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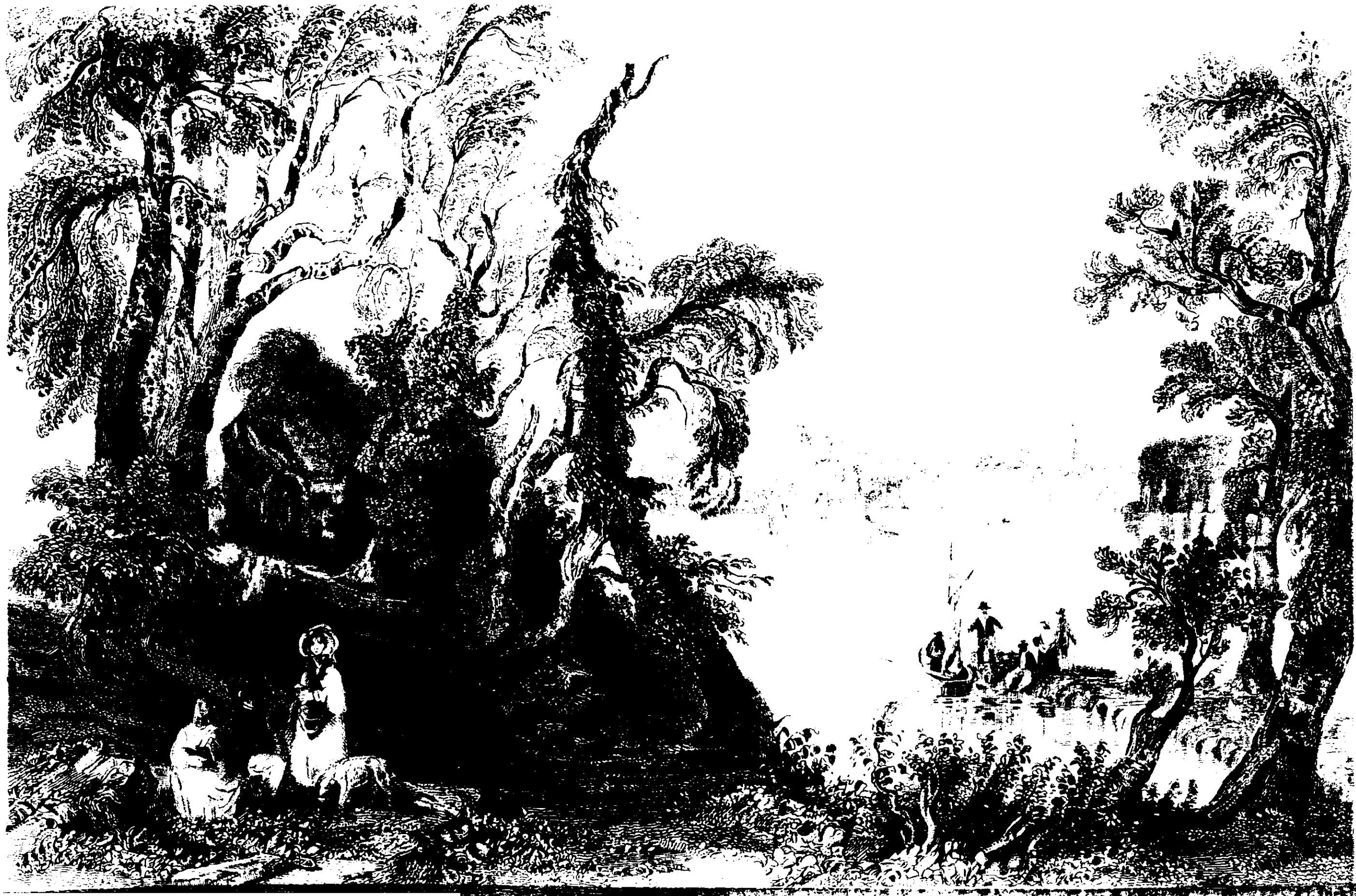

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THE LITERARY GARLAND.

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THE GIRL'S CHOICE.*

BY E. M. M.

> " When gathering clouds around I view,
> And days are dark and friends are few,
> On Him I lean who, not in vain,
> Experienced every human pain;
> *He sees my griefs, allays my fears,*
> And counts and treasures up my tears.
>
> If wounded love my bosom swell,
> Deceived by those I prized too well
> He shall his pitying aid bestow,
> Who felt on earth severer wo;
> At once betrayed, denied, or fled,
> By those who shared his daily bread."
>
> CHRISTIAN YEAR.

"WHAT do you think of your new acquaintance?" asked Captain Warburton on re-entering; "is she not charming—so amiable, so animated, so everything that a woman ought to be?"

"I am sorry that I cannot agree with you," replied Katherine. "If Lady Marley were all that she ought to be, she would love and revere religion and religious people."

"Pho! you would have every one to be moping Methodists; cheerless indeed would the world become then."

"Have you never seen cheerful, happy Christians, Neville, or worldly people full of care and melancholy?" inquired Katherine.

"Perhaps I may, but more frequently the reverse; for instance, Lady Marley and yourself—what a contrast! the one all light and sunshine, the other sad and gloomy. Is this encouragement, think you?"

"Lady Marley has much to make her happy, while I——." Here Katherine paused from emotion. "Yet believe me, Neville," she continued, smiling through her tears, "I would not change destinies with her, if I could; from my trials, have sprung many blessings unknown to her."

Captain Warburton began whistling, to disguise a pang of remorse that at that instant smote him, while Katherine, anxious to arrest his attention, again resumed:

"Could you witness the happiness that exists in the dear circle at Woodford Abbey, you would discover more of the merits of religion: there is no gloom nor sadness visible under that roof."

"Because misfortune has not reached them, probably," replied her husband.

"They have suffered many sorrows; remember both the Ladies Woodford are widows."

"But they have wealth to console them; were I only rich, I should be perfectly content with this world, imperfect though it may be; without money, man is a wretch."

"Ah, Neville! what importance do you attach to that which God considers of none! Sufficient means, I grant you, are necessary. This might be ours if you would only limit your desires."

"Very fine, indeed! Much you know about it. I tell you I have not sufficient means to live like a gentleman; am I to be satisfied with that?"

The gesture of impatience accompanying these words made Katherine pause, but only for a moment. In the softest tone she then said:

"Neville, you would not make the choice of the young ruler in the scripture, who preferred his wealth to following his Saviour?"

"I should be sorely tempted to do so. Why give up a certain good for that which is uncertain?"

"Doubtless he thought so at the time; but could the same offer be made to him now, what would be his decision, think you?"

"I cannot say, indeed."

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* Continued from page 350.

"The wealth that was his, where is it? Can it avail him in the land of spirits? But oh! had he gone with Christ, how blessed would have been his lot to all eternity."

Katherine said this with such sweet seriousness, that the levity of her husband was checked. He moved towards the window, where he stood musing, while she mentally breathed a prayer, that a gracious God would remove the veil from his sight, and bring him out of his present state of darkness and unbelief.

"Will this prove a happy evening?" thought our heroine, as she prepared her simple dress for Lady Marley's party. "Am I not by my compliance, resisting those words, 'come out from amongst them and be ye separate?' What was my motive when I yielded my consent? I wished to rival Lady Marley in the eyes of my husband,—to let him see that I too could be admired. How unworthy of my Christian profession, and how inconsistent he must think me. Dear Mrs. Bruce! what will you say to me? Condemn me for my folly, I am convinced."

As these reflections crossed her mind, she took from her mother's casket, a few of her ornaments, with the intention of wearing them, but such a rush of tender recollections overpowered her on beholding them, that she was forced to lay them aside. At the appointed hour, Sir James Marley very kindly sent his carriage to convey her and Captain Warburton to Marley Vale, the name of his place. Having first seen her child safely in bed, and given innumerable charges to her servant, in whom she had no confidence, that she must not leave the little creature for a moment, she descended the stairs, and with a throbbing heart and many compunctions, she entered it with her husband, and drove off. A quarter of an hour brought them to the gate of the mansion, which was handsome, though of modern structure. As the carriage dashed up to the front entrance, Katherine beheld lights streaming from all the windows. Nervous and unused to gaiety, how did she wish herself back in her own humble home; but it was now too late, and she was ushered into the hall and up stairs into a dressing room, where a pert, flippant, and very dressy maid, appeared to take her shawl.

"Will there be a large party?" inquired Katherine, in some trepidation.

"Very large, ma'am," replied the maid, running her eyes over the graceful form of the stranger. "The ball room is to be thrown open in the evening."

"I have no right to be here," thought Katherine, as she took her husband's arm and entered the saloon, where Lady Marley, sparkling in jewels, and rustling in satin, advanced to meet her, with a diminutive elderly gentleman, who she introduced as Sir James Marley. He instantly led the trembling girl to a seat, very kindly standing by her side and talking to her, until the door again opened, and other guests were announced.

Katherine had not been in so large a circle since the days of her girlhood, when, with Madame by her side, and the support of her mother, she felt no awkwardness. Now she was alone, and, as a married woman, holding a certain position in society. For a few moments she felt abashed, but recovering her self-possession by degrees, she ventured to look around her on the gay assembly, all strangers to her, except a few of the officers belonging to the same regiment with her husband. Mr. Stanhope, Mr. Fitzarthur, Mr. Sinclair, and the red-nosed paymaster, Mr. Brand. Little as she was known amongst them, still was she admired and beloved, and perhaps pitied; and with one accord they came forward to address her in words of friendly kindness.

From leading so secluded a life, Katherine had a very humble opinion of herself, strengthened, doubtless, by the neglect of her husband; it was with surprise, therefore, that she now encountered the admiring eyes of nearly the whole room fixed upon her, and heard the whispered remarks made upon her beauty. It would be untrue to say that she did not feel pleasurable emotions on the occasion, especially as Captain Warburton was present. Her appearance did indeed form a contrast to that of most of the other ladies, dressed as she was in a simple white muslin robe, without a single ornament, her long fair ringlets shading a face of extreme sweetness, rendered even beautiful by the large, deep blue eyes, that rarely lost an expression of seriousness amounting at times to melancholy.

A brother of Lady Marley, a Mr. Wilkins. was particularly struck with her, and learnt with some surprise who she was. He was rather a good-looking young man, but free to vulgarity in his manners, and conceited of his person. He sought to improve this by wearing an enormous pair of moustaches, which, in a country apothecary, were certainly a little *outré*; but Mr. Wilkins belonged to the militia, and in his red coat, considered himself, (to use the school boy phrase) "*no end of a fellow*." A large gold chain, and sundry studs and pins, completed, he thought, his distinguished appearance; and running his hand through his hair with a peculiar grace, he walked up to our heroine, saying:

"A beautiful evening, ma'am, I never saw the sun set so brilliantly before; but possibly you are not such an admirer of nature as I am; with me it is a passion."

"I admire everything good and beautiful," replied Katherine, a little startled by the abruptness of his address; "but I delight rather in the sun's rise than in his setting."

"May I ask why?"

Katherine coloured, and then said:

"The first seems the coming of bright hopes, the last speaks of their departure."

"A very pretty idea, indeed; quite in my taste, I must note that down;" and he took from his vest a small pocket book and pencil as he spoke. Katherine looked and felt annoyed; to her relief, Miss Felicia Sykes ran across the room, exclaiming:

"My dear Mrs. Warburton! I am so happy to see you; I have a thousand apologies to make for not having called, but I was not quite sure that you had returned home. La, Mr. Wilkins! with your ass's skin again in your hand; what are you writing? a recipé for weak nerves, or weak intellects?"

"For neither, ma'am," replied Mr. Wilkins, indignant at this allusion to his profession, of which, as the brother of Lady Marley, he ignorantly began to be ashamed. "Bright hopes—their departure," he continued to himself.

"Ha! the man is moon-struck, I believe," said Miss Sykes, turning from him. "And how did you leave our friends at the Abbey?" she added, to Katherine; "are they not delightful people?"

"They are, indeed," replied our heroine, warmly. "I felt it quite a privilege to spend so many days in their society."

Dinner at this moment being announced, made a pause in the conversation. Sir James Marley paired off with a tall lady in a white satin hat and feathers, the rest following according to some imaginary precedence. Katherine, to her regret, was led out by Mr. Wilkins, while Miss Sykes, disdaining the aid of man, declined the arm of a bustling little personage, who came up to her, with a low bow, saying:

"Permit me the honor, madam ——"

"Abominable creature!" mentally inveighed the maiden. "He has been married three times, and I have no doubt would take a fourth wife if he could get one."

The dinner was very sumptuous, and adorned with massive plate, but to Katherine it passed unpleasantly; her ears were so constantly annoyed by the light conversation, bordering on the improper, that was passing around her. The fulsome compliments of Mr. Wilkins fatigued her, while his attempts to be witty, caused her many a forced smile.

"How different is all this to dear Woodford Abbey!" she thought. "Every word uttered there, I could dwell upon with pleasure; here, if I listen, I am pained or vexed."

Lady Marley looked supremely happy, with Captain Warburton on her right, with whom she talked and laughed incessantly; while Sir James gazed on her with eyes of admiration and tenderness, completely lost upon the lady, as she never turned towards him. The more our heroine observed her new acquaintance, the less did she admire her. Her freedom of manner towards gentlemen, her loud laugh at their *double entendres*, her dress almost immodest, from its displaying so much of her person; all betokened a mind far from being delicate, refined or regulated. As the eyes of Katherine wandered from her to the other ladies present, she could perceive in some tokens of disapprobation, while others were too much engrossed with themselves to mind what was going forward. Most heartily Katherine repented that she had willingly entered a circle, where the presence of her God could not follow her, or his holy name be mentioned without profanation.

As there was to be a large evening party, Lady Marley did not remain long after dinner. On reentering the drawing room, they found several young people already assembled there. Katherine now hoped she might meet some one with whom she could find pleasure in conversing, but she soon discovered that when worldly persons meet together, nothing edifying or improving is encouraged. Dress, scandal, and young men, form the favorite topics; while good sense, religion, and charity towards our neighbours, are banished as stupid and old-fashioned.

A very stout lady in a turban, who was the happy mamma of six daughters, happened to mention the marriage of a friend of hers to a widow with a family, and no money.

"How he could be so imprudent, I am at a loss to know," she said, drawing herself up with a prudish air; "we had considered him so very sensible until he took such a step."

"Fy upon the widow for depriving so many girls of a chance!" said Miss Sykes, sarcastically. "Yet I am told she is an agreeable, amiable woman, and that her children are provided for."

"I am sure there is nothing particular about her; it is quite extraordinary how some people manage to get husbands," rejoined Mrs. Cobb, curling her lip.

"Probably because there is no management in the case, and that they possess qualities which we have not the wit to discover," retorted Miss Sykes. "But, my dear, I cannot wonder at your chagrin when you look at yonder row of maidens. Poor things! it is very hard they remain so long unasked."

"So long unasked! Miss Sykes, I really do not comprehend you," replied Mrs. Cobb, now highly offended. "My girls are in no haste to be married; they are too happy at home—and too particular; Arabella has refused no less than three offers."

"Three! a'hem!" said the provoking spinster, clearing her throat in a significant manner, and walking over to Lady Marley, who was arranging the card tables.

"That is the rudest woman I ever met," observed Mrs. Cobb, turning to a lady, "and with all her pretended contempt for men, I am convinced she would give her ears for a husband."

The gentlemen did not make their appearance until a late hour. Lady Marley reproached Captain Warburton for his want of gallantry, when he said:

"I am not to blame, I assure you; I have been wishing to come to you for the last hour, but Sir James got upon the subject of the repeal, and there was no moving him."

"Provoking man! I wish to goodness there could be a repeal of the union," returned the lady; "for I am heartily tired of it."

"Not tired of the wealth the union has brought you, I imagine, Lady Marley," said Miss Sykes, very pointedly, who had overheard the remark. "To be sure Sir James *is* a very queer looking little man," she added, seeing him approaching. "How could you persuade him to conceal his grey hairs under that abominable wig?"

"Sir James dresses as he pleases, Miss Sykes, and so do I," replied Lady Marley, stiffly.

"So I perceive, my dear," retorted the maiden; "for if you dressed to please others, you would cover your shoulders a little more."

"Miss Sykes is a privileged person," said Lady Marley, endeavouring to hide her chagrin under a laugh. "She would correct the whole world if she could."

"I certainly would put many things right that I now see wrong," replied her tormentor. "Wives should be content with their own husbands, and not try to gain the hearts of their neighbours; they should be modest, chaste, and keepers at home."

"Old maids' wives and children are proverbially perfection," said Lady Marley, bitterly.

"Bravo, Charlotte, bravo!" exclaimed Mr. Wilkins, clapping his hands. "Attack her with her own weapons; what say you to that, Miss Sykes?"

"That I quite agree with Lady Marley," she replied; "with less to occupy us, we are quicker to discern the faults and follies of our acquaintances; but we are quite as ready as others to admire real worth when we behold it—real innocence, and not its miserable counterfeit—real goodness, and not its semblance." And she linked her arm within Katherine's, who had drawn near her husband, as she said this.

Lady Marley felt angry and mortified, particularly as she noticed Captain Warburton's gaze of admiration on his wife, whose fair open brow did indeed express all that was pure, and good, and lovely.

"Are we not going to have some music, Charlotte?" said Sir James, now hobbling up to the party.

"I hope so; Mrs. Warburton, perhaps you will favour us," she said, feeling sure that Katherine could be no performer.

In this, however, she was mistaken, for Captain Warburton, pleased to see his wife an object of attraction, and overruling her extreme reluctance, led her to the piano, and obliged her to sit down. An age had passed since she had trusted her voice in singing, and painful it was to make the effort now; but to please her husband, what would she *not* have tried to do?

After musing a while, she chose the air he had first asked her to sing in her own happy home. Her voice as she began was tremulous from various saddening recollections, but as she proceeded, she gained courage, and sang it with such exquisite taste and feeling, that every one was enchanted; every one but Lady Marley, who could scarcely disguise her chagrin on beholding Captain Warburton hanging over his wife's chair, delighted with the sensation she had caused, and evidently touched himself by her sweet strains.

"Charming, indeed!" said Sir James Marley, who was particularly fond of music. "I have not enjoyed such a treat for a long time. Nay, pray do not leave the instrument," as Katherine, confused by the praises she received, rose to move away. "One more song, I beg."

"Do you know 'the heart that loves fondest of any?'" asked Mr. Wilkins; "it is a beautiful air."

"I never heard it," replied Katherine, smiling; "I sing very few English songs."

"Do not fatigue Mrs. Warburton," said Lady Marley, now approaching. "The young people are impatient to dance, and the band are in the ball-room. Captain Warburton, shall we lead the way?"

He started at the sound of her voice, half irresolute, when several gentlemen thronging round Katherine, begged so earnestly for another song, that she felt obliged to comply. Again she astonished and charmed her audience with a splendid Italian air; but this time she experienced no gratification from their applause, for Lady Marley had, in the midst of it, managed to draw away her husband, and his praise was all she coveted to receive. Sir James Marley, overflowing her with compliments, offered her his arm to lead her to a seat, talking to her of Italy, and all the operas he had heard in his young days, till she cordially wished him there again, and herself as far away.

Mrs. Cobb, jealous that a married lady should absorb so much attention, now pressed her daughter Arabella to sit down to the piano-forte.

"You can sing Mr. Wilkins' favorite, 'the heart that loves fondest of any,'" she said. "Pray oblige me."

Miss Arabella made many excuses, pleading a cold, but at length she was prevailed upon, and commenced the song, which proved a wretched production; but to say the truth, no justice was done to it, the young lady having little regard to tune or harmony. However, mamma was pleased, and Mr. Wilkins so charmed that he immediately asked her to dance. Mrs. Cobb then called to her second daughter, who ran across the room.

"Gussy, my love, your feather hangs too much over your eye; let me arrange it."

As she did so, a tall, pale-faced young man entered the room.

"La! there is Mr. Spooner, I declare," continued the matron. "I have not seen him for an age; how improved he is in his appearance; don't you think so, Gussy?"

Mr. Spooner had just been called to the bar, and was heir to a good property.

"He is not to be compared to Mr. Sinclair," replied the daughter, as the young ensign passed in his smart uniform.

"La! my dear, are you not aware that Mr. Spooner will be very rich?" said Miss Sykes; "that gives a man every attraction in the eyes of mammas; but you have no chance, I fear, for he is engaged to be married."

"No chance, indeed," returned the young lady, tossing her head contemptuously; "I would not marry such a ghost-like creature if he had the wealth of worlds."

"Here is one approaching more suited to your taste, perhaps," said Miss Sykes, as Mr. Brand drew near.

"Oh! mamma, do make haste!" exclaimed Miss Augusta; "that red-faced man is my horror; I am sure he is going to ask me to dance."

But Mr. Brand passed on and walked up to a pleasing looking girl, who he led off in triumph to the ball room, while Miss Sykes hummed the air:

"Oh, dear, what will become of me!"

as the mortified Augusta sat down, her mamma being called away to the card table.

"And this is pleasure!" thought Katherine, as she listened to, and beheld all that was passing around her. "Pleasure, where all the evil passions of our nature are called into action; envy, jealousy, detraction and vanity!"

This sentiment became still more confirmed, when, persuaded by Mr. Fitzarthur, she entered the dancing room, where she saw Lady Marley walking with Captain Warburton, and noticed with what delight she listened to his conversation. Anger and hatred struggled within her heart, filling her with disquietude for yielding to their influence, even while she smiled and seemed to look happy.

Hours floated past, but none, save our heroine, wished the festive scene over. The old ladies, quarrelling over the card tables, determined to try their luck again; whilst the young, engrossed by their partners, continued the dance, or stole into corners to listen to their soft nonsense. Sir James Marley had very wisely retired to bed; almost all those who had dined at his house, having long since taken their departure, except Mrs. Cobb, who remained to watch over her daughters, and the lynx-eyed Miss Sykes. Katherine, fatigued, and anxious about her child, entreated her husband to take her home; but Lady Marley would not hear of this until after supper, which was not announced till one o'clock, when the crowd rushed for places.

Unobtrusive and retiring, and little versed in the light talk of the day, our heroine might have been left alone, but for Mr. Brand, who politely conducted her to a seat, exerting his utmost abilities, (which, in truth, poor man, were small) for her amusement; but her spirit, cast down and quite subdued, would not rise again, and unwilling to waste his little store of wit on one so insensible, at length, to her infinite relief, he left her, to eat lobster salad at a side table.

Poor Katherine! She looked towards her husband, but he was still devoted to Lady Marley, and leaning her head against the wall, she could no longer restrain her tears. Miss Sykes, who was standing near, and perceived how pale and fatigued she appeared, very kindly offered to take her home in her carriage, which had been waiting for her some time.

"Oh! thank you a thousand times!" exclaimed our heroine; "gladly will I go; but I must first tell Captain Warburton."

"La, my dear! he is too much engrossed to hear you; come away, and I will desire one of the servants to acquaint him that you are gone."

With these words, the maiden took the hand of Katherine, and passed through the throng. In a few more minutes they were driving rapidly homewards, Miss Sykes talking the whole way, and quizzing every body and every thing. The free manners of Lady Marley—the vulgar assumption of her brother—*the absurdity* of Sir James in choosing such a wife, at his age—the fine dresses of the ladies—their affectation, and the folly of the men; *all, all came under her* lash.

"Has Lady Marley many of these parties?" asked Katherine, making an effort to speak.

"Constantly, and if not in her own house, she is engaged elsewhere; I scarcely think she has spent one evening *alone with Sir James since their marriage*."

"Surely such gaiety must be distasteful to him; I am surprised he allows it."

"La, my dear! he cannot help himself; his young wife rules him entirely, besides which, having led a gay and dissipated life, he still wishes to be considered *youthful in his habits*."

"Poor man, how I pity him!" said Katherine. "There are few things more painful than to see an old person retaining all the follies of his youth."

At this moment the carriage stopped before the gate of her humble home.

"Love in a cottage, I see," observed Miss Sykes, as the door was opened and the steps let down. "Very charming, I have no doubt; but he is a *troublesome*, quarrelsome little fellow sometimes. Preserve me from his power and keep me single!"

Katherine smiled as she returned the pressure of her strange companion's hand.

"We cannot expect to pass through life without trials," she said, "and though you *may* be exempt from some by remaining unmarried, still others will come, such as sickness and pain, and loss of friends, to teach you *that this is not your rest*."

"Very true, my dear, very true," returned the maiden. "These we cannot help, *therefore must* submit to; but if we willingly load ourselves with a chain, we must expect it will sometimes gall us. And now, good night! I will come and see you *soon*, for I like you much;" and throwing herself back in the carriage, the light-hearted woman began to sing,

"My heart's my own, my will is free;"

while Katherine, the instant the door was closed upon her, flew to her infant, who she found *sleeping*; but from its quivering lips, she knew that it must have been sobbing, and her heart smote her again and again for having left it to the care of an ignorant servant for so many hours.

"Never will I do so any more, my darling!" she murmured, as she *knelt down* by the cradle and kissed its fair cheek. "What have I gained by my compliance? my *vanity* has been flattered, my evil passions roused, which I thought were for ever at rest. Oh! how much sin have I discovered within my breast this *night*—*how opposed* are such scenes to piety and peace, and yet they are called innocent amusements; how can they be so considered when they tend to so *much* evil. I *feel* unfitted for prayer—my thoughts are so confused and wandering—my spirit so weary, while my mind is in a tumult. Forgive me, *oh! my Father! and preserve me henceforth from the* like temptations. Let me show forth more decidedly whose I am, and whom I wish to serve."

She *now threw off* her dress, and prepared herself for retiring to rest, placing a small lamp upon the table, which she always kept burning in the absence of her *husband*. She looked at her watch; it was nearly two o'clock; he could not be long, she thought, and offering up her petitions to God for pardon and protection, she laid her aching head upon her pillow, not to sleep, but to listen and start at every noise she heard. She had just sunk into a broken kind of slumber, when the voice of Captain Warburton in the outer room aroused her. In a few minutes he entered, and (as Katherine now too often beheld him) *evidently excited from wine*. To avoid any unpleasant conversation, she feigned sleep, but the noise he made awoke the child, who began to cry.

"Hang that squalling brat, do take her away, or I will strangle her!" said the irascible young man, as Katherine started up and *strove to quiet* her.

"Are you in earnest, Neville? Shall I take her out of the room?" inquired his wife, *in alarm*.

"*If* you don't, I will; I am not to be disturbed in this way night after night;" and he would have rudely snatched the infant, who clung to its mother, as she tottered with it towards the door.

She had just gained it, when, overcome with terror and fatigue, she sank fainting into a chair. This appeared *to sober* him, and restore some better feelings. He gave the child to the maid, who came at his command, and chafing the temples of Katherine with *vinegar*, he spoke to her soothingly and kindly, which had more effect in restoring her than anything else; and she wept as he pressed her *affectionately*, and laid her gently on her bed.

"Do not send Amelia away," she murmured, as the wailing voice of her child met her ear.

"No, love, I will not; see, Bridget is rocking her to sleep; she will soon be quiet now."

Katherine felt consoled, and closing her eyes, she breathed *a prayer of thankfulness*, and in a little while forgetfulness stole over her in the soundest, sweetest repose.

The sun was rising high in the heavens when again she awoke. She was alone, and ringing for her servant, she inquired if Captain Warburton were in the house.

"No, ma'am," replied Bridget; "he went out some hours ago, desiring that you might not be disturbed."

"Did he say when he would return?"

"He did not, ma'am, but he rode towards the barracks, and Morris says he is for some duty."

Katherine felt satisfied, and having dressed and taken her slight morning repast, she sat down to her work, reflecting on all the occurrences of the last four and twenty hours, with many regrets and many resolutions for the future.

In the course of this day, Miss Sykes called, and quite won the heart of our heroine by her friendly and considerate kindness. She came laden with presents to the child, who she admired extremely, and made many offers to drive Katherine to Woodford Abbey or anywhere else she wished, whenever she pleased. She invited her also to go and see her, and said she would always send the carriage for her. Katherine expressed her grateful sense of such friendliness from a stranger, in her own ingenuous and sweet manner, and they parted, mutually pleased with each other.

Another gratification was in store for our heroine to-day—a letter from her brother Arthur, from whom she had not heard for many months. It was written in high spirits, and in his usual affectionate style. He informed her that he had just been appointed to a fine ship which would sail for China in a few days; that he had written twice to his father, but had received no reply. An order for money had, however, been left for him at his banker's, in London; the last, he imagined, he would receive. He deeply lamented not being able to see his sister once more ere his departure, but expressed a sanguine hope that in a couple of years, at least, he might enjoy that happiness. He informed her of Mr. Atherston's return to Granby Lodge, with his wife, and wrote feelingly of past happy days. Commending his beloved sister to the care of her Heavenly Father, who would never forsake her, as her earthly parent had done, he begged her acceptance of ten pounds, regretting he could not double the sum. Captain Warburton's name he never mentioned. Katherine wished he had, but with heartfelt gratitude she pressed the letter to her lips, and on her knees besought the protection of God for her darling Arthur, shedding tears at the same time as she reflected on the possibility that they might never meet again.

Captain Beauchamp called while she was still engaged reading her letter over and over again, and knowing his readiness to sympathize in the joys and sorrows of others, she could not forbear showing it to him. He warmly congratulated her on the appointment of her brother, but more especially on the style in which the letter was written, bespeaking, as it did, a thoughtful mind. Captain Beauchamp then conversed with her about the dear family, at Woodford Abbey, conveying to her many kind messages from Clara, and mentioned Lady Woodford's intention of coming to see her in a day or two. Both became animated while speaking of these valued friends; Captain Beauchamp particularly, reddening as he mentioned the name of Clara, and betraying by his manner, the growing interest that was springing up in his breast for that engaging young woman. On his rising to depart, he warmly pressed the hand of Katherine, over whose cheek a glow of pleasure passed, occasioned by the exciting subject they had been conversing upon. At the same instant Captain Warburton entered the room, having ridden up to the house without their perceiving him. He darted a look of astonishment, first on his wife, then on Captain Beauchamp, which changed for one of fury. This he subdued as Katherine flew with delight towards him, holding up her letter, and saying:

"Dearest Neville! I have been made so happy to-day; a letter from Arthur, do read it."

Whatever may have been the dark thoughts that obtruded themselves, they now seemed to fade away, for he smiled upon her, and addressed Captain Beauchamp in friendly terms, telling him of a horse which he knew he wished to purchase, and that it was to be offered for sale on the morrow. Captain Beauchamp remained a while talking to him, and then took his leave, little dreaming of their next encounter.

A month, perhaps six weeks, might have floated past. Mr. and Mrs. Bruce had in the interval taken an affectionate leave of the sorrowing Katherine, who had again paid a visit to her friends at Woodford Abbey, having been summoned there by the special request of Clara, who she found ill, and suffering from a cause that called forth her utmost sympathy. Too late for the peace of her daughter, Lady Woodford discovered that a mutual attachment had arisen between her and Captain Beauchamp, founded on a similarity of tastes, of disposition, but, above all, of religious feeling. Much as she admired the many excellent qualities of the young man, the fond parent shrank from the thought of parting with her child, to wander she knew not whither; added to which, she had bound herself by a promise, made to her departed husband, that Clara never should be wedded to a military man. This last reason was of course conclusive; and bitterly she reproached herself for having allowed one so calculated to win the affections of a young person, to be so constantly and so intimately associated with her daughter, without reflecting on the very natural consequences. Regard for Captain Beauchamp, the remembrance of his early misfortunes, and the friendship manifested by her son for him, had closed her eyes to the inconsistency of her conduct in encouraging his visits. But now this was glaringly displayed to her view, and severely punished when she beheld the misery it had caused—the pale cheek of her darling child, who had never uttered a complaint, but submitted at once to her mother's desires. One deeply affecting interview the poor girl had held with Captain Beauchamp ere they parted, when his manly frame shook with conflicting feelings; fervently they commended each other to the protection of the Most High, and expressed their assurance that the bitter trial had been sent for their mutual good. They had been too happy, their thoughts had been withdrawn from their Heavenly Father, and chained to earth, and now in mercy He had chastised them to bring them to Himself. Together they prayed for pardon and for strength to bear the rod, and then yielding to a first and last embrace, Clara tore herself from his arms, and fled weeping to the bosom of her commiserating mother.

When Katherine learnt all this from the lips of her interesting friend, how did she contrast her noble and dutiful conduct with what her own had been, under similar circumstances.

"You will be rewarded for it, dearest Clara," she said, as they mingled their tears and their embraces. "God will bless you abundantly for the sacrifice you have made. Oh! that I had proved myself such a daughter; from what days and nights of remorse and suffering should I have been spared."

"Do not praise me, sweet friend," replied Clara, with emotion; "for often does my heart rebel against this fiery trial, which the support of God alone enables me to endure mutely; then, to witness my dearest mother's grief at being the unwilling instrument of so much sorrow! Would you believe it, she asked my forgiveness with tears. Oh! could I be so ungrateful as not to strive to be resigned for her loved sake. Henry, too, all kindness, all affection; and grandmamma, old as she is, affording me her sympathy. With such blessings as these, I were indeed a sinful creature to murmur."

Katherine was musing upon all this as she sat *alone in her little parlour soon after her return*, when, to her surprise, she received another letter from her brother, who she had supposed far on his way to China. She opened it with a trembling hand, and read with astonishment, mingled with fear, that the ship had sailed without him, he having been induced to lend his money to one he had considered his friend, and who had promised to repay him on a particular day, but had failed in so doing. He bitterly lamented his folly in trusting to the word of a gambler, which had placed him in a most painful and trying situation, but he hoped, through the interest of a friend of his father's, to obtain another appointment in a little time. He expressed a strong desire to see his sister, but he charged her not to inform her husband that he was still in England, or that it was his intention to visit her, as he particularly wished to avoid meeting him. He promised to write again, and name the day when he would be in Canterbury.

It may readily be imagined the uneasiness this letter gave poor Katherine, increased by the secrecy enjoined in it. She knew not how to act, or what she ought to do; formerly she had had dear Mrs. Bruce to consult in her difficulties. She had even sought at times the advice of Captain Beauchamp; but the one was far away, and the other she had not seen since his severe disappointment.

"If I could only see Lady Woodford or Sir Henry, all would be well," she mentally said. "I will wait until to-morrow, when perhaps I may be so fortunate. Dear Arthur! the happiness of beholding you is sadly alloyed. Why, why desire me to keep your coming a secret from Neville? Never did I withhold anything from him before, and it pains me."

The morrow came, but before she could decide on any plan, a few lines from her brother announced his being at one of the principal hotels in Canterbury, and waiting with all impatience to see her, as he must be off again the very next day. What was to be done? she must decide in a few minutes. Fortunately for her, (at least, poor soul, so she thought) Captain Warburton was engaged to dine at Sir James Marley's; she could therefore receive her brother at home in the evening.

"And I can assist him, too," she said; "how can I better apply the remainder of dearest mamma's jewels," (Captain Warburton had disposed of some) "than in rescuing one so beloved from his difficulties. Should Neville ask for them, by that time I shall be able to tell him the truth."

Having once settled this, she became more easy in her mind, and went to her room for the cabinet in which they were kept. On unlocking it, she missed a valuable diamond brooch, containing the hair of sweet Ernest; her husband knew how she valued this above all the others; it was impossible, therefore, that he could have parted with it. She immediately rang her bell, and asked her servant if she had seen it. The woman looked at first confused, then assuming a *bold and confident manner, replied:*

"How could I see it when you always *keep* the cabinet locked?"

"I am sorry to wound your feelings," returned Katherine, who had noticed her confusion, and had besides, reasons for suspecting her honesty; "but I remember yesterday having left it open while I was showing a necklace to Miss Sykes. *No one but yourself or Captain Warburton enters* this room; he would not take it without mentioning it to me, as he knows how I treasure it; what am I therefore to think?"

"Think indeed! what you like," returned the woman, with the greatest effrontery. "I am no more a thief than yourself, and can show the best of characters. Isaac the Jew was here this *morning; my master was selling him some old* gold lace; it is far more likely he sold the brooch *at the same time.*"

The indignation of Katherine was roused to the highest pitch by this insinuation.

"You are a very insolent woman," she said, her cheek reddening with a thousand conflicting feelings. "Leave the room! I am thankful I shall not much longer be subject to your irritating and improper conduct."

"You are not more thankful than I am," rejoined Bridget. "*I can get a better place than* this any day—higher wages and better *wittles.* My Lady Marley wants a housemaid, and would take me, I am certain. Aye, *she is* a lady, and no mistake!" and with these words she flounced out of the room, slamming the door violently after her.

The moment she was gone, Katherine burst *into a flood of tears. Captain Warburton found* her still considerably agitated on his return. On demanding the cause, and being informed of all that had passed, his passion knew no bounds, and he would have had the woman searched and dismissed at once, but for the intercession of his wife, who considered it more prudent to inquire at the Jews and at the Pawnbrokers, whether such a brooch had been sold to them by any person.

"*I am to blame for having* left the casket open, and for placing a temptation in the way of *one who could not resist it,*" *she said;* "*therefore* I should not like to ruin the poor creature's character by the discovery of her dishonesty. She will leave me in a few days, when I expect a most respectable young person, recommended by Miss Sykes."

Captain Warburton appeared satisfied, fully intending, however, to take active and immediate steps for *the* recovery of an ornament of so much value.

As the day wore away, it became overcast and threatening rain. Katherine had contrived to *send a note to her brother by a little boy who she sometimes employed to run errands,* requesting he would come to her at eight o'clock, as her husband would be from home. Very painful to her it was to act thus clandestinely; but until she *knew Arthur's* reasons for wishing concealment, she would not venture to disclose his vicinity. Never before had she wished Neville absent, but *now she counted the hours with impatience and* disquietude. Once he noticed her uneasy and abstracted manner, but attributing it to the loss of the brooch, he said:

"Do not make yourself uneasy about it, love; I trust we shall be able to recover it again."

This kindness touched her, and she would have given worlds at that moment could she have confided *to him the real cause, and* well *would* it have been had she yielded to the impulse.

The rain was falling heavily when Captain Warburton, throwing on his cloak, wished her good evening and left the house. She watched him from the window till he was out of sight, then murmured within herself:

"Never will I hide any thing from him again, *I have felt all this day like a guilty thing;* even the expectation of beholding my brother scarcely repays me for the uneasiness I have suffered."

She continued watching till it became quite dark, when, ordering lights, she endeavoured to compose herself by reading; but her attention soon wandered from her book, and throwing it aside, she sat listening, her heart bounding at the slightest noise. It was long past eight o'clock when a loud ringing at the door-bell announced Arthur. She started up, clasping her hands and *unable to move.* In a *few minutes a young man* enveloped in a cloak *entered the room.* Katherine started; could this be her brother. His voice assured her, when with a cry of joy she fell into his extended arms. He held her there with speechless affection, then gazing *mournfully* in her face, he said:

"Oh! Kate! Kate! my darling sister! how *changed you are!* Where is the *bloom I used* to see on your cheek—where the merry laughing eyes? But I know the cause; Warburton is a brute—a villain, and I would not encounter him, because for your sake I feared the consequences."

"Ah! dearest Arthur! speak not so harshly of poor Neville," replied the weeping Katherine, "Indeed he does not deserve it; he has had much to try him since our marriage. My father's cruelty has placed us in great difficulties."

"Yes! difficulties which he has increased by his wilful extravagance," returned Arthur, with indignation; "but if he had been kind to you, I would have pardoned all. As it is, I execrate the day that ever I helped to lead you into so much misery and trouble."

"The past we cannot recall, my brother," said the distressed Katherine. "Let us improve our afflictions to the good of our souls, then they will not have been in vain. But how you are grown! I should scarcely have known you; do tell me all about yourself. How very unfortunate to lose your money and to miss your ship."

"I was an unlucky dog, indeed," replied Arthur; "but is it not more unfortunate, that, possessing as I do, a rich father, he will not assist me; every false step I have made, I owe to his unnatural desertion. What should I know of the world? Those whom I thought my friends—who courted—who flattered me, proved my bitterest enemies; and having stripped me of all, basely deserted me."

"There is but one friend, dear Arthur, who never changes—who never forsakes; I trust you have sought Him in prayer and in His holy word," said Katherine, laying her hand impressively on his arm.

"I fear not so much as I ought, Kate," returned her brother. "You know not what temptations assail a young man when once he is launched into the world, as I have been, without a parent's guiding hand. I often think how blessed was dear Ernest in being taken as a child, from all evil; better for me had I followed him then."

"Ah! say not so, dearest Arthur! God has given you a longer day of grace; prize it and improve it. You remember Sir Henry Woodford?"

"Indeed I do, well."

"You are aware that he is living within a few miles of this place," continued Katherine. "Go to him and ask his advice; few are more capable than he of giving you the best."

"No! no! not under existing circumstances; I should feel so like a beggar," said Arthur.

"Then what can be done?" returned Katherine, gazing uneasily in his handsome face. "I can assist you in a pecuniary sense with the sum you so kindly lent me, and our beloved mother's jewels. I am sure you will afford me the comfort of accepting them, and save me the pain of seeing you depart without means."

Arthur smiled affectionately upon her as she endeavoured to press on him the sealed packet she had already prepared, but he shook his head, saying:

"Never! my own Kate, never! I could not be guilty of such a thing, aware, as I am, of your circumstances; do not be uneasy on my account. The friend who I mentioned to you in my letter, has generously promised to advance me any sum I may require, and I am to go to him and remain in his house till he can obtain some appointment for me; he is very wealthy, and a most excellent man."

"May God reward him for his goodness!" exclaimed Katherine, much relieved. "Have I ever seen him?"

"Yes, he used to visit at Granby Lodge; Mr. Chester, a little withered old man, who, as children, we used to laugh at. From what I can gather, he was attached to our beloved mother before her marriage, which may account for his kindness to me. But, Kate, you have a child, let me see her; I hope she is like yourself?"

"She is thought more like her father," replied Katherine, "but you shall judge for yourself."

And she hastened into her chamber to bring the little creature, while Arthur, looking around him, said:

"My poor dear sister! what a humble home do I find you in. Confound the fellow who took you from your own, and who, instead of repaying the sacrifice you made, with kindness, has treated you with cruelty, indifference, and neglect. That pale cheek and saddened countenance, reveal a tale that you would fain conceal from me if you could."

The return of Katherine, with Amelia in her arms, interrupted his soliloquy; the child looked up in his face as her mother held her towards him, and it would almost seem that she noticed the strong likeness existing between brother and sister, for she smiled upon him. Most affectionately did he kiss her, a tear falling on her soft cheek as he did so. In the same instant Bridget entered with the tea tray, and beholding the strange young gentleman hanging so tenderly over her mistress and the child, she cast on them a most suspicious look, muttering to herself as she retreated:

"Fine doings, indeed, in my master's absence! So much for your religious folks! still water runs deep, they say; who can he be? I could not catch his face, but his back looks milentary. Aye! aye! accuse me of being a thief, forsooth! I'll have my revenge, I can tell you, my lady."

Time flew fast away in conversing on the past, the present and the future, and the clock struck eleven, when Arthur started up, saying he must be gone.

"And do you really intend leaving Canterbury to-morrow, and without seeing Neville or the Woodfords?" asked Katherine, in faltering tones.

Perceiving her look of distress, Arthur evaded the enquiry, half promising to call at the cottage on the morrow, to say farewell.

"Then I may tell Neville you have been here to-night?"

"Certainly, dearest Kate! God bless you! Keep up your spirits,—we shall meet again, depend."

Again and again he folded her in his arms, till her tears actually rained over him, for she suspected he would return no more. Poor Arthur was little less affected, but he strove manfully to suppress his feelings for her sake. With an effort that cost him far more pain than he had ever before experienced, he at length tore himself away. When the bewildered Katherine heard the door close upon him, and his quick retreating footsteps without, her heart seemed to die within her, and casting herself on the ground, she cried in the bitterness of her feelings:

"Another loved one gone for ever! My brother! Oh! my brother!"

Katherine had wept herself to sleep ere the return of Captain Warburton, about two hours afterwards. Bridget opened the door for him, and officiously entered the parlour to ask if he wanted anything. She might have perceived that he looked vexed and angry, but she was too full of her own communication to heed this. After clearing her throat sundry times, setting a chair for him, and snuffing the candles, one of which she put out, and took an age to light again, she said:

"Dear me! the gentleman has left his stick behind him, I declare."

"What are you talking about? I wish you would be gone," returned Captain Warburton, with an oath, and throwing himself into the chair. "Where is Morris?"

"I don't know, indeed, sir; he went out soon after the gentleman, and has not returned."

"The gentleman!—what gentleman? Who are you speaking of?" demanded Captain Warburton, angrily.

"I mean the gentleman, sir, who spent the evening with my mistress."

The mind of Captain Warburton being pre-engaged, and his head not very clear at the time, he scarcely comprehended the meaning of the woman's words. He fixed his eyes upon her, a dark frown overshadowing his brow, while with another fearful oath, he desired her to explain herself.

"La, bless me! you are very hard of understanding," replied Bridget, not in the least daunted. "A gentleman came here about nine o'clock, and staid till eleven, for I looked at the hour. I did not see his face, as his back was towards me; but he was an officer, I am sure; he seemed very intimate with my mistress, for as I came in with the tea, he had his arm round her waist, and was stooping down to kiss the child; but he drew away quick enough, I promise you, when he saw me. My mistress cried bitterly when he went away, and I heard him call her his darling Katherine, for I listened at the door, determined to tell you when you returned, as I thought it my duty so to do."

Had the earth suddenly opened before him, the shock would not have been greater to Captain Warburton, than that he now experienced. He started up like a madman, uttering a yell of fury that made even Bridget quail. His awful imprecations must not sully these pages.

"I have at times suspected this," were his first connected words; "but then, she looked so innocent! Oh, God!" and he violently struck his forehead. "The villain—the double-hearted, hypocritical villain! he shall die for it this night."

And he took down his case of pistols, and rushed towards the door. Bridget now became alarmed for the consequences of her wickedness.

"La, sir! do, pray compose yourself," she said, trying to hold him back. "You may be mistaken in the person; go and ask my mistress, perhaps she can explain all to your satisfaction."

Had he done so in such a moment, there is little doubt but he would have shot his wife. Happily, an unseen power withheld him from entering her chamber, and chained her senses in the most profound slumber, so that the noise disturbed her not. With one touch of his powerful arm, he hurled Bridget from him; then opening the street door, he was off like lightning before she had time to recover herself.

"Well! I wish I had bit my tongue through and through before ever I told him a word about it," was the first exclamation of the affrighted woman. "I never thought he would have been so violent. La, bless me! if blood should be shed, I could never forgive myself. I wonder if my mistress can be asleep; I'll just peep in and see."

With much caution, she turned the lock, holding up the candle as she unclosed the door. The pale, beautiful face of Katherine was towards her, sleeping as calmly as an infant. Her look of innocence smote the heart of the woman, who was not yet hardened in sin. She retreated noiselessly, and hastened down to the kitchen, there to await in fear and trembling, the return of her exasperated master.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MATRIMONIAL SPECULATIONS.

BY MRS. MOODIE.

CHAPTER VI.

—

FRESH DISAPPOINTMENTS.

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It was a long time," continued Mrs. Burnham, before I could discover who were my fellow travellers in the coach, the night being too dark, and the lamps placed too far forward for me to discern their faces and costumes. I soon perceived by their conversation, that there were only two persons besides myself in the dingy cavern into which we were stowed, who afterwards proved a lady from London, returning thither from a visit to a sick mother, and a major in the army, whose regiment had landed a few days before at Yarmouth, from the continent, who was on his way to the metropolis with despatches. They were talking of the Duke of Kent's sudden death, which had happened a few days before, and the officer spoke of him in very high terms. After some time, the lady asked me in a very sweet voice, where I was from, and if I were going the whole journey. I soon told her, not only my name and place of abode, but before the night was half over, my whole history, boasting of the antiquity of my father's family, and naming all the great families to whom he was remotely allied.

"The officer seemed highly amused by my imprudent disclosures, and soon drew from me the reason of my present journey, the sanguine notions I had formed of London, and the certainty with which I expected to make my fortune there. Never did youth and inexperience play the fool in a more preposterous manner; I hate to recall, even at this hour, the absurd manner in which I exposed my vanity and ignorance of the world.

"Fortunately for me, I had fallen into the hands of good Samaritans. The kind lady was a mother, and only smiled at my foolish sallies; and the gallant officer seemed to think not the worse of me for wearing my heart upon my sleeve. They not only took me under their especial protection, but insisted upon paying all my expenses upon the road.

"At Ipswich the officer took his leave, his servant having arrived with horses, in order that he might prosecute his journey with greater speed. The good natured lady dozed the rest of the sixty miles; as for me, I could not sleep; London was ever present to my eyes. I pictured to myself a second Athens or Rome; and when the cold morning at length dawned upon dull, narrow, filthy streets, and interminable rows of dingy, forbidding-looking houses, looming like black giants through the fog, I wondered what ugly town we were entering. My companion soon relieved me from all my doubts, for awakening with a gentle yawn, and rubbing her eyes, she said:

"'I thought we were upon the stones. Thank God! we are in London at last. My dear husband—my dear little children! I have not seen you for six long, long weeks. Oh! how I long to see you all again.'

"'And is this London!' I exclaimed, turning my back upon Limehouse, Stepney and White Chapel in despair. 'What a place! I wish I were back again in the country.'

"'What part of London are you going to?' said the lady.

"'The Tower.'

"'Worse and worse,' said she, laughing. 'But this is not a day in which the city could appear to any advantage. It is just such an one as the cockneys are said to choose when they wish to hang or drown themselves. But here we are at the Saracen's Head; and here is the carriage, and dear William himself, and two of the boys come for me.'

"I envied the kind woman, the happy meeting between her and her family. The husband was a handsome merchant, the sons, two sweet boys of eight and ten, and their faces were all smiles, and there were such a kissing and shaking of hands between them all, that my own eyes were full of tears.

"And there I sat, a stranger in this vast, comfortless-looking city, without one friendly voice to greet me. I was cold, and disappointed, and miserable, and knew not what to do in the present emergency. The guard came to the door and demanded the fare for myself and luggage. This I paid him. He told me I must alight, as the coach put up at this place. I said I knew not where to go, my friends having promised to meet me.

"'I will call a coach for you, ma'am. The direction upon your trunk is Tower street. You will find no difficulty in getting to it.'

"Just at this critical moment, a tall youth of eighteen, who looked like a mechanic, popped his head into the coach, and demanded my name. I drew back with offended dignity into the corner of the coach, and made no reply.

"'Pray, Miss, don't be offended, I meant no harm; I only want to know your name.'

"'We are strangers, sir.'

"'At present, but I hope not always to remain so. Is your name Rachel Beauchamp?'

"'It is,' said I, greatly surprised at its being familiar to a vulgar youth, shabbily dressed, and not over clean, in the streets of London.

"'All right!' said he, cutting a caper, and rubbing his hands in a sort of extacy together. 'I have found you at last. I am your cousin, Sam Cornish, and that is sister Amy and the baby, who are waiting for you on the pavement.'

"I felt sick with disgust, and my heart died within me, as without uttering a word, I suffered master Samuel to help me out of the coach. The moment my foot was upon the pavement, and before I could speak to the female of this extraordinary male, he flung his arms about my neck, and gave me a kiss which could have been heard across the street. Burning with shame, I burst from his rude grasp, and fled across the street to his sister, followed by the boisterous laugh of the coachman and my odious relative.

"The young lady, who smiled contemptuously at what she termed my 'hairs,' was about four feet six or seven inches in height, of a pale, cadaverous complexion, with melancholy, dull-looking dark eyes, a turned up nose, a falling in mouth, and peaked chin. She was dressed in a dirty, dark print gown, an old red shawl about her shoulders, a broken, black chip hat upon her head, ornamented by a dingy red flower, and her hair full of curl papers. The child she held in her arms, a cross boy of eighteen months, was as homely a specimen of the juvenile portion of the species as I ever looked upon, and his face was so blackened and begrimmed with dirt, he looked like an infant chimney sweep. I had taken this deplorable looking young person for a nurse girl of the lowest class, and you may imagine my feelings at being introduced to her as a near relation.

"'I 'ope, cousin,' she lisped out, 'that you are not ashamed of us. You had better lay aside your proud hairs before you get 'ome, or father will soon laugh you out of them.'

"We were now joined by master Samuel, who, to my increasing distress, was staggering under the weight of my trunk.

"'Mr. Cornish,' I cried, for I could not as yet frame my mouth to call him cousin; 'pray call a porter.'

"'Nonsense,' said he; 'that's the way you country Johnnies throw away your money. Father told me to save you the expense of porterage, and carry your trunk myself; and I dare not disobey the old governor, or I should catch it. But I can tell you that 'tis deuced heavy.'

"'I am sorry to give you so much trouble,' I replied. But I was severely mortified, and wondered what sort of people the father and mother of these young persons could be, when rich, as I knew they were, they could suffer their children to perform such menial offices in public. My reverie was again interrupted by cousin Sam.

"'You don't seem very glad to see us, cousin Rachel,' (how I hated his familiarity) 'and it is really too bad, after the dance I had for you this morning. I went to the coach stand in Leadenhall street, and asked the ladies in the different mail coaches, their names, and some laughed, and others were angry and called me an impertinent puppy, but not one among them all was so stiff as you are.'

"I did not answer him; the tears were streaming down my face, and I held down my head in order to avoid observation. At length we entered Tower Street, which, narrow and dirty, and dark as it always appears, is nevertheless one of the great arteries of London. The centre of the street was crowded with huge dray carts, and the width between them and the wall was so small, and the pavement so greasy and slippery from the rain, that I clung to the arm of my rude companion for fear of being entangled in the crowd. Just at the junction of the street with Tower Hill, we stopped at the front of a large house. Amy rang a loud peal at the door-bell, which was answered by another female, yet more dirty and deplorable than Miss Amy. That young lady gave a knowing wink to the domestic slave, as she tossed the baby into her arms.

"'Here, Betty, take Owen; I can tell you that my harm is tired of him. Is breakfast over?'

"'Not quite, there's still a bite left for you," said the impudent wench, staring full into my face. 'Missus was tired of waiting for you, and got cruel cross. Is this here tall gall your country cousin. She's a wopper—beant she?'

"'Aye, she's twice as tall as *me*, Betty; isn't she? Vell! I halways did 'ate tall vimmen. They look so hawkward; don't they?'

"And with this polite speech, I was ushered, not up stairs into the parlor, but down stairs into a dark, miserable, underground kitchen, where a lamp and one greasy tallow candle were contending with the grey, foggy, unwholesome light, which was scantily admitted through a long, low, iron-barred window.

At a table covered with a coarse brown cloth, a thin, spare, hatchet-faced woman was pouring out tea. She was dressed in a blue spotted calico gown. An apron which, like the nightcap on her head, had once been white and clean, long, long ago, was tied with strings of a different colour. Her shoes were down at the heel, and her toes were out of both stockings and shoes; a more disgusting slattern could hardly have presented herself to the eyes of a stranger. Directly opposite to her, on either side the dull fire, sat in wicker-work chairs, two boys from three to four years old, in their sooty-looking night gowns. One, who was deeply marked with small pox, held up round its middle, a meagre, dolorous-looking, half-grown cat, the very picture of starvation,—a helpless victim of infant tyranny, which was uttering useless cries, in the vain hope of being released by its juvenile tormentor. The other little fellow was kicking the fender, and munching a piece of bread and butter.

"I still stood in the door-way, reluctant to advance, not knowing how to address the matron, for I could not believe that this was my aunt, the once handsome sister of my dear, neat, lady-like mother. But she soon dismissed my doubts by calling to me in a shrill, vulgar-toned voice:

"'Yes, I'm your aunt! I'm not a fine lady like your mother, and my husband isn't a poor, proud gentleman, like your father. But we have plenty, without having to ask charity of friend or foe. But sit down, child, I dare say you are tired, and the sound of the coach wheels must be lumbering in your head. If you had come a little sooner, I could have given you a good cup of tea; but now it is little better than slop.'

"'Can't you make the gall some fresh tea, Mary? it won't cost so much,' said a hoarse voice from a corner of the room; and I now discovered through the gloom, the figure of a man in his trowsers and shirt sleeves, shaving at a glass which was fastened against the wall. As he turned to survey me, with his broad, dark face, half covered with lather, and his wiry, black hair standing straight up from his narrow wrinkled forehead, which was cut into all sorts of hieroglyphics by the small pox, I thought I had never before seen a face so coarse and brutal.

"'Lord, William! hold your tongue. It's quite good enough; you would not have me make the gall nervous, would you?'

"'She seems that already,' said the old sailor, for he had first made a fortune as captain of a Hambro' vessel. 'If she is not piping her eye! Well, 'tis natural. The creature is just from home, and that for the first time. Dry your eyes, child. You are among relations and friends.'

"'Thank you, uncle,' I said, sinking down upon the chair he offered me. 'I shall feel more at home, to-morrow, I hope. But my heart is full. Indeed I can't help it.' And having made this confession, I wept in good earnest, greatly to the annoyance of my aunt. Cousin Sam handed me the cup of smoky hot water, that she called tea. Had it been the most delicious bowl of fragrant gunpowder, or imperial, I could not have tasted it. There was such a choking, stifling feeling in my throat, that all attempts to swallow proved ineffectual. A strange, cold, shuddering sensation stole over me, my hair seemed to rise, my teeth chattered in my head, and I went into a violent fit of hysterics.

"'When I recovered, I was lying upon a mattrass in a two-bedded room, up stairs. My cousin Amy and her attendant, Betty, were making the other bed; when I rose up into a sitting posture, both the girls burst into a giggling laugh.

"'So Miss has got over the meagrims at last,' said Betty, with a grin. 'I think Missus will be a good one to cure her of those fine lady pranks. What would she say, Amy, if you were to kick and squall in that ere way?'

"'Hush!' said her amiable companion; 'she will 'ear what you say.'

"'I don't care if she do,' responded the other. 'I spose that 'ere gown vas vite, vich she has on, ven she left 'ome. It's a pretty colour now, isn't it?'

"'This speech made me direct my eyes to my own person, and truly I cut a deplorable figure. My hair was out of curl and hung in lank locks about my pale, woe-begone face. My dress was all rumpled with my journey, and covered with London blacks, and my hands looked as much soiled as my dress. I saw the propriety of immediately remedying these evils, and politely asked Betty to bring up a little water to wash with, as there was none in the ewer.

"'We never vash in the chambers,' said my obliging cousin; 'and in this 'ouse, people always vait upon themselves. You will find a tin basin on the kitchen sink, and a round towel upon the nail, if you vant to clean yourself.'

"To the kitchen I went, as I found there was no other alternative; and as my aunt was there alone, I commenced my ablutions in good earnest—she watching me askance from the stocking she was mending the whole time.

"I then proceeded to unlock my trunk, and took from thence my comb-bag, and going to my uncle's shaving glass, I endeavoured to restore my bonny brown curls to their usual gloss.

"'Well,' said my aunt, 'the less time you bestow upon the glass, the better, Rachel. It will never alter your face, and that is plain enough. I heard my brother say you were a pretty babe, but they always grow up the worst looking; and you *were* a pretty babe.'

"Plain as she considered me, I was certainly, without any self-delusion, the best looking female in the house; and I went on brushing my hair, without noticing her ill-natured remarks.

"'What clothes have you brought with you?' said she, starting from her chair, and going to my open trunk. 'I don't mean to be at the trouble of washing white gowns for you, I can tell you. I shall just look over your things, if you please, and tell you what to wear.' And before I could hinder her, she tossed all my neatly packed clothes upon the kitchen floor, opening and examining even my under garments. I felt my blood boil within me, at what I considered a perfect outrage. She saw me change color, and told me, 'That I need not be miffed, for she always did as she pleased in her own house, and that if I did not like it, I might leave it—that I was just like my mother, and that she saw that I should never be a favourite with her.'

"'Then do let me go home,' I cried, again bursting into tears. 'I cannot stay here. It will break my heart. I must return this very night.'

"'You will think better of it after dinner,' said my aunt, who, perhaps, was ashamed of letting me go home a few hours after my arrival. 'You have seen none of the sights of London yet.'

"'I have seen enough of them,' I cried, sobbing as if my heart would break. 'Why did I leave my dear, kind mother and sisters, to come to a place like this?'

"'Ah ha!' said my aunt; 'but you have not seen the house yet. Put up your duds,' and she kicked my clothes contemptuously with her foot, 'and I will show you the parlour and drawing room.'

"I was so disgusted with her and her daughter, and her kitchen, that I followed her very sulkily up stairs. Great was my astonishment, however, on being shown into a splendidly furnished room, the walls of which were covered with fine paintings, some from the old masters, which were worth many hundred pounds. I looked from the gay walls, to the plain, common looking mistress of the house. They certainly were not in unison. She guessed my thoughts, and said, with some bitterness:

"'Fools always judge by the outside of the purse. The brown leather bag generally holds the most gold. When I wish to sit in a fine room and wear a fine gown, I can do it, and that is more than my lady sister is able to do. Come this way.'

She then opened the door of the drawing room, which was a noble apartment, and furnished with much taste. I remarked a grand piano-forte.

"'Yes,' she said, 'I play and sing well; Amy still better. She has won the gold medal from Mr. Rolfe's academy several times.'

"I wondered, that with such rooms—with sideboards loaded with plate, and wardrobes full of rich clothes—how my aunt and cousin could spend more than half their lives in a dirty kitchen, and in such a mean attire. One word might have answered all my doubts,—Avarice. They wanted the heart and the ability to enjoy all the good they possessed. Their wealth was of a soul-debasing and sordid kind. They only prized their luxuries for what they cost, and for fear of injuring their value, they never made any use of them. Occasionally, they were displayed to gratify their self-love. Once every year, they gave a great party, when all this grandeur was shown to their envying guests. The other three hundred and sixty four days, they were contented to grope through life like moles in the dark. How I pitied and despised them.

"But to cut this long story short, my dear girls; that night saw me again an inside traveller in the mail-coach; but this time it was not to London. Never did the reprieved criminal feel greater transport in quitting his gloomy cell, than did I when I turned my back for the first time upon that wonderful, and to me, unexplored city. In after years, when I became familiar with its magnificent buildings, and the warm, kind hearts that are to be found within its walls, I have laughed as I recalled the breathless haste and the deep disappointment with which I fled from it after a few hours sojourn, and hoped that it was for ever."

CHAPTER VII.

WHICH ENDS IN A WEDDING.

MRS. BURNHAM had scarcely finished speaking when Caroline came in.

"How did Mrs. Beaumont behave to you?" cried Rosamond, running to meet her.

"Oh! better than might have been expected. She shook hands with me, cordially for her, and hoped that I would soon call again."

"Vastly condescending—and poor uncle?"

"Looks dismally crest-fallen. I am sure he repents of his marriage already. I told him that he looked thin.

"'No wonder," quoth he. 'I have not had a dinner cooked fit for a Christian [illegible]t since I married. Mrs. Beaumont does not cook for me now; and we have found no one with sufficient ability to fill her place.'

"Mrs. B. laughed to herself, and said 'that she was glad to escape from the fatigue of cooking—that for the last ten years, she had been broiled to death over great fires; she thought it was high time to rest and cool herself.'

"Uncle sighed deeply, and remarked, that the fine salmon George had sent him, had been spoilt by Sally in the cooking; that he was so vexed about it, that he did not feel so grateful for the present as he ought. He then asked after George, and what he was going to do with himself. This was just what I wanted.

"'He can do nothing at home,' I said. 'His promotion is stopped for want of means, and he is determined to marry Miss Telford and emigrate to Canada, and he did not like to take such an important step without consulting you.'

"'It is the very best thing he could do,' said Mrs. B.

"My uncle shook his head. I saw the tear gathering in his eye.

"'Cannot he wait patiently for a few years?'

"'What good will that do him?' returned the bride, with an awful frown.

"The good old man fidgetted upon his chair; he glanced timidly at his new mistress, but saw no hope in that quarter.

"'Perhaps,' he continued, 'it is his wisest course. I am sorry that I cannot help him, but I may have a family of my own.'

"I dared not look at the doting old man, for fear of laughing outright.

"'It is possible,' I replied. 'Sarah was ninety years old when Isaac was born.'

"'I don't expect miracles, child,' said he, very gravely. 'Mrs. Orams—Beaumont, I mean—is not fifty yet.'

"'Fifty!' screamed the enraged bride. 'I am not forty until next birth-day.'

"'I beg pardon, my dear!' returned the youthful bridegroom. 'I knew that you were a young woman, just in your prime.'

"'You ought to know it, and be proud of it, too,' said the offended lady, smoothing down the folds of her rich silk gown. 'But, Miss Harford,' she cried, turning to me; 'is not your brother very imprudent to marry a girl without any money, in his circumstances?'

"'He would not marry were he going to remain in England,' I replied. 'But what could he do without a wife in the back woods of Canada.'

"'True, child,' said the doctor. 'I am no great advocate for matrimony.' Here he caught another frown from his wife. 'But I think George is right.' Then leaning forward upon the elbow of my chair, he whispered in my ear. 'Tell him he shall get a hundred pounds from me to help him out, but don't say a word to the wife.'

"I felt the colour come into my face, but seeing nothing further could be done, I rose and made my adieus. Mrs. B. followed me to the door.

"'What was that your uncle said to you, Miss Caroline?' she asked, in no very gentle voice. 'I hate whispering in company.'

"'It was something which concerned myself, Mrs. Beaumont,' I said, firmly, but politely. 'If it had been of any consequence, the doctor would have spoken aloud. Good morning!' and off I ran, upon the whole not displeased with my visit, and glad to perceive that our cause is not so hopeless as I at first imagined it."

"You think that there is little harmony between the new married couple?" said Mrs. Burnham.

"None," returned Caroline. "If she ceases to pamper his appetite, her sway will be limited. But this is all mere speculation. It is better for us to act, and leave the rest in the hands of Providence."

The ladies were joined by Mr. Burnham and the two young gentlemen, and the footman announced that dinner was ready.

Rosamond naturally expected that Edward Freeburn would lead her down stairs. She was surprised and disappointed, when, passing her with a slight bow, he gave his arm to Miss Cotterel, and led her from the room. Clement instantly sprang forward to supply his place, and drawing her arm within his own, said gaily:

"We are the last, Miss Rose; the youngest, and I hope, the happiest pair in the room."

Rose tried to smile, but there was a moisture on the lids of her beautiful eyes, which looked rather like tears. She dashed it away, and descended in silence to the dining room. At dinner, Edward had always contrived to get the seat next her. To-day, there was no anxiety displayed to effect this. Entirely engrossed with Miss Cotterel, he did not even ask our fair Rosamond to take wine with him. The dinner was excellent, the conversation general and lively. Rose, alone, was silent and miserable. Dr. Burnham remarked his favourite's abstraction, and began joking her upon her uncle's marriage, which he declared an atrocious act, for robbing his dear young friend of her gay spirits. Rose coloured slightly, and rousing herself from her reverie, she saw at once that she was acting foolishly and drawing the attention of the party to herself. Pride came to her assistance, (and she possessed no small share of it,) and she answered, carelessly:

"You are mistaken; I was sorry for that ridiculous marriage at first, for I could not endure the thought of calling an ugly, vulgar cook-maid, my aunt; but I am glad of it now."

"How! my pretty Rosamond? What can have made you alter your opinion?"

"It has given me a clearer insight into the world and its ways," returned Rose, glancing contemptuously towards her lover. "It has taught me how to discern between my real friends and pretended ones."

"But, my dear girl, such knowledge, although it may be useful, is far from agreeable. If you can philosophize upon it, and turn it to a good account, happy are you."

"I will try," said Rosamond, and the conversation ended.

Edward Freeburn stole a glance at the indignant girl. The warmth with which she had spoken had left a bright glow upon her cheeks, and given a clearer sparkle to her eyes. She looked beautiful; and in spite of the sordid selfishness of his character, he felt ashamed of himself. After dinner, the young folks adjourned to the garden, in search of amusement. Miss Cotterel and Caroline had grown into great friends, and they ran off into the grove to improve their acquaintance by a sentimental ramble. Rosmond and the two young gentlemen were left alone. Rose heartily wished herself at home, for she found it no easy task to conceal her tears and affect indifference, which it was foreign for one of her ardent temperament to feel. Clement proposed a walk to the sea shore, to which Rosamond reluctantly consented.

"Freeburn!" he cried; "will you not accompany us?"

"Oh, no! A third person would be sadly in the way. The afternoon is too warm, and I am too lazy; besides, I want to finish the last volume of Night and Morning. Good bye, Clem—I wish you a pleasant stroll."

What passed during this walk between Rose and her companion, never transpired, but certain it is that the young lady returned in better spirits. Clement looked proud and happy, and a great intimacy grew up between the families, while Edward Freeburn's name was never mentioned by Rosamond or her sister.

In the meanwhile, George Harford lost no time in making the necessary arrangements for his intended emigration. He obtained permission from the Horse Guards to retire upon half-pay, and settle in the Canadas; and expended a part of his small means in fitting out himself and his young bride for their voyage. Caroline was able to bear her own expenses.

In a few days, Mrs. Harford's cottage presented a scene of bustle and confusion. The carpet and tables were strewn with goods. Sheets and blankets occupied one sofa, books and articles for the toilet, another; coats and waistcoats were suspended on the back of every chair. No one could move about without stumbling over some article of use or uselessness, or wishing trunks and portmanteaus every where but in the place they occupied. And to add to this universal litter, sempstresses were at work in every chamber, and a restless and uncomfortable spirit pervaded the house.

"I wish this fuss and muddle was over," sighed Rosamond, who, too much excited to continue steadily at her needle, was wandering from room to room like the evil genius of emigration, standing in her own and every body's way, while Caroline, ever active, was superintending the packing of trunks, attending to the fitting of dresses, regulating the confused assistance of servants, and answering letters of business with as much calmness and promptitude as if she were only a looker-on, and not one of the parties most deeply concerned in these important arrangements.

"If you cannot make yourself useful at home, Rose, could not you step over to the Telfords, and help Ellen. You really are dreadfully in our way," said Caroline. "I wish you were going with us, and then you could not be so idle."

"Indeed, Caroline, you must forgive me," said poor Rose, bursting into tears. "When I think of your all going away to that far country, it makes me so miserable, that I cannot settle to anything. I would gladly work, but my hand trembles so, and my eyes are so dim that I cannot set a stitch."

"Well, then, do sit down and read, my dear girl," said Caroline, kindly kissing her pale cheek; "for I cannot work if you will keep misplacing everything, and running in our way. To-morrow, and to-morrow, and the day after to-morrow, as the children said to Werter,—and this scene of confusion will subside into its usual calm."

"Alas!" said Rose, putting on her bonnet to walk over to Ellen Telford's; "it will be the calm of death."

It had been arranged by George and his mother, that his wedding was to take place on the morning of their departure, Caroline and Rosamond acting as bridesmaids upon the occasion. They were to breakfast at Mr. Burnham's, and from thence proceed on board the steam-packet, which was to convey them to London on their way to the far west.

The sudden marriage of Lieutenant Harford, and his departure for Canada, were the universal theme of conversation in the village. Some blamed his precipitancy, other laughed at his folly; few, but his own immediate friends, praised him for his manly and independent conduct.

The day so long dreaded by Mrs. Harford and Rose, at length dawned upon the world; and a beautiful and cloudless day it was, and seemed to smile propitiously upon the poor emigrants.

Caroline was up with the sun, and had seen every trunk and chest properly deposited in the boat that was to convey them on board, before she thought of the duties of the toilet. She found Rosamond still before the glass; but she looked pale and sad, and declared that she would put on a mourning dress, instead of the rich white satin that George had provided for her.

"Nonsense!" said Caroline; "this day should be regarded in our family as a declaration of independence. White, and nothing but white, will suit it. But quick, dear Rose; I hear Ellen's voice in the parlour; George has been to fetch her over. We shall be too late for church."

A very few minutes served to arrange Caroline's dress; but she did not leave the chamber before she laid her travelling costume ready for an exchange with her bridal finery, the moment the party returned from church. They found Ellen and her mother and sisters in the parlor, the poor young bride struggling to hide the grief of an eternal separation from her family, in forced smiles. But it would not do; she flung herself into Caroline's arms and wept.

"Courage, dear sister," said the strong-hearted girl; "reserve these tears for the parting hour. This belongs to joy; and joyful, I hope, it will prove to us all."

The party now proceeded on foot to the village church, which was but a few paces distant, and the glancing of their white favors and snowy dresses in the morning sun, made a gallant show. All the poor people in the village were assembled at the church gate to see them pass, while more aristocrical heads were peeping from behind curtains and over green blinds, to satisfy their curiosity, and to ascertain what the bride was dressed in. At the altar they were met by old Mr. Beaumont himself, who had volunteered to fill Mr. Robland's place, and perform the marriage ceremony. The old gentleman sighed audibly as his eye ran over the wedding party, and rested with a sad and regretful expression on the manly, handsome face of his nephew and his lovely bride, and his voice sank almost to a whisper several times during the service. At length the knot was tied, and Ellen Harford received the congratulations of her friends.

"Will you accept mine, young lady?" said the old man, kissing her blushing cheek. "I am sorry that I cannot give you my blessing in a more substantial form," he continued, thrusting a paper into her hand. "But by and by I will not forget you, rest assured of that. God bless you, my dear children; I wish you may be prosperous and happy. As to your poor old uncle, he is of all men, the most miserable;" so saying, the doctor hobbled off, leaving the party not a little pleased and surprised at his kind reception and frank confession.

On returning to Mrs. Harford's to change their dresses, Ellen found that the paper she had received from Dr. Beaumont, contained a cheque upon his banker for five hundred pounds, which had the effect of raising her husband's spirits to an extravagant pitch of joy, and they all proceeded to Mrs. Burnham's with smiling faces, looking upon this circumstance as a harbinger of future fortune.

I will pass over the sighs and tears—the bitter sorrows of parting. I have experienced them myself. You, my kind readers, have many of you felt the heartache of that worst agony, leaving your dear native land—the friends of your youth—the home of your childhood. I need not repeat in words, feelings which no language could faithfully depict. You can all better determine from your own experience, the anguish which that hour brought forth. Nor do I mean to follow our emigrants in their melancholy voyage across the great waters, or describe their first settlement in the back woods of Canada. I reserve these for another story and another place. My present humor is to stay at home and see what befell Rosamond, and how her old uncle left his property.

CHAPTER VII.

WHICH SUMS UP THE WHOLE MATTER.

It may well be imagined, how solitary and sad Mrs. Harford and her daughter felt themselves, after the departure of the bridal party; nor can it be wondered that Annice Cotterel kindly invited herself to spend a few weeks at the cottage, in order to help to dissipate their dulness; or that she and Rosamond, in the absence of Caroline, formed a very tender friendship for each other; or that Clement, who was such an affectionate brother, should often step over of an evening to see his dear sister. I cannot tell how it happened, (but such things do constantly happen,) that in their evening rambles, Annice was always found loitering far behind some hedge-row, collecting botanical specimens, while Clement and his beautiful partner were closely engaged in conversation, which appeared deeply to interest them, and before the first letters were received from the emigrants, announcing their safe arrival in Canada, the said Clement had proposed for the Rose of C——, and had been accepted by both mother and daughter.

As the young gentleman had not yet commenced business on his own account, the affair was kept a profound secret, and not even the neighbours suspected that the charming Rosamond would unite her destiny with the plain, unpretending son of the yeoman.

At length the long-looked for letters from Canada arrived, and told, not only of a pleasant and prosperous voyage, but of the marriage of Caroline to a young clergyman, who was going out to take charge of a parish in a long settled and flourishing district. This circumstance had determined George to purchase a farm in the same neighbourhood. This he had accomplished on very advantageous terms, and the whole party were so much delighted with their present happiness and future prospects, that George summed up the whole by entreating his mother and Rosamond to join them in the spring, declaring that if his uncle were to make him his heir, upon condition of his returning and spending the rest of his days in England, he would prefer staying where he then was.

Mrs. Harford was much gratified by her son's letter, and Caroline's happy marriage; but poor Rosamond cried for a full hour at the idea of their being so comfortable without them.

"I was so certain," she exclaimed, "that we should soon see them back again! that they could not live without us! And Caroline, too! Mrs. Hunter, I beg her ladyship's pardon. I thought, whatever George might do, that she would return to us. Ah! yes. I see through it all now. Caroline was afraid that she would not get married at home. It was only a marriage speculation, after all. I wish I was at her elbow just now. How I would torment her about old maids."

"Dear Rosamond," said Annice, quite astonished at this burst of spleen. "You are quite spiteful and censorious this morning. Your sister was a very lovely young woman; you surely could not consider her in the light of an old maid. I am only surprised that she did not marry long ago."

"Annice, I don't mean to insinuate that Caroline was an old maid, (though she had a great many old maidish ways) for she is only just two and twenty; but she always used to declare that she meant to die an old maid. Yet you see the very first offer she got, made her change her opinion. And for one of her severe notions, the courtship was rather short. I can't forget all her lectures upon propriety, maiden delicacy, et cetera, and I am glad that she has proved in her own person, how easy it is to theorize, how difficult to practise."

"Well, Caroline is an excellent girl, and I wish her happy, with all my heart. Don't you remember, Rosamond, once upon a time, saying that your sister would make a capital wife for my brother. What made *you* so soon alter your opinion?"

"I did not care for him myself then."

"Does not your answer apply equally well to Caroline? She did not care about getting married, because she had never seen a man whom she could regard with sufficient esteem to entrust her happiness to his keeping. I know Caroline well enough to feel certain that she would not make a bad choice. But who is this coming so slowly across the lawn? Bless me, Rosamond! 'tis your uncle—'tis Dr. Beaumont himself."

Mrs. Harford went to the door to receive her unexpected visitor. She thought that he had heard of the arrival of the foreign mail, and had stepped in to inquire after the fate of his nephew.

"This is kind, Dr. Beaumont," she said, plac- for him a large easy chair; "an attention from you which I did not expect. I hope I see you well."

"Yes, yes, quite well, never was better in my life," said the old man, slowly removing his clerical hat, and wiping away the perspiration which had gathered upon his bald head. Then letting his hat drop to the floor, and his hands rest upon his knees, he continued looking at Mrs. Harford in such a solemn, serious manner, that that lady grew alarmed, and asked him in a faltering voice, if anything had happened to distress him. "Have you not heard the news?" he gasped, in a sepulchal tone. "Mrs. Orams—my wife that was—died last night in a fit of apoplexy."

An exclamation of surprise burst from the three ladies.

"Yes—it's true. A woman in the very prime of life. It should be a warning to me, and I should feel grieved for her death. But, God forgive me, I can't. It is such a relief to me—such an emancipation from vulgar, coarse tyranny, that I could scarcely refrain from a sinful feeling of joy, when Sally came to tell me of it this morning. Poor woman! I am sorry for her, for she was so unprepared, and died, I fear, from the combined effect of repletion and brandy; but I cannot help congratulating myself. Ah, niece! will you forget and forgive the past, and come over and help me in my distress? If you will let this place and take charge of my house, you shall never have cause to repent the change."

This offer was too advantageous to be refused, and a few days after the funeral of the doctor's lady, Mrs. Harford found herself established as the mistress of the doctor's spacious mansion, with every prospect of his property being finally secured to her family.

"Now, Clement, will be my time to propose for pretty Rose Harford," said Edward Freeburn, as they sat together in the office, chatting over the sudden death of Mrs. Beaumont, and the alteration which that event had made in the fortunes of the poor Harfords. "It will be a grand spec. The brother and sister are married and gone, and she will, in all probability, inherit her uncle's ortune."

"But do you think she will have you?" asked Clement, drily.

"Why not? I know she loved me."

"A mere fancy. Did she ever tell you so?"

"Why—no. But in a matter like this, one can scarcely be mistaken."

"You *are* mistaken, Edward," said Clement, rising. "Rose Harford, after the treatment she received from you, when you considered her poor and friendless, would never be your wife. She is engaged to be married to one, with her uncle's consent, who, I trust, is more worthy of her regard; who is less gifted than you, by nature, but who had the good taste and the good feeling, to love her for herself."

"Who do you mean?" asked Freeburn, changing color.

"Myself!" returned Clement, gravely.

And here ends my Tale.

THE CAOUTCHOUC TREE.

The caoutchouc tree grows, in general, to the height of forty or fifty feet without branches, then branching, runs up fifteen feet higher. The leaf is long, thin, and shaped like that of a peach tree. The trees show their working by the number of knots or bunches, made by tapping; and a singular fact is, that, like a cow, when most tapped, they give most milk or sap. As the time of operating is early day, before sunrise we were on hand. The blacks are first sent through the forest, armed with a quantity of soft clay and a small pickaxe. On coming to one of the trees, a portion of the soft clay is formed into a cup and stuck to the trunk. The black then striking his pick over the cup, the sap oozes out slowly, a tree giving daily about a gill. The tapper continues in this way, tapping perhaps fifty trees, when he returns, and with a jar, passing over the same ground, empties his cups. So by seven o'clock, the blacks came in with their jars, ready for working. The sap at this stage resembles milk in appearance, and somewhat in taste. It is also frequently drunk with perfect safety. If left standing now, it will curdle like milk, disengaging a watery substance like whey. Shoemakers now arrange themselves to form the gum. Seated in the shade, with a large pan of milk on one side, and on the other a flagon, in which is burned a nut peculiar to this country, emitting a dense smoke, the operator having his last, or form, held by a long stick or handle, previously besmeared with soft clay, (in order to slip off the shoe when finished) holds it over the pan, and pouring on the milk until it is covered, sets the coating in the smoke; then giving it a second coat, he repeats the smoking, and so on with a third and fourth, until the shoe is of a required thickness, averaging from six to twelve coats. When finished, the shoes on the forms are placed in the sun the remainder of the day to drip. Next day, if required, they may be figured, being so soft that any impression will be indelibly received. The natives are very dexterous in this work. With a quill and a sharp-pointed stick, they will produce finely lined leaves and flowers, such as you may have seen on the shoes, in an incredibly short space of time. After remaining on the forms two or three days, the shoes are cut open on the top, allowing the last to slip out. They are then tied together and slung on poles, ready for the market. There pedlars and Jews trade for them with the countrypeople; and in lots of a thousand or more they are again sold to the merchants, who have them stuffed with straw, and packed in boxes to export, in which state they are received in the United States. In the same manner any shape may be manufactured. Thus toys are made over clay forms. After drying, the clay is broken and extracted. Bottles, are made in the same way. According as the gum grows older, it becomes darker in colour and more tough. The number of caoutchouc trees in the provinces is countless. In some parts, whole forests of them exist, and they are frequently cut down for fire-wood. Although the trees exist in Mexico and the East Indies, there appears to be no importation into the United States from these places. The reason, I suppose, must be the want of that prolificness found in them here. The caoutchouc tree may be worked all the year; but generally in the wet seasons they have rest, owing to the flooded state of the woods; and the milk being watery, requires more to manufacture the same article than in the dry season.

THE PEARL-FISHER:

A TALE OF THE BUCCANEERS.

FROM THE FRENCH OF EMMANUEL GONZALÈS.

BY EDMOND HUGOMONT.

XLVII.

THE INTERVIEW.

WHILST the combat lasted, the Seigneuresse had remained on her knees, her lips moving as if in prayer, her cold hands pressed upon the locket which was suspended from her neck. At length the explosion took place, and terrified by the tremendous noise, she started to her feet and rushed into the wood; but her feeble limbs refused to bear her, and after running a few yards, she stumbled and fell. Without any effort to rise, she remained thus for a quarter of an hour, listening with dread to the slightest murmur of the sea or of the forest leaves, as if she heard in them the voice of an avenger.

"All is now finished!" she exclaimed, at last; "but where is Carmen? it may be, sunk to the bottom with all the others—with all the others," she repeated, with a shudder. "Oh! if I could only have saved *her*, it seems as if my sufferings would be less. Let me go in search of her, perhaps I may yet feel her arms wound about my neck—her lips pressed to mine. Then, perhaps, I might pass unregarded, these livid and bleeding countenances that now flit before my dim vision!"

She interrupted herself to utter a cry of alarm. She heard a rustling among the leaves; she saw a burning look glaring at her through the branches; she recognized the Leopard, who dragged himself along, bleeding and exhausted, and by an involuntary impulse, she endeavoured to renew her flight. But the buccaneer sternly exclaimed:

"Margaret!"

And at this call from a voice which she had never disobeyed, she paused and turned towards him.

"Margaret! I am thirsty!" he resumed, more calmly.

The Seigneuresse forgot all that had passed; her pity overcame her terror, and she was once more the sutler of the Brethren of the Coast. She gently approached him, and raised to his parched lips, the gourd-bottle, which she always carried by her side, from which he drank long and eagerly.

"Margaret!" he said, after a pause, during which he regarded her sadly; "the blood still streams from my wounds, and I have need of one hour longer of life to fulfil an imperative duty."

The Seigneuresse felt some of her former terror revived by these words; but without reply, she took the kerchief which covered her withered neck, and the scarf which was wound round her attenuated form, and tearing them into shreds, proceeded to bind up the wounds of the brave adventurer.

"Why dost thou tremble, Margaret?" he asked as she finished her task.

"The combat!" she rejoined, timidly, avoiding a direct answer—"was it very fierce?"

"I alone remain of all my brethren!"

"Alone!" she repeated. "Can it be?"

"Alone of all my brethren, and of all the crew of the caravel," added the Leopard, with a bitter smile.

Margaret thought of Carmen; she clasped her hands convulsively, whilst her whole frame trembled.

"Yes!" resumed the Leopard; "all these brave adventurers whom thou lovedst so much—didst thou not, Margaret?" and he looked at her with a piercing glance.

"Dead! dead!" she muttered.

"It is no wonder that thou mournest thus for them," continued the adventurer. "Dost thou remember that day when my poor Balthasar found thee sleeping at the foot of a palmetto? A large serpent had rolled his scaly rings round the trunk of the tree, and was already bending his flat head towards thy motionless face, when Balthasar, with a stroke of his steel ramrod, crushed the head of the monster. Had the blow failed, the serpent would have darted at him, and he must have perished. Slumber not so imprudently again, Margaret! for Balthasar cannot be there to protect thee; he fell by my side."

"Dead!" she again repeated.

"Dost thou remember," resumed the Leopard, in the same cold, measured accents; "dost thou remember that hunting party, when we lost our way in the forest, on the Spanish territory? The scoundrels, knowing we were there, set fire to the woods, and we were soon surrounded by the flames. Over our heads was spread a murky canopy of flame-fringed smoke; under our feet were crackling branches and marshes bubbling with the heat; the air was filled with burning twigs falling around us in showers of red cinders and white ashes. Each thought only of his own safety, and all speedily escaped, save thee. Pitrians was the first to perceive this. 'Never shall it be said,' cried he, 'that the Brethren of the Coast have allowed their mother to perish, rather than have their complexions spoiled!' He rushed through the blazing pile, and brought thee back on his shoulders, senseless and half dead. Wander not again in the Spanish forests, Margaret! Pitrians is dead or a prisoner like all the rest!"

"How can you speak so calmly of such a disaster, Leopard?" stammered the Seigneuresse.

"A judge should never be moved by indignation or hatred, Margaret! There are crimes so infamous as to deserve contempt rather than anger. All our brave companions have perished thus, because they were taken in a snare—because they were betrayed."

"Betrayed! why do you think so?" she asked, trembling.

"Weep tears of blood, Margaret!" he continued, without answering her; "for thou shalt never more hear the war-song issue from the lips of these brave brethren; thy hand shall never more fill the wine cup for them as they return from the chase. But why dost thou tremble thus, Seigneuresse?"

The unhappy woman stood before him, completely overcome. All the horror of her treachery had been called up before her by the words of the Leopard. She dared not reply to him, nor venture to encounter his searching glance. Suddenly the buccaneer changed his tone, and asked abruptly:

"Margaret! hadst thou ever reason to complain of a Brother of the Coast? Has any of them ever insulted thee, either knowingly or accidentally?"

She made no answer.

"Avow it frankly!" he pursued. "There are words which at times go straight to the heart like the point of a sword, though never so intended by the speaker. And from such small beginnings, a secret hatred may grow in the soul, until it bursts out in some fearful revenge, like the volcanic eruption of subterraneous fires. Has any adventurer ever given thee such cause of hatred? Reply, reply, Margaret!"

"Never!" she murmured, almost *inaudibly*.

"Thou knowest well," he continued, "that on the first word of complaint, strict justice would have been granted thee?"

"I am certain of it," she replied. "But what mean these questions, Leopard?"

"What matters it to thee?" he said. "Give me to drink, Margaret."

She handed him the gourd, which he emptied at a draught and gave back to her. Her hand shook as she received it.

"Why dost thou tremble thus?" he again asked.

"Leopard! time wears away," she said, still evading his question. "You ought to fly and conceal yourself. The Spaniards may have seen you gain the shore, and if they pursue, you are lost. You are alone and wounded, and could not defend yourself."

"How tender thou art of my safety!" answered the Leopard, in a tone of lurking irony. "Think not that I will survive my brethren, Margaret! If I have dragged myself hither, it is not to avoid the Spaniards, but that duty calls me here."

"Here! in this wild waste!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, here!" replied the buccaneer. "Thou art esteemed a woman of wise counsel, Margaret! Tell me, what punishment ought to reward treachery—such as that of which we have been the victims."

"Treachery!" she repeated. "Oh yes! it is horrible—too horrible! But why put such a question to me, Leopard? I am but a wretched old woman, often, they say, deprived of reason—I am no judge, thus to utter sentence."

"You have lived too long amongst the adventurers," said the Leopard gravely, "not to have a bold heart and firm soul. I will speak to thee then, as I would to a man of courage. Margaret! make thy peace with Heaven! In memory of our ancient friendship I grant thee time for this."

"To make my peace with Heaven!" she repeated, with pale and trembling lips.

"Yes! make haste!" said the buccaneer sternly.

"What do you mean, Leopard?" she stammered. "I do not understand your words, but your look terrifies me."

"No weakness—no cowardice, Margaret!" answered the chief. "Thou understandest me perfectly. Thou knowest why I have come to seek thee. Thou knowest the doom that awaits thee—the doom of the traitress!"

"Heaven help me!" exclaimed the Seigneuresse, falling on her knees; "what are you going to do?"

"Thou must die!" said the Leopard, in the same severe but sad accent. "Blood must be repaid with blood!"

XLVIII.

EXPLANATION.

MARGARET understood from the accent of the buccaneer that her fate was decided. Yet, such was her desire of again seeing Donna Carmen, if she still lived, that she still endeavoured to avert her doom; but she did so, hopelessly and instinctively, as the chained tiger bites his iron fetters.

"I must then die!" she murmured; "die by your *hand*. He that would have foretold this but a few short hours *ago*, would have been scorned as a madman. In a few minutes I shall have ceased to live. Terrible thought! All the love that still burns in this seared and wounded heart—my *remorse*—the secret of my life and of my sufferings, shall all be buried beneath a handful of earth and a few withered leaves! If any one on the face of the earth should still think of me, *it will be to curse my memory*. Yes! such will be my funeral *oration*," she added, with a wild laugh, and then continued, pointing towards the ocean; "But you are right, Leopard! The dead below there, call upon me. There wants are corse to *complete* their roll. There is still one empty place among them. *I go to fill it*."

She looked towards the buccaneer, and thought she read in his features a softer and more relenting expression.

"If I dared ask such a *thing, master*!" she resumed submissively; "I would entreat you to grant me one day—only one single day, ere you slay me. I will not attempt to escape; you know me well enough to believe that; but I would die in peace if I could again see—."

"Donna Carmen, is it not?" interrupted the Leopard. "It is impossible, Margaret! It is part of thy *punishment never* to know whether thy treachery has saved her or not."

"No! no! you will not be so pitiless!" exclaimed she, embracing his knees; "you have always been noble and generous!"

"It well becomes the treacherous minion of the Spaniards to prate of nobleness *and generosity*!" cried the Leopard, with disdain. "Ungrateful serpent! Thou knowest not, that to reach the *magazine* of the caravel, I had to drag myself over the bleeding and *mangled* corses of my brethren; each livid mouth, each gaping wound, seemed to cry aloud, 'Avenge us of our *betrayer*!' At this very moment, I seem to mark their glazing eyes fixed upon me, awaiting the just punishment of the traitress. *Urge me no further*, but prepare thee for thy death!"

"No! you will *not* kill *me* thus cruelly!" replied the Seigneuresse, rising to her feet. "You would be a coward to do so—I say, a very coward! What courage is there in being the executioner of *a defenceless woman*?"

"I am no child, to be *moved by such taunts*," returned the buccaneer, with a melancholy, but determined expression. "The Leopard has proved *his* courage sufficiently to place it beyond doubt. *At* present, he *alone* can execute the doom of the spy, and it shall be executed. It is a sad and irksome task, but it is an imperative one."

"You would *strike me* to the heart, then, without pity or remorse?" she said, *with anguish*.

"Wert thou moved with pity, Margaret? wert thou *stung with remorse*, when thou leddest to that horrid butchery, *those* who called thee mother?" replied the Leopard, calmly.

"Be it so, then!" cried the Seigneuresse, driven to despair. "I *have betrayed* you all, and I repent not of the treason. I had to choose between you and Carmen, and I made my choice. Why should I care for the lives of your fierce companions? If they have saved me from perils which I would perhaps have *gladly welcomed*, did they not see me bend over their pallets, when their veins burned with contagious disease, and even their dearest friends deserted them? They loved me, you *say*. Yes! as *you* would love the physician who alone could cure you—as *you might* love a poor insane woman, whom you thought at times inspired, and who might unveil for you the future! *I owed them nothing*. But to leave Carmen to perish—her whom I had reared from her tender infancy—her whom I loved so dearly! No! it was impossible—impossible, I tell you. Ah! I loved her so well, that I sometimes forgot, as I gazed on *her lovely* features, that I had a son in this world—a son who was torn *from me* an infant, and whom, doubtless, I shall never see. *I see* you cannot understand this, brave Leopard! You have *never known* the force of these bonds of the heart; the voice of kindred has never made itself heard within you."

"*Wretched woman!* thou restorest me all my courage," interrupted the *Leopard, sternly*. "Amongst those whom thou hast betrayed, were not only my brethren in arms, my companions ——."

"Didst thou not hear me, *master*?" she asked. "I repent not of the deed. Do what you deem your duty."

"Amongst them," *pursued* the buccaneer, without listening to her, "there was also one whom I love, as dearly, Seigneuresse! as thou dost Donna Carmen."

All Margaret's previous resolution seemed to melt away; a cloud passed over her eyes.

"Say on! say on!" she cried, in agony.

"Amongst them was my nephew—Joachim Requiem, the pearl-fisher—Joachim Montbars, the brave adventurer!"

"Your nephew!" replied the Seigneuresse, her eyes glistening wildly. "'Tis false, 'tis false, Leopard! He was not among them; I would have seen and recognized him. 'Tis false, I say! I counted them all. I would never have allowed him to go with you."

"He returned to Porto de la Paca in time to join the fourth boat, that of Pitrians," said the buccaneer, with more emotion than he had hitherto displayed.

"In time!" murmured the unhappy woman. "In time to be betrayed—to die!"

"Yes, like the others," added the Leopard. "Dost thou now think thy condemnation just?"

The Seigneuresse remained for some moments motionless as a statue; then, shaking her head incredulously, she burst into a fit of laughter, but it was that wild and fearful laugh which is so often a token of insanity.

"Yes! you are right, master!" she said, after a pause. "Avenge yourself; it is your duty. He too—he, too has been betrayed, that brave young man, who rescued my dear Carmen! Did he not say to me the other day, with a smile: 'Should I ever go to Europe, thou wilt come with me, my good old Margaret.' For like all of you, he called me Margaret. He knew not my real name. He knew not that the Seigneuresse had once been fair, and proud, and rich, and honoured. Ah! it is long, long since then!"

"Come, Margaret!" said the adventurer; "lose not in idle dreams of vanity, the minutes I have granted thee to think of Heaven."

"No! no!" she replied, "you do not now address Margaret the Seigneuresse. At this my last hour, I must avow my name, and reveal the secret of my life. I am about to charge you with a sacred mission, and, if you accept it, I will die blessing you, brave adventurer! The woman whom thou hast condemned, Leopard! is no longer a wretched wanderer without name or story. She is called Adelaide de Rochefort!"

"Adelaide de Rochefort!" repeated the astonished buccaneer.

"Marchioness de Cossé!" continued the Seigneuresse.

"'Tis a lie—a lie!" cried the Leopard, staggering as if struck by a levin-bolt. "Hush! hush! wretched woman! What name hast thou dared to pronounce?"

"Has that name reached even this far country, stained and dishonoured?" she rejoined. "It matters not! I assume it with all its disgrace and ignominy. I repeat, I am the Marchioness de Cossé!"

XLIX.

ADELAIDE DE COSSE.

"Be silent! be silent!" exclaimed the buccaneer, an expression of horror contracting his noble features.

"Why should I be silent?" asked Adelaide de Cossé, as we must now call her. "Before heaven, I repeat that I have told the truth!"

"The truth!" repeated the Leopard. "No! no! wretched woman! it cannot be. Down—down on thy knees, and confess that thou hast lied!"

And seizing her with a convulsive grasp he forced her into a kneeling posture.

"I am Adelaide de Cossé!" she repeated in a low but firm tone, submissively bending her head.

"Thou art that woman," exclaimed the adventurer, "who betrayed her young, affectionate and trusting husband, to become the mistress of a base and selfish prince?"

"I confess it," she murmured.

"Thou art that woman," continued he, "in whose blood Bernard de Cossé deemed he had avenged his outraged honour? Curses on thee, wretch! who could drag on thine existence, uncrushed by such infamy!"

"I am that unhappy creature!" replied the poor woman. "But if I have still lived on, it was in the hope of one day obtaining from Bernard, not pardon, for of that I was unworthy, but a few words of pity, a single compassionate look. And besides this, I hoped at some time to see once more my child, whom he had borne off with him. Could a mother consent to die, with the hope strong in her heart of one day embracing her lost son?"

"Her son!" repeated the Leopard sternly, through his clenched teeth. "Knowest thou what thou hast done, miserable woman?"

Adelaide listened with a vague sense of coming evil.

"Heaven itself hath condemned thee," continued the buccaneer. "It hath blinded and ruined thee. I also—rude hunter and buccaneer as I now am—was once a gentleman. But I had to break my sword and burn my soiled parchments. No one, till this hour, has known the noble blood that flowed through the veins of the Leopard; for the Brethren of the Coast exact no other claim to nobility than is given by courage and fidelity to their engagements. But I will now render secret for secret; thou shalt learn who I am."

"Say on! say on!" cried Adelaide, with deep anxiety.

"I was once called Petris de Cossé, Madam!" he replied calmly.

"The brother of Bernard!" stammered the poor woman, letting her head droop on her bosom:—"Of him whom I have in vain endeavoured to discover. I followed him to Hispaniola, but could never trace him further. But," she suddenly added, raising her head, whilst a smile of hope animated her withered features; "you who are his brother and have always loved him so much, must know where he has sought refuge. You will tell me—you will show me my son? But you do not reply! Ah! Bernard doubtless hates me still. But, if it is so, they need never see me. I will conceal myself by night near their abode; when my son goes forth in the morning I shall then see him; my heart will at once assure me whether 'tis he. I will promise not to make the slightest noise; I will swallow my tears, I will suppress my sighs, I will still the wild beating of my heart. But I shall see him, Petris! I shall see him, and oh! what happiness that will be! I will not—I cannot die till I have seen him!"

"Insensate!" interrupted the buccaneer; hast thou lost all memory?"

"Pardon me! what have I forgot?" she asked with a timid and constrained air, like a child surprised in a fault.

"Dost thou forget that thou hast delivered up Joachim Montbars to the tender mercies of the Spaniard, and that Joachim is my nephew?"

Adelaide de Cossé started back with a shriek as if her brain had been seared with a red-hot iron. Her lips trembled; she stretched out her arms as if in search of some support for her failing frame.

"Hush! hush!" she exclaimed, in a low whisper; "not another word, or I shall go mad!"

"Joachim is the son of the dead Bernard de Cossé, Madam!" replied Petris calmly.

"Bernard dead! Joachim his son! Oh! do not revenge yourself thus, Leopard! This is not—this cannot be true!" she said, and dragging herself to his feet, she embraced his knees, and continued, in accents almost choked with emotion: "Only say that it is not true, noble Petris! Have pity on me! Do not say that I have betrayed my child! You know that my fault—my crime, has been followed by a life of humiliation, remorse and penitence; that a few months of guilty pleasure have been followed by long years of misery and wretchedness. Oh! how did I not discover him to be my son! He, at least, would have pardoned me; he was so noble and so good! No! no! I have not betrayed him too! He is still alive—is he not, Leopard? Oh! tell me! for pity's sake, tell me!"

"Unhappy woman!" said the buccaneer, moved in spite of himself, by the heart-rending despair of the mother; "Joachim is possibly still alive ——."

Adelaide raised the hand of the Leopard to her lips.

"But if so," pursued he, "he is, thanks to you! the captive of the Spaniards, and the scoundrels will not long spare him; they have the loss of their caravel to revenge."

"Thanks, generous Petris!" said the poor mother, in a voice broken with sobs; "thanks for even this! Why should I now live longer on the earth; my fate is sealed! Quick! Avenge your brethren whom I have betrayed; for if you do not, I must avenge my son on her who has given him up to his enemies."

"It may be," muttered the Leopard, moved to pity by her words; "I may yet save him!" He reflected a moment, then added, mournfully. "Aye! but the *Spanish spy* and Joachim Montbars must never meet! The son would despise the mother, and it is a terrible thing for a mother to deserve the curses of her child!"

Adelaide had only heard these words, "I may yet save him!"

"Do you still hope?" she eagerly cried.

"I hope nothing," he replied; "but all that the strength and courage of one man can accomplish, shall be done to free the son of my brother. "There is not a minute to lose," he continued; "I must return to Porto de la Paca, and from thence proceed to San Fernando, whither the Spaniards have doubtless taken him."

"Haste, brave Leopard, haste!" returned the mother. "Why do you stand thus motionless, when every moment is so precious, when my son ——. Ah! I understand it now; your errand here is still unfulfilled. Courage, noble Petris! Think of all your companions, whose blood cries aloud for vengeance—and strike! Lose no time in idle pity! Strike! I will not resist."

The buccaneer chief could neither determine to pardon the traitress, nor to accomplish what he considered an act of justice, and his arm hung nerveless by his side, But Adelaide had become more inflexible towards herself than the sternest judge. She gently drew from the Leopard's belt one of the daggers that he wore there, and then said to him in a firm voice:

"Master! will you grant me a kiss of pity, if not of pardon?"

They interchanged a silent embrace, a tear trembling on the eyelash of the buccaneer, whilst not a drop moistened the cheek of the Seigneuresse.

"Give that kiss to my son," she said. "Tell him that I loved him dearly to the last, and beseech him not to curse my name! Now go, Petris de Cossé!" she added, with a calm smile. "I will give you the signal of departure."

She raised her armed right hand, and held it on high for a few moments, her eyes uplifted, and her lips moving without sound. Her arm fell; the long, keen blade was buried in her bosom, and the erring woman fell at the feet of the buccaneer, breathing with her last sigh the name of "Joachim!"

"Poor, unhappy mother!" murmured Petris de Cossé; "thy last wishes shall be faithfully fulfilled!"

He hastily buried the corse under a mass of earth and leaves, and then departed on his rash and desperate enterprise.

I.

SAN FERNANDO.

THE LEOPARD had taken a bold and decisive resolution. He saw that there was no time to make an appeal to the Brethren of the Coast then at Tortuga, to put himself at their head, and rescue his nephew by force of arms; for the vengeance of the Spaniards was generally as expeditious as it was cruel. He returned to Porto de la Paca, and announced the fate of their companions to the eight or ten buccaneers whom he found there, having been absent at the chase when the expedition against the caravel set out. He gave the chief brother among them some secret instructions for M. du Rossey and L'Olonnais, and then departed for San Fernando, resolving to gain admittance to the town, were it even as a prisoner, and determined to restore Joachim to liberty at the cost of his life, or to perish with him.

After a toilsome journey, he reached San Fernando, but was surprised to meet no patrol of *lanceros* near the town, according to their customary caution, nor to see any sentries stationed along the ramparts. The silence around the town was as profound as in the midst of a desert savannah. At length as he passed through one of the gates of the town, called the Giralda, he saw a ragged looking soldier, half asleep under a wooden pent-house near the gate. He advanced almost close to this figure unnoticed; but the soldier suddenly turning round, and catching sight of him, seized the musket that lay beside him, and levelled it at the adventurer, shouting at the same time, with signs of the utmost terror: "A sorcerer! a poisoner!"

The buccaneer marched right onwards, and the sentinel fired, but missed his aim, as might have been anticipated from the manner in which his whole frame shook. The Leopard seized him by the arm.

"Has fear so troubled your vision," he said, "that you do not recognize the dress and accoutrements of a buccaneer?"

But the soldier, regarding him with a wild, unsteady gaze, still continued to cry: "A sorcerer! a poisoner!"

Almost immediately, the street of the Giralda, whose houses had hitherto seemed so many silent tombs, became animated as if by enchantment. Windows were opened; the balconies were occupied by armed men; the sun's rays were reflected on every side from glistening musket-barrels; and the cry of "A poisoner! a poisoner!" echoed along the street, repeated from window to window like a death-knell. Women and young girls, their hair scattered in dishevelled locks over their shoulders, their drapery hastily thrown around their forms, as if they had been suddenly aroused from their siesta, pointed out the Leopard, with trembling fingers, to the fury of the men; whilst a cry of detestation arose with that accent of implacable fierceness which is given by deep, mysterious and desperate terror.

The buccaneer saw the imminence of his danger without understanding its cause, and, determined not to throw away his life for nothing, he clasped in his arms the paralyzed sentinel, and held him before his breast, a living cuirass. Meantime, the exasperation of the inhabitants seemed rising to its height, and although none of them ventured to cross the threshold of his house, the most furious would undoubtedly have fired at once on the soldier and the buccaneer, when suddenly the echoing sound of a gong was heard from a small cross street that opened upon the Giralda. This sound seemed to strike new terror into the minds of the listeners, and the windows and balconies were deserted almost as quickly as they had been peopled.

Along the narrow street, a waggon slowly advanced, the wheels creaking and groaning under its load, which, as it drew near, was seen to be a hideous mass of livid corses, partly concealed under a few torn winding-sheets. In front of the vehicle sat three men, entirely clad in yellow, who were emptying, amid shouts of merriment, a large leathern bottle, marked with stains of blood. From time to time they struck the gong which hung on a cross pole behind them, or lashed the two meagre mules that drew the disgusting load along.

A few females still remained at the windows, darting eager glances at the death-waggon, as if to ascertain if it contained amid its lifeless tenants, any dear to their hearts. As the vehicle rolled along the street of the Giralda, some even overcame their terror so far, as to make a sign to the conductors to pause. But as these obeyed not their distracted gestures, and remained deaf to their despairing words, the unhappy women tore the rings from their fingers, the necklaces and precious rosaries from their necks, the golden arrows and other ornaments from their hair, to throw them to the *yellow alguazils*,* as these officials of the grave were termed. The waggon then stopped, and the yellow alguazils, having first carefully picked up their booty, threw off the winding sheets that covered the bodies.

It was a horrible sight that was thus disclosed, of distorted, blood-stained features, and forms that seemed still writhing with pain! But none of these gazers regarded it with even a shudder. Those who recognized amidst that heap of mortality some well-known beloved countenance, glared upon it with a fixed and tearless eye, as if they feared to forget its lineaments, and wished to engrave them deeply on their memory, ere they looked their last upon them. Others stretchek out their arms fondly, and seemed to say: "Farewell for a while! we will soon rejoin thee!" Those, again, to whom the features of all the dead were unknown, bent lowly in grateful prayer to Heaven.

The Leopard felt a deep sympathy with the grief of the bereaved mourners, for a thought suddenly rushed across his mind:—"It may be that Joachim lies there, amid that heap of lifeless corses!"

He determined to resolve his doubts, and leaving the sentinel, he pursued the waggon, which had resumed its slow progress, the yellow alguazils having again thrown the winding-sheets over the bodies. A few of the inhabitants, who had re-appeared on the balconies, again levelled their fusils at the buccaneer; but to their great surprise, even while the cry arose—"Fire on the poisoner!" he quickened his pace, with two or three bounds cleared the space between him and the waggon, and leaped into that inviolable asylum.

"Bold as a buccaneer!" cried one of the alguazils.

"And worthy to join our brotherhood!" continued another.

"Sorcerer, pirate, or poisoner," said the third, "thou art welcome! The yellow alguazils drive the most thriving business in San Fernando," he added, displaying the rings and other jewels which had been thrown to them.

The Leopard answered not; he was busily engaged in enamining the dead bodies.

"We are the kings of the town," resumed the first yellow alguazil, "for we levy taxes almost at pleasure, and we are far more feared than the governor himself."

"Take this!" said the second, throwing over his shoulder a ragged shroud; "there is thy royal mantle!"

"And here is thy sceptre!" continued the third, holding out to him the half-empty bottle.

The buccaneer by this time breathed more freely; he had ascertained that Joachim was not among the fatal pile.

"You seem to love hard silver, my masters?" he said, gravely, turning towards the alguazils. "Well! I am called the *Leopard*—lead me to the governor, Don Cristoval de Figuera, and you shall have your reward. I have nothing in common with you—Obey!"

The insolent effrontery of these men quailed before the calm bearing of the celebrated buccaneer. One of them proceeded to the governor's palace to announce the important capture; but Don Cristoval was so much occupied with the pestilence which had raged in the city during the last two or three days, that he simply ordered the Leopard to be conducted to the same dungeon, in which were confined the other adventurers, unfortunate enough to have survived the explosion of the caravel.

San Fernando was at this time thrown into confusion by the sudden, and seemingly uncaused invasion of a pestilence, the existence of which, however, few were willing to admit. The people preferred attributing to a human and criminal origin, this terrible disease, whose progress they could not understand, and which ran through the veins of the infected, like an invisible poison. This prejudice at least left some hope. Poison necessarily supposes a poisoner, and the cry of the fierce and credulous mob was: "Destroy the snake, and you destroy the venom!"

Until this time the *Vomito prieto*, which had made such ravages among the Indians of the Continent, had remained unknown in the islands. One physician alone thought that he recognized some of the symptoms of this fatal epidemic, and attributed its appearance to deleterious gases liberated by the late earthquake. But his opinion was not listened to, and he was very nearly immolated by the multitude, as being himself a poisoner. A people with whom, as in this case, distrust has increased to a madness, must have victims; it is the only remedy in which their terror has any faith.

This pestilence had so discouraged the hearts of all the inhabitants of San Fernando, that even the capture of eight buccaneers, among whom were Pitrians and Joachim, had caused no sign of joy or triumph in the town. The governor had ordered them to be inscribed with numbers, and two of them chosen by lot, to be executed by the *garrotte* each day, in order to prolong the pleasure of the Spaniards, greedy as they were of all such spectacles.

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* Or Constables.

LI.

THE PRISON.

WHEN the Leopard entered the bare and narrow chamber in which the other prisoners were confined, he found nothing but *calm and joyful countenances*. The adventurers were all familiarised to the expectation of death; and besides, the heart naturally raises itself to meet a public and imminent danger. One might tremble and grow pale, proceeding alone to the gibbet; but when companions in peril and death mount the scaffold together, each finds courage for all and through all.

On seeing the Leopard, the Brethren of the Coast uttered a simultaneous cry of surprise and regret.

"My uncle!" cried Joachim, rushing forward, and affectionately embracing him. "We had hoped that, more fortunate than ourselves, you had succeeded in escaping; and now we meet you here, like us, a prisoner, condemned, and on the eve of death!"

"Yes!" replied the buccaneer, "I endeavoured to escape, for I had a duty to fulfil, brethren! I succeeded, and, my vengeance accomplished, finding I could not deliver you by the strong hand, I thought I might be as useful to you in the prison as on the field of battle—and here I am!"

"Alas!" returned Joachim; "your generosity will only serve to involve you in our destruction."

"I promised thy father never to abandon thee in peril, *my lad*!" said the Leopard. "And besides, I am charged *with another mission to thee*—a sacred one—."

He hesitated, not knowing how best to divulge the secret he had learned.

"Who can have such interest in me, a poor obscure adventurer?" asked Joachim, with a melancholy smile.

"And who could it be," pursued the Leopard abruptly, "if it were not an unhappy woman, who has indeed been very guilty, but who has been punished as deeply for her faults as her most *mortal* enemy could desire;—a woman who has lived through long years of humiliation and suffering, *only* by thy memory, and the hope of one day seeing thee *again*?"

"I do not understand *you*," *interrupted* Joachim, with much agitation. "A mother alone could love thus, and mine, as you well know, is *dead long, long* since, and by a most terrible death."

"Thy mother lived, *Joachim*!" replied the Leopard with equal emotion. "Thy *father* fled so hastily, after the furious transport of his vengeance, that he thought he had killed her, while in fact, she still breathed and lived."

"My mother alive, and it is only now that I learn it!" said Joachim, plaintively. "I had a living mother, like the children whom I used to envy so much, and yet I never saw her!"

"No weakness, my boy!" interposed the buccaneer chief; "we are not alone here."

"Oh Heavens!" murmured the young man; "my *mother lived. And when I was a weak and suffering infant, it was not she who cradled me in* her arms, who *kissed away my tears*, who *smiled* upon me to make my *young heart glad*!—My mother *lived*, you say! Is she now dead?"

"She is dead," repeated the Leopard, "*And* in dying, she besought that her son would never curse her memory, for she had loved him dearly."

"Curse! *I* curse her memory!" cried Joachim. "Impossible! Why did she not come and disclose herself to me? Oh! how happy I would have been to be able to pronounce that single word 'Mother!'"

"Heaven willed it not," said the buccaneer. "*She would willingly have looked upon thy face and folded thee in her arms.* But in dying she had at least the consolation of having seen her son—without knowing *him, it is true*."

"How was that, my uncle?" *stammered* the young man.

"Ever respect the memory of the Seigneuresse, Joachim!" replied the Leopard.

Joachim buried his face in his burning hands, and the vainly repressed tears trickled through his fingers. He understood it all,—he dared not ask the old buccaneer another question.

During the rest of that day many of the Spaniards came through curiosity to visit the prisoners, and were much surprised to notice the calmness and *indifference which they displayed*, just as if they bore not *on their caps the death-number*. Joachim was called *Number Six, and the* last-comer, the Leopard, was, to *the jailors only* known as Number Nine.

The next morning the visits were renewed, and the young adventurer was startled at seeing among the strangers a veiled female, accompanied by a monk, whose face was almost entirely concealed by his hood.

"Do you not recognise Donna Carmen and Fray Eusebio, my uncle?" he whispered to the Leopard, with much agitation.

"Ah! thou art not yet cured, my poor boy!" returned the buccaneer chief, shaking his head.

A whispered conversation was also going on amongst the visitors.

"Are you satisfied now?" said the monk to the weeping girl. "No human power can save your accomplice. As for you, Senorita! you have promised that, if I would allow you to see this wretch for but an instant, you would enter a convent, and bestow all your property on the monastic order to which I belong. I have kept my word—will you keep yours?"

"Yes!" she replied, in the same low tone. "But since nothing in the world can now save Joachim, permit me to bid him a last farewell. Let him not think that I have basely deserted and forgotten him!"

"No!" said Fray Eusebio sternly; "for I have sworn, by the memory of my brother, Don Ramon Carral, that Joachim the pearl-fisher shall not again see your face, until the last moment of his life, that it may be the more embittered by despair."

"Let me at least speak to the Leopard," urged Carmen.

"To the Leopard, who regards you as the cause of his nephew's destruction!" replied Fray Eusebio. "Certainly! I consent to this."

An almost imperceptible glance of joy lighted up the features of the girl, whilst a turnkey opened the barred gate that separated the visitors from the prisoners, and delivered to the Leopard the message with which he had been charged by Fray Eusebio. The buccaneer at first hesitated, but could not resist the entreaties of Joachim to grant the interview. As soon as Carmen saw him advance, she left Fray Eusebio and went forward to meet the adventurer.

"You know that you are all condemned to death?" she said firmly.

"Yes!" replied the Leopard; "and we will die like brave men."

"Like brave men!" repeated Donna Carmen bitterly; "not so, but like cowards whose limbs fail them ere they reach the scaffold."

"You are a Spaniard, Senorita!" said the buccaneer, regarding her sternly; "still I thought you possessed a noble heart. There is little generosity in thus casting insults in the face of dying men."

"I tell you, master!" resumed Donna Carmen, "that the Spaniards are too cunning to allow you to march with firm footstep to your death. To satisfy their revenge, they must see you act the trembling coward in your last moments!"

"Explain yourself, Senorita! explain yourself!" cried the Leopard.

"Think you," she added, "that those who call you pirates and robbers, will permit you to mount the scaffold bold and undaunted? No! no! They know what enervating juices can blanch the cheeks of the bravest, can instil weakness and anguish into the most fearless hearts, and wring the cry of fear from the firmest lips!"

"'Tis infamous!" exclaimed the buccaneer, an involuntary shudder running through his frame.

"Hush! hush!" resumed Donna Carmen; "speak not so loud as to reach their ears. Yes, master! your nephew himself—aye! even you, the terrible Leopard—you will let yourselves be dragged to the place of execution, pale and trembling."

She seized the rough hand of the old adventurer, and slid into it a small silver flask, which he mechanically clutched.

"This contains opium, master!" she continued, in a whisper. "By means of this flask, you may spare yourselves the shame and weakness of that fatal hour."

"Thanks, Donna Carmen, thanks!" replied the Leopard. "I can now forgive you all the misfortunes of which you have been the innocent cause."

"But stay!" exclaimed the girl. "Before making use of the drug, be sure that all hope is lost. It is rumoured that a party of filibustiers are on their way to San Fernando to attempt your rescue. And should they arrive in time ——."

"Who commands them?" interrupted the Leopard, his features animated with an expression of joy.

"A chief named L'Olonnais, it is said," replied Carmen.

"Then those reserved till to-morrow will be saved," returned the buccaneer. "Those whom the lot spares to-day, may witness the death of their judges."

"Yes!" murmured the girl; "but those condemned for to-day ——. Joachim may perchance be among them ——."

"Perchance!" repeated the Leopard, with a meaning smile.

"Do you then still hope for him?" asked Carmen, her heart beating wildly.

"Come, Senorita!" interrupted the imperious voice of Fray Eusebio, ere the buccaneer could reply; and the monk advanced to her side.

Donna Carmen was drawn away, pale and almost fainting, whilst Fray Eusebio, turning to the adventurers, and shaking his hand at them with a threatening gesture, exclaimed:

"Enjoy life while you may—to-morrow the prison shall be empty!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE MINSTREL KNIGHT.

BY FUZ.

I.

Within the walls of a Moslem Tower
There sat a captive Christian Knight,
Watching the quick and rapid flight
Of each swiftly-passing hour.
Why sits he in that lonely mood,
So pensive, sad,—though not alone?
Have those massive walls of stone
O'er his mind a charmed power?
Or, are those sighs
For his native skies?
Does he thing of the day when he nobly stood,
In his country's cause, on the field of blood?
He sighs when he thinks of his own dear home,
For he fain would be at will to roam
O'er the hills where in youth he play'd
With some mirthful, dark-eyed maid;
His noble spirit grieves,
And his bosom a deep sigh heaves,
And he curses the fate that bade him yield
To the foe, on that blood-stain'd battle-field.

II.

There sits by his side a graceful form
Gazing on him in tenderest love;
Her cheeks are as fair as the blushing morn,
With its thousand balmy sweets new-born,
And eyes, that beam like gems new set
In the rim of a priceless coronet,
Shine like the orbs of darkest night,
That scatter o'er earth their feeble light,
From the realms of bliss above!
Her full lips move: List! list! she speaks;
What claim does the fair Zenora make,
Or why do her quivering lips thus shake,
As if fearing the humble boon she seeks,
If asked, should be denied?
"Sing again, Christian, sing again!
I love to hear that gladsome strain;
I can list to thy song for it cheers *thy* brow—
Ah! see, that sad gloom is gone e'en now."
"What shall I sing?" the Knight replied;
"Shall the theme be Love,—Zenora! or
Shall I sing of Captivity, or of War?"

III.

A blush suffused her rosy cheek;
Those eyes, expressive, pure and meek,
Dwelt for a moment on the Knight,
With gaze so tender, soft, and bright,
That he had deem'd such looks scarce given
By one who was not all of Heaven,
Of undefiled, and hallowed birth,
Too pure to tread this guilt-stained earth.
"Sing not of War," the maiden cried,
But oh! evoke some gayer theme;
Nor let thy mind o'er-burdened seem
Though freedom be to thee denied—
Some nobler strain those chords must move—
Let it—Yes, let it be of—Love."

IV.

The captive seiz'd his slumb'ring harp,
His brow no longer looks so dark,
And his eyes have a brighter glow,
As those exquisite notes are stealing
From the harp-strings, soft and low,
To that tender heart appealing—
That heart now well nigh breaking—
For those wild-like sounds awaken
A pang in her breast of snow:—

IDA.

"'Oh never yet has Angel dwelt
In fairer form than thine,
Or lover ever stood, or knelt,
Before a lovelier shrine!

'And I would to thy heart appeal,
And grasp thy hand so fair,
While at thy feet I humbly kneel,
And wait an answer there.

'Ida! I crave thy answer now—
My life more blest would be,
If maid, so passing fair as thou,
Should cast her lot with me.'

'Sir Knight, I am but humbly born,'
The blushing Ida cried:
'Thy haughty friends would look with scorn
Upon thy lowly bride.

'A peasant's cot has ever been
My humble, happy home:
How could I leave each long-loved scene
With thee, Sir Knight, to roam?'

'Oh! speak not thus,' the Knight replied;
But leave thy humble cot;
Say thou wilt be my loving Bride,
And share my earthly lot!'

Fair Ida blushed still deeper now,
Nor ventured a reply;
A flush o'erspread her marble brow,
She yielded with a sigh.

Long since that Knight has cross'd the wave,
Back to his Fatherland;
Oft doth he bless the hour that gave
To him fair Ida's hand."

V.

The song is ended, and the Knight,
With heart more heavy, and eye less bright,
Lets fall the harp, and vainly seeks
To hide the tears that course his cheeks;
The lovely Princess too doth sigh,
Those tears have caught her woman's eye,
And, starting, as if from a trance,
Upon the Knight she cast a glance,
Seized the pale hands that by his side
Had fallen, and thus faintly said:
"Sir Minstrel, raise thy drooping head.
In vain those tears thou seek'st to hide;
I know thy generous heart doth grieve
This absence from thy native land.
Thou may'st not hope for a reprieve,
The Emir's stern, unchang'd command,
Is still enforced; but I would fain
Break every link of thy captive chain,
And risk my life to set thee free
From long-endured captivity.
Say! canst thou reach the Christian camp,
Where thy brave comrades are in arms?
If so, I'll free thee from these damp,
These hated walls, and thou shalt be
As the wild waves of ocean, free,
Enjoying liberty's sweet charms—
Then, Christian, *then*, oh! think on *me*!"

VI.

"There is no peril but I would dare
To see my home once more;
No dangers abroad that I would not share
To gain my native shore.
Fain would I see my comrades brave,
And the graves where my fathers sleep;

For this I would brave the treach'rous wave
That rolls o'er the mighty deep."
"Then thou shalt go—this very night
Thou'lt wander to the seaward gate;
An aged eunuch there shall wait,
Whose boat shall bear thee soon from sight,
And may the God that you adore,
Conduct you safe to that far shore,
Where you may rest for ever free
From the terrors of Moslem slavery!"

VII.

The Minstrel gazed, as if in doubt
Such hopes, alas! were not for him:
The Princess' tender eyes grow dim,
More pallid seems her hueless cheek—
What does this sudden change bespeak?
He gazes still—she turns aside,
The fastly-flowing tears to hide
That from those glassy founts run out!
Can this be love! or why those tears?
What do those bitter sighs betoken?
Must her fond, loving heart be broken
By silent love—love never spoken?
Ah! had the Knight but dreamed of this
He ne'er had sought for greater bliss,
But poured into her listening ears
Vows that would melt her tender heart,
And prove, ere they were forced to part,
That he too, love's deep pangs had felt.
A moment more, and he had knelt
In humble attitude before
That beauteous, soul-enthralling maid;
But, entering through the half-closed door,
A form, in eunuch's guise arrayed,
Hastily called the Princess fair
Unto the Emir's palace, where
Her father waited for his child.
She rose, and on him faintly smiled—
The captive Minstrel's straining eye
Watch'd her retreating footsteps as she pass'd,
"That look! that might a sunbeam's glow outvie!
That look!" he cried, "and must it be the last!
Oh! why does Fate thus bid fond hearts dissever?
We part to-night—and part, alas!—for ever!"

VIII.

Now has arrived the wished-for hour:
'Tis night—the captive leaves the tower,
And hies to the appointed place,
Anxious to see Zenora's face,
(For he had thought to meet her there,
Fly with, or—leave her in despair.)
The gate is gain'd—the shore—the boat—
That o'er the rising waves must float,
And bear him on with favoring gale,
That he may reach his native vale.
The aged eunuch too is there,
With steady and determined air;
All, all are there and ready—save the Maid—
Save her for whom the Minstrel had delayed,
Did not the trusty eunuch urge
His bark into the heaving surge,
And bade the Knight no longer stay—
"Time presses and we must away,
Else, if we're taken thus in flight,
Our heads must surely fall to-night!"
The cheerful boats-crew ply their willing oars,
And soon behind them leave the silent shores;
Away—away—the ocean's wrath they brave,
And disappear from sight, upon some distant wave.

IX.

Fain would I tell how that frail bark
Plunged like a sea-god through the dark
And angry billows of the deep,
O'er which the terrible wild winds sweep,
And the high-heaving waves do roll,
As they dive to their watery goal,
Scattering spangles of light on high,
As pure as the orbs that roll
O'er the face of the pale-blue sky!
Fastly she speeds o'er the restless main,
Braving the billows with disdain,
And, tossing the spray, o'er the waters passed,
As if eager to fly from the coming blast.

* * * * *

The dark clouds wandered through the air,
The wind swept wildly past,
And the dismal-looking atmosphere
Re-echoed back each blast.
The thunder roll'd with deaf'ning crash,
Through the gloomy, clouded sky,
And the vivid glare of the light'ning's flash
Illumed heaven's canopy.
The wavering pine on the mountain's brow
Was hurl'd from its lofty seat,
And sprang, like an arrow from the bow,
The dark-blue waves to meet.
Far, far away on a distant wave
The lightning's glare revealed
A tiny boat that was wildly toss'd
On the breast of the watery field:
Now it appeared on a crested wave,
Now sank in a furrow deep,
So deep that the eye could not perceive
Its terribly awful sweep!

* * * * *

The land is gained; the Knight sprang to the shore,
Knelt down and thanked the Providence that bore
Their bark in safety o'er the boisterous sea,
Which roared, and rolled, and heaved convulsively,
As if it ever sought to make their graves
Deep, deep within its pearly, watery caves,
Where many a sturdy mariner has slept
His everlasting sleep; while for him wept
His comrades, or a tender, loving wife,
Whose very being hung upon that life
Now lost to her for ever. Yes, he prayed—
That Knight—who oft before had humbly made
His supplications to the Deity,
Now knelt, and thanked his God that he was free.

X.

The storm is over, and the sky is bright;
The crew must reach their home ere morning's light;
They sail away, and soon are borne along
The prancing waves that echo back their song,
But echo feebly; for their voices seem
To have spent their strength upon one boisterous theme.
When through the air the grumbling thunder roll'd,
And flash'd the vivid light'ning: hush'd and cold
They move along the rippling breast of ocean,
Where erst they met with wrath and wild commotion.
Safely, amid the stillness of the night,
The boat moves on, the tower appears in sight;
With eager glance they scan the distance o'er
That yet remains between them and the shore,
And now they near—they land—and gently creep
To their appointed homes, to rest and sleep.
Not so the trusty eunuch, though, I ween;
He passes by the sentinel unseen,
And now—he stands by the fair princess' side.

"Say, is he safe?" the pale Zenora cried—
"He is," replied the eunuch, and withdrew.
Oh! had the Knight but seen her now—but knew
That for his sake the lovely princess sigh'd;
He would again have cross'd the angry tide
That rolled between them; scorning to be free,
While she who freed him from captivity,
Writhed 'neath a pang no medicine could remove,
Nor leech could heal—deep disappointed love!

XI.

Now pass we o'er some few short weeks;
The noble Knight no longer seeks
That home for which he often sighed,
For which he rather twice had died,
Than stay'd within the Emir's tower.
Another day, another hour,
A captive in the Moslems' power!
His native land before him lies,
He breathes the air of Europe's skies,
But his brow doth wear a more saddened gloom,
His cheeks have lost their healthful bloom.
In vain the beauteous fair ones smile,
There is nought can please in his native isle;
The Saracen beauty! for *her* he sighs—
"Oh! for one look from Zenora's eyes!
One moment's gaze on that face divine!
Enough! I'll return to Palestine!"

XII.

Hail, Love! thou essence of the soul!
Gem! whose attractive rays control
The high—the low—the rich—the poor—
The Christian king—the savage Moor—
All hail! for at thy magic will,
The once-freed Knight is captive still!
He sat within his castle hall,
  Thinking of the fair Princess;
Each word—each look—he'd fain recall,
  Each blush of maiden bashfulness.
Entered his Squire—"My lord," quoth he
"There's a page without would speak with thee;
He seems in haste, and craves to bear
Some tidings of note to Limoges' heir."
"Then let him enter," said the knight—
"What tidings brings the urchin wight?
A billet mayhap from some love-sick dame,
Who wishes to change her maiden name!
A truce to such folly—none, none shall share,
The love that I feel for my Princess fair!"
The page appeared—the squire withdrew—
The Knight's gaze is fixed on the lovely hue
Of that delicate face, that seems too fair
For the page of a love-sick dame to wear.
He humbly doff'd his cap and stood
  Before the minstrel Knight, until
To the brow of each rush'd the heart's warm blood,
  Like the oozing forth of a buried rill,
One moment's pause—they meet—embrace—
"Zenora!" "Henri!" face to face
      They've met again,
      And like summer rain,
Like dew-drops in the morning's sun,
The salt tears down their cheeks do run,
On their faithful bosoms falling,
Thoughts of the weary past recalling.

XIII.

"Tell me, Zenora!" said the the Knight,
  Their fond embrace of transport o'er.
  "How didst thou reach this distant shore?
  Why didst thou leave thine own dear land?"
"Ah!" she replied, o'erpowered quite,
  And seizing Henri's hand,
"I have spent many a weary hour
Since you left that dark old tower,
Many a long and sleepless night
Since I took my hasty flight,
Leaving home and friends to be
Once more, Minstrel Knight, with thee.
And now, since I have found thee,—now
Oh! let me stay to cheer thy brow,
  To be thy minstrel—aye! thy slave!
But do not bid me leave thee!" "How
  Could I spurn her who thus would brave
  All dangers both by land and wave,"
Replied the Knight, "that she might be
If I thought meet, a *slave* to me!
No, lovely, loving one," he cried,
"But thou shalt be mine own dear BRIDE!"
Once more he clasped her to his breast,
Once more that lily hand he press'd,
And she, with cheerful, smiling face,
Fondly returned his warm embrace.

XIV.

With what a joyous, wild delight,
Do those voices ring through the skies of night!
Some are merrily singing a jovial strain
That makes the old castle shake again.
Here sit a group of merry ones laughing,
Drowning all care with the wine they're quaffing.
There are others who love with the fair to mix,
There are merry old Knights, full of merry old tricks,
Who love to be gay in their good old age,
When their gray hairs tell they should be more sage.
Here sits the Beauty enchanting all;
Young love-stricken Knights obey her call,
And she reigns like one who long has been
The attractive star of each brilliant scene.
Why, at this silent, midnight hour,
Do those revellers meet in castle and bower?
Why gleam those thousand lights so brightly?
Why move those beautiful forms so lightly?
Long, long has that castle in silence stood,
Now its old sides shake in convulsive mood,
As if its silent reign was o'er,
And it lived again, as in times of yore.
Lords, Knights, and Nobles—a glittering throng,
Have met to swell the rejoicing song.
They have come to see Limoges wed.
The priest is there—the rites are said—
Many a beauteous fair one sigh'd
As she grasped the hand of the lovely Bride;
Many a youthful, blooming dame
Would have gladly borne Limoges name;
But now they gaze, with a gloomy air,
On the form of their stranger rival there.
The morn is dawning—the castle-halls
Are as silent now as its stout old walls;
The sounds of revelry long have ceas'd,
      And the smiling fair
      Are no longer there,
To gladden the sumptuous marriage feast.
The bridegroom and bride have retired to rest:
May their dreams be gentle! their life-time blest!

Kingston, C. W., 1845.

THE VIOLINIST.*

BY E. L. C.

GUISEPPE lost no time in pursuing the path which Fabian, the page, had pointed out to him, and as he penetrated deeper and deeper into its labyrinthine turnings, at every onward step a new world of beauty was opened to his admiring gaze. To him the fair face of nature was always lovely, and every changeful aspect of her glorious features, awakened rapture in his soul. And so he loitered on, his pleasant path, chequered with glancing light and shade, pausing often to admire the view, as through some green vista he beheld the marble walls of the palace gleaming among the dark groves of orange and of ilax in which it was embosomed, or caught a glimpse of the blue Brenta, "winding at its own sweet will," between its shady banks, till the ruins of the old abbey appeared suddenly in view, reminding him that he was approaching the termination of his walk.

A single turret rose erect before him, moss-grown and crowned with mantling vines, and around its base, covering the broad slope of a green declivity, there stood many a crumbling arch and broken pillar, beautiful in their decay, and indicating, by the wide surface over which they were scattered, the extent and importance of the original building, of which they once formed a part. A dilapidated wall defined the limits of the former courtyard, in the centre of which a bright fountain still threw up its ceaseless jet of water, and again, in a diamond shower fell into a granite basin, over whose scalloped edge it trickled with a pleasant sound upon the green herbage below. It was a sweet spot, peeping forth from a grove of ancient chesnuts that nearly encircled it, and filled with breezy sounds, and fragment odours exhaled from innumerable flowers, fair tenants once of the Brotherhood's well-kept garden, but which now, untrained by holy hands, sprang up in wild profusion wherever the idle winds wafted their seeds, wreathing with gay chaplets, the old gray columns, and crowning the broken archways with forms and hues of beauty.

Guiseppe's eye drank in with delight the rare loveliness of the scene, spread out like a living panorama before him,—glancing joyously on verdant hill and dale, and misty mount, and following the course of the sparkling Brenta as it wound onward through a paradise of beauty, circling in its arms the distant city, that, crowned with dome and turret, rose silent and beautiful, like some rich painting against the glowing background of a lovely sapphire sky. 'Twas distance lent enchantment to the view,'—at least so thought Guiseppe, though not in the exact words of the poet, as he remembered the populous and busy life that was ever astir within those walls whose softened outlines, bathed in the glory of that rich Italian sunlight, formed so quiet and beautiful an object in the landscape. He sighed at the thought that his home lay in the midst of those crowded thoroughfares, yet rejoiced still to feel himself alone with nature, whose sweet influences breathed a delicious freshness over his wearied spirit—wearied with its struggle between filial love and duty, and the strength of that absorbing passion which maintained over him such resistless sway.

Leaning against the pedestal of an old sun-dial, which, although half buried in flowers, still told upon its disk the rapid flight of time, Guiseppe stood lost in revery, with his eyes fixed sometimes upon the far-off vein, and then upon the moss-grown tower, that alone of the ruined pile remained entire, when he fancied he saw a shadow pass before one of the narrow windows that appeared here and there, deep set in the rough massive masonry.

"Can that lonely chamber contain an inhabitant?" he murmured to himself, and with the rapidity of thought his fancy pictured the worn form and venerable features of the anchorite who might there have fixed his abode, when suddenly a white hand parted the ivy that screened the window, and then a face like one of Guido's angels, was thrust momentarily forth, a quick glance cast abroad, and the fair head was withdrawn, the thick vines fell heavily down, and immediately the tones of a silver voice were heard carolling, as the songstress descended the winding stairs, some stanzas of an old ballad that told the legend of the tower.

The melody itself, so rich and plaintive, would have held the music-loving Guiseppe a spell-bound listener, even had not a natural curiosity to behold the invisible singer prompted him, as the voice every instant came nearer, silently to await her appearance. The old sun-dial stood right facing, and at no great distance from the low postern, through which she must emerge from the tower, and a narrow well-trodden path diverged from it, traversing the ancient garden and court-yard, towards the palace. And there, fixed as a statue, the youth stood, as two females issued from the low arched door, and with light step threading the path which wound close beside him, would have passed on without perceiving him, but for an involuntary movement on his part, which suddenly betrayed his presence, and attracted their observation towards him.

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* Continued from page 371.

A quick start betrayed their surprise at this discovery, and with a half suppressed exclamation they paused, when the elder of the two spoke for a moment in a low and earnest tone to her companion, then slightly hesitating, she advanced towards Guiseppe, and said gaily,

"Art thou aware, young stranger, that thou dost incur a heavy penalty by thy trespass on this holy ground, and were the old monks who once trod these walks yet living in their cells, I warrant me thou wouldst not escape without a night's vigil in Father Hugo's haunted tower, and the gift of a silver chalice for the altar to boot."

"Say'st thou so, fair lady!" replied Guiseppe in the same strain of light badinage—"Since such are my deserts, then, and the reverend Fathers are not here to read my doom, I submit me in all humility, to thy decree, whatever thou in thy wisdom mayst see fit to pronounce."

"We will study to be lenient since thou art so docile," said the lady, "and require of thee in expiation of thy offence, naught save a few brief touches on that marvellous instrument of thine, whose tones, if I mistake not, we have often heard of late—distant and faint, and unknowing whence they came, have deemed them,

"'Melodies divine,
Gushing from founts, to mortal vision sealed!'"

"Thou shalt be obeyed, lady," said Guiseppe, "Yet," he added with graceful modesty, "this is but a poor instrument save in the hands of a master, and that I claim not yet to be, although my aspirations point to the time when I may stand beside Corelli, and share with him an equal meed of merit."

"That time is not far distant," said the lady, "if indeed it be not already arrived—for I have heard Corelli, and beautiful and flowing are his strains, but they want the soul of sweetness and of passion that in thine awakens every listener to rapture."

A bright glow of mingled pride and pleasure flushed the face and forehead of Guiseppe as these words of praise fell from the beautiful lips of the speaker; yet conscious how greatly they exceeded his deserts, he said with a gay and ingenuous smile,

"Thy commendations, lady, so far transcend my merits that I must perforce discern the satire which lurks beneath thy honied words, and it teaches me a salutary lesson of humility, which I promise thee shall not be cast away unheeded."

"Now, by my halidom! thou dost wilfully pervert my words," said the lady with pretty pettishness—"for I meant naught like this—neither, I vow, dost thou so understand it, since if thou wilt but recal the night of the Marchesa del Monti's fête, when thou didst bear away the palm of victory from the first performers of Italy, thou wilt confess that I have ample warrant for my words."

"And thou wast present, lady, on that night," said Guiseppe inquiringly. "I remember now," he continued, as she bowed assent, "I remember now, for how could I forget it, one, among that galaxy of beauty which was my inspiration at the moment—one star more glorious than the rest, and now again I hail its light, as it sparkles far above me, a cynosure of beauty in the heavens."

As he spoke the young man bent low before her, who stood, a living personification of ideal beauty, in his path, though even while he offered her this homage of admiration, his roving glance strayed from her proud and commanding features to the angel face of the young girl at her side, who in her sweet unconscious loveliness, seemed formed to win all hearts, and subdue them by the might of her gentleness.

"Is it in the schools of Padua, young signor, that thou hast learned to coin thy cunning flatteries?" asked the lady, an arch smile curving her ripe lip, till it looked like the very bow of Cupid, bent, ready for the flight of his most fatal arrows. "If so," she added, "thou art an apt scholar for thy years."

"Too apt, lady," he gaily replied, "to be outdone by one of thy tender sex in fair speech, for where gentle hands lavish gems, he would be an uncourteous churl to render back aught less sparkling in return."

"It was in repayment then of that which thou didst receive, that thou framed'st thy flattering speech, and may not therefore be viewed as the spontaneous offering of thy sincerity," said the lady, a shade of chagrin, in spite of the bright smiles that veiled it, becoming suddenly visible on her countenance.

"Nay, by my faith! fair lady, the offering was from my heart,—aye, from my heart of hearts,—said Guiseppe as slightly inclining towards her, he laid his hand with an expressive gesture on his breast; "yet, had I not drawn courage from thy kindness, I confess to thee, I would never have been emboldened to present it."

"Thou wilt prove ere long a learned casuist," said the lady laughing; "but all this time thou *forgettest*, wilfully I doubt not, the penance we ordained thee, *and I so long* to hear again thy music! Have I not raved of *his sonatas*, sweet Ianthé, till thou too art all but dying with impatience to hear them?"

"*In truth* thou hast, dear aunt," said the beautiful girl whom she addressed, and as she spoke a smile like the first ray of sunrise on a vernal landscape shed its light over her lovely face, giving an irresistible charm to its expression, and heightened brilliancy to the exquisite hues of her complexion. Her voice was *low* and of a reed-like sweetness, and as Guiseppe's eye lingered admiringly upon the youthful beauty, the elder lady *seemed uneasy*, and annoyed that another should divide with her, even the *passing* homage of the young and graceful student. But before she could entirely regain the attention which her vanity coveted, they were interrupted by the appearance of the page, *Fabian*, who was seen advancing towards them.

"He brings some message from my uncle," said Ianthé, and she went forward quickly to meet him, but returned *almost instantly*, followed by the page—

"My lord," he said, "desires the immediate *presence* of the Countess Bertha, and the Lady Ianthé, as *some strangers* of distinction have arrived at the palace, to whom he wishes to present them. Moreover, Signor," he said, addressing Guiseppe, "I am commanded by his reverence to seek thee out, which I was now on my way to do; but having found thee here, I need but deliver his message, which is, that thou present thyself at the palace to-morrow evening, where thou wilt *meet many rare performers*, among whom, as my lord bishop was pleased to say, the student of Padua would not rank the *lowest*."

"I am beholden to thy master for his courtesy, sir page," said Guiseppe, "yet marvel on what he grounds his golden opinion of my poor skill, inasmuch as it hath never been tested in his presence."

"But it hath, Signor," returned the page—"*once at the villa of a* noble lady, near Padua, and again this *morning* when he heard thy music and questioned me as to whence it came; so I told him of our rencontre, describing thee and thy *mode* of playing, and he recognized at once the *student minstrel* whom he hath long wished to meet, and sent me forth to find thee, with the message which I have but now *delivered* to thee."

"Truly, I owe thy lord hearty thanks for his good will and kindness," said Guiseppe, "but—"

"Nay we *will have no buts*, in the way of thy obedience to the lord bishop's commands," said the Countess Bertha, breaking gaily in upon the *young man's meditated apology*. "He loves not opposition to his will, and ill brooks a slight in return for offered kindness. What say'st thou, Ianthé, do I not counsel him wisely?"

"Ay, *dost thou sweet aunt*," said the fair girl whom she addressed, *and her voice* sounded to Guiseppe like the low aerial tones of the wind-harp, when the light-breeze gently touches its *strings*. "And yet," she added, "with a lovely blush, "I *would not* that thou constrain the young stranger over much, since he doubtless hath reasons of weight for declining the request, and if so, sure am I, my kind uncle will not regard his refusal as a slight."

"And I said this but *to force him to* our wishes," returned the Countess, "and now with thy straitforwardness, thou silly child, thou hast quite *marred my purpose*."

"I meant not so, *dear aunt*," said Ianthé, "and perhaps—that is, if he love music as thou sayest he doth,—he will not say us nay, when we tell *him* that the great violinist Veracini, is to be chief among the performers on the evening of the concert."

"Veracini!" exclaimed Guiseppe with enthusiasm—"Francesco Veracini!" he reiterated, for the name fell like a spell of magic upon his ear, and transported *him* in a *moment* to the church at Venice, and again *filled it with* the rich and thrilling melodies of that marvellous performer.

"Thou *wilt come to us*, then," asked Ianthé with artless earnestness.

"Ay, Veracini will win thee, though our eloquence hath failed to do so," added the Countess Bertha, pleased, yet half piqued that any allurement should carry with it *more* weight than her wishes.

"I should resist both," said Guiseppe, "but that I have not strength to withstand the double temptation; and so I *yield me* to its power, turning a deaf ear to the voice of *duty which pleads* so earnestly within me."

"Duty, Signor?" exclaimed the countess; "I prithee, *tell me* what *duty* thou wilt violate by accepting the hospitality of the Bishop of Padua?"

"None, fair lady, by that simple act," returned Guiseppe. "But they who by nature have a right to *command my* entire obedience look not with approving eyes on *my intense* love of music; and therefore I should avoid all *places*, where the passion which I have never yet been able to subdue, may find food for its cravings, and so grow into giant strength and power. My own wishes would lead me to dwell ever in an atmosphere of melody, and of late I have done so, but *too* much—turning with disgust from my studies, and forgetting in the harmonies so dear to me, the counsels and the expectations of those to whom I owe my being."

"Perchance thou hast done wrong," said the Countess Bertha—"yet it may be that thou condemnest thyself unjustly. Knowing naught of thy position, I cannot judge for thee, but be it as it may, I beseech *thee, let not thy* penitence take effect till after this concert at the palace, for I would fain hear once again, before thou dost forswear the *beau science, thy skilful touches on* that instrument of thine."

"In obeying thee, lady, I do but fulfil my own strong desire," said Guiseppe; "and *when* I have once more listened to Veracini, I shall the more cheerfully yield to the wishes of my parents, since in despair of attaining his excellence. I *may find it* a less difficult task to resign forever the indulgence of a taste which it is not permitted me to cultivate."

"*Thou canst not resign it, Signor*," said the countess—"it is a gift from God, an endowment of thy being, to which thou canst not, nor ought thou to be indifferent—."

"Nor would I," he replied, "but for the wishes of those, whom both duty and affection constrain me to obey. For their sakes I *will strive* to become what they desire, but each day, I feel how vain is the struggle to stifle the inward promptings of the spirit, and bind its airy and *aspiring wings* down to the dull and precise formularies of the schools."

"Ah! but it is so sweet to make happy those who *love us fondly*," said the low and earnest voice of Ianthé. "Blessed indeed, must it be to sacrifice even our cherished wishes, for the happiness of *tender and doting parents*."

Tears filled her lovely eyes as she uttered these words in the fervent tone of deep and artless feeling, and though they were not so *intended*, Guiseppe felt the rebuke they conveyed, and blushing at his own selfish repining, he said gently:

"Thou art right, *sweet lady,—and those* for whom I should make this sacrifice of inclination, are worthy, and more than worthy, of all I can do to testify my grateful sense of their goodness and unceasing love. When to-morrow hath passed away, I will strive to remember and obey only their wishes, more entirely than I have yet *done*."

A glance of soft approval, was Ianthé's only reply, but that look was treasured in his heart. The Countess Bertha *seemed not* well pleased at this brief interchange of sentiment between them, which met no response in her own breast, and her brilliant *smile became not unlike a sneer*, when, as they uttered their farewells, she saw the youth pluck from the ground a bunch of violets that had fallen from the girdle of Ianthé, and place it in his bosom. But she did not see his lips drink the fragrant dew of their petals *as he turned away to depart*; nor could her eye discern the sweet tumult of his thoughts, as he trod his homeward path, till he found himself *alone in the solitude of* his own apartments.

Then the scene of the morning passed in review before him like a dream. The smiles, the fascinations of the *brilliant countess*, the beauty of the young Ianthé, so pure, so touching, so spiritual, she seemed to him like one of his own exquisite harmonies, or like "*some rare creature* of the elements," soon to dissolve again into her native and transparent air. Her smile—how beautiful it was—still it seemed to his imagina*tion to linger* on the violets which he cherished, because she had worn them; her voice was low and ravishingly sweet, and her every movement a *revelation of* harmony and grace.

That she was the niece of the bishop of Padua, he had discovered during the interview—that neice whom he *had been solicited to instruct* in the art of music, and with eyes blinded and sealed to the future, he had unthinkingly declined the task. How he now blamed his own *folly*, and *vainly* wished for power to recall that refusal. The Countess Bertha, he knew, also, belonged to the family of the bishop; in fact, she was his youngest *sister*, and had resided with him since the death of her lord, the Count de Rossi, a period now of two years. She had been urged by her brother to do so, *not only on account* of the love he bore her, and the pride with which he regarded her beauty and her talents, but also, because his niece, the *lady Ianthé*, *an orphan whom* he had adopted in her cradle, having attained her fifteenth year, was on the point of emerging from the convent, where she had been *educated*, and he felt it peculiarly desirable to obtain for her the companionship, and matronly protection of her aunt.

Young, gay, and beautiful, a hundred adorers had sighed at the feet of the Countess Bertha; but a vain love of show was her ruling passion, *and that she might* have power to gratify it, she turned from those most worthy of her love, to bestow at eighteen, her hand upon the old Count de Rossi, a superannuated *wretch* of threescore, whose only attraction in her eyes was, the possession of that shining dust which could surround her with the pomp she coveted. And for *four long* years succeeding her marriage, her most extravagant desires were satisfied; she lived like a queen in the midst of almost oriental splendour *and pageantry*; but her jewelled robes covered an aching heart, her glittering coronet, a weary head, and ere one short month of her wedded life was flown, she would willingly have changed the downy pillow on which she vainly courted rest, for the rude couch and sweet content of the meanest peasant in the land.

The truth was, she found her lord, with all his outward magnificence, a miser in heart, whose avarice only yielded to that passion for ostentatious display which awakened the envy of mean minds, and won for him the vulgar admiration in which his sordid soul delighted. His young and lovely wife he made a part of his exhibition, cradling her in luxury, and loading her with gems, each one of which was worth a prince's ransom, but making her withal the mere puppet of his silly vanity, without power—without even a moiety of that wealth which surrounded her, at her own disposal; and moreover, subjected continually to his absurd caprice and jealous tyranny.

Thus four years passed on—four wretched years of mental misery and suffering, to the disappointed wife, when death like a kind friend stepped in to cut short the thread of De Rossi's life, and relieve her from her thraldom. In a moment of petty chagrin, the count had made a will, bequeathing the whole of his immense wealth to a distant relative, with the exception of a trifling annuity to Bertha. But this pitiful bequest, the high-spirited countess scorned to accept; her own private fortune, though limited, was amply sufficient for her wants. She had learned by bitter experience, the utter insufficiency of wealth to confer happiness, and she felt deeply that sympathy and affection could alone satisfy the heart, and form the true felicity of a loving and tender woman.

The last rites paid to her deceased and unregretted lord, the youthful widow fled like a freed bird from the gilded cage in which she had pined, a sad and lovely captive, to the arms of her brother, who welcomed her with joy, and prevailed on her, for the reasons already named, to remain in his household, rather than retire to a small estate she owned at no great distance from Milan. To this proposition she readily yielded her assent, and two years had elapsed since she fixed her residence at the palace.

With renovated spirits, and beauty matured, but more brilliant than in its first lustrous dawn, the Countess Bertha now seemed to live only for enjoyment. She coveted no longer the wealth and éclat for which she had once sacrificed herself, but with almost morbid craving, her heart yearned to find one, on whom she could lavish her pent-up affections, and who in return would love her for herself alone, and find a universe of joy in her presence and her smiles. Many, indeed, were the conquests she achieved, but no one among her suitors answered to the ideal she worshipped, and she turned coldly or gaily from all who proffered her their love.

It was at a fête given by the Marchesa del Monti, that she one evening met Guiseppe Tartini, and there was that in his sweet and intellectual face, in the elegance of his youthful person, in his graceful and noble carriage, and above all, in the divine manifestation of his genius as a poet and a musician, that riveted her attention, and kindled her deepest interest. Solicitous to bring him within the immediate circle of her acquaintance, she urged the bishop to engage his services as a private teacher for Ianthé, and when baffled in this purpose, by his declining the office, her intriguing spirit busied itself in divining some plan by which a familiar intercourse might be established between them.

It was therefore with a thrill of pleasure that she again recognized him as he loitered among the ruins of the old abbey, and the issue of that meeting, contrary to her expectations, promised the fulfilment of the object which she so earnestly wished to accomplish. Of all these secret thoughts and purposes, she said nothing to the young Ianthé, whom she regarded and treated as a child, and who had in truth the simple manners, and the guileless heart of one. But though the brilliant countess secretly despised, in her niece, the sweet artlessness and perfect singleness of heart which offered so striking a contrast to her own studied and designing character, she could not fail to love a creature so gentle, and so generous—so loving too, and so unselfish in every daily act. She was her pet, her favourite above all others, but not the chosen confidant of her busy thoughts and never-ending schemes.

The bishop loved his sister fondly, but he idolized his charming niece. Her mother was in early life the chosen of his heart, but she preferred his brother, a brave soldier, and he from that hour centred his affections in the church, and took upon himself the vows of an ecclesiastic. The birth of the little Ianthé, however, within two years after this marriage, cost her mother's life—her father had already fallen on the field of battle, and the dying mother bequeathed to him, whose fond hopes she had blighted, the gift of her precious child.

And he received her gratefully and cherished her fondly. His position obliged him to place her in a convent for many years; but he kindled her love for him, and fed his for her, by frequent visits, and when at length she came to dwell beneath his roof, she brought light and joy to his solitary home; he called her ever the pearl of his heart, and it was to him a delight and refreshment, to turn from the dazzling and restless enchantments of the beautiful countess, to the childlike and gentle creatures who hovered near him with song upon her lips, and love in her beaming eyes, quietly anticipating his wishes, and like some blessed presence, diffusing an atmosphere of joy and peace around her.

Little did Guiseppe dream that he could be an object of even momentary interest to either of the high-born and beautiful women, whom he had encountered in the ruins, and soon becoming absorbed in preparation for the performance of the coming evening, he quite dismissed them from his thoughts, and spent the remainder of that day to the commencement of another, in reiterating his favourite pieces, especially that one of satanic origin, which he justly considered his masterpiece. The moments seemed to fly on leaden wings during the last few hours, which preceded the time named for his appearance at the palace; but at length it arrived, and with a light step he set forth, gaily traversing the pleasant path which led by Hugo's Tower.

Sitting on the edge of the fountain, and playing with its waters, he found Fabian waiting to conduct him to the presence of the bishop, and rejoiced to be thus guided, he walked on with him through grounds embellished with rare taste and beauty, till they entered the spacious gardens, every alcove and flower-plot of which, had its presiding deity, sculptured by the faultless chisel of a master, from marble of the purest and most brilliant whiteness. Everywhere the eye feasted on forms of beauty, and the senses of smelling and of hearing were regaled by an atmosphere of most delicious fragrance, and by the mingled music of fountains and of birds, which fell with soft and lulling melody on the ear.

Passing on through this scene of enchantment, they reached the broad flight of steps which led to the principal entrance of the palace, and as Guiseppe ascended them to the lofty colonnade which extended along the whole front of the edifice, his heart beat quickly at the thought of his presumption, in venturing hither to display his skill before its patrician inmates—and not only before them, but in presence of Veracini, who, not even excepting the veteran Corelli, was the most admired and celebrated violinist of the age.

It was then, however, although his failing courage prompted him to the act, too late to retreat, and with a firm step but a faltering heart, he followed the page into the spacious vestibule, and on through a suite of stately apartments to a brilliantly lighted saloon, the door of which flew open at his approach. He heard his name announced, and entering, he beheld gay and smiling faces around him, and he heard low strains of music, mingled with the hum of voices, and the sweet sounds of woman's silver laughter. But dazzled by the scene he could discern no object distinctly; a sudden pause seemed to follow his entrance, and confused and irresolute, he stood a moment uncertain whom to address, or whither to direct his steps.

But immediately the bishop quitted a group with whom he was conversing, and advanced, cordially, to greet the young stranger, graciously thanking him for so ready a compliance with his wishes, and presenting him to the Countess Bertha and the Lady Ianthé, as a guest for whom he desired their particular regard and attention. The welcome smiles with which they received him, together with the kind and courteous bearing of his noble host, reassured the youthful debutant, and enabled him to return the greetings of Veracini and other distinguished amateurs, to whom the bishop introduced him, with the quiet self-possession that marked his usual manner.

His appearance, indeed, seemed to excite a general sensation in the company, and indeed, in his graceful student's dress, his intellectual face glowing with genius and sensibility, one could hardly have beheld a more interesting individual than the young and impassioned musician, who with mingled emotions of hope, pleasure, and timidity, on this night entered the illuminated saloon of the Bishop of Padua.

There were few ladies present, nor was the company large, but it was composed of those before whom Guiseppe felt it would require no little effort of courage to display his skill. But Veracini spoke to him with kind encouragement, and flattered him by saying that the fame of his attainments had reached his ears, and rendered him most anxious to hear his performance. Then pointing to a celebrated concerto, the music of which lay open before him, he desired the young man to attempt it in company with himself.

Guiseppe bowed assent, and though his hand slightly trembled as he drew his bow across the strings, it acquired vigor and firmness as the sounds awoke beneath his touch; his timidity vanished, he forgot the presence of all around him, and felt himself alone in the world of harmony which he created. He ceased, and deafening plaudits resounded through the rooms—such a union of skill, produced the most entrancing music; and overpowered, astonished at his own success, Guiseppe drew back to hide the emotion which betrayed itself on his ingenuous countenance.

But again he was called for, and this time he was to play alone. For a moment he hesitated;

he felt the trial almost beyond his strength, but the eager and expecting eyes that were turned upon him, nerved him to new exertion, and with a bolder hand he tuned his instrument, and commenced the "Sonata del Diavolo," which he had spent most of the preceding night in repeating.

Its strange, wild melody at once riveted the attention of the audience, while as he proceeded, the young man's kindling eye and rapid execution, declared the inspiration of his own genius, and not the superhuman teaching of "demon dark or angel from above." Again he paused and not a sound followed the hush of that rich and wondrous melody. The whole assembly remained motionless; and Veracini himself, who during the performance had sprang to his feet and leaned forward, a breathless and absorbed listener, continued for a minute in the same position, as if still drinking in the divine sounds he loved.

It was a moment of almost overwhelming triumph to Guiseppe, the more so, that he met the soft eyes of Ianthé fixed upon him, and swimming in tears of rapture. She stood beside the Countess Bertha, whose love of pomp still betrayed itself in the richness of her attire, and the splendour of the jewels which blazed upon her person. The incense of admiration was heaped unceasingly upon her shrine, but the gentler lustre of the lovely Ianthé's charms commanded the deeper and more silent homage of the heart.

And strikingly were the opposite characters of the two, indicated by their different styles of dress: that of the countess being elaborate and brilliant to excess, while the young Ianthé loved still the chaste simplicity of childhood, nor coveted more gorgeous gems than the orient pearls that circled her arms and neck, and shone among the soft, dark tresses of her braided hair.

Disengaging himself from the throng of admirers that pressed eagerly around him, Guiseppe retreated to the deep embrasure of a window that looked forth upon the cool and fragrant shades of the garden. Its icy freshness came deliciously in through the open window, bathing his fevered brow with balm, and stilling the excitement of his overwrought and excited feelings. But not unmarked had he sought this retreat, for as he leaned forth to enjoy the the evening air, and to lift his eyes for a moment in silent adoration to the arching heavens, whose myriad hosts shone out with dazzling lustre through that transparent atmosphere, he felt the light pressure of a hand upon his shoulder, and heard a sweet voice whisper in his ear,

"And wilt thou now forswear thine art, now that even Veracini bows down in homage to thy genius?"

Turning quickly around, he saw the brilliant figure of the Countess Bertha standing by his side.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

OLD LETTERS.

Old letters, O then spare them—they are priceless for their age!
I love—O how I love to see each yellow time-stained page!
They tell of joys that are no more, of hopes that long have fled!
Old letters! O then spare them—they are sacred to the dead!

They tell of times, of, happy times, in years long, long gone by,
Of dear ones that have ceased to live but in the memory!
They picture many a bright, bright scene, in sunny days of yore.
Old letters! O then spare them, for they are a priceless store!

Old am I too, and grey-haired now—deserted and alone,
And all of those I once could call my friends, alas! are gone,
Yet oft at midnight's stilly hour; in solitude's retreat,
With each one in his silent tomb, I hold communion sweet.

Old letters! here is one—the hand of youth is on its face;
Ah! that was from a brother young, in some far foreign place!
A sailor boy, beloved by all, frank, open-hearted, brave—
Cold, cold and lonesome is his rest beneath th' Atlantic wave.

Another, stained with dark red spots, as clasped by bloody hands,
Was found beneath a father's corpse on dread Corunna's sands;
A stranger hand with kindly care conveyed the relic dear.
Old letters! ye are priceless! ye have cost a widow's tear!

Another—know I not that hand! Oh! she was bright and fair;
Too pure, too gentle, and too good, for angels long to spare
Her to this earth of grief and wo: well, Death! thou might'st be vain;
Thou hast not such another flower in all thy dark domain.

Oh! ye are not the only links that bind us to the past;
Sweet, sweet memorials of the days too happy far to last;
The tear-drop fills again the eye which tears had almost fled.
Old letters! ye are precious! ye are sacred to the dead!

ENGLISH FIELD SPORTS OF THE OLDEN TIME*.

BY VALENTINE SLYBOOTS.

> Waken, Lords and Ladies gay!
> On the mountain dawns the day,
> All the jolly chace is here,
> With hawk and horse, and hunting spear—
> Hounds are in their couples yelling,
> Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling—
> Merrily, merrily, mingle they—
> Waken Lords and Ladies gay!
>
> HUNTING SONG.

THE sports of rude and semi-savage nations are confined to the exercise and display of mere bodily superiority. Wherever war has been the business of the popular life, racing, wrestling, and the chase, have proved the favorite pastimes. In all turbulent and troublous times, we find the accomplishments of the mind disregarded, and the education of the body, in strength, activity, and endurance of fatigue, pursued with emulous zeal. Thus was it in England under Saxon rule, when learning was considered, if not an ignoble, an utterly unsoldierly pursuit, adapted only to the gloom and quiet of the cloister. The Norman conquest affected the national sports in two ways—firstly, by the institution of tyrannical Game Laws, and consequent restriction of the pleasures of the chase to the favoured few—and secondly, by the introduction of the observances of Chivalry—its jousts and pageants, pomps and tournaments:—

> In rough magnificence array'd,
> When ancient Chivalry display'd
> The pomp of her heroic games,
> And crested chiefs and tissued dames
> Assembled, at the clarion's call,
> In some proud castle's high-arch'd hall.

Wild and rude though the institution of Chivalry undoubtedly was, it cannot be denied that its influence was favorable to the progress of civilisation—tempering the mere courage of animal man with some share of generosity and mercy, heightening the tone of social and domestic intercourse, and requiring in every gallant and faithful knight, a familiarity not only with all warlike exercises, but with the chase and every stirring sport, and some knowledge of the lighter accomplishments of dancing and of music. In the old Romance of "The Death of Arthur," a certain Sir Tristram is depicted as the very mirror of Chivalry, of whom it is said—"He learned to be a harper, passing all others, that there was none such in any country; and so in harping and on instruments of music he applied himself in his youth for to learne, and after as he growed in might and strength, he laboured ever in hunting and hawking, so that we read of no gentleman who more used himself therein."

The tilts, tournaments, and displays of military prowess which had sprung from the romantic spirit of chivalry, though strongly countenanced by Royalty in the persons of the seventh and eighth Henries, died away very much towards the close of the fifteenth century; but the more peaceful sports, with which they were commingled, retained their popularity. Those diversions of a people, which are most deeply interwoven with the general feeling, and most in accordance with the bent of the national character, seem indeed to defy the power of time, and to be scarce sensible of change, even while kingdoms are convulsed, laws reversed, and institutions buried in oblivion.

The love of field sports in "Merrie England" had all the enthusiasm of a passion deep seated in the national mind. "It hath ever bene of old antiquitie," says Henry VII. in one of his Proclamations, "used in this realme of most noble fame, for all lustye gentlemen to passe the delectable season of summer, after divers manners and sundry fashions of disports—as in hunting the red and fallowe deer with hounds, grey hounds, and with the bowe, also in hawking with hawks of the tower; and other pastimes of the field." Glance we then briefly at the three "fashions of disports" here indicated—Hunting, Hawking and Archery.

I. The northern nations of Europe—the Saxons, the Britons, and the Danes—were from the earliest times more attached to the pleasures of the chase than the Romans and other races of the sunny South. It was indeed an occupation rather than a pastime. *Kings rejoiced in it, and* the hound became even the travelling companion of the noble. Alfred the Great, at the age of *twelve, was* "a most expert and active hunter, and excelled in all the branches of *that most noble* art"—Edward the Confessor, with all his monkish devotion, "took the greatest delight," *says* the old historian Malmsbury, "to follow a pack of swift hounds *in* pursuit of game, and to cheer them with his voice."—*On the accession of* William the Norman, the people generally were prohibited from hunting, under cruel penalties, *and that right monopolised* by the King, and those of the nobility who were favoured with a license from him. To destroy any of the beasts of chase within the royal hunting grounds was reckoned a capital crime; and the life of a stag deemed far more *precious than* that of a peasant. The severity of these game-laws—*which even modern* advancement has not yet been able entirely to eradicate—was rather increased than diminished *until the reign of* King John, when a clause was inserted in the Forest Charter, *providing* that no man should forfeit life or limb for killing the King's deer, but should be subjected to a heavy *fine.*

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* For not a few of the facts contained in this short notice, I am indebted to Strutt's valuable but somewhat rare Treatise on the "Sports and pastimes of the people of England"—on which, by the way, Horatio Smith has drawn very liberally, in his volume on "Festivals, Games and Amusements."—V.S.

Froissart relates of Edward III., that he took so much delight in hunting that even at the time he was engaged in war with France, and resident in that country, he had with him "sixty couples of *stag hounds,* and as many hare hounds, and every day amused *himself with hunting or hawking.*" The same spirit animated almost all the crowned heads of England, down even to that intolerable pedant James I., who, treating of kingly sports in his "Basilikon Doron" remarks, "I cannot omit here the hunting, *namely with running* houndes, which is the most honourable and noblest sort thereof, for it is a thievish forme of *hunting to shoote* with gunnes and bowes."

The chase was *the hereditary privilege of nobility,* and well did the pastime suit the wild spirit of the old Liege Lords. "In our time," says a grumbling author of the twelfth century, quoted by Strutt, "*hunting and hawking* are esteemed the most honourable *employments,* and most excellent virtues by our nobility; and they think it the height of worldly felicity to spend the whole of their time in these diversions. By constantly following *this way of life,* they lose much of their humanity, and become as savage, nearly, as the very brutes they hunt——"

The nobles, however, were rivalled, perhaps surpassed in *their attachment* to the chase, by the proud and pampered clergy—the Bishops *and* Abbots going out to *hunt in great state,* attended by a large retinue of followers, and some of *them* even becoming celebrated for their skill in this fashionable sport. The old English poets and other writers loudly exclaimed against these abuses in the Church. *Chaucer, in his Canterbury* Tales, repeatedly turned his keen pen against the excesses of the Priesthood, asserting "that *many* of them thought more upon hunting with their dogs, *and blowing* the horn, than of the service they owed to God."

"What?" says a plain satirist of the early part of the fifteenth century—

"What? Are these Bishops divines?
Yea, they can well skill of wines
Better than of divinity.
As for preaching they know no care;
They would see a course at a hare,
Rather than make a sermon!
To follow the chase of the wild deer,
Passing the time with jolly cheer,
Among them all is common!"

Thomas à Becket, it is said, when sent by Henry II. as ambassador to the Court of France, took with him, for his diversion, hounds and hawks in great variety, "such as were used by *Kings and Princes.*"

The clergy of rank *had at all times* the privilege of hunting in their own enclosures, and these were very extensive, and well stocked with game. At *the period* of the Reformation, the see of Norwich *alone possessed* no less than thirteen parks of immense extent, *all abounding* with deer, and other animals of the chase.

The ladies of the olden time were mighty hunters—*sometimes* accompanying the gentlemen to "the jolly chase," but *often* enjoying the sport by their own sweet selves. In the former case, we are informed by the erudite Mr. Strutt, "it *was usual* to draw the game into a small compass by means *of enclosures;* and temporary stands were made for them to be *spectators of the sport,* though in many instances they joined in it, and shot at the animals as they passed by them with arrows." *In a very old* Romance, entitled "The Squyr of Low Degree,"* the King of Hungary is represented endeavouring to enliven the spirits of his daughter, drooping on account of her love *for the* Squire, by promising her, that on the morrow she *should go out* with him to hunt, in a chariot "cover'd with velvet red," and drawn by

"Jennets of Spain that ben so white
Trapp'd to the ground with velvet bright—

and that she would be supplied with

"A leash of greyhounds with you to strike
And hart and hind and other like—

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*See "Ellis's early English Poets.'

> Ye shall be set at such a *tryst*
> That hart and hind shall come to your fist,—
> Your disease to drive you fro
> To hear the bugles there yblow."

In their own hunting parties, the ladies blew the horn, started the game, and pursued it with a fearlessness and spirit—we had almost said—*blood-thirstiness—incompatible with modern notions of feminine gentleness.* It appears that in early times these female Nimrods sat astride on horseback to gain a firmer seat—nay, more, history saith, that "the Bury ladies, that used hawking and hunting, were once in a great vaine of wearing breeches!" actual bonâ fide breeches! gentle Reader, for so the vernacular hath it—not used in a metaphorical sense, else were the circumstance no exclusive peculiarity of the fair ones of Bury, or of any other town or city whatever, but the simple enunciation of an unfortunate fact of very extensive application, as all the married world knows full well!

The chase was a diversion well adapted to the strong minded Elizabeth, and she pursued it with an ardour which advancing years seemed scarcely to affect. In the year 1600, when she had entered her *seventy-seventh year*, an old courtier writes to Sir Robert Sidney—"Her Majesty is well, and excellently disposed to hunting, for every second day, she is on horseback, and continues the sport long."

All the Poets allude to hunting as a morning pastime, and modern ladies must sigh, we fear, in vain for the rich bloom that covered the cheeks of those, who sprung from their couches at break of day to

> "Chase the desperate deer,"
> "And through its deepest solitudes awake"
> "The vocal forest with the jovial horn."

Milton, enumerating the signs which betoken the rising of "the dappled dawn," speaks of

> "Oft list'ning how the hounds and horn"
> Cheerly rouse the slumb'ring morn,"
> From the side of some hoar hill,"
> Through the high-wood echoing shrill."

II. Hawking, though for a time a greater favourite in England than even hunting itself, cannot of course boast an origin so ancient. Antiquaries have discovered no traces of this sport prior to the fourth century. At a very early period, the "Grand Fauconnier" of France was an officer of high distinction in the court, in the receipt of a salary of 4000 florins, keeping three hundred hawks, and levying a tax on every one of these precious birds sold within the Kingdom. Hawking appears to have become a fashionable sport on the continent of Europe, before it was introduced into England. About the middle of the eighth century, we learn, that Winifrid or Boniface, Archbishop of Mons—a native of England—presented to Ethelbert, King of Kent, "one hawk, and two falcons,"*. In the succeeding century, the sport was enthusiastically adopted by the Anglo-Saxon nobility, among whom the training and flying of hawks soon came to be considered as essential a branch of education as the chase itself. These birds were regarded thenceforth as ensigns of noble birth, nor could any thing be more dishonourable to a man of rank than to be deprived of his hawk. *Under Norman rule,* the leading nobles were alone permitted to keep hawks; but the Forest Charter, signed by King John, accorded to every free man the privilege of having "aeries of hawks, sparrow-hawks, falcons, eagles, and herons, in his own woods."

We have already adverted to the hunting retinue of Edward III, when invading France. The same authority, Froissart,† informs us that the King was also accompanied by *thirty falconers on horseback*, to take charge of his hawks.

The frequent mention in old writers, of hawking by the river side, leads to the supposition, that *the pursuit of water fowl* afforded the greatest diversion. Chaucer, in the Canterbury Tales, avers of the doughty Sir Thopas, that he could hunt the wild deer,

> "And ryde on haukynge by the *ryver*
> With grey goshawke in hande."

Like hunting, this pastime was a favorite recreation of the clergy, although expressly forbidden by the canons of their Church. The ladies, too, of the middle ages, pursued with passionate eagerness, a sport, which to the eye of modern refinement, must wear an aspect of repulsive cruelty. The artificial jargon of terms in which the various operations of hunting and hawking were expressed, or rather mystified, constantly hovered round the lips of these mediæval belles; and in experience and practical skill, they often surpassed the sportsmen of the day.

When not flying at game, the hawk was "hooded" with a cap fitted to her head, and secured upon the "fist" by "jesses" or straps of leather wound around her legs, the hand being protected from the talons or "singles" of the bird, by strong gloves made for the purpose. Attached to the legs of the hawk, by rings of leather, termed "*bewits*," were little bells of a shrill, but pleasant sound. The best "*goshawk* bells" were brought from Milan.

The practice of hawking declined very rapidly, as soon as the fowling-piece was brought to some degree of perfection. It appears to have reached the height of its popularity about the year 1600, and not long after, the sport was scarcely known at all. The training of hawks was then carried to its greatest perfection. In the reign of James the first, Sir Thomas Monson gave a thousand pounds for a "cast" or couple of hawks. Various attempts have been made to revive this pastime in England, but in vain; the vast expense and labour involved being sufficient to discourage the renewal of a sport, which the more modern fowling piece and rifle so effectively supersede.

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* See Warton's History of English Poetry.

† Chronicles, Vol. 1. cap. 210.

III. It remains, that we glance shortly at the pastime of Archery. The bow was used by the Saxons, Danes and Normans, both with a view to recreation, and as a weapon of war. The "Cross Bow, or Arbalist," though frequently named in history, does not appear to have continued long in use among the archers in England. It was in shooting with the long bow, that they acquired an unapproached perfection. Many were the edicts in olden times for the encouragement of this exercise. Among others, an ordinance was made in the fifth year of Edward IV., commanding every Englishman and Irishman dwelling in England, to have a Long Bow of his own height; and further, requiring butts to be set up in every township, and the inhabitants to shoot thereat on all fast days, under a penalty of one half-penny for each individual omission. Similar edicts were passed by Henry VII. and Henry VIII., in whose reigns the use of the cross bow was altogether prohibited, and parents commanded to teach their children to shoot with the long bow, and masters to see that their apprentices engaged in the same exercise on every holiday. Of the deadly skill which the English attained in the use of the bow, as a weapon of war, the fields of Cressy and Agincourt bear a terrible record.

Robin Hood, and his "hundred valiant men" were the most expert marksmen that ever roamed through the green forests of England.

"All made of Spanish yew, their bows were wondrous strong;
They not an arrow drew, but was a cloth yard long—
Of archery they had the very perfect craft—
And of these archers brave there was not any one
But he could kill a deer his swiftest speed upon,
Which they did boil and roast in many a mighty wood,
Sharp hunger the fine sauce to their more kingly food.
Then taking them to rest, his merry men and he
Slept many a summer's night under the green-wood tree."

Many are the trials of skill in archery recorded in the ballad poetry of England, in which the prize given to the best marksman was sometimes a sum of money, but oftener an arrow of distinction, as in the "Merry Geste of Robin Hood" it is recorded:—

"He that shooteth al of the best,
Furthest, fayre, and lowe,
At a gayre of goodly buttes
Under the greenwood shawe—
A ryght good Arrowe he shall have,
The shaft of sylver whyte,
The head and feathers of rich red gold—
In England is none lyke."

There is a bold, free spirit speaking from every line of these merry old ballads, a breath of daring and of chivalry which passes over the mind as it reverts in imagination to those stirring "times of yore." The every day romance of the former ages strikes the more forcibly, by its contrast with the uniformity and peculiarly realizing tendency of ours. It would be foolish to regret that progressive change in the character of national amusements, which aims at making the pleasures of sense subservient to the gratifications of mind—the feast of reason, and the flow of soul; but there is a glow of manly boldness and enthusiasm about much that tradition tells of the rougher sports of a ruder period, so congenial to the mind, that we cannot turn from the contemplation of them, without some such feeling lingering on the heart, as a modern poet has thus happily expressed:

"No! those days are gone away,
And these hours are old and gray,
And their minutes buried all
Under the down-trodden pall
Of the leaves of many years.

"No! the bugle sounds no more,
And the twanging bow is o'er;
Silent is the ivory shrill,
Past the heath, and up the hill;
There is no mid-forest laugh,
Where lone echo gives the half
To some wight, amaz'd to hear
Jesting, deep in forest drear.

"So it is; yet let us sing
Honour to the old bow-string!
Honour to the bugle-horn!
Honour to the woods unshorn!"

THE MELODY OF SONG.

If even words are sweet, what, what is song
When lips we love the melody prolong?
How thrills the soul, and vibrates to that lay,
Swells with the glorious sound, or dies away!
How to the cadence of the simplest words
That ever hung upon the wild harp's chords,
The breathless heart lies listening; as it felt
All life within it on that music dwelt,
And hush'd the beating pulse's rapid power,
By its own will, for that enchanted hour.

Hon. Mrs. Norton.

NOTES ON HISTORY.

NOTE THE FOURTH.

THE MOUND BUILDERS.

BY CLARENCE ORMOND.

No person conversant with American Antiquities, will attempt to deny that the tremendous mounds *found in Kentucky*, Ohio, Illinois and other places in the United States, were the work of other *hands than* those of the present race of red men. Indian traditions, preserved among various tribes, by different persons, at places far distant from each other, show that there once existed where these mounds are found, a powerful, numerous, and enlightened people called the Allegewee. The authorities respecting this ancient tribe, who occupy the *foreground of* American history, leave us in doubt as to the precise period *of* their domination. Certain it is, that they were a nation far advanced in arts and the policy of government,[*] and that while holding a high reputation as hunters, they cultivated maize or Indian corn extensively, and lived in large towns:[†] and that they erected those ancient fortifications which extended *over the entire* Mississippi valley, as far north as lat. 43°, and the lake country, reaching from Lake St. Clair[‡] to the south side of the Niagara-ridge (the old shore of Lake Ontario) and the country of the Onondagas and Oneidas.[||] Towards the south they extended as far as the borders of the Cherokees and Muscogees.[¶] From the traditions of Father Raymond, they were worshippers of the sun, had a priesthood, and exercised a *sovereignty* over a very wide area of country.[**]

At what era the Alleghan confederacy existed, and at what time their dominion ceased in North America, we do not know. The Indian nations having no certain chronology, dates must be established by the contemporaneous traditions of the Mexican nations, or by internal antiquarian evidence of *undoubted correctness*.

The old fort, discovered by Dr. Locke in Highland Co., Ohio, in the *year* 1738, *denoted* a period of 600 years from its abandonment, that is, 284 years, *or nearly* three centuries, before the adventurous Christopher Columbus first directed his course to this continent. The trees on Grave Creek mound indicate the abandonment of the trenches and stone look-out in that vicinity about the year 1136.[††] The ramparts at Marietta, Ohio, had a tree *decayed in the heart*, but the concentric outer circles which could be counted, were 462.[*]

The live oaks on the low mounds of Florida—where one of the Algonquin tribes, namely the Shawnees, aver that they once lived and had been preceded by a people more advanced in arts—denote their abandonment about the *year* 1145.[†] But these researches do not probably reach sufficiently far back to denote the true period.

If we fix upon the first part of the twelfth century as the era of the fall of the Alleghan race, we shall not probably over-estimate the antiquity of the event. It is probable that they had reached the great valley of the Mississippi, a century or two before their downfall, having felt, in their original position, west and south *of that stream*, the great revolutionary movements, which preceded the overthrow of the Toltic dynasty, and the establishment of the mighty Aztic empire in Mexican America.

There are but two words left in our geography, which are supposed to be of the ancient Alleghan language. These are *Alleghany* and *Yioghiogany*; the latter being the name of a stream which *falls into the* Monongahela river, (the left-hand fork of the Ohio) about twenty miles *above the* junction of the Monongahela and Alleghany to form the Ohio river, at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Tradition, not of the highest character, however, gives us the word *Talligeu*, or *Talligewee* as the name of this ancient and mysterious nation, *although it is nearly* identical in sound with the existing and true name of the Cherokees, which, according to the late Elias Boudinot, (a Cherokee) is *Tsallakee*. Colonel Gibson—a plain man, an Indian trader, and no philologist, who furnished Mr. Jefferson with Indian vocabularies of the various dialects of his day, to be used in answer to the enquiries of Catherine the Great—[‡] expressed an opinion that *this ancient people did not use a* T before the epithet, but were called Allegewee. *Tradition* has, however, strictly speaking, preserved neither of these terms, although both appear to have strong affinities with each other. The word Alleghany has come down *to us, from* the earliest times, as the name of the great right-hand fork of the Ohio, and also as the name, from the same remote period of antiquity, of the chain of mountains extending from New York to Georgia. In this form it is manifestly a local *term applied* geographically, according to the general principles of the *Indian languages, like* *hanna* in the river Susquehanna, and *hannock* in the Rappahannock, which appear to denote in each case a river or torrent of water. By removing this local termination, we have the word Alleghan as the proper cognomen of the "*Mound builders*" of America. The huge footsteps which have been discovered in various places in Kentucky and Tenesee are evidently the work of this people; although some antiquaries are foolish enough to suppose that they are the prints of mortal feet on the rocks. It is my opinion that among a people so far advanced in the arts, sculpture was known, and that these impressions were cut by the mystic nations; for their size declares that they must have belonged to giants, and we have no account of these tribes being of more than ordinary size. Dr. Bird says, that in a cave in Tenessee he saw the bodies of two men and a dog petrified, and that they had, from appearance, remained so for hundreds of years, and that they differed from the Indians in their features, but not in their size.

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[*] New York His. Coll., vol. 2, p. 89-91.

[†] Davies' His. Car. Islands.

[‡] American Philosophical Transactions.

[||] Clinton's Dis. His. N. Y. His. Soc. vol. 2.

[¶] Seneca Tradition, ibid.

[**] His. Carib Islands, Paris, 1658. London Ed. of 1666, p. 201 et seq.

[††] Transactions Am. Ethnological Society, vol 1, N. Y., 1845.

[*] Clinton's Dis.

[†] Arch. Am. vol. 1.

[‡] Trans. Royal Acad., St. Petersburgh.

LEAVES
FROM THE NOTE BOOK OF AN IDLER.
No. II.
LEGENDS OF THE HIGH BRIDGE.

BY CLARENCE ORMOND.

The Ansable river—which is situated in the northern part of New York, and falls into Lake Champlain, after having for many miles been the boundary line between the two counties of Clinton and Essex—presents a romantic and singular appearance near the village of Keeseville. At this place the course of the river, which is east for the distance of two miles, runs north, when again it turns to the east, and is soon emptied into the Lake. From Keeseville to Birmingham, the distance of two miles, just the length of the bend, the banks of the river rise in a perfectly perpendicular direction to the height of one hundred feet—in some places only fifty. The distance across the river at the top of the banks, is about fifty or one hundred feet. About thirty years since, when the country was very thinly settled, there was a bridge across, with which is connected the following incident:

Among the farmers in the vicinity, was one, who had a servant named Daly. Having on one occasion missed some money, this individual (whose name we will not give,) suspected Daly, and taking him one night to the bridge, the brutal master fastened a rope around one of Daly's legs, and forcibly thrust him over the side of the bridge. His situation was now one of the most horrible that can be imagined. Suspended one hundred feet above a deep, rapid current, from which there is no escape, even for the best swimmers—by a frail cord which might break or slip from the hands of the brute who held it, the heart-rending appeals for mercy from the servant would have moved any one but the monster who now held him. The farmer now told the man that he should hold him in that position till he confessed his guilt, or if he did not, he should drop him in the river. The servant denied all knowledge of the robbery, and supplicated him in moving terms to release him, but it was not till Daly's shrieks and cries for mercy had changed into the incoherent ravings of madness, that he was drawn up. When he reached the bridge, his hair was gray! And the man forever afterwards was a maniac. The country being thinly inhabited, there were no means of obtaining justice, and the author of this outrage went unharmed. But the abhorrence with which he was everywhere met, forced him to leave the country, and whither he went, no one knew.

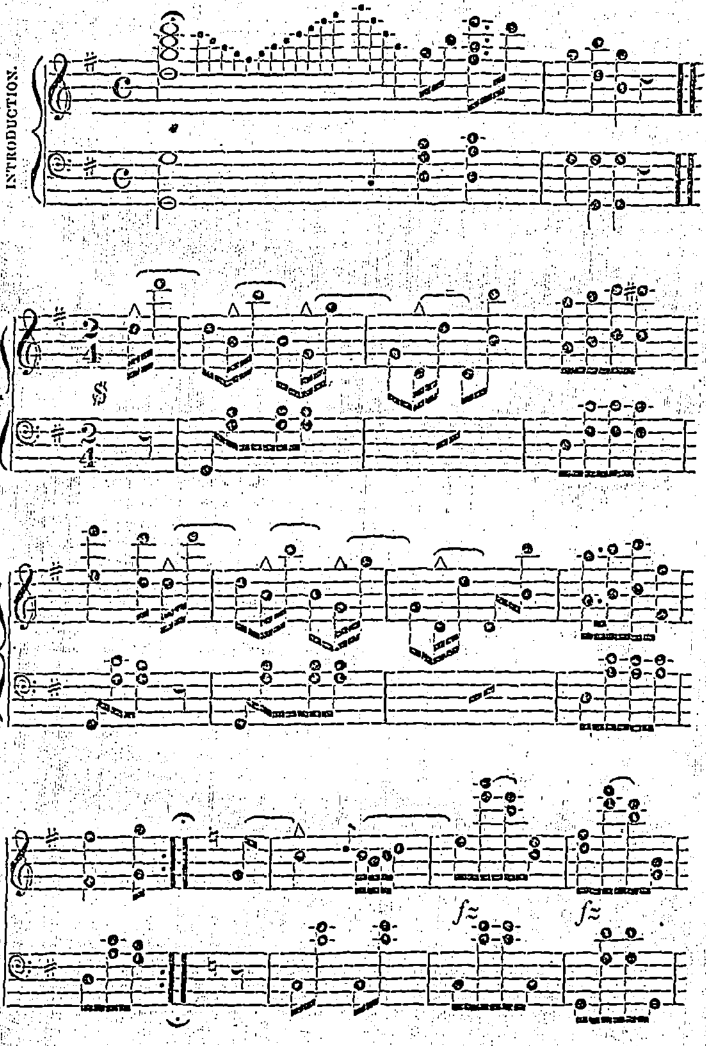
After this, for some reason, the bridge was suffered to go to decay, so that in five year's time, nothing remained but the string pieces—huge pieces of timber two or three feet square. A farmer, who for many years had resided on his farm without leaving it, was summoned to attend a county meeting on the opposite side of the river, about two miles distant from the place where the bridge had been. Although he had fifteen miles to go, the farmer did not set out till late in the afternoon, and made for the place where, on his former visit many years before, the bridge had stood. The night was dark, and on arriving at this place, the man was surprised to see his horse start back with strong demonstrations of terror, and judging that he was frightened by some beast, (for he knew that panthers abounded in this section of the country,) he spurred on and encouraged his horse, which at length proceeded onwards.

Arriving at the tavern, he was asked how he had crossed the river, and replied, "By High Bridge." His hearers were incredulous, and having laid many wagers, it was agreed that the company, who were to remain at the inn that night, should go in a body to the bridge to decide the question. The next morning they accordingly proceeded to the bridge, and the farmer could scarce believe his eyes when he saw nothing of the bridge but the three string-pieces, and when on the middle of these pieces were discovered the marks of the horse's hoofs, the farmer fainted away; the sense of danger that he had incurred, proving too much for the equilibrium of his mind. The hesitation of the horse was now accounted for; and the only wonder was, how the sure-footed beast had carried him safe across.

AIR, A LA GALLOP.

COMPOSED FOR THE LITERARY GARLAND.

BY MR. W. H. WARREN, OF MONTREAL.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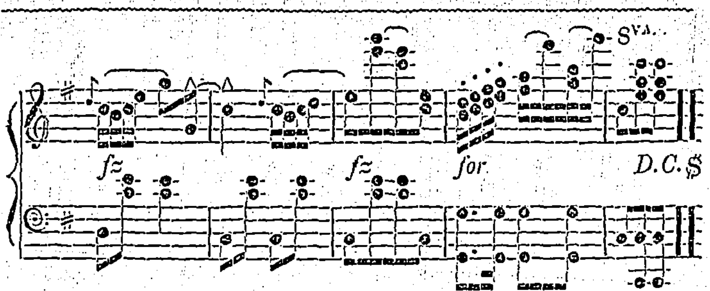

THE PIC-NIC.

BY MRS. HOWITT.

[WITH AN ENGRAVING.]

Dwellers by lake and hill!
Merry companions of the bird *and* bee!
Go gladly forth and drink *of joy* your fill,
With unconstrained step and spirits free!

No crowd impedes your way,
No city *walls impede your* further bounds;
Where *the* wild flock can wander, ye may stray
The long day *through*, 'mid summer sights and sounds.

The sunshine and the flowers,
And the old trees that cast a solemn shade;
The pleasant evening, the fresh dewy hours,
And *the* green hills whereon your fathers played.

The gray and ancient peaks
Round which the silent clouds hang day and *night*;
And the low voice of water as it makes,
Like a glad creature, murmurings of delight.

These are your joys! Go *forth*—
Give your hearts up unto *their mighty* power;
For in his spirit God *has clothed* the earth,
And speaketh solemnly from *tree and* flower.

The voice of *hidden* rills
Its quiet way into *your spirits* finds;
And awfully *the everlasting* hills
Address you in their *many*-toned winds.

Ye *sit* upon the earth
Twining its flowers, and shouting full of glee;
And a pure, mighty influence, 'mid your mirth,
Moulds your unconscious spirits silently.

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Children of pleasant song
Are taught within the mountain solitudes;
For hoary legends to your wilds *belong*,
And yours are haunts where inspiration broods.

Then go forth—earth and sky
To you are tributary; *joys are* spread
Profusely, like *the summer* flowers that lie
In the green path, beneath your gamesome tread.

OUR TABLE.

ARMOUR AND RAMSAY'S LITERARY NEWS-LETTER, AND GENERAL RECORD OF BRITISH LITERATURE.

NOS. I.—IV.

PLACED, as we are in this Colony, at so great a distance from the fountain head, whence issue the streams of British literature, it cannot be expected that more than a small portion of its waters—the mere spray, as it were—should ever reach us; and to this "consummation so devoutly to be" regretted, the comparatively low ebb of the literary taste of the Province, has undoubtedly contributed in no small degree. In this respect, the last few years, we are happy to say, have witnessed a rapid improvement. We venture not to determine whether an increased supply of, or increased demand for, such wares as these, gave the first impetus to this advance; but many of our readers must have remarked the manner in which they have acted and re-acted upon each other; the increased demand producing a further supply, and this fresh supply, again, giving a renewed impulse to the demand.

Even yet, however, not a tithe of the teeming productions of the British press can be imported by any sane bookseller, and works have thus often reached a third or fourth edition in England, almost before they were even heard of here. To this disagreeable state of things, the appearance of the serial, named at the head of this notice, has put a complete end. In the four numbers now before us, a list is given of all the works published in Great Britain during the first half of the present year, amounting altogether to nearly twelve hundred. "*Lector* in search of a Book," has not now, as formerly, to undergo, in pursuit of a work on any particular subject, as many adventures as might have served Mrs. Hannah More's "Cœlebs." He has but to run his eye over this list, select the work that answers him best, and send the title to any bookseller; in a few weeks (when Henson's Aerial Machine, or Cunningham's Balloon plies regularly between London and Canada, we suppose we might say, in a few days) the book lies on his library table. Without the very circulation of the works themselves, no better mode could be devised of keeping the Canadian public *au courant* of the literature of the day. We had designed to have noticed a few of the books in this list which have attracted most attention in the literary circles of England, but intractable space forbids this for the present.

The second part of the News-Letter contains a catalogue of works lately imported by the publishers, and, from its extent and variety, will prove very useful to intending purchasers.

The third part announces the publication, during each current month, of the consecutive portions of these various cheap Colonial editions published by Messrs. Armour & Ramsay, and to most of which we have previously referred. Murray's "Colonial Library" in particular, has won our repeated commendation; and each new issue has confirmed the favourable opinion expressed. Mr. Murray, the veteran publisher, carries out vigorously his announced intention of furnishing a series of excellent works at a cheap rate, and we trust that his exertions towards the improvement of our Colonial literature, will not pass unrewarded.

One of the Colonial editions mentioned under this head, however, we have not previously noticed, we mean the National Atlas, now publishing in monthly parts. The plates, which have been executed by Messrs. Johnston of Edinburgh, may be considered as the finest specimens of map-engraving extant, whilst the minute accuracy of the geographical details, is fully worthy of this beautiful mechanical execution. As to the merits of the descriptive letter-press, the warm recommendation of Sir David Brewster is a sufficient guarantee of its excellence. We must specially advert to the maps of "Physical Geography," which contain, within the compass of a single plate, more information than is often to be obtained, by wading through many of the huge quartos which profess to treat of this subject.

The fourth and concluding part of this useful publication, contains a synopsis of the literary *on dits* of the day, gathered from various trustworthy sources. Those who expect nothing more in this little serial than a dry catalogue of books, will find themselves most agreeably disappointed by this feature; for the selections given will afford them, we are certain, much interest and amusement.