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ROSE-BELFORD'S
CANADIAN MONTHLY

AND

NATIONAL REVIEW

VOLUME II.

FROM JANUARY TO JUNE, 1879.



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ROSE-BELFORD'S
CANADIAN MONTHLY
AND NATIONAL REVIEW.

JANUARY, 1879.

REGINALD ROSS.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

BY EDGAR FAWCETT.

I.

WHEN Miss Beatrice Sedgwick came to live with her relative, Mrs. Ross, she made a fourth in the household circle, which already consisted of Reginald, his mother, and a Miss Eloise Forbes, a ward of the late Mr. Ross and an heiress of no inconsiderable wealth. Eloise, like Reginald, was at present absent from the Ross country-mansion, having left on a visit to some Newport friends soon after the general arrival, in June, from New York.

Reginald Ross was now in his twenty-ninth year. He was what we call fine-looking; his limbs were large and heavy-wrought, though neither unshapely nor ungraceful; his breast was the breast of an athlete, and his head, small, with matted-looking waves of hair worn just long enough not to hide its dark gloss and its classic crispness, crowned a throat that rose from massive shoulders with solid majesty of moulding. His eyes were of a soft humid hazel, but noticeably restless. He wore a brown curly beard and

moustache, neither of them abundant, and he dressed with a kind of subdued dandyism that was by no means averse to one or two accentuated touches of colour.

Since her son was never much to be depended upon as regarded his movements, Mrs. Ross was not greatly surprised, one morning, to have him suddenly return from a fishing tour along the Massachusetts coast, and to hear him announce his intention of remaining at home for an indefinite period.

On this lady's face, delicate as a half-faded wild rose, and in her dark eyes, that had doubtless wrought sorry havoc of old, there now appeared much quiet satisfaction at the intelligence given by her son. She adored Reginald, but it was not purely for such reason that she now desired him at home; for, tenderly loving Beatrice Sedgwick and wishing with fervour to see her Reginald's wife, Mrs. Ross perceived in the absence of Eloise Forbes a future reason why these two young people should enjoy much of each other's unshared society.

However easily intimate might have

been the terms, heretofore, on which Reginald and Beatrice had stood, they could find nothing in past experience at all like their present intimacy. They took frequent walks and horseback rides together; sometimes he would spend a whole morning in reading aloud to her. Mrs. Ross had noticed, too, certain unmistakable symptoms of contentment in Reginald's bearing while he was with Beatrice (if no more emphatic term should be applied), which seemed like the happiest sort of augury.

But in Beatrice's manner, as days lapsed along, she could read nothing. Nothing, too, in the girl's composed and power-suggesting face, over whose broad-moulded forehead the low-growing hair, somewhat coarse of texture, made full black ripples. It was a face whose every feature she had learned dearly to love, but most of all its limpid gray eyes, energetic, sympathetic, intellectual. More than once had a steadfast gaze into those eyes made Mrs. Ross tell herself that here was the woman of women whom it would delight her to have her son Reginald marry.

'Reginald is not a weak man,' she had once told Beatrice. 'Instead of this he is a sort of maimed, half-incapable giant. In numberless ways he baffles analysis, because every trait, with him, takes its force from a fragmentary spring of action—what his mental life needs is its missing half—he is like a tall, perfect tree snapped in the middle. Does this seem wild fancy?'

Naturally Beatrice had been mystified at the time these strange words were uttered; but an explanation had followed them which astonished her deeply. She learned from Mrs. Ross that Reginald had been the eldest of twin brothers. The two boys were five years old when the younger brother, Julian, was seized with scarlet fever in its most malignant form, and died after an illness of a few hours, having been till now in a condition of

perfect health. The disease was developed in Reginald almost simultaneously, but by what seemed a miracle he was saved.

During those five years before Julian's death, Mrs. Ross had often watched with singular interest what close bonds of mutual similarity, both in nature and in temperament, bound the two little brothers together. The way in which outward objects or new ideas impressed them; their respective tendencies of affection or prejudice toward certain people; their trivial likes and dislikes in matters of amusement, food, and the commoner impulses of sense; their susceptibility to the forces of humour, compassion, anger, disgust; all these, and many more embryo or full-developed characteristics bore, each with each, an element of resemblance startlingly salient. Persons before whom she mentioned, however, what seemed to her questions of such curious import, laughed at her wonder and assured her that every pair of twins was thus reciprocally constituted. But as time passed she became fonder of her illusion, and used to tell herself that in some strange way one soul had become divided between two bodies.

Nor did this illusion, with Mrs. Ross, possess a single morbid touch, a single shadow of discomfort. She never watched the children when they played together without a secret gladness at their charming interchangeable traits. She sometimes used to wonder whether between their very physical motions there was not a subtle concordance, and repeatedly she had assured herself that many thoughts occurred to both of them at one and the same moment. In appearance they were so alike that she, their own mother, even up to the time of Julian's death, would often omit to make use of the few slight signs by which she told them apart. And, as previously has been said, her strange idea regarding them dealt her no pain. Even if for a moment she calmly ad-

mitted its grotesque, fantastic truth, the thought of two lives thus indissolubly twined, brought with it not a pang of anxiety or dread. Indeed, whenever it took the serious colours of an actual thought and ceased to float like a bodiless influence through the atmosphere of feeling only, she would ask herself whether the future of these two boys, if thus peculiarly viewed, did not teem with beautiful suggestion, did not differ from ordinary living with a rich positiveness of variation; and whether, at the same time, their case might not as definitely place itself outside the uncanny limits of nature's caprices, as the lower-graded example of two fruits mellowing to maturity on the same twig.

But when Julian's death occurred, and the terrible threat failed to fulfil itself under which Reginald's life seemed for days to quiver, then this poor lady found that her grief-stricken soul and her shattered nerves were eager to turn what had once been a pleasant, poetic vagary into a distressingly doleful fear. Since she had lost Julian, must not Reginald soon follow him? Would their living apart be a possibility? Ought she not to expect with certainty the crushing stroke of a second blow, now that the first had fallen. But as months passed, making themselves into a year, the sword over Reginald's head seemed to gain much stouter means of suspension. By degrees Mrs. Ross's wretched disquietude died a natural death; the boy continued healthful and vigorous. If the old fancy visited her now and then, it was summoned by something in Reginald's conduct, for whose singularity this visionary explanation sometimes offered its imaginative aid. Later on in her son's life she had incessantly caught herself clinging to that old dogma of mysticism, and interpreting his oddest actions by its convenient, insubstantial kind of glossary.

'I think that you and Beatrice have never been better friends than

just now,' Mrs. Ross made bold enough to say, on a special afternoon when Reginald, having learned that he must take a solitary horseback ride because his usual companion had a prostrating headache, manifested some wholly unconcealed disappointment.

'I don't know of any particular reason for such change,' he rather lightly answered, 'provided it really has taken place. Unless it is because we are thrown more than usual upon each other's mutual resources of entertainment,' he added, in a less careless tone, and after a slightly reflective look.

This reply disappointed his mother, but the remark which had called it forth dwelt with Reginald some time after he had begun his solitary ride. It seemed to the man as if every fibre of his spiritual being tingled with pleasant self-gratification while he told himself that he was indeed better friends with Beatrice Sedgwick now than ever before. She had always seemed to him, in comparison with the other women whom he had met and known, intellectually to overtop them all; but he silently admitted this afternoon (while riding his free-gaited five-year-old along country whose rich greeneries of meadow and foliage had been brightly freshened by recent rains), that Beatrice blended in a marvellous degree logic and intuition, sympathy and pure reason, poetry and sober sense. It is doubtful, indeed, whether plain admiration of man toward woman ever goes noticeably beyond the limits of Reginald's present feeling; the sort of admiration, let it be added, whose least and greatest thrill emanates from no such emotional vagueness that we cannot satisfactorily name for ourselves its exact source. He could look back over the past fortnight through the most accurate and unblurred glasses of retrospect. He could account to himself, with a kind of arithmetical tenderness, for each separate occasion when he had felt what a potent attraction

her presence exerted. He even assured his own thought, with something like creditable success, that a regard which thus yielded to the analytic attempts of him who entertained it, must be a regard based upon the most lasting, safe and efficient foundations.

There was something, too, in the wholesome breeziness of the afternoon that presented to him, through the medium of sense, a clearly-realized analogy between its own bracing force or cheering radiance, and the atmosphere of vigorous mental hardihood, healthful womanly judgment, and fresh, large-souled charity surrounding his present estimate of Beatrice's character. Not unnaturally at such a moment, moreover, he recalled his mother's evident and often-hinted longing. Reginald was by instinct what his biographer owes him the justice of naming—a dutiful son, and to reflect upon the almost sacred importance of so marked a maternal wish, was an act that now linked itself in admirably proper sequence to the convictions which had just preceded it.

The most radiant mood has its solar spots of gloom; but if Reginald was so troubled this afternoon, while he spurred his good-blooded animal briskly down more than one agreeable slope of road, the gloom took its darkness from reminiscence rather than actuality. He had been, during his eight-and-twenty years of lifetime, the occasional prey to a certain sinister spasm of feeling which far rather merited the name of a nervous sensation than even to be placed on the list of half-reasonable impressions. It was a monster, *informe, ingens*, to which his imagination occasionally opened a door of sardonic mental hospitality; and the guest would now and then resist every method of ejection except, perhaps, that of the stoutest exorcising cudgel which common sense possesses within her armory. If he remembered, just now, the uncomfortable hours passed in this aggravating sort

of hostship, it was only to smile at the recollection of a nightmare which, at the present hour, seemed as incapable of molesting him by any grim assault as the very landscape through which he journeyed, green in its soft, leafy splendour, seemed inviolate against winter's disfiguring rigours.

Beatrice, on this same afternoon, had complained of a sad headache. Mrs. Ross had mildly insisted upon perfect retirement, and at least an attempt to secure slumber. No slumber came for a long time, but the headache began to beat surely yet sure retreat before the powers of silence and repose. It was about six o'clock when Mrs. Ross softly stole into the chamber for a fourth time, and seated herself at the bedside with a book. Beatrice at last had fallen into a peaceful and even-breathed sleep, and Mrs. Ross watched her clear, strong profile against the whiter background of the pillow, with that radical satisfaction felt when those whom we love are at length delivered from physical pain. If any deity of sleep had occupied a place in Mrs. Ross's theology, there is no doubt that more than one domestic tripod would now have been gratefully set smoking. These being the lady's feelings, it is not strange that an expression, almost like one of anger should have filled her face, when her maid suddenly burst into the room with the loud voiced and seemingly pointless observation:

'Oh, Mrs. Ross, are you here, ma'am?'

Stern thoughts of giving her maid summary discharge held brief sway in even this gentle mistress's bosom. The rare sparkle of indignation was in the mild darkness of her eyes, as Beatrice, roused by the rude tones, lifted her head with a great nervous start from the pillow.

'Oh, ma'am, Mr. Reginald,' the maid now said, in whimpering tones. . . 'I'm afraid he's hurt very bad. . . they're bringing him into the house now. . .'

The maid went on with her distress-

ing intelligence, and of the two ladies who heard it, Mrs. Ross, doubtless, only took into consciousness, after this, a stray word here and there, such as 'horse,' or 'fainted away;' while Beatrice, on the other hand, clearly comprehending the full sense of the intelligence, very soon had fast hold of both her friend's hands and was saying rapidly, yet with excellent composure :

'Don't be so alarmed until you know just what it is. Perhaps, after all, the accident may not prove a serious one.'

Nearly fainting with fright, Mrs. Ross presently stood at her son's side, where they had laid him on a lounge, in one of the lower rooms. Reginald's eyes were closed and he was extremely pale; but he soon gave signs of not having swooned, opening his eyes for a moment and pointing with a suppressed groan toward his right leg. The real truth was that excessive pain in the ankle of this limb had temporarily nullified all the man's nervous energy. As soon as the locality of his injury had been discovered, the ankle was bared, and already its bluish swollen look gave serious import of future trouble. Meanwhile Beatrice had despatched one servant for a doctor, and learned from the head-gardener, Haslitt, who was an eye-witness of the accident, just how appallingly narrow an escape Reginald had sustained. Haslitt was himself near one of the main lawn-gates at the moment that a bulky-looking peddler's waggon was about to enter it. At the same moment his master appeared near the gate, riding briskly. Reginald's horse, terrified by the uncouth vehicle, reared unmanageably once, and his rider, as though irritated by such an unforeseen procedure, then promptly spurred him forward. But rearing a second time, the horse lost his balance and fell backward. 'I don't know what ever saved Mr. Reginald from being crushed,' Haslitt proceeded, 'when that thing happened. The fence hid him, Miss, an' I says to myself, "he's killed," says I, "sure." But when I got through the gate, there was the horse,

scamperin' like mad down the road, and Mr. Reginald lyin' white as a sheet, with his right leg a-doubled up straight under him. I knew quick enough, Miss, he'd somehow got clear o' the horse, but I'm afraid o' my life his ankle's broke, and very bad broke, too.'

Medical authority, however, when it arrived soon afterward, gave scientific disproof of Haslitt's theory. Reginald was suffering from a violent and rather complicated sprain of the right ankle, but beyond the unavoidable discomforts of tedious recovery he had no reason for future anxiety. During all the period between her first appearance at the sufferer's side and the subsequent arrival of the doctor, an interval, which intensified sensation on at least her own and Mrs. Ross's part, must have made twice its actual length. Beatrice's self-possession, tranquillity, and knowledge of soothing if not curative applications, brought to bear upon the whole group surrounding poor agonized Reginald something like the commandant, distributive capability which is to be found in judicious generalship. Once or twice, even amid the excitement preceding the doctor's appearance, Mrs. Ross felt a dreary pang of realization break through her anxiety, as she observed Beatrice's unruffled presence of mind. Admirable though it might be under the given circumstances, a demeanor so collected spoke ill for her own newly-roused hopes. For where, in this courageous benignity, was there one gleam of anything like actual passion.

Those same hopes, however, were fed with a fresh force during the after days of Reginald's illness. Never was a tenderer, more considerate or more accomplished nurse than Beatrice now proved herself. A vigorous young fellow of active temperament is not always dowered with the sort of endurance which makes him murmurless under a martyrdom like this of Reginald's; but it is certain that the effect of Beatrice's continual attend-

ance, her unfailing interest, and her softly genial manner presented powerful inducements toward resignation.

A fortnight of absolute inability to walk left Reginald, at its end, equal to occasional hobbling peregrinations about the house, with the aid of a stout cane. And what, now, were his feelings toward the woman whose many kind offices had so lessened the acuteness of past pain and the tedium of enforced inaction? It would have been scarcely possible for his esteem of her character by any noteworthy degree to deepen; but in so far as concerned his less rational and reflective valuation of her excellences, he was very willing to assure himself that a marked change had taken place. Nothing is more difficult to trace with accurate precision than are the shadowy boundaries between an excess of devout spiritual respect, as in a case like Reginald's, and that warmer unreasonable state of sexual attraction which dispenses with self-inquiry and lapses away into the bland heedlessness of rosy sentiment. Reginald felt sure that he had passed these boundaries, and was repeatedly on the verge of telling Beatrice so, in appropriately ardent words. Indeed, it happened, on a certain morning, that, after Beatrice had read aloud for more than an hour from Browning's 'Men and Women,' and then left him upon the lounge in the sitting-room, the man took himself severely to task for useless procrastination.

It was about mid-day, and the windows were shaded coolly from the somewhat fierce July sunshine outside; a dreamy veil of dusk covered the lightly elegant appointments of the room—its pale matting; its soft-blue rugs, scattered over the floor; its slender bamboo furniture, and its many tasteful ornaments of statuette or book-rack or flower-filled vase. Reginald's self-reproaches, vehement for a slight while, soon took the form of a gently comfortable resolution, much

in accordance with the tranquil ease of his surroundings. Yes, at the next opportunity—which would doubtless occur that same afternoon, when Beatrice had promised to renew her reading—he would end all further needless delay. It even occurred to him that a certain graceful relativity and sequence might be made to surround the words which he contemplated speaking, if he should suggest that she read from the latter passages of the 'Princess,' where, though small resemblance exists between the position of Ida toward her wounded lover and that of Beatrice toward himself, there would still be an almost exquisite fund of suggestiveness in those lovely lines which describe how two wedded souls, each with its separate yet similar lofty aim, each with its reciprocal tribute of respect, affection and trust, may in the end reach that sweet triumph of

'The single pure and perfect animal,
The two-cell'd heart beating, with one full stroke,
Life.'

Shortly after this dilettante piece of meditation, Reginald fell into a pleasant doze. His ankle had rather murdered sleep on the previous evening, and doubtless for this reason his nap was a somewhat sound one. Awakening about a half-hour later, he was straightway conscious of having been roused from sleep by some sharply disturbing agency. His lounge was close against one of the side windows of the room. Loud cries, as though from a terrified child, were sounding somewhere near, and he soon discovered that they seemed to emanate from a portion of the lawn just beyond this window. With but slight effort he was able to throw back the blinds. There was no piazza against this portion of the house, and a green sweep of sunlit lawn was immediately brought to view. At a distance of perhaps fifty yards away, he perceived two figures, one that of a little girl, the daughter of the head gardener, Haslitt, while the other figure was plainly that of Bea-

trice Sedgwick. The child was in a perfect spasm of shrill-toned crying. Beatrice bent over her, holding in one hand a handkerchief, with which she seemed endeavouring to staunch a wound on the girl's arm. Still further on, Reginald now discovered that a certain large Newfoundland dog, for several years a pet of his own, lay crouching in a sort of sick attitude, with protruded tongue. He was on the point of calling out to Beatrice, inquiring the cause of the trouble, when a new-comer appeared on the scene. This was none other than Haslitt himself, wearing a very excited demeanour, and carrying a gun. Advancing toward the dog with a great deal of caution, Haslitt suddenly levelled upon him the muzzle of the weapon; one moment later a clear discharge was heard, and the dog, shot through the head, lay in his death agony.

Beatrice now left the screaming child and hurried toward Haslitt. The two held a brief conversation together, purposely low-voiced. Reginald guessed what was being said while he noticed the anxious look on Beatrice's face and the gardener's serious shake of the head as he turned and pointed to the now motionless animal. Hastening back to the child, Beatrice knelt at her side. A thrill almost of horror passed through Reginald as he saw the lips of her whom he had resolved to make his future wife press themselves against the wounded arm. But from whatever cause the thrill began, it ended in an enthusiasm of admiration. He had needed no further evidence of this creature's nobly charitable nature, yet here was thrust upon him the final convincing proof of it!

What other woman would have acted with this fearless, unselfish benignity? If she consented to marry him, should he not have won a treasure of surpassing worth?

A little later he made known to the group on the lawn that he had observed them. Beatrice passed indoors,

after having tightly bandaged the child's arm with her handkerchief, and given Haslitt instructions at once to go for a doctor. When she entered the room whence Reginald had watched her, it is hardly hyperbole to say that his maimed state alone prevented him from throwing himself at her feet after the old-time romantic fashion, and covering her hands with many kisses of fealty, of honour, and of pride. Beatrice walked up to where he lay in a half-reclined attitude, and with a slight smile on her tranquil face, said:—

'So you have been watching that pleasant little affair? I hope I haven't shocked you?'

'Yes,' he answered, 'you have shocked me—and very much. But I suppose I had no right to be shocked. It was no more than just what one should have expected from you.'

His tones so palpably bespoke his real meaning that they seemed to embarrass her. 'The dog was probably not mad,' she began, with a touch of confusion about her rapid sentences; 'but there is no doubt that he has been sick for a day or two and that when little Jane attempted to make him play with her he bit the child quite cruelly. Haslitt was for shooting him on the spot. You know the old superstition. I don't believe I could have stopped the shooting if I had commanded him ever so harshly. Of course the best plan was to have waited and discovered just what the dog's malady really proved to be. But my common-sense suggestions were worthless sound in the ears of the poor ignorant fellow. I was a tyrant to be put down at the muzzle of the gun. So he put me down—and shot your Lion. I hope you are not inconsolable.'

Reginald's face was bright with a smile as he held out toward her a hand which she could not choose but see and take. Her own hand was very cool and firm, but his had both an unwonted warmth and tremor.

'I believe,' he softly replied, 'that it must rest with you whether I am to be inconsolable or not——'

And then he came to an abrupt pause, for a high girlish voice was heard outside, and the next moment a slim young figure burst into the room.

'Why, Eloise,' exclaimed Beatrice, promptly moving towards the intruder. 'You have arrived a day earlier than we expected.'

Eloise laughed a shrill silvery laugh as she kissed Beatrice impulsively on either cheek. 'Yes, the Marksleys were coming straight from Newport to our own hotel, so I couldn't miss the opportunity of having them take care of me instead of that stupid old Mrs. Osgood——Oh, there you are, you poor Reginald' (running up to the invalid and seizing his hand in her own gloved clasp). 'I've felt so dreadfully for you ever since I heard of it. But you're ever so much better, aren't you? And you haven't lost flesh a bit; *has* he, Beatrice? You're just the same great big creature you used to be. A little bit paler, though, now I look well at you.'

Considerably paler, Miss Eloise might have thought, could she have compared Reginald's present appearance with what it had been just before her entrance. The bright blue eyes and the plump little face, rimmed with waves of yellowish hair, expressed a sort of funny superficial sympathy, as Miss Forbes seated herself on a section of the unoccupied lounge, still retaining the invalid's hand. And very probably she did not feel, through her intervening glove, how almost clammy cold that hand of Reginald's had now become.

Another week accomplished wonders for Reginald's sprained ankle. He was able, at its end, to dispense with the cane, and though still an imperfect walker, the evidence of his injury now decreased with daily rapidity. During this same week two letters had been exchanged between himself and his friend Wallace Wil-

lard, recently returned from a considerable stay in Europe. The result of this correspondence was Mr. Willard's appearance at the house of his old friend.

Quick of manner, slim and rather unnoticeable in figure, possessing a face that suggested almost a decade more than his real age of thirty-two, Wallace Willard rarely impressed at first sight. His features were of good regularity, but his somewhat lean visage nullified their effect, being of a slightly yellowish colouring. He had inherited at an early age a sufficient competence to permit the indulgence of that extraordinary American eccentricity usually defined as being 'without a business.' Many years of his life had been spent in travel, and these same years had proved productive of much valuable social experience. He was a man with no special predominating tendency, but with a liberal appreciative inclination toward all that was worthy of a cultured taste, and of an educated intellect originally well above the common. He recognized the shortcomings of humanity, as the unprejudiced observer and the thinker, wholly freed from inherited bigotries, wholly exempt from all distorting touches of dogma, may alone recognize them. Coated, to those who first met him, with a light film of what might almost resemble cynicism, he was promptly found, by all whom this deceptive over-dress did not repel, to wear beneath it a serious mailwork of reflective soundness and moral solidity. He had looked deeply enough into life to have discovered that what seem its baffling mysteries and entanglements are themselves a silent scorn of anything like sceptical approach; and while he was far from preserving any faith which might be called definite or positive, his respect for the very majesty of those insoluble problems constituting human existence, informed him with a calm and patient philosophic trust, full of lofty liberal-ity and wise meditation.

Conversationally he knew how to make himself charming, and with a fresh rarity of charm, that the whole Ross household were not slow to discover and appreciate. Eloise should perhaps be excepted from the list of his more earnest admirers; for where it was a question of pleasing young bachelors she belonged to that class of feminine entertainers who would have no hesitation in scorning even the holy laws of hospitality themselves, provided she were not at all times rewarded with a good lion's share of notice.

'I don't dislike him—oh, not a bit!' she told Reginald, one evening, while he and she were standing together on the starlit piazza, having left a family-group within-doors. 'But I feel (don't you know?) as if I were the merest cypher when he is present, and of course that bothers my vanity, or something of the sort, can't you understand!'

'I think I can understand,' Reginald said, with a smile that the young lady did not see.

But she detected a satiric ring in his tones and fired up quite vigorously. 'Oh, you *can*, can you? Well, no doubt I'm not fit to breathe in the same room with that prodigious wise-acre. He exhausts all the air. What made you follow me out?' (with a sudden lowering of the voice and a quick lifting of the eyes to his face, succeeded as rapidly by a downward look.) 'I wish you hadn't.'

It is possible that Reginald already wished very much the same thing. Since the first coming of Eloise Forbes into his mother's household, there had been a new incident force directed upon his life, whose effects he had himself been watching with a sort of disappointed wonder, at certain separate intervals during the past five years. The man somehow revolted from what his temperament seemed imperatively to ordain. While he was in Eloise's company his mind seemed to close every door of intellec-

tual congeniality except that of a little antechamber, as it might be said, where trifling fancy and light pleasantry, and often random nonsense, gained free admission. That his feeling for Eloise should be dignified with the name of a passion, he sometimes made haughtiest mental denial; that it *was* a passion, dominating him with a tyranny as irresistible as distasteful, he now and then dejectedly confessed.

He had never come nearer to a complete victory over these self-despised impulses than just before Eloise's return. Had she remained away a few days longer, and had Beatrice given favourable answer to his suit, the change, he could not help believing, might have assumed a most permanent and resistant stability. Closer personal nearness to Constance, and those respectful caresses and pure fondlings that their engagement must sweetly have sanctioned, might have lighted with the real sacred flame an altar whose sculptured beauty alone needed this one illuminative grace. But now the altar seemed not only hopeless of the kindling touch; it had been overthrown as well. And who had been the iconoclast? A flippant-minded girl, a piece of pink-and-white wilfulness, too well-dowered with mischief to be called innocent, and too shallow to make the charge of wickedness ever a just one! In proportion to the strength of Reginald's late resolution, now followed the strength of its reaction. 'I can do nothing,' he told himself, as these new days lapsed along. 'If I were a lesser man or a greater man, it might be well with me. As I now exist, there is but one course left: To go away. I have gone many times before. A year ago it was Europe; it shall be Europe again, and this time for an indefinite space.'

But he did not go away. Willard's visit as yet showed no signs of termination, and he indeed seemed holding Reginald at his host's word as regarded making a most extended stay. Meanwhile each new day only aug-

mented the unhappy spell. More than once a certain bitterly despondent mood laid its black hand upon Reginald's soul. His self-mortification now appeared to take secret pleasure in assigning one grotesque and strangely imaginative cause to what, during all rational moments, he condemned as unpardonable weakness.

No wholesome effects had sprung from a confidence once made by Mrs. Ross to her son regarding the singular fancy with which she herself had been haunted. It is sure that the strong impression which that odd story relative to his brother Julian from the first made upon Reginald, had never been revived into more positive memorial colours than just at present.

Again and again he was on the point of confiding all his misery to Wallace Willard, and humbly asking advice from a judgment, an intelligence and a psychical keen-sightedness which he granted were superior to his own. But Reginald's courage, in this matter, was wholly disproportionate to his yearning. Always sensitive to ridicule, he dreaded the latent amusement, if nothing more serious, which so quaint a confession might provoke; and just now his position became secretly aggravated from an unexpected source.

The large neighbouring hotel numbered among its present guests a Mr. Alfred Austin, who very often strolled over, both mornings and evenings, for the apparent purpose of being pointedly civil to Eloise. He was a gentleman whom she had known for several years, meeting him rather frequently in town during the winter. He was tall, straight-limbed, with an oval face, pleasant grayish eyes and a scant blonde moustache. Escaping the charge of foppery, he nevertheless exhibited a daintiness of costume, a perceptible affectation of manner and a pronounced tendency to imitate prevailing fashions. Jealousy was beyond doubt wholly exempt from the unwilling toleration with which Regi-

nald regarded him, after a few meetings. He deserved the name of well-informed, in its most absolute sense. On many subjects he was positively redundant with facts; fluency seldom failed him; he sparkled at times with something that it would be hypercritical not to allow as wit; his stock of happy phrases perpetually showed itself: he was adroit at veiling his ignorance, very often under graceful epigram; he was a man who might shine for an hour or so where his intellectual betters would seem justly enough to merit the charge of dullness. But his measure was limited, and Reginald was not wrong, perhaps, in his rapid taking of it. 'I suppose the man is what ought to be called clever,' he told Willard one evening, while smoking a late cigar with his friend, after the ladies had disappeared; 'but for myself he compares with men of really interesting parts about the same as the dictionary would compare with any enjoyable piece of reading. By-the-by, Eloise asked him to make one of our little pic-nic to-morrow.'

Reginald was not wholly ill-pleased, however, that the little pic-nic in question had been made to include Mr. Austin's company. He had a dreary certainty that most of his own time would be given to Eloise, provided a party of four allowed him opportunities of unlimited *tête-à-tête*. And, to put the matter in its harshest terms, he was ashamed that Wallace Willard should have any such striking proof as might then be afforded, of how Eloise's society could attract him with so engrossing an efficiency. Hitherto he had managed to shroud from Willard, under a half-abstracted sort of carelessness, the spiritual servitude which bound him. And so, on the following morning, when Austin, with fresh-looking, blond demeanour, really appeared, Reginald's welcome wore a touch of cordiality no less insincere than explainable.

The party of five started on foot for

a certain charming spot called Green Hollow, which they reached after perhaps an hour of leisurely walking. On either side of the hollow, rose thick-wooded hills, one of which broke most beautifully at its base into rocky cavellike irregularities, of lichen-grown and fern-plumed picturesqueness. A boulder-broken stream foamed through the delightful vale, on its way toward lower lands.

The morning, though somewhat oppressively warm during their walk, left this cool monastic retreat almost untouched by its ardours. Everybody was sun-wearied on reaching the end of the walk, and everybody soon recovered under the sweet touch of a new refreshing atmosphere.

Two servants had accompanied the party, bearing liberally-filled hampers, and after nearly an hour of what perhaps struck more than one person as general conversation of a rather aimless order, the edibles being spread upon a tract of meadowy sward, cold chicken vied in its allurements with a savoury store of other dainties.

Austin was what his admirers (and such men always have devoted admirers) would have called in his best vein this morning. He told several sprightly stories, nearly all of which sparkled with some foreign reminiscence; he seemed bent upon infusing a gentle spirit of mirth into the party, notwithstanding the marked resistance that somehow met this noble attempt; and far from anything like monopoly of Eloise's society, he appeared even to avoid securing one. Finally, while the eating was in progress, he waxed despondent, declared himself unable to make anybody 'jolly,' and in one of his characteristic word-torrents, where all the brief sentences trod hot on each other's verbal heels, he poured forth amusing reproaches. Reginald and his friend Willard now and then exchanged looks, as two calm-eyed sensible horses might do on witnessing the wild gambols of a colt.

'With what object do five people meet together as we are met now?' said Austin, brandishing a chicken-leg loftily in one of his white womanish hands. 'Is it to look pensive over a waterfall, Miss Beatrice? Is it to smell our vinaigrette and wish we had not walked here, Miss Eloise? Is it to appear wisely absent-minded, Ross? And Willard, is it to show even less appetite than conversation? Why let to-day's pic-nic get itself registered in our memories as a failure? If so, we shall shrink from all future pic-nics, and scent *ennui* in the very name of one. For myself I have done my best, but I have been grossly rebuffed. Yet never mind that; all social reformers have to run the gauntlet of contempt. Already having taken one glass of claret, I now proceed to accompany with more claret this yet-undevoured chicken-leg. After that, I shall probably have gained courage enough for the dreadful act of boldness which I meditate. What is this act of boldness? It is to storm your outworks of unsocial melancholy. It is to sing a comic song.—By Jove! how dark things are getting!'

'I should say, Mr. Austin,' now laughed Beatrice, 'that your comic song will have to be sung in the midst of a thunder-storm, unless you rather expedite it.'

The clear, blue sky above them had indeed darkened during the past few minutes into thick-folded masses of purple cloud. One of those sudden storms to which our American summer is so often subject, had hurried up with startling velocity from the South-west. Low grumbles of thunder already sound in surly distinctness, and the gloom deepened with every new moment.

'We shall catch it in about ten minutes,' exclaimed Reginald, springing from the ground; but his prophecy was an incorrect one; for in half that space the rain began to fall, and the two servants, abruptly deluged while endeavouring to replace the edibles

within the hampers, were forced to quit their task and join the other portion of the party, dryly ensconced beneath those rocky coverts whose over-jutting ridges afforded ample shelter. Eloise, nervous from the first approach of the storm, uttered more than one terrified cry as vivid lightning-flashes illumined the almost solid sheets of down-rushing rain, and were promptly followed by furious roars of thunder. Reginald and Beatrice were on either side of the frightened girl, and to Reginald there was something like a direct mockery of his own position in the intensity of contrast between the separate demeanours of Eloise and her companion. One face wore a childish terror that well suited the occasional plaintive cries issuing from its lips; the other face was a trifle paler than usual, perhaps, but full of sweet, serious composure, suggesting a natural awe restrained by a gentle though firm sufficiency of self-possession.

The lightning at length abated, and both rain and wind palpably lessened. There was even manifest a certain brightening of the sky, too, when suddenly a fresh mass of yet blacker cloud brought a deeper dimness, and new peals of thunder alternated with fresh and intensely brilliant flashes. Eloise's fears, diminished by what she believed to be the end of the storm, were now re-awakened with more than their first force. She threw her arms about Beatrice, uttering wretched little cries, and buried her face impetuously against the other's bosom. Many soft words of comforting assurance were spoken by Beatrice, in tones so full of womanly strength, of unconscious placid superiority, that once more the same mockery of contrast struck with telling effect upon Reginald.

And now there occurred, after a momentary lull in the tempest, one flash of such livid luridness that every eye which met it involuntarily closed, while with simultaneous rapidity there pealed forth a great crashing outburst to which the other

thunder-claps had almost been of slight volume.

'That struck somewhere near!' exclaimed Willard, as the hollow reverberations were yet rolling boomingly away. And indeed, not many yards distant, a large hickory, standing somewhat alone and far overtopping all adjacent foliage, showed to every eye a great splintered gash through its midst and an utter ruin of several stalwart branches. Eloise, however, should be excepted from those who really witnessed the effect of this terrible bolt; for her condition had at once become wildly hysterical, and her moaning screams resounded with shrill sharpness, while she clutched Beatrice in an actual agony of tearful alarm. The storm at once permanently decreased, and both peals and flashes showed signs of its pacified condition; but Eloise, her noisy spasms having ceased, now seemed overcome by a complete prostration, like a vaguely-conscious swoon. Beatrice not only bathed her temples with a rain-drenched handkerchief and performed every attentive office which the occasion would allow, but repeatedly assured Alfred Austin, in low placid words, that she felt convinced the attack would soon pass over, that Eloise had before suffered in much the same way, and that there was no occasion for the least anxiety. Austin was the only one of the party who exhibited any marked worryment at the sufferer's condition, and his nervousness and pallor were both plainly evident. Reginald remained watchful, making no comment. Wallace Willard, ready in whatever suggestions of relief occurred to him, seemed to partake of the same tranquil coolness that marked Beatrice.

In a quarter of an hour the storm had wholly departed, and the sun was once more shining upon drenched foliage and sodden country. All were so confident that Mrs. Ross would have caused a vehicle to be sent after the party as soon as the weather per-

mitted, that the idea of despatching one of the servants to the house was only momentarily entertained. And, true enough, the vehicle at length appeared. By this time Eloise had grown much stronger, and was even able to profess herself 'dreadfully ashamed,' which she did with so much pretty humility that the most unsympathetic observer would have had little heart to feel toward her anything except indulgent pity.

II.

Six months had passed, and the same party, after a continued period of separation, were again to be found in Mrs. Ross's country-house. They had assembled there to spend Christmas. The spaciouly comfortable mansion had been decorated with a charming collection of greens throughout nearly all of its attractive chambers. Good cheer reigned everywhere, with a sweet sovereignty. It was Christmas day, briskly cold out of doors, but free from the snowy accompaniments common to this period. The household had met at a sumptuous-looking six o'clock dinner, which was still in progress. Reginald had scarcely spent six weeks at home during the months since we last saw him. It was somehow understood that he had been passing most of his time in New York, though he had been oddly reticent regarding his frequent and prolonged departures. For three days past, since the two guests, Austin and Willard had arrived, his manner had seemed to everyone unusually taciturn and preoccupied. To-day, during dinner, he scarcely spoke ten sentences. The occupants of the dining-room were all rising from dessert, when he whispered in Willard's ear :

'I want to have a short talk with you, Wallace.'

A few moments afterwards he and Wallace had quitted the house by a rear door and were strolling side-and-side along one of the more retired

paths of the lawn in the early winter starlight. It was not till now that Reginald gave his companion the least clue regarding what was to be the subject of their conversation.

'Wallace,' he rather measuredly began, looking straight before him, 'I hope you won't attempt to contradict me when I tell you that I am the weakest man of your acquaintance.'

'I shall require proof, however,' was the slow and rather dry answer.

'Proof!' exclaimed Reginald, looking all about him for a second as though to make sure of there being no unseen listener. 'Good heavens, my condition fairly teems with proof! You know I had been away for a little time before the accident from which you found me recovering last summer.'

'You had been fishing, I think you said—yes.'

'I had been falling in love.'

'Ah.'

'I had been falling in love—well, let me say it all—with two women.'

'That is serious. Was one a fisherman's wife and the other his ——?'

'Don't jest, please. I was never more serious than now. Can't you see it?'

If Willard had not seen it before, the look that Reginald here turned upon him was, indeed, well calculated to settle all doubt. 'No matter how long I was away, Wallace,' he went on, 'and no matter what opportunities I have had of fully observing these two women. Some of the facts are these: I have seen enough of both to understand their natures pretty thoroughly. Both are my social equals; both are unmarried. I love one—he paused now, and laid his hand heavily on Willard's shoulder, while his restless eyes dwelt for a moment on the other's face in solemn and appealing fixity—'I love one, Wallace, with my heart, and one with my soul. This has a very high flown sound to you, no doubt, but it is the only lucid way to put the matter, after all.'

A silence, during which the two friends walked slowly along, in the crisp, keen air. Willard suddenly slipped his arm into that of Reginald. 'Describe to me,' he said, 'your feelings towards her whom you say that you love with the heart.'

'They are not complicated,' was the deliberative answer, touched with a sort of dignified melancholy. 'When we are together I am simply very much pleased. A strong attractive force has me in its grasp. If I attempt to find a reason for this charm I usually finish by profound and selfish self-contempt. There is between us no congeniality of intellect. I will even admit to you that the woman is common-place, whimsical, of a small nature. I am like one bewitched, yet fully cognizant of the spell-power binding him. If I marry this woman my happiness must last, only so long as that spell-power continues unchanged. Should it cease, there will be no barrier against myself—contempt assuming wider than personal limits. Only, I believe that it *will* last. I believe that the influence of this woman over me is an indestructible fact, and founded upon no fleeting impression of the senses. I can safely tell you that satiety will never make headway against it, though on this point you will probably feel like presenting objections.'

Willard offered no reply for some little space, as the two men still walked onward. His head remained meditatively drooped, while Reginald turned more than one swift inquiring glance at his half-hidden face.

'And the other?' he at length questioned.

Reginald's voice had loudened when his prompt answer now found utterance, and its melancholy of tone had deepened likewise. Through all that he said there seemed to surge a steady undercurrent of self-reproach, even of confessional self-abasement.

'She is a woman in ten thousand—clever, capable, courageous, brimming

with the sweetest charities, looking at life with the broad-sightedness of some deeply thoughtful man, yet mingling with her view a sympathetic intuition exquisitely feminine. I feel that if I married her I should be a wretch not to become the happiest of men! And yet —'

'And yet you would probably be the most miserable.'

'No, no! I did not say that. I do not think it.'

Before answering, Willard brought his friend to a dead stand still. There was a half-smile on his lean, worldly-wise sort of face, and a few tiny wrinkles seemed, in the bluish dimness where he stood, to have come into sudden view beneath either eye. He drew his arm from Reginald's and began to speak, with placid distinctness.

'It is fair to suppose, my dear fellow, that you have not put this confidence in me without a certain feeling that my advice may be of some value. But if I am wrong, here, at least this advice can do no harm, and I am going to give it. The woman of these two whom you love is evidently she whom you mentioned first. What you described to me regarding your sentiments toward her was undoubtedly the description of a passion. To gratify this passion may be an imprudence which your after-life will heartily repent; I don't pretend, on such a point, to prophesy affirmatively or negatively. I have seen too many marriages of this sort turn out well, and too many turn out ill, not to confess that the dissimilarity of both temperament and intellect between a wedded pair is one of those questions as yet quite defiant of inductive reasoning. The accumulation of instances does not seem to give much help of an *a posteriori* kind to the social observer. Perhaps when pure science has made more psychological headway we shall be able to match men and women one with another as accurately as we now match certain meats and certain sauces.

But I don't want to seem flippant, as your look informs me that you think me. All that I would suggest is this: either marry or do not marry the woman whom you have told me that you love. But by no means dream of marrying the beautiful-souled creature whom you respect so emphatically and esteem with such a chivalrous warmth of admiration. No man ever falls in love through his conscience, or from a sense of advisability. And least of all, my dear Reginald, a man of your somewhat peculiar nature.'

'Nature!' exclaimed Reginald, with a touch of such absolute despair in face and voice that a pang of involuntary pity shot through Willard's heart. 'What is my nature, for Heaven's sake? I sometimes think I am a man born without any!'

* * * * *

The twilight had become darkness when Wallace Willard rejoined the little group within doors. Reginald did not accompany him. He was yet walking about the lawns, having been left alone at his own suggestion.

Reliance upon the soundness of Willard's views and belief in the excellence of his friend's rarely-proffered advice had grown almost a second nature with him during the years of their long acquaintance; but he could not now bring himself to place trust in either. That the declaration of his love to Eloise should have come so near being sanctioned by a man of Willard's keenly perceptive judgment, roused in him a passionate yearning to make the words he had just heard an excuse for giving sentiment fresh liberty and revelling in its unrestrained gratification. But co-existent with this yearning arose an indignant unwillingness, which seemed to cry out at the commission of a sacrilege. His memory perpetually reverted to past events, and that satire of contrast so plainly observable between these two women was like a reproachful index-finger, pointing, across months of fool-

ish hesitation, at other equally fair experiences in the sweet grandeur of Beatrice Sedgwick's character. Willard had been confident enough in his prophecy of future unhappiness resulting from any such union, yet Willard was after all but a fallible seer. And as regarded this abnormal fascination exerted by Eloise, how did he know but that rigid spiritual disdain of it might accomplish wonders hereafter? His reflections, indeed, ran on into angry syllogism, and he declared that all men could crush out a passion unworthy of their moral natures, that he was a man, and that therefore the hope of ultimate victory must not be thought delusive; though whether any marked flaw existed or no in the poor fellow's major premise may be a matter of doubt to some who read these chronicled meditations. Granted, he went on, that his love for Eloise was a weakness ludicrously disproportionate to much else within him that was sound and healthful. There he would be the hospital for his own disease, and perhaps with an ultimately curative effect—or the private asylum, to put it a little more strongly, for his own distressing insanity!

Having reached this stoic stage in his musings, Reginald passed into the house. The idea now occurred to him of entering the library, a certain room on the ground floor, richly stored with bookshelves of his literary preferences and antipathies, and of taking down some favourite author with whom to spend, as a sort of desperate, though unsocial makeshift, an hour or two of the evening. He had nearly reached the doorway of this room, when the sound of a voice—a woman's voice, speaking with much vibrant clearness—told him, to his sharp surprise, that the library had other occupants. A second later he was aware that the voice belonged to Beatrice; and while in doubt whether to turn away or to make his presence known, he had become a listener to the following words:

'I can say, without any conscience-qualms, that until I met you I had no experience of what it is to love as doubtless every woman has loved once in her lifetime. And yet, since you have made perfect candour between us the order of the evening, I . . . I think I had best repose in you a confession.'

'By all means do so.'

Wallace Willard's voice! Is it possible that no thought of his objectionable situation occurred to Reginald at this moment. Astonishment was alone uppermost within him, as Beatrice now proceeded, rather hesitatingly :

'During several weeks before you came here, Reginald, as you have heard, was suffering from the effects of an accident. We were constantly thrown in each other's society. . . . Often I would spend hours at his side, talking with him, or reading aloud. His mother had often hinted to me, in a hundred ways more or less pointed, that if we two should ever care for each other, such an occurrence would prove the gratification of a very dear wish. Until then I had never believed that Reginald felt for me other than a most ordinary regard ; but repeatedly, during those days of his convalescence, I fancied that I discovered in him signs of an actual passion. And it was great pain for me to believe that I had inspired any such intenser feeling ; for . . . let me say it most solemnly. . . I had none to bestow in return. But my love for Mrs. Ross, my deep respect for her wishes . . . my strong sense of duty toward a friend who . . .'

'I know,' the other voice broke in, with soft and sympathizing tones ; 'I understand perfectly. You would have accepted Reginald at that time if he had asked you to marry him ? Or did he ask, and did you refuse ?'

Those were the last words of this conversation to which Reginald listened. Gliding away, he paced up and down the hall for a long time. There was no suspicion in his soul that Wallace Willard, by his recent advice,

had played false, having guessed the concealed truth. Unjust as such a suspicion would have been, many a man, under circumstances like the present, would have been prone to foster it. But no thought of the kind troubled Reginald. He simply felt an excited over-glowing sense of liberty. The inexorable finger of duty no longer pointed toward a certain path. If his mind reverted at all toward Willard it was only that he felt for his friend a genial instinctive gratitude. Willard had forever settled the tormenting problem. By falling in love with Beatrice and winning her love in return, this man had freed himself, Reginald, from all future excuses for doing otherwise than his emotional part had long so powerfully prompted. His course was clear now, and it seemed literally paved with self-justification. Toward Beatrice fate had lastingly sealed his lips ; and not the most rigid casuist, knowing every struggle through which he had fought his way, could have blamed him now for letting this residual need profit by which his spiritual demand had irrevocably lost. Perhaps ten minutes later Reginald heard the door of the sitting-room, which was situated considerably further toward the outer entrance of the hall, slowly unclose. He chanced, at this time, to be considerably distant from the opening door, having sunk into an easy chair midway between library and sitting-room. But now he saw Eloise come forth, and a single glance at her face showed him its unwontedly flushed condition.

Reginald's heart gave a quick bound. A sudden colour showed itself on his face, and his eyes took a rich, softening light. It occurred to him that Eloise had never looked prettier than now, as she came and stood before him, with her blonde hair waved in crisp disorder about her fresh young face, and wearing a great pink rose in the bosom of her white-muslin dress.

'Are you alone ?' he asked. 'I mean, has Austin left you ?'

'I have just left him,' she said. Her colour deepened a little as she spoke. Something in her tones caused him slightly to cloud his brows, as though from a vague perplexity. His face grew somewhat paler, and he took one or two steps nearer to where she stood.

'Ah!' suddenly exclaimed Eloise, while turning an abrupt rosy-red. 'I believe you have begun to guess my secret before I've told you a word of it. Here, give me both of your hands.' So speaking she glided up to him, and seized both of his passive hands in both of her own. 'It was all settled to-night. We are engaged to be married, Alfred and I. It seems so funny to call him "Alfred." You like him, do you not? I know you do, by the polite way in which you treat him. But then, everybody *must* like him—I think he has no such incommmodity as an enemy, And you're pleased, are you not? Well, if you are, tell me so.' She was shaking each of his hands in an impulsive, intimate manner, while a very full and pretty smile bloomed on her blushing face.

Reginald never remembered afterward how he behaved at this crisis. He believes it most probable that he acquitted himself with decent self-possession. But the ordeal did not last long, for a little while later Mrs. Ross appeared in the hall, and Eloise, deserting him, ran coyly toward her guardian with the important intelligence.

Reginald slipped away after this. He went upstairs into his own room, and, locking the door, threw himself within a chair. An hour passed while he sat thus in the almost utter darkness of his chamber, but it did not seem to him longer than five minutes before he at length rose and struck a light. Looking at his watch, he promptly left the room and went downstairs through the silent house. All the family, including Wallace Willard, had evidently retired for the night; but on reaching the servants'

quarters he found them still occupied, and was enabled to give some low orders to the head groom, with whom he held converse in a certain gloomy passage-way. Then he passed upstairs again to his own room.

He now packed a portmanteau with a few needful articles. An hour or so later he threw himself on the bed, having left his light still burning. He remembered that he ought to leave a few lines to his mother, in some way accounting for his intended departure the next morning. But he was incapable of making the effort that such an act would have required. Besides, he could write on reaching New York. His lamp burned on, and the night grew. But though his eyes often closed, he did not sleep. Sometimes a faint sigh escaped him; sometimes he stared fixedly at the opposite wall for many moments; sometimes he lay with lowered eyelids; sometimes he moved his head in painful restlessness from side to side.

But finally, at a very late, or rather a very early, hour, sleep overmastered him. And during this sleep he was visited by a strange dream—by what many people would, perhaps unhesitatingly, call a vision, holding the old marvel-suggesting word as more pertinent to the present circumstances than any natural physical explanations. He was lying on the lounge in the sitting-room downstairs. The windows were shaded from the outer sunshine; the pale matting, the rugs, the bamboo furniture, the graceful surrounding ornaments, were all dimly evident to him. Presently his mother appeared at his side. 'Does your ankle pain you much now, Reginald?' she tenderly asked, and her hand began to smooth his hair while she spoke. 'No,' he answered; 'not at all.' And then his mother murmured, in the most natural of voices, while he seemed to feel only a vague half-surprise at her words: 'Eloise is coming home this morning, you know, with your brother Julian——' Almost imme-

diately after this, his mother vanished, and a loud wailing as of a terrified child struck upon his ear. While he was trying to discover whence the noise proceeded, Beatrice appeared beside him, holding in her hand a handkerchief, deeply stained with blood-marks. 'Haslitt has shot your dog, Lion, Reginald,' she told him, in very composed tones. 'I hope you are not angry.' And then he put forward a hand and seized that of Beatrice, and, in his dream, kissed it many times. 'You noble girl!' he cried. 'You good, wise, generous, charitable girl!' But as his words ended, a clear-pealing laugh sounded from the further part of the room, and Eloise, dressed in a white muslin dress, with a great pink rose on her bosom, hurried up to him, exclaiming: 'I'm home earlier than I expected, though I've been nearly frightened to death by that awful thunder-storm. It struck a tree all into splinters only a few yards away from me. Oh! it was horrible!' And now Eloise lowered her voice to the faintest of whispers, and scanned his face with her bright blue eyes, that had somehow turned very gravely serious. 'But Julian came with me,' she said. 'He is waiting outside. Shall he come in?'

'Yes,' Reginald answered. 'Mother told me that he had accompanied you. I want to see him. I have not seen him, you know, since we were both five years old.'

And now the room seemed to darken, and neither Beatrice nor Eloise were any longer present. But a voice was speaking somewhere amid the dimness, a clear, resonant, manly voice, and yet like none other that Reginald had ever heard.

'I am here,' the voice said, 'but you cannot see me, for matter may not look on spirit. There are some things hard to explain, Reginald In truth, what is there which a poor mortal like you may really say that he knows? I cannot tell you why we were parted from each other . . . it was for a reason,

a certain reason but I am not permitted to tell. Yet be sure of one thing: if you are incomplete in your life without me, so am I incomplete in my life without you. All your past perplexity, all your weak indecisions, all your abrupt outbursts of fine strength, all, all, are attributable to this. We should have been one; we are two. That tree, which you saw the lightning split in two portions last summer, will, doubtless, put forth leaves and branches from either portion in years to come. But the blessed unity will be wanting to each, which once gave the perfect tree its beautiful equipoise. Had we both lived, we would have been as one man, full of mutual love, help, sympathy. But even then, there would have been many assailing doubts for each of us, as to the special incompleteness and insufficiency of either; and when death, at unequal periods, finally divided us, the anguish, the great sense of loss would have surpassed, for him left, any suffering you have ever yet known.'

For a moment the voice paused, and it now seemed to Reginald, as if the most pitchy darkness surrounded him.

'I must leave you,' the voice recommenced; 'I have already remained too long For a spirit like myself to speak of form, is to deal in what means very differently to you and to me. But you will understand me better if I say it thus: Hereafter, when you leave this earth, one form shall cover us, and we shall be one entity. . . . Our severed halves shall reunite, our separate fragments shall make one strong, noble and divine union Be patient till then. Be patient and wait. . . .'

* * * *

With a start, Reginald awoke. The early summer sunshine flooded the room. The lamp burned smokingly on a near table. His packed portmanteau lay close beside the bed. The hard realism of these mute facts brought

with it nothing inharmonious. For all through the latter portion of his strange dream there had somehow seemed to be within his mind a latent recollection that it was the day after

Christmas, that he was to start for New York at a very early hour in the morning, and for Europe on the following day.

A CHRISTMAS HYMN

BY MARY B. SANFORD.

O H, softly down with the mighty stream
Of Time, as it onward glides,
Is borne the strain of a wondrous song,
And yet sweet are its notes, though drear and long,—
Is that river with sweeping tides.

Oh, list ! for it breathes of rest and peace
Through tempests of doubt and strife,
Where oft the turbulent waters roll
O'er the sinking faith of some weary soul
'Mid the darkness struggling for life.

And looking back up the long, dark stream
We see, through sadness and fears,
A sun-bright sheen on its crests afar,—
'Tis the mem'ry of joys that vanished are
With the ebbing tide of years.

And brightest shine out our Christmas-tides,—
They gleam from our childhood's days,
And voices sweet sing the glorious strain
'The Saviour is born, and His peace shall reign.
'Tis the Angels' anthem of praise.

Oh Father, though oft the song seems faint
When the sounds of strife increase ;
Though often the mists obscure our sight,
And the tide rolls dark ; oh, send us Thy light,
And grant us Thy rest, and Thy peace.

WASHINGTON IRVING'S OLD CHRISTMAS!

BY WALTER TOWNSEND.

'IT is indeed the season of regenerated feeling—the season for kindling, not merely the fire of hospitality in the hall, but the genial flame of charity in the heart. The scene of early love again rises green to memory beyond the sterile waste of years; and the idea of home, fraught with the fragrance of home-dwelling joys, reanimates the drooping spirit—as the Arabian breeze will sometimes waft the freshness of the distant fields to the weary pilgrim of the desert. Stranger and sojourner as I am in the land—though for me no social hearth may blaze, no hospitable roof throw open its doors, nor the warm grasp of friendship welcome me at the threshold—yet I feel the influence of the season beaming into my soul from the happy looks of those around me. Surely happiness is reflective, like the light of heaven; and every countenance, bright with smiles, and glowing with innocent enjoyment, is a mirror transmitting to others the rays of a supreme and ever-shining benevolence. He who can turn churlishly away from contemplating the felicity of his fellow-beings, and sit down darkling and repining in his loneliness when all around is joyful, may have his moments of strong excitement and selfish gratification, but he wants the genial and social sympathies which constitute the charm of a Merry Christmas.'

It is thus that dear, delightful Washington Irving writes of the feelings engendered by Christmas, and as in our lives each succeeding Christmas comes and goes, we realize more and more fully that the chief delight

of the season is derived from the sight and sense of the happiness of others. To the child, who tries in vain to keep awake to see Santa Claus make his appearance down the chimney; to the boy with longing visions of bats and balls, books, skates, and boxes of tools; to the youth with fresh and glowing aspirations after pleasure, Christmas is a season of innocent selfishness. But to the man, who has done with toys, and who has found that even pleasure will pall, the feeling that every one is doing his best to be happy, or at the very least, to appear happy, constitutes, as Irving says, the charm of a merry Christmas. Of course there is, as cynics take care to remind us, a certain amount of humbug about Christmas, but I am not so sure that humbug, if it be of the right sort, and not too rampant, is at all times a misfortune. It does no one any harm to be forced to shake an indifferent, or maybe, an uncongenial, acquaintance warmly by the hand, and wish him, with effusive enthusiasm, 'a Merry Christmas and many of them.' If he should respond with extra warmth, and if by chance a merry twinkle steal into his eye, it is just possible that we would say as we parted, 'Really, Jones is not such a bad fellow after all, although he did try to pass off on me that spavined old mare of his.' And Jones, on the other hand, might depart murmuring, 'Well, Robinson is not quite so detestable a curmudgeon as I thought, and it is not his fault if he doesn't know a good horse when he sees one.' And then, as we grow older, the accumulated treasures of memory in-

crease, and so sacred are the associations of Christmas, that long years, stirring events and change of clime are powerless even to cast a haze over the brightness of our earliest recollections. We still see the tender, much-loved mother, at whose knee we first learned the sweet story of Christmas, bending over the little cot at the foot of which hangs the tiny stocking ready for Santa Claus—we still remember that, ever kind, ever thoughtful as she was, at Christmas time her care seemed warmer and her love more sacred; we see her once again as she appeared to our childish eyes, a glorified and perfect being, and alas, for some of us, the vision is blotted out by a blinding rush of tears. But why recapitulate those sweet and bitter memories which are so familiar to us all? To him who is separated from the home of his youth by a thousand leagues of sea, Christmas is especially dear by reason of these mingled recollections; he can be sure that then at least, he is fondly remembered, and that, amidst all their rejoicings, those he has left behind will feel a pang of tender regret when they think of the absent one. And just in the same way as every individual Englishman feels his heart stirred at Christmas time by yearning thoughts of his childhood's home, so the vast family of Englishmen, whether born in Canada, Australia, or Old England itself, turn at this season instinctively towards the land that they are all proud to call home—the land where Old Christmas finds his warmest welcome, and is most gaily decked out in holly and mistletoe. We none of us need to be prompted either by literature or art in our remembrance of friends, or in our love for Christmas, but it is very pleasant to open one of some few books, which are themselves old friends, and to be gently reminded of the old familiar faces and the old familiar scenes—and among such rare books Washington Irving's 'Sketch Book' deserves a prominent place.

Much as we love every article and story in the Sketch Book, we recur at this time of the year with the greatest affection, to the series of papers on Old Christmas. It appears singular that an American should have written the most delightful account of Christmas that our literature possesses. Irving was, however, imbued with such warm love for his parent country, and for all her old institutions and customs, that he wrote concerning them with equal warmth, and with more truth, than would be possible to a native-born Englishman. Not only in his account of Christmas, but in his papers on 'The Boar's Head Tavern,' on 'London Antiques,' on 'Little Britain,' and in many other instances, he evinces an affection for old customs, which, from his greater familiarity with them, would not be likely to impress an Englishman so deeply. 'Nothing in England'—he says—'exercises a more delightful spell over my imagination, than the lingerings of the holiday customs and rural games of former times.' In discoursing of these old customs and games, Irving throws a halo of sentiment around them, which renders his account charming, without in the least depriving it of the accuracy gained by study and observation. The story of his Christmas passed in the country opens with a delightful description of a day's journey by stage-coach. The revolution in our manner of travelling has been so complete, that, although stage-coaches have not been defunct half a century, we accord them all the reverence due to antiquity, and invest their memory with a tinge of sentimental regret. We know that, as a matter of fact, they were often dirty, ill-horsed, and unsafe; that a traveller was compelled either to freeze with cold outside, or to be stifled with bad air inside—and this, in a journey of any length, for four or five days at a stretch;—and yet, although these and other cruel facts are patent, we obstinately shut our eyes to them and

turn with delight to Dickens' picture of Tom Pinch's ride to London, or Irving's description of his journey on Christmas Eve. And then what grotesque romance surrounds the idea of the Coachman! Our experience of human nature tells us, that in too many cases he must have been a drunken and insolent vagabond, but we never allow our ideal to be desecrated by the intrusion of any such gross considerations. We prefer the broadly truthful delineation of this extinct race given us by Irving. 'He has commonly a broad, full face, curiously mottled with red, as if the blood had been forced by hard feeding into every vessel of the skin; he is swelled into jolly dimensions by frequent potations of malt liquors, and his bulk is still further increased by a multiplicity of coats, in which he is buried like a cauliflower, the upper one reaching to his heels. . . . He enjoys great consequence and consideration along the road; has frequent conferences with the village housewives, who look upon him as a man of great trust and dependence; and he seems to have a good understanding with every bright-eyed country lass. . . . When off the box his hands are thrust in the pockets of his greatcoat, and he rolls about the inn-yard with an air of the most absolute lordliness.' As we read this, a vision of the immortal Weller Senior rises before our eyes, and we recognise how admirably Irving has hit off the broad characteristics of that class of which Dickens' creation, in spite of its caricature, must for ever remain the most finished type. The humour with which the sayings and doings of the three youngsters, whom the coach is taking home for the Christmas holidays, are recorded, is of that tender sort which provokes tears as readily as laughter. The little rascals, with their unbounded delight at the prospect of the unlimited joys of a six weeks' holiday, with their eagerness to greet their old pony Bantam, who was 'according to their talk pos-

sessed of more virtues than any steed since the days of Bucephalus,' appeal irresistibly to our feelings, reminding us of the time when we 'had neither known care nor sorrow, and a holiday was the summit of earthly felicity.' The charming picture of the meeting of the youngsters with the old family servants, accompanied by Carlo the pointer and the redoubtable Bantam, is inimitable. 'Off they set at last; one on the pony with the dog bounding and barking before him, and the others holding John's hands; both talking at once, and overpowering him by questions about home and with school anecdotes.' The country inn, where the traveller meets with Frank Bracebridge, is admirably sketched. The obliteration of these old coaching houses has been a necessary, but somewhat melancholy, accompaniment of modern progress. No one who has travelled much in England can fail to have come across numerous examples of these old inns, 'whose glory has departed, and whose place knows them no more.' I remember a striking instance in the Feathers' Inn on the Cambridge road, a few miles out of Ware in Hertfordshire, which possessed,—and indeed still possesses although mouldering into decay,—stabling for fifty horses, but which, instead of resounding with the bustle of travel, is now deserted, save by the casual ploughman calling in for a pint of beer. It is well for these old houses that they live in the pages of more than one great writer, so that, although deserted and abandoned to decay, they will for long retain their glory as the most perfect embodiments of comfort and cheery hospitality.

The thoroughness with which Irving enters into the spirit of an English Christmas is exemplified by the manner in which he brings his traveller to Bracebridge Hall. When we first meet him in the stage-coach he has no fixed destination, but he comes across an old travelling acquaintance, who, with impulsive good-fellowship,

invites him to accompany him to his home, and spend Christmas there. This at once symbolizes the hospitality peculiar to the season. An Englishman would not wish his worst enemy to dine alone on this all-important feast-day, and would rather risk the company of the most uncongenial guest than endure the thought of another spending in loneliness the day set apart for mutual good-will. Such is the natural introduction of a Christmas guest to the table presided over by the Squire of Bracebridge Hall. He is the central character of Irving's charming sketch, and it would be impossible to imagine a more poetical, and at the same time more truthful portrait of a 'good old English gentleman, one of the olden time.' I have always thought that in delineating this delightful personage Irving had before him, perhaps unconsciously to himself, that *preux chevalier* Sir Roger de Coverley. Not only in general characteristics are the two identical, but in many minor points. They both were firmly convinced that there is 'no condition more truly honourable and enviable than that of a country gentleman on his paternal lands,' and in spite of the worthy Knight's occasional visits to London, they both thoroughly lived up to this belief. They were both beloved by, and sole arbiters in all the concerns of, their tenants and dependants, and each esteemed every man as a friend, no matter what his station, who showed himself worthy of friendship. We are told by Mr. Spectator that, as Sir Roger was beloved by all about him, 'his servants never care for leaving him; by this means his domestics are all in years, and grown old with their master. You would take his valet de chambre for his brother, his butler is grey-headed, his groom is one of the gravest men I have ever seen, and his coachman has the looks of a privy counsellor.' The composition of the Bracebridge household was exactly similar; we are told that the servants

'had an old-fashioned look, having for the most part been brought up in the household, and grown into keeping with the antiquated mansion, and the humours of its lord.'*

Indeed, we are continually reminded, in reading Irving's Old Christmas, of the visit of Mr. Spectator to Sir Roger's country-house, and more particularly of those portions of it which are described in papers contributed by Steele, whose essays have a striking affinity, both in style and matter, with the writings of Washington Irving. It would be too much to say that if there had been no Sir Roger de Coverley, there would have been no Squire Bracebridge, but it is hardly too much to say that if 'The Spectator' had not existed, Squire Bracebridge would have been a somewhat different, and perhaps a somewhat less endearing creation. It would be almost impossible, however, to present a perfect type of the old English gentleman without investing him with some of the characteristics of the famous Knight, and perhaps a more remarkable coincidence is the resemblance between Irving's description of Master Simon and Addison's sketch of Mr. Will Wimble. In each of these cases an eccentric personage is portrayed, with curious habits formed by the force of circumstances, and in each case the habits are at least similar, and the circumstances absolutely identical. Irving, it is true, elaborates the picture in his most charming manner, so that the execution is entirely his own, but for the conception it almost seems as if he were indebted to Addison. Old bachelors and poor relations are themes upon which Irving loved to dilate with kindly good nature, and certainly if all old bachelors were like Master Simon marriage would not so generally be deemed the more honourable state. 'He had a chirping buoyant disposition, always enjoying the present moment; and

* This idea is still further worked out in 'Bracebridge Hall' in the paper on Family Servants.

his frequent change of scene and company prevented his acquiring those rusty, unaccommodating habits with which old bachelors are so uncharitably charged.' He made love to all the old spinsters, in whose eyes he was still a gay young dog, and he was adored by all the youngsters, 'for he must have been a miracle of accomplishments in their eyes. He could imitate Punch and Judy; make an old woman of his hand, with the assistance of a burnt cork and pocket handkerchief, and cut an orange into such a ludicrous caricature that the young folks were ready to die with laughing.' The failure of the village choir in the anthem which Master Simon had so industriously endeavoured to drum into their heads, is conceived in the true spirit of comedy, and the old gentleman's joviality after dinner, when he chirped 'like a grasshopper filled with dew,' and finally grew maudlin about the widow, is excellently humorous. In his choice of a parson the Squire of Bracebridge Hall differed from Sir Roger de Coverley. The little, dried-up black-letter hunter, who even on Christmas Day preached a long erudite sermon on the rites and ceremonies proper to the season, citing as his authorities half a score of the ancient fathers, is in marked contrast with the worthy gentleman to whom Sir Roger presented all the good sermons printed in the English language, making it a condition that he should read one of them in the pulpit every Sunday, and leave to others all attempts at originality. The remaining characters are, in this series of papers, but slightly sketched in, but how charming and how comprehensive Irving makes even his slightest sketches! The young officer who had been wounded at Waterloo, with his dash of natural coxcombery; the blushing beauty of seventeen, the coy victim of his love-making; the Oxonian, who delighted in quizzing his maiden aunts and cousins with exaggerated airs of gallantry; the captivating little hoy-

dens still in the school-room, who taxed Master Simon's powers of dancing so sorely; the fat-headed old gentleman, who stuck in the middle of a story, and was the only person in the room who could not remember the end of it; to each of these a vivid personality is given, which could scarcely be increased by any additional elaboration.

With regard to the antiquated manner in which he describes Christmas as having been spent at Bracebridge Hall, Irving was freely criticised on the first appearance of the 'Sketch Book.' If such a criticism were true in 1820, it would be doubly true in 1878, but I venture to think that its truth cannot be sustained. In remarking upon these strictures at a later period, Irving said, that since writing the Old Christmas papers he had had opportunities of seeing almost all the rural customs which he describes, in full force in many districts in England. With the exception of the dance, accompanied by cudgel play, which so delighted Squire Bracebridge as being the lineal descendant of the sword dance of the ancients, there is nothing described, the counterpart of which could not be found to-day in some parts of England. Surely no one will allege that blindman's buff, hot cockles, bob-apple, or snap-dragon, are obsolete games; or that the Yule Log, the Wassail Bowl, and the time honoured mistletoe are things of the past? With regard to the Antique Masque which concluded the merry Christmas evening, this only purported to be a 'burlesque imitation,' and Irving half confesses that he borrowed the idea from Ben Johnson's Masque of Christmas. But to refute seriously an allegation against Irving's Old Christmas of want of accuracy, is to fight with shadows. Probably no such exquisite combination of all the sports and merriment belonging to the season, was ever found in any one village of England; but how many villages of England have lived under the jovial

sway of a Squire Bracebridge? A writer attempting to give a general idea of the pastimes peculiar to Christmas, is not compelled to locate his village, and confine himself to the customs of that particular district; had Irving at any time attempted such pedantry, we should not only have lost his Christmas at Bracebridge Hall, but many more of his most delightful essays. It is more profitable, however, to abandon all ideas of probability or improbability, and yield ourselves up to the charm of Irving's writing, and he would be but a churlish reader who could resist this, and who could deny that he would give a year or so of his life, to pass one such Christmas at Bracebridge Hall. Who would not, even on a frosty night, be kept waiting at the door, as were our travellers, if the reason were that the merriment in the servants' hall was too uproarious to allow them to hear the ringing of the bell? To be ushered into such a hall, and to greet such a company, we ourselves would willingly ring from one Christmas Eve to another. To see the old Squire, seated in his ancestral chair beaming 'like the sun of a system' gladness to every heart; to see the old hall, with the famous portrait of the Crusader; to shake hands with the parson, and to joke with Master Simon; all and any of these would certainly be worth some waiting for. And, after the supper and merry dance of Christmas Eve, how delightful to fall asleep as the music of the waits died away in the distance, and how doubly delightful to wake, to hear the pattering of little feet outside the door, and after a whispered consultation, a choir of small voices chanting a carol! And then the family prayers, and the dear old Squire in his Christmas joy and exaltation, allowing his voice to ramble out of all the bounds of time and tune; and the walk to church through the clear and frosty air, and Master Simon's anthem and the Parson's sermon; and the loving greetings of the peasantry to the Squire—all these are sym-

bols of things which never fade into antiquity, but which bloom fresh and green with each recurring Christmas. And the crowning ceremony of all, the Christmas dinner, the feast which Englishmen unanimously exalt to the first place among all feasts, with what a humorous gusto is it described! Irving could praise good cheer enthusiastically, without incurring the slightest suspicion of being himself either a *gourmet* or a *gourmand*, and from his description the Squire's must certainly have been a model Christmas dinner. The talk over the wine, which the Squire, 'whose joviality seemed always tempered with a proper love of decorum,' interrupted exactly at the right moment, is full of pleasant humour. The evening games, although themselves no longer necessary accompaniments to Christmas, constitute an admirable example of the uproarious merriment which most households still indulge in on Christmas night.

I have, I hope, said enough to show how thoroughly ideal is the picture Irving draws of Old Christmas, but it may, in addition, be pointed out that all his figures and scenes are, so to speak, types. He makes no attempt at character-painting, except so far as is necessary to present each of his *dramatis personæ*, as an example of a class. The stage-coachman is a type, the country inn is a type, Bracebridge Hall is a type, its inmates and surroundings, the Squire, the Parson, Master Simon, the village Church, the traveller himself, are all typical; and finally, the series of papers as a whole, form a wonderful and unique type of what Christmas, in its most Christian spirit, sometimes is, and always ought to be.

It is impossible to dismiss Washington Irving with a reference merely to his Old Christmas, charming as that is, and peculiarly appropriate at this time of the year; and, therefore, it will hardly be considered out of place to make a few general remarks upon the position he occupies among

English Essayists. Those writers who have achieved the very first excellence in the familiar style of writing, are few in number. Steele, Goldsmith, Washington Irving and Charles Lamb, are the four greatest, and if of these, judged simply as familiar essayists, Charles Lamb must be deemed *facilis princeps*, it is not so easy to discriminate between the claims of the remaining three for second place. In style, as well as in choice of subject, and natural bent of mind, Washington Irving bears a strong resemblance to Steele. They both possessed the same simplicity of mind, combined with kindness and comprehensive charity: the same deeply reverential spirit characterized them both, and if Washington Irving was not so prone as Steele, to turn his essays into short sermons, it is in a great measure because the accidents of his life, and the tone and temper of the age in which he lived, forbade it. Essayists in the familiar style appeal directly to their readers as friend to friend; they attempt to engage the heart rather than attract the intellect, and the measure of their success can therefore be gauged better by our affection for them as men, than by our admiration for them as authors. The strong personal feeling which we have for such writers as Lamb, Goldsmith, and Irving, is in some respects a curious phenomenon. It is altogether independent of, and uninfluenced by, their character or the events of their lives, but arises entirely from the effect of their writings upon our emotions and susceptibilities. The reason for this would appear to be that perfection in such writing cannot be approached by any man unless his nature fit him pre-eminently for it, so that the writing is in the truest sense the man. The knowledge of this is unconsciously present to every reader; we know that we are being admitted behind the veil, and that the author's nature, his likes, his dislikes, sometimes his very soul, are laid bare before us, and naturally we love him as we do a

friend who entrusts us with his every secret. Mere frankness of confession, however, such as Rousseau's or De Quincey's does not necessarily produce such a result; there must not be the slightest intrusion of the tragic,—even our interest must not be too deeply aroused; we must be thoroughly satisfied with our author's nature, and through him with our own, it being delicately insinuated that, as he is, so are all men. Washington Irving rarely does more than confide to us his tastes and sentiments; he does not, like Charles Lamb, entrust us with his most sacred feelings, and his most human weaknesses; but although for this reason he does not lie so near our hearts as the gentle Elia, his graceful *bonhomie* and genial warmth render him peculiarly endearing. There is one faculty which essayists of Irving's type must possess in an abnormal degree, and that is taste, or tact, call it which you will. The slightest jar upon the feelings of a reader would neutralize their efforts, and it is only by the possession of this faculty, that men of crotchets, as to certain extent all such writers are, manage to write so as to please all readers. I think too, that another reason why we love these authors is, that as boys we revelled in their works. How well I remember the appearance, the very binding of the well-thumbed Washington Irving in the old school library! When I open the Sketch Book, or Bracebridge Hall, visions of hours of keen delight rise up before me, and I recognise anew the fact, that at no period of life is more enjoyment derived from books, than at that delightful age, which accepts all it reads unhesitatingly, and thinks a hint against its favourite authors treason. There are few authors who can claim equal sway over the boy's imagination and the man's intellect, but of these few Washington Irving is one, and his kindly unostentatious nature would have regarded a boy's delight as a more grateful offering than even the praise of critics.

In 'Bracebridge Hall' Irving again introduces us to the scenes and characters already made familiar in the Christmas papers, and in addition he brings before us some new character-sketches. The most important of these are Lady Lillycraft and General Harbottle, but although described with many touches of native humour, they are far inferior creations to the Squire or Master Simon. Much more original is Ready-Money Jack Tibbets, who plays a prominent part throughout the Bracebridge Hall papers, and who may be set down as a fairly representative specimen of the English yeoman. The sketches of the village worthies are admirable; the apothecary who was the village wise man full of sententious remarks, who "observed, with great solemnity and emphasis that 'man is a compound of wisdom and folly;' upon which Master Simon, who had hold of my arm, pressed very hard upon it and whispered in my ear, 'That's a devilish shrewd remark!' The village politician, who 'had a confounded trick of talking, and was apt to bother one about the national debt, and such nonsense,' the tailor and the worthies who kept the village inn, all these and many more testify to that extraordinary perception, amounting almost to intuition which Irving possessed of the oddities and excellencies of English character. Not only in his essays and sketches, but also in the tales with which they are so plentifully interspersed, Irving's English characters are in inception, conventional, but he presents them with a naturalness, and invests them with a freshness, that make them actual living creatures, and not mere puppets. In this respect he reminds us of a worker in a different field of art, David Wilkie,* whose subjects are conventional, but in treatment exquisitely natural. Such pictures as 'The Rent Day,' or 'The Blind Fiddler,' are conceived

and worked out in exactly the same spirit, as that which inspires Washington Irving's charming delineations of rustic life. That the painter and the writer should both have treated Spanish subjects, as well as English, may be looked upon as a mere coincidence, but as here too they display the same delicate fancy combined with truth and accuracy, the very coincidence serves to draw the parallel between them closer. The style of writing which Lamb and Washington Irving adopted has found few disciples in our day. We have a number of brilliant essayists, whose achievements have made the nineteenth century perhaps the greatest prose era in our literature;—but they are philosophical, critical and didactic; their self-imposed mission is to teach, not to amuse, whereas the primary object of Lamb and Irving was to afford their readers matter for innocent enjoyment. There is, however, one writer, himself a countryman of Irving, upon whom the mantle of Charles Lamb seems to have fallen. Oliver Wendell Holmes, without in any instance sacrificing his originality, follows closely the method of the elder essayists, and although he is the most remarkable, he is by no means the only proof we possess, that it is among American writers we now chiefly find that quaint and delicate humour, which the discussion of the sterner realities and larger issues of life seems for the time to have banished from England.

Irving's fame does not, however, rest solely on his charms as an essayist; as a story-teller he is unrivalled. The practice of telling a story simply for the sake of the story, and not as a vehicle for the discussion of human character, has of late been well nigh abandoned. The rôle of *raconteur* seems for the present to be played out, in spite of the vehement assertions of a living novelist that it has been the one aim of his life to assume it. The truth is, that the novel can never be used simply to tell a story; the essence

* It may be interesting to note that Wilkie and Irving were intimate personal friends.

of such stories as Irving's lies in their brevity, and the slightness of the material composing them. The plot is rarely if ever absorbing in interest; the characters are, as I have said before, types of classes rather than strongly-marked individuals, and the fascination the tales possess is derived from exquisite charm of manner, and direct simplicity of narration. That which, if otherwise told, would be melodramatic, becomes natural; that which, if otherwise told, would be commonplace, becomes poetical; and characters, in themselves conventional, and drawn sometimes merely in outline, become instinct with life and motion. 'Men are but children of a larger growth,' and Irving's tales are simply the highest expression of the kind of story-telling with which we amuse children. It may be conceded that the novel, in the hands of genius, is a much higher form of art than mere story-telling; but it may still be matter for regret that the latter should become in any sense obsolete. Irving's stories are of two distinct kinds, the humorous and the romantic: of the first, 'Rip van Winkle,' and the 'Legend of Sleepy Hollow,' are the best examples; of the second, 'The Student of Salamanca,' and 'The Story of the Young Italian,' in 'Tales of a Traveller,' are favourite illustrations. His Spanish tales have never been so popular or so widely read as 'The Sketch Book' or 'Bracebridge Hall,' although they are exceedingly graceful and attractive. The 'Tales of a Traveller' alternate the humorous with the romantic, but although many of them display Irving's peculiar qualities, by no means at their worst, they are not, as a whole, nearly up to the level of his two best known works. Of Irving's efforts in the more ambitious field of history, in which, indeed, he has been eclipsed by his countryman Prescott, I do not intend to speak, but there is a somewhat similar class of literature in which he stands without a rival, and which should be noticed even in this brief paper. His

'Life of Goldsmith' is the best biography of its kind in the English language. Biographies may be roughly said to be of two kinds: one which, by faithful and minute records of actions, allows the life to tell its own story and unfold the character of its subject; and the other which presents the life in the form of a story, from the point of view of the narrator. It is obvious that the latter form of biography must largely assume the character of a criticism, and must depend for its success greatly upon the degree of sympathy between the biographer and the man whose life he sets before us. The complete sympathy between Irving and Goldsmith, the similarity of their natures, are in themselves reasons for the supreme excellence of this work. It has all the charm of fiction, combined with absolute truth and fidelity to fact, and at the same time presents us with an accurate portrait of the man, and a generous and faithful criticism of the author. There is no other man whose life Irving could have written so well, and it is no less true that no one could have written Goldsmith's life in such a manner. This work will, I am convinced, form one of the least perishable monuments of his fame.

I have made a wide digression from the Old Christmas papers, but one may be excused for growing a little garrulous over Washington Irving. There is no author who is dearer to us, and whose character is more clearly and indelibly imprinted in every line of his works. We can apply to him, without the excision of a single word, his own language concerning Goldsmith: 'The artless benevolence that beams throughout his works, the whimsical yet amiable views of human life and human nature, the unforced humour, blending so happily with good feeling and good sense, and singularly dashed, at times, with a pleasing melancholy; even the very nature of his mellow, and flowing, and softly-tinted style, all seem to bespeak his

moral as well as his intellectual qualities, and make us love the man, at the same time that we admire the author. At this season of the year, when all men are, for one brief day, in harmony, we can sympathize most truly with an author whose writings spring

from a fount of benevolence and kindly charity. Not only his 'Old Christmas,' but all Washington Irving's writings, breathe the spirit of Christian love, with which all hearts should be filled at Christmas.

KASPAR.

BY R. RUTLAND MANNERS.

THIS Christmas Eve, and a cold clear night,
 And the earth is filled with the white moonlight,
 Which falls through the frosty air from on high,
 From the crystal blue of a winter sky,
 And glittering rests on the drifted snow,
 And gleams on the half-iced stream below ;
 And the forest's naked limbs arrays
 With numberless trembling diamond sprays,
 By the Frost-king there unradiant strewn.
 Now illumed by the white-fire touch of the moon.

Round the mountain's base the river glides,
 From the gloom of the pine on its rugged sides,
 And creeps through the vale by the evergreen shade ;
 By the fringing elders, all leafless made ;
 By the hazel-copse ; by the ice-bound wheel
 Of the moated, long unbusy mill,
 And into the quiet burg hard by
 Whose quaint tile roofs sharply rise on high,
 Till beyond 'tis lost in a distant wood,
 Where its voice alone stirs the solitude.

The village church caps a neighbouring hill,
 O'ergrown with ivy and tufted moss,
 'Neath giant willows weirdly still,
 Which a shadowy net-work weave across
 The snow's white folds on roof and tower,—
 There deftly spread as by magic power,—
 O'er which points the spire with its cross on high,
 Seeming set 'mid the brilliants that fill the sky.

From the gothic windows a dim light creeps
 Through the coloured panes, and softly glows

On the whitened sills where it restless sleeps
 Or steals o'er the clustering moss that grows
 On mullion and transom and eaves above,
 With lacing ivy there interwove,
 Then fades within—to appear again
 Softly tinting the many-coloured pane.

Old Kaspar, the sexton, had wrought within
 Till the midnight hour crept on a-pace,
 With clusters of fragrant evergreen
 Adorning the walls of the holy place.
 But the Elfin band who all silently
 Weave the web of sleep, have him captive ta'en
 And laid 'neath the spell of their sorcery
 They bind him tight with their silken chain,
 And in pall-like folds, which they weave from night,
 They muffle him close for their mystic flight.

'Tis the potent watch of the Elfin reign,
 And they gather fast on every hand,
 And now at their sceptred chief's command
 Is their captive borne to their bright domain,
 To the golden scenes of the vision-land.
 Swift as thought its enchanted bounds they pass
 And its sunlight breaks 'neath the vaulted height
 Of the Elfin court, alabaster white,
 Filled with throngs of the airy populace.
 And they move through grottos with jewels bright,
 Glittering many-hued in the soft rose light,
 That steals within, with the perfumed air,
 From the flower-filled dells of the mystic sphere
 Half-seen beyond 'twixt the arches high,
 Whence comes the glad sound of festivity.

* * * * *

And now to the Royal Court they come,
 Reared on tinted marbles its crystal dome,
 Which range away in bright colonnades,
 With fountains between and enchanted glades,
 And in the midst on an ivory throne,
 Its seat iridescent opal stone,
 Sits the Fairy-Queen robed in lily white,
 And crowned with a circlet of diamond light.

On every side 'neath her gracious smile
 Her people the festive hours beguile
 In merry round, while on busy wing
 Some richest fruits to the banquet bring.
 For in fairy realm—as proclaims the scene
 With its joy, good cheer and emblems green
 Speaking grateful praise,—'tis a time of feast
 And thanksgiving for a danger past,

To a noble King who freed their land
 From a Giant grim, and on every hand
 Rarest fruits are spread, and glad heralds call
 Fairy Land to the royal festival.

They gather fast from glade and grot,
 Elves and sylvan sprites and butterfly fays,
 Their little forms decked in textures wrought
 From flowers and brodered with gossamer rays,
 And they join in the bright festivities,
 Till the scene with their buoyant gladness rings,
 While the air is filled with sweet harmonies
 From their tinkling spangles and tuneful wings.

Now all is hushed; for the Fairy Queen
 Stands forth, and surveying with gracious mien
 The throngs which gallery and court-ways fill,
 Thus in accents clear speaks the sovereign will :—
 ‘Our much-loved people, most glad are we
 To welcome you all to our Royal fête,
 On this festal day when the memory
 Of our Champion-King we celebrate.
 Throughout the bounds of our goodly State
 To share our joy we have called you here,
 And your presence with loving heart we greet,
 The humblest alike with our highest peer.
 So all strangers sojourning in our domain,
 Have we bidden come—alike welcome all,
 For all hearts should meet on Love’s equal plane
 This day of Love’s grateful festival.
 To-day, as he whom we honour came
 Of his own free-will and kingly grace
 To save our realm, love alone should claim
 Our hearts and therein all else displace,
 While each for the other’s happiness
 Gives foremost thought, as true love e’er will,
 And so shall the hours most joyous pass
 And goodness her highest charge fulfil.

‘For the choice first-fruits which our people bring,
 As their custom ’tis from year to year,
 An oblation to our most honoured king,
 We yield due thanks. We ourselves shall bear
 Your offerings to him whom we all revere,
 For in honouring him most honour we
 Ourselves and the State we hold most dear,
 Which to him proudly yields its fealty.
 And now let the Feast proceed. Let all
 In our joy and good cheer participate,
 While the Dance and Song in glad carnival
 Rule the hour. Let each present emulate
 The next in mirth and our banquet hall
 With rejoicings loud reverberate;

While all hearts are linked in a chain of love,
That not fate nor the tides of years can move.'

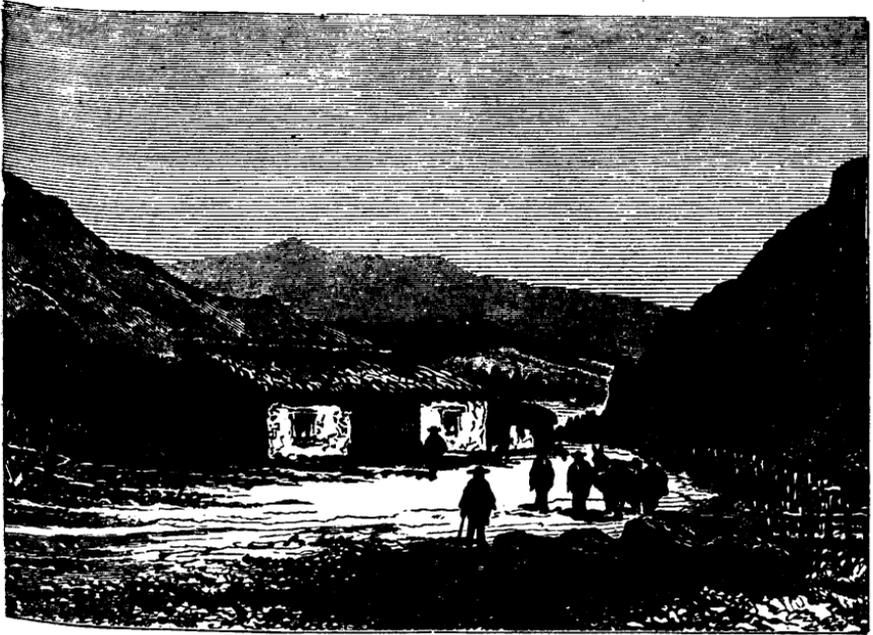
The Sovereign ceased. A scene of wild delight
Applause-full followed till the crystal height
Rang back the sound, while fays on shining wing
Above the throne moved gaily, scattering
About their queen rare floral sweets whose blooms
Imbued the air with delicate perfumes.

As yet the dwellers in this mystic sphere
Had heeded not their stranger visitor,
Save to make way where'er he chanced to pass,
Courtesying aside with smiles and airy grace.
But now beneath the vaulted height appeared,
Where the great dome its crystal beauty reared,
A form majestic, o'er whose brow serene
A halo shone, crowned with a star between,
And robed in light which brighter as it came
Soon dazzling beamed, like to a golden flame.
Its gaze was fixed upon the stranger guest,
Wherein alone high love was manifest,
Yet did it seem as its full glory filled
The scene—quick at its radiant advent stilled
To breathless calm—all in its glance to hold
And to transfigure into shimmering gold.
Then 'neath its power, soon all potential grown,
The fairy court, its populace, the throne
To formless light seemed fused—

And Kaspar woke
As on his face, through the church windows, broke
The rising sun ; the sun of Christmas Day,
Flooding all Earth with its resplendent ray !

SOMETHING ABOUT PERU.

BY S. R. SMITH.



ENTRANCE TO THE VALLEY OF TAMBO.

THE coast of the department of Arequipa in Lower Peru, between the sixteenth and eighteenth degrees of latitude, would present a most desolate uniformity of aridity but for certain fertile valleys which break the dreary monotony of the *lomas*, or barren ridges, that line the shore of the Pacific for three hundred and twenty miles. The fairest and most tropical of these valleys is that of Tambo, which begins at Mollendo beach and extends for fifteen leagues up to the heights of Puquina on the slope of the Western Andes. It is enclosed narrowly between a double chain of rocky hills, and rises gradually from the ocean-level to an eleva-

tion of six thousand seven hundred and fifty feet. The Tambo River flows through it and empties into the Pacific.

It was from this lovely valley of Tambo that, toward the end of a certain October, Paul Marcoy, the French traveller in Peru, to whom the world owes much of its later knowledge of that country, started on a long journey across the sierra region to explore the Rio Apurimac from its source, in Lake Vilafró, at the base of the eastern slope of the Andes, to its junction with the Rio Aquillabamba or Uru-bamba—a journey which led him across the sierra and up the valley of Huarancalquito to Cerro Melchior, in the Great Pajonal.

At the period when Marcoy, with gun on shoulder and sketch-book under arm, is discovered, as the stage-directions have it, in the valley of Tambo, it contained three large haciendas (estates). The hacienda Arenal, nearest to the sea, belonging to General Cerdena, a Spaniard and ex-officer of the royal army that was 'defeated

in the northern part of the province. This person, Pierre Leroux by name, needs an introduction to the reader, for he was destined to become Marcoy's travelling companion in his excursion, and to share with him in his experiences, pleasant and otherwise, up to the summit of Cerro Melchior. He was a native of Besançon, and had



PIERRE LEROUX.

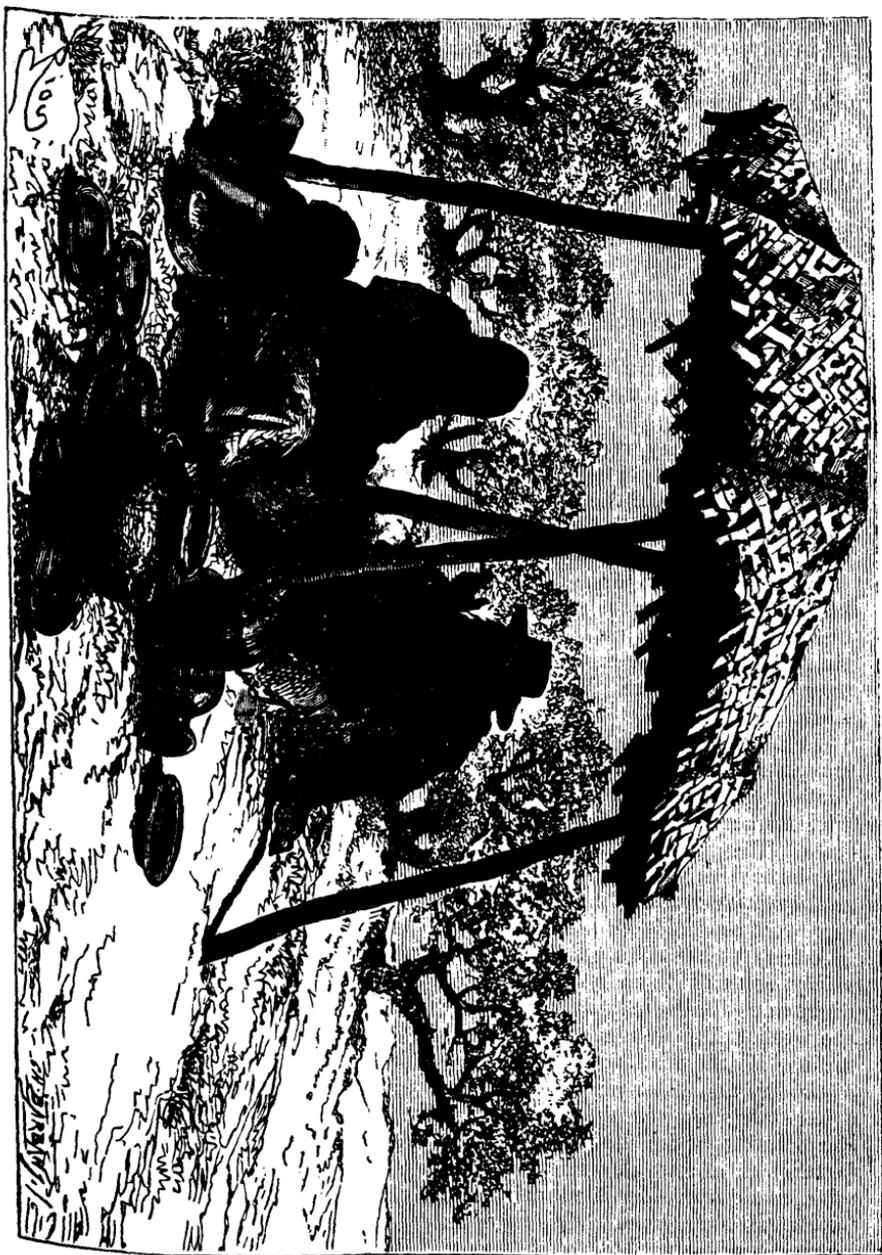
been living in Peru for fifteen years, during which time he had acquired and lost two fortunes in mining operations. As Marcoy has sketched him, with pen and pencil, we are shown a man of forty-five years of age, tall, with a countenance at once frank and intelligent, robust in health, sinewy of limb, and with the iron will of one who, having marked out a goal, seeks it unmindful of obstacles. He had given to his plantation the name of *Tambochico*, or 'Little Tambo.'

Leroux's mind at the moment of Marcoy's appearance in the valley was absorbed in a project of introducing on his hacienda the use of certain machinery for cleaning his rice and cotton. He had ordered it a year before, at a cost of thirty thousand dollars, from New York, through the British

at Ayacucho in the Peruvian war of independence. The next was owned by an Englishman; and the third, a rice, cotton and sugar plantation, was the property of a friend of Marcoy, whose acquaintance he had made five years before, at a place called Caraveli,

consulat Islay, a port about fifteen miles higher up the coast, and was now impatiently expecting its arrival, together with that of the ready-made pine-wood sheds intended to house the machines. Once a week he went to Islay to make inquiries, leaving Tam-

AMONG THE OLIVE TREES.



bochico in the morning and returning by nightfall. During these absences of his host, Marcoy devoted a part of the day to peregrinations among the *olivares* and *higuerales*—as the small

olive and fig plantations are called—which fringe the valley, and in conversing with their Indian proprietors. Among the five or six native families established in the *olivares*, one in

particular aroused his interest, and he often stopped in his walk to converse with these people on the subject of the life they led there, and of their olive-culture and its revenues. The family had erected its dwelling among the olive trees, and although its members had all the outward appearance of ill-health and poverty, they seemed to be happy and contented, seated under their simple roof of mats, upheld by four posts, and with their household utensils scattered about them. They told Marcoy that their home was in the upper part of the valley, and that the simple shelter under which they received him was merely their temporary camping-out residence. Like all the other proprietors of the olive and fig plantations, they remained away from their plantation for eleven months of the year, leaving the trees to the care of Providence: the twelfth month, when the time to collect the crop had come, they passed where Marcoy found them.

From his friends of the olivares, our traveller would stroll a few hundred yards higher up the valley to chat with his acquaintances of the *highuerales*. The male adult owners of the fig plantations were generally absent, as they preferred to abandon the conjugal roof and hire themselves out as labourers to the large planters of the valley, some of them returning each night and others only at the end of the week. The women of the family meanwhile attended to the gathering of the figs and their preparation, in a dried state, for the markets of the sierra towns, or engaged in the manufacture of a sort of violet-coloured wine, made from the figs, which the people call *chimbango*. This fig wine is sweet and agreeable to the taste, and of moderately intoxicating powers, and is sold at a *cuartillo* (about three cents) a quart.

Still higher up the valley, this cultivated zone was succeeded by a sandy tract, irregularly interspersed with

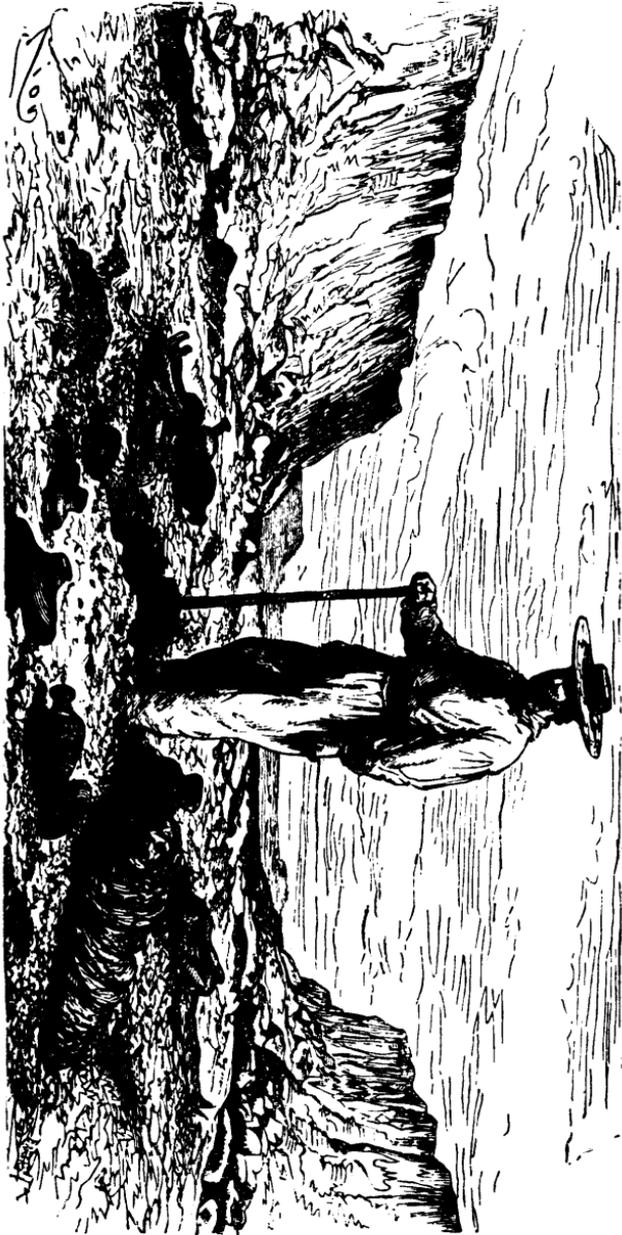
low ridges of the kind which, under the name of *lomas*, characterizes the physical features of the coast. The normal barrenness of these hills is changed from May to October, during the season of fogs, into fertility, for the humidity causes a green sward to appear, and a multitude of charming flowers spring up and cover their surface. In the old days, the gay classes of the population of the sierras were wont to resort, during the period from May to October, to this spot, ostensibly to indulge in sea bathing, but really to enjoy a merry-making season as frantic and fantastic as any Venetian carnival of the past. Tents were pitched among the hills, and the festival lasted for a month or two, during which time the *lomas*, accustomed only to the melancholy sound of the surf beating against the shore, and the murmur of the passing wind, echoed the notes of the guitar, the shouts of the revellers, and their joyous songs. Strange to say, however—a circumstance probably unknown to those thoughtless pleasure-seekers of the sierra—this part of the valley is the burial-place of thousands of Indians of both sexes and of all ages, whose bodies were deposited there before the Spanish conquest, and, as is supposed, during the reigns of the last incas. The bodies lie in trenches barely three feet from the surface. In the majority of cases they are extended on their backs, with their heads toward the rising sun, the object of their reverence in life. Others are found in various constrained attitudes—some as if sitting with their elbows resting on their knees; and the closed hands set in the eyeless sockets. Some of the bodies are nude, others are swathed in woollen rags, or in a coarse kind of drawers, woven from the *sipa*, a grass that grows on the mountains. In the trenches, laid beside them the implements, weapons and adornments which belonged to them in life, and which, in the belief of the survivors, would be needed by them after death.

One afternoon, when Marcoy returned to the hacienda from this old cemetery, bringing with him the mummies of a little child and of a small llama — doubtless the child's playfellow — which he had found lying together in the same trench, he was greeted joyfully by Pierre Leroux, who had come back from a visit to Islay at an earlier hour than usual. Leroux brought important news. The ship with the machinery, the consul had told him, might be expected at any time within three or four days. In his impatience the master of Tambochico resolved to start for the coast with as little delay as possible, and take up his quarters at Mollendo, where the vessel was to land her cargo.

The next morning, about nine o'clock, host and guest, accompanied by servants, mounted their mules and set out for Mollendo with provisions and baggage, the latter consisting simply of an iron saucepan, a few rush mats and stakes intended for the construction of shelter-huts, and some bed-coverings.

The news of Pierrè Leroux's visit to the beach, and a knowledge of its purpose, having spread abroad through

AMONG THE MUMMIES.



the valley, scores of his neighbours, people whom he scarcely knew or had never seen before, came to make in

quiries regarding the wonderful machines. So great were the numbers attracted to the 'festival,' as they called it, that an honest fellow of the vicinity deemed the occasion a propitious one for driving a lively trade in figs, pomegranates and watermelons, which he brought to the spot on an ass's back and sold rapidly to the assemblage, drinking-water being scarce and the fruit serving elegantly to quench the thirst of the curious company.

On the fourth day, in the afternoon, the sails of the expected vessel appeared above the tops of the group of rocks that form Cape Islay, and about the same time an Indian arrived with a letter to Leroux from the British consul informing him that, as it would be dangerous for the ship to approach too near the beach, owing to the heavy surf, her captain had resolved to land the machines on a raft to be composed of the material for the sheds. While Leroux was reading this letter the ship came up and dropped anchor at about two-thirds of a mile from shore.

Although the labour of building the raft was begun at once, two days elapsed before the hoisting of the Peruvian colours aboard the vessel announced that all was ready for the landing. The process of transferring the machinery to the shore was simple enough, for while the ship's crew would 'pay out' a line attached to their side of the raft, the people on shore were to pull the latter toward them by means of another. A fisherman went out to the ship on his *balsa*, or inflated sealskin raft, procured the end of the shore-line and brought it safely to the beach. As soon as he landed the hawser was seized by a hundred officious individuals, who hauled away vigorously at the raft, which by this time had been released from the vessel's side. Leroux, Marcoy, and the spectators watched the progress of the frail tossing platform with varying emotions. Suddenly a great shout arose from the volunteers

who were pulling the rope. The hawser had parted! For an instant the raft swayed about helplessly in the great waves. Then a wave bore down on it, and in a few minutes all that remained was a mass of planks and beams tossing wildly against the beach. Leroux looked on at this ruin of his hopes like one thunderstruck, and for a little while Marcoy feared that his reason was about to leave him; but he recovered himself slowly, and, gazing with a despairing glance at the timber lying on the beach, he turned to Marcoy and said with a sigh, 'Well, here is another fortune to make.'

At some distance from them stood groups of the spectators discussing the event. Although they appeared to belong to the well-to-do class, and their faces bore a commiserative expression suitable to the occasion, still it could be seen, when they turned their glances on Pierre Leroux with a half smile, that the catastrophe had not caused them much regret. Along the shore were ranged the *cholos* (natives of mixed Spanish and Indian extraction) and Indians who had assisted in dragging the raft, and who now seemed to be amusing themselves with the erratic movements of the beams and planks as the waves threw them on the beach and then floated them back into the sea. Presently, having come to the conclusion that the flotsam belonged to the first claimant, they began to load their shoulders with the wood. Some of them were already trudging off with their burdens along the road to Tambo, when suddenly an individual, whom nobody had hitherto noticed, emerged from the crowd and in an uncouth sort of Spanish ordered the pillagers to throw down their spoils. As the rogues seemed to take no notice of this admonition, the newcomer administered a few kicks and cuffs to them, which soon caused them to drop their prizes and fall back in disorder.

The stranger who thus championed so zealously Pierre Leroux's interests



MAKING FIG WINE.

was a Frenchman, who, having deserted from his ship, a three-masted vessel from Marseilles, at the port of Arica in Bolivia, about three months before, had been wandering since that time from village to village near the coast, earning a precarious livelihood while awaiting an opportunity to ship on some other vessel. His name was Moise, and he was a native of Provence. He was a carpenter by trade, and having heard while at Islay of the intended landing of the machinery, he had come to Mollendo with the hope of obtaining work in the erection of the sheds. This information he imparted to Marcoy, who stepped forward to question him, and who recognized in him, when the man's story was told, a member of the restless maritime fraternity known in that region as 'Brethren of the Coast'—in other words deserters from ships who lead vagrant lives until they can once more find employment before the mast.

Moise was a vigorous specimen of the brotherhood. He was about forty years old, with regular features, a complexion bronzed like that of an Indian, and a waving mass of tawny hair and beard that imparted to him a leonine look. His costume consisted of a ragged straw hat that might have done duty as a scarecrow, a tattered red woollen shirt and a pair of sailcloth trousers patched in a dozen places and upheld by a leathern belt. He carried a long staff, and the rest of his wardrobe was tied up in a handkerchief.

The idea occurred to Marcoy to make this adventurer the guardian of the wood—which represented a certain value in money to Pierre Leroux—until the latter could have it transported to the hacienda. He therefore proposed to him to remain on the beach and preserve the property from pillage, with the understanding that his services were to be paid for at the rate of four reals (fifty cents) a day, and that provisions should be sent to him from Tambochico. Moise ac-

cepted the offer, which Pierre Leroux authorized with a motion of his head when Marcoy broached the matter to him. Thus constituted supervisor of the wreck, Moise seated himself in the sand, and, twirling his staff, fixed his eyes on the crowd, and observed in broken Spanish, 'I'll smash the head of the first fellow that touches this wood. You hear me?'

His words—and his manner, perhaps, more than his words—had the effect of causing the would-be pillagers to draw off, and the servants having collected in one spot all the wood that had floated ashore, Moise constructed a rude sort of shed with the remains of the raft, in which he could lodge comfortably with the three peons who were to remain with him until further orders. When this work was completed, and nothing remained for the curious to discuss and ponder, the spectators departed like a congregation retiring from church, leaving only Marcoy, Pierre Leroux, General Cerdeña (who had been among the interested lookers-on from the beginning), Moise, the servants and the ship as witnesses of the day's failures and disappointments. After dark the vessel weighed anchor and sailed away.

The period fixed by Marcoy as the limit of his stay in the valley was now approaching. A few days more would see him on his way from the coast and across the mountains, travelling through the sierra in a climate and amid a vegetation—or a lack of vegetation, as the case might be—altogether different from the climate and vegetation of the tropical estate of Tambochico. As the hour of departure drew near an idea that in the beginning had been only a fugitive thought took firm hold on his mind. This idea was to withdraw his friend and host from the contemplation of his loss by associating him with the journey he was about to undertake. Leroux at first positively refused to listen to the suggestion. Nothing

daunted, however, Marcoy persisted in his pleadings, until finally he gained his host's reluctant assent. It was arranged that during Leroux's absence the *majordomo* should take charge of the plantation, and that Moise, who was then engaged in building a new sugar-house, should await at Tambochico the planter's return.

One morning, at the hour of four, accompanied by a *mozo serviente*, or 'body-servant,' and under the guidance of a muleteer who was returning from the valley to the sierra region with a load of sugar, they left Tambochico, riding in the direction of the mountains. As they reached the top of the first line of hills, a thick fog, descending into the valley, met them and enveloped them so completely that not only were they unable to see two yards in advance, but their garments were penetrated by the moisture. While making their way through the mist the sound of horses' feet and the tinkling of bells in their front warned them of the approach of a caravan. So close was it on them, in fact, that they had barely time to turn their mules to one side when the other party, men and animals, passed swiftly along the road like phantoms. Only their silhouettes were visible for a few seconds, and then they vanished in the fog. Soon, however, the rising sun tinted the icy vapours with an

opaline hue, and the wind, striking the mist, blew it back rolling on itself in the shape of ocean billows. The struggle between the fog on one side and the sun and wind on the other was not of long duration, for, rent asunder by the wind, the curtain of vapour was hurried in broken fragments



MOISE.

toward the north, and the atmosphere was left clear. The plateau on which the party found themselves overlooked the valley of Tambo from a height of twenty-four hundred feet. Beyond it lay the wide-spreading ocean, its azure waters confused at the horizon with the blue of the sky. Before, in

the east, were the heights across which their route was to lead them, and still farther away, behind these, the snow-covered peaks of the Andes towered in the air. The day's journey ended at the hamlet of Omate, a mass of thatched-roof huts which seemed at a distance nothing more than a disagreeable natural feature of the scenery. Two leagues to the northward rose the once formidable volcano of Omate, with its yawning crater, half in darkness and half illumined by the setting sun, sharply inclining to the south-east.

For two days after leaving Omate the travellers journeyed along the western slope of the Andes through a dreary and almost solitary region. When night came they took shelter in a cave-like abode among the rocks in company with the shepherd who inhabited it and his flock. Toward the close of the next day they drew near to Pati, their halting-place for the night. This was a mere group of huts in the heart of the Cordilleras. Here and there along the approaches to it were llama-folds, and on the right of the road, elevated above the plain, was a wooden cross. They found a post-office—or rather post-hut—occupied by a troop of muleteers, who were about sitting down to their supper, and who at first received our travellers ungraciously, but after their first surprise and embarrassment had passed away they made the best of the interruption, and were soon on excellent terms with the newcomers, who slept side by side with them before the rousing fire which was kept burning through the night.

Having made an arrangement the next morning with these muleteers to guide them as far as Caylloma, a village which lay in Marcoy's itinerary, and by which the muleteers were to pass on their way to San Tomas, their destination, the travellers bade farewell to their late guide, who was compelled to leave them at Pati to pursue his homeward journey in another

direction, and set out with their new friends toward the north-west and the region of snow.

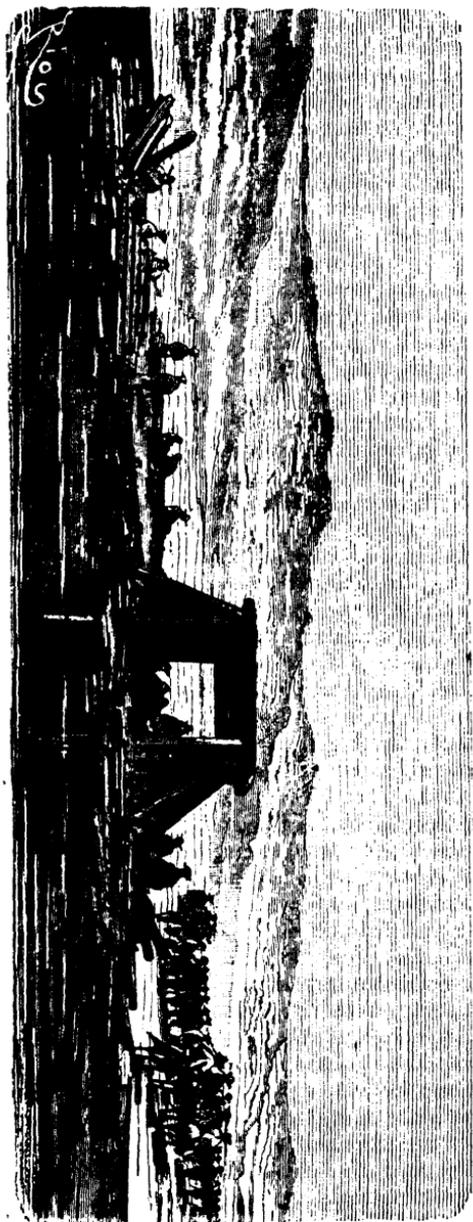
A few hours of descending march brought them to the Punas or Andean plateaus, a barren and rugged stretch of country furrowed by ridges of minor hills unconnected with any of the greater surrounding chains. The northern boundary of these Punas is the snowy range of mountains known as the Sierra de Huilcanota; and as they approached this chain on the second day of their journey from Pati the road became more precipitous and the arid surface presented the aspect of steep hills and deep gorges, forming a succession of heights and ravines which severely taxed the strength of their mules and horses. These difficulties might have been avoided had the old Carrera Real, or post-road, been followed to Caylloma; but the guides had preferred to pursue a course of their own choosing across the Punas, in order to spare their animals the ill effects arising from the rarefied air at an elevation of seventeen thousand feet, which would have been attained had they gone by the highway.

During the afternoon of this day they skirted the side of a hill at the base of which were three large square openings, evidently the work of man. As Marcoy and Leroux peered into these gloomy artificial caverns, the chief of the muleteers informed them that they were the entrances to the mine of San Lorenzo, formerly renowned for its yield of silver, but which at present is unworked. One league distant is the mine of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, equally celebrated during the period of the Spanish occupation, but now also abandoned. As they progressed, they caught occasional glimpses through breaks in the mountains, of the snowy summits of the Andes; then, farther on, the white tops were lost to view and the stony heights presented themselves in all their bald nakedness. This appearance in turn of

snow-capped peaks and stony ridges, continued until they reached the point at which the Sierra de Huilcanota joins—or rather is confounded with—the great chain of the Cordillera or Western Andes. At this stage of the day's journey the scenery on all sides became arctic in its character. The mountains were clothed in a white mantle in every direction, but as the sun was hidden by the clouds, the observer could enjoy the splendours of the view without having recourse to the pasteboard tubes furnished with blue glasses, a sort of spectacles used by travellers in these snowy regions to preserve their eyes from attacks of the *surumpe*, an ophthalmia occasioned by the reflection of the sun on the snow.

The travellers hoped to reach before night a postal station called Machu Condoroma, situated on the western slope of the Huilcanota chain. But as the afternoon lengthened, the sky became overcast with still darker clouds, and suddenly snow fell so thickly as to shut out from their sight objects four paces distant, while the wind, thunder and lightning added to their perplexity. Not a rancho or shepherd's hut was visible as they went on with heads bowed to the blinding storm and trusting to the sagacity of their mules for the selection of the right path. The close of the day found them too far from Machu Condoroma to hope to reach it before darkness should shut out the path, and they therefore prepared for their bivouac for the night by arranging their couches and cooking their supper under the ledge of a projecting rock, whose position had kept the space beneath it free from the drifting snow. After supper, Marcoy and Pierre Leroux lay back to back in a

bed which the muleteers had constructed with the bundles and pack-saddles, while the guides slept in a



WRECK OF THE PARTY.

democratic fashion piled on top of each other.

During the night the storm passed

off, and the morning broke clear and cold—so cold, indeed, as to redden the travellers' ears and noses. The journey was resumed while it was yet dark, and after a two hours' march over horrible roads, they passed Machu Condoroma, a wild lonely spot lying in the shadow of beetling ridges. The post-house, built of blocks of stone cemented with clay, stood in relief against the white back-ground of the snow-clad sides of the mountain beyond. At a day's ride from the station lay Caylloma, and they resolved to push forward so as to reach it before night. As they went on they found the roads in a dreadfully slippery condition from the mingling of the melted snow and the clay and ferruginous earth that composed the soil. Occasionally unhorsed by reason of the inability of their animals to keep their feet, the party finally reached the Rio Condoroma, at that moment a roaring, tumbling, torrent. Crossing this stream, by ascending to a ford three miles higher up than the point at which they had struck it, they stumbled on the village of Condoroma, a humble hamlet that dates from the time of the Spanish domination, during which period its silver-mines were among the most celebrated of Peru.

At the hour of their entrance into Condoroma all the villagers seemed to be absent, for the doors of the houses were closed, and neither man nor beast was visible. A brief halt was made here for breakfast, and while they were engaged at the meal the horses and mules roamed among the houses, and satisfied their appetite by eating the freshly-laid thatched roof that covered one of them.

Four leagues distant from Condoroma is the hamlet of Chita, consisting of twenty houses and situated in a plain with a picturesquely-profiled range of mountains at its back. A mountain-torrent near by leaped noisily over its rocky bed in its descent from the heights. The travellers saw Chita from a distance, and rode by without

halting. They feared to lose by delay the advantages offered by the fine weather that prevailed. Their hopes of continued favourable weather up to Caylloma were, however, doomed to disappointment, for about four o'clock clouds gathered in the blue sky and obscured the sun. At sunset the heavens were overcast with a reddish-gray, against which the surrounding summits were outlined with distinctness, and the cold became intense. At a turn in the road they rode into a plain, and at its farther extremity they saw the houses of a large village. This village, rising mistily before them, was Caylloma, which, on account of the valuable product of its silver-mines in the past, was called for a long time by the people of the country and the Spanish chroniclers *Caylloma la Rica*, or 'Caylloma the Rich.'

Candles were lighted in the houses of the village when they entered its precincts. As Marcoy and Leroux were without acquaintances in the place, they were obliged to follow the muleteers to the *tampu* or caravansary at which the latter were accustomed to lodge with their animals on the occasions of their visits to Caylloma. This *tampu* was a large yard with the sky for a roof. The appearance of the ground, covered as it was with broken straw and other refuse matter, indicated that the place was used as a stable or as quarters for horses and mules. Three sides of the yard were built up with small cells of masonry, to each of which a single door admitted light and air. These diminutive apartments were the lodgings assigned to travellers.

The arrival of strangers in this remote village was an event of so rare an occurrence that as the cavalcade filed into the *tampu* a dozen or more of the villagers surrounded the muleteers, plying them with innumerable questions begotten of purposeless curiosity or due to a natural desire to be informed of the events of the outer world. Some of the questioners—the

shopkeepers—wanted to know what merchandise the bundles contained; others—the politicians and intelligent class generally—inquired concerning the latest revolutionary movements in Peru, and were solicitous to learn whether the legal president of the republic had been assassinated or whether he was still in peaceable occupancy of his office. Another element of the crowd—mere idlers—looked on and said nothing, filling the rôle of listeners. Among the last-mentioned class was an individual wrapped in a cloak and with his face shaded by a slouch hat of the kind called in the country *pansa de burro*. This person gazed with a sort of sympathetic interest at Marcoy and Leroux, as was evinced by the friendly smile that illumined his face when their looks were turned in his direction. Marcoy observed this, and surmising that the unknown desired to make his and Leroux's acquaintance, but was deterred from addressing them by native modesty, he approached him and greeted him with the air of an old acquaintance. 'Good-evening, friend,' he said. 'You are in good health, I hope?'

'Thank you, senor,' modestly replied the stranger. 'You are very kind to inquire concerning my welfare. My name is Mariano Telar, and I enjoy very good health, Heaven be praised! I live here in Caylloma, where I have many friends among the best people. Just now I overheard you conversing in French with your companion, and my attention was attracted to you because the language in which you spoke reminded me of the *Adventures of Telemachus*, which I once endeavoured, in a small way, to put into Spanish. My house, senor, is at the service of yourself and friend during your stay at Caylloma if you will honour it with your presence.'

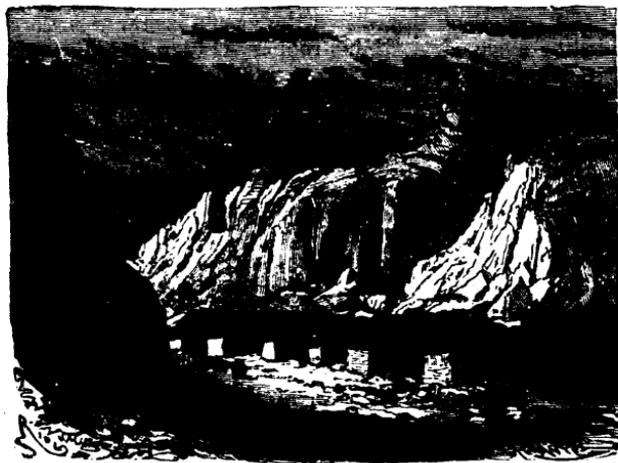
Glad to be spared the horrors of a night passed in the *tampu*, the travellers promptly accepted the hospitable Cayllomero's invitation.

With a request to them to follow him, Don Mariano set off through the dark and muddy streets in the direction of his house, which fronted on the small square of the village, one side of which was occupied by the church. At the house the guests were presented to their host's wife, a grave, middle-aged matron, who welcomed them with a dignified courtesy. The good dame, after a few remarks had been exchanged, disappeared, and half an hour later a servant announced that supper awaited the guests in the *comedor*, or dining-room. Under the influence of the local wine of Locumba, two kinds of which, the sour and the *dulce* (the latter being prepared by mixing the sour wine with sugar), were on the table, Don Mariano developed a gay and talkative mood, and the good lady having retired, as is the fashion in England, after the meal, he opened his heart to his guests, and for three consecutive hours, like the genuine Peruvian that he was, discoursed on the subject of how he had made his fortune and had become acquainted with his wife. Noticing, finally, that his guests were about to drop from their chairs with drowsiness, he considerably closed his remarks, and conducted them to the chamber which they were to occupy for the night.

Early the next morning, Marcoy, leaving his companion in bed, rose and went to stroll about the village, which he found to consist of five streets and sixty-three houses, exclusive of a number of thatched-roof huts attached to cattle-yards scattered about the outskirts. The church was a rectangular structure surmounted by two square belfries, each covered with a sort of cap having the appearance of an incomplete cupola. On either side of the altar was a shrine—one dedicated to Our Lady of Carmel, the other to Saint Joseph, the patron saint of the republic. These shrines were adorned with a profusion of votive offerings which had been placed on them by the faithful—reliquaries and lamps of solid silver, the

latter made from metal taken from the neighbouring mines.

When he returned to the house he found his host and Pierre Leroux conversing, over a glass of rum, on a subject that seemed to possess a special interest for the former. A messenger, it appeared, had just come into Caylloma with the information that a colonel of the national engineer corps had set up his standard metaphorically speaking, in the vicinity of the village,



MINE OF SAN LORENZO.

having just arrived from Cuzo with orders from the Government to survey the boundaries of the province and to obtain its area in square miles. The messenger was this officer's secretary, who furthermore was empowered to notify the inhabitants of the place that they would be expected to furnish the colonel with all supplies he might need while thus engaged in a work which was destined to redound to their glory and to the advantage of the republic. There was great excitement in Caylloma la Rica, for no sooner had the tidings been disseminated in the village than the little community became divided into two parties on the subject of the true purpose of the intruder into their mountain seclusion.

One party loudly proclaimed the colonel a government spy, declaring that

his surveying mission was a sham, and that his real instructions were to impose an extraordinary tax on the people of Caylloma. The other side held, on the contrary, that this official visit was an evidence of the interest felt by the president of the republic in their distant and hitherto neglected province, which he desired to see take rank with its neighbours. Don Mariano joined hands with this wing of the population, and vigorously cham-

pioned the cause of the maligned colonel. As the dispute was one in which Marcoy and his friend had no excuse to interfere, they decided to resume their journey at once, or as soon as possible after the breakfast which their host, who heard of their intention with profound regret, insisted on their sharing with him.

After hastily uttered farewells they left Don Mariano and his neighbours

wrangling and gesticulating over the important political event—for so was it regarded—of the morning, and started due west on their way to Chalqui, the next village in their route. The ride for some distance was a fatiguing one, as the road was filled with declivities, pitfalls and quagmires. The snow of the previous day had melted, however, and the mules were enabled to make better progress. An hour after their departure from Caylloma their eyes caught sight of Lake Vilafro—called by the natives Lake Huanaana—and their attention was attracted to the spectacle of a number of men standing on the shore. These, as they soon learned, were the colonel of engineers and his followers. The colonel was a short, paunchy, bow-legged person, arrayed in a gorgeous uniform,

consisting of a blue coat set off with a profusion of gold braid and a pair of shining, brand-new epaulets, tight breeches and riding-boots, and a red silk scarf with flowing ends wrapped around his rotund waist. On his head was a cloth cap of the same colour as the coat, with a leather visor and trimmed with gold lace.

As this magnificent personage approached the travellers, Marcoy was struck, in the first place, with his extraordinary ugliness, and, secondly,

with his resemblance to some one whom he had seen before. His doubts on the latter head were soon solved; for as the brilliantly-dressed colonel came up with eyes and mouth opening gradually, as if in a sort of stupid surprise, he recognized in him a man whose acquaintance he had made in Cuzco two or three years previously.

'Amigo Don Pablo!' exclaimed the new-comer, extending wide his arms to clasp Marcoy in his friendly embrace.

'Senor Don Julian Delgado y Palo-



CHITA.

mino!' cried Marcoy, in a similar burst of recognition.

'I have been made a colonel of the engineer corps since I last saw you,' whispered Don Julian rapidly. 'At some other time I'll tell you all about it. But not a word at present before all these people.'

After an introduction to Pierre Leroux, Don Julian invited the two to accept the hospitality of his cave, in which, in default of a more commodious dwelling, he had temporarily established his head-quarters. It

proved to be a spacious subterranean chamber about twenty-five feet high, forty wide and eighty deep. A rudely-constructed wall between five and six feet in height divided it into two sections, in one of which the traces of fire and the presence of straw showed that the place had served at one time both as the abode of man and as a stable for animals.

At their host's request the travellers seated themselves on a couple of leather trunks which did service for chairs. •

'This place seems to have had a tenant already,' observed Marcoy, glancing around him.

'The fact is,' replied the colonel, 'this cave has been inhabited, and if you would like to know something about the former occupant, the guide whom I engaged at Mamanihuayta may be able to inform you.—Hallo there, somebody!' As he spoke he looked toward the entrance of the cave, and three or four of the attendants appeared at the same moment in answer to the summons. 'Call Quispè,' he added, shortly.

Quispè, the Indian guide, came forward promptly, and stood at the entrance twirling his hat in his hand in a way that savoured of embarrassment.

'Advance and narrate to this gentleman the absurd story concerning Vilafro that you told me yesterday,' said the colonel of engineers, loftily, while Quispè gazed with a timid and astonished look at Marcoy.

'Come,' remarked the latter, pleasantly, 'tell me what you know about this Lake Vilafro.'

'The lake is called Huanana, and not Vilafro,' returned the Indian. 'Vilafro is the name of a man who belonged to your people.'

'Then the lake was Vilafro's property, since he gave it his name?'

'The lake never belonged to man,' replied Quispè. 'The hills, the lakes and the snows have no master but God. The man of whom you speak was a Spaniard, to whom a poor driver of llamas revealed the existence of the silver-mines of Quimsachata, which you can see from this cave. Vilafro after five years' labour amassed so much silver that he shod his horses and mules with that metal. Although he gave up one-fifth of his treasure to the Viceroy as tribute, and was a devotee of the most holy Virgin—as is proved by his gift to the church of Sicuani of a silver lamp weighing three hundred marks—he was accused of impiety, fraud and rebellion. His fortune brought him

more enemies than friends. He was ordered by the Inquisition and the Viceroy to appear before them at Lima, was cast into prison and was afterward hanged, while his riches were confiscated to the profit of the king of Spain. Since that day the mine of Quimsachata has been abandoned, for the ghost of the hanged man every night revisits its old domain.'

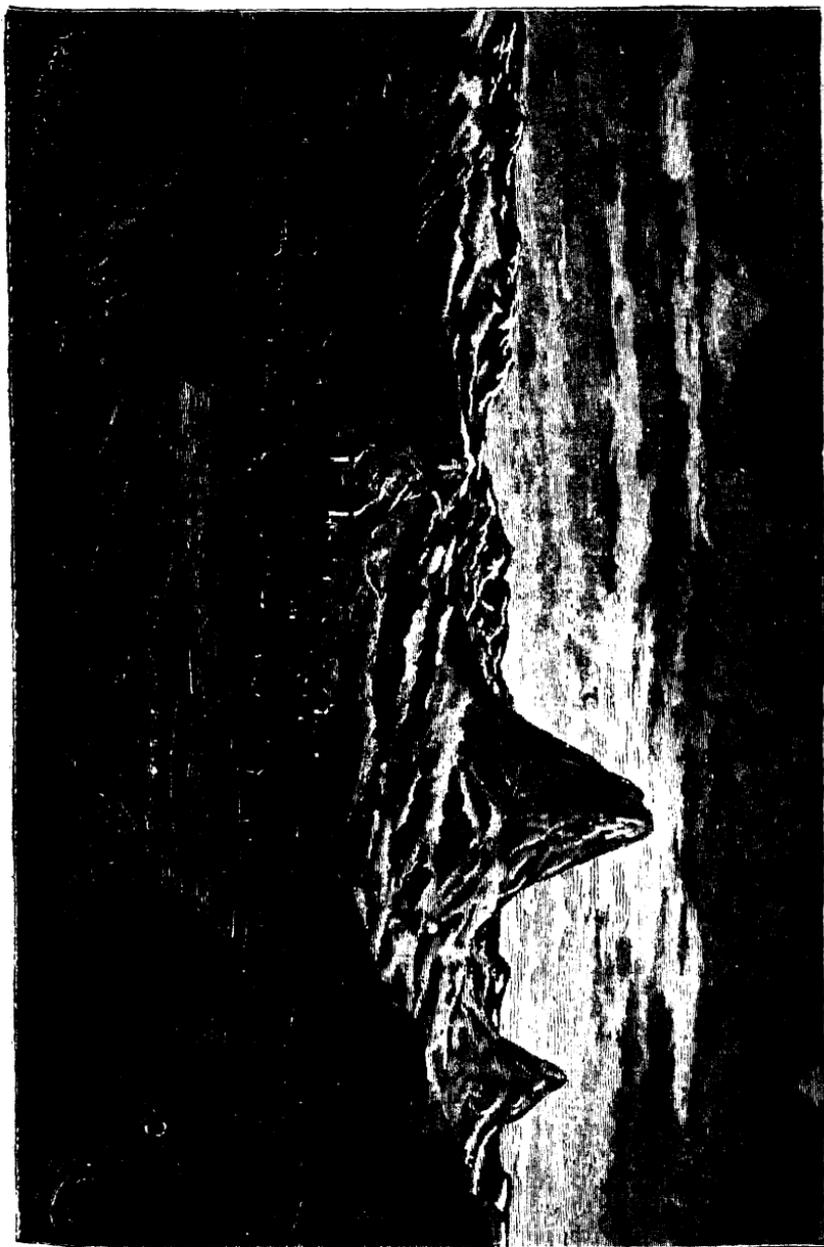
During the recital of this gloomy legend Don Julian busied himself with preparing a collation in the shape of a few dry biscuits and a bottle of sherry, which he took from one of the trunks, and while full justice was being done to the repast by the hungry travellers he entered into some particulars regarding his mission. 'You must know,' he began, with a slight frown of importance, 'that of all the provinces of lower Peru, Caylloma is the only one in regard to which the government is not fully informed. Not only is it ignorant of the statistics of the province, but the boundaries of its territory are so vaguely marked that the people living on the other side of its borders have frequent disturbances with its inhabitants in regard to the mines and pasture-grounds, which each side claims as its own. Such a condition of things could no longer be tolerated, and His Excellency General Hermenegildo, our illustrious President and my well-beloved cousin through my wife, has decided—'

At this moment the sound of a rapidly-galloping horse interrupted the colonel's account of himself. Then joyous cries echoed on the air from the outside, and the party, with Don Julian at their head, rushed out to learn the cause of the uproar. In the advance of a confused crowd of people mounted on mules and horses Marcoy beheld a youth who was riding furiously and shouting wildly.

'My aide-de-camp, Saturnino, on his return from Caylloma,' explained Don Julian with a wave of his hand.

Saturnino was a young *cholo*, a half-caste of mixed Spanish and Indian ex-

CAYILLOJA LA RICA.



traction, of brown complexion, with beardless chin and long, straight blue-black hair falling on his turned-down collar. A travelling cloak thrown back over his shoulder revealed a blue uni-

form without trimmings. A leather-visored cap, similar to that worn by Don Julian, completed his half-military, half-civilian costume. Behind this apparition crowded a cavalcade

composed of the notables of Caylloma, who had sought the fat colonel in his isolated cave to extend their congratulations to him and to place themselves and all they possessed at his service. Marcoy looked in vain for their late host, Don Mariano, among this goodly company, which included a number of ladies, who, encouraged by the presence of the wives of the *gobernador* of the district and the *alcalde* of the village, had accompanied the deputation, riding with Arcadian simplicity astride their horses. The party was headed by the *gobernador* himself, and by his side rode the *gobernadora*, a portly lady seated on a jenny whose bridle the *gobernador* held in his hand.

The women remained in the background, smoothing down their ruffled garments, while the men advanced to greet the great man. Each notable in turn expressed his pleasure at seeing the colonel among them, and at the close of their harangues Don Julian began an address in a loud key, which was more applauded in the exordium than in the peroration. After declaring his own personal satisfaction at having been selected by the chief of the state to visit the inhabitants of Caylloma (so worthy in all respects of the solicitude and high appreciation of His Excellency) on a mission which was destined, he trusted, when its territory should be surveyed by him, to call the province to a new and glorious future which would place it on a level with the most renowned provinces of the commonwealth, he promised that thenceforth the name of Caylloma should shine beside the names of its sister-provinces in the solemn celebrations of the republic and in the almanacs published at Lima. 'And now, seniors,' he concluded, 'I have to request that before sunset the citizens of Caylloma will send to me two fat sheep, some smoked beef, a bag of potatoes, a leather bottle or two of brandy—brandy, remember: don't forget the brandy—and a sufficiency of fuel and bed-clothing to protect myself and my

men from the cold while I am engaged in this task which is to redound so greatly to your prosperity.'

At the utterance of these last words the countenances of the notables lost that expression of patriotic enthusiasm which had marked them before, and the worthy fellows looked at each other askance, as if doubtful of the reception that should be given to the proposition. Don Julian, however, making a pretence of not observing their hesitation, bowed and left them to their deliberations, turning aside to converse with their wives, and throwing as much gallantry as possible into the expression of his ugly countenance and the movements of his ungainly figure. At his invitation the ladies entered the cave, and graciously accepted his hospitality in the shape of biscuits and wine. His polite attentions soon won them over to his cause and by the time the biscuits and the sherry had gone the rounds for the third time the wife of the governor, a lady of mature age, addressed him familiarly as "My dear," while the wife of the *alcalde*, younger, and therefore less bold than her companion, had gained her own consent to style him "Gossip."

The levee was at its height, and the ladies were all laughing together in the most delightful confusion at the colonel's heavy sallies of wit, when the husbands, who had received no invitation to enter the grotto, becoming weary with the delay, or jealous, it may be, of Don Julian's monopoly of their spouses, joined the revellers in the cave, and conveniently pleading as excuse the distance between Lake Vilafro and Caylloma, and their disinclination to intrude further on the kindness of his lordship, finally succeeded in inducing their better halves to resume their seats in the saddles. The expressive looks of the latter on taking leave of Don Julian and his guests satisfied the colonel that his request for provisions would be granted. In fact, about sunset, an Indian was

seen approaching, driving before him two donkeys and four llamas loaded with supplies of all kinds, not a single article called for by the colonel having been omitted. A good part of the evening was spent in arranging the provisions in the cave, and Marcoy

and Leroux, having yielded to Don Julian's entreaties to remain with him a day or two longer, retired to sleep without being disturbed by the uneasy spirit of the executed Joaquin Vilafro.

A REVERIE.

BY H. L. SPENCER.

THE coals grow brighter in the grate
 As evening's dreamy mantle falls,
 And dimmer grow the eyes that look
 Upon me from the pictured walls.

Oh, tender eyes, that into mine
 From these gray walls have looked for years
 I wonder if unto the past
 You turn, as mine turn, blind with tears

Blind ! blind with grief and vain regrets,
 I press my head within my hands,
 And dream, sweet Enie, that we walk,
 Again upon the white sea sands :

By willow brook and ferny hill,
 By lily lake and mountain hoar,
 Through groves of cedar odorous vales,
 Where we shall walk no more, no more

Well, you have grown a woman now,
 And I have wrinkled grown, and gray ;—
 December ! ah, I feel its blasts,
 While round you breathe the airs of May !

Heaven grant a better, happier life
 Than mine has been, your life may be,
 The bells ring out, and how they dance
 Below, around the Christmas Tree

THE MONKS OF THELEMA.

BY WALTER BESANT AND JAMES RICE.

Authors of 'Ready Money Mortiboy,' 'The Golden Butterfly,' 'By Celia's Arbour,' etc., etc

CHAPTER XXXII.

Think women love to match with men,
And not to live so like a saint.'

IT was a fact, this engagement, because the banns were put up in church, argued the people. Banns cannot lie. Bostock might very well lie; Alma herself might lie; but banns are not to be disputed. Therefore the country-side became convinced that the Squire of Welland was really going to marry the Bailiff's daughter, an event as wonderful as that historic parallel of Islington, and the thing could be discussed as if it had already taken place. They knew not, they could not understand, these simple rustics, that the marriage was but a trap set by their Seigneur to catch the sunbeam of their hearts. Had they known that fact they would have regarded the proceeding with the contempt which characterized the prevalent attitude of mind towards the Squire.

'He's not been that good to the village,' said the young man they called William, to the cobbler of advanced thought, 'as the village had a right to expect from the way he began. They suppers, now, they was good while they lasted—as much beer as you liked, and all—why was they left off? And the Parliament, where we was to meet and talk, why wast hat left off?'

'Meanness,' said the cobbler. 'Because we wanted to defend our liberties; ah! because we wouldn't be put upon with lies no longer; because

some among us wanted to ask questions.'

'And the Bar—what call had he to set up a tap?' asked William. 'Who wanted his tap when we'd got our own? And then made us buy it.'

'Gave away the beer, too, at first,' growled the cobbler. 'They'd make slaves and chains of us all again, they would—him and his lot.'

'Pr'aps he'll go back to the Court, now's he married, and let us abide by ourselves,' said William. 'We don't want no Bailiff's daughters along of us; nor no Squires neither.'

'Pr'aps he'll go on as he has been a-going on, corrupting the minds of them as has otherwise the will to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest,"' said the cobbler, thinking of the Atheistic publications which he had been unable to procure in the library.

The Bailiff occupied a position so much higher than their own that the engagement was not considered in the same light as by those who stood at Alan's end of the social ladder. Anything which was likely to remove this uncomfortable Squire from their midst was felt to be a relief. Is not that day the happiest in life when the school-boy steps forth from the tutelage of masters? Would any one like to be always at work under surveillance? Why, then, expect it of the British peasant?

There was one face, however, which grew sadder daily, in thinking of the future—the face of Prudence Driver, the librarian. Alan's schemes might

have failed, but he remained to her the best and noblest of men, while Alma Bostock continued to be the shallowest and vainest of women. This pale-faced little reader of books knew how to read the natures of men and women. Not wholly out of her books, but by mother wit, had she acquired this power. A man may read and read and read, and yet remain a fool. Many do. Prudence knew Alma, and loved her not; she knew her antecedents; and she was certain that the girl would bring her prophet neither help nor sympathy nor encouragement. And, of course, she had long known that Alma disliked her, and would perhaps prejudice Mr. Dunlop against her. Alma might even, Prudence shuddered to think, cause her to lose her pleasant place and its sixty pounds a year. In any case, no more evenings spent all alone with *him*, while he unfolded his plans and revealed the manner of life which he would fain see in his village. No more would the poor girl's heart glow and her pulse quicken while he spoke of culture and sweetness spreading through the labourers' cottages. All that beautiful dream should henceforth be an impossibility, because Alma would throw the cold water of indifference on the project.

'I would have,' Alan said one night—it was the peroration of a long discourse which he delivered walking about the library, for the instruction of Prudence alone—'I would have the whole day of labour converted into one long poem—a procession of things and thoughts precious and beautiful. The labourer should be reminded at daybreak, as he went forth and watched the mists creep up the hillside, and the trees thereon bathed in mysterious cloud and sunlight, of Turner's landscapes—copies of which he would have studied in our picture gallery; as he stepped along the way, the awaking of life, the twittering of the birds, the crowing of the cocks, should put into his head verses which had been taught

him, sung to him, or recited to him at our public evenings. He would shout then, in his joy. And he would watch the flowers by the wayside with a new and affectionate interest; he would beguile the way with examining the mosses, grasses, and wild vegetation of the hedge; his eyes would be trained for all kinds of observation; he would have a mind awakened to a sense of progress in everything, so that the old conservatism of the peasantry, with habit, the rooted enemy of progress, should be destroyed in him. He would no longer do the day's work as a machine but as an intelligent artist, trying how it should be done most efficiently. And on his return he would find a clean and bright cottage, a wife who would talk to him and for him, a meal cooked at our public kitchen, clean clothes washed at our public laundry, children taught at our public school, and nearly every evening something to do, to hear, to enjoy, which should break the monotony of the week. Music in every house; books, joy, and education, where there is now nothing but squalor, dirt, and beer. All these things I see before us, Prudence.'

Prudence remembered every word. What part of it would be achieved now, when he was about to clog his feet with an unsympathetic and indifferent wife? If things were hard to accomplish before, they would be tenfold as hard to accomplish in the future.

'Things hard to accomplish?' Prudence reflected, with dismay, that as yet nothing had been accomplished at all, except the general feeling of discontent. The people did not want to be meddled with, and Mr. Dunlop appeared to them in the light of a mere meddler and a muddler.

Worse than all this, she saw, she and Miranda alone, that Alan was not happy.

In fact, during the three weeks of publishing the banns, Alan's face grew more sombre every day.

For he felt, though this was a thing he would not acknowledge even to

himself, that his marriage would probably be a great mistake.

To feel in this way, even about an ordinary marriage, such a marriage as any couple might contract for their own solace, is indeed a melancholy way of entering upon the holy bond of matrimony; to feel in this way when, as in Alan's case, marriage is intended to advance some great end, is more than melancholy, it is almost desperate. His word was pledged; he was, therefore, bound to fulfil his part of the contract. And yet . . . and yet . . . it was the wrong woman; he knew it now, it was the wrong woman. Nor was there any other woman in the world with whom he could mate happily, save only Miranda.

When he found Alma alone in the pretty garden, among the rugged old apple-trees, it seemed to him, a dreamer as well as an enthusiast—to be sure, it is impossible to be the one without the other—that the future of things looked rosy and sunshiny. She smiled and nodded, if she did not answer, when he asked her questions; if she did not interrupt him by any questions of her own; if she never showed any impatience to begin her ministrations among the poor, but rather put off his own suggestion that her work in the village homes might be usefully set in hand at once; if she gave him no further insight, as yet, into the minds of the people, than he already had—it was, he said to himself, because she was new and strange to the position, that she was as yet only a learner; that she was shy and nervous. He was ready to make all excuses for her—so long as she was at home in her own garden, pretty of her kind, a flower among the common flowers.

At Dalmeny Hall it was different. She sat beside Miranda, and it was like a wild rose beside a camellia, or a daisy beside a tulip, or a russet apple beside a peach. The face was common compared with Miranda's; her voice was strident compared with Miranda's, which was gentle without being

too low; her eyes, bright and animated as they seemed at her own home, where there were no others to compare them with, looked shallow compared with those deep orbs of Miranda's, the windows of a brain full of knowledge and noble thought; her expression, in which could be read clearly, even by Alan, successive moods of shyness, boredom, and sullenness, pained and alarmed him. For what would the future be like, if these things were obvious in the present? and what should be done in the dry, if these things were done in the green?

Miranda did all she could to make the girl at home and at ease; yet every day saw Alma more sullen, more silent, more reserved with her. Perhaps Miranda would have succeeded better had not the custom grown up during this fortnight of Desdemona seeking Alma every day, and encouraging her to confide in her motherly bosom. This Alma did; she could not help herself; such sympathy was too attractive. At first she trembled, thinking that her confidences would be carried to Miss Dalmeny. But as nothing was carried, she grew more and more unreserved, and finally bared nearly the whole truth. Every day, she confessed, was more irksome to her up in this grand house. She grew tired of wandering about the garden; she was tired of walking about the rooms; she could not do work such as ladies do; she could not play; she took no interest in books or reading; she had nothing to talk about with Miss Dalmeny; she did not care one bit about the things Miss Dalmeny tried to interest her in—cottagers and their ways. And oh! the dreary evenings when Mr. Dunlop came, looking as if he was going to a funeral; and when he sat with her, or walked with her, talking, talking for ever, as if the more he talked the more likely she would be to understand what had gone before.

But not a word, as yet, to Desdemona of what she had promised Harry.

Then Desdemona, in her warm and sympathetic way, would croon over her, and pat her cheek, telling her how pretty she was, wondering why Alan was so blind to beauty, commiserating her afresh for the sorrows of her lot, and holding forth on the obstinacy of Mr. Dunlop, who, she said, had never been known to abandon a scheme or confess himself beaten, so that, even when he found that Alma was not fitted to be the cottagers' friend, guide, example, and model, as well as his own servant-of-all-work, he would go on to the end of his life, or of hers, which would probably not be a long life, with unrelenting tenacity of purpose.

Alma shuddered and trembled at the prospect; and then she thought of Harry and his promise.

'I'm not married yet,' she said, after Desdemona had exhausted herself in drawing the gloomy terrors of her future.

'No, my dear,' said Desdemona, 'no; that is very true, and yet,' she added, sorrowfully, 'the banns have been put up twice, and there seems no escape for you. What a pity! what a pity! And you so pretty; and Harry Cardew such a handsome young fellow. You'd have made the handsomest couple ever seen. And Miss Dalmeny would have taken such a fancy to you, under any other circumstances. Of course you can't expect her to like you very much now, considering all things.'

'No,' said Alma, 'of course I can't. No girls, not even ladies, like another girl for taking away their sweethearts, I suppose. But I wish mother would let me go home and stay there.' She sighed drearily. Even the society of her father seemed more congenial than the frigid atmosphere of Dalmeny Hall.

'Better stay here, my dear,' said Desdemona. 'Do you know I keep thinking of that line in your hand—the interrupted marriage line; the long and happy wedded life; how can

that be? And yet the hand never lies.'

With such artful talk did this crafty lady corrupt Alma's simple mind. The girl fell into the trap like a silly, wild bird. Fate, she said to herself, ordered her to follow Harry, when he should give the word.

For a fortnight no word came. Then on the Sunday of the third and last publication of the banns, Mr. Caledon met her in the gardens of the hall. It was in the evening, and Mr. Dunlop was gone. She was thinking how much she should like to go to the garden gate and find Harry waiting for her, when she heard a manly heel upon the gravel, and looked up, and in the twilight, saw and knew Tom Caledon.

'I've got a message for you, Alma,' he said. 'I had to give it to you all alone with no one in hearing.'

'Is it—is it—from Harry?' she asked.

'Yes; it is from Harry. It is a very simple message; I met him to-day, and he asked me to tell you to keep up your heart. That is all.'

'Thank you, Mr. Tom.' The girl looked humbled. She had lost her old pride of carriage, being every moment made keenly conscious of her inferiority to Miss Dalmeny; and the intrigue in which she was engaged made her guilty and uneasy. Suppose, after all, that Harry should fail. And what did he mean to do?

Alan, for his part, was not without warnings of the future in store for him—warnings, that is, other than his secret misgivings and the pricks of conscience.

He had an anonymous correspondent: a person apparently of the opposite sex, though the writing was episcene in character, and might have belonged to a member of either sex.

Alan read these letters, which began to come to him, like many blessings, too late. Had he acted upon them, indeed, he would have had to stay the banns after the first putting

up. He felt himself—it was not a feeling of undisguised pleasure—already married. The burden of his wife was upon him. He seemed to have found out, though as yet he did not put his discovery into words, that so far from being a helpmeet, she would become a hindrance; and that entrance into the minds of the people appeared to be as far off as the entrance into Hamath continued to be to the children of Israel.

And so the anonymous letters, some coming by post, and others pushed under the door by night, came upon him like a new scourge. Was it necessary, he thought, that he should know all the previous life of Alma—how she had flirted with this man, been kissed by that, been engaged to a game-keeper of his own, and had walked through the woods at eve with a Brother of the Abbey? To be sure, none of the allegations amounted to very much; but when the mind is occupied and agitated these things sting. Again, he might have been foolish in entrusting too much power to a man of whom he only knew that he had been on the point of becoming bankrupt. But what good did it do him to be told that his bailiff was a common cheat and a rogue; that he was going to marry the daughter of a man who rendered false accounts, bought cheap and sold dear, and entered the converse in his books; who was notoriously making a long purse out of his transactions for the farm; who was a byword and a proverb for dishonesty and cunning.

These things did no good, but quite the contrary. Alan read them all, cursed the writer, put the letters into the fire, and then brooded over the contents. He would not say anything about them, even to Miranda; an anonymous slanderer is always pretty safe from any kind of punishment; and yet it must be owned that anonymous slanders are grievous things to receive. Alan read them and remembered them.

And then little things recurred to him which he had heard before and forgotten, or taken no heed of. He remembered meeting Alma one day, when he hardly knew who she was, walking in a coppice with Harry Cardew, his old friend and young game-keeper. Alma blushed, and Alan, who was thinking about the grand march of the Higher Culture, just rashly concluded that here was another case of rushing into premature wedlock, and went on his way. Also he had heard Tom Caledon talking lightly of Alma's beauty, and thought nothing of it. And now those anonymous letters accused her of flirting with half-a-dozen men at once; he would marry a girl who had been kissed—the writer declared he had seen the deed perpetrated—by Tom Caledon, and presumably by his gamekeeper and a dozen other young fellows. That was not a pleasant thing to read.

As for the letters, they were written by one person; he—or she—spelled imperfectly, and wrote a large and massive hand, covering a good deal of paper. The letters, like those of Junius, greatest and most detestable of slanderers, waxed in intensity as they proceeded, until the latest were models of invective and innuendo. The last which came to his hands was dated on the Sunday when the banns had been put up for the third time. It began with the following delicious *morceau*:

'Oh! you pore fool. To think that it's cum to this. You and Alma Bostock called at Church for the third and last time, and after all I've told you. Can't you believe? Then send for Harry, send for Mr. Caledon, if he'll tell the trewth, which isn't likely, being a gentleman? send for Alma's mother, and ast them all, and see what they say. Is it for her looks? Why, she isn't a patch upon the blacksmith's daughter'—could the letter have been written by that young lady?—'not a patch upon her for good looks, and yet you never turned

so much as a eye upon her. But you are that blind.

And then the letter proceeded in the usual strain of accusation and libel. Of course Alan was ashamed of reading these things; and still more ashamed of being annoyed by them. The philosopher, we know, would never be annoyed even by anonymous post-cards, which reflected upon the morals of his female relations and were read by the delighted inhabitants of his kitchen before he received them. The philosopher would rejoice, perhaps, at the thought that cook, housemaid, parlour-maid, and nursery-maid have read these libels, believe in them, will repeat them joyfully, and will exaggerate them.

Alan was probably not a philosopher, because the constant arrival of these letters did not make his countenance more cheerful when he went up to see Alma in the evening.

His gloom communicated itself to Miranda. She found it hard any longer to believe in a girl who could not cultivate enthusiasm for Alan. She was dejected and unhappy. She went little to the Abbey during these weeks; she lost interest in the place wherein she was wont to delight. Her cheek grew pale and her eyes heavy. She was kind to Alma, but she ceased her endeavours to interest her in the things which her husband would look for. Alma, for her part, became sullen and silent, restless in the house, and restless in the garden, where she walked for hours. She did not go again to the farm, and when her mother came, received her with a coldness which was worse than any of her ancient insubordination. Desdemona alone preserved a demeanour of cheerfulness, even beyond that to which her friends were accustomed to see in her.

Therefore, during these three weeks when the banns were being published, and while the man and the woman about to take upon themselves indissoluble and lifelong vows should have

been growing to know each other more and more, they were drifting apart. Alan was every day more sombre, colder, more of a schoolmaster, and less of a lover. Alma every day more silent, less prodigal of her smiles, more reserved, and—a thing patent to her *fiancé* and of very unpleasing omen—more sullen.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

'There's nought in this bad world like sympathy:
'Tis so becoming to the soul and face;
Sets to soft music the harmonious sigh,
And robes sweet friendship in a Brussels lace.'

MEANTIME, there seemed, to Desdemona's observant eyes, to be growing up in the Abbey a kind of restlessness. Unquiet betokens change. Was it, she asked, that the Monks and Sisters were tired of the Abbey or of each other? No; she made inquiries, and found that the general feeling was quite in the contrary direction. The place appeared to them still a most delightful haven. Yet there was a certain sadness prevalent. Could this melancholy be a contagious disorder taken from one or two afflicted members? Nelly, for instance, had obviously been pale of face and sad of aspect for some time past. She seemed to take a comparatively feeble interest in the matter of dress; she was known on more than one occasion to shut herself up alone in her own cell for hours; her delight in riding, dancing, talking, acting, singing, lawn-tennis, and all the pleasures in which she was once foremost, was no longer what it had been. Doubtless, in her case, the cause was in some way to be attributed to Tom Caledon. They must have quarrelled; otherwise, why did they avoid each other? Why did they look at each other guiltily, as people do who have a secret between them? To be sure, Desdemona could not know the nature of the admonition which Tom pro-

nounced after the Court of Love. And that was all their secret.

As for Tom Caledon himself, he too was grown melancholy. In these bad days he mooned—he who had been the most companionable of men, who had ever fled from the solitude of self as eagerly as any murderer of ancient story—he who was formerly never out of spirits, never tired of laughing with those who laughed, and singing, metaphorically, with those who sang, was grown as melancholy as Jacques in the Forest of Arden.

‘Perhaps,’ said Desdemona—she was sitting in her own capacious cell, and Miranda was with her; Mr. Paul Rondelet was also with them—he was seen a good deal with Miranda during these days—‘Perhaps, Miranda, the presence of two perpetually wet blankets, such as Tom and Nelly, has imperceptibly saddened our refectory and drawing-room. Blankets which *will* not dry, however long you hang them out, would sadden even the Laundry of Momus.’

Paul Rondelet was leaning against the mantelshelf, a position which he affected because—he was no more free from personal vanity than yourself, my readers, although so advanced in thought—it showed to advantage his slender figure, and allowed the folds of the tightly-buttoned frock which he always wore to fall gracefully. He looked up languidly, and began to stroke his smooth cheek with great sadness, while he let fall from an overcharged soul the following utterance:

‘Momus is the only one of the gods who is distinctly vulgar. How depressing is mirth! How degrading it is to watch a laughing audience—a mere mob with uncontrolled facial muscles! Momus is the god of music-halls.’

‘Cheerfulness is not mirth,’ said Miranda quietly; ‘but you are sad yourself, Desdemona.’

‘I am,’ she replied, clasping her hands, ‘I am. It is quite true; I am encumbered with my Third Act.’

‘And I,’ said Miranda the straightforward, ‘am sad for Alan’s sake.’

‘But you, Mr. Rondelet’—Desdemona turned to the Thinker, whom she loved at all times to bring out—‘you, too, are melancholy. You neglect your monastic vows; you seldom appear at the refectory; you contribute nothing to the general happiness; you are visible at times, walking by yourself, with knitted brows. Is this to be explained?’

Paul Rondelet lifted his white brow and played with his eye-glass, and sighed. Then he gazed for a moment at Miranda.

Had he told the exact truth, he would have confessed that his debts worried him, that his anxiety about the future was very great. In fact, that he was entirely absorbed in the worry of his duns and the trouble of having no income at all in the immediate future. But he did not tell the truth. When facts are vulgar, truth-seekers like Paul Rondelet avoid them.

‘The conduct of life,’ he said grandly, ‘is a problem so vast, so momentous, that there is not always room for pleasant frivolities, even for those of this little society. These are the trifles of a vacation. When serious thoughts obtrude themselves—’

‘I see,’ said Desdemona, interrupting ruthlessly. ‘Why not write them down, and have done with them?’

Paul Rondelet shook his head.

‘You are accustomed to interpret men’s thoughts,’ he said, ‘you can give life and action to words; but you do not know by what mental efforts—what agonies of travail—those words were produced.’

‘Perhaps not,’ said Desdemona most unfeelingly. ‘I suppose small men suffer in their attempt to say things well. Shakespeare, Shelley and Byron, do not seem to have endured these throes.’

Small men! Oh, this fatal lack of appreciation.

There was a cloud upon the whole Abbey. The sadness was not con-

fined to the three or four named above; it was, with one exception, general. While Nelly lingered alone in her cell, while Tom Caledon rode or walked moodily in the lanes, while Mr. Paul Rondelet was seen to go alone with agitated steps, so that those who beheld thought that he was grappling with some new and brilliant thing in verse, the whole fraternity seemed drifting into a constrained self-consciousness most foreign to the character of the Order. Nobody now went off in happy solitude to lecture an empty hall; the three journals of the Abbey appeared at more irregular intervals; Cecilia gave no concerts; nobody translated a new play; nobody invented a new amusement. Instead of general conversation, there was a marked tendency to go about in pairs. And when there was any singing at all, which was not every evening, as of old, it generally took the form of a duet.

What had befallen the Abbey?

There was, as I have said, one exception: Brother Peregrine alone was cheerful. Nothing ever interfered with a cheerfulness which, at this juncture, was unsympathetic; neither rainy weather, nor the general depression of the Brethren, nor even the sadness of Nelly, whom he continued to follow like a shadow. And yet, though he was always with her, though the Sisters wondered whether Nelly had accepted him, and while she wondered why he was silent, Brother Peregrine had not spoken the expected words.

To the rest it seemed as if the Court of Love, the judgment of Paris, and all their masques, sports, dances, and entertainments, were become part and parcel of a happy past which would never return again. Brother Peregrine alone was the same as he had always been. He alone was unconscious of the general discontent. This was due to his eminently unsympathetic character. He came to the Abbey with the purely selfish de-

sign of getting as much pleasure out of so novel a society as possible. He got a great deal. When he told stories, or did Indian tricks, or performed feats on horseback, which he had learned in India, the Sisters of the Order laughed and applauded; it was he who devised pageants, suggested things to Desdemona, and improved on her ideas. Thus the Judgment of Paris was his doing, and he acted, as we know, as Sister Rosalind's counsel in the Court of Love. While he could bask in the sunlight of fair eyes, delight in the music of girls' laughter, drink good wine, sit at feasts, listen to music, and be himself an active part in the promotion of all modern forms of conviviality, he was happy. He was exactly like the illustrious Panurge, in one respect, in being entirely without sympathy. You knew him, therefore, as well the first day as the fiftieth; there was nothing to be got out of him except what he offered at first. Had he put his creed into words, it would have been something like this: 'Everybody wants to enjoy life. I *mean* to, whether other people do or not; I take whatever good the gods send, and mean to use it for myself; if people wrong me, or annoy me by suffering, pain, or complaint, I go away, or else I take no notice of them.'

The Abbey was an excellent place for such a man, because in no other place were the ways of life so smooth. And a man of such a temperament would be very long in discovering what Desdemona, with her quick sympathies, felt as soon as it began—the growing constraint.

For, of course, the Brethren and the Sisters were not going to sit down and cry or sulk, as is the wont of the outer world. There was neither growling nor grumbling in the Abbey, unless it were in each member's cell. Brother Peregrine noted nothing, because there was no outward change. If Nelly's cheek was pale, she listened to him still, and he followed her as

before. If the Order, generally, was depressed, there was still the functions—guest night, choral night, theatre, concert, dancing, all were duly celebrated. The Lady Abbess presided at the refectory, Desdemona performed her duties as directress of ceremonies, and the only difference was that the sparkle had gone out of the wine—it was gone flat. This they all perceived, except Brother Peregrine, who still thought the goblet as *mousseux* and as brilliant as before. The climax was reached when they attempted one of their old costume balls, which had been a sort of *spécialité* of the Abbey. They got as many guests to fill the rooms as they could bring together; but—it was not possible to disguise the truth—it fell flat. The guests went away early; there was little spirit in the dancing; and the chief actors, who ought to have thrown life into it—the Monks and Sisters—were languid.

Next evening, after dinner, when they were all collected in the drawing-room, Desdemona lifted up her voice, and asked, tearfully:

‘What is it, children? Is the wine of life already run down to the lees!’

No one answered, but the Sisters gathered round her as if they looked to her for help.

‘Are there no more cakes and ale?’ she went on. ‘Everything fails. Can the Abbey—our Abbey of Thelema—be a failure?’

‘No—no,’ they declared unanimously.

‘Are you happy here, my dears?’ she asked the Sisters.

They looked at one another, blushed with one consent for some reason of their own unexplained, and then murmured that they had never been so happy before, and never could be happier in the future.

Brother Peregrine remarked that he himself felt perfectly, monastically happy. Indeed, he looked it, standing before them all, with his thin figure, his complacent smile, and his

wonderful absence of any appreciation of the situation. Under any circumstances, if Brother Peregrine himself had no personal care he would have looked equally happy.

Desdemona contemplated him with a little wonder. Was the man perfectly self-contained? Even Paul Rondelet’s philosophy of separation did not rise to these heights of blindness.

‘If you are perfectly happy,’ said Desdemona, sharply, ‘you are not monastically happy. Perhaps, on the other hand, you deserve to be pitied.’

‘Let us invent something,’ said Peregrine cheerfully, as if a fillip of that kind would restore happiness, just as certain ladies fly to little suppers with something hot in order to soothe the wounded spirit. ‘Has everybody lectured?’ He looked round radiantly, conveying his belief that a lecture was the one thing wanting.

No one would hear of lectures.

‘I have learned a new conjuring trick,’ he went on. ‘Would you like to see that?’

‘I think,’ said Desdemona, ‘that the present situation will not be improved by tricks.’

‘When the knights and ladies of the middle ages,’ Brother Peregrine went on, nothing daunted, ‘were shut up in their castles for the winter, they used to amuse themselves——’

‘*Moult tristement*,’ said Desdemona.

‘With games. Sometimes they played hot cockles, the laws of which I dare say we could recover if we tried; or blind man’s buff, which you would perhaps rather not play; or touch me last, which I can fancy might be made as graceful a pastime as lawn-tennis. Then there was the game of *gabe*, at which everybody tried to out-brag everybody else; and the favourite game of *le roy ne ment pas*, at which everybody had to answer truthfully whatever questions were asked. There were to be no reservations; the answers were to be absolutely truthful.’

'I should think,' said Desdemona, 'that your games must have been almost maddening in their stupidity. I would as soon suggest to the Abbey that we should amuse ourselves at *bouts rimés*. Will you play something, Cecilia?'

She went to the piano and began to play some melancholy yearning music, such as might fall upon sad souls with a sympathetic strain. Desdemona listened and reflected. All this dejection and constraint could not arise from disgust at Brother Hamlet's madness, or from sympathy with Tom Caledon. Sympathy there was, no doubt. Everybody liked Tom. Disgust, there was, no doubt. Everybody was indignant with Alan. But that all the springs of joy should be devoured by the disappointment of one Brother, and the crochets of another, seemed absurd.

And suddenly a thought came into her mind. Desdemona caught it and smiled. Then she looked round the room and smiled again. Cecilia was playing her melancholy music: the Sisters were listening, pensive; the Brothers stood or sat about among them in silence. Tom Caledon was in one window, looking gloomily upon the twilight garden; Nelly was in another, pulling a rose to pieces. On the faces of all, except of two, there was in different degrees a similar expression, one of constraint, perhaps of impatience, and perhaps of hope.

Of course the two exceptions were Brother Peregrine and Paul Rondelet. When the former, who had no taste for music, was cut short by Desdemona, he retreated to a table at the other end of the long room, where, with a perfectly happy face, he found a book of burlesques, and read it with appreciation. Paul Rondelet entered the drawing room just as Cecilia began to play. He, too, having no real ear for music, though he talked much of the Higher Music, and held Wagner among his gods, retired to the same part of the room as the Brother whom

most he disliked. Here he found Mr. Pater's volume on the Renaissance, with which, while the following scene was enacted, he refreshed his soul.

'As for Peregrine,' said Desdemona to herself, looking at his perfectly happy and perfectly unsympathetic face, 'that man may have escaped from some great unhappiness, such as a convict's prison, or something as bad, so that everything else seems joy; or he may be a perfectly selfish person, incapable of seeing beyond the outward forms, or—which I hope is not the case—he may have secured Nelly, and so chuckles easily over his own future.'

Then she looked at the other man. Either Mr. Pater had made some remark, which displeased Paul Rondelet, or he was thinking of something unpleasant, unconnected with that author. 'As for that man,' thought Desdemona, 'there is something wrong with him. To be sure, he never ought to have been a Monk at all. He has an anxious look. Perhaps he is in debt. It requires a man of a much higher stamp than that poor fellow to bear up against debt. Or some one may have derided his poetry.'

It will be seen that Desdemona was not very far wrong in any of her conjectures. But then she was a witch, a sorceress.

'As for the rest,' she continued to herself, 'they are all afflicted with the same malady. It is not *ennui*, it is not boredom, it is not anxiety. What can it be but one thing?'

And, as before, the sweetest and most gratified of smiles played about her comely face.

'Of course, she said aloud, so that all started, 'I knew it would come, sooner or later. At least, I ought to have known, but did not think, being quite a stupid old woman. And now it has come.'

'What do you mean, dear Desdemona?' asked Cecilia, stopping her music.

'My dear,' said Desdemona, 'be good enough to stop that melancholy

strain, which only expresses your own mood, and perhaps that of a few others, but not mine at all. I am an outsider, by reason of age and experience. Will you play for me only, and for nobody else, a grand triumphal march?’

Cecilia obeyed, and straightway the air was filled with the trumpet-notes of triumph, the rejoicings of a multitude, the hymns of those who praise, and the shouts of those who offer thanks. Presently the hearts of the pensive Sisterhood rose with the music; soft eyes brightened; closed lips parted; drooping heads were uplifted. When Desdemona presently looked round, Tom Caledon had joined Nelly in her window, and both looked happy. The Brothers and the Sisters were in groups and pairs. Only there was a change, she thought, because there was a touch of solemnity in all the masculine eyes, and of a certain veiled and happy triumph under the drooping feminine lids, as if this was no ordinary evening. Brother Peregrine, unmoved by the exultation, as he had been by the melancholy of the music, sat cheerfully smiling over his odd volume of burlesques. So, too, unmoved by music of despondency or triumph, sat the disciple of Wagner and the Higher Music, Mr. Paul Rondelet, brooding over his cares. Music had no charms to make him forget his duns.

The music stopped with a final rapture, as if human joy could no further find expression.

Desdemona began, then, the speech, which more than anything else has endeared her to the hearts of those who listened. She had ever been the guiding spirit of the Abbey. It was she, we know, who invented their pageants and varied their entertainments. It was she who delighted the girls with her wisdom, her experience, and her sympathy. It was she who took care that the right Brother was told off for the right Sister; it was she who on occasion knew, better

than any one, even better than Miranda, how to throw such a spirit into the Abbey as prevented it from becoming a mere place of idle amusement. To her they owed everything. But after this evening they agreed that their previous debt of gratitude was multiplied tenfold, and that they were bankrupt, one and all, in thanks. At least everybody said so, except Paul Rondelet and Brother Peregrine.

‘The Abbey of Thelema, my dear Sisters,’ this benevolent person began, comfortably leaning back in the softest of arm-chairs, her feet upon a footstool, her hands clasped comfortably in her lap, her face just within the light of a shaded lamp, while two or three of the Sisters were lying at her feet, and the rest were grouped round her, and while the Brothers inclined a respectful ear—‘The Abbey of Thelema was constituted to contain no Sisters but such as were young, comely, of good birth, and gracious manners. So far, with the exception of one, who is but a servant of the rest and an elderly woman—myself, my dears—the intentions of the Founder have been strictly carried out. I would he were here to-day in person to see how fair to look upon, and how gracious of demeanour, are the present Sisters of Thelema. And it was to contain no Monks but such as were also young, well bred, and of good repute. The Brothers are older at admission than they were at the first foundation, just as the undergraduates of the Universities are older at admission than they were five hundred years ago. Also the first Abbey was designed as the school of gentleness; ours is an Abbey in which, like that of Fontévrault, the Monks and Sisters are already trained in the ways of gentle life. But I wish that the Founder were here to-day to see what a goodly assemblage of Brothers we have to carry out his intentions. The Monks and Nuns of the old Thelema, as of ours, were to be bound by no conventual fetters; so far from that,

as you know, they were bound to respect the vows which other Monks and Nuns officially deride. It was even contemplated by the Founder that the unrestrained society of knightly youth and gentle demoiselle would inevitably result—in honourable love, and he showed in his dream how they would go forth as from a sacred Ark, in pairs, to spread throughout the world the blessings of gentleness and good-breeding.

Here Desdemona stopped, conscious of a 'sensation' among her audience. She lowered the light at her elbow, and the discreet Tom Caledon, who, with Nelly, had joined the group and was now listening thoughtfully, lowered another lamp, which stood on a table at hand. Then there was a soft religious light, except at the other end of the long drawing-room, where Brother Peregrine was still chuckling over his burlesque, and Mr. Paul Rondelet was still grinding his teeth over his private troubles, or else over Mr. Pater's sweet and intelligible English.

'My children,' Desdemona went on, in a lowered voice, 'I have seen what has fallen upon this Abbey. Why should we hope to escape what, in his great wisdom, our Founder foresaw would happen? What have we done that we should go on prolonging indefinitely the simple joys which belong to the play-time of life? In all our pageants and in all our pleasures we have but been playing at happiness; preparing for the future as a schoolboy prepares himself in the playing-field for the battle-field. I think that this your play-time, and my great joy as one of the audience, is nearly over: I think that it is time to bring it to a close. Not altogether: other Abbeys of Thelema will be raised for other Monks and Sisters; we shall remain friends, and meet and greet each other; but ours, in its old form, will soon be as a memory.'

No one spoke in reply.

'Tell me, dear Sisters—nay, dear

children—that all is as it should be. There are no jealousies in the Abbey?'

'None,' they murmured.

'Then the will of the Founder has been fairly carried out, and we may prophesy the closing of our Abbey with joy and congratulation. Tell me when you like, and as much as you like, to-morrow, my children. To-night we will have cheerful looks and happy hearts again, though the play is well-nigh finished.'

She raised the light again. Tom disengaged his hands—what was it held them?—and turned up his lamp.

'To-day is Tuesday,' said Desdemona, rising. 'I announce a solemn banquet, a guest night, a choral night, a full-dress monastic night, for Saturday. I believe there will be no dancing, or singing, or any other amusement at all that day. Let us have as many guests as we can muster.'

'But it is the day of Alan's wedding,' said Miranda.

'My dear Miranda,' Desdemona replied, with the slightest touch of asperity, 'I have several times observed that Alan is not married yet.'

'It is the day,' said Nelly, when mamma wishes me to return to Chester Square.'

'My dear Nelly,' said Desdemona, still with asperity, 'do not make difficulties. You have not gone to Chester Square yet. Perhaps you will not go on that day at all. There was an inharmonious chuckle from the other end of the room. Brother Peregrine had come to a very funny part. It seemed as if he was chuckling in reply to Desdemona.

Nelly looked at him and shuddered; but no one spoke.

'On Saturday,' Desdemona went on, 'we will have a full meeting, even if it be our last. Till then, my children, be happy with each other.'

Cecilia took her zither and touched the chords.

'May I sing,' she asked, "the 'Rondeau of the Land of Cocaigne?'" It

was prophetic of the Abbey of Thelema.

'In the land of Cocaigne where travellers tell,
All delights and merriments dwell,
Love, and joy, and music, and mirth,
Loss of trouble, and lack of dearth—
There I found me a magic well
Deep in the greenest depths of a dell,
Lined with moss, and edged with shell,
Precious above all springs of the earth,
In the land of Cocaigne.

I drank of the waters; straight there fell
Behind me, each with the clang of a knell,
The days of grief: Love sprang to birth,
Laden with gifts of gladness and worth,
And singing a song of a wedding-bell
In the land of Cocaigne.'

CHAPTER XXXIV.

'She is a woman, therefore may be wooed.'

IF the other Brothers of the Order were contemplating marriage with the ardour of lovers, Mr. Paul Rondelet was considering that condition of life, as calmly as his creditors would allow him, as a haven of refuge. His position was really unequalled in history. Addison, to be sure, endured a temporary period of poverty; but Paul Rondelet was about to face destitution. In another short half year he would be without an income—absolutely without any money at all; already every other post brought letters from once trustful tradesmen, some openly threatening, some darkly hinting at legal proceedings. Think of the absurdity of the thing. A man actually in the very van and forefront of modern culture: a man with a following of his own: a leading member of the Advanced School: a man so exalted above his fellows that he could afford to feel pity, a gentle pity—not contempt or exasperation at all—with those who still believed in Christianity, patriotism, the old ideas about poetry or art: a man so skilled in the jargon of Art criticism, that people forgot to ask whether he knew a good picture when he saw one, and accepted on his dictum lean and skinny women, with red hair and sad faces, as the highest

flights of modern art; so apt with the jargon of modern poetic criticism, that people only gasped and supposed that, after all, knock-kneed spasms of unreal rapture or crack-jaw dithyrambs, were nonsense pretended to be profundity incapable of articulate speech—was the real, and hitherto undiscovered—poetry—so apt, also, with the latest book jargon, that it required a cool head to discover that he seldom read a new book at all. Such a man was positively going out into the cold and unsympathetic world without an income.

England is not like the East: you cannot wander from village to village, another Mohammed, with your following of listeners, living on the dates, rice, pillau, olives, figs, and bread, offered freely to all travellers; nor is it like that France of six hundred years ago, when an Abelard could retire into the country and pitch a philosophic tent, surrounded by thirty thousand disciples.

Faint thoughts did cross the mind of Paul Rondelet that he, too, might set up his own lecture tent, say on Salisbury Plain, whither the undergraduates might flock, for the sake of the Higher Culture. But no: it was a dream—a dream.

It was already three weeks since he first made up his mind that Miranda should be his wife; since, in fact, he heard that Alan was resolved upon his matrimonial suicide. There were, most certainly, other Sisters in the Abbey desirable for beauty, and not wholly destitute of culture or of money. But Miranda alone seemed to this leader of modern thought wholly worthy to wear his name. She appeared to appreciate him, which he felt could not be said of all the other ladies; she was undeniably beautiful; she was possessed of many broad acres. Her beauty was of a kind which Paul Rondelet felt he would admire more in his own wife than in other people's. For it was not the beauty lauded by his own school. She was not lithe,

lissom, and serpentine : she had none of the grace of the leopardess about her : her eye was lit by no baleful fires of passion : she was not skinny or bony : she did not writhe as she walked : she was not sad-avised : nor was her hair like unto that of the painted dames in the Grosvenor Gallery, or of the yellow-haired Somanli, who greets the traveller at Aden ; it was not yellow tow at all. And in dress she made fashion her slave instead of her mistress. She was not, in short, either in appearance, in dress, or in manner at all like unto the self-conscious young woman who follows the newest fashions of self-conscious and priggish modern art. Paul Rondelet felt that he should be proud of her. It must be said of him, the Master, the Poet, the man of taste, the Prophet of High Culture, the fastidious Paul Rondelet, before whose decisions, as his school considered, artists trembled, that he had chosen a companion worthy of himself.

Above all things, the man of Higher Culture is a critic. As his wines, his engravings, his chairs, his bookbinding, his water-colours, his dinners, his little Sunday morning breakfasts, must all be perfect, so must his wife be perfect. Now, Paul Rondelet felt that he could visit Oxford proudly with Miranda, or, better still, make of Dalmeny Hall a perfect home, an improved Oxford, a college without the uncongenial element.

He went over to the house in order to examine for himself its capabilities. True, it was not like Weyland Court—very few houses are—but still there were great things to be done with Dalmeny Hall, by one who knew how to work. Two or three rooms, he thought, would lend themselves with peculiar readiness to the modern Nobler Treatment. One might even be converted into a peacock-room. All of them, with right paper, right fireplaces, right cabinets, right china, right Harmonies in Blue or Brown, right chairs, and right tables, might be con-

verted into apartments, in which even the most advanced would find pleasure. Life, he thought, might be made philosophically perfect at Dalmeny Hall. Certain modifications would be made : he could not allow Desdemona, a person who pretended to no sympathy with him or his school, to consider, as she did at present, the house her own. Miranda herself would require in some respects a certain amount of moulding before she became perfectly imbued with the newest ideas. It was unfortunate for her, he considered, that Alan Dunlop, who had exercised so great an influence over her, left Oxford before the opinions of the school arrived at their full development ; that is to say, before they quite grasped the doctrines that patriotism is a mark of Philistinism—the true country of every philosopher being the world—religion a pitiable survival of the dark ages : all the art, architecture, music, and poetry of the last three hundred years—except, perhaps, the architecture of Queen Anne—a wretched exhibition of ignorance, bad taste, and vulgarity. When Alan went away they had only arrived at the stage of looking on whatever pleases the majority of mankind with contempt, pity, and suspicion.

But he should mould her : he should be able, through her very admiration of himself, to inspire a desire for higher levels of thought. Together, while poor Alan, mated to his rustic beauty, worked his heart out in a hopeless endeavour, they too, he thought, should present to high and low, the admirable spectacle of the perfect Olympian life.

It was difficult to get an opportunity of finding Miranda alone. Paul Rondelet—I think I have remarked that all the members of his school spoke of him as Paul Rondelet, not as Rondelet, or Mr. Rondelet, but plain Paul, as one speaks of Burne Jones, Julius Cæsar, and other illustrious men—sought in vain for many following days. It was partly that quest of an

opportunity which drove him to wander ceaselessly in the gardens, in the courts of the Abbey, and in the park between Weyland Court and Dalmeny Hall. Desdemona, who watched everything, marked his uncertain steps and wondered.

'Another trouble,' said Miranda to Desdemona, but she did not look troubled.

'What is it, dear?'

'It is Mr. Rondelet,' she replied calmly. 'He is going to offer me his hand.'

'My dear Miranda!' Desdemona cried, in some alarm. 'Pray, be careful. He is a young man to whom it will be necessary to speak very plainly. But you may be mistaken.'

'Not at all, I am quite sure. Remember that I have had experience. It interests me now a good deal to watch the beginnings of these things.'

Miranda sat down, and went on with her experience.

'I grew to discern their intentions almost as soon as they formed the idea in their own minds. Then I used to study the development, and when the time came, I was perfectly prepared with my answer. And I cannot be mistaken in Mr. Rondelet. All he wants is an opportunity.'

'And will you give him one?'

'I think I must. It is always better to get these things over. Poor Mr. Rondelet! I dare say he spared me out of consideration to Alan, until that engagement. It was good of him.'

'It would have been better to have spared you altogether.'

'My dear, Mr. Rondelet is poor, and I am rich,' said Miranda. 'He shall have his opportunity.'

In fact, she gave him an opportunity the very next day.

He found her in her own garden alone. Alma had been with her, unwilling, and had just escaped, leaving Miranda saddened at the hopelessness of getting at the better side of the girl, who continued to remain dull, apathe-

tic, and reserved. In fact, she was thinking, day and night, of nothing but the splendid *tour de force* which Harry was about to perform for her deliverance. The knowledge of this coming event enabled her to be less careful about hiding her discontent and sulkiness, so that she was by no means an agreeable companion.

When Paul Rondelet came upon Miranda, there was a look of languor and fatigue in her face, but her cheek brightened with a quick flush when she saw him walking delicately across the grass, putting up and dropping his eye-glass. Her eyes lit up, but her lips set themselves firm—she was going to hear and to reply to a proposal, unless, as had happened in other cases, he would, at the last moment, become nervous.

Such was not Paul Rondelet's intention. He had been looking at the case to himself, for some days past, from as many points of view as Mr. Browning loves to contemplate a murder. It would be said that he married for money. To be sure, had Dalmeny Hall belonged to himself, he would not have fettered himself with a wife. His school do not greatly love matrimony; on the other hand, he might fairly urge that he brought his wife a fair equivalent for her fortune; and though he was not her equal either in birth—his grandfather belonged to the prehistoric period, and was only conjectural—or in wealth, he was a leader in the most advanced school of Oxford. If Oxford, as all true Oxonians believe, and would suffer lingering tortures rather than give up, leads the thought of the world, then, confessedly Lothian leads Oxford, and Paul Rondelet led, or thought he led, Lothian. Therefore, Paul Rondelet led the world.

'You may have observed, Miss Dalmeny'—Miranda noticed that there was not a bit of love in his face—'You may have observed'—here he let fall his eye-glass, and put it up twice—'that I have of late endeav-

boured to convey to you an idea of the feelings which . . . which . . .'

'Not at all,' said Miranda, untruthfully. 'Pray sit down, Mr. Rondelet, and tell me what you mean.'

'Let me,' he said, sitting down at one end of the garden-seat, Miranda occupying the other; 'let me put the case from our own—I mean, the Higher Modern—point of view. Our school have arrived at this theory, that it is useless and even mischievous to attempt to promote culture. Especially is it mischievous when such efforts lead to personally interesting oneself with the lower classes. They are led, among other things, to believe that they are not entirely deserving of scorn. Therefore, we have decided on a return to the principles of the Renaissance.'

'Really,' said Miranda, looking at him with a little amusement in her eyes. This infinite condescension at the same time irritated her.

'Our plan of life is—separation. We leave the vulgar herd entirely to themselves; and we live alone, among our own set, on our own level.'

'Will not that be very dull? Should you admit the Monks and Sisters of Thelema?'

Paul Rondelet hesitated, and dropped his glass; then he replaced it with a sigh. 'I fear not. Perhaps one or two. But, Miss Dalmeny, the higher life cannot be dull. It has too many resources. It is great, though perhaps the vulgar cannot know its greatness; it is memorable and precious, though it is spent apart from mankind. We care nothing about our reputation among men. We belong to the lower levels in no way—the poor may help the poor, we shall not help them at all, or vex our souls about them. We are no longer English, or French, or Russian, or German; we are no longer Catholics or Anglicans, or anything; we propose to divest ourselves of any, even the slightest, interest in their religions, their politics, or their aims; we are alone among ourselves, the Higher Humanity.'

'Oh!' said Miranda again. 'And what are we, then? I always thought, in my conceit, that I belonged by birth and education to the Higher Humanity.'

Paul Rondelet shook his head sadly.

'Alas! no,' he said; 'I would that we could acknowledge your right to rank with Us. It is not a matter of birth, but one of culture. The Higher Humanity consists entirely of the best intellects trained in the best school. The men can only, therefore, be Oxford men, and presumably of Lothian.'

'And the women—oh! Mr. Rondelet—I should so much like to see the women of the Higher Humanity.'

Was she laughing at him, or was this genuine enthusiasm?

'The women,' he said, 'either the wives of the men, or their disciples, must be trained by the men.'

'And must they, too, be great scholars?'

'Nay,' he replied kindly. 'What we look for in women is the Higher Receptivity—it really was exasperating that Paul Rondelet wanted everything of the Higher order—' The Higher Receptivity, coupled with real and natural taste, hatred for debasement, especially in Art, a love for Form, an eye for the Beautiful, and a positive ardour to rise above prejudice. One of us was recently engaged, for instance, to a lady who seemed in every way adapted for his wife . . .'

'Was he a leader in the Advanced School?'

'He was a— a—, in fact, one of the leaders.' Paul Rondelet spoke as if there was in reality one leader only—himself. 'After training her carefully in the Separation Doctrine, my friend had the unhappiness of actually seeing her come out of a cottage where she had been personally mixing with women of the lowest grade, and giving them things to eat.'

'How very dreadful!'

'Yes. He confided the case to me. He said that he had passed over in silence her practice of going to church,

because old habits linger. But this was too much for his patience. She had to be told in delicate but firm language that the engagement was broken off. The sequel showed that we were right.'

'What was that?'

'Instead of sorrowing over her failure to reach the Higher Level, this unhappy girl said that she was already tired of it, and shortly afterwards actually married a Clerical Fellow!'

'What a shocking thing!' said Miranda, deeply interested in this anecdote.

Paul Rondelet had been speaking with great solemnity, because all this was part of the Higher Level, and meant to prepare Miranda.

Now he began to speak more solemnly still.

'You have seen us, Miss Dalmeny,' he went on. 'At least you have seen me—one of our School. It has been my privilege to make your acquaintance in the Abbey of Thelema—a place, so to speak, of half culture. There are, that is, the elements of the Higher Culture, prevented from full development by such members as Caldon and others——'

'My very dear friends,' said Miranda.

'Pardon me. I am speaking only from the—from my own point of view. No doubt, most worthy people. However, I have fancied, Miss Dalmeny, that in you I have seen the possibility of arriving at the Higher Level'—Miranda thought that this man was really the greatest of all Prigs she had ever seen. 'In fact,' he added, with a quiet smile, 'one is never mistaken in these matters, and I am *sure* you are worthy of such elevation.'

'Really, Mr. Rondelet, I ought to be very much gratified.'

'Not at all; we learn discernment in the Higher Criticism. I saw those

qualities in you from the beginning. But I have reflected, and, Miss Dalmeny, if you will accept me as your guide to the regions of the Higher Thought, we will together tread those levels, and make of life a grand, harmonious poem, of which not one word shall be intelligible to the Common Herd. Its very metre, its very rhythm, shall be unintelligible to them.'

'If you please, Mr. Rondelet, leave the language of allegory, and tell me, in that of the Common Herd, what it is you ask me to do.'

He turned red. After this magnificent overture, leading to a short *aria* of extraordinary novelty, to be asked to clothe his meaning in plain English—it was humiliating.

'I mean,' he explained, after a gulp of dissatisfaction, and dropping his eye-glass once—'I mean, Miss Dalmeny, will you marry me?'

'Oh——h!' Miranda did not blush, or tremble, or gasp, or faint, or manifest any single sign of surprise or confusion. It was as if she had been asked to go for a drive. 'You ask me if I will marry you. That is a very important question to put, and I must have a little time to answer it. No—do not say any more at present. We shall meet in the evening as if this talk had not been held. Good-morning, Mr. Rondelet.'

She rose in her queenly fashion, and walked across the lawn to the house, leaving him confused and uncertain.

Had she appreciated him? Did she realise what he brought to her? He reflected with satisfaction that his method of approaching the subject had at least the merit of novelty. Certainly, very few women had ever been invited to contemplate matrimony in such a manner.

(To be continued.)

CHRISTMAS.

BY JOHN READE.

I.

O blessed day that hallowest
 The old year, ere it dies,
 And in Time's weather-beaten breast
 Stillest the weary sighs,
 We greet thee now with praise and mirth,
 In memory of our Saviour's birth.

II.

We hail thee, as the shepherd throng,
 On that Judæan field,
 And the same heavenly burst of song
 By which their hearts were thrilled—
 "Peace be on earth, good-will to men—"
 From heaven to earth descends again.

III.

The race of man had wandered, sore
 Beneath its weight of sin,
 For many a weary age before
 The day was ushered in
 On which the benison of God,
 On all his children was bestowed.

IV.

To Israel the word had come,
 That in its royal line
 Should rise at last a Prince, of whom
 The race should be divine.
 And so arose o'er all the earth
 A longing for some wondrous birth.

V.

Prophet to prophet handed down
 The promise, still more clear,
 While Jewish mothers pondered on
 The Child that should appear.
 And bards inspired of Greece and Rome
 Foretold the Monarch that should come.

CHRISTMAS.

VI.

And farther east and farther west
 The scattered nations felt,
 By some strange yearning, half-confessed,
 As to their gods they knelt,
 That One, far greater than they knew,
 God's needed work on earth must do.

VII.

Many had come to teach mankind,
 And precepts were not few ;
 But vain, alas ! to try to find,
 'Mid so much false, the true,
 Or satisfy the questions keen
 About the world that is unseen.

VIII.

No teacher yet had come with power
 To solve each doubt that springs,
 Or give, in that most solemn hour
 When death his summons brings,
 The calm, clear faith that knows no fear,
 Hearing the whisper, 'I am here.'

IX.

So now, in spite of priest and sage,
 The world in darkness errs,
 Rome reads with doubting smile the page
 Of Greek philosophers ;
 And cynic age to seeking youth
 With scorn repeats, 'Pray, what is truth ?'

X.

And Israel, rent by factions wild,
 And prey to alien foes,
 Still guards the promise of the Child
 Whose birth shall end its woes ;
 But never dreams to look for Him
 In that meek group at Bethlehem.

XI.

Yet there, as on this very day,
 In that Judæan town,
 Obscure He in a manger lay,
 Without or robe or crown.
 Thither in spirit draw we nigh
 And worship in humility.

XII.

O scene so dear to Christian art
 By inspiration graced !
 O scene that on the human heart
 By love divine is traced !
 The Holy Mother and the Child !
 The God-man and the Virgin mild !

XIII.

The heedless world is unaware
 Of thee, O Bethlehem,
 And of the King reposing there
 Without a diadem.
 But Rome's old gods may feel the power
 That dooms them at this awful hour.

* * * *

XIV.

Before the Babe of Bethlehem
 What millions bow to-day !
 O God ! in mercy look on them
 And teach them how to pray—
 To pray for peace and work for peace
 Till war and all its horrors cease.

XV.

For oh ! 'tis very sad to know
 That, after all these years,
 Men thus should cause each other woe
 And drench the earth with tears.
 They are unworthy of Thy name,
 O Christ, who put Thee thus to shame !

XVI.

So many centuries, alas !
 Since Thou wast born, yet seems
 The world so nearly what it was
 When only fitful gleams
 Of Thy reflected radiance glowed
 Upon the earth which Thou hast trod.

XVII.

So many centuries ! But Thou
 Hast no regard of time ;
 To Thee all ages are as *now*,
 And, while we slowly climb
 To cause from consequence with pain,
 All things to Thee are ever plain.

XVIII.

At last we know all will be well—
 Enough for us to know—
 Enough all tempting doubts to quell,
 However it be so.
 Let us but strive that every day,
 May find us further on our way.

* * * *

XIX.

O blessed day, traditions dear
 Have gathered round thy name ;
 Of modest mirth, of kindly cheer,
 Of charity's bright flame.
 Unto the least of these, said He,
 Whate'er you do, you do to Me.

XX.

Peace and good-will—O blessed words,
 To be our guide through life—
 Oh ! may the nations sheathe their swords,
 And cease from cruel strife.
 The widow's wail, the orphan's tear,
 Sad, sad are these for Christmas cheer.

XXI.

Peace and good-will—O warring sects,
 That bear the Christian name,
 What is the faith that He expects,
 On whom you found your claim ?
 By love He conquered all mankind—
 Let there be in you the same mind.

XXII.

O Christmas-tide ! O merry time !
 When all the world seems young ;
 When every heart is set a-chime,
 And loosened every tongue !
 Thank God for what He gives away !
 Thank God for merry Christmas-day !

XXIII.

O Christmas-tide ! We would not throw
 A shadow on thy name,
 Or cause a needless sigh ; but oh !
 One privilege we claim—
 We think of Christmas-days of yore,
 And those whose smiles we greet no more.

XXIV.

O, dear, dead friends of other years,
 Who shared our joy and pain,
 We have not power, with all our tears,
 To bring you back again.
 But, as we think of you to-day,
 We cannot deem you far away.

XXV.

And we shall meet, we hope, at last,
 When, rent the parting veil,
 Death's tyranny is overpast,
 And the glad earth shall hail
 A glorious, endless Christmas morn,
 When man in Christ awakes new-born.

CHRISTMAS LITERATURE.

BY J. L. STEWART.

A DISTINCTIVE literature gathers around all our anniversaries and gala days, growing richer and more characteristic with age, as moss covers an aged tree trunk, and ivy flourishes on a ruin. The periodical celebration of a day creates a demand for a special literature, and the supply is forthcoming as a matter of course. Halloween has given birth to poetical accounts of apparitions indicative of future husbands and wives,—

'The last Halloween I was waukin
 My droukit sark-sleeve, as ye ken;
 His likeness cam up the house staukin—
 And the very grey breeks o' Tam Glen,'—

and St. Agnes' Eve has been rendered immortal by Keats' mellifluous account of its celebration by the fair Madelaine:—

'Th' told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,

Young virgins might have visions of delight,
 And soft adorings from their loves receive
 Upon th' honeyed middle of the night
 If ceremonies due they did aright:
 As, supperless to bed they must retire,
 And couch supine their beauties, lily white;
 Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
 Of heaven with upward eyes for all that they
 desire.'

The Fourth of July celebrations in the United States have evoked, from the depths of the national verbosity, a species of oratory all its own, widely-known as the spread-eagle variety; and the annual decoration of the graves of the soldiers who fell in the War of the Rebellion, is developing another order of platform rhetoric, one in which the national rejoicing is subdued by the presence of personal woe.

But there is no anniversary with a more distinctive and world-wide literature than Christmas. On the day that Christ was born, St. Luke tells

us, the angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds abiding in the field with their flocks, 'and suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men;' and this is the keynote of most of the literature that belongs to the anniversary of the day.

The advent and incarnation of Christ became, very early in the history of the Church, themes for the sacred bard. St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan in the fourth century, the 'father of Latin church poetry,' introduced hymns and music into the services, and St. Augustine testifies to their effect:—'How did I weep, O Lord! through thy hymns and canticles, touched to the quick by the voices of thy sweet-attuned Church! The voices sank into mine ears, and the truths distilled into my heart, whence the affections of my devotions overflowed; tears ran down, and I rejoiced in them.' The Ambrosian hymns, in the current translations, have all the characteristics of the best of those written in recent times. The advent is the theme of one of the best. Dr. Ray Palmer's translation is as follows:

'O thou Redeemer of our race!
Come, show the Virgin's Son to earth;
Let every age admire the grace,
Worthy a God Thy human birth!

'Twas by no mortal will or aid,
But by the Holy Spirit's might,
That flesh the Word of God was made,
A babe yet waiting for the light.

'Spotless remains the Virgin's name,
Although the Holy Child she bears;
And virtue's banners round her flame,
While God a temple so prepares.

'With light divine Thy manger streams,
That kindles darkness into day;
Dimmed by no night henceforth, its beams
Shine through all time with changeless ray.'

The following, from the Greek of Anatolius, Patriarch of Constantinople in the fifth century, sounds as modern as the last composition on the same theme:

'A great and mighty wonder,
The festal makes secure;
The Virgin bears the Infant
With virgin-honour pure.

'The Word is made incarnate,
And yet remains on high;
And cherubim sing anthems
To shepherds from the sky.'

This version of the great event comes from the Danish:

'The happy Christmas comes once more,
The heavenly Guest is at the door:
The blessed words the shepherds thrill,
The joyous tidings: Peace, good-will!

'No human glory, might, and gold,
The lovely Infant's form enfold;
The manger and the swaddlings poor
Are His whom angels' songs adore.

'O wake our hearts, in gladness sing!
And keep our Christmas with our King,
Till living song, from loving souls,
Like sound of mighty waters rolls.

'Come, Jesus, glorious, heavenly Guest,
Keep thine own Christmas in our breast!
Then David's harp-strings, hushed so long,
Shall swell our Jubilee of song.'

An examination of Schaff's 'Christmas in Song,' Neale's 'Hymns of the Eastern Church,' Daniel's 'Thesaurus,' and other hymnals, shows how Christ's coming has inspired the poets of the Church from the days of St. Ambrose to the present. The Christmas carol written by Luther for his children—'Von Himmel hoch da komm ich her'—which has enjoyed an uninterrupted popularity from that time to the present, is a good specimen of the Christmas literature of the Reformation. One of the numerous translations is as follows:

'Good news from heaven the angels bring,
Glad tidings to the earth they sing:
To us this day a child is given,
To crown us with the joy of heaven.

'This is the Christ, our God and Lord,
Who in all need shall aid afford:
He will Himself our Saviour be,
From sin and sorrow set us free.

'To us that blessedness He brings,
Which from the Father's bounty springs:
That in the heavenly realm we may
With Him enjoy eternal day.

'All hail, thou noble Guest, this morn,
Whose love did not the sinner scorn!

In my distress thou cam'st to me :
What thanks shall I return to Thee ?

'Were earth a thousand times as fair,
Best with gold and jewels rare,
She yet were far too poor to be
A narrow cradle, Lord, for Thee.

'Ah, dearest Jesus, Holy Child !
Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, that it may be
A quiet chamber kept for Thee.

'Praise God upon His heavenly throne,
Who gave to us His only Son :
For this His hosts, on joyful wing,
A blest New Year of mercy sing.'

Some are, perhaps, not familiar with Milton's ode, 'On the morning of Christ's Nativity' :

'This is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of heaven's eternal king,
Of wedded Maid and Virgin Mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring ;
For so the holy Sages once did sing,
That He our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

'That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
Wherewith he went at heaven's high council-
table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside ; and here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

'Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant-God ?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain
To welcome him to this his new abode,
Now while the heaven by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons
bright ?

'See how from far upon the eastern road
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet :
O ! run, prevent them with thy humble ode,
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet ;
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the Angel choir,
From out his secret altar touched with hallowed
fire.'

The hymn which the heavenly Muse composes in response to this invocation is too long for religious services :

'It was the winter wild,
While the heaven-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude nanger lies ;
Nature in awe to him,
Had doft her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize :
It was no season then for her
To wauon with the san, her lusty paramour.'

In this stanza Milton accommodates the facts to English notions of Christmas. When shepherds were

'abiding in the field, watching their flocks by night,' the weather was hardly of the character that would be faithfully described as 'the winter wild.'

'Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw ;
Confounded that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.'

The 'saintly veil of maiden white' would have made the grazing rather unsatisfactory in England or Palestine.

'The stars, with deep amaze
Stand fixed in steadfast gaze
Bending one way their precious influence,
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer that warned them thence,
But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

Milton rather enlarges on the gospel narrative in this stanza, and shows a more intimate knowledge of the doings of the Prince of Pandemonium than the apostles possessed.

Natural objects are personified throughout the poem, and made to manifest a consciousness of the Lord's presence.

'The winds with wonder whist
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed
wave.

The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame
The new enlightened world no more should
need.'

The shepherds are greeted with heavenly music, and

'At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
That with long beams the shamefaced night ar-
rayed ;
The helmed Cherubim,
And sworded Seraphim,
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displayed,
Harping in loud and solemn choir,
With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born
Heir.

'Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set,
And the well-balanced world on hinges hung ;
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel
keep.'

The invocation to the 'crystal spheres' to unite with 'the bass of heaven's deep organ,' make 'full concert to the angelic symphony,' and thus banish 'speckled vanity,' 'leprous sin,' 'hell itself,' and bring back truth, justice and mercy, while

'Heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall,'

is hardly less sublime than the stanzas which describe the glorious scene which the shepherds beheld.

'But wisest Fate says No,
This must not yet be so ;
The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss ;
So both Himself and us to glorify :
Yet first, to those ychained in sleep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through
the deep,

'With such a horrid clang
As on Mount Sinai rang,
While the red fire and smouldering clouds outbreak :
The aged earth aghast,
With terror of that blast,
Shall from the surface to the centre shake ;
When, at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his throne.

'And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
But now begins ; for from this happy day
The old Dragon, under ground
In straiter limits bound,
Not half so far casts his usurped sway ;
And wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail.'

After this exposition of his theology, Milton sings a pæan to the new dispensation.

'The oracles are dumb.

Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine.

No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic
cell.

With flower-inwoven tresses torn,
The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets
mourn.'

Lars, Lemures, Flamens, Peor,
Baalim, Ashtaroth, Moloch, Isis, Orus,
Anubis and Osiris are overthrown ;

'Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave ;
And the yellow-skirted Fayes
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-
loved maze.

'But see the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest ;

And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harnessed angels sit in order serviceable.

This magnificent poem is the noblest fruit of Christmas inspiration. Its bold yet reverent grasp of heavenly things is equalled only by 'Paradise Lost' and some portions of the Bible. If Milton had lived and written in the days of David or Solomon, his poetical exposition of God's dealing with mankind would, in all likelihood, have gained a place among the sacred books which prophets, poets, priests and kings have left as a priceless legacy to the world. When read with a reverent spirit, and with faith that the author's soul was in unison with the great soul of the universe when he wrote, the ode 'On the Nativity' affects one as much as the heaven-grasping psalms of the kingly singer of Israel. All that is sacred in Christian literature is but an echo of this ode. Other poets have diluted the gospel narrative, and given verified accounts of the divine episode ; but Milton alone has gone beyond the text and made the event still more impressive : he has made us acquainted with earthly and heavenly wonders which the New Testament writers either failed to notice or neglected to record. There is a wearying sameness about the great mass of hymns which have been written on this subject : they are all cast in the same mould, all subject to the same limitations. There is not one of the ten thousand that might not be paraphrased by a patchwork of extracts from others. Milton stands in solitary grandeur, unapproached and unapproachable.

The custom of singing Christmas carols is supposed to be coeval with the observance of the day. A sculpture on a sarcophagus of the second century is supposed to represent a group singing in celebration of Christ's birth. Manger songs gave place to sacred dramas, and these degenerated into farces, or Fools' Feasts, which grew so profane and indecent that they were forbidden by the English

clergy in the thirteenth century. Most of the carols are of simple construction. They were written by peasant poets for singers of their own station in life, and have no literary merit. Many of them are preserved as curiosities, and may be found embalmed in various compilations. The following is one of the most famous of those sung in England by youthful seekers after Christmas charity :

- 'God rest you, merry gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay ;
Remember Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas Day,
To save poor souls from Satan's power,
Long time who've gone astray,
Which brings tidings of comfort and joy,
So God send us all a happy new year.
- 'From God that is our Father,
The blessed angel came
Unto some certain shepherds
With tidings of the same ;
That the Babe was born in Bethlehem,
The Son of God by name,
And that's tidings of comfort and joy.
- “Go, fear not,” said God's angel,
“Let nothing you affright,
For Christ is born in Bethlehem,
Of a pure Virgin bright,
And He shall vanquish finally
The devil's fraud and spite.”
And that's tidings of comfort and joy.
- 'The shepherds at these tidings
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding
In tempest, storm, and wind ;
And straight they came to Bethlehem,
The Son of God to find,
And that's tidings of comfort and joy.
- 'And when they came to Bethlehem,
Where our sweet Saviour lay,
They found Him in a manger,
Where oxen feed on hay ;
And the blessed Virgin kneeling down,
Unto the Lord did pray ;
And that's tidings of comfort and joy.
- 'Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
That we true loving brethren,
Each other may embrace ;
For the happy time of Christmas
Is drawing on apace ;
Which brings tidings of comfort and joy.
- 'God bless the ruler of this house,
And send him long to reign,
And many a happy Christmas
May he live to see again
Among his friends and kindred,
That live both far and near ;
So God send us all a happy new year.'

The English poets have not devoted much attention to the great anniversary of the Church. Some of them have no mention of it at all, others only allude to it in passing. Many,

however, have chosen it, or rather the method of its observance, as a theme but the number is smaller than one who had not studied the subject would imagine. It is worthy of notice, also, that comparatively few of these poems have had sufficient vitality to keep them from oblivion. The great collections of poems, which profess to give all the classic verse in the language, have but two or three poems on the subject among them, and some of them none at all. Dana's rescues this of Wither's from the obscurity of the author's works :

- 'So now is come our joyful'st feast ;
Let every man be jolly ;
Each room with ivy leaves is drest,
And every post with holly.
Though some churls at our mirth repine,
Round your foreheads garlands twine,
Drown sorrow in a cup of wine,
And let us all be merry.
- 'Now all our neighbours' chimneys smoke,
And Christmas blocks are burning ;
Their ovens they with baked meat choke,
And all their spits are turning.
Without the door let sorrow lie,
And if for cold it hap to die,
We'll bury 't in a Christmas pie,
And evermore be merry.
- 'Now every lad is wondrous trim,
And no man minds his labour ;
Our lasses have provided them
A bagpipe and a tabor ;
Young men and maids, and girls and boys,
Give life to one another's joys ;
And you anon shall by their noise
Perceive that they are merry.
- 'Ned Squash has fetched his bands from pawn,
And all his best apparel ;
Brisk Nell hath bought a ruff of lawn
With dropping of the barrel.
And those that hardly all the year
Had bread to eat, or rags to wear,
Will have both clothes and dainty fare,
And all the day be merry.
- 'Now poor men to the justices
With capons make their errands ;
And if they hap to fail of these,
They plague them with their warrants :
But now they feed them with good cheer,
And what they want they take in beer,
For Christmas comes but once a year,
And then they shall be merry
- 'The client now his suit forbears,
The prisoner's heart is eased,
The debtor drinks away his cares,
And for the time is pleased.
Though others' purses be more fat,
Why should we pine or grieve at that ?
Hang sorrow ! Care will kill a cat—
And therefore let's be merry.
- 'Hark ! now the wags abroad do call
Each other forth to rambling,
Anon you'll see them in the hall,
For nuts and apples scrambling.
Hark ! how the roofs with laughter sound !

Anon they'll think the house goes round,
For they the cellar's depth have found,
And then they will be merry.

'The wenches, with their wassail bowls,
About the streets are singing,
The boys are come to match the owls
The wild mare is in bringing.
Our kitchen boy hath broke his box :
And to the dealing of the ox
Our honest neighbours come by flocks,
And here they will be merry.'

A good many more might be quoted of the same tenor, but without the quaintness of this. Poems of this class, like the Christmas hymns, have a tendency to run in the old grooves, and much reading of them profiteth little. As a specimen of the poetry descriptive of the celebration of the day in the olden time, the following extract from 'Marmion' is without a rival in graphic sprightliness :

'Heap on more wood !—the wind is chill ;
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
Each age has deemed the new-born year
The fittest time for festal cheer ;
Even, heathen yet, the savage Dane
At Iol more deep the mead did drain ;
High on the beach his galleys drew,
And feasted all his pirate crew ;
Then in his low and pine-built hall,
Where shields and axes decked the wall,
They gorged upon the half-dressed steer :
Caroused in seas of sable beer :
While round, in brutal jest, were thrown
The half-gnawed rib and marrow-bone :
Or listened all, in grim delight,
While scalds yelled out the joys of fight.
Then forth in frenzy would they hie,
While wildly loose their red locks fly :
And, dancing round the blazing pile,
They make such barbarous mirth the while,
As best might to the mind recall
The boisterous joys of Odin's hall.

'And well our Christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course had rolled
And brought blithe Christmas back again,
With all his hospitable train,
Domestic and religious rite
Gave honour to the holy night :
On Christmas eve the bells were rung,
On Christmas eve the mass was sung :
That only night, in all the year,
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.
The damsel donned her kirtle sheen ;
The hall was dressed with holly green ;
Forth to the wood did merry men go,
To gather in the mistletoe.
Then opened wide the baron's hall
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all ;
Power laid his rod of rule aside,
And ceremony doffed her pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner choose ;
The lord, underogating, share
The village game of " post and pair."
All hailed, with uncontrolled delight,
And general voice, the happy night
That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down.

England was merry England when
Old Christmas brought his sports again,
'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale,
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale ;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.'

The more modern Christmas poetry and prose are chiefly devoted to the glorification of Santa Claus, as a gift-distributor to children, and the promotion of alms-giving. The surprise and delight of the little ones at the mysterious appearance of presents have been described in numberless stories, and Santa Claus is the hero of much humorous verse. The happiest description of him informs us that

'He has a broad face, and a little round belly
That shakes when he laughs like a bowlful of jelly ;'

and they all agree as to his great carrying capacity, and his power of getting down chimneys. Poetry and stove pipes hardly harmonize, and there is considerable embarrassment in houses without register grates, but the ingenuity of the elder members of the family is generally great enough to account to the younger ones for the entrance of St. Nicholas with his toys and sweetmeats.

Among the numerous writers of Christmas stories Dickens stands pre-eminent for the power of touching the heart and opening the pockets of the readers. The miseries of the poor, the sovereign power of money to make their hearts dance with delight, and the pleasure of the giver at sight of the joy his shillings have created, are the materials with which he worked. His 'Christmas Carol' is the simplest and best of this class of fiction. Scrooge is introduced in the beginning — 'a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner ! Hard and sharp as flint from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire ; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheeks, stiffened his gait, made his eyes red, his thin lips blue, and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A

frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his low temperature always about with him; he iced his office even in the dog-days, and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.' On Christmas Eve this man, after repelling the only man who dared say 'Merry Christmas' to him, 'took his melancholy dinner in his melancholy tavern,' examined the papers and his bank-book, and went to bed in the dreary chambers which had once belonged to his deceased partner. Marley's ghost appears to him, and then the most subtly humorous interview took place that ever man and ghost indulged in. There is enough undercurrent of burlesque for those who care nothing for ghosts, but not enough to offend those who, like Wilkie Collins, can talk ghost seriously.

"How now!" said Scrooge, caustic and cold as ever. "What do you want with me?"

"Much!" Marley's voice, no doubt about it.

"Who are you?"

"Ask me who I was."

"Who were you, then?" said Scrooge, raising his voice. "You're particular, for a shade." He was going to say "to a shade," but substituted this as more appropriate.

"In life I was your partner, Jacob Marley."

"Can you—can you sit down?" asked Scrooge, looking doubtfully at him.

"I can."

"Do it, then."

Scrooge asked the question, because he didn't know whether a ghost so transparent might find himself in a condition to take a chair; and felt that in the event of its being impossible, it might involve the necessity of an embarrassing explanation.

Even the grim defiance of the old miser yields to the dread influence of the spiritual visitant, and he becomes thoroughly frightened. The ghost's

explanation of its presence on earth develops the philosophy of life which Dickens, in this and many other works, taught so forcibly:—

"It is required of every man," the Ghost returned, "that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow-men, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world—oh, woe is me!—and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness."

Again the spectre raised a cry, and shook its chain and wrung its shadowy hands.

"You are fettered," said Scrooge, trembling. "Tell me why?"

"I wear the chain I forged in life," replied the Ghost. "I made it link by link, and yard by yard; I girded it on of my own free will, and of my own free will I wore it. Is its pattern strange to you?"

Scrooge trembled more and more.

"Or would you know," pursued the Ghost, "the weight and length of the strong coil you wear yourself? It was full as heavy and as long as this, seven Christmas Eves ago. You have laboured on it since. It is a ponderous chain!"

After some more conversation the Ghost further develops the philosophy of life.

"O! captive, bound, and double-ironed," cried the phantom, "not to know that ages of incessant labour, by immortal creatures, for this earth must pass into eternity before the good of which it is susceptible is well developed. Not to know that any Christian spirit working kindly in its little sphere, whatever it may be, will find its mortal life too short for its vast means of usefulness. Not to know that no space of regret can make amends for one life's opportunities misused! Yet such was I! Oh! such was I!"

"But you were always a good man

of business, Jacob," faltered Scrooge, who now began to apply this to himself.

"Business!" cried the Ghost, wringing its hands again. "Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, benevolence, were, all, my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business!"

Scrooge is told that the Ghost has procured a chance of his escaping Marley's fate.

"You were always a good friend to me," said Scrooge. "Thank'ee!"

"You will be haunted," resumed the Ghost, "by three Spirits."

Scrooge's countenance fell almost as low as the Ghost's had done.

"Is that the chance and hope you mentioned, Jacob?" he demanded, in a faltering voice.

"It is."

"I—I think I'd rather not," said Scrooge.

"Without the visits," said the ghost, "you cannot hope to shun the path I tread. Expect the first to-morrow, when the bell tolls One."

"Couldn't I take 'em all at once, and have it over, Jacob?" hinted Scrooge.

The Ghost of Christmas Past comes to him, at the appointed time, and takes him to visit the forgotten scenes of his former life, from boyhood to the present time. He sees himself solitary at school, neglected by his friends, and is moved by the thoughts that moved him then. He witnesses the caresses of his dead sister, loves her again, and thinks of her only child. He is again in the house where he served his apprenticeship, and witnesses the Christmas joviality of the Fezziwigs and their clerks and apprentices. And he sees himself at various stages of the congealing process which he had undergone.

The Ghost of Christmas Present came to him next.

"You have never seen the like of me before!" exclaimed the Spirit.

"Never," Scrooge made answer to it.

"Have you never walked forth with the younger members of my family; meaning (for I am very young) my elder brothers born in these later years?" pursued the Phantom.

"I don't think I have," said Scrooge. "I am afraid I have not. Have you had many brothers, Spirit?"

"More than eighteen hundred," said the Ghost.

"A tremendous family to provide for," muttered Scrooge.

The Ghost of Christmas Present rose.

"Spirit," said Scrooge, submissively, "conduct me where you will. I went forth last night on compulsion, and I learnt a lesson which is working now. To-night, if you have aught to teach me, let me profit by it."

Scrooge is made to see and feel the universal merry-making in the streets, in the squalid home of his poor old clerk, at his neglected nephew's, everywhere. The Spirit stood beside sick beds, and they were cheerful; on foreign lands, and they were close at home; by struggling men, and they were patient in their greater hope; by poverty, and it was rich. In almshouse, hospital, and jail; in misery's every refuge, where vain man in his brief authority has not made fast the door and barred the Spirit out, he left his blessing, and taught Scrooge his precepts.

And then the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come appeared, and showed him in his shroud, his rooms robbed and deserted, his acquaintances speaking of his death with the utmost indifference, and no human being mourning his loss.

"Spirit," he cried, tight clutching at its robe, "hear me! I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been but for this intercourse. Why show me this if I am past all hope?"

‘For the first time the hand appeared to shake.

“‘Good Spirit,” he pursued, as down upon the ground he fell before it, “your nature intercedes for me and pities me. Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life.”

‘The kind hand trembled.

“‘I will honour christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year round. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach. Oh, tell me, I may sponge away the writing on this stone!”

‘In his agony, he caught the spectral hand. It sought to free itself, but he was strong in his entreaty and detained it. The Spirit, stronger yet, repulsed him.

‘Holding up his hands in a last prayer to have his fate reversed, he saw an alteration in the Phantom’s hood and dress. It shrunk, collapsed, and dwindled down into a bedpost.’

And then Scrooge rose that Christmas morning and renewed the vow he had made the Ghost. How he bought the biggest turkey at the poulterer’s, and sent it to Bob Cratchit’s, went to dine with his nephew, raised Bob’s salary, and lived a new life ever after, are within the memory of all readers of Dickens.

In ‘The Chimes’ Dickens deals with the same fundamental principles, but broadens their application. The poor old ticket porter, Trotty Veck, who earns a semi-sustenance by running errands, is the only really good and happy man in the story. Alderman Cute is the worthy representative of the petty criminal law; Mr. Filer, of the heartless political economy which takes no notice of man as a rational being; and Sir Joseph Bowley, of ostentatious and soulless philanthropy. Trotty Veck shows how much more real good a poor devil can do with his great heart than the others with their long purses and studied

systems. Not the duty of alms-giving alone is taught, but of contentment with life, and of charity for sin.

“‘Who puts into the mouth of Time, or of its servant,” said the Goblin of the Bell, “a cry of lamentation for days which have had their trial and their failure and have left deep traces of it which the blind may see—a cry that only serves the present time, by showing men how much it needs their help when any ears can listen to regret for such a past—who does this, does a wrong.

“‘Who hears in us, the Chimes, one note bespeaking disregard, or slow regard, of any hope, or joy, or pain, or sorrow, of the many-sorrowed throng; who hears us make reference to any creed that gauges human passions and affections, as it gauges the amount of miserable food on which humanity may pine and wither, does us wrong.

“‘Who hears us echo the dull vermin of the earth: the Pullers Down of crushed and broken natures, formed to be raised up higher than such maggots of the time can crawl or can conceive, does us wrong.

“‘Lastly and most of all, who turns his back upon the fallen and disfigured of his kind; abandons them as vile; and does not trace and track with pitying eyes the unfenced precipice by which they fell from good—grasping in the fall some tufts and shreds of that lost soil, and clinging to them still when bruised and dying in the gulf below; does wrong to Heaven and man, to time and to eternity.”’

Trowbridge, in ‘The Wolves,’ makes a pathetic appeal on behalf of the poor, and his graphic and thrilling lines are less known than they will be when they are old enough to be revived and added to the common stock of classic poetry.

‘Ye who listen to stories told,
When hearths are cheery and nights are cold,

‘Of the lone wood-side, and the hungry pack
That howls on the fainting traveller’s track,—

‘Flame-red eyeballs that waylay,
By the wintry moon, the belated sleigh,—

'The lost child sought in the dismal wood,
The little shoes and the stains of blood

'On the trampled snow,— O ye that hear,
With thrills of pity or chills of fear,

'Wishing some angel had been sent
To shield the hapless and innocent,—

'Know ye the fiend that is crueller far
Than the gaunt gray herds of the forest are?

'Swiftly vanish the wild fleet tracks
Before the rifle and woodman's axe :

'But hark to the coming of unseen feet,
Pattering by night through the city street!

'Each wolf that dies in the woodland brown
Lives a spectre and haunts the town,

'By square and market they slink and prowl,
In lane and alley they leap and howl

'All night they snuff and snarl before
The poor patched window and broken door.

'They paw the clapboards and claw the latch,
At every crevice they whine and scratch.

'Their tongues are subtle and long and thin,
And they lap the living blood within.

'Icy keen are the teeth that tear,
Red as ruin the eyes that glare.

'Children crouched in corners cold
Shiver in tattered garments old,

'And start from sleep with bitter pangs
At the touch of the phantoms' viewless fangs

'Weary the mother and worn with strife,
Still she watches and fights for life.

But her hand is feeble, and weapon small ;
One little needle against them all !

'In evil hour the daughter fled
From her poor shelter and wretched bed.

'Through the city's pitiless solitude
To the door of sin the wolves pursued.

'Fierce the father and grim with want,
His heart is gnawed by the spectres gaunt.

'Frenzied stealing forth by night,
With whetted knife to the desperate fight,

'He thought to strike the spectres dead,
But he smites his brother man instead.

'O ye that listen to stories told,
When hearths are cheery and nights are cold,

'Weep no more at the tales ye hear,
The danger is close and the wolves are near.

'Shudder not at the murderer's name,
Marvel not at the maiden's shame.

'Pass not by with averted eye
The door where the stricken children cry.

'But when the beat of the unseen feet
Sounds by night through the stormy street,

'Follow thou when the spectres glide ;
Stands like Hope by the mother's side ;

'And be thyself the angels sent
To shield the hapless and innocent.

'He gives but little who gives his tears,
He gives his best who aids and cheers.

'He does well in the forest wild
Who slays the monster and saves the child :

'But he does better, and merits more,
Who drives the wolf from the poor man's door.'

The themes of the true Christmas story are domestic bliss, reconciliation of parted friends, doing good deeds anonymously, the return of repentant prodigals, and the restoration of peace to disturbed communities. We see shivering pauperism taken in from the street, warmed at the bright fire, feasted, loaded with gifts, perhaps recognized as a long-lost child with a strawberry mark on his arm; the wretched husband and father, no longer able to endure the sight of his wife and children's sufferings, snatched from the brink of suicide by unexpectedly securing a good situation, being recalled to the offended father who had banished him, or falling heir to a fortune; the poor sewing girl welcoming the rich lover who had parted from her when she was better off in the world, and had been mourned as dead; and the beginning of the reign of peace, love, plenty and happiness where hatred, want, strife and misery had ruled. They have a great deal of influence in loosening the pursestrings, in softening the hardness which gathers around the heart with the increase of years, in making men have charity for the fallen without looking with indifference on their misdeeds. Alms giving may be proved by political economy to be a curse instead of a blessing, but political economy can afford to stand aside once in the year. If the world were fashioned after the ideal of the philosophers, charity would not be necessary; but it is not. Hunger stands without and gazes greedily through the windows of plenty; cold shivers on the sidewalk where comfort walks in furs and flannels; misery crouches over feeble fires in hovels at the very gates of the mansions of the rich. Leave it to the political economists, if

you will, to decide what effect food and clothes and fuel will have on those who need them, but you can not but feel that it will do you good to distribute them with a generous hand. Read or re-read the Christmas litera-

ture to which I have called your attention; let your soul be saturated with the sentiment that pervades it, and act, for the time at least, on the philosophy it teaches.

UNDER ONE ROOF:

AN EPISODE IN A FAMILY HISTORY.

BY JAMES PAYN.

CHAPTER V.

A TIFF.

HOW few even of so-called educated persons, who trust themselves every day to the risks of a railway journey, have any intelligent reason for the faith that is in them. What the ordinary traveller knows of steam-power, or the method by which it acts, is next to nothing; and it is doubtful whether he is even acquainted with the means by which his carriage is kept (when it is kept) from going off the line. It is quite as well, perhaps, that this blissful ignorance exists, if the opinion once expressed to me by one of the most eminent of our railway engineers is a correct one. 'If the public only knew,' said he, 'the risks they run, especially the "shaves" which take place in every railway journey of any length that they undertake, they would stay at home, or set up the coaches again.' And if such is the ignorance of our land travellers, how much greater is that of our voyagers by sea, the whole confiding class that is included in the head 'Passenger.'

It was a type of this class, rather than an exception to it, that Thomas Hood alluded to, in the lady who, being in a vessel which the winds and waves were hurrying to its doom, exhibited such courage and high spirits because she had the Captain's own assurance that 'they were going on shore.'

When the good ship *Rhineland* started from Rotterdam for Bristol on what turned out to be her last voyage, the weather was what seamen term 'dirty;' but it was not for those who had paid the very moderate passage money demanded of them to inquire whether that phrase did not, in this particular case at least, mean 'dangerous.' They could not be expected to understand that when a large consignment of cattle are eating their heads off at a shipowner's expense, a vessel puts to sea in weather that, under other circumstances, would keep her in port, or even that the presence of cattle on the deck of a steamer does not tend to increase its seaworthiness. Except those unhappy persons who never go to sea at all without a presentiment that they shall be drowned, and behold in every wave

the instrument of their destruction, the passengers by the *Rhineland* were without misgivings. Those subject to sea-sickness at once fled to their berths to hide their agonies from the public gaze, and the others repaired to the saloon—the sofas of which rocked like cradles—or secured themselves in such shelter as they could find upon the deck, to snatch a fearful joy from the contemplation of the work of a south-easter.

Among these latter were two persons, with one of whom, Elise Hurt, we are acquainted by name. She is a girl of eighteen years of age or so, of graceful figure, and a face, which, if not beautiful, according to our English notions, is, at least, eminently pleasing. She is tall and fair, and, well, yes, plump. No other word exactly expresses that particular contour, which, however, it may err in years to come on the side of stoutness, is for the present all that can be desired in the way of shapeliness, and no more. Her hair is of a light auburn, and very plentiful; her eyes, of tender blue, are large and thoughtful, and their long lashes droop over them in a manner which Solomon (who was a good judge of such matters) evidently appreciated; he talks of a lady 'taking' one with her eyelids; and this is what Elise Hurt's eyelids did. They took you, or 'fetched' you, as we moderns express it, in spite of all resistance.

The young Englishman by her side upon the deck has, however, made no resistance at all, and to judge by the expression of his bronzed and handsome face, as he arranges his railway rug about her shoulders, he hugs the chain that has enslaved him. His arrangements for her comfort are complete enough, yet he always seems to imagine that something is wanting; and his solicitude appears to somewhat embarrass her. She explains to him in the German tongue, which he perfectly understands, that she is quite comfortable; and also informs

him in a natural and simple way that she is unaccustomed to such kind attentions.

'You will quite spoil me, sir,' she says, 'if you take so much trouble about me, who am not only used to look after myself, but must always do so.'

'You don't know how to take care of your own money,' says he with a good-natured smile, that becomes his olive face exceedingly.

'That is true—or at least it was so on one occasion. If you had not picked up my little purse in the church yesterday, or if it had fallen into bad hands, it would have been a great misfortune to me—nay, a catastrophe.'

'I did not know I had averted a catastrophe,' replied the young man. 'But it was surely imprudent of you to carry so much money about in your pocket.'

"So much money" was only a few pounds, sir; but then you see it was all I had.'

The young gentleman's eyes grew very pitiful. He had a kind heart, which was always sorry for poor people; but it was especially sorry for this particular victim of poverty. It seemed so hard that one so young and so beautiful should be so poor.

'But had you no friend in Rotterdam?'

'No; my aunt—who is my only friend to call such—lives at Heidelberg. My money must last me for many months, though, indeed,' she added, with a smile, 'if all goes well, I expect to make more in England, and to return home quite rich.'

'And how is it, if I may make so bold, that you propose to acquire this fortune?'

'I am engaged as a governess in the house of a rich English family. A friend of my aunt's was so good as to recommend me, though I have never been out before.'

'Poor thing,' ejaculated the young man in English. She laughed aloud.

'Take care what you say,' said she;

'I have been learning your language—though it is expressly enjoined on me that I am not to speak it—to some purpose. I do not consider myself a "poor thing" at all. I do assure you, but a very lucky girl.'

'Lucky! What, to be leaving your only friend, and your native land, for a strange country, and a stranger's roof. It seems to me you are thankful for small mercies. If your case were mine I know I should think it a very hard one.'

'I hope not; for in the first place, you see, I am no longer an encumbrance to my aunt, who has pinched herself for my sake. Then the lady I am going to, I am assured, is kind, as indeed I gather from her letters. My salary is a better one than I could expect. I like teaching young people, too; and it is a great thing when duty and inclination go together.'

'Is it?—No doubt it is—of course,' added the young man, hastily; for he saw that his *naïve* rejoinder had somewhat shocked his companion. 'You see, unfortunately, I have no duties. Life has been made very easy for me.'

'Still, I should think you would be happier if you made some object for yourself in life.'

'I am not sure; I am happy enough—or at least I used to be so. I used to feel that I had all that I wanted. And then I am so incurably indolent.'

'To know one's faults is half-way, they say, towards remedying them,' observed the girl, in cheerful tones!

'Not in my case. For example, I was as nearly as possible late for the packet this morning, notwithstanding that I had a very particular reason for coming by it.'

'Ah, then, you have more important matters on hand after all, it seems, than you would wish me to believe.'

'I have no objection your knowing about this particular one—the reason why I wanted to come by the *Rhine-land*. It was because I heard you say that you were going by it.'

'Sir, I do not think it is right,' said

the girl, with quiet dignity, 'that you should say such things to me. Such idle compliments may please young ladies in your own rank of life. To one in mine they are quite inappropriate, and, I must add, in my own particular case, distasteful.'

'Good Heavens!' ejaculated the object of this censure. 'It was unnecessary for you to say that. I could see that I had made a fool of myself before you opened your mouth. I am constantly doing that, however —'

'With young ladies whom you meet accidentally in foreign churches?' put in the other, gravely.

'No; there, upon my honour, you wrong me. I speak thoughtlessly, I know, out of the fulness of my heart; but I am no philanderer—what do you call it in German—a male flirt. I despise such a character; and I should still more despise the man who, taking advantage of having performed a trifling service to an unprotected young lady to win her confidence, should venture to breathe a syllable to her that should be "distasteful."'

'The young fellow spoke with fluency enough, but with earnestness also; there was no glibness about his tone; it was plain to see that he had been very much moved and hurt by the suggestion that he had behaved improperly.'

'I am quite sure that you did not intend any rudeness,' said the young lady, gently.

'I hope not, Miss Hurt. I trust that I am at least a gentleman. What annoys me, however, is that you, of all people, should have supposed me capable of such misconduct. I trust I am saying nothing "distasteful" in avowing that your good opinion is of great consequence to me.'

'I can hardly understand how that can be,' was the quiet reply, 'since you never saw me before yesterday, and we are only acquainted with each other's names, Mr. Gresham.'

'I cannot understand it either,' replied he, quickly; 'I only know it is

so. Before I saw you, heard you speak, or took your hand—for these three events that to you, it seems, look so trivial, are now epochs in my existence—I was a waif and stray in the world. It mattered not to me where I dwelt or whither I went. As it happened, I was going to Paris and thence to England, where I have that home and friends which you tell me I do not sufficiently appreciate. You are a little hard upon me there, for I like my home and love my friends dearly; yet, I will confess, that until yesterday I felt like a ship without sails or anchor, drifting here and there, as the wind might blow. Now all that is changed; I do not venture to hope that you will believe it; but I cannot think I have done wrong in telling you the simple truth.'

I am sure you are speaking what you believe to be the truth, Mr. Gresham,' answered the young girl, gravely; 'but I am not sure that you have not done wrong in telling it me. On the other hand, I am quite certain that I should do wrong to listen to you any further. I thank you heartily for all your kindness to me; but your words have put an end to our acquaintance. I am going below, and shall remain there till we reach land. Good day, sir.'

And she rose from her seat, and held on to the nearest rope, which had long become a necessary precaution to all on deck who would keep their footing.

'Miss Hurt, you are surely not in earnest!' exclaimed the young man. 'The punishment you would thus inflict upon me for a venial fault is—oh! you cannot guess what it is: you are taking away my life blood.'

'If it really seems so, Mr. Gresham,' answered the girl, firmly, 'the discipline, harsh as it may appear, is only the more necessary to you. I am a friendless girl, and you are a gentleman of fortune. The gulf between us—since you compel me to speak of such a matter—is deeper than any

between yonder crested waves. I depend upon your honour, and because I am sure you would not do a cowardly action, not to follow me.'

With steps so hasty, that they did not permit of his offering her any aid, and catching here and there for support, at ropes and blocks, she reached the cabin stairs in a few seconds, and disappeared.

To say truth, this proceeding had required of Elise Hurt not only courage but self-denial. In her own heart she did not think that there was either wrong or danger in what Mr. Gresham had said to her. She only felt that she ought to think so.

Her bringing-up had been of a prudent and somewhat narrow kind—yet not on that account less adapted to her circumstances, which were narrow also. Her aunt, to whose sole care she had been left from an early age, was a solid, sensible woman—of which Germany has, perhaps, a larger share than most nations—and she well understood that her niece could not afford, as girls more blessed with this world's goods might do, to receive any kindness from strange gentlemen that exceeded the limits of mere civil attention; and, in particular, she had warned her against listening to the first words of flattery, or compliment, unless they were so light as to be dispersed by a wholesome laugh. She had taken care also to instil in Elise's mind a proper understanding of her own position, out of which it was very unlikely that she should be raised by marriage, especially in England, where social distinctions were so strongly marked. This advice, winnowed by the machinery of her delicate nature from its more coarse and calculating fibres, Elise had laid to heart, and was now profiting by. But, at the same time, it cost her not a little to exchange the breezy deck with the comforts that Gresham's hand had provided for her there, for the stifling saloon, where no such pleasant companionship awaited her. And his society had been very pleasant. Most

young ladies appreciate the attentions of a well-bred, handsome young fellow, who, naturally indolent, evidently puts himself out of the way to give them pleasure; his youth and respectful ways are agreeable to them; his honied talk, if it is not insipid, is music to them. And if this is so in the general case, how much more grateful was such an acquaintance to a friendless, almost penniless girl, quite unaccustomed to be made much of, and who had never listened to a compliment, neatly turned, from the lips of any man. She blamed Mr. Gresham's folly for having put it out of her power to enjoy his society any longer; but she forgave him. It was very foolish of him to entertain such feelings as he had expressed to her, of course, but if he really did entertain them; if, as he said, he had merely spoken the simple truth to her out of the fulness of his heart, she must needs pity him. But she pitied herself also.

As for Mr. Gresham, left alone on the slanting deck in undisputed possession of his railway rug, he was furious with himself for having kept no better guard upon his tongue. Any one but himself, he argued, would have had more sense than to insinuate, far less declare, his passion for this simple, innocent girl, on so short an acquaintance. He might well congratulate himself that she had not taken his words as a positive insult; that she had set him down for the fool he was, instead of a scoundrel. It had been the height of self-conceit in him to take it for granted that the grateful acquiescence with which this poor, friendless girl had received his attentions, was a reciprocation of his own ardent feelings. What was there in a great hulking fellow like him, that almost at first sight a modest young woman should have been ready to listen to his protestations of love—for what he had said to her, he admitted, was nothing less. He had picked up her purse for her, it is true; but in returning it to her he had only shown

that he was not a thief—certainly not acquired the right to talk to her as a lover. It was a sign he felt his mistake very seriously, that he did not grumble to himself because he had foregone the delights of Paris and the pleasure of meeting Fred Mayne, his old college friend, there, as had been agreed upon, all for nothing—or for worse than nothing—as the being snubbed by this young woman might well be termed. Miss Elise Hurt was the exclusive object of his reflections and regret. He reproached himself for having gone so far as he had done with her, upon another account, also, which for the present need not be mentioned, especially as if he had succeeded in getting her to listen to him, he would not have experienced much remorse. Moreover, though that was a small thing, in comparison with the main distress and disappointment, he had deprived himself, by his own folly, of a charming companion on the voyage. And such a voyage as it was like to be! The packet, half laden with cattle, was by no means the sort of craft which Mr. Gresham was wont to patronize. He always went by the best steamer and by the shortest route. He was never sea sick; but he did not like to be inconvenienced. And now what had he let himself in for? A voyage at the best, of uncertain duration, in a clumsy vessel, labouring in a raging sea against a gale from the south-west; while at the worst—though to do him justice, he was not one to look on the black side of things—he might find himself united with the object of his affections—at the bottom of the Channel.

CHAPTER VI.

DRIVING SHOREWARD.

GRESHAM was no sailor, and he was by no means easily impressed with the sense of personal dan-

ger ; but, as the gale increased, he could not avoid the suspicion that the *Rhineland* was incompetent to fight against it, though whether this arose from her build, or the weakness of her engines, or the incompetence of her crew, he was no judge. He only knew for certain that she sank lower in the trough of the sea, remained longer than she had at first in those briny depths of the colour and opaqueness of bottle glass, and rose to the surface no longer buoyantly, but, as it were, with a dead lift. His view of matters was essentially that of a landsman, of course, yet it was clear that things were not as they should be. For example, notwithstanding his thick Ulster and the railway rug, he had now scarcely a dry thread on his body, for wave after wave washed the deck, so that it seemed at times to be under water. Seated at the foot of a mast in almost the centre of the vessel, he was in as level a spot as could be attained, yet his feet were as often as not higher than his head, and only by gripping a tautrope could he save himself at every lurch from being swept with the outgoing waters against the bulwarks.

There had been one or two male passengers who, like himself, had preferred the rough usage of the storm to the sights and sounds, and smells that were only too certain to be met with below stairs ; but even these had, sooner or later, sought the shelter of the cabin, save one individual, with bright grey eyes and keen, weather-beaten face, who now ensconced himself close to Gresham. 'When there is war among the elements,' he observed, with a strong American accent, 'man and beast, fore-cabin and saloon passenger, all herd together in presence of the common danger.'

The idea of this individual from the second cabin thinking it necessary to apologise for his intrusion on a privileged locality during what, not only to Mr. Gresham's eyes, but in actual fact, had become little less than a hur-

ricane, tickled that gentleman's sense of humour.

'You have been in a good many gales like this, no doubt?' said he, good naturedly, and also, perhaps, with a secret hope that his companion might reply in the affirmative.

'I have been in a good many gales, yes, *sir*, but not in one like this,' answered the other, slowly. 'This is a most all-fired and catawampsiuous tornado.'

'Do you think the ship will live through it?' inquired Gresham, in as indifferent a tone as he could assume.

'I have not given my consideration, *sir*, to that contingency,' was the reply, delivered with a most philosophic air ; 'I don't care two cents about the ship, which, moreover, is doubtless insured beyond her value ; but if you ask my opinion as to whether you and I will live through this tornado—well, I give it you plump, I don't think we shall. If I was on dry land, and yet in possession of the facts concerning our position, I would lay ten dollars to one against any person on board this ship getting to land alive.'

'God bless my soul!' ejaculated Gresham, half mechanically, half from the serious shock of this communication.

'Yes, that's just what it's come to,' answered the other ; the coolness, not to say the cynicism of whose tone was greatly intensified by a certain prominence in his left cheek which looked as though he were putting his tongue in it, but was really attributable to a plug of tobacco. 'A man—if he's to be called a man—knows how to take the last hard slap of Fate ; the one with which she knocks you down for good and all. But the women, they mostly take to hysterics. There will be sad scenes down there, I reckon,' and he pointed to the cabin. 'It's time for them as has Prayer-books to sport 'em.'

'You are a seafaring man, of course, and I am a landsman,' answered Gresham, gravely ; else I had hoped that

my ignorance of the extent of our danger had magnified it. Why is it you take such a gloomy view of our position ?'

'Well, the *Rhineland* is not *Al*, and few vessels even that are such could bear such a buffeting as this for many hours ; the engines don't work, in my opinion, as they should do ; we're lower in the water than we should be, and I guess there's water on board below stairs. Moreover—but look yonder and judge for yourself. Our captain would not heave that ballast overboard unless he were in great straits.'

Gresham's eye followed the direction of his companion's finger and perceived that one side of the cattle pen had been removed, and a corresponding portion of the ship's bulwarks swung back upon its hinge, so that with every roll of the ship to leeward many sheep and oxen fell into the sea. It was a simple way of unloading, which the position of the ship, now on one side, now on the other, alone could have rendered possible.

'There will be less meat for the English markets,' observed Gresham, resolved not to be outdone in coolness by the representative of Cousin Jonathan.

'There will be also less mouths to eat it,' was the quiet rejoinder.

'Is it not possible to put back ?' inquired Gresham.

'No. To steer one point out of the wind's eye would be to write *Finis*.'

'If the gale doesn't abate, in short, we are dead men.'

'Nay, things are not quite so bad ; if we can presently hold our course to westward, we shall have the wind behind us. Then we shall run as if the devil were kicking us ; and if we are not pooped may find ourselves in Bristol instead of Heaven.'

Though the stranger spoke as if quite indifferent to the alternative, Gresham noticed that his eye watched narrowly every event—or mischance,—for the words were now identical—

that took place on board : the breaking loose of various articles that had been hitherto secured to the deck ; the occasional crashing of the bulwarks ; the lessening load of live stock ; the behaviour of the two men at the wheel, and the gestures of the captain, who, despite wind and wave, stuck like a limpet to his post upon the bridge between the paddle-boxes. He understood from what his companion said that if the ship were once in the Bristol Channel there would be a better chance for her, notwithstanding that she would be exposed to dangers of another nature.

Matters had thus endured for many hours, when the calls of hunger necessitated Gresham's descent into the saloon.

'If you are going to the larder,' said his Transatlantic friend, 'put both meat and drink in your pocket as I do'—and he produced a flask and a loaf—'for you may need it.'

'You mean if we have to take to the boats ? But one of the sailors told me that nothing but a lifeboat could float in such a sea as this.'

'Never mind what the sailor told you. Do what *I* tell you. Depend upon it Providence always takes the most care of those who never throw away a chance.'

There seemed good sense, if not much faith, in this advice ; and Gresham procured certain supplies from the ship's steward accordingly. That functionary was very pale and silent, and took the money without a trace of his usual promptness on such occasions. Although no sailor, he had been too many voyages in the *Rhineland* not to know that there was something greatly amiss with this one.

The passengers in the saloon, too, were silent ; uttering only a moan or a groan as the shock of a wave threw them from their moorings on the sofas. Some of them had a frightened look in their eyes, like that of a hunted creature who knows not whether to fly ; but most had a stern,

grave air. One or two sat hand in hand with their wives, who were weeping silently, but there were very few women present. Gresham glanced into the ladies' cabin as he passed by its open door, and saw Elise Hurt sitting at the corner of the sofa that ran round the room. Her calm, quiet face presented a strange contrast to the sorrowful and despairing looks of her companions.

She rose, and, holding by the little pillars of the cabin, made her way towards him. 'Are matters really so bad, Mr. Gresham,' inquired she, quietly, 'as they are thought to be down here?'

'They are very bad,' he said. 'Would you prefer to come on deck?'

'If I shall not be in the way, I should,' answered she, simply.

The relations between them, it was understood by both, had altered with external circumstances, in the presence of such sudden destruction as threatened them, all prudery disappeared; face to face with death it was moreover impossible that love should again become the topic of conversation.

'Put on every shawl and wrap that you possess,' he gravely said; and she obeyed him.

At the foot of the cabin stairs a lurch more violent than usual shook the vessel, and Elise would have fallen had not the young man clasped her in his arms.

As the vessel lurched a murmur of apprehension arose from the inmates of the saloon. 'What has happened, Mr. Gresham?' she exclaimed.

'I think the ship has changed her course: we are running before the wind.'

They got on deck, and reached their old place of shelter with less of difficulty than Gresham had met with in leaving it; for what he suspected had, in fact, happened. The vessel was now steaming—or rather scudding, for the paddles were of little use—with the gale behind her. The

pitching and the rolling of the ship had somewhat mitigated, and her stern was now receiving the giant blows that had heretofore fallen on her bows. Neither cattle nor sheep now remained on board, and all things that had not been secured to the deck, or formed part of it, had been swept away. The Yankee had gone below, and besides the two men lashed to the wheel, the captain on the bridge, and the sailors at the pumps—which were kept constantly going—the two young people were the only persons who now braved the storm.

Not, however, that the condition of those in the saloon or cabin was much better; for every seam, through the straining of the ship, had begun to leak, and the berths were half full of water.

'Sit here, Elise,' said Gresham, without the least consciousness of having addressed her by her Christian name; 'and do not turn your head or look behind you.'

Being a woman—or perhaps it would be fairer to say, being human—Miss Hurt immediately looked behind her—to behold a sublime spectacle? The sea seemed to be pursuing the ship with open mouth, with the literal intention of swallowing her! Huge mountains of dark green water, fringed with flying foam, were rushing at headlong speed after their trembling prey. It was a chase wherein the odds against the hunted thing were as a thousand to one; for strength and life were failing it. The *Rhineland* flew with amazing speed, but no longer of her own volition.

There was a certain light to starboard, by which it was attempted to steer obliquely, but the ship scarcely answered her helm at all; though this, as it happened was of small importance, for the light was a floating one—the *Hope* lightship, which the gale had driven from her moorings two miles nearer shore. A little canvas, with extreme peril, had been spread in

the forepart of the ship, when she changed her course, to keep her head straight, but this had instantly been split to ribbons. It was plain to the most inexperienced eye that the labouring and groaning vessel was almost *in extremis*.

Suddenly a tremendous sea broke over the bow, sweeping everything, including even the boats, to the after-part of the deck, lifting the very star-board anchor on to the fore-castle, and washing one of the steersmen from the wheel.

That Elise Hurt and Gresham did not share his fate was solely owing to the protection of the mast behind which they were screened. For the moment it seemed that all was over. The steamer, indeed, could no longer be so entitled, for its engines had stopped, the inundation having put the fires out; nor henceforth could the *Rhineland* be termed a vessel—it was a mere log, at the mercy of the winds and waves. Still it floated. Gresham's arm encircled Elise, and drew her closer to him; 'Be of good courage,' he said, 'I see the land.'

For the first time, indeed, the land had become dimly visible by the occasional light afforded by the moon when unobscured by the clouds that raced across her. A long black line of coast—high and rocky—showed it-

self on the northern horizon. There were more people now on deck—the watch below among them—who had been driven from their quarters by the inroad of the waves. Despair and irresolution reigned among them, but not in every case.

'Load the gun,' roared the captain.

All the boats were badly damaged, some having been broken to pieces, and in any case no boat could have been lowered in such a sea. The only chance of rescue was from the land; and it was high time to tell, if haply there should be ears to listen to them, in what miserable straits they stood. The powder, in such confusion, was not easily procured, and the operation of loading was still more difficult. But, somehow or other, it was effected. Then the roar of minute gun after minute gun mixed with the artillery of the gale. Every thud of the cannon sounded like a knell to these poor wretches; till suddenly the hearts of all were lighted up by the sight of a thin light to southward. The consciousness of their peril had been at last conveyed to their fellow creatures on shore, and had been thus acknowledged! The light was that of the beacon that the men of the coastguard had lit upon the quay at Halcombe Point.

(To be continued.)

L'HOMME QUI CRIE.

BY FRED. A. DIXON.

CHAPTER I.

SOME three miles across the graceful sweep of the Bay of Tadousac, where the mighty rush of the cold deep waters of the Saguenay into the St. Lawrence is as one of the world's arteries, countless ebbs and flows of tide, ages of ice rift and land slip, of rain wear and storm tear have worn down the ranges of the grey Laurentian mountains into sand and boulder, and thrown up a reef whose treacherous ridge breaks for miles into the great river of the north here as the crow flies some 15 miles broad, and Lark Reef is but one of the many deadly traps which the mighty, cruel river sets on all hands to catch the daring invaders of its regal privacy. Rocky peaks suddenly upbreking from waters of tremendous depth, crafty shoals, whirling eddies and headstrong currents, with resistless tides which sweep up for three hundred miles and bear on their broad backs the storms and winds of the ocean, would tell fine tales of many a bark caught and battered to its death. Last but by no means least of its terrors are the dense fogs which for hours and even days form an impenetrable veil beyond which may be safety or destruction, but within whose shrouding there is nothing but doubt and danger. Light cannot pierce them, science cannot dispel them. The sense of sight being useless, the sense of hearing comes to the rescue, and science has summoned the genius of noise in aid of imperilled humanity. Through the thick mist one hears the frequent bomb of a can-

non, warning with giant but kindly voice of the razor-like reef of slate to the south, while the harsh discord of a mighty steam whistle shrieks out 'danger ahead!' from the north; and to supplement these great voices of the children of the mist comes ever and again a moan which though feeble is so mournfully suggestive of mishap that vessels might instinctively bear away from its neighbourhood without touch of helm—this last is the voice of 'l'homme qui crie.'

On the portico of the Tadousac hotel, fronting with its white pleasant face curving bay and jutting rock and wide-stretch of water which lies between it and the glint of Cacouna's house-roofs, stood a man of middle height and more than middle age, with a smooth bald head, reddish whiskers and close shaven chin, grey shooting suit and general air of self-reliance—in the aggregate, evidences of British origin and business respectability, engaged in carefully examining the distant water through the big glass of the hotel. His name, as it appeared on the hotel register, was John Seabold, and nationality being self-established there was nothing left for consideration amongst the good gossips whom the summer sun and their husbands' and fathers' partiality for fishing had brought to that trout and salmon haunted neighbourhood, but the abstruse and unfathomable mystery of his business. He was not a grocer, wholesale or retail; he had been sounded on the subject of sugars and had given forth so uncertain a sound that his ignorance of that business

was placed beyond doubt. Similarly he had been weighed in the balance of the stock exchange, and found wanting in even the rudiments of that mysterious jargon. He was not a geologist prospecting for precious metals or prediluvian remains. Being tested for the presence of the necessary knowledge he had confessed to utter confusion respecting Eocene, Miocene, and Pleistocene periods, and was in the dark as to whether a trilobite was a crustacean or a mammal. Upon the seductive charms of the 'real frize brown hackle,' as opposed to those of the common red fly, he was conclusively silent. He was no fisherman. What was he?

'Do you make her out yet, sir?' said one of a group of young men, lazily lounging, cigar in mouth, in their easy chairs behind him. Mr. Seabold stopped a moment to cover his bald head with a silk pocket handkerchief before replying.

'D— these mosquitoes!' he said. 'Excuse me, but I can't help swearing. If Job had been plagued with these fellows he'd have sworn too. Yes, I see her smoke. She's a good two hours off yet.'

'You don't get mosquitoes in England, then?' queried one of the party.

'Not by the cubic inch as you do here.'

'Oh! you'll get used to that in time.'

'Never. My head is too bald. If my nine months here had been nine years it would be all the same. I wasn't born with my skin tanned to leather.'

'Nine months! Why, how you must long to get back.'

'Well, yes; I do. There are one or two things I miss.'

'Yes? and they are?'

'Well, I should like to see once more a piece of yellow broom. A hedge, a chalk cliff, and a fried sole.'

'All matters of taste. I prefer our granite and limestone to chalk, and broiled salmon is as good as fried sole any day.'

All laughed at the retort, and the one who had taken the lead in the conversation whispered to his friends: 'He's a Ramsgate fishmonger.'

A fisher Mr. Seabold certainly was, but not of fish; a seller of fish he was too—queer were some of the fish he sold, and queer were some of his sells. He was a private detective from London, keen on private business.

As he stood presently on the wharf, so jealously guarded by the swift waters of the Saguenay that the steamer, with her freight of tourists 'doing the Saguenay,' had some difficulty in making her way to its side, an observant onlooker would have said that the keen clear eyes which so closely scanned the crowd of passengers had more of business in them than such a pleasure haunt required, while the flash of recognition which lit them up for a moment as they fell on one member of the party who was then coming down the gangway would have told a tale, which it was clear, by the indifference assumed directly after, their owner did not consider it desirable then to make public. The unconscious subject of Mr. John Seabold's interest was a young man of about eight-and-twenty, tall and handsome, with a light, graceful moustache and the dress and bearing of a gentleman. He was followed by a mulatto servant, carrying a despatch box and a bundle of wraps, while a quantity of luggage, gun-cases and fishing-rods showed his intention of making a protracted visit. Any one in Mr. Seabold's vicinity would have said that that gentleman, as he stood with his back to the vessel, apparently studying intently the whirls and twists of the water round the pier, had positively chuckled. They would not have been mistaken.

Early the next morning society at the hotel would have been full of surmises and genteel excitement at the disappearance of its one mystery, Mr. Seabold, but for the fact that society was charmed with the discovery

that a merciful Providence had cast like some rich pearl, upon their sands a gentleman whose manners showed breeding and refinement, and whose surroundings were rich in suggestions of wealth and good taste. A judicious pumping of his servant, and occasional remarks dropped by himself, brought the information that the new comer was a gentleman of fortune and property in South Carolina; and, further, that the slender fingers, one of which carried an opal of great fire and beauty, had seen service in the rough days when, with the clash of steel and rattle of rifles, the blood of the south had mingled with the blood of the north in deadly quarrel, and the passion which burnt up the hearts of brothers in tongue and land was cooled only with the cooling of the hacked and bullet-riddled bodies of its wretched victims. Mr. Francis Devor, from being an object of interest, became an object of adoration, and when it was known that his plans for the season comprised an extended stay in the little place to which he had been directed in search of health and good fishing, the young lady visitors were in a flutter of excitement, and the dainty morning costumes which their trunks forthwith disgorged would have made an impression on an Icelander. Frankness itself in other respects, Mr. Devor was remarkably reticent upon the all-important subject of his domestic relationships. To the remarkably insinuating, but withal delicate and tactical, suggestions of enterprising mammas he answered with playful evasion. No corkscrew could have been more gently persistent than they; no cork could have held its secrets closer than he. Life, therefore, still offered its riddle, with the possibility of a prize for the solver—was Mr. Devor married?

Meanwhile, the morning boat, coming down on swift tide from distant Chicoutimi, had carried off on its smoky wings the now jubilant, because successful, Mr. Seabold, from

whom, in the course of a few hours, the telegraph flashed the following pithy message:—

‘From Seabold to Menteith,

‘Brevoort House, New York.

‘Bird arrived. Tadousac. Stays one month. I await orders. Quebec.’

In response to which came back a still more curt reply, which ran:—

‘Menteith to Seabold, Quebec.

‘Wait.’

At the same time a letter was sent by the same person, the nature of which is sufficiently explained by the following response:—

‘Philadelphia.

‘DEAR OLD MAN.—Of course you may count on me—on every bone of my body, or particle of skin upon them, if necessary. Since you will play Don Quixote, I presume that, for old friendship’s sake, I must be content to figure as Sancho Panza; but get the confounded business over as soon as possible.

‘Your’s ever,

‘DONALD CRANSTOUN.’

In accordance with instructions received, Mr. John Seabold amused himself as well as he could beneath the shadow of the massive walls of quaint and glorious old Quebec, a matter not without some difficulty for a man constituted as himself, with no archaeological tastes, but little eye for the beautiful in nature, and no acquaintances to aid him in passing away the idle moments. An occasional descent into the haunts of the river police, and a critical examination into the details of the system by which the manners, if not morals, of an immense population of migratory Jack tars of all nationalities were kept in wholesome restraint, tended to the gratification of his professional instincts; and he was occasionally sadly tempted to exercise a little professional dexterity in the loosening of the gordian knots, which now and then came under his notice. Mr. Frank Devor, on the other hand, found life

at the pretty seaside haunt his physician had selected for him far from monotonous. It is true that, as the season went on, he developed certain characteristics, which coming under the notice of the staid matrons at the hotel, somewhat reduced their anxiety to mate their fair doves to what might not impossibly turn out to be a bird of the hawk species; while as for the men, honest good fellows at heart, who had simply come to try their pet flies upon the speckled beauties of the wild waters before them, entertaining no very great anxiety as to the life of boredom they inflicted upon their wives and daughters, shut up in the dulness of an isolated hotel, they voted him no true fisherman; and when, with a gleam of his white teeth, he day after day pleaded excuse upon excuse for not sharing the, to them, pleasurable hardships of toilsome hours spent in pursuit of their favourite pastime, they did not hesitate to express their opinion freely as to his womanish tastes and ways.

No doubt his ways were womanish, and that a lounge on the gaunt crags of the "Red Rocks," the great porphyritic spar which forms the far end of the pretty harbour, sketch book in hand—there for excuse not use—with a cigarette eternally between his handsome lips, gave him more satisfaction than even the tug of the rushing salmon upon his line could have afforded. Need it be added, seeing that he was what he was, that the younger ladies becoming impressed with the charms of nature, resolved themselves into a company of strolling artists, and his studies of the sublime were seldom unaccompanied by an element often ridiculous—ridiculous, that is, to the cynical on-looker.

But it was in the delicious cool of the summer evening, when the awful chasm of the mighty Saguenay had swallowed up the last sun, and the ripple of the incoming tide was the only sound which broke the stillness of the moon and star-lighted scene,

except when the clumsy roll of a school of porpoises, or the flutter of a party of playful seals dashed the waters of the bay into sound, that the hero of maidenly romance, matronly doubt, and paternal contempt, rose to the zenith of his attractiveness. Then, kneeling in Indian fashion in the stern of his birch-bark canoe, with the moon shining full upon his well-cut features, he would pause in the regular lift and fall of his paddle to murmur words that tickle, and words that soothe, to drive back with his dreamy and handsome eyes, half shut, eyes which nevertheless seemed to fascinate the very soul of the listeners lying enchanted at his feet, into that romantic world of pain and glory, torture, despair, and mad excitement, the days of his soldier life. Often, as his soft musical voice would tell in clear incisive accents of some deed of deadly daring witnessed, or of some bold exploit shared in, or hardship endured, the girl he addressed would feel herself irresistibly drawn forward with a strange unnatural feeling which she could not stop to analyse, and would not if she could, to meet the burning masterful orbs, which like the glittering death in the head of the serpent seemed to compel her near approach; then he, with a smile of a beautiful Satan would say:

'Take care! Take care! You will upset the canoe if you move, and then where should we be?'

And she, falling back again with a little sigh of relief would echo dreamily—'Where indeed.'

It has been experimentally and decisively proved by the close investigation of able scientists and philosophers, that there is more mischief in one meek and modest moonbeam than in ten gallons of your imprudent sunshine, imperial measure.

Occasionally there would sweep down upon river and bay, village and hill-side, a misty veil of fog, so thick that a few steps from door or friend would place the stepper in the land of nowhere, with himself as sole denizen.

Then, from over the water, subdued but not suppressed by the mist, would come the harsh, deep howl from the steam whistle on Red Island light-ship, nine miles away, and the heavy boom of the cannon from Green Island, off the opposite shore, while across the bay came the sound of the fog horn from the new lighthouse on the end of Lark Reef.

Mr. Devor, 'La Diva,' as some wag in the hotel christened him, once, after one of these spells of fog, when the curiosity of the visitors had been excited by the weird uncanny nature of the warning voice from the reef, proposed and organized a picnic to the mysterious spot, and a bright, sunny day saw the party in one of the pleasure boats kept by the fishermen of the place, skimming the waters in the direction of the lighthouse.

Jean Baptiste Raoul, lighthouse keeper, and his pleasant, kindly little wife greeted their visitors in the queer patois of the district—French, with a dash of distorted English—but with a welcome such as Robinson Crusoe might have given, visitors being but rarely seen on the reef. The high, white square tower was duly admired, and the snug little building close by, where the keeper lived. Presently, with an air of no small pride in the instrument, Jean took down from the wall of the cottage a long tin tube, looking extremely like an overgrown squirt with the nozzle off, bearing the government mark, and, drawing out the piston, produced that prolonged, melancholy note which had so often excited their wonderment. 'Ah!' said Mr. Devor, 'you, then, are the man who cries.'

Jean laughed. 'Yes,' he said, 'this is my voice. It isn't very sweet, but it's very useful.'

Looking out upon the long stretch of boulder-strewn sand to the east of the point where they stood, now, at low water, exposed, and at their feet to the huge worn and rounded masses of rock which composed the islet it-

self, and which could be seen stretching under the water like the vertebrae of some huge snake for three miles beyond, it was easy enough to believe in the use of such a voice. One of the party said so.

'Look here,' said Jean, stepping forward and pointing successively to all points of the compass, 'rocks everywhere, danger everywhere; miss the foot of this reef and Vaches patch catches you, unless you are careful; get into this current with the ebb and you will be lucky if you don't go down a hundred fathoms below the bed of the St. Lawrence before you find the bed of the Saguenay. A western breeze with the tide running out over yonder will drive you down upon Red Island, though perhaps you might get ground to pieces on the slate of Green Island instead. Out there to the west, those three humps of rock they call the Brandy Pots are not pleasant neighbours in an easterly gale, and the Pilgrims would send you on a pretty pilgrimage you may be sure. Oh! it is a wild bit of navigation, this.'

'How terrible,' said one of the ladies.

'Yes; but it's as safe as the inside of a church, after all, if a man knows his way about. He can bring his ship in from the sea on the darkest night; it's as easy as walking down a street in Quebec.'

'As long as the wind is all right.'

'Yes; the winds and currents knock a man's calculations into nonsense.'

'You know this coast well, then?' said Mr. Devor.

'Pretty well,' said Jean, with a touch of pride in his voice. 'I've been on it, man and boy, for fifty years.'

'Then you could take any one across if they wanted to go, I suppose?'

'Easily enough—day or night, for that matter—down to the gulf if he wanted to go. But I could not leave this,' and he pointed to the lighthouse.

The suggestion was now made that

the lighthouse itself should be explored, and its lighting apparatus examined. Madame, however, came forward, with many apologies, to say that the basement was fitted up as a sleeping-room and was at that moment in the occupation of a strange gentleman, who had come over for the sake of the fishing off the reef. Madame was grieved at the disappointment, but the party would forgive. The party did forgive, and soon separated, some to spread luncheon on a big boulder, others to stroll on the rocks.

A few minutes after, as Frank Devor was standing on a large boulder near the end of the point, looking abstractedly into the eddies, one of the young ladies of the party, a pretty, graceful Canadian girl, upon whom he had conferred more of attention, burning glances and whispered confidences than mere friendship required, and who, poor girl, had not proved as leathern-hearted as she should have been for her own ease of mind, approached him and in an undertone said :

'What has come over you? You have quite lost your spirits. I suppose it is the melancholy noise of that horrid instrument.'

'Perhaps it is,' he said. 'The fact is I have a strange feeling of trouble impending. The moment I set foot on this place I seemed to feel a repugnance to it. These rocks here,' he continued, looking down at the great boulder on which he stood, 'seem to have a strange fascination for me. I didn't wish to come down to them at first, but I couldn't resist.'

'Oh! you are superstitious, after all, I see,' she said, with a bright laugh, trying, as a kindly woman would do, to coax him into a pleasanter frame of mind. 'The fact is, your artist eye was allured by the beautiful tints of red and brown and green on these boulders, and the white wooden lighthouse yonder, and your feet objected to the wet rocks.'

'Perhaps,' he said.

'What,' she said, as they turned to go back to the rest of the party, 'what did you mean by asking so particularly about crossing the river. You are not thinking of leaving us, are you?' She looked up shyly into his face as she spoke.

His cheek slightly flushed as he replied, pressing the hand he was holding to help its owner over the stones.

'Leave you? no, but I may try to shake off this fancy of mine by a few days' trip to the other side.' He emphasized the 'you' somewhat, and the pressure of the hand savoured of a very warm species of Platonism. She was satisfied—more than satisfied.

'Yes,' he went on as they passed the lighthouse, 'I must get away from here. I am growing nervous again.' He did not explain his observation, and at the moment the door of the lighthouse opened, and out stepped, mopping his bald head with a silk pocket-handkerchief, Mr. John Seabold.

CHAPTER II.

DAYBREAK on the reef. Not like other daybreaks this. The place and its surroundings insisted on a dramatic dawn. The curtain, a heavy veil of mist which hung over lighthouse and river, shut out the glories of the grand spectacle 'The Birth of the Sun God,' which the enterprising manager, Nature, was preparing to exhibit in the east. The sullen, stealthy lap of the tide, now beginning to return, and the twitter of hundreds of the small birds which gave its name to the reef, were the only sounds heard. On the side of the point furthest from the Saguenay, a fisherman's boat, with sails hanging idly against the mast, rose and fell gently, anchored to the rocks, while its owner, stretched at as full length as the tiny cabin allowed, made up arrears of sleep as only a dog or a fisherman can.

A quarter of a mile down the reef, two men, one dressed in a rough pilot coat, and the other with a light Scotch plaid over his shoulders, were pacing the wet and boulder-strewn ground. The former spoke—

'Daybreak he said in his telegram. Daybreak on the tenth. A quarter of a mile from Lark reef lighthouse. It is time they were here, Cran.'

'I wish they would come. Ugh! how cold and raw it is,' and the speaker drew his plaid more closely about his ears, and thrust his hands into his pockets.

'I say,' he went on. 'Suppose your wonderful Seabold has failed for once, Colin.'

'I don't suppose anything of the kind. Seabold is a man who succeeds.' The speaker, Colin Menteith, notwithstanding his tone of assurance, peered anxiously in the direction of the Tadousac Bay.

'Well, all I can say is, that if he does succeed in bringing his man out of a warm bed on a morning like this he is no ordinary fellow.'

'Listen!' said his friend; and through the mist came the sound of paddles, though no canoes could yet be seen, and a voice was heard calling to know whether that was the place where they got their larks.

'Not quite. A little further on yet,' replied another voice.

The two men on the reef listened.

'That's Seabold. It's all right,' said the one called Colin, and his face flushed, and a queer tigerish look came into his grey eyes which boded trouble for somebody.

'Get back to the boat,' he said, speaking hurriedly and in a whisper which sounded like the suppressed roar of a wild beast. 'Get back to the boat. I'll join you presently,' and he waved him off with his hand.

His friend looked at him.

'For God's sake, Colin, don't forget your promise. Only hands remember. Don't murder him.'

'Hands are all I want,' was the

reply, and a grim smile came over the face of the speaker.

Cranstoun, for he it was, stepped rapidly and silently away into the mist.

It was clear that Nature's spectacle was to be but the back ground for humanity's drama.

'Hillo!' came from the water, as a flock of small dun-coloured birds rose from the rocks about a hundred yards off. 'There they are.' It was the voice of Frank Devor, and a moment after the silent listener on the reef heard the canoe touch the rocks.

'I shall get out here,' the voice said.

'Well, I shall go on a little higher up.' And the speaker directly afterwards passed in his canoe, faintly seen through the mist which was now gradually lifting. Mr. Devor, having hauled his canoe up on the rocks, was engaged in fastening his belt of cartridges round his waist; his gun already taken from its case and loaded, leaning against the side of the canoe.

He was whistling cheerfully, and did not observe the approach of any one till, looking round, he saw, standing on a boulder near him, a tall, muscular figure in a pilot coat and Scotch cap. 'Well, my man,' he said, glancing round, 'what do you want?'

The figure made no reply.

'Oh, you're the man who cries up, eh? Well, Mr. L'Homme Qui Crie,' he went on, gayly, 'if you can't cry without your voice, you'd better go and fetch it.' The tall figure still continued intent. Mr. Devor was attracted by the silence as if it had been speech—which indeed it was. He turned round and read that in the steady stern eyes meeting his own which made him put his hand upon his gun. There was a suggestion of madness about this man's conduct. The statue opened its lips and spoke, pointing to the gun.

'Keep that for by-and-by,' it said. 'I have something to settle first.' The voice was cold and hard; a slight

curve of the lip accompanied it; it was not reassuring. Was it the recollection of a something meriting settlement which the words he heard had called from some inner cell of his brain, some microscopic picture of face or deed which, at the summons, had forced its way through the load of other pictures of other faces and other deeds awaiting their turn to be called from the microsmic to the gigantic, from the hidden to the known, from servitude to mastership, which made him put his gun down and answer, with a nervous laugh? He did both.

'You're a strange fellow,' he said. 'What can you want with me? I don't owe you anything.'

'You lie! You do!' came back the reply, still coldly and quietly.

This was no ordinary man—his grievance of no ordinary kind. Devor's mind ran with the swiftness of lightning over his wild *roué* past without connecting any incident with the face before him. Men, and women too, he had wronged, but on this man surely he had never set eyes before. He was right. He felt the friendly form of his revolver lying ready in his breast pocket before answering—the action not being unobserved by the eagle eyes resting on him. His tone was bolder now, as he said with raised voice, 'Come, come, sir, you mustn't try to play the bully with me. If I am your debtor, as you say, and it is a just claim, why I'll pay it.'

'It is a just claim, God knows, and you will pay it.'

'What is it for?'

'A life.'

Devor smiled contemptuously.

'Sir,' he said, 'You must be mad or dreaming. I have never taken lives or purses. If that is all you want you had better apply to the nearest lunatic asylum. I can do nothing for you. If you don't go, I shall call for assistance.'

'You may call, but no one will hear you; no one can see you in this mist, thank God.'

Devor drew back, with his hand in his breast pocket.

'Who, in the D——'s name, are you, sir?' he said.

His visitor put his hand to his breast and drew out a small gold locket. He opened it, and held it out to the other. It contained on one side the portrait, painted in water-colours, of a young girl with sunny brown hair, and the fresh bloom of sweet maidenhood merging into sweeter womanhood on her cheeks; the other side contained a lock of soft brown hair. Devor held out his hand to take it for closer examination—it was instantly withdrawn.

'Touch that with the tip of your fingers and I'll kill you, you scoundrel. By heaven I will!' roared out its possessor.

'Ah! I see,' said Devor, coolly.

'Only some woman's face.'

Menteith eyed him with a look of disgust.

'Do you know whose?' he said.

'Can't say that I do. I've seen so many in my time.'

'This is the face of Alice Merinden—of Alice Merinden when she was eighteen, and before she knew you. Now do you know?' He spoke very slowly, controlling, evidently with difficulty, the passion which possessed him. Devor's cheek, naturally sallow, slightly flushed, and his eyes, which till then had boldly challenged the searching gaze of the other, now drooped. He turned his head away with a slight shrug of the shoulder.

'Really, sir,' he said, 'you have the advantage of me. I may, of course, have met this lady you speak of, but what of that—how can our chance acquaintance affect you?'

'Chance acquaintance! Look here! I have not had your movements watched and your dishonourable past unearthed for nothing. I know all.'

'Dear me,' said Devor, 'so you have had me watched, have you. What delicate attention! And what did

your resurrectionist discover, may I ask? This is like a scene in a play; stage directions—lights low, enter ghost!

The speaker was more nearly fitting himself to play the part of a ghost than he seemed to think. With a violent effort of self-control, the other replied:

'Four years ago you were on a visit to a family named Derocher, on the banks of the Hudson?'

'You may be right—but since I am to be catechised by you, you will oblige me with your name.'

'You shall learn it in time.'

'As you please,' said Devor, coolly taking a seat on the edge of the canoe, and, placing his gun across his knees, he began to play with the trigger in an abstracted manner, which was not without meaning. Menteith went on, regardless of the action.

'In this house there was a young lady of great beauty and brilliant attainments, whom family troubles, caused by the war, had compelled to earn her bread as companion and governess. Colonel Derocher had been an intimate friend of her father's, and when she was left without home or male protector of her own family she found with him a kindly and loving shelter. This was Alice Merinden.'

'A very interesting story, this of yours, upon my word.'

'It is,' said the other, gravely.

'She was a girl of proud and independent spirit, and would not accept aid from any one, and the only person who had the right to offer her a home was away at the antipodes, seeking in the sheep farms of Australia the means of making one for her.'

'Oh! so you were in Australia sheep farming, eh,' said Devor. With the consciousness of firearms so ready to hand, his spirits rose to the point of chaffing his tormentor. Menteith, in the sadness of his recollections, seemed to forget his presence.

'Then you came,' he went on, and

his voice deepened and trembled slightly, 'devil that you were, with your handsome face, and clever tongue, and all your knowledge of the world, and you set yourself to win this poor girl; to draw her heart out to you, that you might use her store of love for your own ends and not for her happiness. Was it likely that a simple, innocent child like that could help trusting so honest-seeming and passionate a love as you offered her?'

'Oh!' said Devor, 'women always mistake passion for love. They can't help it.'

'Then when her love was all your own, you traded upon it, like the fiend you are, and she consented to run away with you to Chicago, where the marriage might be solemnised. How it was performed you know well. There was such deadly intent in his voice that Devor was silent. Menteith went on.

'How would you know what became of her? Brutal and vicious as you were, the poor child's love, under your blows and cruelty, soon turned to utter loathing, and from the day when in your drunken spite you told her the story of her marriage ceremony and the clever fraud your villainy had played on her, you have never seen her or her baby. I have.'

'Indeed,' said Devor, with a poor semblance of indifference.

'Yes, she wrote me, God bless her for it, to come to her, she was ill, dying, she said. She had something of interest to tell me. Fortunately, the letter reached me in time, and, as God made her and you marred her, she died in my arms.' The poor fellow's voice seemed to choke for an instant, but only for an instant. His next words were uttered with the firmness of an avenging angel.

'That night I swore that my life and wealth should be devoted to finding you, and punishing you, and at last the time has come. You deserve to die the death of a dog, but you shall have the same chance for your

life that I give myself for my own. I have pistols ready yonder, and you and I will stand at ten paces' distance, please God, in as many minutes.'

With the prospect of immediate action he had grown grimly calm. Devor had long weighed the strength of the man before him, measured his brawny shoulders, and calculated his own chances. Seemingly quiescent and careless, he was ready at an instant's warning to swing the muzzles of his breech-loader round and to pull the triggers. His chances were decidedly the best—so, with a supercilious sneer, he said :

'Thank you, my man, but I don't go out with people I don't know. Besides, what is it all about. Only a governess or a nursemaid, or something of that sort.'

Before the words were out of his mouth, with one bound Menteith had him by the throat. He had, indeed, time to pull the trigger, but the spring made was too sudden to allow of shifting the mouth of the gun, the shot only grazed Menteith's side, and the gun dropped on the rocks at their feet. Strong and wiry as Devor was, he was a mere baby in the hands of the muscular Highlander, to whom passion had added double strength, and in whom the instinct of destruction was now the sole sentiment for the time he was mad ; with his eyes and tongue obtruding, the wretched man under his clutch tried repeatedly to stab his opponent with a hunting knife he had managed to draw from his belt, once indeed he succeeded, but only once. As the two men swayed from side to side on the uncertain foothold the ground afforded in perfect silence, no one at a little distance, had the mist allowed them to be seen, would have imagined what a deadly struggle was going on. At last, by a gigantic effort, the Highlander heaved his foe high over his head, one loud cry of agony was heard, and the next moment a bleeding, crushed and senseless form, a mere shapeless heap, lay on

the wet rocks over which the tide was rapidly rising ; its face half stuck between two big boulders and the neck horribly distorted : it was broken. Vengeance had indeed fallen upon the selfish, handsome roué. He was dead, killed by the messenger of the gods. Menteith, unconscious of everything around him sank, his open mouth gasping for air, upon a big stone, with eyeballs glaring in a fixed glassy stare upon the dreadful object below him. He sat for a long time with his face resting on his hands, stupidly indifferent to the consequences of his act, thinking of nothing, scarcely conscious of life. Meanwhile, the tide rose higher and higher. Whirls and eddies sprang up and played with bits of drift wood and fragments of birch bark borne down by the broad streams of the Saguenay. The incoming tide had a hard fight for the mastery every time it came up, and the force of the current, ever driven back and ever returning to the charge, made great waves along the rocky fringe of the reef, which swept into the greedy waters all that is found there. As Menteith watched, he saw first the hair of his victim lapped and waved to and fro by the water, then the head itself began to nod slowly backward and forward, as though a new and perhaps purer soul had sprung with the touch of the waves, into the home abandoned by its stained and abashed sister. Soon, as the waves gathered strength, it seemed, as though boldness came to them, to sport with the dreadful thing which lay there, with such pretence of human majesty and so little of its energy. They leaped upon it, ran under it, lifted it up and dropped it down, played with its fingers and arms till they looked like the snake limbs of an octopus, and at last, with a triumphant effort, slid their new found treasure from the smooth slippery rock on which it lay, and bore it off with many a queer quaint twist, and turn to join in a giddy waltz where its partners the drift wood and the bits of

grass and weed saw it slowly sucked down by the weight of the heavy belt of cartridges round its waist, till it vanished into the awful unfathomed depths below, where no human eye could see it, no human power reach it. Then the canoe lying higher up was seized, soon shaken from its resting place and floated merrily down the current, out into the rush where the fight between the tide and river waged fiercest. And then the waves turned with the bravery born of success upon a new object. Menteith, the fascination of the dreadful spot being gone, rose with a sigh and turned his steps towards his own boat. As if Heaven had sent its own veil, solely for the purpose of shrouding the deed of its own executioner, the mist slowly rose, and the morning sun shone as brightly on rock, and lighthouse, and river, with the fair bay of Tadousac glinting and sparkling in the distance, with its white hotel not yet awake, and its quaint and ancient little church standing out boldly against a background of grey mountain and yellow sand ridge, just as though no minister of God's justice had visited the spot in the early dawn of day.

CHAPTER III.

CHRISTMAS Eve in Quebec; quaint, dear, old, historic Quebec. The city is looking at its very best as the representative city of a land where snow reigns for a third of the year. Other cities may boast of summer charms, but Quebec, glorious under its summer sun, is enchanting under its winter snows. All is life and fun and bustle to-night, and the streets, where the snow is so dry with frost that it is kicked before the foot of the passer-by like sand, are filled with crowds of people making preparation for the genial morrow. Fabrique Street and St. Johns are alive with sleighs dashing along the narrow road-

way or cleverly creeping up the icy slope past the Esplanade. From farms and villages, dotted all about the white landscape and snugly perched on the sides of the mountain ranges which guard the city; from straggling Beaufort, from St. Foye and the two Lorettes, come sleighs of all kinds and fashions, from the queer little red cariole of the small farmer, with its coarse buffalo robes, to the well-appointed graceful vehicle whose glossy black bear-skin sweeps the snow behind it. The air is melodious with the sound of sleigh bells. Here, tuned to a sweet harmonious jangle, a group, silver-gilt, red-tasselled, adorns the proud backs of the splendid greys which are whirling wealth home from its Christmas-tree shopping, while close by there comes a single, feeble tinkle from the neck of a plucky little beast which is drawing a load of wood for Christmas fires on a home-made *traineau*, and whose owner, red-capped and blanket-coated, trudges patiently by its side with many a cheering 'va donc!' meditating hopefully on the prospects of a sale.

Looking down from Durham Terrace, the warm lights peeping from under the steep tin-covered roofs of the houses far below, upon which the snow cannot rest, the wide stretch of the river, now bearing not a ship on her dark cold bosom, but not yet frozen over, though soon to be so if the Fates are kind; the high banks and houses of Levis, snow-covered but dotted with fire-light and lamp-light across the water, with all their suggestions of life and cheerfulness, cold and misery, of man defying nature, and nature, still and deadly, biding her time to catch him unawares. All these things make up a picture upon which a man may look long and think long. From one of the windows of a house close by a man was looking and thinking; for the better part of four months he had had but little chance of doing either.

When Colin Menteith, guided by

instinct, stumbled in a foolish drunken fashion into the stern of the fisherman's boat, where his friends were awaiting him, he fell into a sleep which lasted till, one day his natural self awoke once more, to find a body so weakened that not a muscle could be found with strength to lift a finger from the bed on which he was lying; with all his brown curly hair clipped and shaved off, and with cheeks so sunken and eyes so hollow that it was only a matter of wonder that the soul ever found again a body so much changed for the worse. He had had an attack of brain fever. Fortunately, Cranstoun was in the boat when he had reached it, and, comprehending more than he saw, he had conveyed his poor friend up to Quebec, though with infinite difficulty, till he was able to place him in comfortable quarters, and under medical care. How terrible had been the struggle for life, when, the brain on fire with excitement, allowed no moment of rest to the poor worn-out body. Seeing, with the vividness of its original horrible reality, a struggle with a foe who did not exist, feeling the stabs of a knife which was not even a shadow, heaving up on high, in arms which soon ceased to possess the power of raising even themselves, the sinewy athletic frame of his phantom opponent—hearing that horrible scream of agony, the voice of the real 'homme qui crie,' ringing through ears which in truth heard nothing; and then, with one superhuman effort, dashing the hateful form on to the cold wet rocks, when his own bed was the hardest spot present to receive the creature of his fancy—what wonder that, strong man as he was, mind destroyed matter and life hung by a thread. Then, for hours, he would sit up in his bed perfectly still, watching with glaring eyes the twirling of eddies and currents as they rushed with resistless force around and around—poor soul!—his bedroom. He would look on, panting, while the dreadful head,

with its load of brown hair nodded backwards and forwards in the playful clutch of the waves, and as it slid away to join the merry dance of driftwood he would shriek at it till it vanished from a gaze which had known nothing of its presence into a whirl of water which existed only in imagination. Then—he would begin the whole scene over again! Fortunately no particular excitement had been caused by the disappearance of Frank Devor. He had gone out in a birch bark canoe, to shoot on the reef, before daybreak, a rash thing for a novice to do at any time, and a particularly rash act in a heavy mist. His canoe had been found, half filled with water, far down the river, it was empty. A 'sad accident' had occurred, and Mr. Devor was 'drowned.' So the newspapers said, and they ought to know. The Saguenay River contradicted the story. The doctors at Quebec, of whom Cranstoun anxiously enquired respecting the origin of these strange hallucinations of his friend's brain, were quite authoritative upon the subject; and their lucid explanations of how, in inflammatory disease of the brain, the ganglia connecting the sensory nerves from the eye with the cerebral centres of vision and the gray matter of the frontal convolutions, were capable of producing most realistic impressions upon the brain, which had no element of reality in fact, were most edifying and satisfactory to the listener. Mr. Cranstoun's friend had probably, they conjectured, been a great reader of novels. Mr. Cranstoun admitted that he was.

As Menteith, sitting, weakly enough, but still sanely, in his invalid's chair, looks dreamily out in the depressing dusk of evening into the cold world beyond his window, the warm fire-light and lighted lamps within trying in vain to coax him into kindlier thoughts, a tiny tap comes to his door, and, after a severe struggle with the

handle, a little three-year-old girl puts her golden head into the room, and having entered, and, with a backward push of her whole small body's weight, shut the door with a loud slam, a delicate notification to the invalid's ears of her presence there, and one duly appreciated, says, by way probably of a concession to the politenesses of society, 'May I tum in?'

'Tum in, indeed!' he says. 'Well, I should say you are in already. What do you think?'

They both laugh over this big joke, and the mite, who carries a doll with the pinkest of cheeks, tawniest of hair and bluest of eyes, cuddled up to her own wee breast like the miniature woman she is, to say nothing of a big picture book of nursery tales under the other arm, runs across the room to his chair, and, first depositing her load upon his knees, noisily drags another chair to his side as a means of mounting to the same blissful eminence.

'Well, little witch,' he says, stroking the golden head fondly, 'and what have you got to say to me?'

'Oh, I've dot sumpsin to say to zoo pesently.'

'Oh, now! let it be now,' he answers. 'I implore you, fair maid, not "pesently." I hate pesently.'

Then, after a pretty affectation of finding the place for him in her book by the letterpress rather than by the pictures, she descended from her perch and, with hands folded decorously behind her little back, enchants the ears of her audience by reciting, in a manner print can but faintly express, the well-beloved of children ditty:

'Sin' a song o' sispence,
Pot it till o' hie,
Sor an' tenty bat birds
Bate in a pie.
When the pie was opened
The birds be dan to sin',
Wasn't that a dainty dis'
To set before the tin'.'

'If you don't come and kiss me at once,' he says, 'I shall go mad.'

She is quite accustomed to his chaff. 'Be twiet, there's some more,' is

all the response she makes to his appeal.

'Some more is there? On with the steam then.'

His hand involuntarily plays about his watch-chain, and the locket his fingers open shows a fair young girl face opposite to a lock of soft, brown hair, wonderfully like to the face of the little maiden in her white frock, with its blue sash around her tiny waist, standing opposite to him.

With a gulp for a fresh stock of breath she goes on—

'The tin' was in his tountin' house
Tountin' out his money,
The tween was in the parlour
Eatn' bed an' honey,
The maid was in the darden
Hanin' out the toes,
Tame a 'ittle bat-bird
And nipped off her nose.'

'There! now you tan tiss me if you like—it's finis:d.' she added, graciously.

His hand was over his face, and, as the child looked, two big drops came trickling down upon the book.

'Why, you're tyin',' she said, don't ty.' And she nestled her face in his breast by way of conferring her small utmost of consolation. He drew her to him and kissed her.

'Let me tum up and see the lotit,' said the fairy; and, without waiting for permission, she proceeded to mount upon his knee.

'Who is this, Alie?' he said, holding up the locket before her.

'Poor mamma,' she said, kissing the locket.

'And who am I!'

This was evidently a regular business—this game of question and answer.

'You? You're poor mamma's old lover,' she replied.

'And what are you?' he went on.

'I'm poor mamma's darling.'

'Anything else?'

She burst into a perfect ripple of laughter, and, throwing her pretty arms about his neck, she screamed out:—

'Yes! I'm your little sweetheart, for ever and ever.'

CHRISTMAS.

1878.

BY WATTEN SMALL.

THRO' fretted roof, and dim cathedral aisle,
 With heart and voice, prolong the glad refrain
 Of Angel's song, first heard o'er Bethlehem's plain,
 Thro' centuries of war, of strife, and guile;
 And shall we not cry peace! aye, peace to all,
 And joy as well, in Christmas homes to-day;
 May speech and song and ancient roundelay
 Old bygone memories and joys recall;
 For we are one by human sighs and tears,
 And link'd by bonds, both sacred and divine;
 While race to race, in all the future years
 Rich in all knowledge of the passing time,
 Shall wider grow, and science, art proclaim
 Good will to all of every clime and name.

ROUND THE TABLE.

DO any of the guests ever make scrap-books, I wonder? Scrap-books are so nice, I really love to look at them. To me no book is half so interesting as a pretty scrap-book, with the scraps neatly pasted in,—of course,—and a few pictures to relieve the monotony. I am a regular old scrap-book maker, and I think I have reduced the art to a real science. One might just as well make a handsome scrap-book as an ugly one. It may require more pains and a little exercise of the quality called patience, perhaps, but look at the result! I have no less than four scrap-books, and when my friends drop in on me of a rainy or stormy day, they tell me it is a real pleasure to sit by the fire with one of my scrap-books before

them. I prefer to have all my books of the same size and style, and in pasting my scraps I always use a napkin or a linen rag, and rub my scraps down hard on the page, until there is not a wrinkle or a crease to be seen. When it dries it looks as hard and brittle as a printed page in any book. I never use flour paste, nor gum arabic, nor mucilage, which is nearly the same thing, because the former gets sour, and, by-and-bye, the scraps begin to peel off; and the gum runs through to the ink, and the clipping soon commences to look soiled and black. My brother is a clerk in a drug store, and he has enlightened me as to the best article for scrap-book purposes. Ask in any chemist's shop for a little druggist's paste, and you can get

enough for a few cents to make a book of forty or fifty pages. You can see the stuff I mean in small jars on the apothecary's counter. It is used for sticking on labels, and it is a clean and almost transparent substance. You never have any trouble with it. It is always available, and if, from long standing, it should become dry, a tablespoonful of hot or cold water will soon make it all right again, and reduce it to the proper consistence for immediate use. If you want to make the paste yourself, all you have to do is to ask at your druggist's for half an ounce of pure gum tragacanth and a quarter of an ounce of gum acacia. Mix these together in a cup, and pour water over them. In an hour or two the paste will be ready, and I have never known it to prove unsatisfactory.

In making your scrap-book you should aim at variety, and as there are plenty of coloured pictures to be had at small prices, there can be no difficulty in securing that end. Do not fill your book with pictures either, but pay particular attention to your reading matter. There are hundreds of pretty poems going about in the newspapers, numberless anecdotes of famous personages, cute little stories, funny paragraphs, sketches of people and clever newspaper criticisms of men, women and books, and from these materials it is a very easy thing, for any one of taste, to make quite an acceptable volume of the brightest things to be had. I know a young friend of mine who has been making scrap-books for five years, and she has no less than ten complete volumes, and a new one partly under way now. I never tire of looking at them. I think one can hardly do better during the coming winter evenings than spend an odd hour, now and then, in the very enjoyable occupation of making a scrap-book. The pleasure afterwards will amply repay all the trouble you may go to.

SOPHIE.

—Just about this time everybody has been wishing everybody else, a 'Merry Christmas,' and family parties have met to discuss the regulation turkey and plum pudding, and surprises, more or less successful, have been contrived, and all well-conditioned persons have been doing their best in looks, and speech, and behaviour, to do honour to the great *fête day* of the year. And, no doubt, some of those more philosophical and 'advanced' individuals, whose mission it seems to be to make simple folk uncomfortable, have been moralising, inwardly, if not outwardly, on the hollowness and conventionality of the whole thing, and wondering how long this highly developed age, with its 'culture' and common sense, is going to keep up so childish an observance. Well, we may at once admit that the 'merry Christmas' is often a mere formality, that the average Christmas party is often a very common-place affair, that Christmas gifts are not *always* the spontaneous tokens of affection, but are often rather a heavy tax on the slender resources of ill-furnished purses, and that it is by no means common for long absent and long estranged prodigal sons, or husbands, or brothers, to return appropriately, on the eve of Christmas day, as they invariably do in the blessed realm of story-land. What then! We don't have ideal Christmases any more than we have ideal lives. We have them to match these very commonplace and imperfect lives and characters of ours; but though they partake, as they needs must, of human imperfection, it does not at all follow that we should be better without them. No! let us be thankful for our Christmas day, even apart from the great event which it more specially commemorates, and in honour of which we chant our Christmas song. Let us be thankful that, even in the scientific reign of Professor Huxley and his disciples, this great Christian observance keeps its place, a witness to the power of mind over matter, and to the deathless

element in man; a witness to the power of a principle other than that of the 'survival of the fittest,' and a 'law' which is not that of blind relentless 'force!' Let us be thankful that Christmas day testifies to the rest of the year, of what the rest of the year should be, in its brotherly kindness, its charity, its closer drawing of the bonds of family union and family love. Let us be thankful for its tenderness to the little children, in the spirit of Him whose birth the day commemorates, so that in their innocent glee we may still catch some of the truest echoes of the first 'Christmas Carol,' which floated above the silent Syrian plains. Let us be thankful for each one of its humanising influences, which draw us out of the oyster-shell of *self*, so that even they may rejoice in the Christmas joy of others, to whom no 'Merry Christmas,' no blessed Christmas reunion is any longer personally possible. Let us be thankful for the spirit of human brotherhood which it strengthens and intensifies, so that the happiest may feel, amid their abundant blessings, for such heavy hearted sufferers as the victims of the Glasgow Bank Directors, or those still more pitiable sufferers among far away valleys, devastated by battle, or massacre, or famine. Let us be thankful that the spirit of Christmas gathers into its ample embrace, even the waifs and strays of humanity, that some rays of its light penetrate to the poorest homes, steal even into poor-houses and prisons, and that its generous warmth convinces even a Scrooge that the Tiny Tims have their blessed mission, and do not belong to the 'surplus population' after all! Let us think what our year would be without its Christmas Day, what our lives would be without their

Christmas memories, their softening influences of Christmas past and present; and then we shall be more ready to appreciate the benefits which its observance has brought to the world, and to estimate it as not the least of the many blessings which have followed in the train of the 'divine event' which the Christian world commemorates on Christmas Day.

F.

—On the Christmas Eve of 1873, it was my privilege to witness a singular and beautiful phenomenon. The night was calm, but not very cold; the sky was clear, with the exception of small fleecy clouds, which now and then flitted before and obscured the moon, which was about three-quarters full. Near midnight, the moon having almost reached the zenith, these soft fleeces seemed to have concentrated themselves into one cloud directly across her disc; and this had assumed the shape of an immense and luminous cross. Perfect in form, sharp and clear in outline, it looked as if cut in purest alabaster, whilst the moon was set like a softly glowing jewel in the centre of the cross. The spectacle was sublime, and, appearing just when it did, seemed like a beautiful miracle of the holy season at hand. It was a Divine poem written upon the face of nature. It was as if the Star in the East of eighteen centuries ago were shown us now a cross—emblem of all that Divine love had done for us, even as the Star had been a promise of what would be done. And in this sign of fulfilment, as in the olden one of prophecy, was to be read alike the glad tidings; the assurance of 'Peace on Earth and Good Will Towards Men!'

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PAPERS BY A BYSTANDER.

NO. 1.

IN the Old World, the Eastern Question and its ramifications still fill the scene. England declares her determination to enforce, Russia professes her willingness to execute, the Treaty of Berlin. To enforce or execute the Treaty of Berlin is possible to no mortal power. The supposed settlement embodied in that treaty was a diplomatic structure built in defiance of the decrees of nature. It assumed the finality of a mere stage in the descent of the avalanche. The Ottoman Empire cannot be preserved. It is one of those military empires of the East which have never become industrial or civilized, and which when, the era of conquest being over, their military force has declined, have in them no antidote to dissolution, no source of renewed life. Vain have been all attempts to prop it permanently with arms; still more vain all attempts to regenerate it by loans. Each successive loan has aggravated the malady of corruption, and hastened the steps of death.

There are two strong currents of opinion on this subject, running opposite ways. Recognizing the importance of both, we must, of course, present the view which commends itself to us. In the struggle between England and Russia, the Muscovite, whatever his motives may be (and they are probably as mixed as those of men and nations in general), has the advantage of fighting on the side of nature, which ordains that the dead Turkish Empire shall be buried, and that the young nationalities, which Ottoman rule has repressed, shall have freedom to rise, and to restore to civilization and fruitfulness the barbarized and desolated coasts of the Eastern Mediterranean.

England, in maintaining the integrity and independence of Turkey, is fighting against nature; in struggling to prevent the resurrection of nationalities, she is struggling both against nature and her nobler self. By her seizure of Cyprus she has disqualified herself, in the eyes of all the world, for the part of a disinterested defender of civilization against the Cossack. But a policy of selfish, and ultimately hopeless, repression in the Eastern Mediterranean is entailed upon her by the possession of India, now that the route is by the Suez Canal. If the route were still by the Cape, England would be generously promoting the emancipation of Bulgaria and the extension of Greece.

In the case of Bulgaria the weakness of the policy to which England is reduced by her interest, real or supposed, has become very apparent. A single Bulgaria, being strong, might have been independent, and its possession of a post on the Ægean would hardly have been a serious menace to the greatest naval power in the world. Two weak Bulgarias, which England is struggling to call into existence, will almost inevitably fall under the influence of Russia, who will be able to present herself both as a protectress and as a patroness of union. It might almost be supposed that Russia, by a stroke of Machiavellian policy, had entrapped England into taking the odious part of insisting on an impracticable division, and thereby making a deadly enemy of a young nation.

In spite of all efforts to confine it within the limits of the Turkish Empire, the imbroglia seems likely to spread. Austria trembles, and not without reason. She has totally failed

in the attempt to fuse into one nation, under a common Parliamentary Government, the various members of her heterogeneous Empire, while the bond of fear which, in former days, held them together has been removed by the decline of the Turkish power. The German, Magyar and Slavonic elements start asunder at the touch of any question which concerns the interest or the sentiment of race. An irresistible attraction draws the German element towards the Fatherland, and Bismarck may well abstain from snatching by force that which, in the course of nature, time will bring. But the immediate cause of alarm to Austria is the growth in her neighbourhood of Slavonic communities, which will agitate and attract her own Slavs. The dread of this draws her to the side of England, to whom she brings an alliance which is, unfortunately, at once that of an incurable invalid and that of a bad cause.

The cautious policy which avoided pushing the British Empire aggressively up to the Russian, in the belief that the two Empires might co-exist in peace, has been reversed in Asia Minor by the defensive alliance with Turkey, and is being, at the same time, reversed by the same party on the North-Western frontier of India. It is idle to investigate the merits of the quarrel with the Ameer. The Prime Minister of England has avowed that the real object of the war is the rectification of the British frontier, which, he says, is at present hazardous, but by taking from the Ameer a part of his territory is to be made scientific. To pick a convenient quarrel with a half-civilized potentate is not difficult, particularly when he knows that he is threatened with curtailment of his territory, if not with annexation. The Ameer will, of course, succumb to the British power; Afghanistan will be conquered, a portion of it annexed outright, and the rest turned into a vassal kingdom, regulated, like the Indian principalities,

by an English envoy. Thenceforth the Afghan tribes will probably be unanimous in their hatred of the English, and though we need not expect a repetition of the former disaster, the country is not likely to be held without much trouble and great expense. There is, so far, nothing whatever to prove that Russia is behind the Ameer. It seems certain that he has not been supplied by her with arms, much less with troops. The chances, therefore, are against immediate war between England and Russia, and in favour of some temporary arrangement of their rival pretensions at the expense of the unfortunate Ameer. It has been abundantly demonstrated that the personal leanings of the present Czar are thoroughly pacific, and that had he been trusted in the first instance, instead of being repelled and insulted, the Turkish question might have been settled, for a time at least, without a war. But the thread of his life is worn and frail, and his son's character is cast in a different mould.

Two paths now lie before the English people—the old one of industry and moderation, the new one of military aggrandizement—and the question which of these paths they shall take is to them the all absorbing question of the hour. It is not surprising to hear that there are schemes on foot for the formation of a third party representing the opinions of such men as Lord Derby and Lord Grey, who are Conservative with regard to home affairs, but believe that the foreign policy of the present Conservative Government is leading the country to ruin. An intense struggle of opinion is going on, and the opposite theories of national morality are being presented in the sharpest forms. Sir James Stephen, as the philosopher and friend of Aggrandizement, boldly repudiates those restraints of international law the imposition of which upon lawless force was supposed to be the great achievement of modern civilization,

and maintains that the dealings of England with weaker nations are to be determined by her 'policy,' not by the rules of right. Mr. James Ram, in his 'Philosophy of War,' if we may judge by a review of the work, goes even further than Sir James Stephen, and wishes to restore, for the benefit of the strong, that primeval state of things in which the human herds lived like other wild animals, in a normal state of mutual hostility, and the most vigorous brute survived. On the other hand, the cause of civilized morality is supported in the *Fortnightly Review* by Mr. Lowe, who, we may safely say, is as free from weak sentimentality, or weakness of any kind, as Sir James Stephen or Mr. Ram.

The existence of dissension in the Government itself is denied; but it was denied just as roundly at a time when, as subsequently appeared, two members of the Cabinet were on the brink of resignation. There can be little doubt that the summoning of Parliament represents a partial victory of the more moderate section of the Cabinet over their extreme colleagues. The Prime Minister has never concealed his dislike of Parliamentary government or his preference for government by prerogative, and throughout these transactions he has been evidently striving to exercise the power of the Crown without the control of Parliament. But his colleagues are younger men; they have a future before them, and they are probably unwilling to let their chief commit them to desperate courses. A serious reverse in a war commenced without the sanction of Parliament would, they know, be their political ruin. While Lord Derby remained in the Cabinet Lord Salisbury had a rival for the succession, and he was afraid to oppose the Prime Minister, in whose power the decision lay; now he is rid of his rival, and can afford to take his own line, for his resignation would unquestionably be fatal to the Government.

In the country the tide seems of late to have been turning against Ministers. In Parliament the Government is still sure of its majority. Perhaps some of the city members may share the fears excited by the present policy among the commercial classes, and it may possibly be to such waverers that the threat of a dissolution is addressed. Two or three times before, warnings of a dissolution have been given, but each time the Government has recoiled from the step, warned probably by the electioneering agents, whom it constantly consults, that there was danger of a loss of seats, which would look like a condemnation of its policy. If a general election now takes place there can be but little doubt that the Opposition will gain, though it is not at all likely that the Government majority will be wiped out. The Tories have the great advantage of possessing in the landowners, with their vassal train of tenant farmers, in the clergy, the licensed victuallers, and the populace of the cities organized into Conservative Working Men's Clubs, a mass of supporters which is absolutely obedient to the command of the party, and which no adverse argument can move. In the regular course of things, the end of the present Parliament is not very distant, and the Tories may deem it their best policy to get a fresh seven years' lease of power, even at some sacrifice of numerical strength, before the progress of the reaction has completely turned the scale.

The ardour of Jingoism* could hardly fail to be chilled by commercial distress. There is in England an enormous amount of inherited or accumulated wealth, which has scarcely yet been touched by the depression; but among the commercial and industrial classes the suffering is severe, and the outlook gloomy in the extreme. In his

* No apology is needed for the use of this word, which, though a new comer, is as completely naturalized as its French counterpart, *Chauvinism*, or as the English *Whig* and *Tory*.

Guildhall speech the Prime Minister bade his hearers look for a return of prosperity on the ground of the improvement which had commenced in the trade of the United States; but it is not easy to see how English industry is to be relieved by the revived activity of its most dangerous rival. Unless things take a favourable turn we must be prepared for a spectacle of industrial distress such as has hardly ever been seen. Within the last century, and especially since the repeal of the Corn Laws, England has given birth to an immense population wholly dependent on manufactures for their bread, besides the multitudes employed in the carrying trade and in the general business of distribution. The effect of a permanent loss of work among these masses would be second in its hideousness only to that of an Indian famine. History, speaking from the grass-grown streets of many a once thronged and busy city, tells us that commerce, though bountiful, has wings; and one element of the miraculous prosperity of England, the monopoly of manufactures which fell to her through the devastation of Europe by the great continental wars, has departed to return no more. Wages have been falling with terrible rapidity, notwithstanding the desperate efforts of the workmen to maintain them at their former level by strikes. The result must be a great cheapening of English labour and its products, which will expose the manufacturers of other countries, including Canada, to severer competition.

If an ardent Imperialist wants to understand how a patriotic Englishman can be opposed to a policy of aggrandizement, let him take a walk through one of the low quarters of London, or of any one of the great English cities, and afterwards visit the cottages of the labourers in one of the poorer agricultural counties. He will then be able, perhaps, to sympathize with those who think that government and the community have

some objects of pressing concern nearer at hand than Cabul or Batoum. But the rulers whose thoughts are engrossed by the game which they are playing at Cabul and Batoum, are members of an aristocratic class which hardly ever comes into contact with the masses of want, ignorance and misery lying close to their own doors. The corrupt demagogism of the United States is expensive as well as demoralizing; but it is not so expensive as the total misdirection of the policy and energies of an industrial nation by a ruling class unconnected with industry and living apart from the people.

The Message with which the President of the United States has opened the Session at Washington, is flouted by some American journals as "mild optimism." Friendly onlookers will perhaps be more tolerant of mildness than partisans, and as the President's optimism is not indiscriminate or unqualified, it can hardly be said to be unwarranted. The financial burden which the war left upon the country, continues to be lightened by the reduction both of the principal debt and of the rate of interest, to the credit of the American financiers as well as to the relief of the people; and if commercial prosperity cannot be said to have returned, symptoms of its return appear. Furnaces which have been idle for ten years, are now in blast again. But there is a still better cause both for rejoicing and for hope in the recent victory of hard money, and the assurance thereby afforded of a sound currency, the life of trade. It is true that the Greenback vote in the late election was large, though by no means so large as everybody expected it to be, and in case of a square fight between the Republican and Democratic parties, the Greenbackers might be strong enough to turn the scale. But a great many Democrats, especially in the commercial and banking centres, are hard money men, and it is scarcely conceivable, that if they are not office seekers.

or wirepullers, they will allow their allegiance to a faction to carry them the length of voting for national ruin. Once more the Republic has been saved from a great peril, by the sure, though slow, awakening of the good sense of its people. The victory itself was not more valuable than the way in which it was won. A question so intricate, so dry, and so unavailable for clap-trap rhetoric as the currency, puts the popular intelligence and the principle of self-government to the severest possible test; and in this case the test was well borne. The people when fairly aroused to the necessity of attention, gave their minds to the subject, listened to the arguments, mastered the essential points and voted right. It was noticed that the vote on the right side was largest where the politicians, who generally give the people credit for less wisdom and morality than they possess, had the courage of their opinions, and put the issue boldly. There has seldom been a better national debate, or one which more clearly proved how great an advantage it is to political economists and teachers of political science generally, to be forced to put their theories in a practical form and bring them to a level with the intelligence of ordinary men. The smartest thing said in the discussion was, 'If the State can make money, why does it come to me for taxes?' We did not happen to see the Greenback answer.

It is only to be regretted that the same good sense which yesterday rejected Greenbackism did not fifteen years ago put its veto on inconvertible paper. By doing so, it would have averted fearful derangement of commerce and also the industrial disputes arising from fluctuations in the value of wages, as well as an enormous addition to the burden of national debt. In justice to the Greenbackers it must be remembered that many of them are being absolutely crushed, as mortgagors or debtors in other ways, by the pressure of liabilities contracted ori-

ginally in depreciated paper which now, the paper having risen to par, are devouring the whole of their substance. This it is, not the mere spirit of fraudulent repudiation, that has been the mainspring of the greenback agitation. Despair is a violent counsellor. Distress far short of despair led the English landlords, when the price of their corn fell after the close of the French war to use their control over Parliament for the purpose of passing the Corn Law to keep up prices and rents while the people were deprived of bread.

One effect of the alarm caused by the Greenback agitation has been the re-consolidation of the Republican party which had split on the question of administrative reform. It is to be hoped that the question of administrative reform, which is as vital as that of the currency though less urgent, will not be allowed to suffer by the postponement. A permanent reconstruction of the "machine" as it was in the time of Grant, with the men who then worked it, and all its jobbery and corruption, would be a miserable result of a great national effort. More than this it would be pregnant with the most serious danger, if anything like the domination of the carpet-baggers were to be revived at the South.

Southern troubles are not at an end. The evil memory of slavery was revived the other day by the burning of a negro alive, a hideous act of barbarism more than once committed, we believe, under the old regime. It is difficult to imagine any complete solution of this problem. When two races cannot intermarry, their social fusion is impossible; and without social fusion, political unity and equality are hopeless. It is evident that though the nation has conferred upon the negro an equality of civil rights, his exercise of the suffrage is forcibly prevented in South Carolina and some other Southern States. Not only the negro but the white who belongs to the national

party, seems to be virtually deprived of his franchise. Rebellion, worsted in the field, renews the struggle in a milder form at the polls, and at the polls, as in the field, it will have to be put down. The issue of the Civil war decided that the American Republic was to be not a congress of sovereign States, but a nation. It will have to assert its nationality in the highest and most important of all questions by enforcing the electoral law. Self-government to any extent is compatible with national unity, and the more of it there is, the higher politically the community will be; but national unity ceases to exist if the decrees of the supreme legislature can be defied. It is probable that the Democrats, as the party of resistance to national sovereignty, first in the interest of revolutionary liberty, and afterwards of slavery, will league themselves with resistance to the electoral law of the nation at the South as they do with Greenbackism and social agitation at the North; and it is possible that these combined forces may prevail. But it is also possible that the national spirit being evoked, the Republic may be victorious once more.

From Europe and the United States we come back to Canada. Since the last article on current politics appeared in this magazine a great revolution has taken place in Canadian politics. Whoever may be prophetic after the event, the event itself took both parties by surprise, and in this consists the real significance of the revolution. The wirepullers, however busy, had little to do with the result, and their calculations, on both sides, were ludicrously falsified. The political principles, or what are styled the political principles, of the two parties went for nothing; their conventional professions of loyalty and their mutual charges of disloyalty fell dead upon the public ear. The country was swept by the National Policy. It was swept, that is, by the determination

of the people to give a trial to a fiscal policy which they thought might possibly do something for their material interests, and afford them some relief from commercial depression. Under the influence of this motive, not from change of political opinion, they trampled down party barriers, broke party allegiance under the friendly cover of the ballot, and put the Government into the hands of those who had declared themselves willing to make the desired experiment. The result indicates that the people, as they grow in intelligence, will prefer their substantial interests to the figments of party politics, and it is full both of instruction and of happy augury for the future.

In assigning the desire to give the National Policy a trial as the main cause of the changes, we do not leave out of sight the great personal popularity of Sir John Macdonald, and the general conviction that he is the ablest of Canadian statesmen. The Pacific Scandal having been properly condemned, and visited with temporary exclusion from power, the people were willing that the king should have his own again. That the national verdict on the Pacific Railway transaction has been reversed, or that public feeling has undergone any alteration on that subject, there is not the slightest reason for believing. The people have simply refused, in choosing their government, at a practical crisis of the most serious kind, to allow all other considerations, including the repeated violations of reform and purity pledges by those in power, to be swallowed up in the memory of a single offence. The writers of the *Globe*, indeed, preached in tones of passionate earnestness the duty of inflexible society towards so great a criminal; but these high teachings were deprived of some of their force by the notoriety of the fact that the teachers were in the pay of Sir John Macdonald's political rival. We are often called upon to remark how credulous are

gentlemen of this class in their estimate of the credulity of other men.

A third factor in the revolution was, no doubt, the determination of genuine Liberals to deliver themselves and their cause, if possible, from the strangling grasp of Gritism, which had been fatally tightened since the departure of Mr. Dorion from the Government and the resignation of Mr. Blake. It is certain that, in the cities especially, a large Liberal vote—a vote large enough, as has been computed, to turn several elections—was cast against the reactionary despotism of the *Globe*. It is equally certain that, from their own point of view, and with reference to the interest of their own cause, these seceders acted wisely. To all charges of apostasy they may conclusively reply that the domination of the *Globe* is not the ascendancy of Liberal principles, but as much the reverse as possible, and that to secure the ascendancy of Liberal principles was the sole object with which they entered the party. If they have deserted, it is from the camp of deserters. The Government of Sir John Macdonald cannot possibly be more reactionary than was that of Mr. Brown; it will probably, in some important respects be more progressive; it will certainly be far abler; and it will be a Parliamentary Government, not a Government of outside influence. Mr. Mackenzie's friends boast of his personal purity, and not without justice; but they forget that if he was innocent of the corruption with which they charge his rivals, his connection with the proprietors of the *Globe* was equivocal, humiliating to the national Government, and, at the same time, injurious to the character of the press. So people would say in England if a similar connection existed there between the Prime Minister and the *Times*.

On the success of the genuine Liberals in shaking off the yoke of Gritism depends the future of their party. If they fail, every Liberal tendency

will be discouraged, every Liberal movement vetoed, like the movement for the reform of the Senate, every man of truly Liberal tendencies treated with suspicion as before. Nothing will be left but the old professions of reform and purity which, unless there is some object to inspire disinterested efforts, are sure to be again belied. The circulation of the *Globe* since its defeat has been declining, and its desperate efforts to destroy the independent Liberal press in the West have failed. Even in Toronto it has been thrust out of a large part of its former domination. It is reduced to vending a weak and suspicious brand of the Conservatism which is found undoubtedly genuine in the *Mail*. To take care that it shall not recover its monopoly of opinion will be the obvious policy of those who have raised the standard of revolt against it. There appears also to be an inclination to transfer the leadership, if possible, from Mr. Mackenzie, as the special nominee of the *Globe*, to Mr. Blake. It cannot be said that Mr. Blake's former experiment in independent action was successful or of happy augury; but his courage may have been strengthened since the hollowness of the bug-bear has been revealed. The world does not go backward, nor does it very long stand still. If Liberals will have patience, and allow discussion to proceed and opinion to ripen, keeping up their general co-operation with each other, and at the same time resolutely refusing to help the mere office-seekers of the connection in setting up again the fallen tyranny or in doing anything to prevent its complete and final demolition, their day will assuredly come. The adverse influences which at present prevail are evidently limited in their range and in their probable duration. The new government cannot remain stationary, and it can hardly move in any direction without breaking ground to the ultimate advantage of the Liberal cause, supposing Liberal prin-

ciples to be sound. The future can be marred only by hastily reconstructing the party upon a narrow and inadequate basis, or, as might truly be said in reference to its recent condition, without any basis of principle at all. Boasts of purity, intolerance and clannishness are not a sufficient platform. Gritism has been nothing but Scotch Calvinism, with the doctrines of election and predestination, applied to politics; it has had no affinity to Liberalism whatever.

Sir John Macdonald's government passed safely through the ordeal of re-election, which in this country has double perils. Sectionalism unsubdued, we fear almost unabated, by Confederation, demands not only a representation of provinces in the ministry, but a representation of races and creeds. Of all the nationalities, the only one which may be safely neglected is the Canadian, ever meek and self-despising. Irish discontent, after the division of the spoils, is supposed to have had something to do with the election of the deposed Minister of Finance in Huron. But that event might be plausibly ascribed to the insidious policy of Sir John Macdonald. The danger of the Conservatives is a split between the thoroughgoing Protestants and those who are less thoroughgoing, or who are really not Protestants at all, but simply in favour of a readjustment of the tariff; and there can be no stronger safeguard against such a split, than the unloved presence of the late Finance Minister. Mr. Cartwright was conscientious, but he was needlessly Rhadamanthine. Supposing him to be inflexibly wedded, not only to the strict Free Trade formula, but to the belief that a system which excluded our manufacturers from the American markets while it admitted the Americans to ours, was a free trade system, it was not necessary to slam the door in the face of a suffering interest. He might have acknowledged the hardship of the situation, expressed his sympathy, avoided too trenchant

confutations and promised to do his best. By his austerity he flung into the ranks of his enemy a body of auxiliaries powerful, though not numerous and animated with the energy of despair.

Those who desire Sir John Macdonald's failure naturally demand that he shall call Parliament and bring out his new fiscal policy without reflection. Those who desire his success, in the interest of national commerce, will counsel him to take abundant time for the consideration of a very intricate question and for consultation with the new Minister of Finance. He is pledged by his campaign speeches to nothing but an attempt to afford to the Canadian manufacturer and producer, by a revision of the tariff, that relief from unjust disadvantages which his predecessors had avowed themselves wholly unable to afford. His utterances have been extremely guarded, yet we can hardly be mistaken as to the line on which he intends to move. Those who have looked into the tariff question know that without ostensibly discriminating against the Americans, it is possible practically to discriminate against them, to a great extent, by a selection of articles. A policy of incidental retaliation is in fact that which Sir John Macdonald seems disposed to adopt. Whether he will be doing anything more than running a pin into an elephant and getting a stroke of its trunk in return is a question which we will not attempt to answer till his plan is actually before us. That, setting aside political questions, Canada would economically be a gainer, to an immense extent, by the free admission of her lumber, coal, manufactures and farm produce to the markets of the Continent, as well as by full participation in Continental capital and by being relieved from the expense and trouble of maintaining a customs line, can be doubted by no reasonable being, least of all by the projectors of Reciprocity Treaties. Whether she can gain much, or obtain serious relief

from the disadvantages under which she now labours, by fiscal legislation of any other kind, is the problem which we are now going to see solved.

The debate which has been raging in the papers as to the propriety or impropriety of cutting of Lieutenant-Governor Letellier's head must have been pleasant reading for Lieutenant-Governor Letellier. Sir Francis Hincks has demonstrated with great erudition, as well as with great weight of authority, that the Lieutenant Governor had power to dismiss his Ministry. It is unquestionable that he had that power; and it is equally unquestionable that he had power to commission his footman to form a new Administration. The Sovereign whom he represents has unquestionable power of her own personal fancy to declare war against half the nations of Europe, to veto the Mutiny Bill, to confer a Dukedom on her scullion, or to make her First Lord in Waiting Admiral of the Channel Fleet. Under an unwritten constitution, if the Crown and every other functionary did what they have power to do, there would soon be an administrative chaos. But Sir Francis Hincks will admit that in the absence of written laws the exercise of power under the British constitution is regulated by unwritten usage equal in force to law. He will admit also that British Constitutional usage extends to Canada under the Instrument of Confederation, which provides that 'Executive authority or government shall be vested in the Sovereign of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and be administered according to the well-understood principles of the British Constitution, by the Sovereign personally, or by the representative of the Sovereign duly authorized.' Among the principles thus embodied by reference, there is not one better settled than that which restrains a constitutional king from dismissing his Ministry, except upon an adverse vote of Parliament. All that

he can do is to require that the Ministers shall submit themselves to the judgment of Parliament without unnecessary delay. Of course, if they propose by any means to evade or stave off the judgment of Parliament, he is authorized and bound to withhold his assent. The dismissal of the Whig Ministers by William IV., in 1833, was the last departure from the principle, and it would now be universally condemned as an intrigue. For a personal breach of duty an individual Minister may be dismissed. Lord Palmerston was dismissed for a personal breach of duty in recognizing the usurping Government of France after the *coup d'état*, in contravention of the instructions given him by the Crown on the advice of the Cabinet. Personal corruption or treachery would be a still stronger case. But if the Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec meant to exercise this power, he should have dismissed his advisers, not collectively, but individually, stating the specific offence which was the ground of dismissal in each case. In Lord Palmerston's case, the Prime Minister and the rest of the Cabinet concurred in the removal of their offending colleague.

Every government, however sound may be its title to power has its moments of unpopularity, brought on possibly by the performance of some inevitable public duty. At such moments a constitutional sovereign owes his advisers his special support; if he were to be allowed to seize the opportunity of tripping them up, for the gratification of his political antipathy, it is evident what the consequences would be to the constitution. Our Lieut.-Governors unfortunately are partisans, and if they are not held to the strict observance of constitutional rules, these offices will become the instruments of conspiracy in the interest of party. In this case there was clearly a strong party inducement to get hold of the Quebec Government with its influence and patronage on the

eve of an election, and the new Premier unfortunately gave colour to the natural suspicion by throwing himself unreservedly into the struggle. If the dismissal of the De Boucherville Government was immediately preceded as was asserted at the time, by a conference between the Lieut.-Governor and the leader of his party, it must be said to wear the aspect of an intrigue at least as objectionable and as dangerous to the commonwealth as the Pacific Scandal. Lieut.-Governor Letellier's head, however, had better not be cut off.

The new Governor General and his Royal consort have been welcomed with a hospitable warmth which, we may safely say, so far as the masses of the people are concerned, has no reference to any special policy connected with the appointment. The Marquis of Lorne is a man of the highest character and of the most cultivated mind. The Princess is liked by all who know her, and visitors at Inverary never fail to speak with pleasure of the unaffected grace of her manner. She is also an accomplished artist, and in conjunction with the Marquis she may lend a useful stimulus to the literary and artistic element of Canadian civilization. If this eulogy falls far short of the emulous sensationalism of the reporters, it is at all events the simple truth.

Only polite fiction can represent the political events which take place during a Governor-General's tenure of office as his acts, or their history as the history of his administration. Not a single administrative act of the slightest importance was performed by the late Governor General, who, in the crucial case of the Pacific Railway Scandal, laid down the principle that he had nothing to do but follow implicitly the advice of his ministers. The Marquis of Lorne will, no doubt, pursue the same constitutional course, and furnish as little matter for real history by any political measures, as

his predecessors. In other respects his reign is not likely to be sensational. Both as the heir of Argyle, and as a member by marriage of the Royal family, he must feel that his position is assured, and that he need make no spasmodic efforts to improve it. He will not be tempted, for the purpose of getting up a great head of personal popularity, to impair our self-knowledge and breed illusions by the prodigal bestowal of indiscriminate flattery; or by lavish entertainments to stimulate expenditure around him, overtax slender purses, and set to a society which needs training in cheap and unpretending sociability, the noxious example of extravagance and ostentation. He is at liberty to perform the regular duties of his office, including the duty of a suitable and natural hospitality, like the majority of his predecessors, with fidelity, with simplicity, and without popularity-hunting or self-display of any kind. If he abstains from attempting to form our sentiments and ideas like a tutor forming those of his pupils, we shall take it as a compliment, supposing that he does us the justice to believe that we are not a set of children, but capable of forming our sentiments and ideas for ourselves.

Ships have come at different ages laden with special freights of good or evil from the Old World to the New. The barque of Columbus brought European Civilization and Christianity; the May Flower brought the Religious Republic; the barque of John Wesley brought Methodism; that of Hawkins brought Negro Slavery; the Sarmatian has brought Etiquette. This new addition to our civilization has at once announced itself by a proclamation which, though it relates only to the female toilette, is more important and instructive than many of the documents which are solemnly consigned to archives and which it is deemed the duty of history to reproduce.

THE VICE-REGAL DRAWING-ROOM.

His Excellency the Marquis of Lorne and Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise will hold a Drawing Room at 9.30 p.m. to day in the Windsor Hotel.

Ladies are to wear low-necked dresses, without Court trains, and gentlemen are to be in full dress. Ladies, whose health will not admit of their wearing low necked dresses may, on forwarding to the A. D. C. in waiting, a medical certificate to that effect, wear square cut dresses. Dresses fastening up the throat are not to be worn.

Ladies and gentlemen are to bring with them two cards each, with names legibly written thereon; one to be left at the door, the other to be given to the A. D. C. in waiting.

E. G. P. LITTLETON,
Cav. Genl's Military Secretary.

Among other things, the proclamation marks in the most decisive way the difference between etiquette and those rules of good manners which are spontaneously observed by all cultivated society and, in their spirit at least, by society which is not cultivated, provided that the root of all true politeness, kindness of heart, be there. Good manners would never command a lady to present to an officer a medical certificate of her inability, on the ground of her health, to wear a low-necked dress.

Etiquette is well known to the student of history as a fungous growth of monarchy in decay. In the ages when monarchy was necessary to civilization, and when the monarch was a real ruler, etiquette did not exist. There was reverence no doubt for the person of the chief to whom primitive society was indebted for the maintenance of order, who was the captain of his people in war as well as their ruler and judge in peace; but so far as we can see there was no etiquette. Hedged by the divinity of usefulness, monarchy needed not yet to be hedged by the divinity of buckram. Such glimpses as the imperfect chronicles afford us of the life of the great Edward I seem to reveal a man of free and noble nature doing that to which by nature he was inclined, in war throwing himself into the battle among the foremost, and when his harness was off enjoying himself without restraint or formality among his forces. In simplicity of habits he seems to have been the

counterpart of his illustrious contemporary Saint Louis. With the vicious decline of the dynasty, in the evil reign of Edward IV., Court etiquette comes distinctly in the scene. Round the person and in the Court of Henry VIII. everything mean and servile of course gathered. As with periods so with individual rulers. Hatred of paltry forms and simplicity of life are associated in our minds with the memory of those kings in whose hands nature placed the rod of empire, and whom death has not discrowned. It is impossible to imagine the presence of etiquette in the tent of Alexander or in the home of Marcus Aurelius. Even Charles V. appears to have been simple in his habits, though under his degenerate descendants etiquette attained so glorious a development that the story of a Spanish king being roasted to death because the right lord in waiting was not at hand to move him away from the fire, is scarcely a travestie of the ridiculous reality. It is well known to all readers of French memoirs what a luxuriance of senseless and ridiculous ceremonial grew round the throne of Louis XIV., and at the same time, how unspeakably gross were the breaches of good manners committed on essential points by some of the most perfect courtiers of that day. But the greatness of the Grand Monarque was pinchbeck; the robes were gorgeous, the wig superb, the shoe heels high as stilts; but half and more than half of the little soul was clay.

To prepare us, or at least the "Upper Ten" of us, for the proper performance of our parts under the new dispensation a little treatise on Court Etiquette has been opportunely put forth by Professor Fanning, who describes himself on his title page as a Teacher of Fashionable Dancing, under the immediate patronage of Their Excellencies the Earl and Countess of Dufferin, &c. No hierophant of the august mystery could be more appropriate and to those who presume—as it

appears some do—to tell Professor Fanning that Canadians are not in need of his instructions, he may reply that they are confusing good manners, of which we may hope our people are not ignorant, with etiquette, which they have certainly yet to learn. The Professor has not only treated his special theme with the enthusiasm which always charms, but he has given expression with instructive frankness to the secret propensities of many hearts. ‘What on this earthly sphere,’ he exclaims ‘*is more enchantingly exclusive* than Her Majesty’s Court?’ In these words is contained the whole philosophy of snobbery and of modern aristocracy which is nearly the same thing. Snobbery, in its essence, is the desire to separate yourself from your fellows, to whom you are really in no way superior, by some artificial line of distinction. Its passion is exclusiveness, the exclusiveness of the upper servants’ table as well as that of Her Majesty’s Court. It is simply the lowest, and the most vulgar form of vanity. Of course it is connected with servility, because the object of your heart’s desire must be the object of your worship; besides which, insolence has always in it something of the lacquey, while the true lacquey is almost always insolent.

The experiment of inoculating a community of the New World with Old World formality and servility is not only curious in itself, but important as the probable precursor, should it succeed, of a more serious attack on democracy, both social and political. New hopes have, no doubt, kindled in the breasts of English Tories by the recent political events in the Mother

Country, by the professions and the genuflections of a certain portion of Canadian Society, and by the attitude of not a few American travellers when they find themselves in the presence of European rank. But the result, so far, has not been propitious. The Montreal proclamation was ill received. A good deal of snobbery has manifested itself, but a considerable antipathy to snobbery has manifested itself at the same time. We have those among us who are disaffected to social equality and would like to introduce some sort of mock aristocracy if they could; but the roots of social equality are strong. There are in Canada few ‘landaus, broughams and barouches,’ few coachmen and footmen ‘properly attired’ with liveries, artificial calves and powdered heads; there are many buggies without hammercloths. Court costume is here not easily provided, especially after the heavy draughts already made on the slender incomes of government clerks. Above all, there is not in Canada, as in England, a great class of wealthy idlers to make a religion of frivolities, with a master of fashionable dancing for its high priest, and an exclusive circle for its heaven.

A BYSTANDER.

P. S.—The above paper was in type when the news arrived of the death of the Princess Alice. The event has called forth universal sympathy, the manifestations of which her Royal sister will find as strong and sincere in the land to which she has come as they could be in that which she has left.

CURRENT LITERATURE.

THE display made this Christmas season by the publishers is exceedingly rich, and on a scale of great magnificence. Many new books have been added to the lists, and a remarkably large number of editions *de luxe* of the older classics have been prepared. Almost every publisher of note this year has entered the field with really sumptuous looking volumes, handsomely illuminated by the pencils of leading artists, and bound in a singularly superb style. In former seasons it has been the custom for the principal houses to send out a few fine volumes for Christmas, but this year the list of publishers who have made specialties of beautiful books is quite large, while the number of their works is unprecedentedly full. The tastes of the people are growing more and more æsthetic, and book-buyers are becoming more particular about paper and type and binding. The book-makers are always keenly alive to their own interests. They perceive the change in the trade, and gratify the predilections of their customers accordingly. Books are now published at rates commensurate with the means of even the poorest, and the student or lover of books has now no longer to face the bugbear of monopoly in the prosecution of his tastes and requirements.

Among the works likely to enjoy an extensive sale this holiday season is Mrs. Annie Brassey's really delightful *Voyage in the Sunbeam*,* which stands alone this year as the representative book of travel and adventure. It is not a mere collection of uninteresting entries in a diary of

an unprofitable and tedious voyage around the world; it is a bright, cheerful, sketchy, and, in some places, brilliant account of a journey to remarkable places, which was made under auspices of a most favourable character. In England the book carried everything by storm, notwithstanding its high price, while in France the whole of the first edition was sold in a few hours after publication. The Canadian edition promises to be equally successful. Though issued at nearly one-half the price of the European edition, it falls short of the original copy in no single particular. The quality of the paper is the same. The number of illustrations and maps, and the legibility of the type, are features which differ in no way from the parent book. It is published here by special arrangement with Mrs. Brassey, as the Canadian reader will be glad to know.

The tour, we have said, was made under charming auspices. The little *Sunbeam* may be described as a composite three-masted top-sail-yard screw schooner. She was built by Mr. St. Clare Byrne, of Liverpool, and fitted up with engines indicating 350 horsepower and capable of a speed of 10.13 knots on the measured mile. She carried 80 tons of coal, and her daily consumption of fuel averaged about four tons. In fine weather she ran eight knots an hour. The dimensions of the hull footed up to tonnage 157ft. beam, extreme, 27ft. 7in.; displacement tonnage 531 tons; area of midships section 202 square feet. The trim little craft was commanded by the owner in person, Thomas Brassey, Esq., M. P., husband of the authoress who, with his family, accompanied him on the voyage. The Hon. A. Y. Bingham

* *A Voyage in the Sunbeam, our Home on the Ocean for eleven months.* By MRS. BRASSEY. Sixth edition. Toronto: Rose-Belford Publishing Co.

acted as the artist to the expedition, and other friends F. Hubert Freer, Esq., Commander, James Brown, R. N., Captain Squire T. S. Lecky, R. N. R., and Henry Percy Potter, Esq., (Surgeon), made up the full company of invited guests. Isaiah Powell was the sailing master, and his subordinates who worked the ship, were nearly all blood or marriage relations of the master, and formerly hardy fishermen from the Coast of Essex, who, in their early days, had learned the ways of the deep among the banks and shoals at the mouth of the River Thames. The discipline all through the voyage was perfect, and in times of storm and danger, the men behaved loyally and well.

The *Sunbeam* was particularly well equipped with everything likely to add to the comfort of the *voyageurs*. Like the expedition of Sir Wyville Thomson in 'The Atlantic,' the arrangements and fittings for the journey were conducted on a most luxuriant scale. The cabin was elegantly arranged and furnished. Pictures hung on the walls, bits of bric-a-brac rested prettily in brackets, bronzes, statuettes, handsome lamps, books and engravings, reminded the travellers every moment of their lives of their own beautiful home in England, of which this was but a miniature view. In this pleasant place, so full of charming surroundings, Mrs. Brassey kept her journal, and wrote down her impressions of the places she saw and the things she witnessed.

The *Sunbeam* left Cowes on the 6th of July, 1876, called at Torbay, Madeira, Tenneriffe, and Cape Verde, crossed the line on the 8th of August and reached Rio Janeiro nine days later, accomplishing upwards of 2,500 miles. The coasts of South America were then followed, and the party visited in turn Montevideo, Buenos Ayres and Ensenada, running through the Straits of Magellan and Smyth's Channel. Valparaiso was gained on the 28th of October. An incident of great interest occurred during the yacht's

stay near the Coast of Patagonia. The barque 'Monkshaven,' of Whitby, bound for Valparaiso with a cargo of smelting coal, and sixty-eight days out from Swansea, was discovered to be on fire. A boat was sent from the *Sunbeam*. The mate—a Norwegian—came on board, and told the story in excellent English of terrible days of agony and anxiety spent on board the burning ship, for the fire had broken out the previous Sunday and this was Thursday. Everything of a combustible nature had been thrown overboard, and the hatches were battened down. Ever since then the crew lived on deck with no covering from the elements save a canvas screen. Mr. Brassey and Cap. Brown at once went on board the barque and found the deck more than a foot deep in water, and 'all a-wash.' The hatches were opened and a dense smoke issued out. A moment more and the fire burst forth driving back all who stood near. A man tried to enter the Captain's cabin, but the dense volume of poisoned gas which swept through his lungs felled him insensible to the deck. A consultation immediately followed. It was clear the ship could not be saved, and it was decided to rescue the crew and abandon the vessel to her fate. The men, to the number of fifteen, were safely brought on board the *Sunbeam*, and all their effects, and the chronometer, charts and papers were saved. Mrs. Brassey relates this adventure with telling interest, the very simplicity of the narrative adding much to its dramatic power. Indeed, Mrs. Brassey excels in descriptive and personal narrative, and much of the writing in the book is invested with colour and romance.

The voyage across the giant Pacific, some 12,330 miles, was begun on the 30th of October. A brief stay was made at Bow Island in the Low Archipelago, Maitea and Tahiti in the Society Islands, and Hawaii and Oahu in the Sandwich Group. Assumption, in the Ladrões, was sight-

ed on the 21st of January, and on the 29th the journey to Yokohama was made. Life in Japan is sketched with a glowing brush, and the author does herself excellent credit in the lively description which she gives of the habits and customs of the people. The passages referring to the Japanese temples and their priesthood may be regarded as a faithful addenda to Mr. Simpson's admirable and interesting 'Meeting of the Sun,' from which volume Mrs. Brassey gives several quotations. A trip on the railway, which runs from Osaka to Kioto, a cruise in the Inland Sea, a pause at Simonoseki, brought the stay at Japan to a close, and on the 19th of February the most direct route to England was taken. Hong Kong, Canton, Macao, Singapore, Johore, Malacca, Penang, Galle, Colombo, Aden, Alexandria, Malta, Gibraltar and Lisbon were in turn visited, and we are treated to delightful bits of description along the way, to sketches of various incidents on ship-board, and accounts of sports and pastimes on land and sea. The glimpses of Chinese life which Mrs. Brassey gives us is exceedingly fresh and interesting, and the bill of fare which may be read on page 394 will interest the *gourmand* and *bon vivant* always on the search for something new to tickle the palate. How eloquent Mr. Justice Greedy would grow over a large basin of black cat's flesh, or a pair of black cat's eyes, which he could get for three kandareems of silver. The voyage home is written in the same splendid spirit, and the reader reaches the last chapter all too soon.

The book is most sumptuously illustrated, and contains no fewer than 118 illustrations cleverly engraved on wood by G. Pearson after drawings by the Hon. A. Y. Bingham, and nine beautiful maps and plans, showing the general chart of *The Sunbeam's* track, the Straits of Magellan, the Sandwich Islands, Paumotu, Japan, the Linschoten and Lu Chu, Strait of Singapore,

Ceylon, and a chart, exhibiting monthly average temperatures of water and air during the voyage.

A book which will delight every variety of reader, both on account of its splendid illustrations and its happy letterpress, is Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes' beautiful poem 'The School Boy'*—a poem which our readers will remember was read at the Centennial celebration of Phillip's Academy, Andover, Mass., last June, and which exhibits the charming spirit and humour and grace of the delightful author's genius. One cannot thank the publishers too much for such a book. The poem is well known. It is considered one of the finest things Dr. Holmes has written. We have had nothing to equal it for playfulness of diction and elegance of description since Goldsmith, whom Dr. Holmes resembles sometimes. The by-play is effective and the manner of the poem is striking while its humour is gentle and delicate. In the beautiful form in which it is presented to the public, it will be sure to have very many readers who will like to possess a superbly illustrated edition of a favourite poem. There are some twenty-eight engravings, all of them finished in the highest style of art and made from designs furnished by Appleton Brown, F. T. Merrill, D. C. Hitchcock, W. L. Sheppard and A. R. Waud—names well and favourably known to book-buyers. The poet has been handsomely treated by the illustrators of his work. They have seized on the salient features of his poem—a poem which all will admit is full of interest to the artist inasmuch as it is a complete storehouse of beautiful and graceful pictures. The great Elm at North Andover is finely drawn and is quite a good bit of sketching. The Shy Maiden is equally clever, and both suggestive and happy. The School Room is also bright and The

* *The School Boy*. Illustrated. By OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES. Boston: Houghton, Osgood & Co. Toronto: Hart & Rawlinson.

Dark Shawshine will bear critical examination. 'Tented Pines' is not so well done as the others. Of the paper, type and binding one cannot speak in terms too high. The book is a positive luxury.

A very handsome and suitable Christmas present for lovers of Ceramics, is Miss Jennie Young's charming volume 'The Ceramic Art,'* which comes to us in a tasteful dress. It is abundantly and luxuriantly illustrated—containing upwards of four hundred and sixty-four highly finished engravings. Miss Young is an enthusiast in her devotion to this now fashionable art. She is skilled in the manufacture of pottery and porcelain, and the reader feels at once that he is in the hands of a safe and trustworthy guide. The book is far more than its entertaining author claims for it. It is a complete history of the various forms of pottery and porcelain, together with a succinct and useful account of their manufacture, from the earliest times down to our own day, when the 'science' has really become an important adjunct in our civilization and education. Miss Young has drawn liberally from the best sources extant for material for her work, and has made no little personal research herself. Especially is this noticeable in the valuable account of American Ceramics, which is quite full, and certainly surprising in the scope and character of its information. The study seems to be a most delightful one in itself. It has a history all its own, and the legends which are available to students and collectors are very charming indeed, and apparently quite inexhaustible. In the volume before us, the reader will be struck at the variety of its information, the enormous mass of material which the author has contrived to group together in a singularly happy and contained manner, the sim-

licity and beauty of the whole narrative, and the almost fairy-like spirit which pervades the paper from cover to cover.

Miss Young has delved very deeply, and she tells many curious and noteworthy things which are exceedingly useful to know, and quite as valuable to general readers as to those for whom the book is especially intended. A good idea of the progress which has been made in the study is given, and much that is worth recording is told about Chinese, Japanese, Persian, Sarcenic, Greek, Italian, and the more recent specimens of modern ware. The author happily blends strong industrial habits and the true artistic sense, and her book is a happy reflex of the combined characteristics.

Miss Young having taken pains to present only the useful, her book is quite free from wearying details, or that unnecessary verbiage which only distracts and tires the reader, instead of furnishing the amusement and instruction he requires. Matters which belong properly to the manuals, Miss Young leaves to the manuals without a sigh of regret or a pang of sorrow. There is enough in her subject of a broad and liberal character, and from such premises the author argues, and always with great nicety and discrimination. Her literary style might with advantage be improved a little, but on the whole the book is a very charming compendium of a most interesting art, and the author may be congratulated on her part of the performance, while for the artists and publishers we have nothing but words of praise.

A literary experiment has just been tried, and it will be curious to know just how successful it may turn out. Over twenty-six years ago the world was startled—we use the word in its literal and absolute sense—by the appearance of a novel which made a great noise and created tremendous excitement in America and in Great Britain. It was written by a lady

* *The Ceramic Art*. 464 Illustrations. By JENNIE J. YOUNG. New York, Harper & Bros. Toronto, Hart & Rawlinson.

who threw her whole soul into her work, and though there were many artistic and literary blemishes in the composition, people read the story for its extraordinary and bold attack on American slavery, its truthful pictures of life among the lowly, and its freshness and power as a work of fiction. *Uncle Tom's Cabin** in its day was a most successful book, and Harriet Beecher Stowe, at one bound, reached a leading place in authorship. The story enjoyed a great run. It passed through many editions and it was read by people of every class and creed. Doubtless it did much good. Doubtless it helped the cause of the blackman, for it presented his sufferings and trials in a strong and most unmistakable light. The book became very popular in most of the Northern States, while in Canada—always the refuge of the slave—and in England, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was looked upon as a revelation and the best selling book since *Don Quixote* or *Robinson Crusoe*—two widely different works the reader will admit. Mrs. Stowe was hailed as a noble woman and she was forthwith looked upon as the most famous lady then living. People in their enthusiasm forgot the general shortcomings of the book as a performance in letters. It was written in a homely style and its verisimilitude commended it to all classes. In the South of course it was bitterly denounced, but the condemnation of the slaveholder and men of the Legree type was really the best advertisement the volume could get. Their abuse upheld the tenets which it taught. Their condemnation proclaimed the truths of the narrative.

The story, as we have said, created great excitement everywhere. It was dramatized, and panoramas and dissolving views conveyed about the country the salient points of Mrs. Stowe's characterization. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

was followed by *Dred*—a tale of the Dismal Swamp, but this last effort was an unsuccessful venture. It did not die quite still-born, but its popularity and influence never amounted to much. It was too palpable a prolongation of the strain which was started by the greater work. It was really a continuation of that narrative. New characters were introduced but the incidents were the same, and those who had read *Uncle Tom* had enough of the subject, and new readers preferred the original source of supply. *Dred* was a failure, but *Uncle Tom* kept its place and made for its author a name in the world and earned for her the reputation of having produced the most popular as well as the most remarkable novel ever written or published in America.

Now that slavery is a thing of the past, it will be curious, as we remarked at the head of these observations, to know what impression the most beautiful edition of this exposition of its horrors will make on the reader of the present day. Stories which have for their single and primary object the redressing of a wrong or the repression of a vice, are apt to be short lived. People are beginning to inquire whether ten years hence '*Nicholas Nickleby*' and '*Oliver Twist*,' or '*Bleak House*,' will be read, or whether '*Hard Cash*' or '*Never too Late to Mend*' will live beyond the next decade. Will '*Uncle Tom's Cabin*' be read by the new generation of readers, or will it only be purchased by old admirers of the tale and friends of the author, whose recent pictures of life in New England, such as '*Pogonuc People*' and '*Old Town Folks*,' are in such demand, and who may wish to possess themselves of a really beautiful edition of the book? The copy before us is sumptuous. It is printed in the fashionable red line style, so prized by lovers of pretty books, and the illustrations are numerous and clever. There is even more to commend its favourable

* *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Illustrated. By HARRIET BEECHER STOWE. Boston: Houghton, Osgood & Co. Toronto: Hart & Rawlinson.

reception by bookbuyers and bibliophiles. Mr. George Bullen, of the British Museum, furnishes a positive enrichment to the volume in the shape of a complete list of the various editions which have been published in America, in England, and in very many foreign countries. In the British Museum there are thirty-five editions of the original English, and eight of abridgments or adaptations, as well as nineteen translations, three editions in English of *The Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*, four in Continental languages, nine separate works on the subject, and forty-nine reviews in serials, besides a list of a number of translations not at present forming a part of the collection. This information, which tells so eloquently of the amazing success and popularity of this novel, is well worth preservation, and many who already own other editions will likely be glad to get this copy for this matter alone.

Among the copious collection of books for the young which the publishers have sent out this holiday season, none will appeal to a wider interest or touch the hearts of the olive branches with more effect than the gorgeous edition of 'Mother Goose's Melodies,* which comes opportunely on the stage in a grotesque cover and with illuminated pages. That Mother Goose once lived and sang her melodies, and told her rhymes to many little folks, is settled beyond all cavil, and we are treated to a few pages of well-written biography of the good dame in the beginning of the book, which sets at complete defiance the old lady's revilers and the misbelievers of her identity. Mother Goose has always, through fate or otherwise, led an apocryphal existence. At first, it is a difficult thing to convince the inhabitants of the nursery that she is not

a great and good and living personage. Afterwards, as the midgets grow older, though not always wiser, it is an equally herculean task to impress on their minds that she *did* live at one time, and that her real name was Goose—Elizabeth Goose. The present handsome edition, which in this instance is dedicated appropriately to John Fleet Eliot—a direct descendant, no less than great-great grandson of the venerable spinner of venerated rhymes—sets aright the various conflicting statements which have troubled and vexed the youthful mind for quite too many years. The letter-press needs no commendation from us. It is exquisitely printed on a rich toned paper. The illustrations, which are conceived in excellent taste, and are from Mr. Alfred Kappes' pencil, are printed in colour, and form a useful and desirable assistance in elucidating the text, the spirit of which they seem to follow closely. The notes at the end of the volume are quaint and interesting.

Next to having an original book by Mr. Aldrich, the sum of the happiness of the young folks is reached by a translation from his pen. The same delicate fancy which surrounds everything this popular author touches is nowhere seen to greater advantage than it is in the pretty rendering he has made of *Mère Michel*, M. Bedollier's famous *Story of a Cat*.* The tale is familiar to us in the French, though we do not remember reading it in translation before. None of its exquisite spirit is lost in the version furnished by Mr. Aldrich. Indeed the manner and full essence of the original are faithfully preserved throughout, and the book will have a long lease of popularity among children, for whose enjoyment it is mainly designed, as well as among grown persons who will follow the adventures

* *Mother Goose's Melodies: or, Songs for the Nursery.* With Illustrations in Colour, by ALFRED KAPPE. Boston: Houghton, Osgood & Co. Toronto: Hart & Rawlinson.

* *The Story of a Cat.* Translated from the French of Emile De La Bédollière. By T. B. ALDRICH. Boston: Houghton, Osgood & Co. Toronto: Hart & Rawlinson.

of the mysterious cat with keen interest. The silhouette designs by Mr. Hopkins are quite ingenious, and elucidate the text very happily.

The Appletons have published in good library form M. Henri Van Laun's new work on the French Revolutionary Epoch,* in two volumes. Mr. Van Laun is a story-teller rather than a historian. He is intelligent and industrious, and generally accurate in his statements and information. His book presents a very agreeable, though one-sided picture of French affairs generally from the early times of the first Revolution down to the episode at Sedan and the downfall of the Second Empire. In his treatment of subjects which come properly before his notice, and which are necessary to the continuity of his narrative, M. Van Laun exhibits the utmost desire to be impartial and fair. In most cases he is successful, though in some notable instances he has allowed his feelings to outweigh his better judgment and some of the facts of history are strangely perverted to suit the harmony of the author's views. French politics, however, have many sides, and as party feeling always runs high in France, and extreme men are the rule rather than the exception, M. Van Laun may justify his position—on the score—perhaps, of convenience, or the exigency of the party to which he owes allegiance. M. Van Laun has not gone very fully into details. He has rather aimed at giving a somewhat rapid glance at the social character of the French people, their moral and religious life, the general aspects of the country, its political, military, and scientific career, and the mass of material which makes up the history of France during the past hundred years. In his estimates of men and in his study

of the revolutionary epoch, the author presents a picture of unequal merit. He is happy in the concentration of his material, but he appears to fail altogether in the formation of those brilliant and picturesque bits of colouring which so delight the admirers of Macaulay and Froude and the historian of the Crimea. His work is extremely useful, however, and many will like to read the latest utterances of a skilful writer on a subject which is always interesting. M. Van Laun acknowledges his indebtedness to Carlyle and M. Taine, and Lavallée, and Lock, and de Goncourt, and Michelet, and Quinet, and some other authors of reputation for assistance in his summaries of the events he describes. M. Taine's fine and spirited *Ancien Régime* has been of much value to M. Van Laun, his introduction and a portion of the first chapter being mainly a summary from that able work. Other quotations, almost equal in length, are made from the same author, all of which are gracefully accredited to the proper source. The chapters which treat of comparatively recent events, for the work is carried forward to the year 1870, give to the book its chief interest and value, and it will be much prized on that account. The author deals rather spiritedly with living issues, and the story of the Franco-Prussian War is very ably told. As a specimen of the historian's style, which is simple and devoid of all rhetorical flourish, we give here his account of the events in Paris which followed the reception of the news announcing Napoleon the Third's defeat at Sedan:—

'In the evening the news of the disaster of Sedan arrived in Paris; large crowds went to the Louvre, the residence of General Trochu, and to the Legislature, and loudly demanded the deposition of the Emperor. Towards midnight an official proclamation was published, announcing the capitulation of Sedan, and the captivity of Napoleon III., whilst stating at

* *The French Revolutionary Epoch.* Being a History of France from the Beginning of the First French Revolution to the end of the Second Empire, in two volumes. By HENRI VAN LAUN. New York: D. Appleton & Co. Toronto: Hart & Hawkinson.

the same time that the Government was taking the measures demanded by the critical aspect of affairs. At one o'clock at night a sitting was held by the Chamber, in which were proposed the deposition of the Emperor and his dynasty, the appointment of an Executive Committee to resist, by all possible means, the invasion, and to drive the enemy from French territory, and the maintenance of General Trochu as Governor of Paris. The discussion was adjourned till the next day (September 4th), when another proposal was submitted to the Assembly, conferring on the Count de Palikao the title of Lieutenant-General, and appointing an Executive Council, selected by the Legislature. A third proposal, signed by M. Thiers and forty-seven deputies, to appoint an Executive Committee of National Defence, and to convoke a Constituent Assembly as soon as possible, was also laid before the Chamber. It was decided to refer these three proposals to a Committee, which should discuss them without delay, and the sitting was suspended until the report should be ready.

In the meanwhile several thousands of the National Guard had gone unarmed to the building where the Assembly held its sittings, and which was surrounded by an enormous crowd of people, nearly all clamouring for the abdication of the Emperor. Troops and policemen were stationed everywhere, who only allowed the deputies to pass, as well as those persons who had tickets of admission; but they could not prevent many people from entering also. Whilst the Committee was deliberating, a large number of people had collected outside on the steps and in the colonnade of the Hall of the Assembly, and they all loudly demanded the deposition of Napoleon III., a demand which was echoed by the great mass of individuals who filled the Place de la Concorde, the quays, and the Champs Elysées. The agitation of the assembled multitude

increased, and finally they broke through the ranks of the soldiers and the police, and arrived before the building of the Legislative. The National Guards who were on duty fraternised with the people and assisted them in climbing over the wall, whilst the regular troops looked on without interfering.

The crowd, which had invaded the Legislative, rushed through every passage, and penetrated into all the rooms, even into those in which the Deputies were assembled in committee. The public tribunes became soon filled to suffocation, whilst M. Schneider, the President of the Assembly did all that lay in his power to calm the excited multitude. The sitting was declared opened, and several leading members of the Opposition united their efforts to those of the President, and demanded in vain to allow the Assembly to deliberate. Many of those who had filled the tribunes descended to the seats of the Deputies in the Hall, the doors were burst open, and fresh crowds arrived, who increased the tumult, and loudly demanded a change of Government, as well as the proclamation of the Republic. At last M. Gambetta pronounced the deposition of the Imperial dynasty, amidst the vehement applause of the assembled multitude, who still insisted, however, upon the proclamation of the Republic. It was thereupon resolved to proclaim this new form of Government at the Hôtel de Ville, and the leading members of the Liberal party went thither, followed by enormous masses of the people. They were soon joined by many other deputies, and the French Republic was then publicly declared. Acting upon the advice of some of her advisers, the Empress had already left for England.

The troops which were stationed in Paris offered no resistance to the people, and only a few National Guards kept sentry before the public buildings, which henceforth were considered

as national property. A Government of National Defence was provisionally appointed, composed of the nine Deputies of the Department of the Seine, with General Trochu as its president.

The book concludes with this melodramatic outburst from Lock's *Histoire des Français*, which M. Van Laun tacitly endorses :

'1848 had been a revolution caused by contempt; 1870 was a revolution caused by disgust. The Empire lasted twenty years . . . a long period in the life of a human being, but a small one in the life of a nation. It had its foundation in the infatuation which rendered possible the crime whence it sprung; it owed its duration to the terror which its initiative crime inspired. In order to deter minds from thinking of liberty, it gave full scope to sensual appetites, for such is the policy of all despotisms. But in the very day when material pleasures no longer sufficed, and when it was compelled to utter the word "Liberty," it was lost. The ebb which was perceived from afar sapped the ground under its feet; it felt that the quicksand would do its work, and in order to save the dynasty, and without caring whether it was not going to ruin France, it had the folly to provoke the catastrophe by which, fortunately, it was not overwhelmed alone.'

*The Tariff Hand-Book** is a trustworthy brochure which is particularly useful to all who take an interest in the discussion of Free Trade vs. Protection. Its compiler, Mr. John Maclean, has made the Tariff a life-study; and as he only presents facts and does not venture on the expression of an opinion of his own either way, his book is likely to meet with a good reception by both the political parties, for whose benefit the work is pertinently and mainly designed. Mr. Mac-

lean exhibits the Canadian Customs Tariff and its various changes for the last thirty years, and presents the British and American Tariffs in full, as well as the more important portions of the tariffs of France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Italy, and Switzerland. A new edition will, doubtless, be called for after the House opens.

Quite an attractive and convenient edition of Jean Ingelow's Poems.* has just been issued from the press of Messrs. Roberts Brothers. It contains the latest work of this charming English singer, and is further enhanced by a handsome steel portrait of the poet. Miss Ingelow's writings are universally admired for their delicacy and sweetness of rhythm, and nobility of purpose. All of her favourite poems may be found in this new and compact edition.

From the somewhat cursory glance which we have been able to take of Mr. Jones' new Law book,† and from the high legal attainments of the author, we should judge that the Practical treatise on the Real Property Limitation Act of Revised Statutes of Ontario, is a work which no member of the honourable profession could very well do without. It contains the latest decisions both in England and Canada, as well as a complete compendium of the Law on Easements. Mr. Jones is well qualified for the task, and his work exhibits a most extraordinary degree of research and verification. The book should prove of almost as much value to Conveyancers and Real Estate agents as to Attorneys and Barristers, for whom, however, it is especially designed. It is dedicated to the Hon. Stephen Richards.

**The Poetical Works of Jean Ingelow*, 1878. — Boston: Roberts Brothers. Toronto: Hart & Rawlinson.

†*Jones on Prescription*. — A Practical Treatise on the Real Property Limitation Act of Revised Statutes of Ontario. By HERBERT C. JONES. Toronto: Carswell & Co.

|| **The Tariff Hand-Book*, compiled by JOHN MACLEAN. Toronto: Rose-Belford Publishing Co.