance for the difference of longitude, at the very time when the innocent forerunner of all my misfortune stood before me.

CHAPTER XX.

A CHANGE.

FOR some time after the death of Mr. Buchanan no particular incident occurred that deserves to be related. But the sinking value of my consignments seriously affected my income, and Mr. Ascomy found himself unable to fulfil the marriage settlement. Perplexity was embarrassing every interest of the country, and I was taxed with my share. Book-making again occurred to me, but only to be abandoned; the animadversions which had escaped from Mr. Adage respecting the risks of authorship sufficiently convinced me, as I have already intimated, that I was too sensitive to preserve equanimity under such manifold annoyances. Nor is ambition an element of my

mind. I can call myself nothing but a quiet absorbent of easy pleasures—far more addicted to observe the conduct of others than to be alert in my own actions. Perhaps the scenes through which the current of my life has passed have contributed to give my thoughts this habitude; be that, however, as it may, I was roused from the indulgence of reverie to more earnest employment, arising from the pressure of the times upon those with whom I was connected.

The increasing distresses of the West Indians, partly arising from their own improvident habits, and the tameness with which they permitted their most important interests to be treated, at last dried up all the income I derived from that quarter. Had I possessed capital enough to make my needy constituents advances on mortgage, doubtless it might have been different with me; but as it was, they dropped off one by one, and the full sense of the misfortune I had suffered by the death of Mr. Buchanan was soon felt.

Among the various objects to which I turned my solicitude, was that of emigration; I saw

before me the contraction, in this country, of all the means of employment. I had five sons to be sent into business; no opening could be discovered for young men, and the legacy from Sir Neil Eccles, with some small reservations which were daily diminishing, was all I possessed. I recalled to mind the visit and intentions of Mr. Mashlim; I meditated on the condition of Society in the Italian States, when commerce retired from Venice and Genoa, and the consequences that would inevitably ensue when the cultivation of the mind tended to diminish the exercise of the hands.

My reflections on my own prospects were dismal, and the gloom in them ever increasing. I was haunted with distrust as I thought of my country, and irrepressible penury was gradually insinuating itself, like a slow progressive disease, into every thing connected with my family. Sometimes I became so susceptible to impressions from these causes, that my peace of mind sank under them, and a barren and inert melancholy spread over my reflections, like ice on the water, when the inclemency of winter has come. My only intervals of exertion and

hope were when I reflected on the scheme of Mr. Mashlim.

It then seemed to have been conceived in prudence, forethought, and wisdom. But though eminently judicious as applied to his case — a practical farmer, accustomed to outdoor duties, bred up in the privations of rural life, and regardless of those innumerable little fancies which were of no inconsiderable moment to me—was it so to mine?

I thought of it myself with a doubt which merged in despondency, and my wife was thoroughly convinced that the idea of emigrating was, as she called it, a mad scheme; but as often as I spoke with her on the subject, I was persuaded, from her observations, of the truth of the Irishman's remark, that women are not men of business. In fact, the female mind foregoes its own nature when it judges of contingencies. Though every difficulty that has to be encountered in emigrating to the solitudes of a distant region and forest was in readiness to be offered as an objection to the undertaking, no expedient was suggested, nor could be devised, to alleviate the increasing

pressure that was closing around us. Yet sometimes we had recourse to inventions in our controversy with poverty, that I cannot now recollect without a smile, even while I well remember they were never resorted to without anguish.

The lady of the friend whose villa at Oak-hill I had been permitted to occupy on such easy terms, died abroad, and he returned to England, when, soon after, marrying again, he required the house. This obliged us to remove, and the state of my finances admonished me to seek an abode of a different description. It may be said, that I ought to have been long prepared for such an occurrence, and undoubtedly I was so, as well as Mrs. Corbet, who, indeed, could easily accommodate herself to any change which did not impose restraint. She could sink in circumstances with something not much inferior to dignity, and far more happily than she could rise ; but our vexation proceeded not from ourselves.

The children, accustomed to spacious apart-

ments, and habitually supplied wants, found every thing amiss;—they did not like this, they complained of that—the young ones clamoured to be taken home, and the older looked sulky, and muttered discontents. I verily think that the first month after our removal was more distracting, owing to these ridiculous causes, than if actual beggary, in her rags and emaciation, had served our daily meals.

But the change was otherwise salutary; as the dissatisfaction of the fretful brats mellowed, and usage mitigated their fantastical grievances, my wife became sensible that in fighting with fortune we were waging an unprofitable war. I perceived the change working in her reflections, by the manner in which she occasionally expressed her wonder that we should remain so near London. As often as she made the remark, I, however, somewhat more ingeniously than naturally belonged to my character, attempted to persuade her, that we might as easily translate ourselves to America, as to a more distant part of England. This ever irritated her confidence in her own judgment,

and begat bickerings between us, verifying the proverb, "When poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window."

The first six months after our removal from Oakhill, were the most irksome in all my experience. I had looked forward steadily and calmly to the decay of my income, but the change from comparative elegance to meanness, was, by its abruptness, harsh, and full of vexatious incidents, for which our modes of life had not prepared us. But when the sharpness of misfortune became blunted, and a milder acquiescence with circumstances appeased the rigour that had overtaken us, our scattered comforts began to return. Fate, however, continued as stern and relentless as ever.

My diminished means obliged me to abstain from social enjoyments. Our abridged establishment forced upon my inadequate hands more of our domestic duties. Our footman was dismissed, but we were so weak as to attempt the preservation of the rank—which such an appendage is, by many as foolish people, supposed to indicate—by substituting

a mannerless whelp of the parish. But for that get, the second half-year would have passed tolerably enough. I foresaw that emigration awaited us, notwithstanding the seeming obstinacy with which every proposal was resisted by my wife, and I imperceptibly laid my plans for that ultimate destiny, persuaded that in time she would see we had no other alternative: Sam, the boy, however, did the work of conviction more effectually, at least in a shorter time, than I could have hoped to effect by the most cogent reasoning, or even appalling Poverty, in a coarser garb than the stinted vestment with which she was so often then our afflicting visitor.

CHAPTER XXI.

TROUBLES.

FROM the time we had resided at Oakhill, our intercourse with Mr. Ascomy was in a great measure discontinued. On my part, although I had endured some provocation, there was no quarrel; but he, who had suffered none, was heated with a causeless resentment, the more intensely, as he could find nothing to warrant its injustice. I was therefore at no pains to soften his feelings, and I ought to add, that even while sensible he thought of me injuriously, I studiously avoided every thing likely to increase his animosity. But when he heard of our new retreat, he invited himself to spend a day with us; and my wife, from her knowledge of his character, expected that he was desirous to

remove the coldness between us, and to re-establish our former cordiality.

On the day he had appointed, I was in readiness to receive him, resolved to do so as if there had never been any dryness between us; but when I met him at the gate, I was struck with an uncommon solemnity in his looks; he spoke scarcely a word to my welcome, but casting a hasty glance on the house, he hastened into the parlour, and seated himself without heeding the children, who rejoiced at seeing him, or taking the slightest notice of Mrs. Corbet.

Conduct so singular surprised us both, and it was so totally different from what my wife had anticipated, that she could not repress her emotion.

When he had rested himself several minutes, only replying to one question, and at the same time visibly affected by some unknown care, he rose, and without saying a word of his intention, visited the whole house, inspecting it all as if he had been an intending tenant. He then went into the garden, looked eagerly around, and measured it with his stick. This was inexpli-

cable ; so indeed were at all times many of his actions, and the bustle of them often prodigiously disproportioned to the occasion.

Seeing him in that preposterous humour, I took an opportunity to whisper to my wife, to let him take his own way unmolested ; but the ungracious manner in which he repulsed the blandishments of the younger children, moved her maternal spleen, and she inquired with, perhaps, a little more accent than the case required, what they had done to offend him ?

“ Nothing, nothing !” was his querulous reply : “ they are children — and children are plagues ; it would have been a better world had there never been such things !”

The oddness of the remark made us both smile, which he observing, cried still more pettishly,

“ Yes, yes, I see how it is—but take your own way—no regard have you for my opinion—no respect for my judgment. I foresaw what was coming, and it has come—all has come to pass, but I thought it would have shown itself in more dutiful behaviour.” At these words he turned quickly round, and said to me, “ So

you have abandoned your intended flight to America?"

It was of no use to be so indulgent to his humour as I had proposed, and I accordingly answered somewhat particularly,

"That I had not given up the intention—on the contrary, the more I reflected on the state of this country, and my diminishing means, I was the more firmly convinced that it was the only alternative in my option."

"Diminished—diminished means?" he echoed two or three times, and then severely inquired if I ascribed the diminution to him?

"How should I be so unjust? your own means are suffering from the effects of the same causes. When friends see themselves oppressed by unavoidable disappointments, it will not mitigate their sufferings to impute blame to each other, especially when the cause lies so obviously elsewhere."

In this sort of unsatisfactory controversy we continued some time; he was evidently unconscious of his determination to be displeased, and was, as in his grudge against me, the more displeased because he could assign no reason.

But without expatiating at greater length it must be obvious to the reader, that so near a relation infected with such a humour was, independent either of riches or poverty, in itself a misfortune. It certainly had a material effect on my wife; and, although she said nothing, I soon saw that her objection to leaving him was materially softened, and that she no longer pleaded her duty to remain near him, as an argument against my project of seeking a refuge in the woods of America.

Doubtless, from having comparatively no tie to retain me in England, the idea of emigrating was a far lighter subject of consideration to me than to Mrs. Corbet; but the same cause which at last made her to reflect on it with less reluctance, operated otherwise on me. I hated to think that inconvenience arising from the temper of so near a friend as her father, should in any degree influence me; and but for an accident, perhaps the feeling which dictated the dislike might soon have become strong enough to have made me change my intention.

Our foot-boy, Sam, was everlastingly causing

troubles. He was a smart, sprightly lad, whose greatest fault was an inordinate predilection for whistling, and when he happened to get hold of a new tune he did nothing but whistle it from morning to night. He contrived to adapt it as a fit accompaniment to cleaning knives; his hand went in accordance as he rubbed the table—up and down—here and there—he ever whistled the same melody till his ear caught another; and as he was seldom sent to town, he often at last became intolerable. I wonder yet how we thought of suffering our comfort to be so molested by such a pest, for although with himself and his temper no fault in reason could be found, yet, as he was fresh from the school, he had every thing to learn pertaining to his vocation, and it requires a meeker saint than I am to teach footmanry.

Sam, among other habits at variance with a judicious household economy, was ever trying experiments. This ingratiated him with the children, especially with the boys, to the continual annoyance of their parents, till at last he acquired such an ascendancy over them, that it became my duty, on their account, to resolve

on parting with him ; and when the resolution was on the point of being carried into effect it was accelerated by Sam himself. In showing the boys how combustible flax is, he set a candle to a quantity in one of the garrets, which blazed up in such an unextinguishable manner that the house itself was in flames before help could be got, and consumed to the ground. So rapid indeed was the conflagration that very few articles could be saved, and these only of the most miscellaneous and ordinary kind.

But considering our meditated voyage, the accident could not be regarded as a very heavy misfortune. The furniture was insured, and the destruction enabled me to get payment without difficulty on the policy. We were thus at liberty to proceed across the Atlantic. It did not, however, seem advisable to do so at once ; inquiries were necessary, some preparation in clothing was requisite, and without divination it was foreseen that a residence in the forest required a providence of many little family etceteras which in town are obtained from the shops.

But without expatiating on the considerations which induced us to defer our voyage, it will be readily conceded by the reflecting reader, that there was at this time a confluence of circumstances which inevitably directed our views to another scene. We could not long, in all appearance, refrain from entrenching on the consecrated legacy of Sir Neil Eccles ; domestic aches, as they may be called, had impaired the comfort which we might have enjoyed with our relations. Duty clearly advised us to abridge our social reciprocities, and the fire had loosened us from the soil like a ship when she weighs anchor. Alike the victim of the times, of pecuniary accidents, and of family grievances, no prospect of happier fortune could be discovered, and hope for myself and my offspring existed only in a foreign land. In a word, I felt the strong hand of Fate pushing me on to emigrate ; and I am the more anxious that this should be manifest, as some who have pretended to be interested in my proceedings have insinuated that, not necessity, but caprice and fancy instigated a determina-

tion in which so much hardship must be encountered, and all the enjoyments of friendly intercourse foregone. They are but shallow observers who think those actuated by light motives who forsake their native land.

CHAPTER XXII.

MISANTHROPY.

ON the evening after the destruction of our house, I removed my family into town. The event, considering our intended emigration, could not be contemplated as a misfortune ; it accelerated, however, a course of mortification, which but for that accident would not probably so soon have come to pass. Our intention was scarcely known among our acquaintances, and they deemed the inclemency of adversity in consequence to have fallen more suddenly and with greater severity upon me, than was really the case—it tested their faithfulness. If I wish, however, to retain the good opinion of the reader, I must restrain myself from indulging remarks tinctured with

misanthropy ; I do not indeed feel any, I am only inclined to express inferences deduced from observation. But poverty begets vile thoughts, which mankind, from a benevolent sentiment, do not like to hear. General flatterers of human nature are as much favoured by the species, as particular sycophants by individuals.

It has been made sufficiently obvious, that besides the sear and yellow leaf into which my circumstances had fallen, there were irksome domestic vexations in our lot, which recommended emigration as the only expedient by which my adversity and these vexations could be alleviated. Our temporary removal brought others of a kind not so easily susceptible of remedy, and in some respects as bitter to suffer.

Reckoning on quitting England as soon as it could be determined whether we should proceed to Canada or the United States, and disregarding situation in the choice of lodgings, I carried my family to a furnished house in Abingdon Street, Westminster. Parliament not being then in session, we were cheaply accom-

modated ; but it was remote, and far from the beat I had been accustomed to frequent. I know not if any other cause contributed to the effect we were made to feel, but certainly it so happened that we were established there more comfortably for less money than we could have been in any more public part of the town.

The newspapers having proclaimed the accident which had befallen us, our friends required no intimation from ourselves, so that next day, when I met with several, I had only condolence to receive.

In the apparent sincerity with which it was given, there was no cause to put an invidious construction on the sympathy expressed for what all regarded as a misfortune ; till one of them, whom, being still alive, a prosperous gentleman, I shall abstain from naming, inquired where we had removed to ? When I told him, and that it was my intention to proceed to America as soon as the necessary preparations were arranged, I noticed a slight change in his countenance—or rather a suspicious momentary glance, as he said with some inflexion in his accent, that he was sorry to hear it.

We separated, however, much as on another occasion, but in walking along, the recollection of his sudden sinister look returned upon me inquisitively, and the more so, as I could not then divine the cause.

This incident, so trivial, made me more observant of the looks and accents of my acquaintance, and I soon perceived that they dreaded something like infection. Intimates were always engaged in some urgent matter when I chanced to fall in with them, and if sometimes they forgot the apprehended difference in our respective situations, and by inadvertency were guilty of their former cordiality, it became a motive afterwards with them to be more guarded. Mrs. Corbet remarked the same thing among her female associates; and one fact could not be concealed from ourselves. Families with whom we had more particularly cultivated the usual reciprocities of society, continued to visit and invite us to their houses, with the freedom of other times, and no doubt thought themselves meritorious in so doing; but we unluckily discerned, with the feelings of Lear in his treatment from his

•

daughters, that we were not considered quite so importantly as formerly, and that when invited to their houses it was only in a private way, and never, even by accident, as principals. All this added to the reasons for my determination to emigrate, for it was evident we never could recover those feelings which were necessary to the comforts of social intercourse. It was asking too much of human infirmity to expect that our friends would ever pardon us for having excited the clandestine embryos of their own bosoms, or that we would forget the insight and knowledge which had in consequence been forced upon us. Independent, therefore, of all pecuniary considerations, our resolution to quit England was ratified by other occurrences, inevitable perhaps in time, but abrupt in their advent by the accident which brought us to town, and we became impatient until the Atlantic should wash out remembrances that otherwise would have been dear.

In stating these facts, nothing, I hope, in the opinion of the judicious reader appears like a wish to extenuate a decision, which so many

things combined to render prudent, I may even add almost necessary. The aspect of the world, as well as the phase of fortune, was changed towards me, and it was surely wiser to fly from rising evils, than to wage with Fate a constant controversy and incessant war. Accordingly we began our preparations by seeking the best information that could be obtained; and upon the maxim which the friend of my helpless years, the good and kind Mrs. Busby had so strenuously impressed, every article not essentially requisite was studiously omitted. In this juncture, I received an account of the sudden death of my old friend Mr. Macindoe, and of his handsome legacy to my wife of five hundred pounds, already mentioned; some incident, however, occurred about his will, by which the money could not be immediately paid, and as the season was fast advancing, it was agreed that we should postpone our voyage until the spring.

In that resolution I was not, however, governed so much by any particular regard to the legacy—having placed my pecuniary concerns on a satisfactory footing—as by the advice of a shrewd

Scotchman, recently from America: one Mr. Lawrie Todd, to whom I was introduced as an intending emigrant, who had not fixed on his particular destination. He has since published some account of himself, and of his adventures and experience as a settler in the woods of the Genesee Country, and who, although not exactly qualified to instruct an emigrant of habits and wants similar to mine, had yet gleaned so much various information, the result both of what he had seen himself, and gathered from others, that I have no doubt he may have lessened many of our prospective difficulties, and taught me to avoid hardships which the stranger in the forest should be well prepared to encounter.



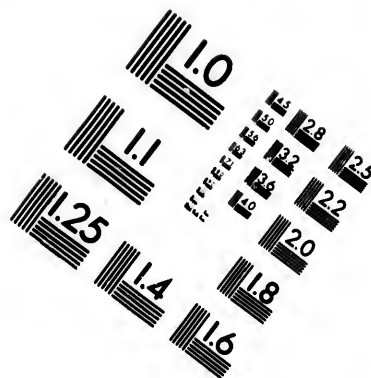
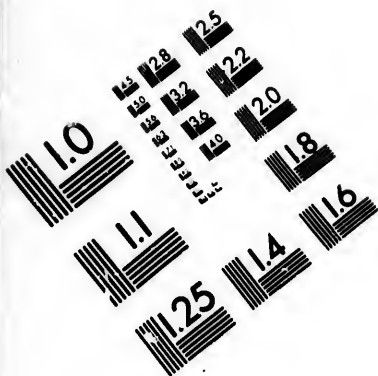
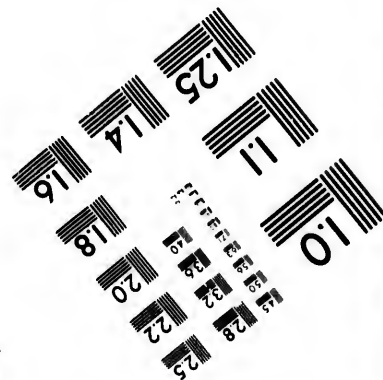
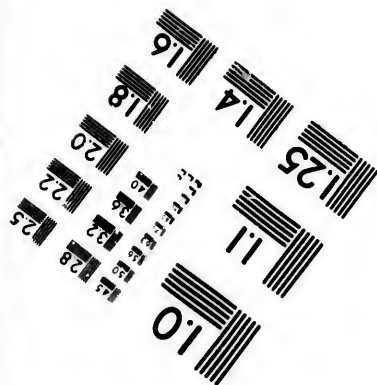
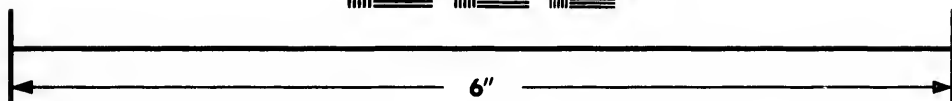
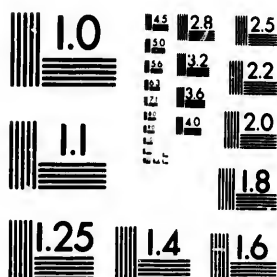


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CHAPTER XXIII.

AN INCUBUS.

IT is with no exaggeration that I say an intention to emigrate for ever is, as far as worldly feelings are concerned, more analogous to quitting life than those imagine to whom we must bid adieu. It in many respects bears the same relation to death, that to sleep does to die; and the sentiment with which the emigrant prepares for his departure is far more solemn, at least I feel it so, than in every other crisis of farewell but in the last ceremonies of the death-bed.

To me, however, this sombre feeling was lightened by the consideration that I should be accompanied by my family; and I trust, when I confess that, saving a filial reminiscence of Mrs.

Busby, then aged and infirm, my regret at the idea of seeking a new life in another world was not of an intense kind, I shall not be deemed insensible to the moral worth and political splendour of my native country. But even the tie in my remembrance of that venerable gentlewoman, the only parent I ever really knew, was destined to forego its hold. Towards the end of the autumn she wrote in her usual manner, for we had always continued frequent occasional correspondents, but in the conclusion of her letter there was something mournful and affecting.

She described her own fast decaying strength as a weariness of the mortal world, and a longing in her spirit for repose ; and alluding to my proposed departure with my family, expressed, in a remote and delicate manner, the satisfaction it would give her to have seen me once more.

To the reader it is unnecessary to remark, that although not superstitious, I cannot yet entirely acquit myself of being inclined to the indulgence of mysterious conceptions. This letter, the last from Mrs. Busby, affected me with a deep impression ; it hung, as it were,

upon my spirit like a load of cold damp clay ; and day after day the weight seemed to increase, insomuch that it interfered with the interesting consultations which I often then held with my new friend Mr. Lawrie Todd. It even acquired a metaphysical influence over my sleep, and night after night I suffered a mingled sensation of dream and feeling concerning the amiable author, a forerunner of her impending fate. This haunted state of mind became at last intolerable, and Mrs. Corbet, who had no tenderness for what she called the hypochonderics, at last began to sympathise with my uneasiness—if that could be called uneasiness, which consisted only of a too frequent presence of a distressing image in the mind, unsanctioned by any obvious cause.

Two or three weeks elapsed in this inexplicable mood, when one night I was startled with something scarcely less appalling than a vision. I was lying in a drowsy rather than a sleeping state, in a perfect consciousness of what I am and where I was, when suddenly a light seemed to dawn before me, and I beheld, as it

brightened, an open coffin with a body in it, but the body was not in the vestments of the tomb ; it seemed rather that of a person in the final aged helplessness of life, dressed in the habiliment of the sick chamber.

Of all the fancies to which I had ever yielded any credence, this was the most impressive. I gazed at it as if it had been some natural solemnity ; and when it disappeared suddenly, I roused myself, but in a state of awe and perturbation which baffles description.

Mrs. Corbet was terrified ; she imagined that I was infected with some cause of delirium, and insisted, in her alarm, on sending for a doctor. He came, but the fountain of the malady lay deeper than the reach of his skill. Had it not been soon after followed by an event of a painful kind, doubtless it would have passed away as a phantasy, or been deemed a confirmation of my wife's apprehension. As it was, the more I think of it, the more I am justified in considering it as one of those mysteries which are sometimes unfolded on the sensorium of the unhappy ; for next day the effect was an

impulse, which I could not repress, an impassioned wish to see Mrs. Busby before she died.

I make no attempt to explain this singular phenomenon. I only know, that presentiments of the same sort have happened to others, and that although the event augured did not appear to the world so extraordinary as that it should have been marshalled by a vision, it had yet a secret efficacy on their reflections. But not to occupy the reader's time with any disquisition regarding what may be my opinion on the subject, the desire to see Mrs. Busby became so strong, that I prepared to pay her a visit, when, on the third day after the revelation, a letter came from Dr. Leach, informing me that she had been smitten with a severe stroke of palsy, and was not expected to survive. This intelligence, which would at any time have been afflicting, received a kind of hallowing from the phantasma; for the calamity had overtaken her in the very hour and crisis of my trance.

I was not, however, satisfied, nor in any degree appeased by the Doctor's letter; on the

contrary, it seemed only to give a rational sanction to the inscrutable motive by which I was actuated, and I fulfilled my previous intention by going immediately to Scotland.

Strange as it may seem, I accomplished the whole journey by the mail without once shutting my eyes, and yet no febrile feeling was upon me, nor did I experience the slightest anxiety in my thoughts. My mind was tranquil; I expected to witness a melancholy sight, and nothing occurred to disturb the sad sobriety which that consideration naturally diffused over all my reflections.

I have however been sometimes told by Mrs. Corbet, that a change has been visible upon me since that period; my constitutional alacrity has subsided, and that I am apt to fall into an unaccountable mood of sadness, which, without alarming, disturbs her with melancholy fears. I must not, however, anticipate; but proceed as calmly as possible to describe the result of my visit—a visit which brought back the harmless incidents of my boyhood as vividly as if they had been still in action, and which has so influenced my

imagination, as to make, as I proceed with this narrative, all my past life come back again, as if the scenes and transactions that wait on my pen had been the substanceless apocrisia of an idle poet.

CHAPTER XXIV.

GRIEF AND CARE.

I REACHED the residence of Mrs. Busby about noon. I saw around me many old familiar objects; at the sight of several, I felt as if the burden of many years had been lifted from my shoulders. The garrulity of Mr. Macindoe, then in the grave, was renewed, and the past returned, as if each particular event was still in the performance. But when I reached the door of my early home, the spell was broken, and the recollection of my disappointments since I first left it grew painful in my spirit, like those gnawing insects and reptiles which are said to fasten themselves in the flesh and will not be shaken away.

The house bore the same aspect of trimness

which it ever bears in my memory. In one thing alone was it different; the brass knocker, which in the olden time was daily brightened, appeared on this occasion muffled with a piece of green baize, and the parlour shutters had not been that morning opened.

I knocked, and by some unconscious accident, though the knocker was tied up, beat with it the same rhythm with which I playfully announced myself in other years. Nanse, the old housemaid, recognized the sound at once, and opened the door, but not with her wonted blithe chiding for the din; on the contrary, she was demure in her aspect, and said, with a tear in her eye,

“ Oh, but I’m glad ye’re come! the mistress heard your knock, and looked in my face, for she canna speak—she’ll never speak again.”

I could make no reply, but walked in, and followed the faithful creature up-stairs into Mrs. Busby’s room, where she sat in her easy-chair, wrapped in flannel; but in all other respects as neatly dressed as ever. On the opposite side of the fire, the nurse, a decent house-

hold-looking matron, was sitting with a cup in her hand, from which she had been administering some cordial or ineffectual medicine; she rose as I entered, and immediately left the room.

On seeing me, my affectionate old friend gazed for a moment, and attempted to smile; but such a smile! so sad, so shattered, so like anguish! I could not speak, but going towards her, stretched out my hand. She looked in my face—her hands were powerless; and dropping her eyes towards them, to bid me see they were so, she burst into tears, and leaning forward on my bosom, could only utter a low and sorrowful moan.

The nurse, at rising, had set down the cup on a claw-foot table, and at this moment the cat, conceiving that it might contain something for its solace, jumped up and was on the point of approaching it, which Mrs. Busby observing, uttered a wild, shrill, unearthly cry, that made me shiver from head to foot. It was perhaps the last effort of habitual care. But the irreverent animal, as if conscious of her inability to interpose, only paused in its

attempt, and looked round at the ineffectual invalid. It was a scene that only some great limner may venture to hope he can represent; the effect on me was electrical; I struck the plunderer from the table with a cruelty of punishment disproportioned to the offence, and flung myself into the nurse's seat, trembling with inexpressible emotion, which was increased to agony by a sound, intended for a laugh, at once so strange, silly, and unnatural, that I was struck with horror and dread.

But let me escape from this painful remembrance. That night, at exactly the same time when her first stroke so shattered her faculties, Mrs. Bushy died.

By her will it appeared that, though her jointure was small, not amounting to quite two hundred and fifty pounds per annum; frugality during her long widowhood had enabled her to save several hundred pounds, one-half of which she bequeathed to me. In doing this, her characteristic orderliness was evident. The money was not given merely as a legacy, but in trust, expressly to be applied only to the education of my children.

As soon as a few little affairs were settled, I prepared to return, to conclude my preparations in London, when the latent malady which had so long distressed my nights with unhappy dreams, suddenly broke out in the form of a smart fever, by which, though my strength was much impaired, the wonted temperament of my thoughts was restored. I was, however, unable to travel for some time, but the interval was not idle leisure.

During the disease, I had been confined to the house of Mrs. Busby; but as soon as the doctors conceived I had regained strength enough to bear the fatigue, I caused myself to be removed into Glasgow, where, after I became able to endure society, many of my old acquaintances called. Among others, Eric Pullicate, who, although I am ever affected by a feeling of inconceivable dislike when his image is recollected, justice and gratitude compel me to say, evinced towards me particular kindness, and ultimately did me great service.

One forenoon, as we happened to be talking of old transactions, I mentioned to him my intention of emigrating with my family, in conse-

quence of the diminished state of my income. Some rumour of it had reached him, but as I had not myself spoken of it, he merely supposed that it was one of those probable guesses which society sometimes makes in its gossiping, respecting the fortunes of individuals. When I consulted him, however, not as to the measure itself—for that, he admitted, afforded the only feasible prospect of bringing forward my children, and passing life in the quietude to which I had become attached; but as to the method according to which I ought to proceed, his counsel and considerations were truly valuable. Native shrewdness had taught him to conceive, if I may say so, much of the practical wisdom which my friend from America, Mr. Lawrie Todd, had derived from experience, and it was in some respects even better adapted to my situation than the notions and facts of that worthy gentleman.

“It’s no’ to be contested,” said he, in allusion to some remarks I had been making on Mr. Todd’s suggestions, “that he must have gathered a fund of useful information; but Mr. Bogle Corbet, ye’ll excuse an auld frien’ for

counselling you no' to be overly particular in following his footsteps, for he was naturally of a lower degree in the means of education than you; even by what ye have been telling, he does not yet seem, in a certain sense, to have grown familiar with genteelity, which, without a brag, takes pains and opportunities to learn; I would, therefore, advise you, wherever ye settle, to pick your place, no' o'er far frae the howffs of civilization. At your time of life, the hardships of the woods are no' wholesome, nor new ways an easy conquest. A man of his condition and natural talent was very suitable in the Garden-of-Eden-state of a new settlement; but ye're one of a different order, and I'm thinking that the town of Judiville, or sic like as he left it, would be more to the purpose for a gentleman o' moderate means, than the awesome solitude of the wild woods, and wanchancy neighbourhood of bears and trees. So Sir, Mr. Bogle Corbet, my counsel in this matter of flitting across the Atlantic, is, that it should be made just as like as possible to a flitting frae Buchanan-street to ayont the Clyde, with a right reverence to the economy of the cause. Folks

neglectful o' such a consideration, fill their life with more miseries than need be, as I have seen by letters from some of my friends, that were helped away after the radical Straemach at the time of the battle of Bonny Muir."

His observations were commonly in this general fashion, but the inherent, shrewd good sense of the man governed all he said, even on topics respecting which he could possess no previous knowledge.

CHAPTER XXVI.

INDISPOSITION.

MY convalescence was slower than might have been expected, and a weakness which infected my limbs prevented me from taking needful exercise ; the weather, indeed, was variable, and but seldom so fair as to allow me to be much abroad. I was, in consequence, without being absolutely confined to the house, rather too much at home.

One day, when the morning happened to be exceedingly showery, this was the case, and it so chanced that during the forenoon no one called. Application to any sort of study was at the time oppressive, insomuch that after making several attempts to read a pious book

called "Margaret Linsay," I let down the curtains, and laid myself down on the bed.

I must have soon fallen asleep, for I had no consciousness when I awoke of having heard any noise, but on looking up, I beheld, as it were, a vision of Mr. Woodriffe from London at the bedside, lifting the curtain. He was pale, meagre, and death-like, but the glow of the crimson curtain shed a supernatural bloom on his countenance that ill accorded with his emaciated features.

In the first moment, thinking it a dream, I turned round, but he spoke, and I instantly started up.

"You are surprised to see me here in this plight," said he; and before I could make any reply, he added, "I have been very unwell since you left town, and the doctors have advised me to try the effect of a change of air. This has led me to think of a tour to the Hebrides, though the season is so far advanced; and when I heard of your being here, and of your plans, I thought perhaps you might be persuaded to come with me, especially as I have understood that a gentleman whom I

intend to visit is making arrangements to help a number of his tenants across the Atlantic: perhaps some connexion with their projects may be serviceable to your's."

While we were thus speaking, Mr. Pullicate came to see me, an incident which gave me pleasure on several accounts. Mr. Woodriffe, of all men I have ever seen, possessed instinctively the most accurate perception of real character, and I was glad that he should have an opportunity of observing one whom I believed to be so strongly connected with my fortunes. Besides this superior power, he had also another species of talent, still more extraordinary than even his surprising acuteness. He could, in the course of a few sentences in conversation, discriminate opinions formed on experience, from those which are deduced from theoretic principles, and was in consequence one of the ablest to advise with respecting matters of business, as well as of men: I had, from our earliest acquaintance, ever entertained the utmost respect for his judgment. But not to summer and winter longer on this, the meeting with him, and the coming in of Eric Pullicate

at the same time, gave me exceeding pleasure, till the superstition which had taken possession of me respecting Eric's destiny was recollected with its usual saddening influence.

It so happened that Mr. Pullicate's visit at that particular period was in consequence of some information he had received about emigration, and he had come to advise me respecting it, thinking it might be useful. This, which ought to have cheered me, had at the moment a very different influence. Darkened as my spirit was with the bodement arising from the presence of Mr. Pullicate, I thought, notwithstanding the seeming wisdom and unanimity which appeared between him and Mr. Woodriffe, that their advice betokened some fatality, and in my heart I secretly resolved to withstand it.

While they were speaking, I noticed the vivid glances of Mr. Woodriffe's eager eyes frequently elancing between Mr. Pullicate and me, and that he was suddenly affected by some mental resolution, the nature of which I could not conjecture. After a moment's pause, the latter turned round, and congratu-

lated me (with significance in the expression of his countenance that I could not but observe,) on my frien', as he called Mr. Woodriffe, having come so opportunely from London; adding, "For do you know I have had a great disappointment this morning; a house at Manchester has failed that I thought was as good as the Bank, and is more than a bawbee in my reverence."

The news,—such is the waywardness of man, gave me pleasure; but I affected not to notice what Mr. Pullicate evidently alluded to; it did not escape, however, the penetration of Mr. Woodriffe, who said curiously after he had gone away,

"That shrewd man thinks he is lord of your ascendant."

"How? In what way?"

"Nay; you should be best able to tell, but he thinks so;" and proceeding in his desultory manner, Mr. Woodriffe added, "He is not many degrees under a man of genius, but not quite one."

"You amaze me! How have you already discovered him so well?"

“ Don’t say discovered, say detected.”

“ How ! is there then such art about him ?”

“ Art it cannot well be called ; it is endowment. Have you not observed how curiously he fishes for the thoughts of others ? He speaks of what he knows will be agreeable, and discovers by that test what is the contrary. He is one of those who find out the weaker side of their neighbours by trying the strength of the stronger. He is a virtuous Iago—a character which Shakspeare has not delineated !”

We then fell into a more particular discourse concerning my affairs, and after some farther consultation, I agreed to accompany him to the Isle of Ardghlass, if, in the course of two days, the doctor might think me qualified for the journey. In my early years, such a jaunt would indeed have required the advice of the doctor, but the steam-boat which now plies between Glasgow and the West Highlands, has changed the nature of the voyage, and shortened the distance of those heather regions, converting what would have been formerly an undertaking of hardship and hazard, into a jaunt of pleasure, salutary to invalids.

While speaking, somewhat desultory, on

different topics connected with my situation, an incident occurred, highly characteristic of the curious singularities of Mr. Woodriffe. He suddenly paused, and looking at me very earnestly, with a cast of solemnity in his countenance, said, "The danger of your disease is in the mind?"

"Explain yourself—tell me why you think so?"

"I cannot," replied he, thoughtfully; "but your physical malady, I suspect, is only a sign or symptom: the disease is metaphysical."

I pressed him again to explain why he thought so, but he either could not or would not. He added, however, that when a young man, he had a strange pleasure in visiting Bedlam and other lunatic habitations, and said that he could easily discriminate between the insanity that springs from corporeal maladies, and that which originates in the mind itself; and then abruptly subjoined—

"But you shall come with me to the Highlands; I will wait till you are able; for you think too much of one thing—variety of objects and active employment is your best medicine."

CHAPTER XXVII.

AUGURIES.

THE meeting with Mr. Woodriffe was in many respects agreeable to me, but his own health did not improve, and before we left Glasgow, his disease had evidently made progress. His alacrity of mind, however, suffered no decay; on the contrary, the buoyancy of his spirits—one of his most fatal symptoms—was rather increased, and he enjoyed with zest and eagerness the local peculiarities; but few of the inhabitants afforded him so remarkable a subject of study as Mr. Pullicate.

He considered him as a person of talent, and as one possessed of a discerning spirit, such as he had seldom met with even in the metropolis, but the *ci-devant* democrat was

interesting on another account. His controversy between his republican principles and his good fortune furnished Mr. Woodriffe with much amusement; for although Eric himself was quite sensible that his prosperity had outgrown his refinement, yet a judicious sense of the propriety of suiting his manners to his circumstances, constantly prompted him to aim at a genteeler deportment, and his endeavours were not always felicitous.

"He has mistaken," said Mr. Woodriffe, "the show for the substance. Let him be a plain character, and he will become an uncommon gentleman."

Mr. Woodriffe was, however, not aware that the errors which he discovered in the ostentatious Eric, ought properly to have been ascribed to Mrs. Pullicate, now a shrewd and portly matron; ever actuated by an ambitious emulation to be in gorgeous equality with her neighbours, and constant in her endeavours to animate her husband with an energy of the same kind.

"I wonder," said Mr. Woodriffe one day, "how so sensible, demure, and acute a man as

Mr. Pullicate, should act in so many respects as if he were inflated with vanity; and yet there is less of it about him, than about almost any man I have ever seen."

He was not left long to wonder—the day following, Mr. Pullicate thought a little country air would do me no harm, and the weather being remarkably fine, he came with his carriage, a new one, and invited me, with Mr. Woodriffe, to come with him to Webends, as his country-house was called.

"And you must come," said he, addressing me in particular, "for Mrs. Pullicate will not be content if you do not: you see this is the first day that we have launched our own coach, and she would fain have you to hansom it."

Such an invitation, with the beauty of the weather, could not be resisted, and we agreed to accompany him.

Without having been much interested by the peculiarities of Mrs. Pullicate, she was in some degree rather a favourite with me; so extremely prudently did she contrive to render her feminine ambition ever subservient to the

promotion of her husband's consideration in the eyes of the world, veiling her own delight in the gratification with the most unsound, yet plausible reasons. But the hawk's-eye of Mr. Woodriffe saw more of her in a few minutes, than I had discovered in the course and intervals of a long acquaintance.

"I see," said he, "where the fault lies, that I could never account for in the conduct of our friend. He is much attached to his wife, and though not ruled by her, he does many things from affection to please her, which his own understanding would repress."

The incident by which Mr. Woodriffe so readily comprehended her character, is, however, worthy of being noticed. On our arrival in the new coach at Webends, she naturally enough inquired how we thought the new chaise, as she called it, would do.

"For my part," said she, "it's a thought overly fine, one of a soberer sort would have been a greater convenience. On Sabbath, when a sense of duty to the Giver of all Good would fain have made me ta'en it to the church, was,

you ken, a desperate showery day, so that I was obliged to walk, as if I had na such a commodity in my power."

I was diverted at her suffering such inconvenience on a wet day by possessing a new carriage, but the observation laid the whole mind of the worthy lady open to Mr. Woodriffe.

When, on our return to the hotel where we stayed, we were in the evening comparing notes together, he remarked,

"You have been mistaken in some degree as to the character of your old friend. The actuating principle by which he has been urged into wealth lies with his wife. He himself can discern what should be done, but it is Mrs. Pullicate, to whom he is evidently much attached, that makes him so ambitious."

I have ever since thought that this little observation showed more of the innate insight which Mr. Woodriffe possessed of character, than many of his most philosophical remarks. I must, however, hasten on, for matters were coming to a crisis with me. Mrs. Corbet was anxious for my return—the season was advancing, and although I was deeply interested in

the state of my friends' health, it was yet necessary to avoid every unnecessary delay. I had moreover, except my promise to accompany him to the West Highlands, no inducement to remain in Scotland, after being able to bear the fatigue of travelling.

At last, the day was fixed for our departure by the steam-boat, and our luggage was on board, but just as we stepped into the street to walk to the Broomilaw, Eric Pullicate met us at the door and startled me with his presence.

"I am glad," said he, "to have caught you; I have had an upcast, Mr. Bogle Corbet, that I hope may be a benison to you. Five decent douce families frae our gaitend are minded to emigrate in the spring, and as they have na settled on where they will go, they came to me last night, and said, that if ye would let them, they would na be backward in following you. Sir, it's a real cast of good fortune; for after all the discourse that we have had anent the subject, as ye're for the wilderness, creditable folk for neighbourhood and hands will be a great comfort. They'll be mair to the purpose than the naubies ye'll see in the High-

lands, who, though they can fight like rabiators, are no past ordinar I jealouse among trees and farming."

It is a curious fact, that although I am not naturally of a very reverential temperament, the success of Mr. Pullicate inspired me during that visit to Glasgow with great respect for every suggestion of his; and the high opinion which Mr. Woodriffe had formed of his talents and understanding, had deepened the feeling.

I stopped, conscious that I could not do wiser than follow his advice.

"Do not hesitate," said Mr. Woodriffe; "say you will assent to their proposition; but come, for our time is up, and the steam-boat will be off."

I stood in need of no farther exhortation, but authorized Mr. Pullicate, as we walked along the street, to act for me, and the suddenness of his appearance was forgotten in the interest of our conversation respecting the sort of arrangement which should be made with the emigrants; but when we had embarked, and the boat was paddling down the river, the recollection of it returned, and I am ashamed

almost to acknowledge how much it secretly disturbed me. Some misfortune, I was sure, impended; the shadow of the event so sent before darkened my spirit, and I could not shake off the apprehension, even although the wind was favourable, and the sea only rippled before the boat, as if the waters were gladdened by our rattling speed.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ONE OF THE HEBRIDES.

OUR sail down the Clyde was delightful, but I retain no recollection of any particular object. The picturesque shores and scenes have passed from my mind, like the impression from the surface of the calm pool when the ripple of a stone thrown in has subsided. I was, during the voyage, as in a soft and unbroken sleep, and we were landed, as we thought, at our place of destination, without having encountered impediment or adventure.

The steamboat, however, had not long left the shore, when a Highlander, with a huge staff, or rather piece of timber, that must have been valuable in the island, came towards us. We inquired our way to Ardghlass, the re-

sidence of Mr. Campbell, the friend of Mr. Woodriffe, and heard, with feelings better imagined than described, that we had been put on shore on the wrong island; that Ardghlass was at least seven miles' distant, and that we had no chance of getting a boat for several days, as the couter, which plied between the island and the mainland, had gone that day to Oban. The situation of two invalids in such circumstances was no doubt enviable!

We inquired again what sort of accommodation we were likely to find till a boat could be obtained, but his information was not comfortable; we were, however, surprised at his gentlemanly deportment, so little in accordance with his mean tartan garb; and I was particularly struck by the politeness of his English, especially as I expected to hear only the dislocated Celtic gibberish in use among the lower classes who frequent the Lowlands.

He did not allow us to remain long in the dark respecting what he was, but, by way of insuring to himself that deference which he was conscious his garb was not exactly of a sort to bespeak, he told us that he had been a Captain

during the late war, and he added, as he conducted us to his house, partly as Mr. Woodriffe suspected to prepare us for its rudeness, that he intended, with many others, to emigrate to America in the spring, and was, in consequence, not "very insisting on the manner" in which he then lived.

The house, considering what had been his regimental rank, did indeed require some descriptive anticipation; and yet it had been his paternal mansion, and the residence of his ancestors, for aught I know, or he himself knew to the contrary, since before the building of Babel; it being well authenticated in the Highlands that Gaelic was the original language of the world, and that only the descendants of the builders inherited the confusion of tongues.

It stood at the foot of a smooth green knoll, near the dry channel of a little occasional torrent, and was a mere thatched hovel, constructed seemingly of undressed stones, picked from the brook or brought from the shore. A chimney at the one end was formed of heather, and, as I thought, of an old hamper, wattled and warped with a straw rope. At the op-

posite gable the thatch had a hole in it, from which the savoury smoke of peat was rising in a tall and curling column. The door was open, and had a window on each side, under the sills of which a plentiful assemblage of tubs, milk-dishes, iron pots, a brass pan, dishevelled heather besoms, and invalided utensils were sunning themselves in a row. On the one side, three or four paces in front, stood a stately peat stack, the barbican tower of the castle; and on the other side, also in advance, before the cowhouse, a midden, on which a cock with his sultanas was strutting like a chieftain; and several snow-white ducks, which had not evidently then been fattened for the spit, turned up the sides of their heads, and looked at us in a quizzical manner as we approached the portal.

The interior of the mansion of Dungowan, as this ancestral residence of the Captain was denominated, could not be said to be unworthy of its exterior. Divided into two apartments, the first entered was the kitchen. Two wooden enclosed bedsteads stood in the corners; an antique oaken wardrobe, with a carved cornice

between them. A grate, which was not in the middle of the floor, but with a blazing turf fire, was placed against the wall, under an opening in the roof, and several chairs and stools were placed around, and bundles of yarn and mutton-hams hung from the dingy rafters, assurances of clothing and food. The wooden partition which separated this antechamber from the other, the dormitory for strangers, was adorned with a portrait of the iron-visaged Duke on horseback, so coloured that it might justly be called an obstreperous picture, and near it a glaring view of the battle of Alexandria, with the Pyramids in sight, and crocodiles playing near the spot where

“The brave Abercromby received his death-wound.”

We were not permitted to seat ourselves in this apartment, but were shown into the other, which had a deal floor, partly covered with a carpet;—the floor of the antechamber was of clay. In this room were two four-post beds, with curtains—one with printed calico, and the other with blue and white domestic-made check; a mahogany chest of drawers, covered

on the top with a bright towel, on which stood an oval, swing looking-glass, and near it a clothes-brush, with combs, and a pocket-Bible were lying ;—a clawfoot table was also there, and the fire-place was filled with green boughs ; but the most interesting object in the room, besides a fowling-piece, a regimental sword, and a pair of handsome pistols, which hung over the mantel-piece, was an old glazed portrait, on which the name was obliterated, but which the Captain told us was Prince Charley, and was thought a good likeness by his grandfather, who, however, “ was not out in the Forty-five.”

“ Being seated, as a matter of course—for the hospitality of our host did not conceive any invitation necessary, he himself drew out the clawfoot table to the middle of the room, and presently it was replenished with a square gardevine of whiskey, glasses, and a loaf, on which the damp of the climate had painted the blue and yellow livery of the Edinburgh Review. The glasses were then filled.

While engaged in these initiatory rites, an aged crone, uncorrupted by English, came in,

and set forth another table, which I had not observed, and covering it with a clean damask table-cloth, placed on it a mahogany tray, a tea equipage, and a japanned canister, with a rose on its side — consolatory symptoms in a misty morning on an *Æbudæ*.

Presently, when all the apparatus for breakfast was prepared, a mountain of wheaten toast, and valleys of oaten cake, were brought in, together with a hecatomb of broiled ham, fried fishes, like whales, a cairn of eggs, and butter in a lordly dish, with a punch-bowl full of honey, and a plate, like a battle-field, of bloody jam. But the appetite with which I surveyed the feast returns, and I long again to partake.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE SECOND SIGHT.

WE found Dungowan, as our host Captain Campbell was commonly called by the Celts of the island, not only hospitable, but really, notwithstanding his mean appearance, a gentleman of good manners, and possessed of humour and information.

“The Highlands,” said he, “have seen their best days; the chieftains are gone, and the glory of the claymore is departed for ever. I speak to you, gentlemen, who cannot but compare the lonely, comfortless condition which I am obliged to put up with here, with the active, bustling, and gay nine-and-thirty years that I have spent in the King’s service, and in other lands;—but I must not say so, for although the olden

time has long been dead, its spirit walks the mountains, and scowls upon me when I dare to repine. After an absence of many years, I came back to this old spot, which often was remembered in distant scenes as the pleasantest that the earth could contain; but on my return, all that had endeared it in recollection existed no more. That poor old woman, my house-keeper, alone remains of all those to whom I was attached: it is only by missing early friends that we discover how little the aspect of our native land contributes to the sentiment with which it is pictured on the memory. In truth, I am weary of this empty place, and although past the season of adventure, I have resolved to seek another scene. Here I am idle. What does it avail to sit on a rock looking at yon shipless ocean, or to lounge on the hill side listening to the humming-bee? This country is now but for sheep—Men have no business here; and one like me, who has lived in activity, makes misery for himself when he imagines that the stirring spirit of the world can be brought home to the glen, the island, or the moor. It is not that feeling, however,

which has urged so many of my neighbours to emigrate, nor am I a solitary example of its influence. We are all swayed by different motives, though our actions are so similar."

It seemed to me, while he was thus speaking, that there was something congenial in his sentiments to my own, and that in the woods he would not be an unpleasant associate; in consequence, I inquired if he had fixed on any destination.

"No; all countries are alike to me: it is one of the advantages of a military life that we lose local attachments. Before my return, every place had something about it inferior to my own home, but the delusion is gone. I think, however, that Canada will probably have my bones; for several officers whom I knew in the army, have settled with their families there. I have no comrades here, and it sweetens death to fall among companions."

During this conversation, Mr. Woodriffe uttered not a word, and before we had finished breakfast, he complained of unusual lassitude. The Captain regretted the absence of his servant, an old soldier, who was gone with the

counter to Oban, and advised my friend to lie down on one of the beds, proposing to me that we should leave him to rest himself, and take a stroll on the hills.

The day was by this time far advanced towards noon. The gentle breeze of the morning had subsided, and a lulled and quiet air slumbered, as it were, on the landscape. The hazy mist had disappeared, the ocean lay in glassy calmness before us, and behind and around the islands and the mountains extended in boundless perspective.

As we stood together on a promontory, admiring the silent and romantic scene, I discovered the white sail of a boat glittering in the sunshine, but it was far beyond all hail and signal, and seemed like one of those unattainable wishes that so interest and disappoint us in life. The Captain also saw it, and pointing it out to me, said with a playful pensiveness, "How like to a Colonel's commission in an old Captain's hope." The expression was in unison with the thought in my own mind, and it led to some remarks on the inconclusive ex-

pectations which all men cherish, even when reason clearly forbids them. In this frame, moralizing, half unconscious of our own reflections, I observed an aged woman coming towards us. She was not so old as the Captain's housekeeper, and considerably taller, but she leaned upon a staff, and her steps were more feeble.

"God be with you, Dungowan!" said she; "it was not me that expected to find you here well and hearty—but I could not abide the wearying, and came myself to see."

The Captain turned to me with a smile, and said, "She has the reputation of having the second sight;" and then addressing himself, with assumed solemnity, he said to her, "And why have you been so wearying?"

"It's no' a question that I can answer," was her serious reply, as she stood before us, bending over her staff; "But a cold hand from Ardenhulish kirkyard has heavily touched my heart."

"Save us!" replied the Captain; "and to what effect—"

"It was not him," said the Sibyl, looking earnestly at me; "I saw him there—I saw him well—"

"Where and when?" cried I eagerly; but without noticing my question, she subjoined, turning towards the Captain:—

"And you were there, in your regimentals; and the boat was at the shore, and Mr. M'Groan, the minister. Och hone! and was all yon, do ye think, but a vision? It could be no more, for the sadness is not of this world that lies so cold in my breast."

"Tell us all," cried Dungowan, sincerely serious, for he had become affected by her mystical manner.

"I saw the sun setting, and the hills' black shadow on the ploughed land, and the horse at the door, and your soldier-man Hector, and one, that to me is nameless, brought out the coffin."

I started, and thought of Mr. Woodriffe, whom we had left so unwell. The Captain was evidently not less disturbed, and bidding the old woman call for some refreshment at the

house, put his arm into mine, and drawing me aside, said,

“ This daunts me : I have often heard of her dismal faculty, but deemed it a phantasy of her ignorant neighbours.”

Although not an actual believer in the second sight myself, yet sometimes a kind of hankering to credit the doctrine of foresigns has infected me, and made me ready to believe in presages of sympathy—but at such a time and in such a place, with such an avouch of authenticity, could I longer doubt ? We hastened to the house, and were gladly surprised to find our friend seated on a chair in front of it, his spirits gay, and his lassitude gone ; but our joy was only for a moment ; our appearance, for we came hastily upon him, brought on a violent cough, and before I could assist him, he tumbled from the chair dead in my arms !

But let me fly from the painful details that ensued—the boat I had observed with the Captain from the hill reached the island that night, and on board of her, passing from Mull

to Morven, was the Reverend Mr. M'Groan, who kindly consented to stop until the body was prepared for interment. The funeral, when the couter returned on the second day after from Oban, was performed in all circumstances as it had been described by the old woman; and with a throbbing heart and an awed spirit, I laid the head of Mr. Woodriffe in the Ardenhulish churchyard.

I returned immediately afterwards overland to Glasgow, where, on my arrival, I had the satisfaction to learn from Mr. Pullicate, that he had made, with his wonted foresight and discretion, an arrangement with the emigrants, by which they were to follow me by a ship from Greenock for Quebec; he judiciously considering that it would best serve the purposes of all, were I to be there some short time before them, to make the necessary preparation for proceeding to that part of the province where I might be advised to settle.

CHAPTER XXX.

CAUSES OF EMIGRATION.

THE celerity of the journey to London completed the restoration both of my mental and corporeal health. I felt renewed energy; the aimless reveries, the drifting wrack of the mind, had cleared away, and I could again think and act with something not unlike the decision characteristic of my youth.

The disease, as that vague and hazy intellectual lassitude may be justly called, is perhaps not uncommon, especially among those who feel adversity closing like a smithy-vice upon them; but the moody shyness with which it is ever accompanied, has the effect of making the subjects averse to disclose their consciousness of the malady; and yet, when we look around us in

society, how visible and numerous are its victims ! It must indeed, be allowed, that the inward and outward state of man sympathise with each other ; and that the judgment and fortunes partake of some secret reciprocal influence, that makes them fade and wither in companionship. The apothegm is Shakspeare's, but I do not recollect his exact words. I think, however, it has not been so curiously observed, that when the wheel happens to relapse, the mind also experiences a corresponding revivification. It was certainly so with me. The business of preparing for the voyage, and of gathering information that might be useful, made me again in earnest with the world, and emulous to accomplish what I had undertaken ; but the details are not interesting, farther than that the change was visible to my former associates, and had the effect, even from only my outward appearance, of making them more cordial.—It was too late !

Having exerted myself with all my wonted assiduity, every thing was prepared for our departure before winter was over ; and thus,

although we intended to take our passage in one of the earliest ships for Quebec, I found myself in possession of several months of prospective leisure.

My intention to emigrate with my family being generally known among our acquaintances, I had, in consequence, many visitors disposed to follow my example, with whom I was often much amused. The address with which, I may say, they managed themselves, interested me in no common degree; for it was evident that in the various subterfuges under which their consultations were conducted, the ostrich which hides its head in the grass, and believes it cannot be seen, is not more cunning. It was not, however, so much to escape the scrutiny of others, as to conceal themselves from their own thoughts, that their address was exerted. Pecuniary embarrassment was at the bottom of their intention, and yet, with only one exception—and such he was indeed—they ever ascribed it to taste, fancy, and all that. This was not so much to excuse their enterprise to the world as to themselves. But the remark

requires no illustration ; for we all know that as much self-delusion is practised on ourselves, as in our endeavours to deceive others.

The only one, the exception alluded to, who acknowledged that he was actuated by considerations drawn from the state of his own circumstances, and the cloud which lowered upon the prospects of the Country, was also the only one, *à priori*, the least likely of them all to have entertained the idea of quitting Great Britain. He was a set-in-bachelor ; for although at that period of life when many men do not think themselves too old to marry, and still remote from the epoch of imbecility, when fondling old age with a blushing bride, mistakes chronical cramps for youthful animation, he was yet obviously, at the first glance, one of those whom Fate and Nature predestinate to celibacy.

He was dressed in a sober suit of gray, made quaker-fashion ; wore a broad-brimmed, low-crowned white hat, trimly brushed, his neck-cloth tied with ecclesiastical precision, and his hair cut and smoothly combed in the most ostentatious style of the preachers of the Gos-

pel, according to St. Self. There was, indeed, all about him the strongest impress of comfort, and sleeky snugness, a man, in fact, who ate one nice egg to breakfast—his shoes toasting within the fender, and had his solitary tea and single muffin at six o'clock precisely. He seemed the very antithesis to change, and the impersonation of permanency; but he was minded to emigrate—to cross the roaring billow, to wrestle with the primitive forests, and dare the shelterless hardships of its labyrinths.

I could scarcely preserve my gravity when he first mentioned the subject, the notion appeared so preposterous, and, with his dovetailed habits, so impracticable. It was probably owing to the surprise I expressed when he spoke of his intention, that he was induced to mention his reasons.

“In truth, Mr. Bogle Corbet,” said Mr. Hoard, “I see you are surprised; but were you as sensible of the difficulty of managing your funds to any satisfactory account in this country, you would discern that prudence could suggest no better course than to try America.”

“The woods and wildernesses of Canada,

Mr. Hoard," I replied, "are, however, not exactly like Bartholomew-lane; and my inquiries have chiefly been directed to obtain information concerning them. But considering the nature of your income, derived, I understand, entirely from a judicious management of your money-matters, I could not have imagined, that the idea of emigrating would ever have occurred to you."

"Ah, Sir, the times are treading close on my corns; perhaps I may not yet have suffered any coarse tramp, but really to live upon a competency is no longer an easy obligation in this country, oppressed as we are with taxes, and the means for a profitable investment of money becoming every day more contracted."

"In some respects, what you say, Mr. Hoard, cannot be disputed; but I should think you are not much likely to feel these perplexities?"

"But I may feel them—nay, I have great reason to fear that I shall feel them, and that early; and a wise discretion should teach us to anticipate by preparation inevitable evil."

"Very judicious; we cannot act more wisely," replied I, laughingly, "than to be prepared for

a cold; lest we take it. But I am not aware that any information which I may have obtained can be applicable to your case. Poverty causes me to seek a new country, and wealth makes you not quite at home in this. Our circumstances are very different."

"Then you do not think that America opens a much better field for an advantageous investment than London? For unless I were well assured that it did—and I have been strongly assured, I should never have entertained any idea of moving. Every body tells me that capital is much wanted in America, and yet your words would imply that it may be as profitably employed here."

This is enough to show the reader what sort of exceptions occur among those who contemplate emigration. Money, the want of it, or to get it, is the actuating spring, whatever may be the pretexts of intending emigrants of the middle ranks. No doubt, with a few, there may be other causes, taste or caprice, but I have never met with men actuated only by them. All who consulted me were individuals in impaired, or desperate circumstances, unable to preserve

their caste in the social system of this country, wrecked and catching at emigration as the last plank. The lower classes are governed by motives sufficiently manifest; agricultural changes, and the introduction of new machinery, is constantly throwing off swarms of operatives who have no other resource; as their vocation is labour, a shifting of the scene is comparatively of little consequence to them. But it is only amidst the better class of emigrants that the mingled and combined feelings of necessity, interest, and sorrow are found. The cares and fears, the anxieties of enterprise, the wound of the heart, that pains like amputation, and the solitude that waits in the wilderness, are keenest and cruelest among them. But this is digressing from my own narrative, and trenching upon the unavailing truisms of the political economists, as well as of those who have a juster conception of man.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE MOTHER.

INDEPENDENT of the peculiar feelings by which I observed the intending emigrants so generally actuated, there were among my visitors several characters of the most interesting description, even without reference to their immediate circumstances. To have attended only to their tales, one might have thought they could show cause enough, apart from all pecuniary considerations, to seek another world. One of these was no less than a grandmother, upwards of sixty years of age, the mother of the landlady of the public-house where the stages stopped when we lived at Oakhill, and where I had sometimes noticed her, interested by the general neatness of her appearance, and

a pensive cast of countenance, which may be described as the complexion of a beautiful old age.

One morning she called, attended by two of her grandsons, stout, good-looking striplings, older than boys and yet not old enough for men. I was astonished when she told me, that the object of her visit was to consult me about going to Canada. A little embarrassment in her air increased the interest which her explanation of the motive of her visit excited, and I perceived her look once or twice at the lads, as if she wished they had not been present; at last she told them to go to their brother in the street, and she would join them in a few minutes.

When they were gone, I saw the tear start, and after a short pause, she said:

“No wonder, Sir, that you are surprised at my errand here; you could not, indeed, but have a light notion of my prudence, when I spoke of going, at my years, to that far-off land. But I have many reasons, and some of them sad enough. These boys are two of five left by an unfortunate—a lovely—and my heart would say,

my ever dearest daughter ; I had but two—Mrs. Purl of the Horse and Groom, whom you know, was one of them. The eldest boy, though of a gallant and proud spirit, would not come in, for it molests him to think—poor tender lad!—of what is no fault of his, and yet the thought of hiding ourselves in Canada is the invention of his modesty.”

“ Hiding yourselves ! Mrs. Paddock ? what has happened, that you should ever think of that ? ”

She wept profusely, and after a little space of time replied—

“ I am sorry, Sir, to be so troublesome, but it will not make you think less of us, to tell you all. I thought, however, you had heard of our dishonour. Alas ! it is not the bluntest pang of such afflictions to fancy all the world sees the stain, as well as we ourselves feel it. Mrs. Purl, as you well know, is a good and kind wife and mother ; I could never have had a more dutiful child ; she was my second daughter. The mother of these children, was Eliza, my eldest : she was the flower of our village, but she fell, and I have never seen her again. Vain

words, I see her ever still, blossoming in her beauty and innocence!"

The tone of exquisite grief in which the old woman uttered this pathetic remembrance, I can never forget; she paused, and then proceeded.

"He was a gentleman, and woe to me! she lived with him in shame many years, and was the mother of the five orphans. When he died, she was not forgotten by his brother the heir, but she lived not long after. What could I do? the children were Eliza's, whom though I would never see while she was happy in her error, I could not but gather them—alas! Sir, it was under a widow's wing.

"I have brought them up; I have done all I could for them, and the eldest is now ready to go into the world; but in his father's house he had grown familiar with gentility, and servitude—he has no other lot—he cannot abide, so we are thinking of going to America, for we have friends already in Ohio, that write enticing accounts of their prosperity, and Canada is understood to be a neighbour town."

I must let the reader imagine for himself

the effect of this simple story upon me, for without well knowing what escaped from me, I said :

“ It was a wild thought at her time of life ; could the lad not be better persuaded.”

“ Ah, Sir, I cannot urge him, and he has infected all his brothers with his pride ; but if they had it not, good servitude is growing scarce in England, and Mr. Purl has his own sons to provide for.”

It seemed to me that the simple expression “ servitude is growing scarce,” was fearfully ominous of something fatal in the State. It accorded with what had been the tenor of my own reflections, when my spirits were languid, but I had recovered, and in my cooler moments it would have been considered as a morbid sentiment ; at the time, however, its import was serious, and might have become solemn, had not my wife entered the room.

“ What’s this I hear, Mrs. Paddock ?” said she ; “ and so ye’re thinking of crossing the seas too !—they are too well at home who think of that for a diversion.”

“ It may be so, Madam,” replied the old

woman, "you know best your own feelings."

I was not ill-pleased at the retort, for Mrs. Corbet should have seen her distress; however, none daunted at the reproof, she rejoined,

"They are indeed fond of an ado that seek to make one. And so those three boys at the door are your grandsons, are they?"

"It is my misfortune and my pleasure to call them so."

I perceived my wife was in the wrong, but I knew that she would, as soon as convinced of it, make a liberal atonement, and therefore did not interfere.

"But how was it," inquired Mrs. Corbet, "that all the time we lived at Oakhill we never heard of this family?"

Mrs. Paddock looked at me, as if to ascertain what I suffered, and then said respectfully, but with a slight inflexion of resentment in her voice,

"Madam, I believe that in most families there is always something unfit to be made a boast of. You are a happy lady who have not yet known this—if you do not?"

"Do you know, Mr. Corbet," said my wife, a little bamboozled, and looking sedately at me, in evident confusion, "they say these obstreperous boys, and the three others, are the grandsons of Mrs. Paddock?"

"I have been told so," was my reply, affecting the most excessive meekness, but ready to bite off her head, as if she had been Mr. Macindoe's gingerbread lady; and I gathered my brows at the same moment into a most appalling scowl. Mrs. Corbet saw at once her mistake, and turning towards the old woman, was greatly shocked to see her weeping grievously. To make, therefore, short work of the equivoque in our situation, I related gently the heads of Mrs. Paddock's account of her grandchildren, and it immediately had the effect intended; my wife instantly forgot her apparent heartlessness, and sympathized with the poor old woman with more than her wonted benevolence.

"But," said she, "would it not be as much to the purpose, were Mrs. Paddock, instead of this Canadian adventure, to represent the con-

dition of the poor boys to their uncle. He could do something, surely, for them?"

"He never shall!" was the spirited answer; "if need be, I would go into the workhouse first. I am old and infirm, but not so old that I may not help their householdry. I will cross the waves with them—I'll dive into the woods with them, — we'll go together where we never have been known, and God's blessing will go with us; for our purpose is honest, and the blessing will not be withheld if there be charity in Heaven. No, Madam, we are poor, but proud, and not more proud than just. I will not injure these boys, were their uncle to befriend them; but never will I ask the blood of their father for any favour, so help me thou living Lord!"

And at these words, uttered with an indescribable energy, she fell upon her knees, and spread her arms, as if in imprecation, then paused, and rising, said calmly, "It would be to curse my Eliza's children."

My wife stood petrified with consternation at her eloquence and energy, nor was I capable for some time to utter a word—the scene, the feeling, and the impassioned grief, surpassed all

description. Its vehemence was the more impressive by the powerful contrast which it afforded to the pale thoughtfulness of the old woman's calm habitual look.

"You know not, lady," she affectingly exclaimed, "the resolution of a mother's heart, when she thinks of the dishonour of her child. Nineteen years have I passed in hidden sorrow, but nineteen hundred years will not heal the wound that ever rankles here!" and she smote her bosom at the same time with such an upward look of anguish, that Mrs. Corbet burst into tears and fell upon my shoulder.

"I beseech you, Mrs. Paddock," I exclaimed, "to repress these violent feelings; they are not seemly at your age."

"I know, I know it!" was her impassioned answer; "it is the outbreking of nineteen years of secretly collected sorrow. I little thought to utter it in this world. Oh, Eliza! her fault will make the everlasting skies a mournful place to me!"

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE EMBARKATION.

THE case of Mrs. Paddock and her grandsons is undoubtedly not common, either in the circumstances, or in such energy of character as that of the old woman. Of all those who have hitherto consulted me—no very wise proceeding on their part, when it is considered that I can have had no practical experience whatever on the subject—she has interested me the most.

We have agreed that she and her family shall take their passage in the same ship. Perhaps I ought to add, that her resolution and feeling make her enterprise to me almost sublime. Her old age, her saintly countenance, the sentiment by which she is actuated, the youthful pride of the boys, the hazards to be

encountered, and the object in view, are each and all affecting topics ; and when I say so, the sympathy which they have excited in my wife shows how strongly they are calculated to awaken the benevolence of the heart ; for Mrs. Corbet is not a person much disposed to enthusiastic sensibility ; domestic and practical in all her ways, she yet feels not less excited, I verily believe, than I do myself.

I have engaged for the voyage the cabin of the *Mirimachi*, Captain Binnacle, and Mrs. Corbet finds that besides our own family, Mrs. Paddock may be accommodated also in the cabin. Her grandsons must rough it in the steerage—no great hardship to them, for since their mother's death they have lived with the old woman, and their lot has been severe enough, but they are already prepared with a gallant stock of young cheerfulness for the voyage. It augurs well of their destiny.

In my own family all is bustle and activity ; the greater part of our luggage is embarked. We have not much ; we trust on being able to supply ourselves in the country, and have only laid in those articles which our habits may

require, but which are not to be found easily, as we are told, there.

I have been a good deal surprised to learn from the Captain that we are not likely to have many passengers, notwithstanding the universally acknowledged distress of the times. But London is always the last part in the kingdom that suffers. It has so many resources of employment peculiar to itself, that visible distress is not observed in it until they are touched.

Hitherto I have written these reminiscences of accident and feeling retrospectively, and although my stock of materials is far from being exhausted, I have now only detached notes to make, merely to keep up a connexion in the narrative, until I shall have been settled on our land. Perhaps it might be as well were I to suspend the story until that be accomplished; but we are in a crisis, and doubtless hereafter the record of the incidents of our adieu to London may amuse us in the forest.

Mr. Ascomy has taken his farewell; I was not present. He submits, my wife says, with great tranquillity to the separation, confident that we shall soon tire of America. To the

children he has given toys and good advices, in the most affectionate style of a grandfather expecting to see them at the next holidays. Alas ! they part for ever !

Captain Binnacle proposes to drop the ship to Gravesend the day after to-morrow. Mrs. Pad-dock and her grandsons go on board at Greenwich. I shall not therefore embark until the Mirimachi has reached Gravesend, as the old woman will, no doubt, be accompanied by her daughter, and it makes me melancholy to witness farewells.

We are all ready—One of the Gravesend coaches takes us this afternoon. I think, as we have no baggage, that it is proper we should be there before the ship, in case something requisite for the voyage may have been forgotten : for our adventures after reaching America, I am assured by Mr. Lawrie Todd, we are amply provided. Why should a voyage of this kind fill me with more anxiety than when I sailed for Jamaica ? Are we not going to our home ? “ Yes, to our long home,” says Mrs. Corbet. I could have wished she had employed a fitter phrase.

I remember, when a boy at school, that a family of three generations emigrated from our village, a grandmother, the husband and wife, with several children. On the Sunday before their departure, they requested the prayers of the congregation, and were all in church ; when the precentor read their request, they stood up. It was the day before I was sent to Glasgow, and Mrs. Busby, who was in the pew beside me, caused me also to rise. The prayers were ineffectual ; the ship with all on board perished, and all the hope and expectancy of my youth are gone !

We reached Gravesend last night, and when the tide serves we shall then embark. The day is lowering, and but for Mrs. Corbet, who visibly suppresses her own natural regret, I should not be in good spirits. The children are exulting with delight at the prospect of the voyage, and the young ones are courageously anticipating many a combat with the bears and lions, that are to be encountered in the American woods.

We are now on board, and I should not have again opened my portfolio, but with all

our care, Rory, our little dog, has been left behind ; I trusted that one of the boys would have seen it safely on board, but it has been forgotten. We have, however, forsaken other things that ought to be lamented more, and yet I cannot describe how much this incident has molested us all. It gives, as it were, a form and body to our departure, and the children are sorrowfully wondering to each other what it will do, and where it may be pining.

The tide is full, and the anchor is weighing. It mortifies me, I know not why, that I am thus sad, for in vain I seek to discover in all the corners of my recollection for one single object in the island that should make me wish I had not taken this decisive step ; surely it can be no presentiment of disaster ! It is felt by no one else on board ; even Mrs. Corbet, who has left her father and sister, shares not to such a depressing degree this phantastical grief. To me, indeed, phantastical, for I have no cause.

The evening is closed, and we see the Foreland Light on our starboard quarter. I have

just left the deck. The stars are out, the wind is fair, and the land looms darkly—why should I be thus bodingly troubled?—Farewell, my native land!--England, good night—alas!

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE ICEBERG.

THE voyage to Quebec was far different from that to Jamaica. We were among the earliest vessels of the season, but not so early as to expect so wintry a passage, as, according to Captain Binnacle's opinion, we experienced. What increased our discomfort was the condition of the *Mirimachi*. She was called a "good ship" in the bills of lading, but as she proved very leaky, my wife most cogently observed, it was a shame and deception that deserved serious punishment — enticing honest people by false pretences to put their precious lives in danger. However, we reached Quebec, and certainly not without sufferings, both actual and imaginary.

While in the Channel, and, indeed, until we had doubled Cape Clear, we met with no great cause of annoyance. The weather was bright and breezy, but much colder than I expected. The women and some of the children were of course sea-sick, and, had I not made exertions, I might have had a relapse of the "hypo-chonderics;" but sensible of the folly of giving way to aimless reflections, I struggled to find objects of interest in the occurrences of the voyage. I kept a log-book, more minute than that of the ship; took observations as often as the Captain, and found a strange pleasure in discovering that my schoolboy astronomy was at last of some seeming use.

But the winds and waves were not disposed to encourage my studies in the nautical sciences; on the contrary, they were much too often in a state of turbulence, and we had a plentiful experience of squalls and storms, rattling hail and dumbfalling snow.

As we approached the coast of Newfoundland the cold increased, though the year advanced; and what added to our chagrin, the wind was often so inclement, that when a fire

was most needed, we could not venture, on account of the ship's violent motion, to kindle one, and were in consequence obliged to sit all day chattering round the cabin-table, wrapped in the coverlets of our beds, like Capulets in their winding-sheets, gnashing their teeth at one another in the family vault.

One evening it suddenly fell quite calm, as if we had turned a corner. We were still far from land. During the night the gloom increased, and, when the dawn of the morning should have appeared, it continued dark. The whole atmosphere was so thickened with the fog, that even at noon we were embarrassed as we walked the steady deck, such was the opaque and palpable obscure; and when the candles were lighted in the evening they burned dim and furry. Mrs. Corbet deserves credit for the ingenious simile by which she described their ineffectual lustre. "They are no better," said she, "than fish heads in the dark." During the day, in apprehension of falling in with other ships, we kept tolling the bell—sometimes the boys hailed with the trumpets, as if a sail were in sight, and although the sailors had work enough to do, so

preternatural was the thickness of the air, they could do nothing. At sunrise in the morning, we had sailed out of the fog-bank, which then appeared like a stupendous chalky cliff, stretching across the ocean ; but as the day brightened, a light breeze blew out, and it thinned without disappearing, till all the transparent East became as if it had been ground like the moon-shade of a lamp, preserving its outline as distinctly as real glass. When the sun at last shone over its edge, the glory was as dazzling as when he looks from the unclouded horizon of the ocean. Captain Binnacle, in thirty-nine passages across the Atlantic, had never seen such a phenomenon.

That evening we had light airs and clear weather ; but when the first watch was set, the wind came so sharply from the north, a fresh breeze, and so intensely cold, that the sailors said it must be blowing from an iceberg. Our chief comfort in this apprehension was that our course enabled us to bear away with the wind several points free. We saw, however, nothing, although the moon was high ; but at midnight one of the men descried a brightening along the

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northern horizon, which left no doubt of the fact.

An island of ice inflamed the imaginations of the passengers, and we all assembled with straining eyes on deck, and stood there shivering, without satisfaction, several hours ; at last the brightness began to assume outline and features, and the wind rose as piercingly and rude as December, while the enormous mountainous mass was evidently nearing. By its apparent extent, the Captain conjectured we should pass to the windward of it without difficulty ; but as it came nearer and nearer, the feeling of danger mingled with the chillness of the wind, and we beheld with awe and astonishment many streams of beautiful water leaping and tumbling from the cliffs and peaks, as it drifted in the sunshine towards us.

The wind, as the iceberg approached, slackened, and we saw with the telescope, on a point that projected from the side, a huge white bear couchant, which the sailors said was watching for fish.

No sight could be more solemnly impressive than the evidently advancing mass ; at last it

came so near, that we feared it would be impossible to escape. Our dread made every one on board silent : Mrs. Paddock, with two of her younger grandsons, seated herself behind the companion, and clasped them under her cloak in her arms.

The vast peaks, cliffs, and pinnacles, were like a gorgeous city with all its temples and palaces, shuddering, as if shaken by an earthquake. The waters dashed from terrace to terrace, and every point and spire was glittering and gleaming with countless flames kindled by the sunshine. But it cannot be described. Terror confounded every one on board. A huge mass which projected far aloft, and almost already overhung the ship, was seen to tremble, and with a crash louder than thunder, it fell into the sea. The whole dreadful continent, for such it seemed, visibly shook. The peaks and mountains were shattered with indescribable crashing, and with a sound so mighty that it cannot be named, it sundered, as if several islands had separated, and we saw through the dreadful chasm a ship under full sail beyond, coasting the weather-side.

Our danger was increased by the breaking up of that iceberg, which only multiplied itself; but the sight of the distant sail cheered our despair, and a slight change in the wind soon carried us again to a considerable distance; still the different masses floated in view, and all day long we had our eyes fixed upon them as they appeared to recede, fearful that another variation of the wind would bring them again around us. Afterwards we saw several other icebergs, but were not in danger from any again.

Appalling as the fear of being crushed to atoms by the iceberg had been, we encountered in entering the Gulf of St. Lawrence an equal peril of as dread a kind. Several other vessels entered it along with the *Mirimachi*. The wind was easterly, and of course fair, but the weather was foul and sleety, and I observed a change in the colour of the sea, which, when the immense inland waters that flow into it at that place are considered, ought not to have surprised me. It lost its azure purity, and instead of becoming green, as in the British Channel, grew dingy and muddy.

There was nothing in this which a very little reflection might not have explained ; but my mind, naturally, perhaps, too apt to ponder on mysterious causes, regarded the phenomenon, so common where rivers diffuse themselves in the ocean, as a consequence of some great internal turbulence—an earthquake, or a deluge proceeding from the snows being suddenly melted by a volcano ! In vain the Captain assured me it only exhibited the permanent local complexion of the sea. I was persuaded myself, however, that it arose from something portentous, and confident that it indicated some extraordinary event which had either taken place or was about to come to pass. My wife ended our controversy, by advising me to take a dose of physic ; and yet that night a dreadful tempest gave credibility to my apprehension, and seemed to verify the omen.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

A SHIPWRECK.

SIX or seven sail entered the Gulf together. The wind was blowing a strong and steady breeze, and the Mirimachi, though certainly not a comfortable ship, and very leaky, was yet swift, and carried her canvass gallantly. A speedy arrival was, in consequence, cheerfully anticipated.

Towards evening the wind shifted more to the North, and came in sudden violent squalls from off the coast of Labrador, accompanied with lavish showers of hail, while the sea dashed abruptly, and the heavens assumed a threatening aspect. We, however, had a rapid run, until we had passed the Magdalen Islands, and were beginning to congratulate each other

that the dangers of the voyage were nearly over, when the mate announced that the Island of Anticosta was on the weather-bow, and lay black in the evening horizon, like a corse covered with a mortcloth.

This dismal island was an object of dread amongst us. An old newspaper, which we found on board, contained an account of a shipwreck which had happened there the preceding year, attended with circumstances of horror that I shall not attempt to transcribe, and which rendered it, in consequence, a topic of apprehension among the children, in our conversations during the passage. An incident, at the moment when the mate announced the news, awakened all the anxieties which the story had inspired; for scarcely had he spoken, when a sudden crash of thunder, resounding with a long, vast, hollow roll, unlike the loudest peals we had ever heard, burst over our heads. In any place, and at any time, such a tumultuous congregation of dreadful sounds would have been appalling; but off Anticosta, which we regarded as a forbidden isle, and respecting

which our imaginations were filled with terrific images, the effect was indescribable: we looked at one another as if the hazards of the voyage were only beginning.

Conceiving ourselves safe in the American waters, we had all the afternoon been in uncommon good spirits, and, although the evening was rough and the skies sullen, undisturbed by any fear. But the name of Anticosta was portentous, and the deep, long rolling, sudden thunder, roused as an alarum, and we became instinctively silent. Some time after, another peal rattled, but in its noise less solemn, and to this succeeded tremendous rain, with a gust of wind, that blew several of our sails fortunately into pieces.

"Had it not done so," Captain Binnacle, when he saw them in rags, said, "God only knows what the consequence might have been!"

Although the evening was wild and gloomy, the night was not so dark as we had feared it would be. The moon was at the full, and though not visible, her light, dim and ghastly,

showed the outline and white manes of the waves, but the ominous island still darkened along the horizon. We, however, were proceeding at a dashing rate, and several of the ships which had entered the Gulf with us, were seen by the sailors through the intervals of the showers, close at hand.

There was something like companionship in this, and though it would be difficult to assign any solid reason why it should have been so, we felt a kind of satisfaction in the thought. But the feeling was soon checked; for all at once—in a moment, the wind shifted into the South-west, and blew out a furious gale—and one of the ships to leeward fired a gun.

I knew not what the signal intended, and there was such a bustle on our own deck, that it would only have troubled the Captain had I enquired.

During the hazard we were in from the iceberg, old Mrs. Paddock was surprisingly calm, but manifestly in great anxiety. In this storm she was no less so, and collected her grandsons around her in the cabin, to which they had been

invited by my wife. She leant on the shoulder of one of the elder boys, with the two youngest on her lap, as they all sat on the floor, and maintained the most serene tranquillity, while the ship was wildly plunging, and every thing not lashed fast was careering, as if instigated with life and rage.

Mrs. Corbet, with my own children, had early retired to their berths, and were less alarmed than might have been expected ; we had several times as rough nights before, but we had then also sea-room, the value of which they were not sailors enough to appreciate. For myself, I am not ashamed to say that my courage, if I had any left, was rather a-kin to curiosity than to bravery. That dismal Anticosta, and the cannibalism of necessity by which its unblest shores had been rendered so frightful to the imagination, acted like sorcery upon me, warranting fancies wilder than the roaring tempest.

In this crisis, the mizen-topmast was carried away, it was blown sheer overboard, but the rigging fell upon the deck, immediately over

the cabin, with a shattered crash, as if the ship herself had been crushed.

Mrs. Corbet and all her flock screamed from their cabins; the young Evelyns also cried in terror, and clasped their Grandmother, who, however, appeared self-possessed, and only said piously—

“It is the will of Heaven.”

Another signal gun was at the same moment heard, but farther off, and from the black shore of Anticosta.

I ran on deck.

“It is one of our companions on shore, or near it,” said Captain Binnacle; “The Benson of Liverpool. I thought, when I saw her last, she was too near that cursed island when the wind changed.”

I could see nothing, and a third signal left us no longer in doubt of her doom; but there was no time then for reflection; a man on the forecastle cried “Land a-head!” I ran, not knowing what I did, towards him, and beheld a steep dismal promontory within a short distance.

Captain Binnacle had followed me, and lean-

ing over my shoulder, said, "I think we shall weather it."

"And if we do not?" cried I.

"We are on Anticosta," was his answer ;
"God help us !"

In the same instant the blast came rushing along, the waves rose before it, and hurled us, as it were, to the rocks. I ran towards the cabin to share the fate of my family. The frightful tale in the newspaper flashed upon my recollection, and transfixed me to the spot before I could descend.

"Better," I exclaimed, "to perish, than survive to share that !"

Forgetful I was holding by a rope, I clasped my hands in despair, and losing my hold, was flung by a lurch of the ship with such violence against a hen-coop, that I was stunned by the fall, and lay for some time senseless on the deck.

When recalled to myself, which was not till some time after, I found the ship had weathered the precipitous rocks, and was anchored safe in their lee in smooth water.

The day also was beginning to dawn; our comrade the Benson, which had been driven on shore, was wrecked and broken to pieces; the crew and passengers however were saved, and we carried them with us to Quebec.

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CHAPTER XXXV.

QUEBEC.

THE morning after the storm was cloudless and tranquil. The wind came gently again from the north-east, slightly rippling the surface of the flowing tide, which carried us with an easy current towards Quebec. Next day we passed the Saugenay, a vast and comparatively unknown stream. We saw it at ebb-tide pouring its mighty waters into the St. Lawrence, and which are supposed in volume to be scarcely inferior, issuing from a region of hills and valleys, destined to become the home of many an outcast from Europe.

As we approached the Isle of Orleans, the St. Lawrence contracted his banks, and the features of the country gradually became more distinct,

surprising me with the appearance of a denser population than I had previously conceived any part of the continent of America yet exhibited. It was, however, but in a stripe of villages. The cultivation did not reach to any considerable extent on either side, and the northern mountains were still hoary with winter, save where here and there, to use the words of sabbath Graham, the Glasgow poet, a sweep in the hills opened

“ Some distant vista of her bright domain,”

and disclosed the remote and loftier summits which, instead of being capped with snow like those of Europe, were still dark with their original pines, as if none had fallen.

When we came in sight of Quebec, we saw the celebrated Falls of Montmorency on our right; but I was more interested in the warlike and glittering aspect of the city, than with the magnificence of Nature. The hazards of a tempestuous passage had amply satisfied all on board that the crystalline peaks and mountains of even an iceberg afford but a cold pro-

spect of pleasure, compared to the silvery spires and shining roofs of an hospitable town.

The approach to this promontory-seated fortress in the evening, when the sun pauses in the horizon, exhausts description. The roofs and steeples, covered with tin, are then all gloriously kindled. The precipitous shores of Point Levi, and the upland country above them, calm in the sunshine, and thickly sparkling with the starry windows of scattered houses and churches, present a bright contrast to the opposite side, where the Chateau of St. Lewis, dark in shadow, and resembling the western view of Edinburgh Castle, stands in stern sublimity over the obscure masses of the lower town.

I traced the wavy outline of the fortifications, enclosing the city, like a warrior's belt, till it is knotted, as it were, at the citadel of Cape Diamond; and on the topmost corner I could discern the sentinel's arms glancing as he moved to and fro in the setting sun. But from the great objects of this most picturesque of landscapes, my attention was drawn to the river below by the passing of a canoe, rapidly shoot-

ing across like a shuttle in the loom, the watermen singing in chorus; presently a steam-boat from Montreal came round a headland, joyously paddling, and the music of her fife and drum seemed to bid us welcome.

Few of the ships of the season had arrived, but still the river had a gay appearance; numerous boats were flying to and fro; several surrounded us with Englishmen in quest of news, but the boatmen were in general Canadians—the simple, contented progeny of Jean-Baptiste, the best-disposed and best-bred commonalty in the world. Altogether, the evening of our arrival was delightful, and Mrs. Paddock, as she thanked Heaven for anchoring us after all our perils in safety, acknowledged that her lines had fallen in pleasant places.

By the advice of Captain Binnacle, we did not disembark on the Quebec side, but went on shore to a comfortable hotel, near the landing-place at Point Levi; where the appearance of the house, and the obliging dispositions of the servants would have soothed us, even had the gratification of finding ourselves again on land been less vivid. But I ought to mention

an incident which a little disconcerted my romantic mood at the time, and which certainly was in as perfect antithesis to an excited fancy, as one thing could well be to another.

My wife, Mrs. Corbet, is, as I have already intimated, not distinguished for a poetical temperament. On looking at the glittering roofs and steeples of the city, she remarked that they were as beautiful as the pinnacles of the white of an egg dropped in a glass of water on Hallow e'en; alluding to the Hymeneal mystery practised on that anniversary, the holding of which, with all due ancient ceremony, I have taught to be a custom among my children. This was, to say the least of it, a bad enough comparison of great things with small; but when I explained to her that the brightness of the steeples and roofs proceeded from the tin with which they were covered,

"Dear me," said she, "they must just be like common coffee-pots and dish-covers!"

I could make no reply to such disparagement; yet, nevertheless, we spent a cheerful evening, and enjoyed our entrance to the new world, as enlivened with happy auspices.

Next day, our luggage, and Mrs. Paddock, with the young Evelyns her grandsons, were put on board the steam-boat, and I went to Quebec to arrange with an agent to receive and forward to Montreal the emigrants that Mr. Pullicate was to send to me from Glasgow. But with feelings of no considerable distaste, I found, notwithstanding the thousands of British emigrants that arrive yearly there, Government had no officer to assist them. It is surely deplorable, that all the prodigal expenditure which our Colonies occasion, should be exclusively applied to mere military uses, and settlers left in ignorance to search out their way to their intended location. Many thousands came out that season as helpless as wrecks cast on the coast ;—had they been military recruits, instead of the ancestors of a future nation—Mercy on us !—could Joseph Hume count the cost of their attendants !

Before leaving London, it had been determined that I should settle in Upper Canada, it was therefore unnecessary to visit the Surveyor-General's office in Quebec ; so that as soon as the little matter of business I had to

transact was dispatched, I rejoined with my family our fellow-passengers in the steam-boat, and the same evening proceeded up the river.

Considering the embarrassment which inexperience causes in new circumstances, it was an invariable rule with me to employ qualified persons on the spot to execute whatever was requisite, and in consequence, probably, my family and our *protégés* suffered less hardship in going up the country than other emigrants. It is true, that we brought more means with us to procure assistance than they commonly do, and perhaps I had been more minute in my previous inquiries; but still, nothing can excuse either the Supreme or the Provincial Governments for not having regular establishments to guide and aid those who, to the natural depression arising from their friendless condition, ever stand so much in want of counsel and assistance. It is not, however, my purpose to animadvert; but only, in faithfully reciting the progress of my own course, to afford to those who may follow, something like the instruction furnished by example. The poor emigrant must, I fear, still struggle with neglect; but

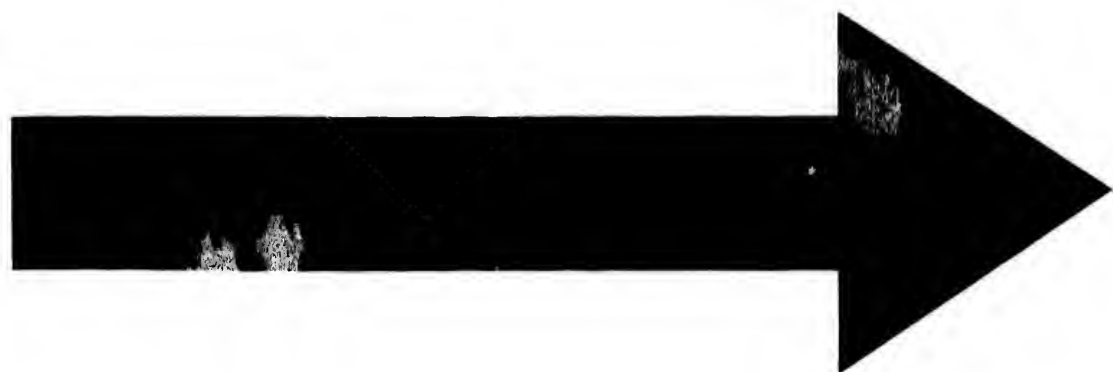
those, the few and rare, who happen to possess some means, and who are competent to render information available—which is not always in the power of the best-educated to do—may possibly derive hints from this narrative that will not be useless. But I must resume the sequence and series of our adventures.

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE BOYS' TALE.

SOON after we had sailed past a kind of ordnance-wharf, a passenger pointed out to me the precipitous bank where General Wolfe led his army to the plains of Abraham above. While looking at this celebrated spot, two schoolboys, the eldest about fifteen, passengers going to Montreal, stood beside us, and listened with avidity to our conversation, so much so that their intense curiosity attracted my particular attention. But judge of my surprise, when, after questioning them on the subject, I found they were no less than the historians of the achievement. They had, it seems, gathered some traditionary circumstances concerning the conquest of the country, the impression of



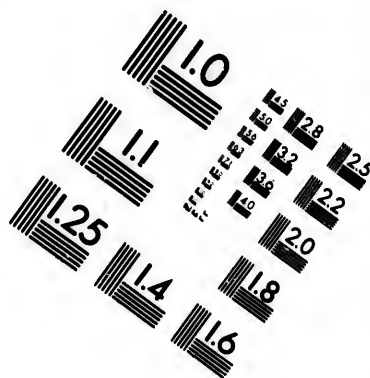
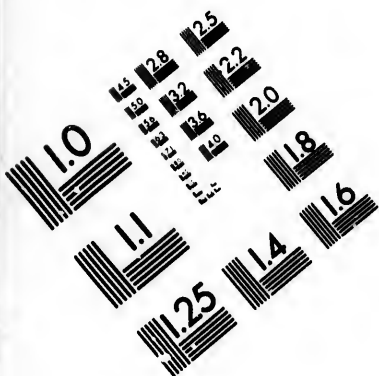
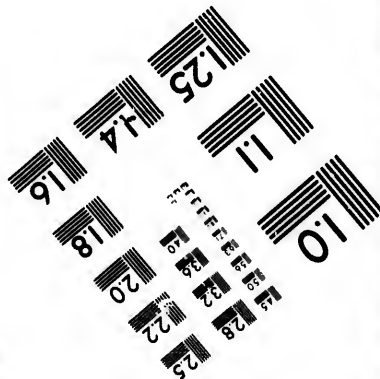
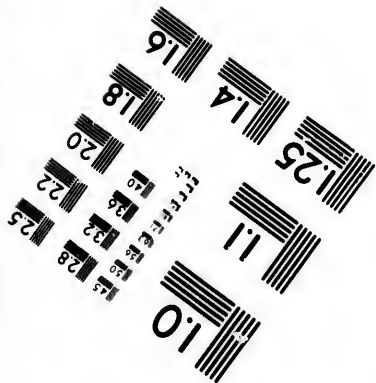
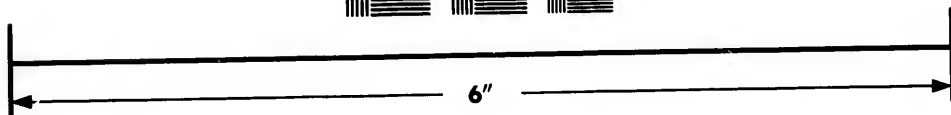
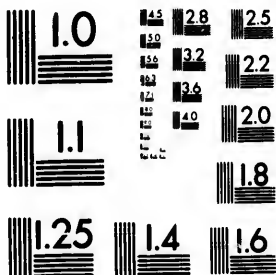


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which had so excited their imaginations, that they were induced to weave them into a tale; and though the narrative be somewhat loose and desultory, the incidents are told with picturesque effect. Their notices of savage habits and fortitude are very striking, and have an originality about them, which could only have been derived from the Indians themselves. I made the youths not a little proud, by soliciting a copy of their joint production; and I have the greater pleasure in laying it before the reader, as we met with nothing in the voyage to Montreal equally interesting, nor observed any object on the banks of the river, (which are generally tame and European-like,) that in description would supply more entertainment, or better illustrate the character of the scene.

A TALE OF QUEBEC.

DURING the time when Quebec was invested by the English, a solitary canoe was seen softly gliding along the placid waters of the Utawas, near its confluence with the St. Lawrence, containing three persons, an Indian and two

Whites. The Indian, whose name was Yazoo, sat at the stern, and all were plying their paddles with unceasing rapidity. His companions alternately cast a look at the setting sun, and over the wide expanse of water they had crossed, but nothing seemed to disturb the gravity of Yazoo.

The European seated at the prow, inquired of him in a tone which betokened anxiety, how long it might be before they would be out of danger.

The Indian shook his head.

They then pursued their course in silence, and entered opposite to Beauharnois the St. Lawrence, as the sun sunk in the horizon, burying the surrounding objects in the gloom of twilight. All appeared to increase their efforts, though without speaking; when suddenly Yazoo showed signs of uneasiness, though no sounds as yet broke on the ears of his companions save the mournful cry of the Whip-poor-Will, along with the roar of the far-distant rapids.

A short time after a slight noise was heard from the bank, and Yazoo said in a low tone, "We must try the middle current of the river,

as, from sure signs, I perceive that enemies lurk in the opposite woods, and that others are behind us."

On saying this, he turned the head of his vessel down the river; presently cries were heard from the shore, accompanied with the sound of the paddling of canoes in pursuit: the time was, however, in their favour, as the night was darkening every moment. The only guide their pursuers could have was the noise occasioned by their progress; and as each stroke carried them nearer the rapids, even that small guide was lessening quickly. Their adversaries, nevertheless, gained on them, and the only hope of escape lay in passing the rapids in safety.

The roar was now so increased that they could hardly hear each other speak. Yazoo, however, made them understand that they might suspend their efforts and leave the management of the canoe to him.

He now threw off all his former apathy, and assuming a more watchful attitude, rolled his eyes from side to side, and then fixed them steadfastly on the head of the bark he had undertaken to conduct.

The other canoes had so far gained on them, that they were within range of their fire-arms, and after firing a few shots, Yazoo, to the surprise of his companions, uttered the war-whoop of his nation, which his enemies hearing, lost their wonted caution in eagerness to secure him; and continuing to pursue, soon came within the distance which excluded all possibility of escaping the rapids, when they too late endeavoured to rectify their error.

Yazoo's canoe, in the mean time, under the guidance of his skilful hand, kept on its way in safety; and when near the middle of the current, he said, "We are approaching a place which will quickly decide our fate;" and taking the paddle out of the water, ceased from farther exertions.

The bark being left to itself, was borne on like a piece of cork, in an opposite current, which carried them in sight of the rising spray that marks "the split rock," from whence these rapids take their name.

He then seized an oar, and exerting all his strength, shoved the vessel into an eddy, and soon reached the shore in safety, where, after

lighting a fire, they composed themselves to sleep. The other party not being so fortunate, were soon upset, and all drowned except one, who escaped by clinging to the canoe.

After some time, Yazoo having arisen to mend his fire, and not having any fuel beside him, went a short distance to gather some, but perceiving an immense bear making up to him, he hurried back to his companions, and told them to make ready their rifles: saying this, he ran to the nearest tree, where the animal seeing him, tried to enclose him in his dreadful clasp, but he drawing his knife, plunged it into its breast. The bear feeling itself wounded, rushed to him with violence, and tearing him down, was on the point of killing him, when Williams, one of the whites, fired, and turned its rage upon himself, but, before reaching him, it fell from loss of blood, and was soon despatched. After this they were no more disturbed, but thought it advisable to be on their guard. Early next day they commenced paddling down the river; at length, Yazoo turned his canoe to land, and they continued their journey on foot.

When they had proceeded several miles, they arrived at a spring, where Yazoo told them to refresh themselves, as he did not know how long it might be before another opportunity might occur in which it would be safe to indulge.

In a short time they again commenced their march, but had not proceeded far, when he told them to stop, and having laid his ear to the ground, listened attentively some time, then starting up, made a sign to them to follow, and darted into the surrounding thickets.

His companions found some difficulty in keeping up with him; but he seemed as if intimately acquainted with the neighbouring woods, which he threaded with amazing facility.

Williams and Barkly, the two whites, were soon after alarmed by the sound of the cracking of dried twigs, some distance behind. Yazoo sprang into a small stream which was meandering amongst the brushwood near them, and motioned them to follow; but to their astonishment, he, instead of crossing it, commenced walking down its current, taking great care not to discompose any of the many

branches which overhung their way. In this manner they proceeded some distance, where again leaving the stream, they continued their course on dry ground.

As yet, Williams and Barkly had heard nothing of their enemies, who were led by the person that had escaped from the canoe, and who, when he reached the shore, went without delay to an encampment of his tribe, and informed them of what had happened, and of his own escape. Whereon it was determined, by an assembly of their chiefs, to send a party to intercept Yazoo and his friends on their route; a reward having been offered by the French for the scalp of every enemy, whether European or native.

This was the party which was now in pursuit; but having arrived at the spot where Yazoo had entered into the water, they uttered a terrific shout on losing the trail, and at this moment it reached the ears of the terrified fugitives, who thought themselves discovered. But the Indian explained to them that the cry was not because they were discovered, but because their enemies were uncertain which way

they had gone, and which might allow them to proceed some distance undisturbed; so saying, he continued his route with unabated speed, and the sounds of pursuit were soon lost behind.

The other party was in the mean time engaged in endeavouring to find the way they had taken; till, after some consideration, it was resolved that they should divide, and that those who first found the track should give as a signal a loud cry, and then continue the pursuit: upon this, five went down the margin of the stream, and having come to the place where the pursued had left the water, soon perceived the marks of their footsteps, and giving the signal, followed on their track.

Yazoo now informed his companions, that if they could reach a place where two of his tribe awaited their arrival, they would no longer fly, but turn upon their pursuers. It was then that they heard the cry which betokened the discovery of their path, and Yazoo told them, that they must not delay a moment, for their trail was disclosed, and that it would be madness to think of resisting with their inferior numbers.

Sounds from behind were now heard, and the Indian urged them forward, by saying, that their lives depended on their speed, and that in a few minutes they would be in a state of comparative security.

Their enemies, on the other hand, pressed on with great eagerness, encouraged by the knowledge that their prey was almost in their power; and the sounds increased so much, that the others were in doubt whether they should be able, eventually, to reach their friends; but just as their pursuers came in sight, they were joined by Yazoo's companions, armed like himself, and the others retreated.

Yazoo conversed apart with his Indians, in a language which neither Williams nor Barkly understood; during which he appeared to be vehemently urging something which his companions did not seem to like much, but in which, after some time, they appeared to acquiesce.

He then addressed Williams, and told him that their enemies, who had just retreated, would most likely bring more of their companions to assist in destroying them; but that

they, viz. himself and the other two, had resolved to retrace their steps part of the way, and lie in ambush.

Upon which, they both expressed their wish to be of the party, and the place where they had left the stream should be the spot for the attack. After this, they returned as quickly as they could, and having hid themselves in the bushes, Yazoo told them to lay without moving a leaf, and to shut their eyes, as the eye was the thing first discovered.

All being now prepared, they awaited in suspense the arrival of their foes, whom they heard advancing, by the splashing of the water. Yazoo slowly rising, crept behind a tree, and lifted his tomahawk to strike the first who should attempt to land, and who having now reached the landing, placed his foot upon the ground, and received a fatal blow on the back of the head. Two were killed by the fire-arms of the Whites ; who, together with the Indians, sprang from the bushes, and made their numbers equal.

The two parties now opposed to each other were inflamed with animosity, doubly height-

ened by their own private quarrels, and their having embraced different sides, the one the British and the other the French; neither, however, delayed the contest, but prepared to engage. Yazoo, casting away his bloody tomahawk, drew his knife, and closed with the one opposite to himself; his companions did the same with another. The Europeans, not well accustomed to Indian weapons and encounters, were not quite so quick, but they still showed not the least fear; on the contrary, they endeavoured to repair that disadvantage, by exerting themselves to the utmost. Yazoo's antagonist, now thinking to finish the combat by a single stroke, stabbed at him, and missing, fell exhausted. Instantly, the knife of Yazoo was through his heart. Then, disengaging himself from the dead body, he went to the place where Williams was pushed to the last extremity by his opponent, but who with his assistance, soon ended the contest. At this time, a cry arose from one side, and on their turning to see the occasion of it, they perceived Barkly extended, apparently lifeless, on the ground, and one of the Indians running

away, but pursued by the two others, who had overcome their own antagonists. On seeing this, Yazoo started in pursuit, leaving Williams to take care of his friend, who, upon examination, proved to be only stunned, and after a short time came to himself. Both then employed themselves in listening for sounds, which might betoken in which direction the chase had gone; but as no sound reached them, they began loading their rifles, and had just finished, when they heard a noise, and perceived an Indian rushing between the trees, but as he leaped over a large one, which lay across his path, Barkly fired, and shot him dead.

The day was now on the decline, but still they purposed to continue their journey with the utmost haste.

We must now pass over a week, during which nothing befell them, and they reached the point at Jaques Cartier in security. Proceeding from thence in a canoe to within a few miles of General Wolfe's transports, they landed, intending to walk the remainder, as Yazoo informed them that he had some observations to make.

It is time now to relate how these English

happened to be with an Indian chief. It is well known how the English, having conquered all Canada, except Quebec, had besieged that city, the strongest fortress in America. General Wolfe being in need of Indian guides, and likewise hearing of the fame of Yazoo, who was on the side of the British, had despatched Captain Williams and Lieutenant Barkly to beg his assistance in his knowledge of the country; and as it might have excited some suspicion if he had sent an escort with them, they therefore volunteered to go unattended. But the French having found out this, and likewise the rank of the messengers, had despatched a party of Indians to intercept their course, which they endeavoured to do at the rapids, as described.

After having arrived at the transports, Captain Williams took Yazoo to his own ship, while he went to apprise the General of his arrival; who sent an officer immediately to conduct him to his presence, where he addressed him thus:

“Can you conduct a body of troops,” said General Wolfe, “up the cliffs, which now pre-

vent our being on a more equal footing with Montcalm? if so, your reward shall be in proportion to your services. I know that the difficulties which will attend the enterprise are great, but it is necessary, and must therefore be attempted. But should you prove false, there is no medium: you must die the instant you are discovered."

At these words, the brow of the Indian chief grew dark, and his eyes seemed to flash fire, as he replied, "Do you think me a dog, to say one thing and do another? Such may be the custom of your people; but should an Indian be found guilty of a lie, his name would be quenched from his tribe. I am able to conduct brave men."

"I trust you," was the answer; "and should you fall, your reward shall be to your nation."

All now was preparation for the landing, as soon as the result of the conference was known; and at the appointed hour, Yazoo having placed himself at the head of the party, they disembarked, and marched up with the utmost silence to the heights. Having led them some dis-

tance, he then told them to halt, and crept away from them : turning to the right, he disappeared for some time.

When he returned, he informed them that they might proceed without danger of discovery, but that they must climb on their hands and knees ; saying which, he led them in the same direction that he had gone before. After going up with difficulty what they supposed might be half the height of the bank, he paused, and raising his hand, armed with a gleaming axe, hurled it with great force into a thicket a few yards in their front, which seemed to be vacant ; but a slight groan followed the noise of the tomahawk, as it cleft the air, and then all was still. Yazoo now motioned to advance ; and [to their amazement, they found themselves in front of a picket of the enemy, whom they took quite unawares, and thus possessed themselves of a narrow passage which led to the plains above.

It was about day-break when they reached the level ground.

General Wolfe now put his army into the order of battle to oppose Montcalm, (who was

rapidly advancing to meet him,) and having placed himself at the head of his grenadiers, the battle commenced by Montcalm's ordering his advanced-guard to fire, which was returned by Wolfe's Highlanders. The battle now became general; and the English commander, as he rushed on, received a shot in his wrist, which, however, nothing deterred him, for he immediately wrapped his handkerchief round it, and remained at the head of his troops, and continued the battle, until he received another and more fatal wound in the breast, by which he soon after expired, but not till he had had the pleasure of seeing the French give way.

At this moment Captain Williams came up to Yazoo and said, "I have lost my friend, your companion, who was killed by the first discharge." As he was saying this, the French rallied a little, and fired two or three volleys: one of the straggling shot coming in their direction, struck Captain Williams on the left breast, who falling mortally wounded, said:

"Yazoo, I feel I am dying, and it is but right that I should follow my noble General."

He then ceased speaking, and in a few moments expired.

Yazoo returned to his tribe to brood over the fallen state of his nation ; and as the war was ended, he became a father of his people, and died by the decay of Nature.

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CHAPTER XXXVII.

MONTREAL.

WE disembarked from the steam-boat at Montreal, and after conveying my family, with old Mrs. Paddock and her two younger grandsons, to an hotel, I went in quest of a gentleman to whom I had letters of introduction, and by his advice applied to a forwarding-agent, to whom I consigned our luggage, and gave the same instructions as at Quebec, respecting the followers from Glasgow.

By this arrangement, which was all effected in less than an hour, we were in a condition to proceed. The three elder Evelyns were to be sent on with the baggage, and their grandmother, with the two younger ones, I invited to accompany us in a stage-coach, which I hired

for the purpose, to the village of Lachine, where the steam-boat plies across the mouth of the Ottawa to Upper Canada.

As it was early still in the day, and we were tired of sailing, it was agreed that we should dine at Montreal, and not proceed to Lachine till the evening. This afforded us an opportunity of seeing the city, and of supplying ourselves with several articles necessary to our woodland operations, particularly axes, which are said to be obtained better at Montreal than in any other town in the two provinces. At my wife's suggestion, I also purchased a piece of the country-made cloth, which, though not commendable for the hue, was, as she observed, stout and well made, and would make comfortable forest-dresses, as trees were not censorious about colours or fashions.

I mention these purchases, because I subsequently found we had been well advised in making them. And I also ordered to be sent along with our luggage, a variety of little household articles and groceries; we paid, however, their price, in so much, that I would advise the emigrants to whom such things are necessary, to

bring them from England, for the carriage as far as Montreal is attended with no difficulty, and the transportation of them up the country is as easy as of the goods purchased in that city. But I did not greatly repine at this discovery ; on the contrary, I regarded it as an initiatory fee—a just tax on my own ignorance, conceiving that my inquiries had comprehended every possible point of information and detail.

The drive from Montreal to Lachine is by a well-made road. It would not have been thirty years ago accounted a bad one in England, and the stage-coaches are, for the length of the journey, really far better than I had been taught to expect ; so that we reached the village, situated at the end of the Lachine canal, without detriment or danger. It is, however, at this village, that the emigrant bound to Upper Canada first begins to encounter the reputed difficulties. But these only materially affect the poor, for the modes and means of travelling, as I have experienced, though not comparable to those of England, certainly furnish no cause of complaint. To emigrants whose circumstances oblige them to ascend the river and rapids in

batteaux, the hardships are often both serious and oppressive ; but by those who can afford to avail themselves of the established conveyances for the mercantile travellers of the country, danger and hardship may be easily avoided.

The inn at which we put up for the night, exceeded my expectations. It was in every respect not inferior to the generality of similar houses in the vicinity of London ; certainly better than any tavern in the celebrated village of Brentford, or Greenwich, or Woolwich. Doubtless, it was not so well furnished in luxurious wines, but in all that a travelling family only halting requires, it deserves every reasonable commendation.

We stopped at Lachine until the middle of the following day, by which time the batteau with our luggage, and the three Evelyns, arrived, and then we crossed the Ottawa by the steam-boat, where I engaged an extra stage-coach to carry us on to Coteau du Lac ; at which place, we found another steam-boat in waiting, on board of which we instantly embarked for Cornwall.

The weather, from our adventures off Anti-

costa, had been bright and genial. The aspect of the country appeared less wild, and more inviting than my information had led me to hope. The land began to assume a coarse resemblance to some of the woody parts of England; but in the passage from Quebec to Montreal, while it had much more the appearance of an old country, there was still some indescribable foreign look about every thing, constantly reminding us that we were in another than our native land.

On the bank of the river, at the cheerful village of Cornwall, we found several stage-coaches ready to receive the passengers; but as we advanced, our anxieties increased, and the turbulence of the waters at the rapids, which we had seen in coming to this place, made us so fearful for the Evelyns and our luggage, that I began to think it would be judicious to wait until they came to Cornwall, though informed they would probably be several days. This intention, which I may say was accidental, proved fortunate; for on going to the tavern, I heard of a ready-furnished house, in which all my family and train could be accommodated for some time, and had

almost determined to carry it into effect. Considering the apprehensions with which we were all still impressed, the information seemed, indeed, like a God-send, and I would have taken the house for a month, and fixed my family there, until I had determined the spot of our ultimate location ; but on speaking on the subject with a gentleman of the country, whom I fell in with at the inn, he advised me to proceed to Prescot, at the head of the navigation, where I could be equally well accommodated, and from which I could with more facility regulate my future course. I am particular in mentioning this accidental intention, because the cheerful appearance of Cornwall is apt to allure emigrants to halt there, to which, after the voyage, they are naturally much inclined ; and because I am disposed to attach considerable importance to the friendly disposition of the inhabitants to give strangers the assistance of their local knowledge and advice ; especially as I began to discern, that although the information I had gathered previous to our departure from England, was not entirely erroneous, it was yet more applicable to a lower class of emi-

grants than we conceived ourselves to be. It corrected, too, the misconceptions of imagination, and by dissipating fallacious ideas of the sufferings we were to incur, stripped our undertaking of many fears. In all the course of our progress, I therefore, afterwards, made it a rule to throw myself in the way of the inhabitants, who, from their professions and vocations, were the most likely to have acquired some knowledge of the country; and I am persuaded, that from a systematic adherence to this simple rule, the journey to our destination was performed with comparative ease and comfort.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CANADIAN TRAVELLING.

BUT although the road from Cornwall to Prescott is certainly inferior to the Bath and Brighton roads in England, we met, in the course of the journey, with no other accidents than such as might have happened on the best-made. Being light in luggage, one of the extras as they call them—that is a stage-coach hired for ourselves, easily took us all; and we were driven along in it as joyously as if we had been witches riding on broomsticks in a hurricane.

The coaches in this country merit, however, a more particular description. They are vast curved-headed caravans, loosely suspended by enormous leathern straps, and seem to have

been invented about the same era as the French jackboots. Capable of containing at least nine full-grown persons, Virgil's white sow with young was not such a miracle as they are when crammed with children. They rattle along like a visible and embodied peal of thunder, involved with all sorts of violence in sound and motion. The boldest bang-up coachman from the White-horse Cellar or the Angel at Islington, would stand a statue of astonishment at the sight of their oscillations and balancing, with

“—Each particular hair on end
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine.”

Indeed no creature, lion, tiger, or bull-dog, equals in courage a Yankey driver; and the coachmen in Canada are all from New England. They flourish their carriages along through the dubs and pools and over the dry roads, like the directing genii of water-spouts and whirlwinds, themselves all the time as sedate as the stumps and roots amidst which they navigate.

With the customary peril of neck and limb, we got underway, the children titillated beyond the power of complaining by the jolting. For

some time all went well though not smoothly ; the country was pleasant, and the houses, as we passed along, had something of an English air ; but the universal snake-fences, formed of balks of cleft timber, have not yet conciliated my taste.

On the one side rolled the majestic St. Lawrence, and from time to time its mighty rapids, tumbling, roaring, and tumultuous—horizontal cataracts—were objects of attractive admiration ; and on the other the primeval forest, with a narrow strip of cleared land between, stood like the arborous wall of Paradise, with, here and there at long intervals, a narrow vista into the green Eden of new settlements beyond. The landscape is, however, solitary, and, to say the truth, is to the emigrant a little saddening. It lacks the social cheerfulness of villages ;

“ The taper spire that points to Heaven ;”

the gorgeous castle, the manorial hall, and the mouldering monastic piles of the olden time, which make the landscape of England, in the variety of its imagery, so like the associations of the English mind.

In our raging vehicle we were driven like a tempest, and for at least thirty miles of the journey were so occupied with feet and fang in counteracting the jumbling, that I had but little time to be, as the Cockneys say in Scotland, "a-looking at waterfalls," until we reached an inundation of low marshy land through which the road lay.

The year being still young, the brooks and streams were overflowing with the melting of the inland snows, and the rains with which they had been succeeded. In consequence, the highways were in many places flooded, and in those corduroy passages, where causeways had been formed of trunks of trees, and were then covered with water, it required good pilotage to conduct the coach. In one place this was particularly the case, for we had considerably advanced through one of these temporary lakes, when, happening to look out at the window, I beheld the bottom deep beyond us, and the rim of the coach-wheel within a few inches of the end of the logs which formed the road, and which lay as deep as the axletrees under water. The slightest deviation would certainly have ended

all our anxieties, and I confess that my fears of it, at the moment, had such an effect that I durst not turn my head, but called aloud in consternation for every one to sit still. We passed the Styx, [sticks,] however, in safety, and when we reached this side, I disclosed the peril we had been in, and exulted in our escape.

But there was not much time for rejoicing ; we had not come more than three or four miles farther, when we reached a broken bridge. It had been constructed with trunks of trees, like the corduroy-roads, resting on cross-beams. One of these had given way, and in consequence, the end of the others, the waft, as weavers would call them, had fallen down, and presented a fearful diagonal, the ends resting on the beams pointing aloft, and the others being sunk in the stream. The coach halted, and the driver coolly requested us to alight.

To pass over seemed impossible, and we rejoiced that it was not night ; but without heeding our remarks, the lad coolly begged me to get the ladies and the children over as well as I could, saying he would steer the coach.

I looked at the place, then at the sedate

driver, and anon at the hulk of a coach. The proposal seemed ridiculous, and I made no reply.

Without more words, however, he went to the road-side fence and took off several of the rails, and laid them across the hollow over which the bridge had been; his passengers looking on, marvelling what would come to pass. In the course of a few minutes having thus formed a new bridge, he again mounted his box and drove over, to our applauding admiration, with the heroism of a warrior crossing a beleaguered ditch. Had he been an engineer, and the coach a cannon, he would have deserved mention in a Gazette-extraordinary, both for his courage and dexterity.

Being again embarked, we proceeded to Prescott, which, saving these two great alarms, and an infinitude of smaller terrors, we reached in that evening soon after sun-set. At this town we considered the hazards of our journey and voyages from England to Upper Canada over. Before us, to Niagara, the navigation of the river and of lake Ontario lay open, either by schooners or by steam-boats; and we had only

to pause for the arrival of our luggage and the Evelyns, before determining our ultimate destination. It was thus so far fortunate that we had come on instead of waiting at Cornwall, as I had proposed ; for I found Prescott a much more eligible resting-place, and the proper point from which we could best start towards our location ; moreover, I met there with several gentlemen interested in the commerce of the country, which centres there, as the chief landing-place, both for exports and imports, and learned from them a variety of information which tended to allay many apprehensions, and to give me still more correct ideas of the country, and of the course I should pursue.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

COLONIAL REFLECTIONS.

DURING the time we stopped at Prescott, I had different opportunities of correcting my hearsay information respecting the country, by the practical knowledge of the different gentlemen with whom I happened to enter into conversation.

It seemed to me, although it is alleged that political dissatisfaction is indigenous to all colonies, that the Canadians, especially the inhabitants of this upper province, have less cause of complaint against the mother country, than she has with them. I speak of their respective people ; for Canada, and indeed all colonies, are a burden on the British people greater than need be. I do, not, however, ascribe the fault to

them but to the negligent colonial system of the mother country—if system it can be called, which is literally no more than the sending of troops to keep possession, and of making a few civil appointments for the sake of patronage.

I heard many complaints made against the Provincial Government, but facts of misrule were not often adduced. From the scattered state of the population, magistrates—men dressed in a little brief authority—are necessarily numerous, and necessarily, from its kind, selected from a class sufficiently prone to play fantastic tricks. It must therefore probably be allowed that something of a meddling spirit is abroad; for few, either high or low, can imagine that there is any difference between the possession and the exercise of power. Justices of the peace may be said to be as numerous here as the constabulary of an ancient kingdom, and the irksome evil of excessive surveillance cannot fail to be the natural consequence.

But what chiefly interested me was the imperfect management exercised by the Imperial Government over this fine province. Yearly, thousands on thousands of emigrants arrive at

Quebec; but such is the void of all arrangement, that these helpless shoals of British subjects are left to shift for themselves, and to wander up and down, as if the very apparatus of the state had been instituted only for the behoof of those who fill official situations.

The blame which attaches to this condition of things cannot, however, be fairly imputed to the subordinate public servants. They execute their appointed duties, I doubt not, with diligence and honour, whatever may be occasionally said of them. The fault lies with their superiors.

Why, for example, should there be such a total absence of all arrangement at home, that in the Colonial Office itself there is no department which can furnish the slightest information respecting the colonial lands open for settlement? And yet emigration, so long as we have colonies, ought ever to obtain no inconsiderable degree of attention from Government. The formation of an institution to supply this desideratum might be accomplished for little more expense to the nation than the cost of a single Master in Chancery. Let but diagrams and

maps of the townships and colonies be lodged in every Custom-house of the United Kingdom, to be from time to time amended as the lots are successively taken up; the emigrant, by consulting them, would be enabled to make a contingent selection of his location before his departure, and much of that uncertainty would be obviated which hangs so gloomily before him as he quits his native land.

Why, also, should not the colonial lands have a specific value set upon them?—but, instead of money-price, a labour-rate? Nothing can be more erroneous in principle, or jejune in conception, than the system in practice. For example, occasionally great public works are undertaken in the colonies,—such as the Rideau Canal in this province,—vast sums are drawn from the United Kingdom to pay for them; why, instead of offering them to be executed by contract, like the works in an old country, are the public lands not valued to those who receive grants, and so many days' labour on such works required in lieu of payment? The main expense might be thus defrayed without touching the pocket of John Bull at all.

But I may as well suspend these observations, particularly as it is not in Canada they could be rendered productive of any good effect. They apply to the management in Downing-street and the Ordnance Office; where, if things be conducted with promptitude and regularity in the old way, every thing is supposed to be done that can be required; as if the departments of Government were exonerated from all obligation to introduce new methods into their routine, or to render their system more efficacious.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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