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THE FAVORITE

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REST.

BY CHRISTIAN G. ROSSETTI.

O earth, lie heavily upon her eyes;
Seal her sweet eyes weary of watching, Earth;
Lie close around her; leave no room for mirth
With its harsh laughter, nor for sound of sighs,
She hath no questions, she hath no replies,
Hushed in and curtained with a blessed dearth
Of all that irked her from the hour of birth;
With stillness that is almost Paradise,
Darkness more clear than noonday holdeth her,
Silence more musical than any song;
Even her very heart has ceased to stir;
Until the morning of Eternity
Her rest shall not begin nor end, but be;
And when she wakes she will not think it long.

FEUDAL TIMES;
OR,
TWO SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE

A Romance of Daring and Adventure.

(*Translated especially for the FAVORITE from the French of Paul Duplessis.*)

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ESCAPE FROM THRALDOM.

While de Maurevert was acquitting himself in a manner so brilliant, and, above all, so productively, in the commission to Marie, confided to him by Raoul, the chevalier paced the floor of his chamber with irregular steps, endeavoring to reduce his feverish state of mind to order.

"Is it possible," he asked himself, "that I can have suffered myself to be captivated by the seduction of Marie? This woman is beautiful, admirably beautiful, it is true; but why have I not sooner seen that this seductive envelope hides a vitiated soul, a guileful heart? Ah! if Diane should ever know to what an extent I have outraged her memory, how she will despise me! By what expiation shall I ever be able to obliterate from my own mind the enormity of my offence? My remorse, by showing me the whole extent of my baseness, renders Diane still more dear to me. How superior she is to Marie! In Diane, courage has its source only in the sentiment of duty; Marie, on the contrary, exercises her audacity only at the impulse of her caprice. Diane represents the spirit of Good, Marie the spirit of Evil!—the one is an angel, the other a demon. Wretch that I am, it was with eyes fixed on heaven that I was allowing myself to fall into the bottomless pit!"

His excitement was still at its height when a knock at the door of his chamber attracted his attention. It was the landlord, who brought him a letter. As soon as that individual had left the room, he nervously broke the seal. The missive was from Marie.

The mysterious young woman begged him to come to her without delay, as she had a serious communication to make to him and an important service to ask of him. Raoul hesitated; to obey this invitation was, he felt, to cast himself deeper than ever into the gulph from which he wished, at any cost, to extricate himself; it was to go into battle unarmed.

"Yes, I will go," he said, at length, "for my fears are more injurious to Diane than my passing infidelity has been. The respect I owe to Mademoiselle d'Erlanges forbids my preserving to her my heart by a shameful flight from temptation. It is victorious and triumphant that I must cast myself at her feet, or not at all."

Before going out, and in spite of his hostile intentions, the chevalier dressed himself with the most scrupulous care. Half an hour later he knocked at the door of the solitary house on the Marché-aux-Chevaux, hardly twenty minutes after the Marquis de la Tremblais had taken his departure thence.

Though it was still broad daylight—five o'clock was about striking—it was in a room hung with black, and tenderly lit by a lamp veiled with gauze—the same room into which he had been introduced on his first visit—that Marie received the chevalier. Sforzi bowed ceremoniously to the unknown, and waited with a cold and severe air until she should address him.

Whether it was that Marie observed the attitude—so aggressive, or, at least, so defensive—taken by the chevalier, or whether, excited by what had passed between herself and the Marquis, she wished to strike a decisive blow, it was

"THE FLOWERS SHE FLINGS AWAY."—SEE PAGE 36.

with a perfectly enchanting look that she opened the conversation.

"Monsieur Sforzi," she said, "if, carried away by the impulsion of a vivacity stronger than my reason, I suffered myself unreflectingly to wound your sensitiveness by sending you a souvenir of friendship, I now see my error and hasten to repair it. I ought—before following the custom universally received at the Court of France—to have divined and respected your exaggerated susceptibility. The ambassador you sent to me, Monsieur de Maurevert, brought me the expression of your grave discontent. I trust, chevalier, that, with your justice and knowledge of life, you will deem sufficient the explanations I now give you."

The air, half serious and confused, half pleasant and embarrassed, with which Marie pronounced these words, contrasting so remarkably with her ordinary manner, indicated clearly how much this explanation cost her pride. Sforzi, somewhat fortified as he was against her seductions, could not resist a feeling of vanity. He felt that what Marie had now done for him she would not have done for any other person,

"Madame," he replied, with a slight tremor in the tone of his voice, "I humbly thank you for your explanation, and I see that my susceptibility has exhibited itself in very ill taste. But, as you so judiciously remarked, when I had first the honor to visit you, I am but a poor provincial gentleman, very awkward, and altogether out of place in the neighborhood of the Court, and worthy only to taste the common-place joys of a peaceful marriage. It is for me, therefore, to beg you to accept my most humble apologies."

"Monsieur Sforzi," said Marie after a brief pause, "am I to attribute to irony or to lack of spirit, the allusion you have made to certain words spoken by me during our first interview? If, in the first instance, I hurt your self-love, by offering to your ambition a vulgar and limited perspective, it was but the better afterwards to excite your emulation and awaken your pride."

"Madame," replied Sforzi, "you attach to my words a sense I had not intended to give to them. I spoke neither in irony nor in discouragement, but simply expressed my tastes and hopes. I repeat, madame, that I do not feel drawn either towards the splendours or the struggles of the Court. My dream of the future is concentrated in the tranquil mediocrity to which you have counselled me to attach myself. The love of a princess would destroy my independence, my instincts of liberty; for a princess can love only a slave."

"What if I told you that I love you, Raoul!" cried Marie with so much impetuosity that the strangeness of the avowal was put out of sight by its bold audacity.

The chevalier's heart bounded in his bosom, his blood boiled in his veins, and a bewildering cloud passed before his eyes; but at length he was able to master his emotion, and to reply firmly:

"Madame, what is the use of mocking my credulity, of playing with my weakness? I love with all my soul a noble and angelic girl—a chaste and adorable creature! Would it not be cruelty in you, for the mere purpose of amusing an idle hour, to bring trouble into my heart?"

"Sforzi," interrupted the unknown, vehemently, "I am too high in rank, and you have too proud a spirit, for us to descend to falsehood! Let us treat as equals—with faces unmasked. Deception is only for the weak! Let us be frank, then, since we are strong. Chevalier Sforzi, is your love for Diane d'Erlanges serious—real? or is it one of those ephemeral passions, one of those youthful errors, of which reason quickly cures us?"

At the name of Diane, the chevalier's emotion was calmed as by enchantment; it was the drop of iced water falling on to the boiling lava and changing it into a cold stone.

"Madame," he cried, "I am ignorant by what means you have become mistress of my secret; but it is better thus. I can now the more easily speak with perfect frankness. Yes, madame, I love Mademoiselle d'Erlanges with all my strength; my love for her will not finish even with my life, for my soul will take its flight with hers to heaven. Nothing, madame, be assured nothing—neither the prospect of the most brilliant future nor the certainty of a frightful catastrophe, could make me renounce Mademoiselle d'Erlanges!

"Though I am still young, I have already suffered much, which means also that I have lived much. I am not the foolish provincial nor the inexperienced gentleman you imagine; and now that I am no longer blinded by passion, I can tell you what the part is you have played towards me—what were your projects concerning me. You sought—and for a moment, I confess, you were successful—to turn my head, because you had need of me to carry out certain projects of your own, of which I am ignorant—perhaps to avenge you for the infidelity of a lover; such things are seen every day at Court. You had need, I say, of a devotion, blind, absolute! You required a valiant sword, ready, at a word from you, to strike the victim you pointed out. From the indignation with which I received your charity this morning, you have doubtless discovered that I am not precisely the scoundrel or fool you were seeking. You have now changed your tactics—you have decided to strike a great blow—you have pretended to be in love with me! Perhaps even your knowledge of my passion for Mademoiselle d'Erlanges may have inspired you with the idea of entering into rivalry with her! If it is so, I warn you that to persist in playing such a part, madame, will be but to expose yourself to humiliating defeat.'

While Raoul was thus freely and violently expressing himself, Marie remained perfectly unmoved by his words; but for the fire in her eyes, nothing about her betrayed the least vexation or anger.

"Monsieur Sforzi," she replied, coldly, "I have really been grossly mistaken concerning you. I certainly *did* think you were something other than I find you to be. Monsieur Sforzi, I will not detain you any longer."

And without deigning to enter into any further explanation, the unknown saluted the chevalier by an inclination of the head, and passed majestically out of the room.

"Where the devil have you come from, so handsomely accoutred, chevalier?" inquired De Maurevert, when the two companions in arms met, half an hour later, at the Stag's Head.

"From the house on the Marché-aux-Chevaux," replied Raoul.

"Aha! then I'll wager that you and I have to-day seen the two prettiest women in Paris!" cried the captain.

"Of whom are you speaking?"

"*Parbleu!*—of Marie and Mademoiselle d'Erlanges," replied De Maurevert, "Why, how you blush and then turn pale!—donkey that I was not to mind more what I am saying! Yes, dear companion, Mademoiselle d'Erlanges is at this moment in Paris."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE GIANT AND THE DWARF.

At the news that Diane d'Erlanges had escaped the pursuit of the Marquis de la Tremblais, and inhabited the same city as himself, Sforzi was beside himself with joy. The

future, which had, a moment before, appeared to him so dark and desolate, smiled now with the liveliest colours; in his excitement he would have fearlessly defied misfortune Diane at Paris!—Diane near him!—what now could trouble his felicity? He felt master of the universe! It seemed to him that Nature entire must rejoice with him and partake of his intoxication.

Of Marie, that woman so seductive, so extraordinary, whose image had a few hours before so profoundly agitated him, he thought no more. She had passed entirely from his mind.

The captain expected questions without number and embarrassing explanations, but he was agreeably disappointed in his expectations. Sforzi threw himself upon his neck, and embraced him warmly, at the same time crying:

"De Maurevert, conduct me to her!"

"My dear friend," replied the captain, not at all desirous to find himself third at the meeting of the two young people, "Mademoiselle d'Erlanges lives in the Rue du Paon, near the King David hostelry, in the Faubourg Saint-Germain—and I do not feel inclined to undertake such a walk this evening."

"Rue du Paon, Faubourg Saint-Germain," repeated the chevalier—"that is all I need to know;" and without further occupying himself with De Maurevert, he rushed from the hostelry like a man out of his senses.

"How youth throws away its strength!" remarked the captain, shrugging his shoulders. "The dear chevalier, on reaching Diane's house, bathed in perspiration, and with his dress covered with dust, exposes himself to appear at a disadvantage. Would he not have done a hundred times better to have mounted his horse, gone at a walking pace, and appeared before his mistress in all the glitter and freshness of an irreproachable condition of dress? Bah! who knows? Women delight in anything that has the appearance of passion. Raoul's disorder and impetuosity may perhaps greatly please Mademoiselle d'Erlanges! The reflection that worries me most, and to which I shall never accustom myself, is that the imprudences of youth mostly turn to its advantage; that is sovereignly unjust.

"What is to come of all this? Nothing ood, I feel pretty sure. From Raoul's manner, on telling me that he had seen her highness, I suspect the interview had been a stormy one. I hope Sforzi contrived to keep his pride under control. The Princess is not a woman to forgive an affront, as she has but too often proved."

Fatigued by the exertions of the day, the adventurer seated himself on a stone bench outside the Stag's Head. It was a principle with him to remain as little as possible shut up in his own room; he affirmed that Fortune never comes to seek any one in his home, and that, therefore, if not sought, she ought at least to be waited for on the road along which she is likely to pass.

He had been seated on the bench about a quarter of an hour, when his attention was attracted by the apparition of a strange personage.

It was a little man—whose height did not exceed four feet ten inches—with shrunken limbs, indefinable physiognomy, and timid and hesitating bearing. He was dressed in a pourpoint and hose, half glaring red, half gold yellow. Stopping before the Stag's Head, he appeared undecided whether or not to enter the hostelry.

"Companion," said De Maurevert to him, "if you are seeking a lodging, you may thank our good star for having conducted you here; owhere else will you find such excellent wine, r such a marvellous table. Would you like me o recommend you to the landlord?"

The little man turned towards De Maurevert nd looked at him with extreme attention without returning any answer.

"*Tudieu*, companion!" cried the captain, knitting his brows and pretending to be angry, "it seems to me that I had the honour of addressing you a moment ago."

The little man this time did not even deign to look at his interlocutor.

"By the god Mars, my pretty little mignon!" cried De Maurevert, raising his voice, "do you know you have considerably raised my bile? For two pins I would demand satisfaction for your impertinence."

Wishing to push the joke further, the captain rose, drew himself up to his full height, and placed his hand on the hilt of his sword. The little man followed his example, and likewise pretended to draw his sword.

"Aha!" cried De Maurevert, pleased with the diversion thus sent him by chance, "it appears that you are fond of fighting, valiant companion. In that case—draw!"

Several idlers, attracted by this burlesque scene, formed a circle about the dwarf and the giant.

"Yes, yes—draw!" they repeated in chorus.

The little man, so strangely dressed, appeared—at least to judge from the bellicose and determined expression of his face—to take this invitation seriously.

"So be it," he cried; "a duel!—a second!"

"You are laconic, my impetuous friend," said De Maurevert; "your pantomime, however, so well supplies your lack of eloquence that one has no difficulty in comprehending you. You want a second, is not that it?"

"Yes," replied the dwarf.

"Do you know any friend of yours, one of your countrymen, a Patagonian for example, who will join his luck with yours and share your glory and your dangers?"

"Yes, I have such a friend."

"And where may he reside?"

"Here!" replied the dwarf, pointing to the Stag's Head.

"That is marvellously convenient. Do you desire me to go in and inquire for this friend?"

"I do."

"What is his name?"

"The Chevalier Sforzi."

De Maurevert was greatly surprised at hearing the chevalier named, and he examined more attentively than he had hitherto done the victim of his mystification, his pretended adversary.

"Sanguinary companion," he said, in a tone half jocular, half serious, "I deeply regret to be obliged to meet your wishes with a refusal. In the first place, Monsieur Sforzi is at this moment absent; in the next place, were he present, he could not accept your invitation. The chevalier counts me for his best friend."

"Absent!" repeated the dwarf, with an emotion so real as to double the captain's astonishment.

The little man advanced to De Maurevert, took one of his hands, and closely examined the natural lines upon the palm. More and more interested in the dwarf, the captain suffered him to do this without offering any opposition

"Loyal and grasping," muttered the dwarf, releasing the adventurer's hand.

The air of jocularity, so far maintained by De Maurevert, changed into one of mystification.

"Death!" he cried, affecting to become furious. "We must come to an end of this. Since we have no seconds, let us fight on our own account."

"Let us fight!" repeated the dwarf, placing himself on guard with a precision and firmness which seemed to denote on his part a thorough knowledge of the art of fencing.

De Maurevert was beginning to be weary of this pleasantry, but he could not now put an end to it without throwing himself open to the sarcasms of the idle knot of bystanders. He therefore affected to take an extravagant posture of defence.

"Are you ready?" he demanded coldly of the dwarf.

"Yes, companion."

To the great pleasure of the on-lookers, the little man drew from its sheath a gilded lath, and began to fence with De Maurevert. After making two or three grotesque passes, he uttered a cry, threw up his arms, and, acting the part of a man who has been mortally wounded, fell to the ground.

"Help, captain!" he cried in a feeble voice.

De Maurevert not waiting for a second invitation, lifted up the little man, and carried him into the Stag's Head.

The idlers, prodigiously diverted by this amusing scene, dispersed, regretting that it had been so quickly terminated.

As soon as the dwarf and the adventurer were alone, De Maurevert said with a really serious air:

"Monsieur, I cannot imagine for what purpose you have enacted this pasquinade: but of this I am sure, that you have had some motive."

"Yes," replied the little man, whose face expressed profound sadness, "I wished to see Monsieur Sforzi."

"You know the chevalier, then?"

"I know him, and I love him."

"You love Monsieur Sforzi?"

"He has done me a great service."

"Ah!—And what do you want to say to him?"

The dwarf hesitated; then again taking the adventurer's hand in his own, he, for the second time, studied the lines of the palm. Apparently, this examination was favorable to De Maurevert, for the dwarf smiled affectionately, and, lowering his voice, said:

"My cousin D'Epernon detests my friend Sforzi!"

"That is true. How did you come to know this?"

"And when my cousin does that," continued the dwarf, "he pursues the person he detests to the death."

"Raoul is in danger?"

"Heaven send that he may return safely to-night?"

"What do you mean?"

"If he returns safely to-night," replied the dwarf, "do not let him go out again alone."

"Explain yourself more clearly. Why have you not confidence in me?" cried De Maurevert, seriously alarmed on Raoul's account.

"Many gentlemen wear coats of mail under their clothes," continued the singular little man, as if determined not to answer the questions of his interlocutor. "If I were Sforzi, I should follow the example of these gentlemen. Good-night," he added, nodding slightly to De Maurevert, and moving towards the door.

"I must absolutely know who you are?" cried the adventurer, seizing him by the arm.

"If you do me any harm, I will not come back again—and then it will be so much the worse for Sforzi," replied the dwarf.

"Tell me at least," said De Maurevert, releasing him, "what I am to answer the chevalier when he asks me your name."

"Tell him," said the dwarf, as he moved away, "that the Sane Madman often thinks of him; and that whenever the occasion arrives for being useful to him, he will not allow it to escape."

As if this response had horribly fatigued him, and that he dreaded having to submit to further questioning on the part of the captain, the dwarf went away running.

"By Castor and Pollux!" muttered De Maurevert, after the departure of the dwarf, "I should not be sorry at this moment to throw myself into a good bed. But Raoul has need of me; there is no time for hesitation."

The giant adjusted the baldrick of his sword, and, at a rapid pace, hurried towards the Faubourg Saint-Germain.

CHAPTER XL.

THE PRICE OF TWO QUESTIONS.

Night was beginning to fall when De Maurevert quitted the Stag's Head. Late passengers were already hurrying towards their dwelling-places, and the noise of the great city was gradually subsiding.

"*Morbleu!*" said the adventurer to himself, quickening his pace, "I am certainly growing old. It almost goes against my heart to traverse the streets when once the curfew has sounded. This is a bad symptom; it smells of marriage. What a pity it is that the Marquis de la Tremblais should have killed the Dame d'Erlanges!—that worthy old Huguenot, shaken up and rejuvenate by love, would have been a very well assorted match. I should have become Seigneur de Tauve, should have consecrated my leisure to the cultivation of my lands, and to the augmentation of dues paid by my vassals. What a charming existence it would have been!"

"By the way here is a man regulating his steps to mine in a singular manner; it seems very much as if he were following me. Let me see whether my suspicions are well founded."

De Maurevert crossed the street; the individual referred to did the same.

"No, I was not deceived," said De Maurevert to himself.

The captain turned sharply round, and saluted the stranger with extreme politeness:

"Monsieur," he said, "I am deeply pained to see the trouble I am giving you. I really cannot suffer you any longer to incommode yourself by acting as escort to me." While speaking, he laid his hand on the hilt of his sword.

The stranger appeared to take no notice of this threatening piece of pantomime.

"What, captain!" he replied—"have you not recognized me?"

"To my shame, I confess that I do not recognize you even now!" said De Maurevert.

The stranger loosened the folds of his cloak which hid his features; it was the confidential servant, by whom Marie had sent the mantle and purse to Sforzi in the morning, which, a few hours later, had become the property of the adventurer.

"Why did you not sooner make yourself known to me?" demanded De Maurevert.

"What need was there for me to do so? You were going towards the Marché-aux-Chevaux. I allowed you to proceed on your way."

"Her highness, then, wishes to speak with me?"

"Yes; she is waiting for you."

This answer appeared to annoy the captain considerably.

"By my faith," he replied, "I am, it is true, bound to her highness, body and soul; but it is impossible for me, at this moment, to obey her invitation. My companion in arms, my best—I might even say my only—friend, is exposed to danger. I am hurrying to his assistance. Duty before everything else."

"You refer to the Chevalier Sforzi?" asked the man.

"To Monsieur Sforzi."

"Well, then, I swear to you that your disobedience to the orders of the princess, my honored and powerful mistress, is likely greatly to exaggerate the position of the chevalier. Monsieur de Maurevert, I have no interest in deceiving you, and may speak to you with perfect frankness. Lend me your close attention."

"With pleasure, monsieur," replied De Maurevert; "but, as we can talk just as well walking as standing still, let us continue our way. I am now listening to you."

"Captain," responded Marie's servant, "I heard the princess, shortly after your departure, express herself in the most eulogistic terms concerning you. She congratulated herself on having attached you to her person, and promised herself frequently to turn to account your rare talents and precious qualities. If I were a mean and jealous spy, dear Monsieur de Maurevert, this favor on the part of my mistress would have made me desire to destroy your rising credit and future fortune; but, thank heaven, I see things from a higher point of view, I see, that instead of declaring myself your enemy, it will be my interest to become your most devoted servant. My office, as the confidential servant of her highness, pertains only to her highness' private business—to all such delicate missions as require address and discretion; you will have the superior direction—in a word, of all that pertains to the sword.

"Your duties, therefore, will not in the least interfere with mine; our two administrations will be perfectly distinct. Now, I feel convinced that, by relying upon one another our strength will be increased a hundredfold, and our credit will be for ever secured. You will hold the princess through her feelings of hatred; I by her tender affections. You see, then, dear Monsieur de Maurevert, that it is not my interest to deceive you, and that you may put the firmest trust in all I have now said to you."

De Maurevert had listened with the utmost attention, without for a moment slackening his pace.

"Two questions," he said. "What is your name?—and do you belong to the *noblesse*?"

"I am called Lambert," replied the man, "and I am the son of tradespeople."

"Then, Lambert, your sentiments are very much above your origin. I have rarely met, even among the higher classes of society, a man gifted with such exquisite good sense as yourself. You have appreciated, with a clearness of sight which does you the greatest honor, the services it may be in my power at some time to render you. And now, estimable Lambert, let us pass to what is of more immediate consequence. Tell me, I beg, in what way my refusal—dictated by an imperious necessity—to go immediately to your mistress is of a nature to aggrevate the position of my companion, the Chevalier Sforzi?"

"I left her highness," replied Marie's servant, "under the influence of an excitement beyond any I have ever before seen her display—and which she did not even attempt to conceal from me. She addressed to him at once the most cruel reproaches and the most tender expressions. She was both a tigress and a dove! It was in the midst of one of these transports that she sent me in search of you. Now, I feel certain that if you refuse to obey her orders, her highness will let the balance fall on the side of anger; and all the world knows that, when once she has resolved upon doing anything, whatever it may be, it is sure to be accomplished without delay. It would not surprise me to hear that this very evening the chevalier had received the chastisement due to his culpable indifference."

"The devil!" murmured De Maurevert, "the position is becoming complicated in a most lugubrious fashion! Poor Sforzi certainly does not bring happiness to his friends. As to himself personally, he is decidedly unlucky. Scarcely does he arrive in any country than everybody league themselves against him to exterminate him. After having revolutionized Auvergne, he is now going to raise Paris! The princess, D'Epernon, and De Joyeuse are eager to have him stabbed! All things considered, I think it will be best for me to attend her highness' summons. Dear Monsieur Lambert, having duly examined, weighed, and considered your communication, I will accompany you."

When the captain and Lambert reached the solitary house on the Marché-aux-Chevaux, they found Marie impatiently awaiting them at the foot of the stairs. She took De Maurevert by the arm, and drew him into a kind of small oratory on the ground floor.

"Captain," she cried, without giving him time to present his homage, "what is Raoul doing at this moment? Do not attempt to deceive me!—I have your promise. I will—do you hear?—I will know all!"

"Madame," replied De Maurevert, coolly, "your highness consented to allow me to remain silent whenever I consider it right to remain so; I therefore humbly beg of your highness' justice to be permitted to answer your questions, or to refrain from doing so as I see fit."

"Have you seen Monsieur Sforzi since you quitted my presence?" asked Marie, without thinking of discussing the pretension of her interlocutor.

"Yes, madame."

"When?"

"Scarcely an hour ago."

"And since then, where has Monsieur Sforzi been?"

De Maurevert remained silent.

"Do you not hear me?" demanded Marie, impatiently. "I ask you where Monsieur Sforzi now is?"

"Madame," said De Maurevert, "if your highness attaches so little importance to an arrangement so fully discussed and voluntarily accepted that she thinks herself empowered to break it without being authorized to do so by the other contracting party, I shall be reduced to the painful necessity of refusing my services to your highness."

"Captain," cried Marie, "I will give you five thousand *livres tournois* if you will this evening answer all my questions!"

De Maurevert started, and his cheeks turned brick-red.

"I should prefer, madame," he said, after a short pause, "knowing your highness' generosity, that she would set a price on each of her questions."

"I don't understand you," replied Marie.

"My proposition is perfectly transparent nevertheless. Suppose that after satisfying your highness' curiosity ninety-nine times, I should be compelled to remain silent to the hundredth question, would it not be sovereignly unjust that my ninety-nine compliances should go for nothing? But the method of computation I have suggested, by setting such a price on each question as your highness may think fit to attach to it, it would result that I should be paid in proportion to the service I shall have rendered."

"Very well, captain—I will be less exacting than you; I will give you five thousand *livres tournois* for two questions only."

"That is to say, two thousand five hundred livres for each, madame; for I may answer your first, but not the second question."

"So be it—two thousand five hundred for each question."

"I am only too happy to be agreeable to your highness. Your first question?"

"Where is Monsieur Sforzi at this moment?"

"Is it really for an answer to this question that your highness is willing to pay two thousand five hundred livres?"

"Yes."

"Monsieur le Chevalier Sforzi left me, madame, to visit Mademoiselle Diane D'Erlanges."

"I suspected it!" murmured Marie. "A second question, captain," she went on, after a brief pause.

"Which your highness also deigns to value at two thousand five hundred livres?"

"Precisely so."

"Heaven send that I may be permitted to answer it."

"Do you know where Diane D'Erlanges lives?" demanded Marie.

"Yes, madame; Mademoiselle Diane D'Erlanges lives with the Dowager Madame de Lamirande, in the Rue du Paon, near the King David hostelry, in the Faubourg Saint-Germain."

"Thanks, captain. Tell Lambert to order my chair to be got ready. I am going out at once."

"Without escort, madame?"

"You will accompany me!"

"That will be a great honor, madame; but allow me to observe to your highness that I hardly count for more than three ordinary men. Now, three men, in these Epernon times, form a suite insufficient to protect your highness."

"Do you reckon my presence as nothing, captain?" demanded Marie, proudly. "I should be curious to see D'Epernon dare to attack my person!"

Five minutes after the occurrence of this conversation Marie stepped into her chair.

"Rue du Paon, Faubourg Saint-Germain," said Lambert to the porters.

CHAPTER XLI.

ATTACKED BY BRAVOS.

While Marie was on her way to Mademoiselle D'Erlanges, the Chevalier Sforzi found himself in a most critical position. Intoxicated with the idea of again seeing Diane, he had set off with hurried steps, as we have said, towards the Faubourg Saint-Germain. At the same moment five men, who appeared to have been on the watch in the immediate neighbourhood of the Stag's Head, sprang from their place of concealment and rushed after him.

Raoul did not remark this incident, and continued his way in all haste. It was only when the absence of pedestrians had made the streets solitary that he began instinctively to suspect that something strange and unusual was taking place about him. The sound of the footsteps of the five men who had followed him so persistently at first began to attract his attention vaguely, and finally to arouse it thoroughly.

As soon as his suspicion was awakened, he did not lose a moment before examining his situation! he saw at a glance that, for the present, he must banish the idea of Diane from his mind to think of his own safety. Twenty diverse thoughts passed through his brain; to call for help; to turn abruptly upon his adversaries and charge them without giving them time to reconnoitre him; to take advantage of the advance he had of them to fly, and to seek refuge in the first house he might come to; lastly, to endeavor to reach a guard-house. But on the execution of none of these impossible, or at least hazardous projects, could he finally determine.

He was scarcely two musket-shots distant from the Rue du Paon when the men who were following him appeared to be preparing for action. Instead of regulating their pace by his, they suddenly began to run after him. The chevalier paused, and speedily became the prey of one of those fatal and irresistible crises of which, after they had passed, and he had returned to reason, he generally so bitterly deplored the violence.

"Death and carnage!" he cried, snatching his sword from its sheath—"death and carnage!—let the bloodshed fall on the heads of the guilty!"

If the obscurity of night had not concealed from the assassins the expression of furious rage with which the countenance of their adversary was contracted, it is probable they might have hesitated to attack him.

Suddenly a change, as extraordinary as it was instantaneous, manifested itself in Sforzi. With that incredible and marvellous lucidity which the imminent approach of danger gives to more than ordinarily gifted natures, his whole past life presented itself to his mind. The image of Diane stood before him, radiant, angelic. An inexplicable reaction took place within him. His fury gave place to weakness—he became afraid.

"To die when one had so nearly reached to happiness!" he murmured. "I do not feel capable of exhibiting this stoical courage."

Like a stag pursued by a pack thirsting for his blood, he turned his back upon his adversaries and fled with all the energy of despair. Five minutes sufficed to carry him so far in advance of his enemies that he ceased to hear their steps. With his brow bathed in perspiration and out of breath, he leaned against a wall and rested himself.

His eyes caught sight of a lanthorn hanging from a vast, mean-looking house, situated a few paces from the spot on which he was standing. A cry of joy escaped his lips. By the aid of the dim light of the lanthorn he read, upon a signboard projecting into the street, the words "King David Hostelry—Lodging for Man and Beast." With a bound he reached the door of the house and struck hastily a blow with the knocker.

"What do you want?" demanded a voice, yawning.

"The Dowager Madame de Lamirande."

"May the devil wring your neck!" replied the voice. "It is not here."

"I will give you a crown if you will direct me to the house of Madame de Lamirande," cried Sforzi.

Raoul heard the wicket in the door open.

"Let's see your crown," replied the voice, now in a tone so harmonious as scarcely to be any longer recognizable.

Sforzi hastened to pass the promised piece of money through the open wicket.

"Monseigneur," said the voice, by this time modulated to gentle murmur, "Madame de Lamirande lives next door—the first house to the left."

Raoul started with surprise; it was the very house against which he had leaned to rest himself from the fatigue of the flight—the very house inhabited by Diane! In this accident, in which there was really nothing extraordinary, he saw the hand of Providence, and a happy presage for his love.

This time it was with a trembling and discreet hand he raised and let fall the knocker. The light blow which he gave found a long echo in his heart. His emotion redoubled in intensity when, after an interval of a few seconds, he heard the sounds of footsteps within approaching the door.

Almost at the same moment a voice well-known to him, that of Lehardy, inquired the name of the late visitor. The chevalier had hardly strength to reply.

"Monsieur Sforzi!" repeated Lehardy, in a tone of mixed indignation and astonishment—"is it possible?"

A minute of silence passed, during which Lehardy had gone to take instructions from his mistress.

"Monsieur," said the servant coldly, on his return, and still without opening the door, "Mademoiselle D'Erlanges does not know the Chevalier Sforzi personally; if his business is with the Dowager Madame Lamirande, that lady is at present away from home, and will not return for two days."

Raoul's first impression was anger; but at the recollection of his past conduct, this impression was but of momentary duration. He was about to appeal humbly for admittance to Diane's presence, when his attention was arrested by the appearance of five men who had turned into the Rue du Paon.

"Lehardy," he cried, drawing his sword, "go and tell Mademoiselle d'Erlanges that he whom she despises and detests will soon have ceased to live! Assure your mistress that my latest thoughts will be of her—and that I am happy to die!"

Whether it was that Lehardy believed the chevalier's protestations to be counterfeit, or that, partaking the resentment of his mistress, he was implacable, instead of giving asylum to Raoul, he went away from the door precipitately.

The chevalier was not mistaken; they were, indeed, assassins who had entered the Rue du Paon. To complete his misfortune, and as if everything this night conspired against the unfortunate young man, the rays of the hostelry lanthorn fell full upon him, sharply defining his outline, in the midst of a luminous halo, to the view of the bravos. Comprehending the disadvantage of this position, he at first thought of springing into the shade; but instantly abandoning this project, he placed his back against the door of the Dowager Madame Lamirande.

"It is here that I must fight and die," he murmured to himself.

The attack of the assassins was not long delayed. Scarcely had he time to raise his sword before they sprang upon him.

Sforzi received the shock of their onset valiantly. Being in no fear of a surprise from behind, since his back was firmly planted against the wall, he enveloped himself, so to speak, in a rain of steel, parrying a blow at every stroke.

The Rue du Paon, considerably widened since that time, was at the period of this story extremely narrow; and this disposition of the ground prevented the assassins from charging their victim together, thus rendering the chevalier's defence more easy. For more than half a minute there was a frightful clashing of steel. Sparks flew from the violently opposing swords. Not a word was spoken on either side; a lugubrious silence hung over the murderous scene.

It was the chevalier's voice that first mingled with the sound of the clanking steel. Its ringing power told clearly that the young man had not remained insensible to the excitement of the struggle, that the ardour of his blood had become inflamed by the shock of battle, and that he had again fallen under the influence of that terrible crisis, from which the power of love alone had for a moment rescued him.

"Wretches!" he cried, accompanying each of his words with a dazing whirl of his sword—"wretches! if you had known how rough the work you were undertaking would be, you would have thought twice before accepting it! Let my sword not break, and I swear to heaven that not one of you shall live to receive the infamous reward of your crime! What! do you hesitate—do you draw back! Am I not run down—have you not brought me to bay? Come, one more effort, and you may wet your lips in the blood of your prey!"

One of the assassins, doubtless more sensible to the sting of these sarcasms than his companions, approached the chevalier, who, observing the movement, lunged at him with such irresistible impetuosity as to pierce his body, and bring him to the earth.

"Aha!" he cried, springing back to his position against the door, "my prophecy is beginning to be realized! What!—you do not thank me? That sword thrust is worth one share more to you! When a wolf is mortally wounded, his companions devour him. The spoils of the scoundrel writhing at my feet will be yours if you succeed in killing me! Courage, then!—courage!"

Far from acting upon these ironical exhortations, the bandits appeared, on the contrary, rather inclined to abandon the attack, and to renounce their sanguinary project.

Raoul profited by this momentary truce to recover his breath. Though he dared not yet flatter himself that he had come off so cheaply from the great danger that had threatened him, he began to feel some little hope. Alas! his illusion was of short duration; he speedily discovered that the retreat of the bandits was not a flight, and that, instead of ameliorating his condition, it rendered it, on the contrary, still more critical.

The assassins fearing, not to be disturbed in their sanguinary work—for not a window in the street had been opened since the commencement of the struggle—but apprehensive of partaking the fate of their companion pierced by the chevalier's sword, decided on using the firearms with which they were furnished, and which, relying on their number, they had not at first thought of employing. Raoul saw them draw long pistols from beneath their cloaks.

"I am lost!" he said to himself.

Determined at least not to succumb without vengeance, he was about to rush upon his assassins, when the door of the house inhabited by Diane was opened, and Lehardy appeared on the threshold, armed with an arquebuse.

"Come in," he said, quickly, and fired as he spoke.

The ball did not hit any of the bandits; but the wretches, disconcerted by the unexpectedness of the attack, did not think of replying to it for a moment.

"Come in, chevalier!" repeated Lehardy.

"I will not enter," replied Sforzi, in a calm and resolute voice, "unless I am to be admitted to the presence of Mademoiselle d'Erlanges."

Moments were precious. Lehardy's hesitation was therefore brief.

"You shall see Mademoiselle d'Erlanges, chevalier," he said.

Raoul crossed the threshold, and Lehardy promptly closed and fastened the door behind him. Not an instant too soon. Two bullets joined together, a kind of projectile much in vogue in 1580, hissed through the air and lodged in the stout, oaken framework of the door.

At the moment this scene was passing, the chair in which Marie was being borne, appeared at one of the extremities of the Rue du Paon.

(To be continued.)

CURIOUS CUSTOMS.

One would naturally suppose that every person who enters a shop is aware of what he requires. Our experience, however, shows that shopkeepers and shopmen are accustomed to recognize two classes of customers, those who know what they want, and those who do not. In the first is to be found that customer who is so rare and so perfect that we will call him the Ideal customer. He exists as a sort of fond dream in the mind of the shopman, sometimes, but all too seldom, realized. He knows what he wants, and he knows the price; he asks for it, pays for it, and takes it away. Heaven prosper him on his way! He is a model to all customers.

Now if the shopkeeper did not possess the article required by the Ideal customer, he would inform him so, and the customer would leave the shop. In this respect, and in this only, he differs from the Obstinate customer, who, although quite as clear on his requirements, gives far more trouble. For he is no sooner informed that the article he wishes is not kept, than he betrays a belief that it is, and that only laziness or lack of understanding prevents his obtaining it. He therefore institutes a little search on his own account throughout the shop, naturally inflicting annoyance on the feelings of the shopman.

We will suppose the Obstinate customer enters a chemist's shop, and asks for a pair of washing-gloves. He is told that "we do not keep them."

"Don't keep them?" he exclaims, gazing keenly around the shop; "dear me, that's very awkward! What is that pile of things on the shelf just above your head there?"

He is told that they are chest-protectors.

"Oh, indeed! chest-protectors, eh? They wouldn't do then—they—wouldn't—do." This is said slowly as the speaker's eye wanders searchingly around the shop. Presently he says again, probably pointing rudely and officiously with his umbrella:

"Isn't that pile of things there with the red borders to them washing-gloves? I think they must be!"

They are accordingly taken down and shown to be something quite different to washing-gloves. A glimmer of intelligence will then, perhaps, shine upon him, and he will say, "Well, if you haven't got them I can't have them—can I?" And then, casting suspicious glances around him, he leaves the shop slowly, and the shopman may think himself fortunate if something in the window does not attract his notice, and bring him back again.

A customer much to be avoided is the Indiscreet customer. He orders readily, and speedily finds what he wants. But he never thinks about price, and generally never inquires until his parcel of goods is packed up. It most frequently happens that the price is three or four times what he expected or can afford, and an awkward dilemma is the result. It generally ends in the parcel being opened, and goods extracted until the amount is reduced to within the reach of the Indiscreet customer's pocket.

This customer is the more annoying, as the mode of dealing with him is so difficult. If it be attempted to discern the probable worth of the individual by his dress and appearance, there is the utmost danger of confounding him with the Unknown customer, who is at once the horror and delight of shopkeepers. We will narrate a fact we came across to illustrate this.

A shabby old gentleman walked into a jeweller's shop, and asked to be allowed to look at some topazes. Three or four were accordingly shown to him, and he quickly selected the best, which he said was hardly good enough. "Ah, but you see these stones are expensive," said the jeweller, rather patronizingly. "I can assure you the one you have chosen would answer any ordinary purpose."

The old gentleman looked around him in a dissatisfied way, and presently caught sight of a large and beautiful stone in a corner of the jeweller's glass case.

"That looks more like what I want," said he; "let me look at that one, will you?"

"It will be very expensive, sir; very, indeed—more, I dare say, than you would like to give. The stone you have is very good, sir.'

In a quiet voice, the old gentleman asked if the stone was for sale or only on view. At this rebuke the jeweller produced it, naming a high price. It was immediately chosen; and his customer, taking a sketch from his pocket, said:

"Get that coat-of-arms engraved upon it, and send me word when it's done."

He gave his name and address. He was a noble earl, and the shopkeeper had committed the grievous error of treating him as an Indiscreet, when he was an Unknown customer.

One of the most remarkable specimens is the Communicative customer. This person, it appears, will, with the slightest encouragement (and sometimes without,) converse freely about his personal and private affairs over a shop-counter, to an individual he has never seen before in his life. A gentleman of this class, on the simple introduction occasioned by the purchase of half a pound of figs, told the grocer's assistant that he should have been in the grocery trade himself if he had stopped down in the country, where he was born; but that he always had a fancy to come to London; so he ran away, and came.

"I wasn't worth much when I first arrived," said the Communicative customer, "but I'm worth a few thousands now. I bought a house yesterday that cost me over fifteen hundred pounds; and I'm going to furnish it, and let it furnished. I never could get on with unfurnished houses. One of my tenants," &c., &c., &c.

Another instance was a man who within five minutes of entering the shop, informed the shopman where he was going to dine, what he was going to have, and what his balance was at his banker's!

Of course, the most troublesome of all customers are to be found amongst those who do not know what they want. Foremost among these, we are informed, are ladies. The difficulty these fair creatures have in making up their mind is only equalled by the difficulty the shopman experiences in making it up for them. They are impressed with the idea that the task of buying must be performed slowly; and if an article is found speedily, that is *prima facie* evidence that it is not suitable. The experience of a shopman in a fancy shop was interesting on this point.

If a lady and her husband are about to purchase, the lady herself of course performs the selection.

"That's pretty, dear—isn't it?" she will say.

"Yes, very. Suppose you have that?"

The fair one shrinks from the conclusion. She searches further. Presently she exclaims again—

"There! I think I really like that the best of any!"

Her husband observes, not unreasonably—

"Well, then, my dear, you'd better have that one."

And we are assured that the lady will then invariably put it on one side, and look over the others again.—*Cassell's Magazine.*

A woman in Pittsfield, Mass., advertises her husband for sale for a hundred dollars. He is recommended as strong, healthy, and good-looking. Such a chance for a bargain as this does not often occur. There is only one thing that looks suspicious—so low a price for so fine an article makes a careful purchaser wonder if there is not something more than meets the eye in the advertisement. The legal proprietor of this gentleman must be very much in want of money, or very little in want of a husband.

At an elegant dinner party given at Washington, the *enfant terrible* of the family was permitted to occupy a seat near one of the most distinguished guests. This *bête noire* is much given to conundrums, which are not always appropriate. Moreover, the young man of nine years old has a sister who is a shining belle in society. Eliza is the name of the young lady. He calls her Lize. The company was startled by the voice of the youngster asking, "Why is father like the devil?" An awkward pause ensued. Then he shouted out, "Because he is the father of Lize" (lies). They have found out the way to bring up a child and make him smart.

DAPHNE.

BY JULIA GODDARD.

Rare eyes that make a twofold sun
Upon the world to shine,
Red lips that turn the ruby dull,
A face and form divine;
A footstep fleet as that of fawn,
A blush as bright as rosy dawn,
My Daphne, all are thine.

But, ah! why should that glorious sun
For me o'erclouded be,
And lips that answer others' jests,
Ne'er give one smile to me?
Why should morn's flush grow dark as night,
And oft when I appear in sight,
My Daphne fail to see?

In vain I twine a garland fair,
The flower she flings away;
In vain my verse breathes fond conceits,
She scorns each tender lay.
And if I whisper words of love,
And swear by all the stars above,
My Daphne—goes away.

Yet still my harp is tuned to sing
Of Daphne, spite of scorn,
Since the most perfect joy I have
Is from sweet Daphne drawn.
If she despise the love I bear,
No willow-wreath be mine to wear,
Though slighted love I mourn.

Apollo-like, my brows I'll crown,
Through her most sweet disdain,
With laurel; for my constant song
Of Daphne, fame shall gain;
For Daphne keeps my heart, and I
Am captive, with no heart to fly,
No wish to break my chain.

"IT."

IN TWO PARTS.

II. DWARFINCH'S.

Time passed on. Susan Lutestring had been for two months established at the Hornet, and was still unenlightened as to the mysterious malady of her master. Passing some hours daily at work in her mistress's room, his voice had become almost as familiar to her as his mother's, with whom, when not disposed for study or music, he laughed and chatted incessantly. There was no trace of suffering in those clear accents. He played and sang the merriest airs. He moved about his large, luxurious room with perfect freedom, as one in health, nay, there was one occasion on which Susan was prepared to make oath, if required, that she heard him waltzing with a chair, and finishing up with some gymnastic performance, to which his mother at length put an authoritative end. That he ate and drank in the satisfactory manner characterised by Mrs. Martin as "lik' a good un," none who saw the amount of viands carried in, and not brought out again, by Lufra the deaf and dumb page, would presume to doubt. This youth was Susan's great aversion. She could not divest herself of an odd sort of resentment that the little wretch should be in full possession of the secret she was longing in vain to know. In vain, as it seemed, for her mistress's health had improved of late, and the need of her assistance appeared further off than ever.

At length, one night, Susan's eyes rested on her master. She had had occasion, very late, to revisit the sitting-room below, and while passing through the corridor to regain her room, saw him come forth in his rich, thickly quilted walking-dress, and noiseless slippers. Hardly knowing what to do, Susan shrank back into a recess close at hand, and remained unnoticed.

Her master walked with a measured, manly steps, his head slightly bent, and covered with a hood which concealed his features from a side view. Each hand was thrust into the ample opposite sleeve. He must have been little, if anything, short of six feet in height; and, so far as the thick robe permitted it to be surmised, of a finely-moulded person.

"It!" ejaculated Susan, as she gained her room, and noiselessly closed the door.

Fate willed that she should have a still better chance, and that within a day or two.

Being alone with her mistress, one morning, the latter was summoned to a visitor. Susan was still busied about the room, when her master's voice pronounced her name.

"Sir," said Susan, startled.

"Come in, Susan," was the quiet rejoinder.

So, the moment had arrived. Despite her natural firmness, the girl's heart gave a throb, as she stepped towards the door, just ajar. What was she about to see?

It was not easy, at first, to distinguish anything, the shutters being partially closed, and the spacious chamber being otherwise darkened with heavy curtains. The bed itself, an imposing structure, that might have accommodated Og, spread a mighty canopy across two-thirds of the breadth of the luxurious apartment, yet left abundant space for the tables, couches, cabinets, book and music stands; besides a thousand etceteras bearing silent witness to the refined taste and intellectual culture of its recluse inhabitant.

The latter, folded in his brocaded gown, reclined upon a soft deep couch that filled up a recess in the window.

"Come in! come in!" he repeated, laughing merrily, as he caught sight of Susan's appalled look in a hand-mirror with which he had been playing. "The tiger's quite tame—he never bites. Besides, you can leave the door well open, Susan, so as to make the better bolt of it, should your fears get the better of you, when you see———"

He glanced round at her, but with so quick a movement that she got no glimpse of his face.

"You stand it very well. You'll do," continued the young man, in a satisfied tone. "A little nearer, if you please, Miss Lutestring. Put yourself in that comfortable chair—a little behind me—so, where I secure the unfair advantage of seeing you, myself unseen, and oblige me with a few items of Grandchester gossip, from the paper beside you."

Susan obeyed. But the selections she made did not seem greatly to interest her listener. It was manifest, however, that he was watching her intently, all the time, in his mirror, holding it in such a manner as to keep his own face invisible to his companion. Presently, either in absence or from accident, he changed the position of the glass for a moment, and Susan, glancing up at the same instant, saw the reflection of his brow and eyes. She had barely time to observe that these latter were large, and glowing with a singular lustre, when her master, with a movement of impatience, bade her proceed.

Susan read:

"To those who take interest in the contemplation of the more eccentric forms of nature, we are in a position to promise an unprecedented treat. The uncertainty attendant upon the best concerted schemes, forbids us to do more than recall to the recollection of our readers the mysterious announcement that has, for the last few days, invested all the dead, and a few of the living, walls in Grandchester with an unusual interest. 'It is coming'—that is all. But it has been enough, as the poet writes, 'to haunt, to startle, and waylay.' What is coming? whence? and why? Is it an earthquake? a famine? a tidal wave? a revolution? Let us be composed. No need to put our houses in order, otherwise than may be consistent with giving the entire establishment a holiday, with permission to visit the most extraordinary existing phenomenon of the present age. 'It is coming'—steadily, but surely coming. Yet one short week, and we shall be enabled to proclaim—'Hasten to Dwarfinch's. It is come!'"

"Ah! to Dwarfinch's!" repeated Mountjoy. "I'm glad something is coming to the poor devil! Why, it's months—absolutely months—since there was the glimmer of a lamp about that old shop! They say he has a wife and five children, and nothing to keep them on, except the occasional letting of that horrible old edifice, which was once, my mother declares, a madhouse, and still"—he added, with a short, but not unfeeling laugh—"retains one lunatic—the man who took it! Ah! here's my mother. Thanks, Miss Lutestring, I need detain you no longer."

Susan went to her own room.

While standing at the window, her eyes thoughtfully resting upon the drear assembly-rooms, she became conscious of an unwonted movement in front of that building. Workmen were arriving—carpenters and plasterers—ladders were reared against the massive walls, gas-fittings sprouted forth, mighty posters unrolled themselves, and an enormous object, seemingly a transparency, but as yet shrouded from the public gaze, was slowly hoisted to the very centre of the structure, just above the principal door. A small, nervous-looking man, in very seedy attire, but having the air of belonging to a better class, fidgeted about among the workmen, and seemed to point out to two pretty and neatly-clad children, who clung to him on either hand, the wonderful metamorphosis in progress. This was Mr. Dwarfinch, the proprieter.

So much was Susan interested in what was before her, that she was only roused by the pleasant voice of the old housekeeper at her elbow.

"Well, I'm glad to see this," said Mrs. Martin. "Poor things, they wanted a fillip of some sort. The last thing was a horrery and lectur', which didn't pay, for some boys stole the sun, and Mars and Saturn being at the pewterer's, the heavens was thin. I wonder what's coming now?"

In the intervals of conjecture, Mrs. Martin made Susan acquainted with the received history of "Dwarfinch's."

Mr. D., a gentleman by birth, and a graduate of Cambridge, had, in early manhood, been induced to take part in some private theatricals. Such unfortunate good fortune attended his first performance that the poor gentleman imagined himself an actor on the spot. Abandoning all other views, he embraced the professional stage, failed signally, sank from grade to grade, was unable to obtain an engagement even for the humblest line of parts, wandered aimlessly about, and was ultimately directed by his evil star to Grandchester, the old assembly-rooms of which were at that moment sadly in want of a lessee.

"A bank-note, sir! A bank-note!" asserted the agent. "Mints of money to be made there. Rent, a fleabite. Repairs might be reckoned on your thumb-nail. What do you say?"

Mr. Dwarfinch, with some misgiving, glanced mechanically at his thumb-nail. He did, however, take the rooms, and, for the first year, not only covered his expenses, but contrived to make a decent living. Encouraged by this, the misguided man disappeared for a few days, and returned with a wife, a pretty and interesting woman, who, within the next five years, with the help of twins, managed to surround her embarrassed lord with five little pledges of their mutual love.

Alas! as expenses increased, income diminished. Some new public rooms were opened in a better situation. Their lessee had money as well as enterprise. "Dwarfinch's," despite the respect in which the manager was held, and the sympathy felt by many, in his manly struggles, fell into more and more disfavour, until, as Mountjoy had said, it was with extreme difficulty poor Dwarfinch could provide fitting food and raiment for the wife and children he idolised.

Now and again the desolate pile glimmered with a momentary brightness. A meeting, a cheap concert, a lecture, a charity dinner, might put ten or fifteen pounds into the pockets of the starving family, but this was nothing to their needs, and affairs of late had looked gloomy in the extreme.

Kind-hearted Mrs. Martin, who had scraped acquaintance with Mrs. Dwarfinch, with the object of administering fillips, in the shape of marmalade and raspberry-tarts, to the pretty children, heartily rejoiced to see the spirited preparations now in progress, for what was evidently intended to be a desperate fling at fortune.

An offer of four pounds, light and waiting included, from an itinerant conjuror, had been the straw that broke the camel's back.

"I'll stand this no longer!" exclaimed the outraged proprietor, starting up in a rage, and flinging the conjuror's letter into the grate. "Alice, we must do something—must go in for, for—something. A man or a mouse, my dear! We have just twenty-five pounds left in the world. In it shall go!"

"In what, my dear?" asked his wife, with a somewhat wan and hopeless smile.

"Anything!" was the reckless rejoinder. "Cat-show; baby-show; lions; gladiators; Blondin! I'll have the posters out this very day!"

"Letter, pa," cried Miss Alice Dwarfinch, skipping into the room, and handing him a note, which appeared to have been sealed with marmalade.

Mr. Dwarfinch tore it open, read, and sank back into his chair, pale with emotion.

"The very thing, my love; it's like a—a summons! It's like a providence! My benefactor! Restorer of my fortunes!" he continued, walking about in ecstacy, and waving the letter over his head. "Blessings on your name!"

"What is his name?" asked his wife, fully aroused.

"His name," replied Mr. Dwarfinch, growing more composed, "is Tippeny. He is, without exception, the greatest marvel of the age, yet, with the modesty of true genius, this great, this gifted man, will present himself to the public, at these rooms, on being guaranteed twenty pounds!"

"Twenty pounds!" ejaculated his wife, faintly.

"Twenty!" repeated Mr. Dwarfinch, firmly. "My love, I know what I am about. Ask no questions. To work—to work!"

Mrs. Dwarfinch, whose faith in her spouse's judgment held out against all his ill-luck, was quite content to ask no questions. He himself went "to work" with all the zeal and intrepidity of a man who feels that fortune is at last really coming to his call, and must be welcomed with all the honors due to a long-absent guest. He papered Grandchester from end to end. He engaged whole columns of the local journals. He sent forth processions, with boards and handbills. All announcements were confined to the three warning words, "It is coming," and it was only when public curiosity had been stimulated to the utmost, that "Dwarfinch's" was at length superadded, as the scene of "It's" appearance.

It was on the day succeeding Susan's first interview with her master that the huge transparency in front of Dwarfinch's was solemnly unveiled, and revealed the tremendous secret.

There appeared the semblance of an enormous skeleton, at least twelve feet high.

Dressed it certainly was, but the close-fitting "shape"—of yellowish white, judiciously chosen as being the nearest approach to bone—revealed the minutest articulation in every joint and limb. The scanty doublet was of a darker hue, but—as if the tailor had shrunk from the task of adapting any outer garment to the fearful angle of those projecting hips—holes had been provided, through which these joints seemed to force their way. The countenance of this spectral monster was lit up with a ghastly grin, intended, as afterwards appeared, to symbolise the gay and genial temperament belonging to the individual who had been permitted, through some caprice of nature, to shake off the burden of the flesh, without parting with his bones. New posters, unfolding themselves in every direction, proclaimed that Mr. Edward Tippeny—the celebrated Living Skeleton, the Wonder of the Age—was about to present himself in Dwarfinch's; and a bill, larger than any yet issued, confidently announced, "IT IS HERE!"

It really seemed that fortune designed to compensate poor Dwarfinch for the many scurvy tricks she had played him. Grandchester happened to be greatly in want of a public sensation of some sort. The militia, at this moment embodied, help to flood the streets at evening with groups of idlers. A large party of seamen, just paid off from a ship of war, had come up the country on a spree. Any exhibition, of decent attraction, would probably have done good business for a night or two. How much more, then, the mighty Skeleton, the Wonder of the Age? At all events the thing took, to a degree unparalleled in the annals of the ancient city. Two days before that fixed for "It's" appearance (the bills persisted in so describing Mr. Tippeny) every seat in the vast assembly-room was engaged, and this at prices double those demanded for any previous entertainment on record.

Long before the hour of opening, so dense was the multitude around the doors, that the police on duty with difficulty made way for the carriages to set down. As for pit and gallery, such was the rush that not one half of those who sought admission were lucky enough to pass the threshold.

Before recounting what followed on that eventful day, we must return for a moment to the Hornet.

As if—the ice once broken—young Mountjoy found solace in the presence of his new companion, Susan found herself summoned to his room every day. This was indeed the more necessary, as his mother had been indisposed for a day or two, and, on the evening on which we revisit the Hornet, had not quitted her bed at all.

Susan had read herself almost hoarse, her master being apparently disinclined to do anything but listen to her musical tones, and gaze intently into the mirror which seldom left his hand. He had grown more careless in handling it. Again and again Susan caught sight of those large, earnest, glittering eyes, and moreover, knew—or rather felt—that they were perpetually fixed on hers. To read their expression was impossible, and the rest of his features remained too cautiously veiled to offer any interpretation.

The proceedings at Dwarfinch's had seemed to interest him in a remarkable degree. After the uncovering of the transparency, he had remained at the window as if fascinated by the grisly, grinning monster, and had even directed that some branches of one of the trees in the carriage sweep that intercepted his view should be lopped away. Whatever might be his own affliction, it had manifestly softened his heart towards another, but he could hardly forgive poor Mr. Tippeny for making himself a public show.

"The miserable beggar," he growled. "And as if it was not enough to be poked, and prodded, and snapped, and rattled, at sixpence a head, he must—hand me the fellow's bill, my dear—yes, perform a fantasia on the violin, sing a barcarole to the cithern, dance a saraband, and —hallo! there seems to be a row!" And, throwing the hood over his face, the young man leaned eagerly from the window.

Although, by this time, the assembly-room must have been packed from floor to ceiling, the crowd outside seemed quite undiminished, and, if anything, more excited than before. Something was evidently amiss. People stood in the doorway gesticulating violently, in futile endeavors to make themselves heard. The roar of an angry or impatient audience within could at times be distinguished above the noise without. Poor Mr. Dwarfinch, with a scared and anxious face, could be seen at intervals flitting or struggling among the crowd, as seeking to preserve peace and order. But the tumult only increased.

"I must know what this means," exclaimed Mountjoy, drawing in. "Send, Susan, send and inquire."

Seeing the gardener in the road below, Susan questioned him from the window, and was able to bear back word to her master that the riot, for such it was become, was caused by the non-appearance of the skeleton, who should have made his long-promised bow to the expectant multitude at least half an hour before.

Whether the public had lost faith in Dwarfinch's, or whether disappointed applicants had set the rumor afloat, could not be known, but a belief was certainly rife that the whole affair was a swindle, the unexampled prices demanded for tickets tending greatly to the strengthening of this suspicion. The crowd within hooted, roared, demanded their money back, and even threatened damage to the rooms. The crowd without laughed and jeered, and howled for the manager, but when they had him would not let him speak.

Suddenly a carriage was seen slowly working its way through the throng. Shout were heard. "It's coming." "Here 'tis at last." "Tippeny. Tippeny." "Hooray for the skelinton," bellowed the crowd.

Dwarfinch breathed again, as the coach drew up, and hurried forward to welcome the Wonder of the Age.

"Thank goodness you are come! But why so late? The people are half mad," he gasped. "Quick, quick, my dear fellow. Take my arm."

The skeleton did not immediately respond. Without moving from his seat, he bent forward a great, bewildered-looking face, in form and substance not unlike an ordinary man's, then beckoned Mr. Dwarfinch to come closer.

The latter obeyed, when the Wonder of the Age, placing two groups of bones, intended for hands, on his friend's shrinking shoulders, uttered these words:

"I shay—ole fell—lesh—lesh make—night of it." And fell forward upon the manager's breast, an inert mass of bone.

There was no mistake about it. Strange and eird as was the effect produced by the unexpected phenomenon, the skeleton was, beyond all question, helplessly drunk.

Overcome as he was by this crowning misfortune, and staggering under the superincumbent skeleton, Dwarfinch was roused to action

by an alarm that the audience within had begun to pelt the lights, as a prelude to a general row.

"My wife. My children," gasped the poor man. "Get off, you drunken beggar. That a thing like you should presume to——"

"We won't," murmured the skeleton, "we—won't—gohometillmor—for he's a sholly good—"

"Take that—and be hanged to you," roared the infuriated manager, and dealing a blow that made Mr. Tippeny's strongly-accented ribs rattle like castanets, he sent him fairly back into the carriage. "My wife. My children," he repeated, wildly, as a furious roar echoed from within.

"Here we are, dear," said his wife's voice, close behind him. She had wrapped herself in her cloak, and, carrying the baby, and gathering the rest around, had tried to escape from the scene of disturbance. Unluckily, she had been recognized, and pointed out to the mob, eager for some new incident.

"It's his family, collaring the cash," bellowed some ruffian, in the press. "She's bolting, with the till under her cloak. Return the money. Ah-h-h-h !"

"It's the baby," roared poor Dwarfinch.

But there is no saying what might have followed, had not some half-dozen stout fellows like grooms and gardeners, acting well together, forced their way through the crowd, and reached the carriage. To learn the origin of this timely succor, we must pay a hasty visit to the Hornet.

Young Mountjoy, who, as we have mentioned, watched with unflagging interest what was passing below, had, through the instrumentality of Susan, established a kind of series of lookouts, composed of all the out-door male attendants of the establishment. By means of these, he had received full information regarding the progress of events, the non-appearance of the skeleton, the impatience and suspicion of the audience, the tardy arrival at length of the Wonder of the Age, and its unpromising condition, even the attempt and failure of poor frightened Mrs. Dwarfinch to effect her escape from the tumultuous scene.

The young man's own observation convinced him that the bearing of the mob, incensed by certain personal remarks, not of the choicest kind, directed at them by the tipsy skeleton—was becoming more and more truculent, and a glimpse of the poor woman cowering beside her husband, yet evidently more alarmed on his account than her own—brought him to a sudden resolution. He directed that his look-outs should assemble, make a simultaneous charge into the throng, and bring the whole thing, carriage, skeleton, Dwarfinches, and all, safely within the Hornet's gates.

The attempt succeeded. In spite of yells, hisses, and some resistance, the carriage not only made good its own retreat, but cleared a path for the fugitive family. The gates were closed and barred, and all was well.

"Thank Heaven!" said Mountjoy, as he sank down on his couch, wearied with the excitement, "the poor woman is safe. Go down, Susan, and tell Mrs. Martin to look after the family, and fillip them all round! Pitch the skeleton into the stable, with some sacks and straw."

Susan, who had found the Dwarfinches in the hall, already in the act of being filliped, returned almost immediately.

"Mrs. Dwarfinch, sir, tenders her most grateful——Sir!"

She had stopped suddenly, for her master, in deep agitation, was leaning against the wall, one hand still holding the hood to his face, the other pressed to his side.

"The woman, the woman," he gasped. "The voice! It reached me, at the door. Girl, did you see—her eyes?"

"Yes, sir, blue," answered Susan, hurriedly.

"I knew it!" Mountjoy exclaimed. "Something warned me that—that I was protecting—her! But there's more to do—much more. (Listen! They'll tear the place down, before I——). Now, Susan, be prompt and obedient. Much depends on you. Send Dwarfinch up to my door."

The manager appeared in an instant.

"Dwarfinch," said young Mountjoy, speaking through the half-open door, "you are pledged to produce this skeleton to-night, and instantly."

"Alas, sir," began the poor manager.

"You shall keep your word."

"Sir, the fellow's as drunk——"

"I will sober him within five minutes. Whatever his condition, let him be brought up to my dressing-room, then every one retire but Lufra, my page."

"Anything more, sir?" asked Dwarfinch, his hopes reviving, he scarce knew why.

"Yes. Issue an announcement that the performance will commence within ten minutes. That Mr. Tippeny will then go through the whole programme assigned for him, with additions which, it is hoped, will make up for this unavoidable delay. Away with you. And keep a passage clear for the skeleton to cross."

Dwarfinch vanished on his errand. Next moment, the skeleton was being borne upstairs, cursing and singing by turns. What passed in the dressing-room, nobody but Lufra knew. The skeleton, however, ceased to swear or sing. Sounds of quick but ordered movement were heard, and, to the amazement of all, within the time allotted, the door, flying open, disclosed the Living Skeleton, sober, dressed, violin in hand, and muffled for the passage, from head to foot, in Mountjoy's brocaded dressing-robe!

The temper of a British mob is acknowledged to be fickle. Perhaps the assurance that glowed aloft, telling of the skeleton's imminent appearance, flattered them, as with a victory won. At all events, when Mr. Tippeny was actually seen being escorted across the road, perfectly himself, and with a stride that lacked neither manhood nor dignity, he was greeted with deafening cheers, to be re-echoed, with even greater heartiness, when, at length, he stepped upon the stage.

Apart from his amazing emaciation, there was nothing about this Wonder of the Age to distinguish him from a tall and well-formed man. He possessed flexible, animated features, and a forehead indicative of capacity. His thin limbs were straight and beautifully formed, and every movement was marked with ease and power.

After a brief and graceful apologetic address, he entered into conversation with those nearest the stage, and charmed every one with his gentle and pleasing manners. His performance on the violin was worthy of any living professor. His vocal effort was thrice encored. His saraband was grace and vivacity, so to express it, ossified. In a word, he achieved a triumph unparalleled in Grandchester. As if not content with this, he made an appeal to the audience, on behalf of the hitherto unlucky manager, which so touched the hearts of the well-to-do, that a testimonial of nearly one hundred pounds was subscribed for on the spot. In addition to this, Mr. Dwarfinch, after paying all expenses, realised two hundred and twenty pounds.

But the accomplished skeleton was never more seen in Grandchester. He departed at an early hour next morning. It is odd that the groom who, under Lufra's direction, drove Mr. Tippeny to the next station, reported that he did not seem even then to have recovered from the over-night's excesses, and apparently had no recollection of having kept the Grandchester public in a state of speechless delight for two mortal hours. But he was a stupid fellow, at times, this skeleton.

Young Mountjoy was very quiet, and rather melancholy for some weeks succeeding that busy evening. Susan was constantly with him, reading, or writing to his dictation. All this time she never saw his face, only the high, square brows, and lustrous brown eyes; but even in these she was conscious of a change, difficult to define, but still a change.

One day he suddenly took a fancy to weigh himself, an operation he had not, as he remarked, performed for some months. The machine stood ready in his room. The color rose to his brow as he stepped down.

"I could not have thought it!" he muttered. "I have gained thirteen pounds."

From that day he weighed himself once a week, the result always seeming to afford him great satisfaction. Susan knew that he must be increasing rapidly in size, and began to be seriously alarmed on the score of his health, especially as, the fatter he grew, the more he ate, and the more nourishing and succulent were the meats he chese.

Mrs. Mountjoy's health had much declined of late, and she rarely quitted her bedroom. Thus Susan felt her responsibility increased, and she heartily longed for an opportunity to warn her imprudent young master of the morbid condition of obesity into which his love of eating was rapidly hurrying him.

There came a day on which Mountjoy, after duly weighing, cheerfully proclaimed that he had gained no less than three stone, and was increasing day by day.

Susan could bear it no longer. She began to cry, and, on the astonished young man pressing for the reason, confessed that she could not see him kill himself under her very eyes, without entering what respectful protest she might.

Her master burst into uncontrollable laughter, and, on recovering his breath, asked her if she would like to see him a second Tippeny.

Susan disclaimed this, but submitted that, between a Tippeny and a Lambert, there was a neutral ground more desirable than either.

"That is precisely the spot at which I aim!" said Mountjoy, as he quietly rose up and stood before her; "and nearing it so fast, why should I dissemble any longer? See what I am" (he threw back his heavy gown, and showed a tall, manly figure, emaciated, indeed, but sufficiently covered with healthy, growing flesh), "and then imagine what I was, when—ah, you guess it!—when I assumed the dress and part of the tipsy skeleton, and saved the credit and fortune of poor Dwarfinch and his wife, once the object of my love! Susan, I said 'once.' For now I have another and fitter love, and for her I have been striving to render less revolting this meagre, nay, once almost spectral form. Susan, your presence has helped me to life, and strength, and peace. Confirm these blessings to me. Be my wife?"

The young Grahame Mountjoys are among our most cherished acquaintance, Susan's violet eyes forming an agreeable contrast to my wife's, which are brown.

DREAMS FROM SMOKE.

Says the London *Lancet*: What injures or enfeebles the blood must, as a matter of course, affect the health and activity of the brain. If, then, we ascertain the physiological effect of tobacco upon the life-fluid, we shall be in a fair way for deciding the question, especially if we find individual cases confirming the views thus arrived at. There is nothing stronger in medical evidence than the agreement of physiology and pathology. Dr. Richardson has so clearly explained the influence of smoking upon the blood, that it will be best to quote his graphic account. His scientific eminence entitles his evidence to respect, and lovers of the weed must recollect that it is a smoker to whom they are listening: "On the blood the prolonged inhalation of tobacco produces changes which are very marked in character. The fluid is thinner than is natural, and in extreme cases paler. In such instances the deficient color of the blood is communicated to the body altogether, rendering the external surface yellowish, white, and puffy. The blood being thin, also exudes freely, and a cut surface bleeds for a long time, and may continue to bleed inconveniently, even in opposition to remedies. But the most important change is exerted on these little bodies which float in myriads in the blood, and are known as the red globules. These globules have naturally a double concave surface, and at their edges a perfectly smooth outline. They are very soluble in alkalies, and are subject to change of shape and character, when the quality of the fluid in which they float is modified in respect to density. The absorption, therefore, of the fumes of tobacco necessarily leads to rapid changes in them; they lose their round shapes, they become oval and irregular at their edges, and instead of having a mutual attraction for each other and running together, a good sign of physical health, they lie loosely scattered before the eye, and indicate to the learned observer as clearly as though they spoke to him, and said the words, that the man from whom they were taken is physically depressed and deplorably deficient both in muscular and mental power." Tobacco modifies the circulation in the brain, as in other portions of the body. Hence, it would be remarkable indeed if it did not exercise some influence upon the mechanism of thought. "A sincere, self-observing smoker cannot fail," says Mr. Meunier, "to recognize that tobacco creates a new nature, more disposed to dreaming than action." Although a great smoker himself, he considered the habit was inimical to the rational mind. His frequent diatribes against this *mort aux peuples* excited much raillery; but the habit of twenty years was long too strong for him. So close was the connection between work and smoke with M. Meunier, that the amount of intellectual labor he had performed was chronicled by the extent of his consumption of tobacco. When, at last, after many fruitless attempts, he put his conduct in harmony with his opinions, it required several weeks of undivided attention to break the chains of habit which bound him.

TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS.

Having a photograph taken is one of the great events in a man's life. The chief desire is to look the very best, and on the success of the picture hinges in many cases the most important epoch in life. To work up a proper appearance time enough is used which if devoted to catching fleas for their phosphorus, would cancel the entire national debt and establish a New York daily paper. When you have completed your toilet you go to the gallery and force yourself into a nonchalance of expression that is too absurd for anything. Then you take the chair, spread your legs gracefully, appropriate a calm and indifferent look, and commence to perspire. An attenuated man with a pale face, long hair and a soiled nose now comes out of a cavern and adjusts the camera. Then he gets back of you and tells you to sit back as far as you can in the chair, and that it has been a remarkably backward spring. After getting you back till your spine interferes with the chair itself, he shoves your head into a pair of ice tongs, and dashes at the camera again. Here, with a piece of discolored velvet over his head, he bombards you in this manner: "Your chin out a little, please." Your chin is protruded. "That's nicely; now a little more." The chin advances again and the pomade commences to melt, and start for freedom. Then he comes back to you and slaps one of your hands on your leg in such a position as to give you the appearance of trying to lift it over your head. The other is turned under itself, and has become so sweaty that you begin to fear that it will stick there permanently. A new stream of pomade finds its way out, and starts downward. Then he shakes your head in the tongs till it settles right, and says it looks like rain, and puts your chin out again, and punches out your chest, and says he doesn't know what the poor are to do next winter unless there is a radical change in affairs, and then takes the top of your head in one hand and your chin in the other, and gives your neck a wrench that would earn any other man a prominent position in a new hospital. Then he runs his hand through your hair and scratches your scalp, and steps back to the camera and the injured velvet for another look. By this time new sweat and pomade have started out. The whites of your eyes show unpleasantly, and your whole body feels as if it had been visited by an enormous cramp, and another and much bigger one was momentarily expected. Then he points at something for you to look at; tells you to look cheerful and composed, and snatches away the velvet, and pulls out his watch. When he gets tired, and you feel as if there was very little in this world to live for, he restores the velvet, says it is an unfortunate day for the picture, but he hopes for the best, and immediately disappears in his den. Then you get up and stretch yourself, slap on your hat and immediately sneak home; feel mean, humbled, and altogether too wretched for description. The first friend who sees the picture says he can see enough resemblance to make certain that it is you, but you have tried to look too formal to be natural and graceful.—*Danbury News*.

TO A RAIN-DROP.

Hail! jewel, pendant on the grassy blade,
Now dimly seen amid a transient shade,
Anon resplendent, like a bridal maid
Wed by the wind.
Thou tremblest at his kisses, half afraid,
And half inclined!

How many hues of beauty charm thy face!
For three successive rays each other chase:
The ruby now, the sapphire next we trace;
The chrysolite
Supplants the emerald rich in vernal grace,
And dear to sight!

O fairy creature! whither hast thou come?
Was the Atlantic once thy stormy home?
Or did'st thou through the mild Pacific roam
'Mong coral isles,
And thence ascend to the ethereal dome
With saintly smiles?

Hast thou, in clouds of richest colors blended,
On rising suns and setting suns attended?
Or hast thou shone in bars of beauty splendid
I' the rainbow's robe?
Or hast thou in a misty chariot wended
Around our globe?

Alas! thou answerest not, thou brilliant mute;
Thou shinest on in silence absolute;
The wanderings of thy restless silver foot
Thou canst not tell;
And soon thou shalt resume thy pilgrim's route,
Nor sigh farewell!

DESMORO;

OR,

THE RED HAND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TWENTY STRAWS," "VOICES FROM THE LUMBER-ROOM," "THE HUMMING BIRD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXII.

By the old withered gum-tree, Desmoro was in waiting long, long before the appointed hour of meeting. Never had he felt so anxious as now, while he was tarrying for the coming of beautiful Marguerite d'Auvergne. He listened for the sounds of her approaching carriage-wheels, a score of torturing sensations at work within his harassed breast. He was very pale and very unhappy likewise, while enduring this painful uncertainty concerning the probable object of the lady's coming interview. The Col. had frequently mentioned Marguerite's name to Desmoro, who could not help feeling that the lady took some strange interest in his hapless self. Perhaps she only pitied his condition, and, with a true woman's sympathetic generosity, wished to assist the Colonel in inducing Desmoro to fly from the colony, and to seek a home of honesty and peace in some far-off foreign land.

The bushranger emerged from the thick, sheltering scrub, and looked up and down the road, impatient to catch a glimpse of the expected lady.

At length descending a distant hill, he saw a pony bearing a female, which his heart told him was none other than Marguerite d'Auvergne, who was coming unattended to a solitary spot to meet himself, the outlaw, Red Hand.

The pony trotted briskly along; and, after the lapse of a few minutes, Desmoro's keen eyes easily recognised the lady's features.

He trembled all over, and leant his back against a tree, a sensation of faintness creeping through all his veins. He felt ashamed of his weakness, and tried to hide it even from himself. Why, he was becoming quite womanish in his feeling, and altogether different from his former self.

He could not understand all this alteration in himself: no, question himself however he would, his changed sentiments still continued to be a profound mystery to him. But a moment was fast approaching when Desmoro's eyes would be opened wide, when he would be able to thoroughly comprehend his new state.

He started from his reclining position. He could now distinctly hear the pony's advancing hoofs beating the soft ground. He was in the middle of the road in an instant, waving his hand to the lady, who waved her own in return.

"Oh, I am so glad to see you!" were her first words, as Desmoro took the bridle from her hold, and straightway led the pony and its rider into the screening bush. "I was afraid that you would not put trust in it," she added, speaking with nervous, feverish haste, and looking very beautiful as she spoke. "Shall we be quite safe from observation here?" she continued, finding him pause, and anxiously glancing around.

"Quite safe, mademoiselle," he answered. "Will you alight?"

She sprung from her pony's back at once, and without making any reply.

They then seated themselves at the foot of a tree, opposite to each other. Marguerite's face wore an embarrassed expression, and Desmoro was deathly pale.

"You are astonished to see me here—astonished that I should seek an interview with you, eh?" said she, questioningly. "I hope you will

not condemn or misconstrue my conduct. I have sought you with the best intentions in view."

"Of that much I am quite convinced, mademoiselle," returned Desmoro.

"Of course, I know that I have been guilty of a serious breach of decorum in addressing you; but what have I done in making an assignation with you? An unpardonable act, I fear."

"Nay, not anything of the kind, mademoiselle!" he rejoined.

"You will never think any the worse of me for seeking this interview with you?"

"Oh, mademoiselle!" flushed the bushranger; "as if I could in any way think unkindly of an angel's acts."

She coloured deeply, and her eyes began to overflow.

"You are aware that I have been made acquainted with the secret of your birth—that Colonel Symure has revealed to me all?"

"He told me as much, mademoiselle; he said you were his confidante."

"Your poor father is enduring much anxiety on your account," pursued Marguerite; "and I have promised to exert my utmost endeavours in persuading you to fly from the country as quickly as possible Now you are informed wherefore I have sought you—wherefore I have forgotten my womanhood, and, setting every danger at defiance, wherefore I am here!"

"I am exceedingly grateful for the interest mademoiselle is pleased to take in me," Desmoro faltered, his eyes suddenly seeking the ground, his heart loudly palpitating.

"Well?" queried she, after a pause of some duration. "I must not go hence until I have won from your lips a promise to act according to your parent's most earnest wish and entreaty. Oh, say that you will preserve yourself—that you will fly hence without further delay!"

He looked up suddenly into the face of the speaker, marvelling at her eager tones and manner. As he gazed at her, he began to feel how difficult a task it would be for him to willingly put seas between himself and Marguerite d'Auvergne.

"Will you not answer me?" she asked.

He covered his face with his clasped hands, and sighed deeply.

All this while Marguerite's womanly heart was secretly overflowing with sympathy and love towards the handsome bushranger; but she subdued her feelings, and thrust them out of sight, fearful lest he should surmise her state—the passionate throbbings in her breast—and, surmising such, should despise her.

She felt sufficiently humiliated in having given up her heart ere she had been asked to do so; she did not desire to humble herself still more in her own opinion. She was suffering deeply, but she could endure those sufferings, while none save herself knew what she was enduring.

"Oh, mademoiselle!" cried Desmoro, almost chokingly; "do you guess that I am a proud, presumptuous man—that, outlaw as I am, my thoughts are lifting themselves to a being who is far above myself? Oh, no, you do not dream of my weakness, and far better is it that you should not do so!"

Marguerite opened wide her eyes, wholly unable to comprehend the meaning of her companion's words.

"I cannot quit this land, mademoiselle, while it holds in it a woman who has become most dear to me!" Desmoro added, in tremulous accents and with pallid cheeks.

Marguerite started, with a half-uttered exclamation of surprise and pain.

Was it possible that he had really some one to love, and, consequently, would never be able to love her?

Love her! Was she wishing him to do so? Was she, Marguerite d'Auvergne, belonging to one of the oldest families in France, seeking and craving for the affection of an outlaw—for the affection of a man whom the agents of the law were hunting after day and night, nearly all the year round?

No, no, surely not; the thought was all too terrible for her to entertain.

But there was a thought still more terrible even than that—the thought that Desmoro loved another.

Marguerite was sitting, twining her hands in one another, her teeth gnawing her nether lip, her features blanched and quivering. She could not command her voice, so she made him no reply, but, sick at heart, left him to pursue his theme without interruption.

"You cannot conceive how many difficulties I should have to combat against in endeavouring to obey my father's behest, mademoiselle?" proceeded he. "Whilst she who possesses my soul's adoration dwelleth in this land, Red Hand is unable to leave it."

Marguerite suddenly staggered to her feet, and leant against the tree. She was almost stunned, and knew not what to say or to do. She passed her hand across her eyes once or twice, then a giddiness seizing her, she slid quietly to the earth in a state of partial insensibility.

Perplexed and alarmed, scarcely knowing what he was about, Desmoro had flown to her side, gathered her in his arms, and clasped her close to his breast, on which she lay shivering, and half-convulsed, with all her senses dazed.

"Oh, Marguerite, Marguerite!" he exclaimed, excitedly, his head bending over her, an expression of intense devotion in all his looks; "my darling, my soul's worshipped one! You cannot hear my words—you cannot hear me tell you how much I have learned to care for you! No, no, I would not shock your listening ears with the tale of my presumption; you shall never learn the folly and the utter madness I have suffered to enter my brain and heart."

And laying the still form on the ground, Desmoro drew off the lady's gloves, and commenced chafing her hands; all the while murmuring loving words, syllables such he had never given breath to until now.

Marguerite's half-fleeted consciousness had returned to her, and she was lying with closed eyelids, hearkening to her companion's unlooked-for declaration of love.

She would fain have reclined thus for hours, for the music of Desmoro's accents were most welcome to her, but she felt her cheeks flushing, and could no longer keep her eyelids closed.

"Thanks!" uttered she, raising herself, "I am better now; 'twas the closeness of the atmosphere, together with the excitement of the occasion, that overcame me so. Oh, I am much better!" she added, smiling faintly, her gaze averted from her companion's face, her bosom overflooded quite with joyful thanksgivings. He loved her, her affections were reciprocated, and all her jealous misgivings were at rest.

A painful silence now succeeded—a silence which neither of them had the courage to break. Each felt in some degree guilty: Desmoro, for having spoken to her of his wild passion, she for having secretly listened to him.

She was longing for him to speak; longing for him to break down all the barriers of reserve between them, and to openly avow his sentiments towards her. She was aweary of hiding her own feelings for him, and desired no further deception on either side. Yes, he was an outlaw; but what matter for that, since she loved him—loved him better than every other earthly being?

At length she extended her hand to him, saying, at the same time, "Am I an unsuccessful suppliant, Desmoro?—am I to return, whence I came, without a reward for my hazardous journey hither?" she asked, in pleading, yet tremulous, accents.

"Mademoiselle—I——" stammered he, timorously taking her offered hand, which he held gently, almost fearfully, between his own two palms.

Marguerite flushed painfully, and cast down her eyes.

"You do not answer me," said she. "I have solicited in vain, I suppose; is it not so?" she added, withdrawing her hand.

"I have already told you, mademoiselle, that I cannot quit this land while she I love inhabits it. I am pained to refuse to obey my father's wishes, but I cannot help myself in this matter, I am solely under the control of another, under the influence of a woman, who in my eyes is an angel of virtue and goodness."

Marguerite felt much confused, yet she seized courage to reply to him.

"Does she reciprocate your love?" she inquired, in a hollow, trembling voice.

"She does not even dream of it, mademoiselle," he answered. "I would not defile her ears with a confession of it, for, as I have just said, she is pure and good, while I am that which I dare scarcely think upon."

"If she possesses such strong influence over your feelings as you are pleased to represent, she might probably be able to induce you to act according to your father's advisings?"

"No, no," he rejoined, shaking his head. "Where she abideth, there also must I, at every risk to my own safety."

"Who is she?" queried Marguerite, after a slight pause, her voice scarcely above her breath; "who is this woman to whom Red Hand hesitates to avow his affection?"

Her tones, though low-breathed, were full of significance; he must have been dull, indeed, had he not understood their meaning, and the tender glances which accompanied them.

He fell at her feet in a moment, crying, "Marguerite, Marguerite!"

She laid her hands on his shoulders, and held her breath lest she should utter some exclamation of joy. Her bosom was swelling with transport, and all her pride was under her feet, trampled in the dust.

"Marguerite, Marguerite," he continued, in great agitation, "can you suffer me to kneel here, and tell you how, all unknown to myself, I have learned to worship you, without despising the lips which utter that daring confession?"

The hands that were resting on his shoulders were shaking, and as clammy as death. She tried to answer him, but breaking down in the attempt, she burst into a flood of hysteric tears.

"Oh, Marguerite," he said, suddenly starting from his knees, "I have offended you."

And Desmoro drew back a few paces, looking much disconcerted and humbled.

"I am to blame, mademoiselle; pray, pray forgive me!" he added, appealingly.

She could not yet command herself sufficiently to speak, and once more she held out her hand to him, which hand he carried to his lips, and covered with passionate kisses.

"You do not then utterly condemn me?" he cried.

"No, no," gasped she, between her sobs.

"And yet you know my utter unworthiness?"

"But in the future you shall wipe out the stains of the past."

He shook his head gravely.

"What future can there be for one so utterly lost as I? A future like the present, eh?"

"In another land, Desmoro——"

"In another land, separated from you, Marguerite? Never, never!"

"I said not that," returned she, with a deep blush. "My father has just inherited some large estates, and is making arrangements for our return to France. Now you may understand wherefore I was so very earnest in my entreaties just now. You will fly hence, and that without delay—will you not, Desmoro?" she exclaimed, very tenderly.

"And shall we meet again, Marguerite?" interrogated he, with great eagerness.

"I trust so, Desmoro."

He drew her to a hillock, on which she seated herself. The bushranger then crouched at her feet, not boldly, but with the worshipful adoration of a slave.

He loved her with such tenderness and devotion, and yet so timidly. To him she appeared quite unapproachable, like one surrounded by a halo. She was beautiful and good, while he was —what?—what the world had made him.

He would have crawled after her, on his knees, and kissed her very footsteps, and thought himself blessed in being permitted to do so.

"These are sad, but blissful moments!" he murmured, looking up in her face. "Marguerite, Marguerite, direct me how to act, and I will obey your directions, whatever they may be? Speak to me!" he continued, excitedly. "Tell me whether you have any plan for our future? To what part of the world must I fly? Answer me—answer me! My brain is all confused with this unexpected flood of happiness? Marguerite, Marguerite, this is not a dream—a tormenting vision; it is all reality—bright, rapturous reality—for you love me—do you not, Marguerite, beautiful Marguerite?"

And uttering these passionate words, Desmoro threw his arms around his fair companion, and folded her to his heart.

She did not answer him in words, but her head lay on his breast, and her arms hung caressingly around his neck. Was there any need of speech on her part to advertise her love of him—her true, pure, and womanly devotion towards himself? He felt the strength of her attachment in her clinging, endearing clasp—in the entire trustfulness expressed in her eyes, which were raised to and fixed upon his own, and his very soul overflowed with gratitude and ecstacy.

For some moments they were silent. They were almost too happy to talk. How lovely all nature now appeared before the enchanted sight of Desmoro; how dazzling the world had become to him, since a woman's loving smiles had fallen upon him. Life had a thousand charms for him at this moment, while Marguerite d'Auvergne's head was lying thus trustfully upon his breast.

Suddenly the bushes near them were separated, and a black face, with grinning white teeth, showed itself.

Desmoro turned quickly. His accustomed ears had caught the rustling, crashing sounds of the disturbed, dry brushwood, and the low yelp of a dog.

Marguerite started up in sudden alarm, and looking round, espied the sable intruder, who was habited in a pair of tattered trousers, reaching only to his knees, and gaping in every direction. Of all shirt he was entirely innocent; but around his neck he had a brass chain, to which was appended a crescent-shaped plate (also of brass), bearing an inscription—the rank and titles of the wearer, who evidently thought he was apparelled in the very height of the reigning fashion.

Desmoro recognised the black fellow, and the terror which had shown itself in the outlaw's face vanished at once.

"What brings you here, Puyarra?" he asked, addressing the new-comer. "Have no fear," he added, turning to Marguerite, "this is only one of my purveyors—a poor, faithful fellow, who supplies me with fish occasionally. Yonder old tree-trunk receives for me something more than epistolary correspondence. Well, Puyarra?"

"Pialla (talk) low!" cautioned the black, holding up his finger in a warning manner, and approaching close to the bushranger.

"What do you mean?"

Marguerite was clinging to Desmoro's arm, filled with vague terror of the black and his probable errand.

"Hush, misser! Me come yere a minute ago wid dese yere fish, which is yalmos alive, misser; but me see you wid dis lady, an' me go 'way gin! He! he!"

"Well?"

"Den me go an' sit an' look down an' up de road, s'posin' you'll go 'way by-me-by, an' me kin put de fish in de tree fur yer, misser."

"Well, well, you tire my patience, Puyarra. What's all this to do with me?" asked Desmoro, in fretful accents.

"Wot hab it got to do wid you, misser! Plenty, an' moor, mebbee! Bail budgery (no good,) misser!" returned the black, with a shake of his head.

"How?" asked the bushranger, who was quite conversant with the native's language. "Speak out, fellow."

"Der mounted perlice near abouts."

Desmoro started, and lost his colour.

"To murry, sure; see dem comin' long wid mine own two eyes."

"How far distant hence, Puyarra?"

"Kin jist see dem a windin' down Yoballa Hill, misser."

"Good fellow, good fellow!" cried the outlaw.

"Misser, gib me someding to buy bucca, eh?" queried the black, cunningly and whiningly, his appeal strengthened by a piteous howl from his companion, a dog with a fragmentary tail.

At this instant, there was heard the clatter of horses' hoofs in the road.

"Dere dey is!" exclaimed the black, under his breath.

"Fly, fly!" broke forth Marguerite, seeing the native's shaggy animal prick up his ears. "Care not for me: I shall feel safe, even with this poor fellow by my side! Fly, fly, Desmoro!"

"I cannot leave you here, Marguerite," he answered, with all the calmness he could command.

"Once in the road, my pony will carry me fleetly onwards," she returned, approaching the beast as she spoke, and preparing to depart.

"But you have not explained to me anything, Marguerite," Desmoro replied, gently detaining her "Where is monsieur, your father, and whither would you go now alone on a solitary road?"

"Ask me no more questions, Desmoro," she quickly replied. "There is no time for such. Let me go hence at once, I implore you, and in heaven's name, preserve yourself!"

"But Marguerite——"

"I will be here to-morrow, at the same hour!" she added in a whispering tone, springing into her saddle, and at once dashing through the thick brushwood, heedless of all impediments. And followed by the black and his dog, she reached the road, along which she made her pony gallop at his utmost speed. She did not cast a single look behind her; she was shivering with fear—with fear on Desmoro's account.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A party of mounted police now stopped to interrogate a black sauntering lazily along the highway, with a brief-tailed cur at his heels.

The foremost of the party shouted to the black, ordering him to halt, to which order he paid not the slightest attention; but continued to move onwards at the same leisurely pace as before.

"Confound the black rascal, why does he not obey me?" muttered the police-sergeant, wiping his heated face, and then riding forward until he arrived close by the native's side. "You ebony-faced scoundrel!" continued he, laying his riding-whip across the bare shoulders of Puyarra, who turned with a sharp cry, which showed all his gleaming teeth.

"You'll maybe learn to answer when you're next spoken to?" proceeded the speaker, cracking his whip with a menacing air, which act the half-fed dog, seizing courage, resented with a savage growl. "Where did you spring up from just now? A little while ago I spotted (saw) you and that whelp there running across Dead Man's Swamp. You've been after some sort of mischief, it strikes me, eh?"

The poor black rubbed his smarting shoulders, and the hound snarled, and snapped at the hoofs of the policeman's horse.

"Yer yabber to me cussed grand, as mebbe you was the gubonner hisself!" answered the native. "It strikes me dat you dunno who me be mebbe!" he added, with a little consequential strut, which made the whole party burst out into laughter. "Ef yer be a rale gen'lman, yer find out me by readin' of dis."

And, so saying, Puyarra held forth his breast-plate for the inspection of the sergeant.

"Pshaw! What's such rubbish as that worth?" cried the police-officer, cracking his whip in the air afresh, much to the terror of the black and his shaggy companion. "You're one of the Botany tribe, eh?"

"One of dat tribe, and none oder!" was the glib reply.

"You tarnal fox, your tongue is just a bit too long, and if you don't answer all my questions truthfully, as surely as Snake Gully lies yonder, I'll pitch you into the middle of it, I will!"

Puyarra trembled at the man's words, but made no rejoinder.

"What's your name?"

"King Puyarra, misser," the black answered, quite pompously.

"King Humbug!" retorted the sergeant. "Now, hearken to me! You're the very darky we are in search of!"

"Me!" qualled Puyarra. "Bail budgery you to sarch for me! What me do dat be bad—eh, misser?"

"Where were you carrying the fish I saw in your hands this morning—eh, you ebony villain?"

"You pialla murry sarcy," ventured the native, keeping beyond the length of the other's lash.

"Sarcy, am I, you sooty-skinned knave! By the law, but I'll scourge you if you don't keep a civil tongue to me. You're in the service of that unhung outlaw, Red Hand; and, I tell you, that I'll pull you up to one of the highest trees hereabouts if you don't inform me where he is."

"Golly, misser!" quivered the native, still retreating, in dread of the raised lash.

"You like baccy, eh?" queried the sergeant, in an altered tone.

"Budgery!" exclaimed the other, smacking his thick lips.

"And rum, likewise?"

"Oh, murry budgery!"

The sergeant here alighted, and producing a flask and horn, the sight of which articles made Puyarra's eyes glisten like two black diamonds, drew nearer to the man.

"Budgery yer, misser; s'pose yer gib me 'ittle drap o' dat rum?"

The sergeant winked at his companions, and seating himself on a hillock, drew out the cork of the flask.

Puyarra sniffed the air, and hitched up his ragged trousers, which clung to him from sheer habit, not owing the assistance of any fastenings whatever.

The sergeant poured a few drops of the liquor into the drinking-horn. "Open your mouth, darkey!" said he.

Puyarra obeyed, and the fiery drops were

tossed down his throat. The black smacked his lips, approvingly, and glanced longingly towards the flask itself, thirsting for more of its contents.

The sergeant now drew forth a cigar, ignited it, and puffed the smoke into the calm air, on which it floated in little curling clouds that melted away, leaving a pleasant aroma behind, which caused the black's eyes to glisten and twinkle once more.

The sergeant was narrowly watching Puyarra, knowing well how much he was tantalizing his appetite. He then drew forth a fig of tobacco, and showed it to the black, saying, "Look here, you ebony-complexioned cheat," speaking between each puff of his cigar, and indulging in his liking for calling ugly names. "We've obtained information that you are going against the Government; in other words, that you have private dealings with the notorious bushranger, Red Hand."

Puyarra showed all his teeth, and the whites of his eyes, and put on a most injured look."

"'Clare, misser, dat dose is all cussed lies agin me—ebery one on 'em, misser. Me respec' de gubboner—Ammighty bless him; an' me knows no moor of Red Hand dem me knows of the debbel himsel."

"Then if you've got nothing to tell us, I shall keep my tobacco for some one else," returned the sergeant, putting the fig back into his pocket. "If you had been able to tell us anything about the dare-devil that we are after, we should have given you rum enough to swim in——"

"Golly!"

"And tobacco that would have reached the sky!"

"Golly, misser, me sorry me lose all dat; me wish me know something about this debbel, Red Hand!"

"Oh, you sly, circumventing son of the Old One, I'm one too many for you; I am," cried the sergeant. "Hand here the cords, Stapleton," he continued, addressing one of his fellows, who instantly alighted, and produced a coil of cord, with which the sergeant ordered Puyarra's arms to be bound. "We'll take this fellow before the Governor," proceeded he, winking to his companions; "we'll make the sooty rogue speak the truth, I'll be bound."

The native quietly submitted himself to be bound. He had resisted the allurements of rum and tobacco, and nothing else would be likely to draw from him the little knowledge he possessed concerning Red Hand. He had a dread of being taken before the Governor, which was only an empty threat on the part of the sergeant. But, Puyarra, who was one of the most intelligent of the native blacks, could keep a silent tongue in his head, and likewise preserve his trust, for treachery was no characteristic of the Botany tribe of natives.

Puyarra's arms being bound, he was now dragged along the track by the cord. He was fleet of foot, but he found it a difficult matter to run as fast as a horse can trot. He called out to the sergeant who was holding the end of the cord, but that individual took but little notice of the black's appeal, but rather enjoyed his distress.

Puyarra, who was being taken back in the direction of Snake Gully, was panting at the horse's heels, growing faint from sheer lack of strength. But he still contrived to use his lungs, while the dog barked and yelped with all his might and main.

"Misser, misser!" cried Puyarra, in breathless accents, as the police-sergeant unfeelingly dragged the poor black onwards. And then the appealant dropped on the ground, in a state of half-unconsciousness.

"Halt!" shouted the sergeant to his party, as he slid from his saddle. "This sooty imp has taken it into his thick head to sham fits. I'll fit him, with a vengeance!"

Saying which, the man raised his riding-whip, but ere its lash descended, a single horseman, armed, sprang out of the bush, before the astonished party, who were wholly unprepared for the intruder.

Riding up to the sergeant, the horseman presented his pistol at him.

"Eh! is it the province of the police to persecute the poor, harmless aboriginals in this cruel fashion? At him, good dog!—at him, my fine fellow!" he continued, addressing himself to the black's hound, which was one of a nature savage enough on occasions.

The animal did not need another bidding. He made a spring, and fastened his sharp teeth in the sergeant's shoulder.

"Now, Puyarra, up—up, and use your legs!" the horseman added, as the dog and the man were struggling together on the ground.

The black, who had rallied a little, gathered himself up, and his cords being sundered by the horseman's knife, he made off as fast as he could run.

All this while, the policemen were endeavouring to rescue their officer from the fangs of the infuriated animal, whom they dared not attempt to fire at, lest they might endanger the safety of their leader, the coarse-minded and burly sergeant.

The horseman's jeering laugh was ringing through the ambient air, as he witnessed the fight between the brute and his victim.

The scene was all confusion, and in that confusion Red Hand—for it was he—proclaimed his identity, and then rode off, unharmed and triumphant.

But his triumph was but of short duration, for scarcely had he proceeded a mile along the track, when he heard the clatter of horses' hoofs, and casting a glance over his shoulder, he perceived the police galloping after him.

"Aha! is it so?" muttered Desmoro, laughingly. "Well, you shall have a chase after me my boys!" And with these words he left the track, and darted into the bush, where he was speedily lost to view.

His pursuers, who were incited by no common interest, dashed after the bushranger, heedless of all impediments, thinking only of the reward in perspective, and of the glorious achievement of capturing the notorious Red Hand.

The black's hound had been shot dead, and the sergeant, all torn and gory, riding foremost, led on his men as if he had not a single scratch about him. He was a daring, bull-dog sort of fellow, one well fitted for the post he held. He had but little fear of death, and he was ready to run any sort of hazard in order to win some renown in his perilous calling.

The powerful steeds plunged on, crashing their way through the bush, seeking in vain for some bridle-path. But nothing could they see but scrub, and, further on, high, sheltering trees. Red Hand had vanished from their sight, as if by magic.

The party halted, and the sergeant used his telescope and scanned the scene far and near. But his scrutiny was wholly useless—no one could he see.

Uttering curses loud and many, he was just about to lower his glass, when, at a short distance from him, he perceived a pair of big eyes peering at him. He could only see the eyes glistening between some leafy trees of stunted growth, but what he saw was sufficient to inform him that he was on the track of a horse, which had probably a rider.

"Follow, lads!" cried the sergeant, thrusting away his glass, and dashing onward, pistol in hand, his comrades at his heels, prepared for the expected encounter.

"A thousand furies seize the rascal—he has escaped us!" broke from the sergeant's lips, as they came upon Desmoro's riderless horse, standing quietly among the bushes. "What's to be done now? Evidently there's no bridle-track about here, and the fellow, unable to pursue his way further on horseback, has taken to his feet. May the foul fiend pursue him, say I. If we had but one of those black fellows here, I'd yet find the villain, or lose myself!"

Just upon these words appeared the grinning face of Puyarra.

"Misser," exclaimed the black, "gib me some of dat rum an' baccy, an' me tell you whar dis beast's misser be!"

The sergeant said not a word, but pointed his pistol at the black's head, which instantly ducked behind a neighbouring bush.

Puyarra was playing a game: he was detaining Desmoro's pursuers, while the hunted one was flying still further out of their reach. He had stealthily watched the bushranger thus far, and was now doing his best endeavours to engage the attention of the police for a while, and to put them on a wrong scent.

"There's a high tree, and here's a strong rope!" said the sergeant, alighting, and seizing the black by the back of his neck.

Puyarra set up a loud cry, or rather yell, and begged for mercy, saying that he would direct them where to find the bushranger of whom they were in quest.

"Speak!" cried the sergeant, shaking the black—"speak! or, by the law, I'll make you swing from yonder branches!"

"'Spose you go to de Crow's Nest, on de road to Sandy Hollow, you den find Red Hand hisself, misser?" said Puyarra, looking as truthful as man could possibly look. "Now gib me a 'ittle drap ob rum and a fig o' baccy, budgery, misser," coaxed the native, in whining tones.

"Are you sure that you are not deceiving us?" queried the sergeant, doubtfully.

"What be dat, misser?"

"You are not lying to us?"

"Bail budgery for me to lie, misser!" answered Puyarra, shaking his head, very demurely.

"I don't believe in you, you inky-skinned piece of humanity!" observed the sergeant, at a loss whether to trust the black's tale or not. "But, mind, if I find that you have misled us, I'll have you brought before the governor, you and your gin (wife) both, and I'll roast you alive, a limb at a time!"

Puyarra shuddered, and his teeth chattered with terror.

"Habn't got no gin, misser," he replied, with an innocent air. "Gib me a 'ittle drap ob rum an' a fig of baccy, do, misser," entreated he.

"You sooty beggar, no!" rejoined the other, at once letting go his hold of the native, and springing into the saddle again. "Take that!" he added, striking him across the shoulders with his whip. "Now, forward, lads, to Sandy Hollow!"

And back again into the bridle-track the police found their way, leaving the poor native rubbing his shoulders, and cluckling with glee.

"Sandy Hollow! He, he! Sandy debbel, me say, ef you finds him ye seeks dare, ye gret white rascal! He, he! Me gib ye a lie for yer blows, Misser Sergeant! He, he!"

And once more rubbing his smarting shoulders, and muttering curses many, Puyarra plunged through the thick scrub, and pursued a contrary direction to that taken by the agents of the law.

Desmoro had reached his cavern-home in safety. He was in a state of high exultation at having baffled the police; but there was a rapturous joy deep down in the recesses of his heart—a joy which was not outwardly demonstrated by him, which was making his blood tingle through his veins, and decking all his handsome features in sunny smiles.

The bushranger's hilarity soon subsided, and then he fell into a fit of deep abstraction, during which he uttered not a word.

Neddy, who was busy preparing himself for his intended visit to Sydney, noticed little of his master's behaviour.

Desmoro was thinking that he should see Marguerite again on the morrow, and his mind seemed to have no room for any other thought. He was recalling to his memory every syllable she had uttered to him, every look she had bestowed upon him during their late brief and never-to-be-forgotten interview. He felt absolutely intoxicated with happiness when he remembered the winning tones of her soft voice and the sweetness of her smile. The recollections of his past life were perfectly hideous to him now, and he was wishing that he could bury all bygones in everlasting oblivion.

He looked around at the cavern walls, wondering when and where he should be able to find for himself another shelter. Would he be able to effect an escape from the colony, and be free to seek security and happiness in another land? He must fly—for Marguerite's sake he must bid adieu to his present mode of life and all its dangers.

On the following day, long before the appointed hour, the outlaw repaired to the trysting-place, and there impatiently awaited the coming of his lady-love. He did not feel altogether at ease. He feared that the police were still in the neighbourhood, and he knew that he was running considerable hazard in thus exposing himself to the broad face of open day. But whatever the peril to himself, he must meet Marguerite d'Auvergne. He reflected that he had hitherto been so fortunate as to evade his pursuers; but the tide of his good fortune might probably turn, and he might be engulfed in utter ruin.

With his affection for Marguerite had come to him a higher appreciation of life and liberty. He was no longer the reckless bushranger, ready to court peril on all occasions, just for the mere excitement and sport that such might give him. No, he was an entirely changed being—changed for the better in all respects. He did not think now as he thought only a few short days ago—that because he had been wronged he had a license to wrong others. His heart was not only softened, but filled with sorrow and repentance for all his rash and evil deeds, not one of which did he seek to excuse in any way.

He remembered that he had once breathed a solemn oath of undying vengeance against all mankind. Well, it was a most sinful oath—an oath better broken than kept.

He was willing to forget completely ever having harboured any bitterness of feeling against the world; he wished only to feel kindly now towards every one.

He looked at his red palm, and groaned aloud. Oh, had it not been for that fatal birth-mark how different his lot through life would have been!

Sitting meditating thus, with his head drooping on his breast, there suddenly appeared before his mind's eye the lithe figure and pure features of one whom he had not seen for many long years—of gentle Comfort Shavings. It was strange that any thought of her should come into his mind at this particular moment, when the pulses of his heart were all throbbing for another. But so it was, and the thoughts just awakened would not be driven hence for some length of time.

"Poor Comfort! Where was she now? Was she wedded or single?" he sighed within himself. "Should he ever behold her again, should he ever more listen to the accents of her silver-toned voice?"

Alack, alack! Wherefore was he thus dreaming of one woman while his bosom's warmest affections were devoted to another? He was to blame, for Marguerite had surely a right to claim the undivided attention of his whole mind. Comfort's name then must henceforth become a forgotten sound to him, and her image must be for ever erased from his memory.

Erased from his memory! That could never be, for while life and reason were afforded him, he must still remember her who was once his tender solacer and dearest earthly friend.

Desmoro had not yet speculated on the wealth which the Jew had bequeathed to him. No, brigand though he were, he had no cravings to possess more money than was required to meet his immediate necessities. But as he sat thus, meditating on various matters, he suddenly remembered that a large sum would be needful to assist him in his proposed plans. He would have to offer a handsome bribe, else no captain would be willing to run the risk of smuggling him out of the colony; for masters of ships, like the rest of the human species, were always open to bribery and corruption.

Ben's gold would then be most welcome to the bushranger, it would prove to him a most potent friend just at this particular time.

At this moment the distant clatter of horses' hoofs broke upon Desmoro's musings, causing him to start up and listen attentively to the approaching sounds, his colour quickly changing all the while, his pulses wildly throbbing.

Yes! 'Twas she, 'twas Marguerite: he recognised the light, bounding pace of her pony, and with expectation brightening his eyes, he emerged from the bush and showed himself to the fair equestrian, who was already in sight, speedily advancing towards our hero.

"Thank heaven, I see you quite safe!" Marguerite exclaimed, as Desmoro assisted her to alight. "I have had such fearful dreams about you."

"Dreams!" repeated he, tenderly embracing her, and then proceeding to lead the pony into the bush under the sheltering, screening trees, she hanging fondly and trustfully on his arm as they went along.

"Yes, such as have filled me with a score of terrors on your account," she returned, shuddering, and clinging to him.

"Foolish Marguerite, have no fear for me."

"I should have less, did I perceive that you had some for yourself. You are far too venturesome, far too defiant, Desmoro! Oh, were you but on the sea, sailing away from this land, I should feel content; as it is, I am full of sickening apprehension for your sake."

"Marguerite, if possible, another moon shall not see me under an Australian sky."

"You promise me that?"

"Most solemnly."

Then they sat down together, and he proceeded to talk to her of his plans, of his many hopes and fears, and of the many difficulties he would have to contend against before he should be able to effect his escape from the colony.

He knew the potency of gold—which makes the true man killed, and saves the thief; nay, sometimes hangs both thief and true man," and upon that gold he placed his strongest reliance now.

"Your father will assist you with his whole heart and soul!" said Marguerite. "But, oh, be careful how you expose yourself! Remember that my happiness—nay, my very life itself hangs upon your safety."

"My Marguerite!" he exclaimed, with a burst of emotion.

"I dread your presence in Sydney!" she went on, excitedly, "even though you may be under the protection of your father's roof. I wish you had wings that you could fly away from all these dangers, fly away from them this very moment."

He only smiled at her, and warmly pressed her hand between his own, while she continued to rehearse to him her list of apprehensions.

"On the return of Neddy, concerning whose present errand you are well informed, I will repair to Sydney, and instantly seek my father's house, where I will remain in secrecy and security until the hour of my departure. Fear not, I will use the utmost precaution in all my actions."

"May I inform Colonel Symure of your intentions?" asked Marguerite.

"Assuredly you may," answered he.

"Oh, how his soul will rejoice over my intelligence!" exclaimed she, in joyful accents.

"And your own father, Marguerite? he must not know of our love?"

"Not at present, Desmoro!" flushed she. "When we are again in our own dear land, in which land you must seek a refuge, he shall be informed of his daughter's secret——"

"That she loves the somewhile bushranger, Red Hand!"

"Hush, Desmoro! forget that fearful title!"

"Ah, I would forget all but thee, Marguerite," he answered, very tenderly.

Long sat the lovers thus conversing about themselves and their affection for one another. At length Marguerite rose to depart.

"I would I could accompany you back to Parramatta," he said, in a lingering tone. "I do not like your being on those roads alone!"

"'Tis for the last time. To-morrow I shall return home, you know!"

He assisted her into her saddle, and then led the pony into the bridle-track once more.

Here they were startled by the sudden appearance of Puyarra, the native black.

"No fear, misser," said he, in an assuring tone; "me on de look out fur de bombable perlice dat I sent off to Sandy Hollow to seek fur ye yesterday. De sergeant, cuss him, lash my back, and kill my dog dead, dead as my own fader. But me sent him—he, he!—to Sandy Hollow, whar, mebbe, him stick fast as one of dese old gum-trees fur a while!"

And the black chuckled triumphantly, and rubbed his hands together.

"You put them on the wrong scent after me, my good fellow!" said Desmoro. "Thanks, Puyarra, I shall not forget the friendly act."

"Den gib me a fig ob 'baccy, misser, dreckly," rejoined the black, eagerly.

"A fig! Come to the withered tree to-morrow, and you shall there find a whole half-score of figs."

"Golly!" exclaimed Puyarra.

"Now see this lady safe on her way to Parramatta," Desmoro said.

Puyarra bowed as gracefully as a Court gallant. He had been taught politeness in Sydney, and had profited well by his lessons in that respect. The Botany tribe of natives are like monkeys, full of mimicking, fun and harmless mischief; and, as I have before observed, Puyarra was one of the most intelligent of his race.

Desmoro watched until Marguerite and her sable attendant were entirely out of sight; then he returned to his home in the bush, to that home which he was about to quit for ever.

(To be continued.)

A BOY in Fourteenth street exploded a pack of fire-crackers in his sister's piano yesterday. The intercession of his grandfather saved the youngster a well merited thrashing, and out of gratitude to his deliverer he sprinkled the inside folds of the *Herald* with cayenne pepper, and the old gentleman on opening and shaking it, as has been his custom for years, was taken with a violent fit of sneezing, and threw both of his knees and one thumb out of joint, before the hired man, whose nose he broke, could control him. The old gentleman has temporarily retired from the business of intercessor.

THE FAVORITE

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We are pleased to be able to announce that we have made arrangements with the world renowned author

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PUBLICANS AND SINNERS

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ILLUSTRATED BY OUR ARTIST

Miss Braddon's reputation as an author is too well established to need any comment from us. Those of our readers who have had the pleasure of enjoying "Lady Audley's Secret," "To the Bitter End," "The Outcasts," or any of her other works will, no doubt, be glad of an opportunity to peruse her latest production as speedily as it is written.

FLIRTATIONS.

In every clime under the sun flirtations have been indulged in from time immemorial, but perhaps in no age more extensively than our own. Can any one recall a seaside recollection, a ball or party reminiscence, the memory of a day's blithe and careless excursion, or, indeed, any pleasure of like character, in which those of opposite sexes participated, unmarked by one or more flirtations? It is somewhat remarkable that even the most desperate flirts will rarely acknowledge themselves guilty of flirting. They denominate this species of amusement under various names, as though the name, and not the thing itself, oppressed the conscience. The only two classes, however, into which "flirtations" can be divided, are innocent and wicked. What an innocent flirtation may be, we leave for these who understand it to define. A wicked flirtation is the exercise of our own powers of fascination and of pleasing with the express purpose of conveying to the mind of the person of the opposite sex the assurance that his or her society is particularly agreeable to us. There are a thousand ways of doing this, and every way is wrong. A word, a squeeze of the hand, a gesture of admiration, or, at times, one of impatience, will equally serve, and will send back the blood to the heart of a silly girl with a flutter of impatient or tumultuous joy. Both sexes are equally to blame; for this kind of flirtation is a species of lying, and one can lie with the eye or the hand as well as with the tongue. We think it was Bulwer who said in one of his early novels, that "conscience, is the most elastic material in the world. To-day you cannot stretch it over a mole hill; to-morrow it hides a mountain." The first trifling with a human heart occasions remorse; but when what was once the pastime of an hour becomes the pastime of a life, the conscience is cheated into the belief that flirtations are harmless, and unworthy of the denunciations of even those who suffer.

Many a maiden, laughing away regret, leads her adorer further and further into the domain of Love's rapturous kingdom, weaving around him the soft network of her enchantment, until, poor fool, he breathes a lotus-laden atmosphere; is deaf to all sounds save the low, sweet song of the syren, and his very soul drunk with the intoxication of the melody. He dreams the ecstatic dream of reciprocated affection, and wakes to find himself excluded from the kingdom, deserted for a new admirer, the song which so enraptured him sung to another listener, and something gone from his life that, were he to live a thousand years, will never come back to it. Shut out from his earthly paradise, perchance he seeks to drown his bitter disappointment in the excitement of perilous adventures : finally, it may be, having lost faith in woman's truth, changing into that *thing*, a male flirt; whose business in life it is, perhaps without a single written or spoken vow of love, simply by those delicate attentions that cost so little but mean so much, to win the fresh, pure, trusting heart of a girl — to toy with it as with a token—and finally to throw it back upon itself as something too poor to keep; teaching her, as he has been taught, that "there are other songs without words besides those of Mendelssohn's;" and when her every sense is wrapt in the soft music.

> "That gentlier on the spirit lies,
> Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes,"

suddenly stopping the soul satisfying strains, and leaving her to carry about with her a heart that will feel an aching void until the airs of Heaven sweep over her weary spirit, and, awakening answering chords, make of her everlasting existence a harmony.

Willis sang as follows :—

> "Give me a sly flirtation,
> 'Neath the light of a chandelier,
> With music to fill up the pauses,
> And nobody very near."

And well known is it that the atmosphere of parties, aided by the seductive accompaniments of music, the feverish dance, the brilliant toilette, the generous wines, the sparkle and mingled wit, wisdom, and folly of conversation, and above all, the conspicuous display of beauty in woman, and grace in man, quickens into active life this fascinating source of pleasure. Nightly, words which, if honestly spoken to hearts that listen because they love to hear, would make life sweeter to two souls; words of vows and love emptier than air, are listened to with kindling eye and warm blushes; and low-voiced protestations, that seem to bear the very soul of truth, but "false as Cressida," thrill many a manly heart whose awakened love is worse than useless.

CONCEITED PEOPLE.

Minerva threw away the flute, when she found that it puffed up her cheeks; but if we cast away the flute now-a-days, it is that we may take a larger instrument of puffing, by becoming our own trumpeters. Empty minds are the most prone to soar above their proper sphere like paper kites, which are kept aloft by their own lightness : while those that are better stored are prone to humility, like heavily laden vessels, of which we see the less the more richly and deeply they are freighted. The corn bends itself downwards when its ears are filled, but when the heads of the conceited are filled with self-adulation, they only lift them up higher. Perhaps it is a benevolent provision of Providence that we should possess in fancy those good qualities which are held from us in reality; for if we did not occasionally think well of ourselves, we should be more apt to think ill of others. It must be confessed that the conceited and the vain have a light and pleasant duty to perform, since they have but one to please, and in that object they seldom fail. Self-love, moreover, is the only love not liable to the pangs of jealousy. Pity! that a quick perception of our own deserts generally blinds us to the merits of others; that we should see more than all the world in the former instance, and less in the latter! In one respect, conceited people show a degree of discernment for which they deserve credit—they soon become tired of their own company. Especially fortunate are they in another respect, for while the really wise, witty and beautiful are subject to casualties of defect, age and sickness, the imaginary possessor of those qualities wears a charmed life, and fears not the assaults of fate or time, since a nonentity is invulnerable. Even the really gifted, however, may sometimes become conceited. Northcote, the artist, whose intellectual powers were equal to his professional talent, and who thought it much easier for a man to be his superior than his equal, being once asked by Sir William Knighton what he thought of the Prince Regent, replied :—"I am not acquainted with him."—"Why, his royal highness says he knows you."—"Know me!—Pooh! that's all his brag."

NEWS CONDENSED.

THE DOMINION.—$11,539 has been contributed to the Drummond Colliery Relief Fund.———It is stated at Quebec that the English Syndicate does not want now to stick to its arrangements with the North Shore Railway. On the other hand it is said that several American capitalists are willing to advance a million to the present North Shore Railway contractors, so as to enable them to go on with the work at once.——The Governor-General is expected at Charlottetown, P.E.I., at the close of this week.———The Mennonite delegation are in Ottawa, and will have an interview with the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, with a view to ascertaining what the Dominion Government will do towards aiding their countrymen to settle in the North-west.———Rev. Mr. Ancient has received a magnificent gold watch from the citizens of Chicago for the bravery displayed by him in rescuing passengers from the ill-fated *Atlantic*. Mrs. Riley, daughter of Mrs. Cleary of Prospect, and Misses Agatha and Kate O'Brien, daughters of a Prospect fishermen, also received from the citizens of Chicago a locket and gold chain each; also Mrs. Riley $96, and the Misses O'Brien $48 each, for the attention shown by them to the shipwrecked passengers on that memorable occasion.———At Lindsay, Ont., last week, one Nesbitt, a carpenter, shot a girl with whom he was keeping company for refusing to go out with him. A verdict of murder was returned. The murderer is a married man.——— The crops throughout Nova Scotia are promising. In Cape Breton the fishery has proved very remunerative, and there is considerable activity at all the coal mines.

UNITED STATES.—Kate Stoddard, the murderess of Goodrich, has confessed.———Brigham Young's Arizona Mormon Mission has proved a complete failure. The entire colony, numbering more than seven hundred persons, is on the way back to Utah.———At a meeting held recently at the University in Washington in favor of international arbitration instead of war in cases of national dispute, resolutions were offered endorsing the resolutions of the British House of Commons, and were adopted.———Cholera is reported at Cincinnati and Columbus.———There were several large fires at Louisville last week.

UNITED KINGDOM.—The New York *Herald's* story regarding the failure of Baron Reuter's contract is false.———A marriage has finally been arranged between the Duke of Edinburgh and the Grand Duchess Maria Alexandrovina, the only daughter of the Emperor of Russia. The Duke thus foregoes the right of succession to the Duchy of Saxe-Coburg.———In the House of Lords last week Lord Cranmore's motion for a committee to consider what legislation is needed to check the growing tendency in the Church of England towards Catholicism was lost.———It is stated that Parliament will be prorogued on the 2nd inst. The Judiciary Bill, abolishing the powers of the House of Lords as a Court of last appeal in certain cases, has passed in Committee.———A disastrous accident occurred last week on the Caledonian Railway, by which two persons were killed outright, and thirty injured, some fatally.

FRANCE.—It is reported that the French Government has under consideration the question of calling a congress of the representatives of the Great Powers in Paris for discussing the terms of a new commercial treaty.———A newspaper correspondent reports MacMahon as saying to him that he accepted of the Presidency of France to save the army and rescue the Government from a hideous scramble for power and profit. He added: "There is no reason why the present régime, in its amended constitutional form, with a military executive, who should reign over the country and rule over the army, should not become established in France. When the words empire and republic become synonymous with discipline, every citizen a soldier, and every soldier the servant of the Republic, wrangling and strife will cease in the country." He likewise said: "Everything that can be done to insure the Pope's safety and the necessary liberty of the Holy See shall be done. It is directly against the interest of Italy to expel the Pope, for were he to take refuge elsewhere, the Catholics of all the world would be aroused and united against Italy."——The Government has instructed the Prefects of the occupied Departments to interdict public rejoicings on the occasion of the evacuation of the territory by the German troops.

GERMANY.—The permanent retirement of Prince Bismarck from the Prussian Cabinet, the certainty of which was announced some months ago, is on the eve of accomplishment. He will retain the German Chancellorship. It is now reported that Herr Von Balen will be Minister of Foreign Affairs.———In consequence of the outbreak of rinderpest among Russian cattle, importation has been prohibited.———Cholera is on the decrease.

RUSSIA.—A despatch from Khiva gives the following account of events subsequent to the capture of the city: The Khan voluntarily entered the Russian camp and gave in his submission, formally declaring himself a vassal of Russia. General Kauffman then restored him to his throne and appointed a council of administration to assist him in the government during the occupation of the Khanate by Russian forces. The Khan, in token of gratitude, issued, on the 24th of June, a decree for ever abolishing slavery within his dominions. General Kauffman has sent a despatch to Teheran notifying the Persian Government to make preparations for the reception of 10,000 natives of Persia released from slavery by the Khan's decree.———The expeditionary force will return to Tosken about the middle of next month.

AUSTRIA.—Neither the Sultan nor the Shah will visit Vienna, the former for State reasons, and the latter on account of the prevalence of cholera in the Austrian capital.

SPAIN.—The Carlists who captured the town of Sanguesa, in the Province of Navarre, have been driven out by the Republican troops.——Lieut.-General Sanchez Bregna has assumed command of the army of the North.———The Carlists have won another brilliant victory at Ripoli, in Catalonia. Saballo, with 3,000 men, surprised a force of 4,000 Republicans, under Cabrinety. In the action that ensued the latter was killed, over half of his command taken prisoners, and all his artillery captured.———At Santa Colona, in Barcelona, an action has taken place in which 50 insurgents were killed.——Advices from Carlist sources state that the insurgent chieftain, Sierro, with a band of five hundred men, including fifty-five cavalry, has crossed the River Ebro and entered Old Castile, where he is organizing risings of the Carlists. There is much agitation in Burgos, and many of the inhabitants of that province are enlisting under the banner of Don Carlos. Several bands of Carlists have appeared in the Province of Leon. There are three chiefs in Galicia, each at the head of an organized force.——Five thousand peasants of Alperia have joined the Carlists, driven thereto by the excess of the Republicans.———There have been troubles at Carthagena, Malaga, and Alcoy.———It is asserted that the Carlists have shot a party of Republican volunteers at Cirauqui after they had surrendered.———At a meeting of the majority of the members of the Cortes, it was resolved to approve of the proposition of the Cortes to vote a new constitution.———Maisonave, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Carvajal, Minister of Finance, and Berg, Minister of Justice, have resigned in order to facilitate the formation of a homogenous Cabinet. The majority of the Cortes demand a vigorous ministry under Salmeron.———There have been serious disturbances among the factory employees at Barcelona.———Two thousand Carlists have entered the Province of Valencia.———President Pi y Margall has refused to negotiate with the Carlists for the exchange of prisoners, but he authorized the Republican commanders to come to an understanding unofficially with the Carlist chiefs to secure the proper treatment of Spanish troops falling into the hands of the insurgents.———The Carlists have again laid siege to Puycerda. They claim that they have now 10,000 men under arms.———The Spanish Government has ordered war vessels to cruise along the coast of Biscay, to prevent the landing of cargoes of arms and military stores for the Carlists.

DENMARK.—It is reported at Copenhagen that Prince Arthur of England is coming to solicit the hand of Princess Thyra.

MEXICO.—The American Minister gave a breakfast and evening entertainment to American residents on the Fourth of July. The Mexican Government celebrated the day by displaying flags on public buildings.——The Congressional elections passed off quietly. The results are not yet known.———The Act for the expulsion of pernicious foreigners is not yet enforced.

CUBA.—The Spanish Government has issued a decree rescinding all embargoes and ordering the immediate restoration of all property heretofore seized for political offences in Cuba.——The steamer *Virginus*, with a valuable cargo of breech-loading arms, powder, &c., has successfully landed on the Cuban coast. Manuel Quesada, under whom the expedition was fitted out, has issued a proclamation, saying that other expeditions are soon to follow. He adds: "Affairs have lately changed much in our favor; the God of victory is now with us."

FLORENCE CARR.

A STORY OF FACTORY LIFE.

CHAPTER XLIX.—*Continued.*

Brindley's hand trembled with nervousness, as he uncorked and poured part of the contents of the small bottle into the absent man's half-emptied glass.

And the smell of almonds, which his keen scent detected, frightened and even tempted him to throw away the poisoned drink, before it was too late.

But it was too late.

Even while he hesitated, the door opened again, and John Barker, a trifle more sober, and much paler than usual, re-entered the room.

"Aw'll go wi' you," he said, seating himself at the tab'e; "thar's summit astir; they've got scent of summit. Come along, lad," and he took the half-filled glass in his hand, emptied it at a single draught, then made an effort to rise.

A spring—a shudder—the door opens, two policemen stand at it, while more are visible behind. A convulsive gasp, without a shriek; an outstretched hand pointed accusingly at the murderer, and the criminal and victim falls dead, before the hand of the law could be laid upon him.

The struggle which followed was short and decisive; even the murderer's attempt at self-destruction was frustrated, and there, taken in the very act, his wrists firmly bound in handcuffs, with a villanous expression on his face, and a sensation as though the hangman's grip was upon him, Bob Brindley was marched off to prison.

"Eigh, aw allaws said he'd come to the gallows, yet," said an old woman in a high-pitched voice, as the prisoner was taken past her.

He had been the terror of her children when he was a boy, and the prediction she had often uttered certainly seemed likely to be fulfilled at last.

But Bob Brindley and his victim, John Barker, were not the only person for whoe apprehension warrants had been issued that morning.

The Rev. and Hon. Sidney Beltram, the son and brother of an earl, was likewise wanted, and the officers of justice had gone off to the Rectory; but without any result beyond that of terrifying his aunt and sister, and making the servants doubt whether or not they were in their right senses.

There was still another person to be arrested, one likewise difficult to find, and this was Mary Black, more commonly known as Mother Black, or the White Witch.

Knocking at the door of her house appeared useless.

It had not, the neighbours asserted, been opened or entered since the previous day, and then by her granddaughter Jem, the old woman herself not having been seen for two days past.

The police were not as much taken aback by this information as might have been supposed; indeed they were even prepared for it, but they considered it advisable to break open the door, and enter the deserted dwelling before seeking elsewhere for its usual tenant.

Nothing of any importance, however, met them here, nothing of any value seemed to have been taken away; indeed, to an ordinary observer, there had never been anything of value to take.

For, as we are aware, the old hag's treasure had been hidden, and not knowing where to look for it, the police were not likely to discover that it was missing.

Jem was not there. No one knew, in fact, or, if they knew, would not tell where she was, but as she was not included in the warrant, it was not their business to trouble themselves much about her.

The house having been well searched, and nothing that could throw any light upon the fate of its missing mistress found in it, the police, in obedience to instructions from a quiet-looking man in plain clothes, and whom the curious lookers-on guessed, rightly enough, to be a detective, proceeded to the mouth of the coal pit in which the two girls had, after their abduction, been imprisoned.

Ben, the man who had had charge of the shaft, was not there, he too being missing; but his place had been supplied, and as there seemed some prospect of the matter between the pitmen and masters being settled satisfactorily, it was expected they would be at work again in a day or two at farthest.

The descent into the pit by those not accustomed to it was by no means a pleasant matter, though the manager, who had been away from Oldham for the last fortnight, and had left Brindley as his deputy, had returned but the previous night, and went down the shaft with the policemen this morning.

It was a long while before any trace of the spot which Moll Arkshaw had described, for, as may have been supposed, it was upon her evidence and information that these steps were taken, could be found, but they came upon it at last, led to the end of the dark gallery, just as they were giving up the search, by a low groan.

The woman they were in search of was found, but in what a condition?

Not dead, as her groan testified, but mad, famished, on fire with the craving of unslaked thirst, the pangs of hunger, the want of air, and the horror, almost certainty, of being left to die here, and in this state, alone.

She had been helpless from the first, her hands bound, and her wooden leg thrown some distance from her, and where in the darkness she could not find it.

It was useless remaining here to ask questions, and with all possible expedition they carried the groaning creature to the shaft, where they gave her water to drink, and uncovered her head that the fresher air might receive her.

To a great extent it did so, and when she was, at length, safely brought up to the broad daylight, she was able to speak, though weak and almost blind with being so long in the dark.

As yet unconscious that she was a prisoner, she was placed in a cab and taken to the goal, where the doctor and female warder soon did all in their power to completely restore her.

She must have had a tough frame to survive the horrors of those two dreadful nights and the intervening day, though the latter brought no relief or light to her.

But she did survive it, and soon became sufficiently recovered not only to know where she was and to guess why she was there, but also to plan how, by sacrificing her accomplices, she could save herself.

With her characterestic selfishness and treachery, she determined, if possible, to turn queen's evidence before any of the others could do so, hoping thereby to obtain a free pardon, and be able to return home and punish her grand-daughter Jem, against whom her enmity was intense.

Knowing nothing of John Barker's death, of Bob Brindley's arrest, or of Jem's flight with her hoarded and long accumulated treasure, the old woman, after an hour's reflection in prison, desired a magistrate to be sent for, as she intended to "peach" upon her companions.

True, she tried to bargain for a free pardon before she commenced, but as this was not in the power of her listener to grant, and fearing that one of her tools, employers, or accomplices would be before her, she made, as she termed it, "a clean breast of it," though it would have been a very different kind of repentance, indeed, which could have made her guilty heart clean.

One effect her confession or statement had, however.

It was telegraphed to London that Sidney Beltram, with his companion Florence Carr, was, in all probability, in the metropolis, and although Frank Gresham hung, as his physician declared, between life and death, the house in which he lay was placed under the surveillance of the police, and instead of the bright future, which only a week ago he had revelled in, only death or disgrace lay before him.

All unconscious, however, he lay on his bed in the delirium of brain fever, muttering strange things, which those who heard listened to with a shudder, and hoped, or tried to hope, were but the baseless phantoms of a diseased brain.

Through it all, however, his antipathy to the presence of his mother is as violent as it was on the first day of his illness, and she, who has loved him best of all her earthly treasures, is driven away from his side.

This was the worst of all, the bitterest blow of all, and the proud and stately woman shrank under it, as under her death blow.

"'THAT MAN—THAT GENTLEMAN FELLED ME TO THE EARTH,' SAID FLORENCE."

CHAPTER L.

"I AM HER HUSBAND."

The fury of a beast of prey when robbed of its mate could be as nothing in comparison to the rage which convulsed Sidney Beltram when he heard the woman he had just married claimed by another, and saw her fall, he believed dying, at his feet.

His face became livid.

His eyes glared.

He absolutely foamed with passion, and he sprang forward upon the astonished stranger, and, fixing his hands on his throat, tried to strangle him.

A man does not submit to this kind of thing patiently, and a struggle ensued that was fierce, violent, and seemed as though it would be fatal in its issue.

Under ordinary circumstances, the clergyman would have stood no chance in a struggle with the tall, muscular soldier, but from the fact that he was mad.

Yes, it had come at last—the awful calamity which had given many symptoms of its approach; the change, worse than death, which transforms an intelligent, reasoning being, framed in the image of his Maker, and "a little lower than the angels," into a mindless, soulless animal, irresponsible for his actions, because unable to control them.

Greater to my mind than the mystery of death is that of madness, for it is a living death.

And Sidney Beltram was mad—wildly, dangerously mad.

It could be no fair fight between him and his antagonist, for he seemed endued with supernatural strength, and bit and tore like a mad dog with teeth and nails, so that, though Lieutenant Blackie came to his friend's assistance, the two strong men together could not subdue or hold him.

The noise made with the fight and struggle brought the waiter to the scene, who, horrified at the sight presented, instantly alarmed the whole house, and a few seconds after the room was half filled with people, among whom the ladlord was nconspicuous.

Paying no heed to them, however—unconscious, it seemed, of their presence, Sidney Beltram bit and tore and fought and struggled as no sane man either could or would have done, defying the efforts of the two gentlemen to conquer, hold or restrain him.

And there, also on the ground, with a plain gold ring on the finger, which the chambermaid had not failed to quiz and notice the want of in the morning, lay the new-made bride, so pale they might have thought her lifeless, and with the red blood staining her parted lips.

"Help, some of you; don't you see that we are set upon by a madman?" said the stranger who had claimed Florence as his wife.

The call was instantly responded to, and Beltram was overcome by numbers, while cries for a doctor and the police echoed from various parts of the room.

"I'll fetch 'em," said the enterprising waiter who had admitted the two strangers into Sidney Beltram's room.

And the next instant he was gone on his errand.

Of course a policeman was not at hand when wanted, and the hotel, as I have stated, being near Charing Cross, the man thought the speediest way of getting what he wanted would be to go into Scotland Yard. Not that he could give any very important information, but a telegram from Oldham had but a few minutes before arrived, and, though the inspector, who went with two men to the hotel, little dreamed of the prize they were about to secure, they were soon able to estimate its value and importance.

By the time the madman, for there could be no doubt now about his being so, was secured, a doctor had arrived and was examining the hapless lady.

"Will she live, doctor; tell me, will she live?" The question was asked, anxiously, almost breathlessly, by Lieutenant Blackie's friend.

"Are you any relative of the lady?" inquired the man of science.

"I am her husband," was the reply.

"Her husband?"

It was the inspector of police who uttered the exclamation; then he added by way of explanation—

"This is Florence Carr, the girl whose singular and mysterious abduction accompanied the murder of an old woman at Oldham, with which the papers have been full."

"I know it. The prisoner you have just made is the man who with others took her away, but she is my wife; I married her eighteen months ago. There is my name and address."

And he handed the policeman a card on which was the name of Major Adair,—th Hussars, and also that of the club of which he was a member.

The inspector was puzzled.

He could not contradict the gentleman's statement, especially when backed up by that of his companion, Lieutenant Blackie; neither was he empowered to keep guard over the recently discovered girl, but at the same time, he did not like losing sight of her, without some security as to her safety and appearance when required.

Still, it would have been exceeding his power and authority to deny Major Adair's statement and claim, or pay no heed to it.

The lady he claimed as his wife had been the victim, not the aggressor, in the recent outrage, and provided she could be brought forward when needed as a witness, the ends of justice would be met.

"I suppose you won't be taking her away?" he said, doubtfully.

"It is not likely that I shall; indeed, I doubt whether she will be well enough to be removed. If I do so, you shall know where she is."

"Thank you, sir; it's only that her evidence may be wanted."

And so saying, he turned to where his men stood keeping guard over the insane and refactory prisoner, and telling them to follow, led the way down the stairs to a cab which was waiting at the door, into which they all four entered.

Unconscious of the disgrace which had come upon him, Sidney Beltram, his paroxysm of fury over, was rambling out something like a disjointed sermon, to his by no means edified listeners, and thus he was taken to the police station, to be examined by a doctor as to whether his insanity was real or feigned.

The doctor had not replied to Major Adair's question, when he asked if Florence would live.

It might have been, no doubt was the case, that he could not, with any degree of accuracy,

give a decided answer; at any rate, he had her laid upon the couch, her dress and clothing loosened, and began to strive to restore her to consciousness.

As the blood had ceased to flow from her parted lips, he began to hope that the case after all was not very serious.

That her system had received a shock, nay, a succession of shocks, which would permanently weaken if they did not completely undetermine her health and strength, was, he felt assured, but too evident. Still he thought her life might be saved for a time, and was about to turn to the anxious officers to tell them so, when a choking cough, followed by red drops on the handkerchief applied to her lips, convinced him that her days, if not her very hours were numbered.

The major read the verdict on his face before his lips could frame it, and his own sunburnt visage blanched, and his lips trembled as he saw it.

He must have been twenty years older than that fragile, beautiful creature he claimed as his wife.

Handsome too, with that strong, matured, manly beauty, much more likely to win the heart and fascinate the mind of a young, inexperienced girl, than a man nearer her own age could possibly have done.

But there were hard lines about that handsome face, lines which only pride, passion, and stern, fierce, unyielding obstinacy could have marked there, and though they might be subdued and softened at the present moment by grief, they utterly refused to be completely hid or banished.

Only the housekeeper, the doctor, and two gentlemen remained in the room now with the girl, who had gradually returned to conciousness, though she might never more return to health and strength.

Pillows had been hastily arranged on the couch, and there she lay, covered with a light rug, a bright red spot on each cheek, which simply seemed to make the contrast to her otherwise white face, the more vivid.

She is calm after the terrible excitement, unnaturally so. It may be weakness, or concentration of strength, which will make her indomitable, supreme and master of them all to the very last.

There is a flash and glitter in her dark, deeply blue eye, which speaks of strength and defiance, rather than fear or humility, and she glances steadily around, as though to ascertain with whom she has to cope.

"Doctor," she says, in a low though distinct tone, "how long have I to live?"

"I cannot tell, Perhaps—but you must not excite yourself."

"I want no false hopes," in the same firm, though low voice. "Tell me the truth. Shall I recover?"

"The issues of life and death are in higher hands than ours," was the reply; "but if you have anything to arrange, and worldly affairs to settle, it will be wise to do it quickly."

"I am answered."

And she closed her eyes for a few minutes; she who had shrunk from death with such a coward fear, was nerving herself to meet the king of terrors now.

There was no tear in her eye; she was past tears, no tremor in her voice, for even terror seemed to have deserted her, but the calmness if left behind was more hard, stony and dreadful than the wildest agony could have been.

Her very heart seemed frozen, as though the hand of death were upon it.

"Give me some wine, anything to strengthen me for a time. Prop me up higher; now leave me with—with those men."

And now she pointed to the two officers.

"Your husband and his friend?" asked the doctor, wondering at her manner of speaking of them.

"Yes."

The man of science administered a cordial, placed more in a glass near her, and then cautioning her not to excite herself, left the room with the housekeeper.

"Shall I go too?" asked Blackie, feeling that at this solemn moment, husband and wife, long parted, might wish to be alone together.

But Florence answered quickly—

"No, remain. You know part. You had better know all."

The lieutenant bowed, but his companion came nearer to the couch, attempted to take her white hand in his own, and asked, in a tone singularly humble for him—

"Florence, at this solemn moment cannot you forgive me? I have wronged you greatly, but for the sake of our child forgive me."

For the first time since her return to consciousness, she showed something like emotion.

She snatched her hand from his, as though he had stung her.

In doing so her eyes fell upon the plain gold ring which Sidney Beltram had wedded her with that morning.

With more of contempt than anger in the action, she drew it off, and flung the ring away from her, then regarded the little hand attentively, as though looking for a mark or stain on it,

Then she looked at the man who had been her husband, at the man whom she had idolized and worshipped as a woman worships but once in a lifetime, the only man who had ever touched that cold, proud heart of hers, and a look of despairing sternness came over her fair sad face, as she said—

"No, Herbert Adair, there is no forgiveness for such sins as yours and mine. You have made me what I am; my sin lies at your door. Not the sing you dream of. I am innocent of that, but worse—I am a murderess, and I shall curse you for it, even with my dying breath."

Involuntarily her husband started back, then looked at her, thinking her mind was wandering, unable to credit the truth of her self-accusation.

But there was no sign of wandering or insanity in that firmly fixed eye, in that sternly despairing face, and he hid his own in his hands, unable to bear the sight and horror of thought which her words and looks conjured up.

"My moments are numbered," she went on, in the same cold, calm tone, "and though I leave no written confession behind me, I wish to clear up some things in the past before I die. Mr. Blackie, come nearer; he is frightened at his own work," and she glanced at her husband; "but you will listen to me."

The lieutenant obeyed.

This was no time for condolence, but his face was sad and sorrowful, as he took a seat she pointed to at her side.

"It is not a long story, but it is a dreadful one," she said, with a sigh. "Let me see; today is my birthday. I am only eighteen, and I am dying. And my baby—no; I must not think till I come to that part of it."

She paused, as though the effort to begin were too much for her, and for the time it seemed as if the struggle between weakness, approaching death, and her own will to overcome them for a few minutes longer was beyond her power.

Leaning back on her pillows, she closed her eyes for a second or two, gathering strength to complete the task she had determined to accomplish.

When she opened them again, Blackie saw that she was stronger, that life had a firmer hold upon her than he thought, and he held the cordial which the doctor had left to her lips, having the satisfaction of seeing her sit up and look at her husband, whose face was still hidden in his hands. Then, in a cold, calm voice, she began to tell them the secret of her life.

CHAPTER LI.

FLORENCE TELLS HER STORY.

"It is two years ago, and I was just sixteen,' began Florence, nerving herself to perform her self-imposed task, "when I first met Major Adair. I was on a short visit to a school-mate, at whose house we met. Six months later I ran away from school, eloped with him, to become his wife.

"I had no parents to counsel or guide me, and he knew it—took advantage of it. My mother died at my birth, and my father married again; married a woman who, having children of her own, hated my brother and me.

"Not only did she hate us herself, but she poisoned our father's mind against us, and Lionel, my brother, ten years older than I, was high-spirited, fiery, unused to control, though good, truthful, and generous. There is no limit to the evil a bad woman in her position could inflict. She tortured my brother's proud, sensitive nature, goaded him to rash, imprudent acts, made our father believe everything that was wicked and vile of him, and when he was eighteen, succeeded in having him turned out of his father's house, thrown upon the world to shift for himself.

"Poor Lionel! If we had died then, how much better it would have been for both of us."

She closed her eyes, seeming for a moment absorbed in her grief.

But there were no tears in them, for the tears in her heart were frozen.

"Child as I was, I loved my brother dearly," she went on; "indeed, we had only each other to love, for my father was so absorbed with his second wife and her children as to have little regard, though;, or care for us."

"Thus four years passed away. I heard from my brother sometimes, though he had been forbidden to write to, see, or even remember that he belonged to us. I know he had a struggle to live, for he had been brought up as a gentleman, without occupation or profession, and his education was of very little use to him in fighting the battle of life.

"Four years after he had been driven away I had a letter from him, telling me he had enlisted as a common soldier—enlisted under an assumed name, finding this the only resource from starvation.

"It was a great blow to my pride, and I wept over my brother's letter, angry and indignant also that my father's eldest son, who should have been his heir, was driven to this.

"But I could do nothing except hate my stepmother, the cause of it all, and make her life as unendurable while I was at home as it was possible to be.

"This, of course, recoiled upon myself. She had more influence with my father than I had, and the consequence was that I was sent to a boarding school and not even allowed to go home during the holidays.

"I was about fifteen when my father died. I was not sent for to see him during his last illness; indeed, I knew nothing of it until he was both dead and buried.

"Then the family solicitor wrote, informing me of the fact, adding that my father had provided for me as he had done for his younger children, leaving me to the guardianship of my stepmother, whose will and pleasure it was that I should remain at the same school two years longer, having the same allowance for dress and pocket money, and that she hoped when I returned home, I should have learnt to be tractable and obedient.

"The letter wound up by adding that, as I could not touch my portion of my father's wealth until I was of the age of twenty-one, it would be to my interest, as well as my duty, to submit to the authority of my stepmother.

"I think this letter made me frantic. I know that I vowed I would go home and defy my stepmother, publish her treachery to the world; and then I was ill, and my passion and rage had quite died away by the time I was well and able to walk about again.

"It was for my brother Lionel's sake, far more than my own, that I was so grieved and so angry.

"He had found a soldier's life harder than he had dreamed of, harder than he could bear. My father had not even mentioned his name in his will, and had tied up the money he had left me so that I could not touch it till I was twenty-one, and consequently could not purchase his release.

"There was nothing but submission before me, and my stepmother had her own way.

"It was not very long after my recovery that I met Major Adair, and, as I told you, I ran away from school to marry him.

"We were married—at least, I believe so; we went through a ceremony in a church. I know I never doubted its legality then, and I loved him so devotedly that I would have trusted my very soul as well as my honor in his hands.

"I look back at that time now with wonder and contempt at my own infatuation, but the delusion vanished, as, had I been wiser in the world's ways and wickedness, I should have known it would.

"Even in my own happiness, I did not forget my brother. My husband was liberal to me with money and gifts, and I soon saved enough, not only to purchase his freedom, but to pay for his passage to New Zealand, where he wished to go, believing he should become very prosperous, and also to leave him a few pounds with which to make his new start in life.

"To accomplish it, I disposed of nearly all my jewellery, much of it my husband's gifts, never dreaming that he would blame me.

"I should have told him all about my brother, but I thought it would be a blow to his pride and mine to know that one of his own men, one of those in his own regiment, was my brother.

"Besides, there was no necessity for his knowing, until the future had redeemed the past; so Lionel and I both agreed, and to spare them both I kept the secret.

"My brother was free, and my husband saw our meeting; saw me embrace him for the last time before going upon his long journey, from which I had a dim foreboding that I should never see him return.

"He saw me weep, heard me promise never to forget him, and thus, unconscious of my husband's eyes being upon me, we parted.

"I don't know what followed; even now it seems too horrible to think or remember.

"I must have fallen asleep after my brother went away, I think, for I was aroused by my husband in a voice of fury upbraiding me for my infidelity.

"I could not answer him, could not believe myself awake, until he startled me by telling me that I was not his wife, that the ceremony we had gone through was a sham, and that I, after all, had only been his mistress.

"At first I was mad. I sprang at, and would have killed him if I could, but he struck me, knocked me down—see, I have the mark of his ring on my temple now. Yes, that man, that gentleman," and she spoke and pointed at him with such scorn, that he could not help uncovering his face and looking at her, "felled me to the earth, as he would have felled an ox, me, the woman he had sworn to love and cherish, the mother of his unborn child.

"What followed, I cannot tell you; I don't know. When I awoke to a sense of my condition, I was alone, overwhelmed with grief and unmerited shame.

"My first thought was of self-destruction, but when the moment came, I could not kill myself.

"Neither could I remain where I was. I had no money, for, as I told you, I had given all to my brother.

"My first thought, when suicide failed me, was to go to my brother. I knew he would not spurn me, and go with him where my name and disgrace would be alike unknown.

"But it was too late, the ship in which he sailed had gone, and I was left in the world alone.

"Almost penniless, and utterly homeless, I wandered about the country, sleeping in barns, always intending to drown myself, or meet death in some form or other, before the event I now most dreaded came.

"But I could not die. A power which I could not overcome held me back at the last moment, and thus I wandered on until one afternoon, early in November, with the dead leaves falling and rustling about me, I lay down in a hollow or dell, near a large town, feeling tired, ill, and wishing to die.

"Then, my child was born. Its cry aroused me. Death would not take me, therefore I must live.

"I don't know why I did it, except that I was mad—that I did not know what I was doing, though I seemed calm enough then, but I thought as I could not die for the sin of its father, my boy must, and I wrapped it up in a petticoat, which, cold as I was, I took off from myself, and then I buried it! Yes; buried it alive, and above ground, for there were fresh cut sods about, and with them I covered him up, though he would cry so that it made my heart ache.

"But what could I do? Poor baby; it had no father, and I hear its cries in my sleep so often, and have been afraid to die, because I was afraid to meet him."

She covered her eyes with her hands now, and leaned back on her pillow, exhausted and overcome with the effort she had made.

Exhausted, too, with her feelings, for calm and passionless as she had seemed to be, it was evidently only by the greatest possible amount of self-control that she could command her voice or restrain her sobs.

Silence had succeeded her last words, silence broken by sobs.

Not a woman's sobs, for, as I have said, she had no tears to weep, but the sobs of a man, a soldier, of one who had lost all that could make the present or future worth living for.

"Talk not of grief till thou hast seen the tears of warlike men."

The sound was so strange, the grief and agony revealed so intense, that Florence uncovered her eyes, looked at him in wonder and amazement, rather than sympathy, and turning to Blackie, she said—

"One would really think that he had loved me."

"Loved you!" repeated Herbert Adair, turning his tear-stained face towards her. "No woman was ever loved better than I loved you.

"It was because I loved you so that I became harsh, bitter and cruel when I believed in your worthlessness and infidelity," said the major; "and when I learnt that my rival was your brother, that he had gone away, then I sought and tried to find you, to implore your forgiveness, to tell you that the assertion I made about our marriage not being legal was untrue, and to implore you to return to me.

"But I could not find you, could obtain no trace or clue to tell me if you were living or dead, when three days ago I heard you were in Oldham, and about to be married.

"I hastened down there to stop the marriage and claim you as my wife, but by the time I reached the town you had disappeared.

"Oh, Florence, surely what you tell me of our child cannot be true?"

"Not true!" and she repeated the words scornfully and bitterly. "Do you think I should have invented such a creditable story? No, it is true enough.

"Merciful Heaven! what would I not give for it to be false?

"More than once I turned back to save it, to take it in my arms, warm it against my breast, and live or die with it.

"But the very fiend itself tempted and terrified me that night. I remembered that my child had no father; that it would be a living disgrace to me. To live in the future seemed impossible without it, and if I clung to it, there could be nothing for both of us but death.

"I don't tell you this to excuse my conduct; there could be no excuse for it; if I live, I shall pay the penalty; they will hang me for it. I would not mind that if it would restore the life of my child, but it will not, it cannot. No, there is no pardon, Herbert, for you or for me, and I—I do not ask it."

She closed her eyes and turned wearily on her pillow. Her work was done; life's joys and sorrows, compressed into so short a time, had it seemed reached their end.

Once more she was aroused by a hand taking one of hers, gently, almost timidly, and a voice, not that of her husband, saying—

"Did the baby die? Was it impossible for it to be saved?"

The question, the doubt, the tone startled her.

There was something in it which seemed to give hope, even while it asked if there was none, which acted like an electric shock on her frame.

She sat upright, would if he had not restrained her, risen to her feet, and clutching Blackie, who had spoken, by the hand, asked as though her life hung on the reply—

"What do you mean? Tell me. Surely you would not trifle with a dying woman like this."

"Don't excite yourself, and I will tell you all I know, all, I should say, that I have heard. It was a curious story, told to me as such, but I paid little or no attention to it at the time, little thinking it could concern anyone I knew."

"A story about my baby! Quick! Why will you torture me so? I could not find it; I went to look in the very spot, but it was gone. Quick—tell me—this suspense is worse than death!"

"You must be calm before I begin," said the lieutenant, firmly.

"Calm! I am calm—I will be calm—only for Heaven's sake make haste!"

"A friend of mine, an artist, living in Manchester, but often going to Oldham, told me a curious story about a dog. Don't be impatient. This dog was sent from his home in Oldham to Manchester to sit for his portrait.

"At the first opportunity he escaped, made his way back to Oldham in the middle of the night, roused his master to let him in, but instead of being satisfied, made such a row that his master, to satisfy him, dressed, went out, followed him, and discovered a baby, half buried, but alive, which the dog must have previously found.

"The man took the child home, and having just lost his only son, determined to adopt this one in its stead. It is now, I believe, living and in good health. Can it, do you think, be yours?"

"Yes, it must be; there could not be such another inhuman wretch as I. My child alive—saved! Oh, merciful Heaven! I thank thee. Oh, go and fetch him; let me hold him in my arms one moment before I die."

The floodgates of her heart were open now

the tears so long congealed began to flow down her cheeks silently.

They were tears of repentance and thankfulness as well as of joy, and her husband's attempt to soothe her was not repulsed.

CHAPTER LII.

IS IT LIFE OR DEATH?

The people of Oldham had had an exciting time of it.

The frustrated wedding, the murder and abduction, followed as it was by the cotton spinner's dangerous illness, and the whispered rumors and surmises rather than facts or details, which came out relative to the possible innocence of Willie Bolton, which unaccountably got wind within half-a-dozen hours of the White Witch turning queen's evidence.

All this received an addition in the astounding fact, that two gentlemen—real gentlemen, the servant said—had come to William Garston's house, to demand the baby so singularly found and cared for by him.

As the story circulated, of course it lost nothing in the process of transmission, the consequence being that few who knew the circumstances to begin with, would have recognised the tale on its return.

Indeed, the facts of the case were simply these.

It was the day preceding that on which Martha and Mr. Ashleigh had fixed as their wedding-day, and the cotton-spinner's house, though by no means a small one, was in a dreadful state of confusion.

So, at least, he considered it, declaring with scarcely pardonable emphasis, that he would be—well, hanged—if he could understand why every room must be turned topsy-turvy just because Martha was going to be married.

Despite his remonstrances and growlings, scrubbing, sweeping, dusting and cooking were all carried on with great vigor, while a couple of dressmakers worked away as though their lives depended on the speedy completion of their labors.

In truth, the change of brides had been so sudden that, as the date for the celebration of the ceremony had not been changed with it, more than an ordinary amount of work had to be accomplished in a ridiculously short space of time.

Tired of expostulation, and feeling greatly ill-used, though he consoled himself with the assurance that it would soon be over, William Garston took refuge in his counting-house, and on a rug, but a little distance from him, sprawling, cooing, and with self-willed eagerness, snatching the toys she held out of the hands of Lill, the youngest of the "sax" girls, was Ben's baby.

Ben was there too, watching over his *protégé*, though constrained to do so at a slight distance, in consequence of the decided liking the wonderful baby had for pulling his ears, poking his fingers in his eyes, and otherwise ill-using him.

Not but that Ben bore the infliction very patiently, and when not disposed to be a martyr, discreetly kept out of the youngster's reach.

Everyone who saw or came near it, declared young Will to be a wonderful baby, especially for his age, and his adopted father was as proud of him as though the boy had actually been his own.

The manner in which the infant screamed, and struggled, and tore its way into life, the energy and constant restlessness with which it grew big and strong, and would have its own way against all opposition, made him the wonder and nuisance of the house.

A very beautiful child he was too, with black curly hair, and bright, though dark blue eyes, and with strong, firmly-modelled limbs, and a skin which was as soft and smooth as white satin.

He had crept off the rug and was getting near the door, when, with a preliminary rap, it opened, and Edwin Leinster, who was now Mary's accepted suitor, and promised husband, entered the room, followed by two gentlemen.

The cotton spinner shook hands with his intended son-in-law, and would probably have done the same with the strangers brought with him, if the tallest of them had not suddenly lifted up the baby from the ground, taken it in his arms, and kissed it with strange fervor, exclaiming—

"My child! Thank God, I have found you."

"Eigh, mon, and how came it to be your child?" asked Garston, with a face flushing hot with passion.

"It is a very long story, but I think you will admit Major Adair's claim when you have heard the facts and details of the case," said Leinster, hurriedly, and anxious to smooth matters.

"Then you're mistaken," was the angry reply. "If he's got a claim, let him make it to the police.

"The boy's mine. I found him, rescued him from death. Whoever he belonged to tried to murder him, and he or she will take their trial for that afore they gets the boy from me."

"Listen to me, sir," said the major, still holding the child in his arms.

Indeed, the youngster seemed to take quite readily to his newly-found father, seeming to be greatly interested in the cravat pin which he wore.

"I won't listen. I'll have nort to do with you. The boy's mine, and only the law shall take him from me."

"This is absurd," returned Adair, who had never been remarkable for his stock of patience. "This boy is mine; I can prove it to your entire satisfaction on the testimony of his dying mother, whose only hope now is to see him, and be assured of his safety before she dies."

"I don't believe it," retorted Garston, but his tone was not so positive, and the ring of conviction was sadly wanting in it.

"At least, you will listen to what Major Adair has to tell you," said Lieutenant Blackie, trying to throw oil upon the troubled waters.

"What good will that do? What good will my listening or hearing do? I don't want to know who the boy belonged to, and I didn't never expect to know. Folks as leave a newborn babe to die, as this one was left, don't often turn out to be better than they should be. The boy's mine, and I'll stick to him, and you'll try to take him away from me at your peril."

And he held up his fist threateningly.

Indeed, William Garston's temper had got decidedly the upper hand of his discretion.

"It is perfectly useless quarrelling over the child like this," said Leinster, who felt that this scene might terminate in blows if not speedily ended. "If it does belong to Major Adair, you would not, I feel convinced, Mr. Garston, wish to deprive him of a father's rights and privileges; and I am sure the major must feel that he owes you too deep a debt of gratitude for saving his son's life, and bestowing so much care and affection upon him, to ever think of depriving you of his society, whenever you may wish for it."

"That's what you've got to say, is it? I suppose Mary's been telling you how she hates a baby in the house, and so you've set off to look for somebody belonging to it to please her."

"You are mistaken, Mr. Garston. These gentlemen came to me, knowing that I was soon about to be related to you. The circumstance of your finding the baby six months ago was no secret, although you made no effort to trace its parents. What Major Adair told me leaves no doubt on my mind but that the boy is his son, and from the critical condition in which his wife, the mother of the child, lies, I had no hesitation in coming with them to lay the facts of the case before you, and entreat you to give them a patient hearing, and not drive them to legal extremities.

"The only person, indeed, whom the law could touch or punish will soon be beyond the reach of an earthly judge. She has sinned, but she has also been greatly sinned against, and I would not have it upon my conscience that her dying prayer to hold the child, whom she had believed lost to her for ever, in her arms for one moment, should be refused. You can test the legality of the major's claim afterwards."

William Garston was silenced, if not convinced, for he threw himself into a chair, told the others to be seated, desired Lill to leave them, and then in a sulky, surly manner, signified his willingness to listen to them.

Briefly, earnestly, not sparing himself, and trying to find further excuse for the unnatural mother, Major Adair told the story of his brief married life, of its abrupt termination, of the aimless, frantic wanderings of the disowned wife, the birth and desertion of the child, and subsequent residence in Oldham.

It was not until he had almost finished that Garston and Leinster both recognised in the heroine of this sad tale, the girl whose sudden disappearance on the eve of her wedding, and the tragedy which accompanied it, had so startled the townspeople.

"I would ask you," continued the major, in a singularly humble tone for him, "to spare me the pain and publicity of legal proceedings. My poor, wronged, and erring wife is dying, may not even be alive when I return, and while I shall ever remain your grateful debtor, Mr. Garston, for supplying the place of his own parents to my boy, and shall always consider you have a claim upon his affections, duty, and companionship, second only to mine, it would simply be culpable on my part to shrink from any exposure which you may make it necessary for me to incur when the welfare and position of my child are at stake."

"All that you say may be true, and I'm very sorry for it," said Garston, softening in spite of himself, "but I can't spare the boy. I love him more than you can, almost as much as the one up there."

And he pointed to the portrait which had been brought here for the day, out of the dust, that Leinster had painted of his dead boy.

"It is natural that you should do so," returned Adair, anxiously; "but while we are thus discussing, my wife, the boy's mother, is dying. Come with me; see her—be convinced that what I have told you is true.

"Let us take my child with us, and when—when it is over"—and there was a sob in the soldier's voice, "we can settle about the boy. My thought now is but for her."

But Garston hesitated.

"She is in London, you said, didn't you?" he asked.

"Yes; but a train starts within an hour."

"I can't go. We've a wedding to-morrow, and my lasses would never forgive me."

An angry flush came over Major Adair's face. Proud and haughty as he was, he had humbled himself to the rough man, begging as a boon what was his own by right, and his first impulse was to rise, and holding the beautiful child in his arms, walk away with it.

This was but momentary, however, and Lieutenant Blackie's voice came to the rescue, observing—

"We have no time to lose, Mr. Garston. Since you cannot go with us, will you authorize some one else to do so—Leinster, for instance? But moments are precious. We must return to London within an hour, and the baby, with its nurse, must go too. We have left Mrs. Adair dying among strangers that we might return with her child."

"Promise me that I shall have him back when I want him, and he shall go," demanded Garston.

"You shall," was the reply.

"And you'll be bound for these friends of yours?" asked the spinner, turning to the artist.

"I will," said Edwin, not, however, without a moment's hesitation.

"Then he can go; but you needn't unless you like. The girls will miss you to-morrow, if you are not here. Sall, the nurse, must go too, and mind, I'll keep you to your word."

Thus it was arranged, and that same evening, before, indeed, daylight had quite faded away, Major Adair, with his friend, and the nurse and baby, arrived at the hotel in which Florence lay, not alone, however, for Moll—faithful Moll Arkshaw, was with her.

Moll had heard from Barkup the detective, whose wife had taken care of her, and in whose house she was staying, of Sidney Beltram's madness and arrest, and of some mysterious husband whose arrival had almost caused the death of her friend and recent companion, and she determined to hasten with all possible speed to her side.

Hence, soon after the major and lieutenant had started for Oldham at the entreaties of Florence, and when the sick girl was feeling strangely desolate and alone, Moll, like a ray of sunshine, came to her side.

It was singular, but from that moment, a change came over the seemingly death-stricken woman.

Her pulse became stronger and more regular, the restless, feverish excitement which had made her glance so uneasily and anxiously at the door, gave place to a feeling of subdued trustfulness and content.

Indeed, with Moll by her side, she seemed more like a child secure in the presence and protection of its mother, than the restless, excited, terrified, and unforgiving being of a few hours before.

And she slept, with Moll's hand clasped in hers, as though with that grasp she still clung on to the life which had been so short in number of years, and so long in the joys and sorrows crowded into them.

But as the hours rolled on, even Moll's presence failed to soothe her.

"He said it to calm and deceive me," she moaned. "I knew it could not be so, even while I listened and hoped. No, I am a murderess. My poor dead baby!—and it had a father and I had a husband after all."

And then she would turn on her pillow and cry and sob, in a quiet, despairing manner, which was far more touching and painful than any loudly-uttered cries could have been.

Until the doctor, alarmed for her life, had to entreat her to desist, and try to be calm, assuring her that she would be too exhausted to talk with her husband on his return, if she did not exercise some control over her feelings.

Thus the hours had passed, and Florence had at last fallen into a low, torpid state, which seemed to be neither death nor life, when footsteps sounded at the door.

The door opens, and she, who had lain like one lost to this world, starts up with a cry, saying—

"They are come. Is it life or death?"

She is answered by the cry of a child.

Vainly she strains her eyes to see him; a mist comes over them.

She is conscious that something alive and warm is placed in her arms, that she tries to clasp it and fails, that a voice—her husband's voice—exclaims—

"Florence, my wife, speak to me before you die. Say you forgive me."

A smile comes to the lips, which fail to articulate a sound, and then all is silence and darkness.

Is this death?

CHAPTER LIII.

LOVE'S REWARD.

If guilt be difficult to prove, what shall be said of innocence?

So many circumstances may help to prove a crime, while so few, comparatively speaking, can be found to disprove it, and yet the accused may be quite innocent.

We have seen how the web had been woven around Willie Bolton, until even his own mother believed him guilty.

Indeed, he was himself sometimes tempted to doubt whether he had not, in a moment of insanity or somnambulism, committed the crime imputed to him, and afterwards forgotten it, so conclusive did the evidence appear against him.

And yet he was innocent.

The question was—how to prove it?

There was Jem, the deformed girl's evidence, as repeated by Moll Arkshaw—for Jem herself was missing.

This story, too, the White Witch had confirmed, asserting that she had been paid for her share in the conspiracy.

But as John Barker, her alleged tool, was dead, and the money she had spoken of could not be found in the hiding-place she named, Jem having carefully appropriated it, her testimony, when taken, was thought to be the very little, especially when directed against such a rich and influential, as well as at the present moment, popular man, as Frank Gresham, the cotton lord.

For Frank Gresham was lying ill, dangerously ill.

All the excesses of his life, and debts contracted against his constitution, now came crowding in for payment, until the account was terribly overdrawn.

Weeks had passed on, with no change except for the worse, and as day after day now slipped by, it was evident that there could be but one termination to the struggle, in which life played so weak and poor a part against death.

Still he lingered day after day, growing weaker, but with only fitful and vague returns of consciousness, and the terrible fear that grows over more than one is, that he will die without knowing those around him, or being able to undo any of the deeds committed in his short though ill-spent life.

Every day Moll Arkshaw goes to the spinner's house to ask after him, to learn if there is any change, to see John Gresham, his brother, repeat her tale to him, until he knows every detail of it by heart, and still the same suspense continues.

Like a drowning man clinging to a straw, Moll hopes that Willie Bolton will have justice done him by the man who has worked his ruin before he dies.

A faint hope, you will say.

A very faint one, but it is all she has, and John Gresham, believing her story, admiring her love and faith, and anxious to do justice to an injured and possibly innocent man, has promised, if his brother is again conscious, even for five minutes, to urge him to confess the truth.

Mrs. Gresham's hair has become quite white, the lines on her face have deepened, and twenty years instead of five weeks seem added to her age.

Only while he slept was she allowed to approach the bed on which her favorite and first-born child lay.

Directly his eyes opened, mad, delirious, and incoherent as he was, he would hurl foul words at her, and in his paroxysms of fury, attempt to get out of bed to drive her away if she persisted in staying.

But the end was drawing near; hope of his recovery there was none, and those who watched around him questioned not if he would live or die, but whether or not reason and consciousness would return before death claimed him.

It is morning, a bright morning near the end of June, and Frank Gresham lies on his death bed, so thin, and worn and changed, that those who had previously known, would now scarcely recognise him.

Though the room is darkened, the window is open, and through it comes the song of birds, the perfume of flowers, the ripple of falling water, and a glimpse of waving trees, all speaking of the life and beauty which that exhausted and worn out spirit is about to leave.

He is conscious at last, with a consciousness which precedes the deep sleep which must come upon all.

His mother, brother, the physician, and a clergyman are by her side.

Knowing as he does that death is waiting for him, his eyes wander about over the group, seeking for one who is not there, and at last he uttered the word—

"Florence."

But there is no answer; it is too long a story to tell when life can now only be counted by so many heart beats, and they maintain silence.

John Gresham speaks next. There is no time to be lost, when the last grains of sand in the hour glass of life are slipping away.

"Frank, an innocent man lies in prison. Have you nothing to tell us about him, no act of justice to accomplish before you die?"

For a moment the dying man drooped his eyes, without replying. Then he asked suddenly—

"Is Florence with him? Is it she who desires to prove him innocent and get him free?"

"No, Florence was a wife and mother before you knew her."

"A wife and a mother," he repeated vaguely, half closing his eyes as though the fact overwhelmed him.

He was sinking, and the clergyman strove to speak to him, did say something, but his words fell upon deaf ears—deaf at least to aught that he could say, and those who stood around feared that the end had come, when he opened his eyes again and spoke.

"Bolton is innocent. I planned it all, to get rid of—quick, write down what I have said, that I may sign it. Good-bye, mother; forgive me."

It was the last he said.

Before the paper could be got ready, the pen placed in his hand, he had crossed the river of death, gone to that bourne from whence no traveller returns.

The sun continued to shine as brightly, the birds to twitter their glad songs, and the flowers to give forth their sweet perfume, but the widowed mother's sun had set.

With a piercing shriek, she fell down on the bed, clasping the still and motionless form, and that same day, there was a second death in the house, mother and son alike waiting to be carried to their last long resting-place.

The evidence in favor of Willie Bolton's innocence, if conclusive to the minds of those present at Frank Gresham's death bed, could scarcely be termed legally so, but Moll's hopes rose high, especially when John Gresham told her what had passed, and his brother's dying

confession, adding that he would himself help her to send a memorial to the Secretary of State stating the facts of the case, and adding his own and the clergyman's and doctor's testimony to what death had prevented being legally attested.

Poor Moll! How often had she hoped and prayed only to be disappointed?

Did her faith and hope fail now, do you think? Far from it, her love for Willie Bolton was, if possible, stronger, deeper, more unselfish than ever.

Deserted, in prison, he was more in need of her devotion and faith than he had ever been, and she gave it the more freely.

She never entertained a doubt of his love for her either.

"Perfect love casteth away fear," and her love was perfect as it is given to earthly love to be.

Not that she forgot Mrs. Bolton's hints, even assertion that Florence had bewitched him with her beauty, but she put the suggestion down as even less than it was worth.

Willie had no doubt admired the beauty of her friend; how, indeed, could he help it?—but beyond this, she could not, would not, and did not believe the infatuation to have gone.

Happily for her, there was no one who had the interest, desire, or labored under some mistaken notions of duty, in the necessity of undeceiving her.

Long, weary days they were before the result could be known, but Moll was not without friends now.

Goodness and virtue meet with a reward even in this world, and her reward came one day in the return of the one being whom she loved dearest upon earth.

Very humble and devoted was Willie to her, when at their meeting he clasped her in his arms, mentally vowing to be true to her through life, as she had been to him, when all the world was against him.

None knew better than he that it was Moll's unswerving faith and devotion which had proved him innocent, procured his freedom, and made him feel that he could again hold up his head among those who knew him, without fearing the finger of scorn, or seeing doubt and suspicion written on the countenances of those he met.

A sadder, we will hope a wiser man, he returned to Oldham, to find flowers planted on his mother's grave; the two men who had most injured him gone to their last account, and only Moll left to love and care for him.

"When shall us be married, lass?" he asked her a day or two after his return. "I'd like to have it over soon, and then we'll go away; the world's big enough, and Owdham bean't the same since I left it."

Though Moll demurred at being married so soon after his mother's death, her objections were overruled and the day fixed."

Do you feel any interest about Moll's wedding? It was very simple; it took place on a Sunday morning too, which certainly was not fashionable, but there was a goodly number of people to attend it, early as it was; and more than this, John Gresham gave the bride away, she having no near relatives, while Lady Helen Beltram was the mill-girl's bridesmaid.

Very strange it seemed no doubt, but John Gresham and his intended wife could sympathise with Willie Bolton and Moll in the trials they had gone through, and rejoice with them also in their present happiness, and they were both honest and genuine enough to admit it.

So the marriage was celebrated, if not with as much fuss in the way of preparation, at least with as much joy and fervor as one usually meets with, and what was more to the point, what gladdened Moll's heart more than the very handsome wedding present, was the offer by John Gresham to Willie of such a good situation in his ironworks, as to make the idea of his declining it, and leaving the town, out of the question.

So Moll had her heart's desire gratified at last.

Willie Bolton for her husband, and elevated to a position of honor and trust, as though to refute the last shade of doubt or suspicion which might, by malicious tongues, have been cast upon him, what more could she ask or hope for?

Very little, it is true, and that, with her usual unselfishness, for others rather than herself.

But our story, like all other things, must come to an end, and here we are at the last chapter of it.

CHAPTER LIV.

CONCLUSION.

Of course I am quite aware of the fact that Florence ought to have died that evening when her child was restored to her arms.

The physician said she would die, and stern moralists would say that she deserved to die, yet for all this she did not.

Youth and a strong constitution triumphed to a certain extent, at least, over the grim phantom death, and she still lives, but she has become a changed and repentant woman.

Not that her health and strength have returned—that she knows can never be.

Nay, death has only relaxed, not withdrawn his grasp, and though she may linger on for years, at any moment the least excitement may cause the slender thread of life to snap asunder.

Sorrow and trial, rightly accepted, ennoble and purify the sufferer, and Florence had not gone through the ordeal in vain.

Two years have passed since that night when her husband, bringing back their child, had believed her dead, and we will take one glimpse at them before the curtain falls.

Florence Carr no longer—that was her maiden name—the only name to which she believed she had a right, when frantic, fearful and half mad, she made her way into Oldham that cold, wintry November night.

Do you see that lady reclining in her invalid chair, from which she can never rise without help? That is Florence Adair, the woman we have met, working for her bread in the cotton mill at Oldham.

No wonder you do not recognise her, for lovely as her face is, it has changed as much as the rebellious, defiant spirit within it.

It is not sadness, but cheerful resignation which you see written there.

Gazing at her, you can see that she has "passed through deep tribulation," and you scarcely wonder at the rare smile which lightens up and beautifies her face, as a lovely boy, some two and a half years old, comes running up to her side, closely followed by a gentleman, who, though old for his years, we cannot fail to recognise as Major Adair.

"An old friend has come to see you, Florence," her husband says, as he comes near her; "can you guess who it is? Are you well enough to-day to see him?"

She looks into his face with a quick, startled glance, and a flush suffuses her previously pale cheek.

"An old friend," she repeats, "not—not my brother! Tell me, Herbert, is it Lionel?"

"Yes, my love, it is."

"Thank Heaven," was the fervent reply; "deeply as I have sinned, my loved ones are safe and around me."

And she covered her face with her hands, while tears of joy and thankfulness, which would not be repressed, forced their way through her trembling fingers.

A few minutes later, and her brother, the man who had been the unconscious cause of her misery and sin, was at her side, clasping her in his arms, and blessing her as the dear sister who had snatched him as a brand from the burning, and altered the whole course and current of his life.

Little indeed does he dream what a price has been paid for that act of devotion, and how a secret which had darkened, and the memory of which even now overshadowed her whole life, had arisen out of his sister's devotion to him.

And she prays that he may never know it. The sin, she says, was hers, and though a merciful Providence spared her from the consequence of it, the act and thought was in no degree the less sinful.

But she is not unhappy—nay, she seems brighter and more hopeful than those around, who love and watch over her.

The cross laid upon her she bears without a murmur, happy in the companionship of her husband and son, and looking forward to that home where sin and sorrow are alike unknown.

What more have I to tell you?

Bob Brindley met with the punishment which he richly deserved, and being caught in the very act of poisoning John Barker, was convicted of the murder, and in due time, hung for the crime.

John Gresham and Lady Helen Beltram soon followed Bolton and Moll's example, and were married, taking up their residence at Bankside after the indispensable wedding tour, where Miss Stanhope spent the greater part of her time, though she did not profess to live with them.

Sidney Beltram is still the inmate of a lunatic asylum, no hope being entertained of his recovery.

Edwin Leinster and Mary Garston are married.

So, to the great disgust of his daughters, is William Garston.

Indeed, he took the loss of the baby boy he had found so much to heart, when its parents claimed it, that nothing but a wife could console him, so a wife accordingly he took, and as she has just presented him with a small specimen of humanity, the very image of his father, we will hope, too, that he is satisfied.

So I trust are you.

Most of the people in whom I have tried to interest you, are still living, enjoying as much happiness as usually falls to the lot of mankind, and thus my story is ended.

THE END.

FRIED CLAMS.

A Danbury man partook of an elegant supper of fried clams Saturday night, and went home pretty well satisfied with himself and the scenery. At two o'clock the next morning he was awakened by an unusual activity of a half dozen spasms, which appeared to have moved in during his sleep. Getting out of bed as hastily as possible, he groped his way to the dresser, where he kept a bottle of "Wine of the Woods" standing, and removing the cork hastily swallowed a substantial dose. The moment he got a taste of it he experienced a failing sensation, which, together with the shape of the bottle, created a sudden and ungovernable anxiety within him. "Gracious, Ann!" he said to his wife, "what bottle is that on the dresser?" "Why, mercy!" she exclaimed, "don't touch that; that is my cooocaine!" It was too late, however. He had touched it, and merely explaining that he wished to be laid by the side of his mother, he dropped to the floor, and rolled around and groaned until every member of the family was awakened, and came dashing into the room, variously clothed with revolvers, knives, and stove legs, and not much of anything else. But it was too late to save those fried clams. They had moved.

ROSE LEAVES.

BY GORDON CAMPBELL.

We stood beside the sleeping bay;
She held my gift-rose in her hand;
It was the last sweet trysting-day,
And then, ho! for a strange, far land.
She plucked each tender leaf apart,
And each leaf told its tale to me—
Each leaf a hope torn from my heart:
The leaves fell fluttering by the sea.

And oft in far-off lands I thought
Of one who never could be mine;
Who must be loved, but be unsought—
'Twas hard to love and not repine.
Those rose leaves withered on the sand,
But other roses bloom for thee;
O lost love in the distant land,
O rose leaves withered by the sea!

INDIAN SOCIETY.

I was told I was in luck when I mentioned to some friends who had lived for many years in India that I was going to the large military station of—well, what shall I call it? Nearly every place ends in bad, pore, or lore. Suppose it to be Dasherabad. I am not as yet very well up in Indian geography, but I do not think there is any place of that name in the country, so no offence can possibly be given. This place, I learnt, was everything that could be desired—an almost European climate, easy to get away from (that being, I have always noticed, the special charm of an Indian station), a railway, plenty of society. The ladies were, of course, charming, and their costumes ravishing—none of your native tailor-made-cut-from-domestic-magazine-pattern dresses would do for them. There were two or three High Churches, there were races, there was a theatre. In short it was what Sam Slick would call an A.P.—*i.e.*, airthly Paradise. Such being the case, I could the better obtain a fair estimate of what Indian society really was.

I feel sure that many people at home have very strange notions of us and our habits here in India. They imagine us perpetually clothed in white raiment, sitting down to dinner in our shirt sleeves, smoking hookahs, a charming laxity of morals on the part of the ladies, and ditto, combined with strong alcoholic tendencies, on the part of the gentlemen. Perhaps they may have more exalted ideas of us if they have the good fortune—you see I am modest!—to read this sketch of Indian society.

The first thing I am told to do after having got a roof over my head is to array myself in uniform, gird a sword on my thigh, take cards in my hand, and call on the General and his staff; also the Resident or Chief Commissioner, or whatever else he calls himself, and his staff. That done, I may get into plain clothes, and, having provided myself with a list of all the ladies in the place, commence my round of visits. I believe it is considered the more strictly correct thing to do for a married man to call by himself, and make a kind of reconnaissance. The husband of the lady called upon then does likewise, and, if they are both satisfied, then their wives call. One rule is always observed, and that is, that, married or single, the new-comer calls first. I am, moreover, told that the only hours I can make my calls in are between twelve and two—the hottest in the day. I suppose this is by way of making it all the more meritorious and complimentary, in the same way pilgrims make themselves as uncomfortable as they can by putting peas in their shoes when they visit some shrine. I hire a gharry, or carriage. It comes to the door. It is a wonderful-looking vehicle, on four wheels; there are shutters all round, which if down can never be pulled up, and if up cannot be pulled down. Generally half are up — the very ones you do not want. It is so narrow that you squeeze into it with difficulty, particularly if you are inclined to be a little stout; and on turning sharp round it feels as if it would fall over on one side. The driver sits on the roof, his turban fastened on his head by a bandage passing under the chin, giving him the appearance of suffering from toothache. He has very little other clothing. The horse is a fearful-looking old screw, mere skin and bone, which, when not jibbing, however, goes along at a decent pace. A large bundle of grass, tied on to the roof for the refreshment of the aforesaid screw, completes the turnout. I step in, and we start. The door will not remain shut; it is continually flying open, and aggravating me. The heat is intense; the dust blows in clouds; the perspiration pours down me; my beautifully-starched collars become very limp, my lavender kids are ruined. At last I arrive at the first on my list. The servant comes down the steps of the verandah for my card, and says, "Missis can't see" — the Indian equivalent for "Not at home." I remember on one occasion, when the servant was told to say "Not at home," the truthful creature came to the carriage door, and delivered himself of the following—

"Missis saying she not at home—she in bed, sar."

Sometimes you will be told the reason she can't see, entering very minutely into details that may bring a blush to your modest face. One friend of mine, irritated at going from house to house and getting the eternal "Can't see" for reply, at last requested the servant to inquire if Missis had sore eyes? However, at several of the houses I visited, Missis could see; and then I found out that what are considered evening dresses at home are supposed to be the correct things to wear, both by callers and called upon out here. Some even went so far as to have flowers in their hair. The gentlemen, as yet, have not got to wearing swallow-tailed coats and white ties, but they may do so in time. Old Indians—men who have been long in the country—are rather given to calling in white uniforms; and, as far as coolness is concerned, they have undoubtedly the best of it. Perhaps they do not possess any plain clothes. An officer, who had been thirty years in the country without once going home, told me that seven years before he purchased a suit of plain clothes, or, as he called them—he was a Scotchman—"ceevil clothes," that he had only worn them once, and was afraid of doing so now, as he thought they might be out of fashion, and that the young officers would laugh at him. As there were nearly two hundred houses to call at, it took me the greater part of a week getting through all my visits.

Having now introduced myself to the people in the cantonment, I could put in an appearance at church. Of course, having been in the habit of worshipping only in the best society, I naturally selected a High Church one. My gharry again came into use. No one ever thinks of walking to church, or, indeed, anywhere else in cantonments. Out shooting it is done, but that is a different matter. I had some doubts when I drove up to the church whether it was one or not; it looked a great deal more like Messrs. Ramchunder, Sen, and Co.'s shop. However, as a native was pulling away at a large bell, hung in one corner of the compound, I ventured in. The interior of the building was of the most severely chaste style of architecture. The united talents of the R.E.s and the Public Works Department must have been heavily taxed in its construction. In some High Churches in England the ladies are separated from the gentlemen like sheep from the goats; but here a different plan is adopted. There is a kind of sliding scale of piety. On the seat nearest to the east end there is a large placard, with "For the General" pasted on it; the pew next behind it is for the staff, and the next few for officers; then come seats for the troops; and afterwards, in the very Galilee, the civilians can pray or sleep as they feel disposed. The decorations were very wonderful. Several most palpable banner screens, with unecclesiastical patterns, were hung near the east window. Round the top of the arches were faded illuminated texts, suggestive of Christmas decorations. The choir were correctly enough dressed in cassocks and surplices. Several of the singers were half-castes, very dark indeed; and these, standing beside their fairer-complexioned brethren, reminded me rather of the black and white keys of an organ. The dresses of some of the lady worshippers took my breath away. I know it was very wrong of me to stare about in church; but when I saw a white muslin dress over a pink satin skirt, and a green bonnet, also some rather low dresses, together with bonnets that would have formed a museum of all the fashions in existence for the last ten years, I think I had some slight excuse.

The band-stand is a great institution at a military station. Nearly every evening in the week the band of one regiment or another performs, and there is generally a large attendance. Some remain in their carriages, which are drawn up round the enclosure; others stroll about. A good deal of spooning is carried on. Unlike most Indian stations, there is a great number of spins, as unmarried ladies are called here. At one time there were no less than thirty-nine. They were irreverently called the Thirty-nine Articles, till there came a fresh importation, when they became the Forty Thieves. Tall hats are *de rigueur* at the band-stand. Were a billycock to be seen, probably a memo. would appear next day to the following effect:—"The Major-General Commanding observes with regret that it is the practice of some officers to appear at the band improperly. He hopes, &c., &c." What happy people we ought to be!

We have our Mall. Every one rises early, and there is a goodly show of equestrians on every description of horse and pony—Arabs, Walers, Persians, and Pegus; some very handsome, others specimens of the inexpensive charger recommended by a late Commander-in-Chief in India to the impecunious officer. I pity some of the poor animals. There is Mrs. Growler, fifteen stone if she is a pound, on a little Arab. She ought to be mounted on a Waler, like her husband, the colonel commanding the native infantry regiment, whom I see in the distance, as usual without straps to his trousers, and in uniform too. He can't surely have seen the general order that came out a short time ago, anent wearing those articles of dress. In the evening we go for a drive. We differ from Thurtell—I think it was—who considered respectability to consist in driving a gig. A barouche and pair we think to be the height of respectability. A phaeton and pair will just pass muster; but of a one-horse chaise we don't take any account at all. What numbers of lovely brunettes do I see occupants of the carriages. Their friends say they are of Portuguese extraction. Mrs. Vinegar told me in confidence that they were half-castes. I can't think why some persons can be so ill-natured.

There is always croquet going on somewhere

or another, either at private parties, or else at one of the messes. Very few grounds are turfed. You play on the gravel, which is watered and rolled, and the sun having baked it, it is something like playing on a brick flooring. People play in a blasé sort of way, as if it was even too much of an exertion holding their mallets; however, it is a capital vehicle for closing a little quiet flirtation, as also an excuse for a stroll afterwards into the refreshment tent, and having sundry pegs. Some people will persist in bringing their children. There is quite a background of ayahs and bearers carrying babies, while every now and then a precocious infant of more advanced age dashes in and carries off a ball that perhaps has just been put into position. As it is too hot to play much before six, and it gets dark an hour after, games have to be finished by the light of lanterns, which native servants carry about. Poor things! they have no easy time of it, called hither and thither. Many a stinging blow do they get on their face and ankles from hard hit balls. I should think that they were glad that the days of tight croqueting had passed away. Meanwhile, the ladies who are too elderly or too lazy to play, sit apart and indulge in a little quiet scandal, of not always the most good-natured description. Mrs. Col. Chutney is so shocked to hear Mrs. Tulwar does not live happily with her husband; she's such a nice little body, but he drinks, and all that, you know. Mrs. Curry knows that Mrs. Godown is going to give a dance. She thought so yesterday, for when she was calling on her, she saw two or three disnees (native tailors) in the verandah making up ball dresses. The materials must have been bought, no doubt cheap, from a hawker, as she had inquired at both the shops, and they knew nothing about it; and she was certain she had had no box out from England. She sent her ayah that morning to find out all about it from Mrs. G.'s ayah. She pitied her, as she had been trying so to get those three daughters of hers off her hands. It was hard lines for her, particularly as those girls had brought out with them their wedding trousseaux on spec, when they came from their school in England four years ago. Moreover, she heard that, as the dresses had become yellow and spotted, Jamjee and Beerjee had taken them from her in part payment of their bill, which was a very large one, it was said.

We have a nice little theatre too, well ventilated and commodious. The drop scene is decently painted, and has the conventional lake, mountains, and Italian villas, with gorgeously-dressed, lackadaisical people lolling about in the foreground, playing guitars. With a tasteful arrangement of flowers and ferns, the proscenium looks very pretty. Performances take place usually every six weeks, two months, or even at longer intervals, should the ever-changing inhabitants be of a non-theatrical turn of mind. The acting in some instances is above the average, but the great drawback is the want of actresses; some trumpeter or youthful drummer has to take the part of a Rosalind or Lydia Languish, and though painstaking enough, yet a deficiency or redundancy of the letter H, together with a gruff voice, well-squared elbows, and thick waist, spoil the effect, to say nothing of transient glimpses of anything but twinkling ankles. However, the spectators are not very critical, and there is always plenty of good-natured applause.

There are several balls during the year. Each regiment gives one or two, then the bachelors give one, and the married people return it. Military balls are similar to those in England, inasmuch as the rooms are decorated with all the spare arms and flowers that can be obtained; but what is especially noticeable is the paucity of ladies to the number of gentlemen. Even in the most favoured places they are as one to three. There is a tale told, that once at an up-country station a ball was given. At the last moment, lady after lady sent an excuse. Whooping cough, measles, or what not, kept them at home, watching over their little darlings. One spin—the only one in the place—however, went. To her horror, she found that she was the only lady in the room. There were nearly a hundred gentlemen present, and these were crowding round, asking for the pleasure of the first dance. It was too much for her. She had only lately arrived from England. Gazing wildly about her, she burst into a flood of tears, and had to be removed. It is a lucky thing when a station can boast of a ball-room with a boarded floor. In a great many places they have no such a thing. Canvass stretched over the floor, and chalked, is the substitute; but it is a very indifferent one, as it is always tearing, the seams come unsown, and down come the dancers. However, a tailor, with a few needles threaded and stuck in his turban, is in readiness, and speedily repairs the damage. Dancing is a mistake, I think, in India. It is too hot even under a punkah; and it is not a pretty sight to see Captain Jones and the lovely Miss Smith waltzing past you, the perspiration rolling in torrents down their faces. I don't wonder at the Hindoos' astonishment at the Sahibs' custom of dancing, and thinking how much better their plan was of having it done for them.

The large dinner parties given by the different authorities are very ponderous affairs. The greatest care has to be taken on the part of the host to prevent any mistake as to precedence. I have myself seen, repeatedly, the host walking about the room with an Army List to refer to for the dates of his guests' commissions; but even then he does not always succeed, coming to grief over relative rank. Each guest is expected to bring his own servant to wait upon him; if he did not do so, the chances of his getting anything to eat would be small, as each servant endeavours to get something for his master first. The competition is carried on in a very lively and spirited manner outside the dining-room door, and has to be repressed in a peremptory way by the head butler. It is getting very much the fashion for the gentlemen to leave the table at the same time as the ladies—a good practice, particularly as the wine is often very doubtful. The remainder of the evening is spent in much the same way as it is at home; then, the guest senior in rank having taken his departure, the remainder can file away as quickly as possible.

Society is ever changing in India. In three or four years you will be the oldest inhabitant of the station. Regiments leave, civilians are promoted, others go home, and the place knows them no more, fresh faces appearing to fill up the gaps. Some ladies, on leaving for England, have a curious custom of selling off their old clothes. They send round their butlers with a price list, and coolies carrying the things themselves; so, if you feel desirous of purchasing a little memento of dear Mrs. Soandso, you can do so, from her Sunday bonnet down to her crinoline. In bygone years there was a great many more particularities in the customs of Anglo-Indian Society; but as the facilities of returning home increased, and people availed themselves of them, they became more civilized, and one by one these customs dropped into desuetude. But of those that still exist, I have endeavoured to give a slight, and I fear an imperfect, sketch that perhaps may amuse the reader.

ENTERTAINING STRANGERS.

The conventionalities of society are often made to cover neglect which is without excuse. We stand on our dignity and wait for introductions and opportunities, when we should dispense with the one and create the other. The chill that comes upon one's heart in a strange place is nowhere so icy as when one in the midst of a great congregation feels that no man cares for his soul. The very contracts in the assumed brotherhood of all the race, the oneness of Christians, the fellowship of the saints with the actual frigidity and silence and lack of sympathy, either make the stranger stay away from the house of God or rob the service of its power. We talk about the communion of saints, and yet while sitting at the very table of the Lord we are as careful to observe the prescribed rules of social intercourse as though we were in a railway carriage.

To a certain extent this is the inevitable outgrowth of regulations essential to the welfare of society, but it is quite possible for persons really at peace with God and in charity with their fellow-men, to show more attention to strangers, without in the least compromising their own social status or drawing upon themselves unprofitable acquaintances. As an illustration of this, we quote from a conversation with a friend, a journalist, who went with his family to the country during the heated season last year. "We took a seat," said he, "in a Dissenting church quite far back. Nobody spoke to us. No one asked us to sit farther forward. But one lady called on us. And there we stayed four months, attending church regularly, and making but a single acquaintance." These were people of intelligence, or virtue, of piety, capable of giving and receiving a great deal of pleasure in social intercourse. That church and that neighbourhood lost a great deal by not cultivating their acquaintance.

Country people are apt to think that city folks look down on their rustic ways and their homely style of living; that they plume themselves on their refinement, their ignorance of rural labour, and their superior intelligence. But such is the diffusion of knowledge by the daily and weekly press, by telegraph and railway, that country people who read the papers are as well informed as their city relations, and the free-and-easy way of country living, the openness of house, the roominess, the spaciousness of garden, field, and forest, more than make up to most city people for the exact and finished though contracted mode of city life.

There are many people of wealth and fashion who carry with them into the country all the society they wish; but the greater number of those who seek quiet rural resorts would be glad to exchange courtesies with their summer neighbours; and we are persuaded that both parties would be greatly benefited by this interchange. "I make it a rule," said a plain Christian woman, a most beneficent and useful "old maid," now in the spirit world, "when I see a stranger in church the second time always to speak to her." Our heart warms now as we remember the kindliness of her manner, which made us feel that we were not entirely strange in a strange church.

A large proportion of our successful city men were country boys who learned how to milk, to weed in the garden, to hoe turnips, and to dig potatoes. Their mothers understood the mysteries of butter churning and cheese making, and were practically familiar with all the industries of the farmhouse. These men enjoy renewing their acquaintance with country modes of life, and are very far, if they are sensible men, from feeling themselves in any manner above the sturdy and honest farmer.

Where country people, not from vulgar curiosity or love of gossip, but from a feeling of pure civility or courtesy, make advances to city visitors, they will rarely if ever be repulsed. Few there are but are glad to add to their circle of acquaintances and friends those who are really kind and intelligent; and many there are who feel hurt at the neglect they suffer from societies to which their presence would lend a charm, and from which they might receive lasting good. "Forget not to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."—*Home Journal.*

HARDENING OF DRIED PEAS IN BOILING.

While some peas become soft in boiling, others become horny and hard, and it has been a question whether this is due to the peas or to the water. Professor Ritthausen examined two samples of peas, one said to become soft on boiling, and the other hard, and on boiling them in distilled water found these characters substantiated. The analysis of their ashes gave:—

	Soft.		Hard.	
Phosphate of lime	10.77	18.91	10.41	26.96
Phosphate of magnesia	8.14		16.55	
Phosphate of potassa	59.74		37.43	
Sulphate of potassa	8.10		14.80	
Chloride of potassium	4.72		6.23	
Potash	—		11.47	
Phosphoric acid	4.43		—	

From this we see that the soft-boiling peas contain a considerably greater amount of phosphate of potassa, a smaller percentage of phosphatic earths, and more phosphoric acid than the other kind, which, for their part, are richer in the earth-phosphates, poorer in other phosphoric compounds, and contain an excess of potash. In the action of water on those peas poor in phosphoric acid, that harden on boiling, the legumine, which is present in large quantity, although partially combined with the excess of potash, has also its function. It is decomposed, with the separation of a compound of lime or magnesia, which becomes horny on heating, and brings about the hardening referred to. Cold water extracts from the meal of those peas that boil soft, 4.24 per cent. of soluble legumine, while from the hard-boiling kinds only 1.73 per cent. can be derived. The difference in the amounts of nitrogen and sulphur was so slight, that the hardening could not be ascribed either to a larger amount of albumen or of sulphuric acid. Some kinds of peas, however, represented as hardening on boiling, softened when boiled in distilled water; and analysis of their ashes gave nearly the same results as with those of the other character.

THE ENGLISH HEAVY SWELL.

I have a friend (confesses a London writer to the Boston *Post*)—though I do not boast of him —who is a simon-pure man of fashion. He is the second son of a lord, and has an income of five thousand pounds a year. Of course he is not so ungentlemanly as to engage in any occupation; I fear the old baron, his father, would make short work of his five thousand if he dared to hint a purpose of going "into trade." And what does he do? He seems to be the most enviable of men, for I never saw mortal more perfectly content with everybody, himself included. As his daily career is a type of that of high London society in general, I will sketch it for you. In his person he represents, more perfectly and exhaustively than any one I know, the spirit of aristocratic London in the season. He rises in his rooms in the Albany at half-past 8, and breakfasts at the Junior Carlton, close by; skims the *Times* and chats with his boon companions till ten o'clock. Promptly with that hour his groom appears with the sleekest of chestnuts, which he mounts and makes for Rotten Row. There he flirts, hears the latest gossip, books a wager for the Derby, and takes an hour's brisk canter. From the park he goes to lunch—not to the Junior Carlton, but to some West End house; likely enough, he drops in to lunch with Lady Blanche, and then goes to lunch a second time with Lady Amelia—that is, lounges at lunch time into perhaps half a dozen houses, where he takes a nibble at the delicacies and has a refreshing chat. The afternoon is full of engagements; it is a *fête champêtre* at Richmond or Putney, a match of cricket at Lord's, a race on the Thames, a royal breakfast party in the gardens of Buckingham Palace or Windsor, a crack game of billiards at the club, a meet of the hounds at Middlesex, a drive into Kent or Surrey, an hour at the Exhibition, a pleasant little party to the Academy, or a whitebait dinner at Greenwich. In the evening his brain is in a perfect muddle what, among so many things, to do. There is Patti as *Desdemona* at Covent Garden, and there is the bewitching Ilma di Murska as *Margaret of Valois* at Drury Lane; there is Dumas' "Diane de Lys" at the Princess's, and "The Wandering Jew" at the Adelphi. But Lady Tompkins is going to give an "at-home," and the Countess of Cranberry's ball must not be neglected; there is a musical *soirée* at Sir Titus Tite's, and the masque at Banbury House; Cremorne, with its lanterns and song and free and easy frolic, is tempting, and not less so Tom Hopkins's bachelor "punch." So our man of fashion, whom practice has made subtly perfect, dresses himself ingeniously with a view to a variety of projects. He drops for a while into his box at Covent Garden; and makes a tour of the boxes of his acquaintances. Here he sees no more than any plebian may see for half a crown; who, from his perch in the "amphitheatre," may gaze down upon the most dazzling array of dress, jewels, fashion and rank in Europe. Covent Garden on a night in the mid-season is wonderful; everybody enjoys himself; and the theatre is a saloon as well as a theatre—where society goes to make itself heard and seen, as well as to listen and behold. What a brilliant, noisy, chattering London it is, one of these limpid June nights! There is something infectious in the gay sounds and sights of which the stately quarters west of the parks are full. Every other house is alight from top to bottom; the roll of equipages is ceaseless; the burly, curly-wigged, scarlet-coated, cockaded coachmen are everywhere; the escutcheons on the coach doors glitter in the gaslight; little covered ways from the doors of lofty mansions to the curbstones, with carpets laid beneath, obstruct your way at every other step; and, as you pass, cloud-like forms pop out of the carriages, whisk by in a twinkling, and hurry along in over the carpeted pathway; not so quickly, however, but that you are dazzled by a glitter of jewels and a shimmer of silk. Within, there is the subdued hubbub of conversation, or perhaps the rumble of a waltz; all round about is bustle and rattling; and you ask yourself if these are really the melancholy folk which the blithe old French chronicler of the fourteenth century so lugubriously describes. My fashionable friend, who seldom goes to bed, in the season, until he has made his appearance in half a dozen West End drawing-rooms, clearly enjoys it all, and comes out next morning as only an Englishman can—as fresh and red-cheeked as if he had just come off a Devonshire farm.

THE CULTURE OF MELONS.

Both water and muskmelons require a light mellow soil, and a warm exposure to fruit abundantly. If the soil is too rich and heavy, it can be much lightened by using loads of sand or dried muck, or some material of a similar nature.

Melons can be grown so cheaply that every family should have at least a small patch devoted to their culture, and will be found a decided addition to their bill of fare in summer and autumn. There is nothing more inviting than cool, rich ripe watermelon, or juicy, toothsome, green-fleshed muskmelon when one comes from the harvest fields thirsty, tired and exhausted with the morning's labor. As soon as the soil is warm enough the seeds can be planted, and the soil for each hill should, unless the ground is dark and rich, be mixed with a forkful of old, decomposed horse or cow manure.

Then drop five or six seeds into a hill, and cover them about an inch with soil. Scatter a handful of wood ashes, plaster or bone dust upon the top of the seeds to keep away the bugs. Wood ashes are an excellent preventive against both grubs and bugs, and for the first month of the growth of the plants it is well to apply them once a week to each hill.

Lime or plaster is also good to scatter over the vines, and if applied early in the morning, while they are yet wet with dew, will be an effectual remedy for melon bugs and their like. If one application does not drive off the marauders, try another, because the lime or plaster will be beneficial for the plants, even if it does not keep away the bugs entirely.

Watermelons are usually planted in hills about eight feet apart; muskmelons need only six feet distance. If all the seeds come up, when they have formed the second and third leaves, it is better to thin them out, leaving only two or three in a hill—yet when the melon bugs are around, it is well to defer the thinning of the vines until they have fulfilled their mission of destruction, and then take out those that are the most eaten up.

All vines grow and fruit much more luxuriantly if they are frequently hoed, and it should be continued until they commence to bloom well, and cover the ground with their thrifty shoots.

ON DANBURIAL GROUND.—A broken-hearted young thing writes to a weekly paper as follows: "About three years ago I became acquainted with a young gentleman; and although he never paid me any particular attention, he would often accompany me to and from church, &c. But lately I noticed a great change in him. He avoids me as much as possible, and starts if I address him. Can he have ceased to love me?—for I know he did, though he never said so. If I thought he had, it would break my heart." Perhaps we ought not to interfere in this matter; but, as we know exactly what should be done with the young man, if we feel as we ought to speak out. Do not attempt to reason with him, or cajole him, or pacify him. The next time he calls take a monkey-wrench, fasten it securely upon his nose, lead him off to the dining-room, and ask him in a firm voice what he means. If he won't answer, twist the wrench three or four times, and butt his head up against the stove or the mantelpiece until his gloom is dispelled. If he says he has ceased to love you, let your fingers dally with his ringlets lovingly for a few minutes, and then suddenly lift out a couple of handfuls, and have an Irishman at hand to come in and sit on him awhile, and knock out his teeth, and jump up and down on him, and be sociable. Then let him go, and commence your arrangements to rope in a fresh man. You cannot afford to waste your young life upon such a wretch as this; and where heart will not throb to heart, or soul respond to soul, the best thing to do is to torture the nose at once.

HAST THOU FORGOTTEN?

Oh, hast thou forgotten the time we exchanged
The vows of affection and love?
The stars of the night in their places were ranged,
And shed their pure light from above.

The zephyrs of summer fanned gently thy brow,
And played 'mong thy ringlets of jet;
Then wafted to Heaven the half-uttered vow,
That passed our lips as they met.

Oh, hast thou forgotten the vows we have plighted,
As o'er the lake softly we sail'd,
Ere thy cruel coldness this fond heart had blighted,
And thy lost love my bosom bewailed?

Thou hast not forgotten, and yet thou art cold,
The breathings of love are all o'er;
And false to the tale of affection once told,
Thou hast learned to regard me no more.

'Tis sad, oh! 'tis sad, when a being we love
And cherish sinks into the grave;
But oh, how much more so when falsely they prove
Who vows of affection once gave!

But I'll not reproach thee. Farewell! it is true
I'll but seldom allude to thy name;
I'll mix with the cheerful, and smile when they do,
And falsely they'll deem me the same.

But oh! in the gloom of silent midnight,
Thy memory a treasure too dear;
For hours I spend with the hearts that are light,
Shall wring from my spirit a tear.

No more may I hear the sweet voice of hope,
The ray of her star never know;
No prospect of aught save despair may spring up,
And dark be the season of woe.

And yet I will love thee, aye, even the same,
And pray for thee even as now;
And yield to the magic that lives in thy name,
And dwell in the smile on thy brow.

A Tale of the California Mines.

BY JOAQUIN MILLER.

There was a company up the gulch above us. Portuguese were these—a quiet, unobtrusive set of men, with dogs and shot guns and the quaintest little cabins in the world. Brown men, sailors mostly, with earrings in their ears, and their shirt bosoms open; clannish people, silent and respectful. Then there were other companies below, not unlike our own—a hundred men or more on this little mountain stream. Trees above us in eternal green, chapparal along the fierce and steep old mountain side, that pitched almost perpendicularly on either side the stream upon us, from which whistled the partridge through the day, and called the gray coyote at night. No other sounds than these, but the rattling of the stones in the cradle or the tom, and the pick and shovel on the rocks. No doctors, no law, no lawyers, no thieves; forty miles the nearest trading camp. All things were brought from there across a wall of everlasting snow, upon our backs—bread and bacon and beans, and beans and bacon and bread, the whole year through. At last the dreaded scurvy came. Men suddenly fell ill, lost the use of their limbs, fell helpless on our hands. No help; nothing would do them good but change of place and change of diet. We could not carry them out across the snow. This was dreadful. You could not have seen these strong, brave men stricken there, helpless, dying day by day, without hope, and been silent. Sad! fearful!

There were six of them; and the worst case in the six was that of the man with the leather nose, all brought together, all lying looking helplessly, sadly into each other's faces, thinking of other faces, other scenes, in other lands. At last an old sailor suggested, as a last resort, a remedy. He had seen a ship's crew saved in some lands in the tropics. We would try that. It was to place the men, stripped nude as nature, up to the chin in the earth, and leave them there through the night, till the loose and warm rich soil should draw the poison from their bodies.

There was reason in this. Besides, we had some evidence that it would save our men; for once, when a party of Indians attacked us, we won the fight and, following them a little way, found a wounded Indian buried up to the eyes in the earth. They had done this in the hope of saving him, to try and heal his wound, and they are good physicians.

We dug six pits in the shadow of a pine, in the loose and warm alluvial soil, and there, as the sun went down, we stood the men up to the chin, and filled the earth in about them.

It was a lovely moonlight night, balmy and peaceful as a paradise. Not a sound save the doleful howl of a wolf in the crags above. Even in this condition the grim Russian was the centre of interest. But he was as silent as helpless. His head inclined to one side and rested on the loose, warm soil beside him. His hand was half hidden in the earth.

Oregon Jake was there, assisting as well as he might, in his awkward and loose way, in the singular experiment and effort to save the lives of the stricken men.

But he was not gifted with any special gravity of bearing, and the grotesque picture before him, with all its sadness, had its comical feature.

He went up to Ginger and began to talk, as he looked now and then at the Russian over his shoulder. He half laughed as he did so.

The buried man heard him, lifted his head with an effort, and cried out, in a ghostly, grave-yard voice:

"Knock him down, Ginger! Knock him down!"

Ginger, true to his helpless friend, knocked him down on the spot

Again the feeble head of the helpless man settled over on the soft soil. He closed his eyes with the most perfect satisfaction, and then smiled till his white teeth looked like the entire roof to a miniature cemetery.

After a while the tired miners began to retire, and, with a silent prayer for the success of the experiment, left it to time. The invalids were cheerful, and, now, with a little hope, chatted gayly enough together, but looked strange beyond description—the six shaggy heads just bursting through the earth like Banquo's, three in a row, in the fitful moonlight. It looked like men rising from the earth and coming up to judgment. Their voice sounded weird and ghostly, too, as of another world. After a while one by one they fell asleep, and all was still save the howling of the wolf on the bluff above. I grew frightened like. I think the others did too. And one by one we stole away and left them there, as the night went on, and sought our bunks inside the cabin, and threw us down in our clothes, and slept. It was an experiment for life or death.

What strange stupor overcomes men sometimes at night who have been hard at work all day. Singular that we should have left those six men there at midnight in the black shadows, with only here and there a ray of moonlight to relieve the scene. Strange that we could not keep awake.

The experiment was a failure. The wolves came down in the night and ate off every head level with the ground.—*From the Independent.*

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

No true coal has heretofore been found in Italy, although lignite, or carbonized fossil wood, has been long known to exist in many parts of the country. Now, however, a correspondent of the *London Times* asserts that coal of admirable quality, equal to English steam coal, is obtained from a bed twenty-five feet thick, cropping out at the surface of a place near Grosseto, in Tuscany. It has been used in small quantities for locomotive fuel on the Roman railway.

FOUR hippopotamus teeth have been received at the Lyceum of the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md., as a present from Captain Wilson of the United States ship *Yantic.* They were sent from Zanzibar, on the eastern coast of Africa. The donor writes that the animal to which the teeth belonged when he was able to walk, was killed near the point where Livingstone first landed on his great voyage of discovery, a fact which he thinks may give additional interest to the relics of the deceased hippopotamus. The longest of the teeth is 14¾ inches in length.

DURING the past winter two vain attempts were made to reach the island of Spitzbergen in vessels from Norway. A steamer set out from Tromsoe in November, and after reaching latitude 77 degrees north, was beaten back by the ice. In January an attempt was made by a sailing vessel from the same port, but the difficulty experienced in managing her frozen sails, added to the danger of ice and the perpetual darkness or twilight, compelled her return. The object in view was to convey stores to the house at Elsfiord in Spitzbergen, fitted up last summer as a refuge for the polar expeditions now out.

MAKE-UP OF THE BODY.—Supposing your age to be fifteen or thereabouts I can figure you to a dot. You have 160 bones and 500 muscles; your blood weighs 25 pounds; your heart is five inches in length, and three inches in diameter; it beats 70 times a minute, 4,200 times per hour, 100,800 per day, and 36,792,000 per year. At each beat a little over two ounces of blood is thrown out of it, and each day it receives and discharges about seven tons of that wonderful fluid. Your lungs will contain a gallon of air, and you inhale 24,000 gallons per day. The aggregate surface of the air cells of your lungs, supposing them to be spread out, exceeds 20,000 square inches. The weight of your brain is three pounds; when you are a man it will be eight ounces more. Your nerves exceed 10,000,000 in number. Your skin is composed of three layers, and varies in thickness. The area of your skin is about 1,700 square inches, and you are subject to an atmospheric pressure of fifteen pounds to the square inch. Each square inch of your skin contains 3,500 sweating tubes or perspiratory pores, each of which may be likened to a little drain tile, one-fourth of an inch long, making an aggregate length of the entire surface of your body of 201,166 feet, a tile ditch for draining the body, almost forty miles long.

WRITING MACHINE.—A writing machine is exhibited in Philadelphia. It is the invention of Mr. Emmett Dewsmore. The machine is, with its stand, about the size of a small sewing machine, and consists of a keyboard with three rows of keys, each of which is marked with a letter or number and connected with a long wire hammer, similar in action to those of a pianoforte, but bearing at the striking end, instead of the usual hard covered leather hammer, the metal die bearing the same letter or figure as that on the key. These hammers are ranged in a circle, so disposed that each hammer when thrown up by the action of its key strikes upon the same spot on a wooden cylinder, round which is rolled the paper to be written upon. Underneath this paper is a piece of ordinary carbonized paper, so that when the die on the hammer strikes upon it, the white paper is at once marked with whatever letter or figure may be upon the die. As the key which has been struck rises on being relieved from the pressure upon it, its action loosens a catch by which the wooden cylinder has been detained in its place, and the cylinder, acted upon by a coiled spring at one end, moves on a small space, so as to expose a fresh surface for the impact of the next die, which, on its key being struck, rises as before, and marks the paper with a fresh letter or figure immediately following the first. In this way each word is spelled, the striking of a light wooden bar which runs along the front of the key-board sufficing, at the end of each word, to move the cylinder forward without making any mark upon the paper, thus forming the spaces between the words. There are, of course, keys carrying the various notes of interrogation, &c., and it will readily be seen that by this simple arrangement a sentence may be printed off even much more rapidly than it can be written, each letter requiring, instead of the complicated, though unconscious, process of formation by a pen or pencil, only the single rap with the finger upon the key.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

THE way in which the Shah's visit is being turned to account for advertising purposes is not a little ludicrous. Even the clergy have not escaped the mania. A well-known preacher in one of our West-end churches has issued printed notices this evening that the subject of his sermon on Sunday night will be the "Kings of Persia as recorded in the Bible."

A RICH French banker, who always passes the winter in Paris, adopted the following plan when he wished his gardener to send him from his country house a dish of green peas during the month of January. He despatched a carrier-pigeon with the following note under his wing: "Gather a basket of green peas in the forcing-house, and send it to me by express with the pigeon which carries this note, for the bird is very fat, and I intend to eat it with the vegetables ordered."

A CHICAGO Jew was a juror in a liquor case, under the existing law. He was satisfied from the evidence that the defendant had sold beer, as charged, on Sunday. But, on examining the ordinance in the jury room, he found that the thing prohibited was selling on the Sabbath day. "By the teaching and education which I received," he says, "and by the sacred words of the holy Bible, the term Sabbath applies to the seventh day of the week, not to the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday. The latter being the day on which the accused sold beer, how could I do otherwise but to find the prisoner not guilty?"

MR. AUDIBERT, a prominent railway manager, of France, who died a few days since, was an oddity. It is said he always emptied his pockets of money before getting home at night in deeds of charity, and one day left his cab with a single piece of money. As he put his foot to the ground one of his habitual beggars held out his hand, and received the piece. M. Audibert had nothing left to pay the cabman, who remarked that when one could not pay his fare one went on foot. A scene followed. Just then the beggar came up, and offered to loan his day's earnings, four francs fifty centimes. Mr. Audibert accepted it with a hearty laugh, paid the cabman, and the next day sent his beggar five hundred francs.

A LITTLE history is related, and said to have been told by King Victor Emmanuel himself. The Princess Maria, daughter of the Empress of Russia, was in the dress-circle at the Apollo Theatre. His Majesty had not been forwarned and was in his box, according to his usual custom, in the most complete *négligé.* As soon as he saw her Imperial Highness, he begged the Prefet, Commandant Gadda, to lend his black dress coat and white cravat, for a few minutes. Of course the request was complied with, and His Majesty, having put them on in one of the saloons, went and paid his respects to the Princess. This story is not quite so good as one told by the late Emperor Napoleon. He met Vivier, the horn-player, at Vichy, and asked him to dinner. Vivier excused himself — he was travelling, and had no dress clothes. "We are nearly of the same size," said the Emperor. "Ask my valet, Leon, to lend you some of my evening clothes." After dinner the Emperor complimented Vivier on the excellent fit, adding, "Mind you restore my property." Vivier replied that his honest intentions stopped with the restitution of the clothes, and could no farther go. He could not bring himself to restore the little red ribbon in the button-hole. "Keep it," said the Emperor, and Vivier was gazetted a Knight of the Legion of Honor next morning.

AN IRISH SHAH.—A professor, who was a little eccentric, went through the streets of Queenstown lately, dressed to represent the Shah of Persia, in a yellow suit and chamois knee-breeches, armed with a sword, bow, arrow, and a large club, and wearing a gold crown for a cap. He was arrested late in the evening and brought before Messrs. Macleod, R.M., and Beamish, J.P., charged with presenting a revolver at one of his servants, and firing the same at her head. The unfortunate gentleman was walking through the town all day, followed by crowds, especially a number of emigrants, who thought he was some kind of wild Indian, and in several instances he made them fly in all directions with his club and arrows. Colonel Lloyd was attacked by him near the Royal Cork Yacht Club, and his hat knocked off, and he was obliged to fly for refuge to the Cork Clubhouse. He then went home by train and encountered a young woman selling strawberries at his house. He met her with a loaded pistol, fired over her head, and nearly frightened the poor creature out of her wits; after which he reduced some of his house furniture to splinters with a sword. He was lodged in Bridewell, on remand for eight days.

THE BISHOP AND THE MINERS.—A good story is going the round of some circles in Wolverhampton, and although we cannot vouch for its accuracy, yet the authority on which it is stated is so good, and at the same time the circumstances appear so probable, that it will not be out of place to mention it here. It is said that some time ago the Bishop of Lichfield had been at a church in the Black Country, and, as is often the case with his lordship, instead of riding in a carriage when returning, he walked the distance between the church and the railway station, or other place to which he was going. On the way he met a number of men "squatting" together on the ground, in miner-like fashion, and he suggested to the gentleman who was accompanying him, that they should say a few words to those men. This, also, is a favorite practice with the bishop, who is always ready to offer a word in season whenever a favorable opportunity presents itself. Going, therefore, to the men, a conversation somewhat to the following effect is alleged to have ensued:—"Well, my good men, what are you doing?" asked his lordship. "We bin a loyin'," replied one of the number. "You are lying," responded the bishop, "lying, what do you mean? I do not understand you." "We bin a loyin'," again said the man. "But what do you mean?" "Why, yer see," was the explanation vouchsafed, "one on us has fun a kettle, and we bin a trying who can tell the biggest lie to have it." "Trying to tell the biggest lie!" exclaimed the astonished bishop, "what a shocking thing;" and then his lordship proceeded to inform the men that he had always been brought up with the greatest horror of lying; he had been taught that one of the greatest sins was to tell a lie. The men listened patiently to this, but presently one of them, who had been looking intently at the bishop, suddenly exclaimed, on hearing his lordship say that he had never in his life told a lie, "Gie th' governor the kettle; gie th' governor the kettle." It is added that his lordship resumed his walk highly amused, though somewhat "crestfallen." We repeat the story as it has reached us, and must leave our readers to believe or disbelieve what seems to be an improbable occurrence.

GOLDEN GRAINS.

JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES.—A man may be so much of everything that he is nothing of anything.

DESIRES.—Every desire is a viper in the bosom which while he is still he is harmless, but which kindled may sting.

DEPRAVITY is not easily overcome. Resolution will sometimes relax, and diligence will sometimes be interrupted, but never despair of ultimate success.

VANITY makes one mind nurse aversions and another actuate desires, till they rise by art much above their original state of power, and become despotic.

CHANGE OF IDEAS.—The mind can never remain idle, but too long persistence in one train of ideas weakens it, and deprives it of the happiness which ever accompanies its natural and healthful activity.

MISERY AND DECENCY.—Fortunate people seem to think that their less happy fellow creatures ought to suffer and die before them with decency, as the Romans used to require their gladiators to do.

MAGNITUDE AND GRANDEUR.—The English are apt to mistake magnitude for grandeur, and to think they are doing wonders, when they are only increasing the dimensions of trifling and commonplace things.

EXERTION AND REST.—The happiness of the fire-side is no more to be obtained without exertion than any other pleasure, and its real rest consists in the change from the exercise of other powers to the highest activity of the affections.

THE TIGHT-ROPES OF LIFE.—We are all endeavoring to walk, dance, or balance ourselves upon tight-ropes, and the higher these are stretched, the more numerous the spectators. If well-balanced you will walk erect, and be in less danger of falling.

SOCIETY'S FAVORITES.—Any one who thinks, and many who do not, must know that in every class of society there are men who may say or do things with impunity, if not with applause, for which another would be vilified or ridiculed. In fact, society has favorites.

GOOD MUSIC.—Show us the family where good music is cultivated, where the parents and children are accustomed often to mingle their voices together in a song, and we will show you one, in almost every instance, where peace, harmony, and love prevail, and where the great vices have no abiding-place.

FAMILY MATTERS.

TOMATO SOUP.—Boil one pint tomatoes for twenty minutes in one pint water, then add one pint milk very gradually, that it may not curdle; season and serve with squares of toasted bread.

WATER for making tea should be used the moment it boils. The reason assigned is, that if it is boiling for some time, all the gas that is in it escapes with the steam, and it will not then make tea of the best flavor.

To bleach straw hats or bonnets wash them in pure water, and then put them into a box with burning sulphur. The fumes, arising, unite with the water on the bonnets, and this sulphurous acid thus made, bleaches them.

ITALIAN WAFFLES.—Beat well together eight eggs, 14oz. powdered sugar, and 1lb. flour; stir in 6oz. cream, 6oz. milk, 1oz. orange flour, and the peel of one lemon grated in. Mix all well together until there are no lumps in it, and bake in the waffle irons.

ORANGE CAKE.—Three eggs, yolks and whites, one cup flour, three tablespoon milk, one teaspoon baking powder, a little salt; grate the peel and chop the pulp of one orange together; squeeze the juice out and mix with soft frosting and put between the layers of cake when cold.

STEAMED PUDDING.—Three cups of flour, one cup of suet, one teaspoonful of salt, one and one-half cups of sweet milk, one cup of molasses, one cup of raisins, one cup of currants, one teaspoonful of soda, one nutmeg, one teaspoonful of cinnamon, and one-half teaspoonful of cloves. Steam three or four hours in a tin mould, and serve with sauce.

CASTLE PUDDING.—Mix 1½oz. of finely sifted flour with the same weight of powdered sugar. Dissolve in a basin before the fire 1½oz. of fresh butter, beat this up till it becomes creamy; whisk a couple of eggs, and mix them slowly with the butter, stir in the sugar, and afterwards the flour; add a spoonful of grated nutmeg and half a lemon peel grated. Put the mixture into custard cups, and bake in a moderately heated oven for twenty minutes.

ONE of the simplest yet most beautiful embellishments for window decorations is the English Ivy. The plants should be grown in pots in a cool, partially shaded situation, being careful to have a stone or brick under the pot to prevent the roots gaining earth beyond the pot. In late autumn these pots of ivy, with their dark, rich, green foliage, clean and glossy, can be transferred to the window of a sitting-room or library, and even should the temperature run down to zero, they are not at all injured.

COWSLIP WINE.—The following is an excellent recipe for making cowslip wine; 3½lb. of lump sugar, ½lb. of raisins, 1 sprig of ginger, boil 1 gallon of water with the sugar and ginger twenty minutes; slice two lemons, and put the raisins, lemons, and a quarter of a peck of cowslip pips together; pour the boiling water on them; let it stand working nine days with yeast, then put it into a stone bottle with a small quantity isinglass, and let it stand about three or four months, then put it into ordinary wine bottles with a little brandy.

FISH CHOWDER.—Slice thin some salt, fat pork, fry it in the kettle which you are to use, and when done take out the pork, leaving in the fat. Have ready a sufficient quantity of fish cut in small pieces, place this in the kettle with layers of potatoes pared and sliced thin. Season with pepper and salt, and pour over this nearly enough water to cover it. The pork can be put back on top or left out as you please. Cover the kettle closely and let it stew half an hour, then add a pint of milk thickened with a little flour, and some split crackers.

MELON PRESERVE.—Boil the unripe melons in alum water—a tablespoonful to about two gallons—pare, cut in pieces, lay in water for one or two days to take out the alum taste. The pieces should not be quite soft, but like sweet cucumber pickle. Drain well, make a syrup of sugar, a pound to each pound of melon, a pretty strong flavoring of ginger, as hot as may be liked, remembering that when boiled it will taste hotter; a little mace, and some lemon peel, or essence of lemon to taste. Boil the pieces in this till clear. Unripe melons are soaked for some days in brine, cut up, and freshened in cold water before boiling in alum. This preserve requires watching, being very apt to mould.

A man out West who married a widow has invented a device to cure her of "eternally" praising her former husband. Whenever she begins to descant on his nobler qualities, this ingenious No. 2 merely says, "Poor dear man! how I wish he hadn't died!" and the lady immediately thinks of something else to talk about.

A Louisville drummer was the other day giving his experience in the Red River country. "In a small town below Shreveport," he said, "I was going around with my samples, when I met a green, gawkish, country fellow, with two fancy red strings hanging down on each side of his boot-legs, which I supposed were drawer-strings, not knowing that they wore red strings around their legs in that country for ornament. In a spirit of kindness I said, 'Stranger, your drawer-strings are hanging down.' He gave me a savage look, put his hand on his pistol-belt, and drawled out, 'Look-a-here, mister, are you running them strings?'"

HUMOROUS SCRAPS.

IN Indiana, the great divorce State, people are now getting married in the "second degree."

FIFTEEN years ago, it is said, a Kentucky man bought a coffin for himself, considering it a handy thing to have in the house. Last week he was totally consumed in a lime-kiln, and the coffin is a dead loss, with the interest on the original cost included.

A TEACHER in Rockport received a note the other day from an indignant parent, which read:—"I want you to strictly undarstand that you hant boss of my children if you keep maria for ben late you will have trubl you need not think Wee are Slaves becas wee hant. We live inn a free land adoo."

A BOY in Danbury who was told he should always try to cheer the aged, tried "three times three and a tiger," on his grandmother, Christmas morning, and the old lady was so startled that she spilled a box full of snuff on him. He looks upon the beauties of nature with his left eye now.

A BOY in West Utica, a few nights since, awoke at once to the knowledge of a dismal optic and the fact that he is a somnambulist. He had been in the water, swimming, nearly all the hot afternoon, and in his dreams still divided the sportive wave. Then he dreamed he wanted to dive, and so he dived. When the house got through rocking, he found himself standing on his eyebrow.

LORD ESKGROVE was a very "wordy" judge. Lord Cockburn, in his "Memorials," says he heard him, in condemning a man to death for stabbing a soldier, aggravate the offence thus: "And not only did you murder him, whereby he was bereaved of his life, but you did thrust, or push, or pierce, or project, or propel the lethal weapon through the belly-band of his regimental breeches, which were his Majesty's!"

QUIN, dining one day at an ordinary, was seated next to a person of a most voracious disposition, and observing him to cut a very large piece of bread, which he laid by his plate against the bringing up of dinner, the wit took it up and pretended to cut a piece off it. This was quickly noticed by the other, who told him, in a very abrupt manner, that it was his bread. "I ask pardon," said Quin, in his usual deliberate way, "I really took it for the loaf."

A VERY Daniel of a judge dwells in Memphis. He came to judgment the other day in a case about a goose. This graceful fowl fell into the river, and it was rescued by a man and brother, who claimed salvage from its owner, an Italian. The latter wouldn't pay it, and produced a persuasive pistol, whereupon the colored person marched off with the goose and got a warrant for assault. Then did the goose's owner swear out an answering warrant for the goose. The judge, perplexed, fined both of them, and kept the goose himself.

IT is a true saying that people very seldom know their own minds. The latest instance is of an Indianapolis couple, who thought they were not intended for one another and ought to be separated. They got divorced and began hunting around for other partners of their joys and sorrows. After a vain search for several days, the penitent gentleman sought the presence of the penitent lady, and after a second successful courtship, regained her heart and hand. They were reunited with a mutual promise "never to go and get divorced no more."

AN English journal tells of a young clergyman, more vain than wise, who went to minister in a country church one Sabbath. Entering the vestry, he doffed his coat and vest preparatory to donning the cassock and cloak, and looked round for the looking-glass which generally forms a part of the vestry furniture. He searched, however, in vain. At last, losing patience, he cried out, "Church offisaw, church offisaw!"

After calling out some time, the head of a gray-haired man peered in at the door, and a stentorian voice demanded, "What's yer wull!"

"Where's the *mirraw?*" demanded the minister.

"Sir?" said the other.

"The *mirraw*—the looking-glass," said the minister, impatiently.

"Oh, the lookin'-glass. Ye see, oor minister's sic a handsum man naterally that he doesna need a lookin'-glass; but a'll bring ye a pail o' watter if ye like."

THE labor-saving genius of Young America is something amazing. Here is an illustration: An Evanston parent sent Young Hopeful out to draw the baby for an airing. Young Hopeful thought he would save labor by saddling that duty off upon his noble mastiff. He thereupon improvised a harness out of the clothes-line and hitched the noble mastiff to the carriage. Just then the noble mastiff's favorite canine playmate frolicked along the road, and quite oblivious of the new duty he was obliged to perform, the noble mastiff sprang to his more agreeable companionship. And then these two animals started for a run, and that baby accompanied them. A howl from the startled Hopeful brought the parents to the scene, and then ensued a chase for these dogs and that baby that beggars description. Up this street, down that, through this blind alley, across that broad avenue. The dogs gathered fright as the pursuers gathered numbers and the baby gathered lungs, until a friendly stump relieved the carriage of its load, and the precious infant in its lovely white embroidered clothes, was picked up out of the mud, a good deal more frightened happily, than hurt. But the boy! Well, his Sunday-school teacher found the boy a model of deportment on that day. He considered it ungentlemanly to sit.

A CONTEMPORARY announces a new way of killing potato bugs, consisting of a combination of the guillotine, the reading of one of Mr. A. Johnson's speeches, and an automatic finger which opens the victim's mouth and puts a drop of poison on its tongue, the whole process consuming two days. This is far too simple and concise a method of execution, and hardly calculated to strike terror into the hearts of potato bugs, upon whom it might be advisable to try moral suasion rather than brute force, thus adopting methods of treatment towards which the whole creation moves. Suppose that when next a Western farmer catches a potato bug, he should imprison him and summon a court to try him; wait several months before securing an unprejudiced jury; convict him; sentence him; grant him a stay of proceedings; pronounce that everything done in the case was wrong and must be done over again. It is not fair to suppose that after this the potato bugs of the land would collect all their portable baggage and flee away, fearful of a similar doom? The deviser of the method of execution first named seems as incapable of understanding the finer feelings of the entomological kingdom as those who advocate shooting Captain Jack are of the delicate sensibilities of the genial Modocs.

THE Brantford *Courier* is responsible for the following: A gentleman on Besserer street last week tried an experiment which he says has completely cured his wife of jealousy. He says he was subject to a nightly curtain lecture from his better half, at a time when he wished to be wrapped in the arms of Morpheus, for returning an affection for an old lady friend. He bore it for several nights with Christian-like resignation, but he at last devised a plan for putting an end to it. He procured a piece of wood formed in the shape of a human being and dressed it in some of his wife's wardrobe, and then placed it in the garden, sitting in an iron chair. To this graven image he knelt down and poured forth impassioned addresses. The servant girl was standing at the kitchen door at the time, and overheard these appeals. She immediately notified her mistress of the fact. Presently both of them emerged from the kitchen, armed with broomsticks, and made an attack upon the "dummy woman," while the husband, who had retired in good order, sat at the back enjoying the scene. After knocking the image over, they pounced upon and tore the clothing into rags. They soon discovered the cheat, and rushed back into the house, terribly mortified. The husband followed them, and said exasperating things. Whenever she shows any disposition to be jealous, he has only to mention that little scene in the garden, and she changes the topic. The servant has been induced to go to the States, where "wages are high."

OUR PUZZLER.

8. DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

A queen with more than common beauty curst,
Who fell an hapless slave to glory's thirst.
The wife of Æneas, lost when Priam fell,
Her name, dear readers, it is for you to tell.
A palace of Egypt, by Amenoph amass'd,
And now 'tis a noble relic of the past.
A man (curtail'd) who in geometry excell'd,
And by mathematicians in reverence is held.
A town in France, for antiquity renown'd,
If you search well on the Loire 'twill be found.
He whose duty 'tis in safety to steer,
The noble ship of the treach'rous breakers clear.
A son of Jupiter, at Delos born,
A brother of Dina, and of faultless form.
A defence oft used in the form of a shield,
Also by ladies in a sport of the field.
A painter of Urben oft call'd the divine,
Who copied and worshipp'd at Angelo's shrine.

9. LOGOGRIPH.

Complete, I'm an article commonly found,
In the palace as well as the cot;
Behead me, I head you, without the least doubt,
Whatever your age, sex, or lot;
Behead me again, I'm conducive to health;
I think that a good enough clue;
Curtail and behead me, and without I mistake,
The remainder will stand well for you.

10. CHARADES.

1.—In lanes and alleys,
Hills and valleys
My first is never out of sight;
And when on wing
My next doth sing,
And leaves us rapt in pure delight,
My whole is speeding to my first,
Singing merrily in its flight.

2.—My first should try my last to gain,
'Twould amply him repay;
To dwell in my whole in realms of love
And never-ending day.

T. J. BOSTOCK.

11. ARITHMOREM.

1. 500 and Ha! row (a philanthropist).
2. 50 " vie (an English adjective).
3. 1500 " a turn (a county in England).
4. 1 " sour sup (counterfeit).
5. 101 " a rent (a Scottish lake).
6. 100 " throe (a Trojan hero).
7. 50 " are ten (everlasting).
8. 550 " for if (an Irish town).

The initials read downwards will name a celebrated astronomer.

12. CONUNDRUMS.

1. Why is Monday like a feeble Moorish prince?

2. What would be the best punishment for a "pig-headed" man?

3. Why is a deceived lover, tastefully attired, like a well-cooked leg of pork?

4. What is the difference between a well-made coinage stamp and the reign of a sovereign?

5. Why, if you wish to sell a pound of tea, can you do so without using scales?

CARACTACUS.

13. RIDDLE-MA-REE.

Just list to me, and I trust you will see
The answer to be, for this riddle ma-ree.
Compos'd of circles four, th' only half complete,
Which, when my whole is plac'd, is decidedly a treat;
A portion of these circles to an upright pray now fix,
Another follows after, that is, to number six;
A triangle in my centre, requir'd, to give me sense,
Add three-fourths of a cross: now am I very dense.
Of friends I have a legion, and enemies a few,
Hoping you're the former, I bid you all adieu.

THOMAS PHILIP.

14. CHARADES.

1.—My first's an article, I'm told,
In Walker you will find it;
My second in my third's oft sold,
You'd better never mind it;
My whole's a battle gained in France,
By English valor, shield, and lance.

2.—In days gone by, my first was found
Of mighty use on hunting-ground;
And by it on the battle plain
Many a valiant man was slain.
Without my last no plant could grow,
Or flourish on this sphere below;
My whole's an article of food,
And for the sick is very good.

3.—My first, I'm sure you will agree
Belongs alike to you and me,
My last attends poor mortals here,
And my whole has cost me oft a tear.

P.

15. STATESMEN.

1. Reap by reform; let her die. 2. H'! I excel the John B. Reform clique in zeal and care. 3. Sly, stern Tory leader—gain force. 4. The people rail an crow so. 5. O! a C. stands forth for the best tried friend of poor trade. 6. A lord of an elderly style. 7. An old dry peer in rage. 8. For he talked ugly. 9. Rest? nay; high courts are learning. 10. Ah! don't long for a great Scot devoted to place. 11. Evil charms—he perils all. 12. From a right quaint son.

D. EDIN.

16. TITLES OF BOOKS.

1. Tell the secret art. 2. Lord H. can seal. 3. All creamy holes. 4. Keep mill here. 5. Let her meet paint. 6. Show a mild treat. 7. Frogs court then flee one. 8. George's faithful pet at Lee.

J. CASE, G.G.

ANSWERS.

1. REBUS.—Montreal: Tar; Lemon.

2. DOUBLE ACROSTIC.—China, Spain, thus: CaractacuS, HarP, IndiA, NervII, AnN.

3. DOUBLE ARITHMOREM.—Mary Stuart, Anne Boleyn, thus: MonomaniA, AmericaN, ReconciliatioN, YuletidE, SennacheriB, TobaccO, UngracefuL, AccommodatE, RecriminatorY, TemptatioN.

4. ENIGMA.—"Punch," the comic paper. 2. Punch, a mixture of spirit, lemon-juice, &c.

PUTTING ON A PAPER COLLAR.

One of the saddest comings home is when the husband and father comes home to put on a paper collar. The last collar has resolved into pulpy rolls and come up back of his ears or disappeared within the recesses of his hair. The shirt band is moist and helpless, and inclined to roll under, carrying the back button with it. His neck is wet and slippery, and all the windows are down, and the door is drawn to. By the time he has found the back button and got the collar hitched to it, it seems as if the air was about to stifle him, and as if he would suddenly melt and spoil the carpet. He sends up the windows with a snap, and kicks that door back with a velocity that almost scares it. Then he goes to work to fasten one of the ends, and while he is at it the back button hole suddenly melts and dissolves. He tries another collar. Gets the back and one end fastened, commences work at the other end, and is about intoxicate with his success when the first end suddenly collapses. He sits down a few moments before trying the third collar, and wishes he really knew if there is future punishment, and wonders where his wife is. Then he makes another trial with similar results, and finally dashes out of the house, saying that if he had nothing more to do than gadding to the neighbors he would make collars that his husband could wear. Fortunately his wife is next door learning a new crochet stitch, and does not hear him.

AFTERMATH.

BY GUY ROSLYN.

Come whisper in this oak, west wind, and blow
A breathing music in among the leaves
To soothe siesta, while haymakers throw
The dying grass that fairy perfume weaves;
And as the pail
Of frothing ale
Is eagerly caressed by sunburnt arms,
I'll dream of country life and rustic charms.

Come, carol in this oak, clear-throated birds,
And let your summer's love be in the lay;
Unto the droning tune of leaves give words,
And in kind fellowship together play;
And I will hearken
Till shadows darken—
Till all the men go home, and cloudlets swim
In glowing amber at the western rim.

AUNT CHARITY'S VISIT.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"Minta's young man," said Aunt Charity, nodding her head as she replaced the black morocco spectacle case in her pocket. "I'm going to New York to-morrow to be introduced to him."

"You?" cried Mrs. Trestledale.

"Why not I?" said Aunt Charity. "To be sure I an't much of a traveler, but it's never too late to mend, they do say, and there's one or two things in that big rattle-box of a Sodam-and-Gomorrah of a place I'd like to see afore I die. So now that a good opportunity offers, and Minta's so set on it, I've about made up my mind."

"So Minta is really engaged," said Mrs. Trestledale, thinking with a sigh of her own uneligible eight daughters.

"Well, yes—and no;" said Aunt Charity, rescuing her knitting-ball from the jaws of a piratical kitten. "She's taken a considerable fancy to the young fellow, but she an't goin' to sign and seal nothin' without my consent. Marriage is a dreadful risky business, accordin' to my way of thinkin'. I never got married myself, and I don't see but what I've survived it pretty tolerable well; but you see Minta thinks different. And I'm one as believes in lettin' every one enjoy themselves after their own fashion."

And after Mrs. Trestledale had gone home, Aunt Charity Waite set herself to decide whether she should travel in her black silk or her gray alpaca.

You could not have believed it, to judge of the little brown cottage, with its steep gambrel roof, nor the old lady's antiquated ward-robe and well-worn furniture; but Miss Waite was very rich. Money had somehow clung to the Waites. Their business throve; their interest grew fat upon itself; their acres always lay in the way of some new railway or projected street; their few and cautiously selected speculations prospered. And the very bank directors themselves took off their hats when Aunt Charity drove by in her queer little hooded phaeton, drawn by the horse which was reported never to have gone out of a walk since he had been in the Waite family.

"Well, Aunt Charity, how do you like New York?"

Aunt Charity looked down at the velvet carpet, and up at the gilded chandeliers, and all round at the frescoed walls, and lace and silk-draped casements, before she answered:

"Pretty well—for such a noisy place."

Minta Delmayne laughed. She was a fresh-faced, merry-eyed girl of eighteen, with raven black hair, a saucy nose, and a mouth that plainly said, "Kiss me, if you can," such a cherry-red, pouting, roguish little dot of a mouth, was it.

"And now, Aunt Charity," said she, "where shall I take you?"

"O, 'most anywhere," said the old lady, fanning herself vehemently with a prodigious palm-leaf fan.

"To the top of Trinity steeple?"

"Bless your heart, no," said Aunt Charity; "nor to the bottom of Hurl Gate, nor none o' them outrageous places the Lord never meant his people to visit, else he wouldn't a set 'em down on the level ground."

"Shall we go shopping?"

"Well, I didn't ezactly calcerlate to shop till the end of the week."

"Central Park, then?"

"That's country," said Aunt Charity, "I can see enough meadows and sheep-grazin' at home."

"Then what do you say to the pictures at the Academy of Design?"

Aunt Charity brightened at once. She should like that, she said; and Minta put on her hat and lace sacque, and began to make herself as coquettishly pretty as possible, prattling the while, as was perfectly natural, about Mr. Ames Percival.

"You'll like him so much, Aunt Charity," said she.

"Shall I?" said the old lady, somewhat dubiously.

"He is so gentlemanly, so refined, so entirely free from all the faults of the present age."

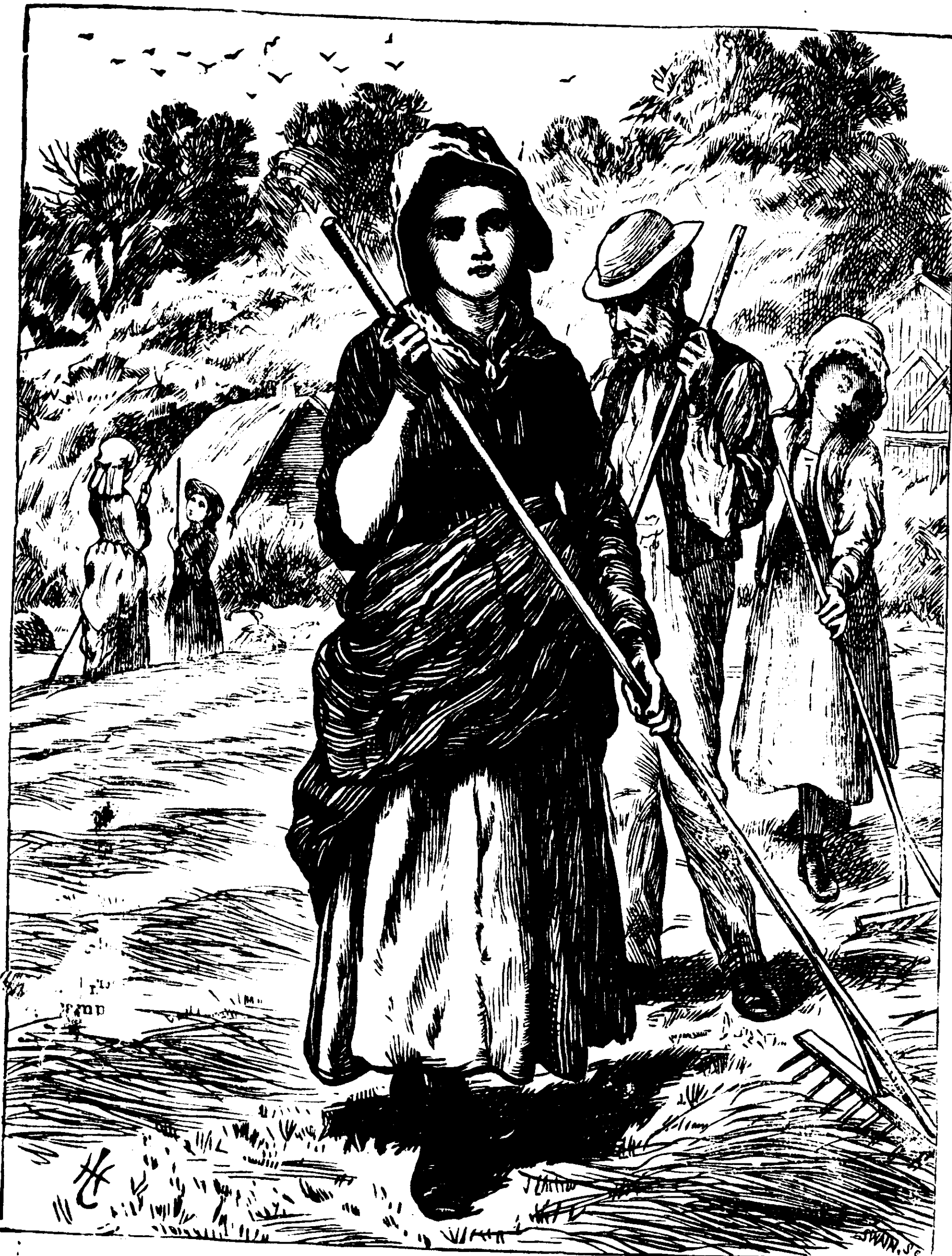
"I'm glad to hear it," observed the old lady. "Don't bet, eh? nor play cards, nor drink?"

"Oh, Aunty, never! He tells me he does not know the ace of hearts from the knave of spades."

"I know as much as that myself," said Aunt Charity, "We used to play, 'old maid' when I was a gal, and 'Muggins.' It's a dreadful funny game 'Muggins' is. But you're ready. I see, and so am I. What are you a noddin' to that vulgar-looking stage driver for? An't one o' your acquaintances, is he?"

"Only to make him stop, Aunt Charity. Now we are all right."

Aunt Charity Waite was delighted with the pictures in the Academy of Design, and long after Minta was tired out she sat complacently, gazing:



"WHILE HAYMAKERS THROW."

"Now I wonder what the man asks for that there cattle piece," said she, before one of Wiles' *chef-d'œuvres*. "I've got five dollars I mean to spend in some sort of an oil-painting to hang over the parlor chimbly, and this jest about suits me. If you don't mind, Minty, I'd like to walk around again."

"Just as you please, Aunt Charity," said Minta; "only as I've seen all I care to, suppose I just run down Broadway a minute, to match some fringe, and then I'll come back for you."

"Well," said Miss Waite, again adjusting her spectacles.

"You won't be afraid."

"Bless your heart! what of?"

And off tripped Minta.

But matching a peculiar shade of fringe is not exactly an expeditious process; and Aunt Charity got her fill of picture-gazing, some time before Minta returned.

"I guess I'll set down, and rest a spell," said she.

So she established herself comfortably on a cushioned sofa, and began to look around at the other frequenters of the art exhibition.

Presently a tall, over-dressed young man, with a blonde mustache, a light-blue insolent eye, cameo shirt-studs, and a pink and white spotted silk neck scarf, planted himself directly opposite her, with his companion — a bull-necked, sallow-faced fellow, who surveyed the surrounding world through a gold-mounted eye-glass.

"You're in my light, sir. Please to move a bit," said Aunt Charity, who was a free-spoken old lady.

The blonde young man stared at her.

"Please to step to one side or the other," repeated Aunt Charity, rather shortly.

"My good woman," said the blonde young man, in a voice whose supercilious tone alone was an insult, "if you don't like your view you can move. I shan't! Look, here. Fortescue," to his companion; "I'm blamed, if I believe the little ballet-girl is coming at all! It's too deuced mean of her to give a fellow the mitten this way, after the champagne supper I gave her last evening."

"She knows you're engaged. Eugenie does, you see," drawled Mr. Fortescue. "She an't a fool, if you are. She knows there are no more bouquets and lace scarfs and diamond rings afloat, say nothing of wine suppers."

"You don't suppose she has heard about the five thousand dollars I lost at the last Fleetwood?"

"Perhaps. Who knows?"

"Well now, look here. I can make it all right when *Dapplewing* runs at Long Branch. I've got a cool ten thousand staked on *Dapplewing*. I have; honor bright."

"And suppose *Dapplewing* chances to lose?"

"Oh, the deuce! What's the use of saying disagreeable things, Forty? All the world knows she's the favorite, and besides, I shall be married to a bag of gold by that time."

"Yes; but, Percival, look here—"

"I say," giggled the blonde young man, "look how that old bag is staring at me. I'm blessed if I don't believe it's a case of love at first sight. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hush!" whispered Fortescue. "There comes your divinity."

"What—Eugenie?"

"No, you blockhead; Minta Delmayne."

Mr. Percival turned around, all smiles and bows.

"You here!" cried Miss Delmayne, "How very fortunate! Come this way, and let me present you to my aunt. Aunt Charity, this is Mr. Ames Percival, of whom I have spoken to you."

Mr. Ames Percival cowered before the gaze of the "old bag" upon whom he had so freely commented. Aunt Charity gazed at Mr. Ames Percival with uncompromising steadiness.

"He wouldn't stand out of my light," said she.

"I assure you, ma'am, if I had had the pleasure of knowing—" growled Mr. Ames Percival.

"Let's go, Minta," said the old lady, rising and taking her niece's arm. "And while we're a goin' home I'll tell you all about the ballygirl and the thousand dollars he lost at Fleetwood, and the ten thousand he's goin' to pile up at Long Branch."

"Ma'am," pleaded Mr. Percival, "you are mistaken. I—"

"No, I an't," said the old lady. "My hearin's as good as ever it was, thank fortune! And one thing's sartin, young man: you don't marry my niece Minta with my consent."

So the match was broken off. And Minta Delmayne had good reason to bless the day that she took her Aunt Charity to visit the Academy of Design.

For the arrow of Cupid had not stricken very deeply, and Minta was too sensible to pine for an alliance with a gambler and a *roué*. And *Dapplewing* was beaten by two lengths, and Mr. Ames Percival is now engaged in billiard-marking for a livelihood.

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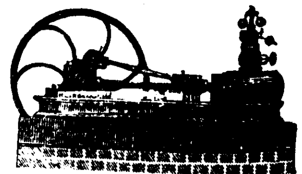

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