EAST AND WEST.

A NOVEL.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "CLINTON BRADSHAW."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

The kind reception given to a former attempt, which was written under disadvantages to which it is hoped this has not been subjected, induced the author to resume his pen. He hopes it will be found that in this second attempt he has profited by the criticisms on the first. He desired to do so, and he cannot but express his gratitude for the friendly manner in which those criticisms were conveyed, and for the favour with which the work, notwithstanding its many imperfections, was received.

In the following pages the author has endeavoured to portray such scenes, characters, and incidents as may fall under the observation of the generality of readers. If he has failed, it is because he has not the ability to record what he has seen and heard, rather than what he has imagined.

EAST AND WEST.

CHAPTER I.

"JERRY! Jeremiah, I say!" exclaimed an old man, standing at the head of his cellar door, and stooping down so as to command the view of as much of his subterranean premises as his situation would permit, and his spectacles would allow him to take by peering over them, for they qualified him to read better, but not to see farther. "Jeremiah!" he continued at the top of his voice, and then in a lower tone he added to himself, impatiently, "The black dolt is as deaf as—" when he was interrupted by Jerry, who stuttered whenever he attempted to speak quickly.

"C-c-c-coming, sir—This l-'lasses won't run well in the cellar these cool days!"

"It stutters, does it?"

"No, sir, it don't s-stutter, it runs t-thick."

"What's that but stuttering?"

"If it is s-stuttering, Master Beckford, the 'lasses can't h-h-help it more 'an I."

"It was put in the cellar too soon; those cool days were deceiving; but we shall, we must, in fact, soon have warm weather now."

"Yes, sir," said Jerry, and he handed a large jug of molasses to a little boy who stood in the store door waiting for it.

"Jerry, where can Ralph be; by dad, he's away, I suppose, at Lorman's; I have not seen him these two days."

"Y-y-yes, sir, s-s-'spose he is; or m-maybe he is up to t-t-talk with Mr. Henry, who w-w-wants him to go to c-c-college with him."

"To college with him! by dad, the expense, the expense, Jeremiah, is awful; it's enough to beggar a man. Here's Ralph now: where have you been so long, Ralph? I want you to go and inquire who has the pews for sale in the new Unitarian church."

"Father, do you mean to join them?—I thought you were a good—"

"It's no matter what I am—these Unitarians are no better than heathens in my notion, and it's fair and proper, and against nothing in the decalogue that I know of, to speculate—no, not speculate; I hate the word; old Lorman's always using it when he talks about his fool's bargains—to make money out of them. Listen to me, Ralph; I want to learn you to make money—yes, to make money. What are we without money?—no better than the butcher's offals that everybody avoids—that nobody cares for, that's worth nothing. Those Unitarians, who are no better than heathens, Ralph, have built themselves a large church, and obtained a glib-tongued fellow to talk to them, who will make their faith fashion-

able—draw full houses like one of your ranting actors, your stars, as you and your cousin Henry call them. He will make the pews sell—do you understand? They are cheap now, selling, I am informed, for a hundred dollars; and before long, no doubt, Ralph, no doubt they'll be worth twice the money."

"Where shall I inquire?"

"At Walker's book-store—he's a convert—and I am told that your uncle, yes, a man of his years, strength of mind, and—but what's your strength of mind, your mere worldly strength of mind, though capacitated to fill the high places, like your uncle's, and be talked of among men—go, Ralph, go take six pews nearest the pulpit—unless they will strike off something—make a deduction for cash—get the longest possible time."

With a reluctant step Ralph Beckford departed to do his father's bidding.

Solomon Beckford, the father of Ralph, was the youngest of three sons. Their father, by the retention of a small patrimony in one of our large commercial cities, whose rapid growth would have been a wonder in any country but ours, had been enabled, without adding to it at all, with the help of a salary which he received as a public officer, to give his sons a liberal education, and to leave them at his death a handsome fortune a-piece, by the increased value of what, at their births, would little more than have paid the medical attendant of their mother. The eldest of the brothers was the favourite of both

parents; they indulged him in everything, and he requited them by a life of dissipation—a brief one happily—that inflicted on them many griefs. The father was comparatively a niggard to his other sons, to give the eldest, whom they esteemed the genius of the family, not only the best possible education, but the means of fashionable expenditure; and though possessed of considerable talents, he spent the time which should have been devoted to his studies, in scenes of dissipation, gradually progressing, at first, and rapidly at last, from the highest company of the kind to the lowest, until in a drunken brawl at an obscure ball, frequented by the depraved of both sexes, he was miserably murdered. The perpetrators of the deed were never detected; and not until after he had been buried in Pottersfield, his body having been so mangled that no one recognised it, did his parents discover by his clothing, which was kept at the Mayor's office, and which, on missing him for some time, they were induced to examine, (his habits being such that any casual absence was scarcely noted,) that their eldest and favourite child had met with such a wretched end. Though of very dissimilar character, the two surviving brothers were not only violently affected, but lastingly impressed by the event.

The younger, Gladsdown Beckford, was named after a maternal uncle, who took charge of him; gave him every advantage of education, and brought him up to his own profession—that of the law.

Gladsdown was now the most prominent member of the bar in the city, and perhaps in the whole state, in which the opening scenes of this narrative are located. Cool, sagacious, worldly, and ambitious, he was so much occupied in increasing his reputation and advancing his political interests, that he gave little heed to his only child, a son named Henry, and left him entirely to the superintendence and care of his wife, a foolish, fashionable woman, but a doting mother. The event of his brother's death had led Gladsdown Beckford to believe that too much care on the part of a parent would spoil a child, and therefore he determined, while seemingly leaving his son to his own impulses, to watch him closely and to control him by a thorough understanding of his character, which he resolved to spare no pains to acquire. He said he would make himself the companion of his son, while he would still exercise over him parental influence; but these resolves faded imperceptibly from his mind, as his legal business increased, and his ambition, which grew with his reputation and consciousness of power, goaded him on, and his son was left, as we have said, entirely to the charge of his mother.

Mr. Solomon Beckford furnished in all respects a striking contrast to his brother. The lawyer was profuse and heedless in his expenditures. His wife was a lady of no fortune, but a large one was settled upon her child; and the whole of Gladsdown's income from his profession, which was very large, was spent

in luxurious entertainments, equipage, furniture, &c. &c. No one surpassed Mrs. Gladsdown Beckford in fashionable display.

Solomon Beckford was a widower, and Ralph was his only child. The only disinterested act of the parent's life was his marriage, which was a love match; and he deeply regretted it afterwards when he came to understand from an old nurse of a lady of fortune, whose good opinion he had cultivated with some assiduity, and whom he quit visiting in a pique, that the lady intended to have accepted him. His love match was not a happy one; and therefore the first and foremost rule in his code in the whole duty of man was, that every man who pretended to common sense, should marry for money. Ralph's mother had died when he was very young—he remembered very little of her, and the first admonitions that struck his ear were the avaricious counsels of his father. At the death of his father, Solomon Beckford, who had been a shop-boy in a grocery, raised funds by mortgaging his patrimony, and therewith opened, near the market-house, what is called a country store, where the country people could obtain, often by bartering their produce, almost any article which in the ordinary events of life, they might require. This sharpened and increased the hustering spirit of Solomon, and his old defaced sign, on which Justice had once appeared over the name of Solomon Beckford, in guilt letters, emblematic of the just dealings within, was still hanging where it

was first hung when he commenced business, and its disfigurement and worn out image of Justice were perhaps more typical than the owner was aware of the present condition of the moral man. He was a great foe to the opening of streets and the improvement of roads; at least he never could be persuaded to contribute to them; and whenever he was assessed according to the increased value which the aforesaid improvements were said to give to his property, he was certain to make a great outcry and to hurry to his brother's house to get professional advice on the subject. But he never was known to institute suit for damages; for he had an awful horror of the expenses of litigation; and whenever he had visited his brother, he would inveigh to Jerry, who was his factotum, and to his son, in profound lamentations on the wasteful habits of the lawyer, averring that all of the tribe were just so; that they gained their money by the instigation of the devil, who set men to loggerheads for their benefit; and that they spent it in the same worldly and wicked manner in which they got it; and then he would nail it with scripture: "Wo unto you, ye lawyers," &c.

Mr. Solomon Beckford had read the moral of his eldest brother's life and death with such a mental bias as to lead himself to the conclusion, which coincided admirably with his economical notions, that a boy should not be indulged in anything. He was almost inclined to think, that paying money for schooling, except, maybe, so far as the rule of three,

was throwing it away. And he maintained, quoting the case of his deceased brother as one decidedly in point, that sending a boy to college, was sending him to the devil.

Mr. Solomon Beckford's personal appearance typed forth the inward man. He was very tall and spare; he stooped considerably, not in the shoulders, but at the hips, like a clasp knife one-third shut. His arms were very long and slender; his fingers bony and skeleton-like, and generally closely, shut, as though he held tight hold of a sixpence. He wore a large over-coat without any other beneath it; and he had a way of thrusting his hands into his pocket, as if he were chasing a fip into the corner of it. A large slouched hat partly covered features that had a sharp prying expression, which was not at all modified by the twinkle of a little gray eye, over the top of an antiquated pair of silver-mounted spectacles, which had nearly all the plating worn off, and were mended at the hinge of the right side with a bit of dirty thread. He almost always went with spectacles on nose, although, as they only enabled him to read, he had to look over them whenever he wished to see at a distance; and to do this with facility, he wore them stuck on the peak of his nose, that had a pugnacious turn up at the end, as if forced unwillingly to do the office.

Jeremiah Tubs, or as he was universally known and designated, taking the surname of his master, Jeremiah Beckford, was as striking a personage in

his way as that individual. He was a short, duck-legged, stuttering negro, with great goggle eyes, thick lips, and a forehead that slanted off like the roof of a house. He held himself to be at least as smart as his master, and was so held by many of the neighbours, and by all the negroes of his acquaintance. Jerry in the main was honest, though we are not going to say that he has not more than once abducted a turkey, or chicken, or quail, which some of the country folks had bartered for tea or sugar, from its proper place, and converted it to his own use, charging the crime indifferently to the cats, rats, mice, or neighbours' or countrymen's stray dog, as best suited circumstances and seemed most favourable to the establishment of the fact in the mind of his master, should he raise any inquiries in the premises. To this wrong doing he was often instigated, aided and abetted by Aunt Minty, an aged old negro crone who acted as cook for Mr. Beckford, and who, together with the parties above mentioned, made up his household. The sons of the brothers were as different in dispositions, so far as their characters were developed, as their fathers. Henry, the son of the lawyer, was lively, witty and wild, with an assumption of reckless independence of manner, that was careless of the feelings of others, where his own selfish gratifications were concerned. He was eminently handsome, with an erect and agile form, and features that were faultless, except perhaps they were too feminine for one of the

sterner sex. Ralph's form was not so tall nor so finely moulded as Henry's, though it was still a fine one, and his features, though not so beautiful, were manlier and more intellectual. His eye was of a very dark blue, so dark as in some lights to seem black, and lustrous rather than keen; his hair was jet black, combinations which do not often occur. He was sensitive and shy, qualities which he inherited from his mother and which his father's character and conduct did not lessen. He had few associates, took a long time to be acquainted, but he was capable of a devoted friendship. His manners were gentle and unassuming, he was not quick to act upon his own responsibility, but when once he had determined to do so, he was immoveable. Much of Ralph's time had been spent at his uncle's, for the lawyer, despising the character of his brother, and remembering how much his own uncle had done for himself, felt an interest in Ralph, which if not so deep, was more active than that which he took in his own son. Even there Ralph could be seldom drawn to the drawing-room, when any young company of which Mrs. Beckford was fond, visited her. He was generally in the lawyer's library, poring over the literary works it contained, of which there was a fine collection; while his father not being at any expense for his boarding, and at very little for his clothing, was content to leave him to himself, every now and then reminding him when they met, "that he had no objection to his reading in a lawyer's li-

brary, so as he didn't read law, and it did just as well as schooling, and better, for he would be a self-made man like Franklin, whose schooling cost next to nothing, and schooling and colleges were no better than pickpocket concerns."

CHAPTER II.

As the cousins were one afternoon strolling together, as was their wont, in a fashionable part of the city, Ralph endeavoured to persuade his cousin to turn to a more lonely walk. Henry who was the elder by a year or two, and disposed on that account to have his own way, as well as from his self-willed spirit, and more particularly on this occasion, as many fashionable persons were on the promenade, resisted, with a satirical laugh, Ralph's wish, and at last exclaimed, as the other averred that he would leave him if he did not take a more private way,—

"Why are you always for being private, Ralph? For my part, I like to look upon these bright creatures—I like to be public, and see the public, more especially this of the sex before us, and behind us, and about us. I am addicted to this atmosphere; it is better, sweeter, finer far than the loveliness of Paradise if Eve were not there. I shall hate to leave this for college; and I've half made up my mind that a college course has nothing to do with the education of a gentleman; but I suppose I must go—I'm told one sees fine times there. What say you, cousin of mine, do you go?"

"I want to go, Henry, as you know; but my father—"

"Ay! is that it. Well, may the first girl that I attempt to kiss murder me with her bodkin—brain me

with her fan, if I wouldn't cut the acquaintance of my father, if he treated me as yours does you. Ralph, you are certainly not intending to commit the suicide of tending in dad's grocery, are you? I'll cut your acquaintance if you do. What? weigh out sugar by the half pound, and tea by the ounce, and barter old barrels and candle boxes with market women, for eggs and butter, dried apples and peach kernels! excuse me."

"Excuse me too, say I, Henry, but necessity has no—"

"Law, say you?" interrupted Henry, "there's no law about it, Ralph. You are the only son; all your father's property is yours; he accumulates but for you—and you—the truth is, you ought to hold a higher head with the old man. You know, you feel how close he is, and he will keep you in this way until the best of your life is wasted. I would speak to him plainly, and know what he meant to do for me. I thank God that what I have, I have—that neither father nor mother can deprive me of that much of it," snapping his fingers. "And I assure you I shall take the responsibility of spending it. I shall neither practise law, nor medicine, nor any thing else but the gentleman of elegant leisure." And Henry waved his hand gracefully as he spoke. "What do you intend, law or medicine, or a grocery?"

"Not the grocery—medicine I cannot bear—for law I have no taste nor talent. I have lived such a miscellaneous life, without end or aim—so much the

creature of untoward circumstances, that I have acquired habits unfitting me for either of the professions. I should wish to be a farmer, to have a pursuit which, while it occupied me sufficiently to prevent ennui, would leave me leisure for literary indulgences. Certainly I wish to go to college, but if my father will not consent to that which I shall press upon him, I hope to persuade him at least to let me occupy Stockbridge Farm. It will be no expense to him. I can certainly support myself there. I am now nearly eighteen, and I have determined that I must know definitely from him what I am to do. I love the retirement of a country life."

"Turning clodhopper, Ralph, would be Hobson's choice with me. You must certainly inherit a large fortune, and I would make my mind up to enjoy it were I you, dad to the contrary notwithstanding. You have been so long in the traces that you think you could not disobey your father for the world. Try him now—get restive—try him. But maybe that pretty innocent—scarcely in her girlhood yet—the fair Ruth—a scriptural name—with whom you would till the earth and fulfil Scripture—"

"Enough of that, Henry," interrupted Ralph, his brow darkening—"enough of that—my father, by the by, talks of leasing Stockbridge Farm to Mr. Lorman; honest, industrious and intelligent, he is nevertheless so wrong-headed in his notions of business as to have speculated himself out of house and home. I believe he has some little pittance

left, and I blush to say, what I fear is the truth, that my father, your uncle, Henry, is nursing the intention of gaining that in the way of trade. I am resolved I will lead this dilly-dally, shilly-shally life no longer. Good-bye to you."

"Stop, Ralph, stop," exclaimed Henry, endeavouring to seize him by the arm and retain him, "here comes Helen Murray—the fair and fascinating—the golden fish—have you no bait for her—it may save trouble with mine uncle; she is above your years, and fitter for your admiration than any baby-love in the land. How sly you are of her; that woman is not born that could make such a sheep-face of me. I tell you what, Ralph, how soon these girls that we went to school with shoot ahead of us into ripened womanhood and leave us a hobby de hoy—all within a year or two. They're graduates while we are preparing for college. Hey, Ralph, what say you, let's join her!"

And Henry made an effort to draw his cousin with him towards the lady; but Ralph broke away from him, exclaiming, "No! oh no! excuse me!" and hurried in a contrary direction.

With now a dilatory, and now a hastening step, emblematic of the state of his resolutions, Ralph proceeded to his father's store. On the way he reflected bitterly on his situation and the character of his miserly parent, and said to himself, "I'll end it—yes, I *will* end it. This pew buying, this trafficking in religion is the last thing of the kind I do.

Could I but leave home and push my fortunes in the west, I should not like to become ——, but I've no profession—have, I fear, no business talent, at least no experience. Well, I'll speak with my father, and if he and I cannot agree, I will advise with my uncle—I am resolved." And with a bolder and firmer tread Ralph entered his father's store, and found Jeremiah, our former acquaintance, behind the counter, busily engaged in removing sugar from a hogshead. With a spade he placed it in a large tray, and broke the lumps before he threw it into the bin from which it was retailed.

"Jerry," inquired Ralph, "why did you not remove the hogshead to the pavement, and break the sugar there; you have hardly room where you are."

Jerry shook his head gravely, as he stuttered forth—

"B-b-boys steal th-the su-sugar there, Master R-Ral-Ralph—big l-l-lumps; m-master don't l-like it, n-nor Jerry n-neither."

"Where is father, Jerry?"

"G-g-gone out, sir. M-master Ralph, l-l-let me a-axe you a q-question," said Jerry, leaning on his spade.

"Not now, Jerry, not now," said Ralph, shaking his head, and moodily leaving the store.

CHAPTER III.

THE evening of the day of the conversation between the cousins, recorded in the last chapter, in the back room of a one-story domicile, annexed to the store of Solomon Beckford, and called by himself his parlour, sat that worthy, before a consumptive-looking tallow candle, as thin as Calvin Edson, with a newspaper—which he had that day obtained at his brother's office—in his hand; for he held, when he debated the matter with himself, that to subscribe to a newspaper was beyond his means, while his public remark was, that he could not conscientiously do such a thing, as, from the state of the press nowadays, it would be a downright assistance in the propagation of falsehood. An inventory of the furniture of Mr. Beckford's parlour could easily have been taken. It consisted of an old-fashioned stuffed arm-chair, that his father had occupied in his office, and which Solomon, after its wear and tear of many years from his own proper person, in which period nearly all the padding had disappeared for want of a cover, was induced to have covered with some damaged buckskin, as he found out he could drive a good bargain with the leather-dealer for that article, and with the saddler, who, for the matter of a few old bridle-bits, agreed to dis-

pose the buckskin in ship-shape. The next important article was a cherry stained table, which had once been emulous of looking like mahogany, but which evidently, of late years, had no aspirations of the kind, as in many places the staining had worn entirely off. Two rush-bottom chairs were beside it, which the dull candle scarcely rendered perceptible, as the old miser refused to have it snuffed—asserting that to snuff a candle was to waste it, as it caused it to burn out. A patched rag carpet covered the floor, whose various dingy hues seemed a reflection of the walls, for here and there in spots they exhibited paper where it had been left, and plaster where the paper had been torn off. Over all—paper and plaster—a thin coat of whitewash had been spread. Two windows, with many broken panes, patched with as many coloured bits of paper, looked out into a narrow yard filled with old sugar barrels, candle boxes, and every kind of trumpery that the rain could not injure—the accumulation of years.

Though it was very early in the spring, and chilly within doors when one was not exercising, no fire had been allowed about the house save that with which old Minty cooked the scanty meal; and now a tea-kettle, from which the beverage for the evening was to be prepared, simmered over a few half burnt barrel-staves in the hearth, every now and then, when the flame chanced to burn brighter than its wont, making an ineffectual effort to boil.

Old Beckford himself was a study for an artist, as with meagre hands he grasped the paper, and pored over it with intense yet apparently incredulous curiosity. While he was yet reading Ralph entered, and drawing one of the chairs from the table, seated himself before the slender fire. Some minutes passed without recognition on either part, when, just as the old gentleman had got through with the paper, and was folding it carefully up, Ralph said,

"Father, cousin Henry will start soon for college."

The old man shot a quick glance over his spectacles at his son, and exclaimed—

"I know it, by dad, I know it, Ralph—the most idle expenditure in the world—it is worse than throwing money away, much worse—it is a more criminal act. It's true, if you throw your money away it would harm yourself and perhaps help to ruin some of these beggarly rascals"—Mr. Beckford held a great hatred to beggars, because the bestowal of charity would cost something—"who roam about the streets picking pockets and gaping around for what they can find that don't belong to them—it is the way, no doubt, my black coat went. I had had it for fifteen years—wore it at your mother's funeral—and it was as good as new when I lost it—when it was stolen. Yes, as I was saying, it will be worse than throwing money away to send your cousin to college—more criminal—it will ruin him, —as sure as you live it will ruin him, Ralph. Your

uncle—my eldest brother—Preston, who is dead, was ruined by colleges and high company. The money he squandered, Ralph, would ruin a nabob —and his miserable end,—I have told you of it often —it has been a lesson to me."

"Well, I want to be ruined too, father."

"What!" exclaimed the old man, starting in evident surprise, though he seemed half to suspect what was coming from the first, "you are for being ruined too, are you?—well, you may be assured, Mr. Ralph, that you shall not be ruined with my consent and connivance—no, sir, not with my consent and connivance—that sin I shall not have registered against me. Has all my instruction and advice come to this? Bless my soul! by dad, when, from your childhood, I have been impressing upon you the folly—the criminality—the inevitable criminality—of colleges. But, suppose it was all right —colleges were even proper—the expense—the expense, Ralph, would beggar me in my old age. I make little in the store—it just keeps soul and body together; and if you were staying at home now—at meals, I mean—instead of living with your uncle, Minty, and Jeremiah, and the rest, would eat me out of house and home."

"'The rest,' I suppose you mean that for me father," interrupted the son indignantly—"but father that cannot be; there is Stockbridge Farm of three hundred acres, that brings in much from marketing —there are your four houses in Fifth street—the house and two lots in Seventh, and—"

"By dad, sir, have you been taking an inventory of my property to cast up into my teeth, you ungrateful boy; the two lots, pray sir, have you ascertained what they bring me in—answer me that, sir, have you ascertained what they bring me in?"

"No sir, I have not exactly!"

"Well sir, they exactly bring me into expense—the ground rents of these and other lots, unimproved property, swallow up everything."

"Why, father, I understood that Day, the stonecutter, gave you a very handsome rent for the lots on Seventh."

"Who told you?"

"Day himself, sir!"

"Do not believe him, he lies—he would cheat the Apostle Paul, he would rob a church, a grave yard; he charged me an enormous sum for a useless vault for your mother; God only knows how many years rent it took."

"Father," said Ralph, whom the turn the conversation had taken, and the way his mother's name was introduced, had emboldened,—"I know all that you would tell me; and more, I know that your income must be upwards of nine thousand dollars a year; and I have no doubt that there is more than enough in this room at this moment, to pay my college expenses over and over."

The old miser looked aghast, uttered a loud exclamation, and then recovering himself, and darting a suspicious eye round the room, at the windows and

towards the store, he sunk his voice to an hysteric whisper, saying hurriedly:—

"Do you want me murdered—do you want the prying knaves who haunt our city to overhear you, and slip in, in the dead of night and butcher me in cold blood, for the money that I have not got," continued the old man, raising his voice at the end of the sentence with the determination that if any person or persons, had overheard their conversation, he or they should certainly hear that he had no money. "But, son Ralph," proceeded the father, edging his chair close to his son's, glancing round and speaking in a whisper,—"who told you, God bless me, who told you all this?"

"My uncle, sir, not half an hour ago; and he told me also, that if you would not send me to college he would."

"Let him," interrupted the father; "if he has no conscientious scruples concerning colleges, I have; and if any ill comes of vicious habits caught there, be the sin upon his head."

"I replied, sir, that I could not, would not be beholden to him for everything, and that as some remuneration for his more than *fatherly* conduct towards me, I would bind myself by every obligation, moral and legal, to deed, when I am of age, that house and lot to him, which you conveyed to my mother, in consideration that she would sign away her right of dower in other property, and which is

mine own at twenty-one; it will not remunerate my uncle, I fear it is but a pittance."

"Pittance," ejaculated the old man, "bless my soul! the property is worth at least seven thousand dollars. It was temper and wilfulness in your mother that defrauded me of that very property; and you are just as she was, and so is your uncle. I shall be cheated and bamboozled in my very grave."

"I'll bid you good night, father," said Ralph, rising and preparing to depart.

"Stay, boy, stay awhile, you must not be so hasty in your doings and conclusions. Your uncle will certainly che—; contrive to get from you double the value of what he advances; your prodigal, squandering men are ever of that character—avaricious in gaining to spend like water. You do not know the world yet; I tell you, Ralph, I am your father, and I will do for you. If you will give me your word, and bind yourself in writing, to fulfil the contract the moment you come of age, to deed me that property, if I advance you the money, my dear son, the money shall be advanced, that is, understand me, a reasonable sum."

Ralph who could not but internally smile, while he pitied his father and felt mortified with him, said:

"Oh! certainly, a reasonable sum, father; at least seven thousand, if I should want it."

"Seven thousand devils, if you should want them," exclaimed the old man, snatching his spectacles from his nose, rising hastily, and pacing to and fro on the

floor; "you'll be ruined, I see it; the wasteful notions you have acquired, are prodigal to a degree—sinful; there will be the visitation of some awful calamity upon you; you, at this rate with your notions, will be reduced to poverty, to hunger, to wretchedness, to want of food and raiment, to a dunghill. I shall be in my grave before then, but I leave you no heir of mine. It would be a spitting in the face of providence, that after the toil of a long life has blessed me with some gains, to leave it to your squandering; I shall educate the heathen with it, or build churches; I have been a sinner and I know it, and who has lived a long life that is not a sinner; such bequest may be something of an atonement; to give it to a prodigal heir, who in viciousness would spend it, would be an enormity in the eye of heaven."

"As you choose, father. I have lived without it so far, and I can continue to live without it. Good night, sir."

"Stay, boy, stay. I suppose you think you can live upon your house and lot for ever? I'll be reasonable with you; it may be worth half the sum named—that is now—but if in the progress of years, property should fall, what then? and it may fall; there is no knowing what may turn up. I might have turned many a pretty penny with that house and lot, by barter, exchange, mortgage, and what not, had it not been for the wilfulness of your mother."

"My mother is in her grave, father, and let her rest."

"Well, not so short, young gentleman, not so short. I am your father."

"And the dead you spoke of was my mother;" and Ralph, with a quickening step was leaving the room, when his father again stopped him.

"Ralph," he said, "you shall have the money—understand, a reasonable sum to go to college. You need not speak to your uncle about it. We will arrange it; it is proper we arrange it between ourselves."

And Ralph departed, while the old miser went out into his yard, and carefully looked among the lumber therein, to see if he could discover the presence of any intruder on his premises, whose intention to do him wrong, should there be such a person hid away, he felt would not be lessened by his having been a hearer of the conversation between himself and son, concerning the moneys in the house, the existence of which the old man had been so careful loudly to contradict.

CHAPTER IV.

As Henry Beckford had decided he would not enter college until the fall, Ralph, whose sensitive nature shrunk from the companionless situation of entering alone, determined to wait for the company of his cousin. Meanwhile the spring wore away, and Ralph beguiled his solitary hours in his uncle's office, to whom his company had almost become a want. The lawyer always asked for him, if he came not in the morning, and frequently, for he had no students, as he said they took up time which could be more profitably spent, he got Ralph to search for authorities for him, or to copy an opinion, or to read to him some miscellaneous work in the afternoon or evening, when he threw by for awhile his professional cares. Gladsdown Beckford stood at the head of his profession, and held himself above doing any of its drudgery, which every American lawyer, unless he is very distinguished, is compelled to do, as in this country counsellor, advocate and attorney, which in England are separate vocations, are combined. Gladsdown Beckford did very little writing, except in giving opinions, that were not often very long; and in making notes of his addresses to juries, or of arguments before the court. He was anxious at first Ralph should read law, but he soon discovered that his mind was so imbued with literary

partialities, it would be next to impossible to give it a taste for the crabbed technicalities of Coke. In watching the developements of Ralph's mind and character,—and Ralph at first seemed desirous of being a lawyer, and had the wish to force his will in that direction, from which, the older he grew, the more his excursive and imaginative mind rebelled,—the uncle became almost satisfied, as great a doubter as his profession had made him on most points, that there were certain biases which some minds receive from nature, which unfit them for his profession. He therefore, knowing that his nephew would inherit an ample fortune at the death of his father, felt it was not necessary to press any profession upon him; or to say the truth, finding so much pleasure and relief from Ralph's society, who sat so quietly in his office while he was engaged, and who so soon, when he was not, became his trust-worthy companion in riding, walking, reading or conversation, the lawyer scarcely thought about it, and having little of the society of his son, whom he deemed entirely given up to fashion and frivolity, he was content to enjoy his nephew's, without thinking of his future prospects. Ralph being of a grateful disposition, exerted himself to please his uncle, and thus the affection existing between them, grew daily stronger.

Towards midsummer, Gladsdown Beckford was taken violently and dangerously ill, with a bilious fever, brought on by assiduous application to his duties. For some time his life was despaired of; he

convalesced very slowly, and for a long time remained feeble.

Ralph had hoped to repair to Stockbridge Farm, near which there was a celebrated academy, and fit himself for college; but his uncle was lonely without him, and seemed to expect his attention, which the grateful disposition of Ralph was anxious to bestow. His aunt was a close watcher by the side of her husband; but as there was little community of sentiment between them, she always felt relieved if some of her acquaintances were with her, and as she was very fond of young company, she invited Helen Murray to be her guest, the young lady of whom Henry spoke to Ralph in their conversation recorded in our second chapter. Leading a life of bustle and excitement, the lawyer, in his long convalescence, could not bear to be left alone for a moment. He was of a gay disposition, and not at all over fond of the gravities of life; he, therefore, like his lady, under his present indisposition, preferred young company to old. His physician thought their gaiety would afford him amusement and excitement sufficient; and he discouraged the visits of his professional brethren, who, he felt, would act upon his patient like the blast of the trumpet on the war-horse —make him pant again for the scene of strife.

Miss Murray, who was a lively, fashionable, and lovely girl, and, for her years, much experienced in the world, and fond of its fascinations, willingly accepted Mrs. Beckford's invitation, the more so, as

she was well acquainted with Henry, and had made some progress in a flirtation, or in tender emotions, maybe, with him. As Helen was rich, beautiful, and accomplished, the parents of Henry had no objections if such things were. Helen's parents, who were descendants from a Quaker family, and disposed to be plainer in their ways than suited their daughter, being, nevertheless, easy people, gave her entirely her own way, and she grew up petted by parents and by brothers. She was the only daughter, with two brothers her elders, and was not at all disposed to yield her own whims or will to any dictation. She was of proud spirit and fond of spreading her conquests in the realms of the heart, yet she was good-hearted; but being a decided belle, and in the full bloom of her bellehood, some grains of allowance must be made when we come to consider the last broad assertion. To bright eye, fair forehead, with remarkably well-defined eyebrows and temples, a chiselled nose and lip, she joined an exquisitely turned neck and bust, and a figure full, floating, and voluptuous. Combined to these attractions, and imparting to them their chief charm, were her manners,—practised and polished to the artist's consummate touch, she had acquired his greatest art —the art to conceal her art. It was only the very minute observer that discovered her proficiency in address; to all others it seemed the impulses of nature,—and it could not be said that she studied it much, after all, for in her childhood she had been

remarkable for a coquettish wilfulness of disposition which displayed tact in its very temper.

"Ah!" said Helen, entering the parlour, the first day the distinguished invalid had been conveyed to it, where he reclined upon a sofa, with his nephew reading to him, and his lady near by feeding a canary bird. "Ah! Mr. Beckford, welcome down, sir. Mr. Ralph Beckford, you shall not always have that pleasure and that honour—I shall deprive you of it, sir, and compel you to be a listener. O! my dear Mrs. Beckford, what a beautiful bird—this is the first time I have seen it."

After pouting her pretty lips, and endeavouring to chirp like the bird, she continued—

"O, you merry little creature, you!—you are happy—you will never make the complaint of Sterne's starling."

"I am making the complaint though, Helen," said Mr. Beckford.

"O yes, sir; but you have more than green fields and idle runaway waters to call you out; you have the encounters that stir the blood. You have nothing to do with the green woods or fields, except to wear the fresh laurel that is gathered there for you. Mr. Ralph Beckford, I am informed, pants for the paradise of young romance, sir."

"What paradise?" inquired Mr. Beckford.

"A country life, sir," replied the lady, throwing an arch glance at Ralph, "is it not so, sir?" addressing him.

Ralph blushed before he could rally and simply confess the fact.

"And where do you think I heard it, Mr. Ralph Beckford? Do you think one of those little birds told me, or do you believe that a rural one from the neighbourhood of your contemplated retirement did me the honour, like the lady-bug, to fly away and give me the intelligence?"

Ere Ralph could answer, his cousin Henry, who, in ascending the steps had overheard the remark, and who had merely come on a kind of visit of ceremony to inquire after the health of his father, stay a few moments and depart, entered the room, and replied for him by saying, with a graceful salute,

"My cousin Ralph is to be envied, Miss Helen, first, that a bird should take such an interest in him as to tell of his intentions, and last, though not least, that you, who turn a deaf ear to all others, should listen to the bird that talked of him. Was it for the sake of the bird that you listened, or for the burden of its song?"

Henry himself had told Miss Murray of Ralph's rural inclinations, and ridiculed them without mercy; the lady liked not, therefore, the vanity which a part of his remark implied, and she playfully but keenly said:

"It must have been for the burden of the song, for the bird that told it was a peacock, a parrot, or a popinjay, I forget which."

Henry coloured, and his brow darkened; but he instantly recovered and replied:

"And you listened, did you, and the bird rested on your shoulder; happy peacock, parrot or popinjay, though lord Chesterfield forbids us to quote proverbs I cannot but reflect upon the old one about birds of a feather."

The lady laughed playfully, and in perfect good humour replied:

"You do a great many things, *Master* Henry, that my lord Chesterfield forbids; but your politeness is like your wit and your whiskers, (Henry had made an unsuccessful attempt to raise a pair)—pardon me, sir, for the personality—not yet able to show itself. As to what you say about the proverb, sir, you must remember what your father will tell you, that circumstances alter cases. That even as dignified a people as the Romans listened to as foolish a bird as the goose, when it cackled ominously."

Mr. Gladsdown Beckford laughed heartily.

"Helen," he exclaimed, "you should have been a lawyer. I rejoice indeed that I am getting well; if ever I should be a widower, I bespeak you for my second wife."

"If Helen would have such an old gentleman, my dear," said Mrs. Beckford peevishly; for she was one of your ladies who are rather jealous of their lords.

"I should be proud, my dear Mrs. Beckford," said Helen, with a woman's tact, "in being even the second choice of a gentleman who had made you his first."

Mrs. Beckford smiled, and unconsciously adjusted her cap in the large mirror that hung adjacent to the canary cage.

Henry laughed satirically, and Ralph gazed with an eye of admiration on the lady, which he averted to the book that he held in his hand, the moment he caught hers. Helen understood Ralph's glance, but coloured not, though he did. She thought him unsophisticated, and she felt that kind of interest in him which a man of the world feels in a guileless girl of fifteen—she had almost made up her mind to have a flirtation with him, and make him her adorer, —'twould be something new.

CHAPTER V.

Ralph, while the conversation was going merrily on round the couch of his uncle, silently withdrew, and, closing the front door noiselessly after him, went forth into the street. With a thoughtful eye he pursued his way for many squares, until he had left the fashionable part of the city behind him and trod in a respectable but by no means a wealthy section. Plain two-story brick houses, interrupted here and there by a frame one or a vacant lot, characterized the streets, which were narrower than those he had left, but neat, with rows of trees on either side.

As he approached one of the most comfortable of the brick buildings, a little boy of seven years of age sprang to his side, and seizing him by the hand exclaimed:

"Oh, Ralph, you havn't been to see us for so long; we have all been wondering where you were."

"Why, Billy, I was here not very long since; how are all at home," asked Ralph, as he took the boy's hand and walked with him towards the house.

"Pretty well, sir, all but mother," said Billy, as they entered the house, which was neatly but very plainly furnished, an air of comfort, nevertheless, pervading it.

"Ralph, you are almost a stranger," said a gentle voice reproachfully to the visiter, as he entered the room, and a fair and quite youthful girl advanced, gave him her hand with an open frankness and a beaming countenance that was radiant with pleasure. "Oh how long it has been since we have seen you, Ralph;" and she still held his hand as she continued: "Billy had given you up for lost, he heard the bellman at the corner the other evening, ringing and giving notice of a lost child, and as he heard you say that when we moved here you nearly lost yourself in finding us, he thought it had really happened, and he teased me to let him go after the bellman and have you found. Only think, if Billy had had his way, what a noise your name would have made in the street."

While Billy's sister (she was his sister) was speaking, the boy got behind her to hide his confusion, and said:

"If I did, sister Ruth, you needn't to tell it."

"Yes, but I want sister Ruth to tell it, Billy," said Ralph, handing a chair to Ruth, taking one himself, and drawing the boy to his knee, "You are the truest friend I have in the world, I expect, Billy. You would have given your last cent to the bellman to find me, and my father would have shrunk at abstracting a few from his thousands."

"Ralph, Ralph, you should not speak so," said Ruth.

"I know it, Ruth. Why where is your piano?" asked Ralph, looking round the room.

A slight flush passed over Ruth's face, and her voice faltered as she replied, "father had to sell it;" but in a moment she cheerfully added, "but you know you say I sing better without an accompaniment; and hereafter when you come to see us—if you have not forsaken us, Ralph—you will not be troubled with its tones." This was said without the least bitterness, but her voice sunk imperceptibly to to the speaker, though she had resolved to speak cheerfully.

"Is your mother not well?"

"No, not well, Ralph;" and Ruth's voice for a moment choked, and her eyes filled with tears. "Father's misfortunes worry her—she cannot rally against them well—she will by and by—she will by and by."

"Mother was sick, and cried because the piano and so many things was sold," said Billy; "and she got sick just so before when we moved."

"Little people must be listeners, Billy," said Ruth, trying to smile; "they must not talk so much. Ralph, if Billy had had the bellman ringing after you, and your age and size had not been mentioned, it would have been a long time before they suspected you for the lost one."

"And took me to the house of refuge!—sometime, indeed! unless Billy had pointed me out to the bellman. I reproach myself for not having been here

oftener, but my uncle has been dangerously ill, and I had to attend him. He has been more than a father to me. I'm told you have some idea of going out to Stockbridge Farm."

At this moment the father of Ruth entered the room and greeted Ralph warmly. He was a fine formed man, but somewhat stooped in the shoulders—more from care than age—for he could not have been above fifty. His hair, which was entirely gray, and his features, that wore apparently the impress of age, like his temples, would have forced the conviction that he was ten years older, did not the reflection arise that there are other wasters of the face and frame than time. He is the individual who, on account of his "fool bargains," gave Mr. Solomon Beckford such a detestation for the word "speculate," though legitimately that worthy's hatred should not have been for the word but for the bargains—as he himself had no objection to a speculation, provided he made by it; and he was so keen in such operations that he seldom failed in that result. Mr. Harvey Lorman inherited from his father a considerable fortune, with which he embarked in trade, and augmented by marriage with the mother of Ruth, who bore him two children, a son and this daughter, and left him a widower. She was a prudent, economical and intelligent woman, and by her advice and counsel aided her husband very much in his business, and restrained in him a propensity for speculations in property and

stocks, with which he was possessed to a degree almost to justify the assertion that in this respect he was a monomaniac. For notwithstanding repeated, and, after his first speculation, perpetual losses, he still would have persisted to his utter ruin, even during the lifetime of his first wife, in these wild schemes of aggrandizement, but for her continual watchfulness and her control over him. By his first speculation, which chance altogether directed, he made a large sum; and it appeared he never could discover afterwards why similar large sums could not be made by him if he only summoned hardihood to venture. His second marriage was unfortunate: it gave him a sickly, hysterical and extravagant woman, full of the fever for fashionable display, without the least prudence, who made him the father of a large and helpless family.

For awhile the second Mrs. Lorman dashed out into all the extravagances of fashionable life, lived magnificently, gave routs to which hundreds were invited, drove a gorgeous equipage, and held a host of liveried lackeys at her beck. But reverses soon came, and instead of having the wife to counsel him, whom Harvey Lorman once had, who would have prevented these reverses, not hastened them, and have soothed him under them; he had himself to become comforter to a peevish, fractious woman, whose reproaches for misfortunes which she herself had assisted materially to bring on him, were continually ringing in his ears, and from whom, to maintain the

quiet of his household, instead of receiving counsel, he had sedulously to hide every pecuniary ill, until they could be hidden no longer; and then he had to endure the cold neglect of friends, and the harsh greetings of creditors abroad; and the querulous, ceaseless complainings of a disappointed, weak woman at home.

The angel of his household was his daughter Ruth. Though too young at the time of her mother's death to have received much instruction from her, she inherited her amiability, her patience, her forbearance, her unforced cheerfulness, and her mental as well as moral excellences. As we have said, Ruth's father had a large family by his second wife, and on his daughter, particularly since his overwhelming misfortunes, devolved their exclusive care; his wife the while keeping her chamber, never going out, and even denying herself to those of her former acquaintance, who, displaying the show of disregard to what had befallen her, were still apparently desirous of keeping up their former intimacy, at least so far as a formal call went, or an invitation to a party to which all the world were invited; not sorry were they, that her excuse for not seeing them, and their unanswered call saved them the trouble of another visit. Possessed of virtues that even won the envious and the selfish, and having the youthful and the unsophisticated for her intimates, Ruth held their friendship, notwithstanding the changes in her fortunes; but when they visited Ruth, her stepmother

was sure if she were by, and she often left her room that she might be, to make some harsh observation to her, or to impose upon her some humiliating duty, all which she bore so meekly, that her sweetness of temper became a common remark among her friends. In fact, as some apology for her stepmother, if such forms an apology, it is proper to say, that she was addicted to the excessive use of laudanum.

Ruth was not beautiful, if regularity of features constitutes beauty; an artist would have found fault perhaps with every feature, had he analyzed it separately, except her eye; and yet hers was the very countenance he would have delighted in portraying, for it was full of that expression which we dwell upon, we know not why, with a melancholy interest, though there seems not much of melancholy in it. It was the expression of one, who had felt and thought much more than one of her years generally feels and thinks; and who, withal, had retained all the early freshness of her spirit, if not all its early gladness. Her eye was dark, and when there was a tear in it, seemed formed to express the sorrow that in its extremity is full of an upward hope. Her form was finely moulded, but so fragile in appearance as to induce the impression, but for her graceful and agile movements, that her health was delicate. Such forms, we believe, have appertained to many of the sex—most remarkable for their womanly qualities. Her voice was so soft and persuasive, that her

stepmother, even while sick, in a moment of remorse for her harsh treatment of Ruth, and while suffering that sensation of sinking, which all who are addicted to the use of opium experience, when the effect of the drug is dying within them; called her to her bedside and said: "Ruth, you must forgive me if I have treated you unkindly; and when I come to die, you must pray for me: your voice sounds so like an angel's, that I know it will be heard in heaven."

"What news have you, Mr. Lorman?" inquired Ralph.

"Nothing, Ralph, but hard times for the poor; with means a man can accumulate, because he has something to go upon—and nothing venture nothing win; but without means, and without credit, his condition is a forlorn one indeed. I am of the opinion, that facilities in business are becoming less and less every day. The integrity of a long life, if a man has been somewhat unfortunate, avails him nothing; a new man in business obtains credit before him. I believe there are now as many chances for successful speculation, as when I made a large sum by it; but what can a man cramped and pinched to death do, Ralph? though I am not a very old man, not yet fifty, I have not a dark hair in my head, I must leave my family young and helpless as they are, some of these days, and perhaps very soon, entirely destitute. It grieves me." Mr. Lorman walked up and down the room with his hands behind

him for several minutes, without speaking; when he turned to Ruth and asked:

"Ruth, my daughter, how is your mother? where is she?"

"She is lying down, father; she is quite sick, sir," replied Ruth.

"Ralph," said Mr. Lorman, "I have a brother in the western country, who is, what they call there, 'a river trader,' a plain, frank, good-hearted man, who is well acquainted with various parts of that country. I wrote to him some months since, of my embarrassments, and of my utter inability to do any thing here—there is a tide against me here—a tide of misfortunes that I cannot stem. I wrote to my brother, as I say, and he advised me to take my family west. I will show you the letter some day; you will agree with me, that I ought to follow his advice; but Mrs. Lorman, my wife, when I mentioned it to her, said she would sooner go to her grave—took to her bed, and has hardly left it since. It is my only prospect, Ralph, unless I could get means to go into business on a proper scale here—and I cannot, I cannot—I have been subjected to humiliation from those who once called themselves my friends—whom I assisted in business—of whom I merely asked a similar favour—I have been subjected to humiliations, but no matter. I tried to convince Mrs. Lorman that we should do better, and be happier there—for there continued neglects from her friends, and the thousand worriments that beset her

on such accounts, would not occur. And, Ralph, it is trying to live in poverty, where you have lived in affluence, and to have to keep up a perpetual struggle for something like gentility of appearance, when you are daily and hourly getting poorer. Ralph," continued Mr. Lorman after a short pause, with bitterness, "the drayman, the common street scavenger is happier than such; for he is contented with his condition, and has known no other; but I have—I have. And here are not only my own feelings to contend with, but my wife's; and do you not wonder, Ralph, I am not a drunkard?"

Here one of his little children entered, and interrupted, by saying:

"Father, mother wants you."

"Yes, yes," he ejaculated, turning two or three times up and down the floor, in the effort to compose himself, "tell your mother I'm coming, my dear," and in a moment he followed the child out of the room.

CHAPTER VI.

Henry Beckford spent much more time at home, after Miss Murray became his mother's guest, than had been his custom for some time previously. The while, with the skill of a most accomplished tactician, the lady played off her powers upon the cousins. Henry, she piqued by her witticisms—by her indifference—by calling him tauntingly, *Master* Henry, and affecting to consider him as one hardly old enough to have his attentions received in any other light than that of badinage. She held him on by playing off, wounded his vanity, by occasionally showing a marked preference for Ralph, and this kept him perpetually on the spur to gain some interest in her feelings. Sometimes, particularly when alone with him, she would glide from badinage to sentiment, while Henry, whose passions became daily more and more interested, would forget, in the belief of reciprocity, all of what to him were bickerings of the past. He felt, if she did not, and under her fascinations, practised, as he believed, to win him, by one not unwon, he would deem himself in the land of fairy, until Ralph would enter, and the lady would carelessly turn from him, and chat with his cousin, apparently unconscious of his presence, until on some question put to her by himself, she would recognise his existence, by turning towards him for a moment, and giving a

hurried answer. Such conduct to a man of Henry's character, who had much of earthliness in all his feelings, with an overweening vanity, was well calculated to win him—that is, to make him determine to win, if only to be revenged upon the torturer, and heal his wounded pride. Sometimes Henry would, by a violent effort, avoid the lady, saluting her, but with passing courtesy at the table, and coming into her presence when she sat with his father, merely to inquire—as he would have it thought—after his father's health. He would appear to be violently taken with some one of the many young ladies who called to see his mother, or Miss Murray, and he would get enthusiastic in expatiating upon her loveliness, before Helen; but she would become more enthusiastic even than himself, and where he would hint a fault, she would proclaim a virtue, advising him by all means to court the lady.

"She will just suit you, *Master* Henry," she would say laughingly, "and as courtship is said to be the happiest period of our lives, you can make your courtship a very long one, sir, and marry when you arrive at the proper age."

With Ralph, Miss Murray's manners were entirely different; she never called him Master Ralph—never did anything to wound his sensitiveness—did all she could to draw him from the shell of shiness in which he was ensconced; listened to him when he read to his uncle, and elicited his remarks; half agreed and half differed with him to draw him out;

would fix her eye in thoughtfulness away from him when he had uttered a striking thought; then turn for a moment a full gaze on him from her lustrous eye, and pass to the piano, perhaps, and touchingly, for she was a most accomplished musician, would strike a note or two of some gentle air, which as much as said, if I were asked I could sing for you—a young gentleman much shier than even Ralph, would walk across the room to her side and beg that she would play—would he not? And it was astonishing how fast Ralph's reserve wore away. Though he had not the gay grace that his cousin, formerly at least, had in her company, or his sprightly wit and fashionable frivolity, he acquired a quiet deferential ease that evidently sprung from admiration of the lady who could so wile him from his morbidness, and make him forget, happy forgetfulness to a sensitive man!—himself. There is this difference, perhaps, between a conceited vain man, and a morbidly diffident one, that the first is happy in proportion as you make him think of himself, and the other in proportion as you make him forget himself.

It could not be discovered yet whether Ralph's admiration had taken the tint of tenderer emotions, though Henry believed Ralph's feelings, judging from his own, involved. Certain it is that Ralph showed no jealousy of his cousin, and if he felt it he curbed it and gave way to what he considered superior claims; for whenever they were together in

the lady's company, Ralph, instead of pressing himself upon her attention, yielded always to Henry. When the three were together in the garden, (and Mr. Beckford had a magnificent flower garden attached to his house,) Ralph often lingered behind his cousin and Miss Murray; and not until she attracted him to her side, by addressing him, or asking for some flower near him, did he interrupt Henry; but when she did, with a tone that showed an evident pleasure that she had addressed him, and as evident a desire to please, he answered with knightly and sincere homage, or plucked the flower and presented it when she wished it.

Ralph's manner, so full of respectful regard, was so different from that of the worldlings by whom Miss Murray had been surrounded—who appeared to speak the compliment they did not feel, while Ralph appeared to feel what he could not speak—that it touched her more than she was aware; and the thought would often cross her that Ralph was nursing a passion for her that he believed to be hopeless and dared not reveal. And as Ralph sometimes left her with Henry, when alone in the withdrawing-room, she would doubt if it could be so; and to test it tried to awaken his jealousy by her smiles on Henry, or to draw him out by flirtation at a party, for she had succeeded in making him her beau to several; or in tenderness alone with him in their moonlight walks home; so that by the very means in which

Henry became interested in her, she became interested in Ralph.

Henry was acquainted with the Lormans, and had been a boyish beau of Ruth's, in their better days; but he had not called to see them for some time before they moved to the residence in which we introduced them to our readers, until about the period when the suspicion entered his mind that Ralph was pleased with Miss Murray, and that she was not indifferent to him—then Henry made them repeated visits, and the cousins often met there. With Mrs. Lorman, Henry was a decided favourite: his air of ton had always struck her; and he was very much addicted to making flattering speeches of which she was very fond; besides he would be the possessor of a large fortune. After the renewal of Henry's visits, which weekly became more frequent, Mrs. Lorman insisted to her husband that he had serious intentions of addressing Ruth; and as Ralph might be in the way, and as Henry was much the more preferable match for her, that the former's visit's should be discouraged, particularly as it was evident that Ralph only called as an acquaintance. Ruth she lectured at length upon the subject, to which Ruth replied with firmness that she did not believe Henry had any more serious intentions than Ralph; but her step-mother would hear no such thing, and overwhelmed her with a Xantippean lecture, to which Ruth made no reply.

Mr. Lorman soon began to be of his wife's opinion, for Henry held long conversations with him upon his affairs, which was not his habit, and expressed the regret that he was not of age, so that having his fortune he might assist him. He felt that he liked Ralph the best, but then he had no particular reason for believing that Ralph was attached to Ruth; and he reflected, if he should be, that Ralph had little or nothing independent of his father: and that should the son make a match with a poor girl he would be certain to displease the miser, from whom at any rate he could expect nothing during his lifetime.

While matters remained in this posture, the cousins one day went a gunning together. They rode on horseback, taking their guns with them, intending to spend the day in sport at Stockbridge Farm. Lately the cousins had not been thrown much alone, and, by a tacit consent, when they were, each seemed desirous to avoid speaking either of Helen Murray or of Ruth Lorman, for neither alluded to them in conversation. Talking on general subjects—though both, particularly Henry, were more silent than usual—they arrived at the farm. In their pursuit of game they became unconsciously separated, and they did not meet again till each returned to the farm house; when, on exhibiting the spoils of the field, it appeared that Henry had been the more successful shot.

"I take it, Ralph," said Henry, exultingly, "that I am the best shot."

"So it would seem," replied Ralph, "but you have been shooting doves. I could have shot them too, but I have a superstition against it."

"Ha! have you! hang doves! I shoot all kinds of them—I am for roaming free on nature's great common—for granting no immunities to bird or beast," said Henry, in a reckless tone; "but come," he continued, "let us test our skill at a mark."

"Agreed!" said Ralph. "Go on to the oak tree by the mill-race, and I'll in and get a piece of chalk to mark the tree, and be with you in a moment."

"I'll test him," said Henry to himself, glancing towards his cousin, as the latter entered the house. "How Helen Murray laughed at me the other day when I hinted love to her! And does the modest son of the miser—my cousin too—dare to attempt to cross me—that I should be laughed at! And when I said to her, after my anger at her treatment had subsided, 'Let there be peace between us!' for her to tell me that 'She never warred with gentlemen, and that no *gentleman* ever warred with her!' And then she gave me the tip of her jewelled finger when I offered her my hand. I will not believe she means aught with my modest cousin but flirtation. She has involved his gentle heart, and when his despair drives him to an acknowledgment, she'll blow him sky high, as I suppose she would blow me if I came out plumply. And he has Miss Ruth in reservation! Well, as he has dared to enter the lists with me with our superb virago

though he has not the courage to speak of it—or scarcely to show the intent when I am by—I will enter upon his reservation. And when Miss Helen has let him down the wind, we'll see if a prosperous gale comes from Lorman's. I would almost marry Miss Modesty to thwart him, if I could not do so without."

The further reflections of Henry were interrupted by the approach of Ralph, who, as he joined him, said—

"I have been out of practice for some time, Henry; I expect the day is yours, unless I make a chance hit."

"Ah! do you think so? You don't seem disposed to compliment yourself, Mr. Beckford. You do not hold, I hope, that you are one of those who, according to the proverb, are fortune's care. Will all your hits be of that kind?" Henry spoke in a cold, constrained tone.

"I hope not, Henry," replied Ralph, good humouredly; "but what's the matter with you: there seems premeditation in your hits."

"Not at all, not at all," replied Henry, quickly. "What are your conclusions about college—or, rather, what are your father's?"

"I told you, you know, some time since, I expect to go. I have not spoken to my father, though, on the subject, lately."

While conversing, they reached the oak by the mill-race, and Ralph made the mark on the tree, and

they stepped off to the proper distance and loaded their guns.

"Fire first," said Henry.

Ralph lifted his gun to fire, and while in the act of taking aim, Henry said:

"Ralph, between you and I and your gun, I don't think much of our little friend Ruth—I think she has inclinations to be no better than she should be."

At the instant Ralph started and fired, but his ball went so wide of the mark that he did not even hit the tree, which was a very large one. He turned to Henry, and in an astonished and indignant tone, with lowering brow, asked—

"What do you mean?"

"Mean! what I say, Mr. Ralph Beckford," replied Henry, with a dark smile curling on his lip at the manner of Ralph.

Ralph struck the butt of his gun on the ground with violence, and gazed at Henry with such a scrutinizing and scornful glance, that, proud-spirited as Henry was, and notwithstanding his belief in his own superiority to his cousin in every respect, he quailed beneath it, when Ralph inquired, after a moment, in a tone of great apparent coolness—

"Why do you think so?"

"Oh, impressions," said Henry, with a toss of the head; "we get impressions, you know, we can scarcely tell why."

"And utter them for the same good reason, without a wherefore," exclaimed Ralph, with deep indignation.

"Henry, I thought better of you. You know that is as false and as foul a suspicion as was ever uttered. Yes, sir, frown your blackest, you cannot look blacker than that falsehood. It is well that you have uttered it only to myself; you are my cousin; more, you are the son of my benefactor and my uncle. The bare insinuation dies where it was uttered,—it makes no more impression against the purity of Ruth Lorman, sir, than would the smoke from your fowling-piece make on heaven. Think, Henry, think it is against a poor defenceless girl, who has no brother to protect her, who has had more than her share of misfortunes, who has had few comforters, from whom the world fell off, as the leaves will fall from these trees when the wintry winds come, that you have uttered that calumny. I leave you, sir, to your reflections; as I have no part or lot in them, I leave you, sir; but I warn you to keep that calumny to yourself, or I shall forget that your father is my uncle, and that you are my cousin." And Ralph turned away from him, and stepped towards the house.

"I have a great mind to blow you through," exclaimed Henry in a rage, pointing his gun at Ralph.

"And if you did," said Ralph, facing him, "the deed would not be half so foul as that falsehood."

Henry presented his gun, as if to take a certain aim; but he reflected a moment, and upon a sudden impulse threw it from him, and burst into a forced fit of laughter. Ralph turned and walked away. Henry picked up his gun, advanced toward him, and said:

"Don't be foolish, Ralph. I did but jest. I wished to discover what influence our little friend had on you—ha! ha! ha! For aught I know or believe, she is as chaste as what Shakespeare says of the snow on Dian's temple—ha! ha! If aught were surmised against the fair Helen, would you likewise be her champion?"

"Yes, sir, if it were necessary. But Miss Murray, sir, is not as friendless as Miss Lorman. She has brothers, wealth, and many admirers. I hope, sir, you hold that you yourself have reasons, more than the mere motives of friendship to the unprotected, to move you in her behalf against any inquisitive, malicious jester, whatsoever; I certainly have."

So speaking Ralph quickened his step and left his cousin, who, surprised at the spirit Ralph had displayed, and burning with ill-suppressed indignation and shame, for he felt that he had acted meanly, did not pretend to keep pace with him, but lagged behind, ruminating darkly upon what had passed, and particularly upon the last words of Ralph in relation to Miss Murray.

CHAPTER VII.

The day on which the cousins went a gunning, Mr. Gladsdown Beckford had, early in the morning, ridden out with his physician to a medicinal well near the city, of which that worthy had advised him to try the water, and had expressed the wish to attend him when he did so. These two gentlemen were at the head of their respective professions. A close intimacy existed between them, and they went together in the physician's gig. Left alone, the ladies decided to devote the day to making calls, and while discussing whom they should visit, and whether they should have the carriage, Helen Murray asked,

"O! my dear Mrs. Beckford, have you lately been to see the Lormans—that meek, pious-looking little girl, with the expression that used to be praised, and that foolish stepmother of hers, who lived a while so gaily, and ruined her husband? I'm told they are wretchedly reduced, and that they have moved to the world's end."

"True, my dear, and it is shameful I have not called on them. She used to give splendid parties—the daughter was quite a child then—I remember her; she is not at all a showy girl—not calculated to make a figure: I expect she bears it better than her

mother. Where do they live?—O, the young gentlemen can tell us."

"They have gone a gunning, you remember. I can find it—your nephew pointed the place to me the other day when we were riding. Miss Ruth was at the door—she looks delicate. It's a shocking walk."

"O! then, indeed, we must ride."

And Mrs. Beckford rang the bell, and ordered that the coachman should get the coach forthwith.

After a short delay the coach came, and a long drive bore them to the residence of the Lormans.

"Is this the house?" said Mrs. Beckford, as the carriage drew near, and Helen pointed it out. "Well, my dear, they are indebted for our visit to you. I never should have thought of riding through this part of the city. My husband may have what opinion he pleases on the entailment of property being anti-republican. Only think, Helen, my dear, if the property of Mr. Lorman had been entailed on his wife and children, it would have saved all this failure, or all its consequences, at least. I declare to you, I hate to go in now—to see this change in people's fortunes quite shocks one. Indeed," to the coachman, "is there no stepping-stone, Cato? It is lucky for you, my dear," to Miss Murray, "that there are no beaux passing by, unless you are anxious to display your ancle."

"These short dresses which we wear nowadays, Mrs. Beckford, more than gratify all one's ambi-

tion in that respect," replied Miss Murray, while her pretty little foot peeped out, unconscious to the owner no doubt, as she spoke.

"O! no, no, Waverley." Great names, whether of war, or song, or of romance, have, by many who have presided at the baptismal font of the negroes of our country, been deemed peculiarly appropriate to that race, in fulfilment of the remark, perhaps, that there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous; and therefore had Mrs. Beckford called her footboy Waverley; or, as the boy was a great pet of hers, it may have been to display her admiration of the greatest genius of the age. "O, no, no, Waverley," she exclaimed to her woolly-headed official, who, with the dexterity of a lamplighter, had descended from his elevation, the instant the driver checked his horses, "do not let down the steps yet; we will not alight until we know if they are at home and visible. What! no bell, nor no knocker! Do not strike with your knuckles, you little wretch,—you'll knock the skin off and make them bloody, and how could I bear to have you wait on me with such hands. Take Cato's whip, and rap with the but-end."

Waverley complied, and after waiting the fashionable time without any one coming, he rapped again.

"They'll keep us here all day, my dear," said Mrs. Beckford, impatiently; "suppose we go."

But while she spoke, the door was observed to move, as if some one, not of sufficient strength was

attempting to open it. At last, after several ineffectual jerks, it flew open, and little Billy, who had performed the duty, by the suddenness with which it gave way—for Waverley had shoved from without,—in his last effort, was thrown sprawling into the middle of the passage. Billy's head went to the floor with a most belligerent bounce, and he set up his pipes in full blast. Here Ruth sprung to the door, in a neat but not very fashionable dishabille, and lifted up the prostrate Billy, while Mr. Waverley, who had not thought of assisting the child, stood in the doorway in a broad grin.

"If you laugh at me, you nigger, you," said Billy, suppressing his tears, and doubling his fist the moment he marked the grin of Waverley; "if you laugh at me, I'll take that whip from you and give it to you."

"Billy! Billy!" exclaimed Ruth, while a crimson flush passed over her brow and bosom, but it went as quickly as it came, and passing by the child, in violation of fashionable formality, to the side of Waverley, who had turned away the instant Billy spoke and let down the steps of the carriage, she assisted Mrs. Beckford and Miss Murray to alight.

"I am sorry we have no stepping-stone, ladies," she said sweetly. "Billy run in and get the stool, that's a good boy."

"I won't," said Billy, "do another thing; my head hurts me now: if you want it send this black fellow."

"Oh, my dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Beckford to Ruth,

"do not, I beg of you, trouble yourself. It is quite easy to descend;" and Mrs. Beckford descended.

Ruth gave her hand to Miss Murray. "I am truly glad to see you, Miss Murray; I am sorry you should have been kept so long waiting, ladies."

"O, 'twas not long!" exclaimed Helen and Mrs. Beckford at the same instant; and Helen continued, "I did not know exactly where you lived, or I should have been to see you before. Mr. Ralph Beckford pointed out your house to me the other day as we passed it. You know I saw you in the door." And she tripped after Mrs. Beckford gaily in.

Billy had no sooner ceased his cry, than his little sister, younger than himself, whom Ruth had with her in the room, and which she suddenly left to haste to the assistance of Billy, took up the note faintly at first, but which, from the protracted stay of Ruth, had increased into a regular bawl by the time the ladies entered the room.

"Don't be frightened," said Ruth, taking the child to her lap, as she asked the ladies to be seated on the sofa, "brother Billy's not hurt."

"Yes, I am though, sister Ruth," said Billy; "I've got a lump here"—putting his hand on the afflicted part—the back of his head—"most as big as a hen's egg. If you had it I reckon you'd ha' thought *you* was hurt."

"No doubt of it, Billy," said Miss Murray, laughing—and offering him her hand—"won't you come to me:" and Helen wore her most bewitching smile.

"Ah!" said Billy, retreating to the side of Ruth, "I saw you laugh too!"

"Not laugh, smile," said Miss Murray, rising and taking his hand; "I was pleased to see you were such a brave boy as to threaten to whip Waverley—'that nigger,'" and Billy, subdued like his edlers—'Men are but children of a larger growth'—no longer refused the proffered hand of Helen. She led him to the sofa and seated him by her.

"How is your mother, Miss Lorman?" asked Mrs. Beckford.

"Not very well, ma'am, but I'll send and tell her that you are here."

"O! not for the world! don't disturb her!"

"O yes, I must tell her! She would be displeased if you were to leave, and she were not to know it. Excuse me one moment, ladies;" and Ruth left the room to seek her mother.

"Wretchedly, wretchedly reduced!" whispered Mrs. Beckford to Helen, as Ruth's footsteps died away upon the stairs.

Helen nodded her head slowly several times, as she assented. "But," said she, "Miss Ruth is a sweet girl. She has from amiability what a woman of the world has from art—self-possession. A beautiful expression of countenance, but what a delicate form! I suppose her stepmother—defend me from these stepmothers—stays in her room, and that Ruth has to do everything. I presume they don't even keep a servant

"We did," interrupted Billy, for they had forgotten the presence of the child, "but Barbary said she wouldn't cook and wash too, and so she went away yesterday."

The ladies stared at each other in some confusion at this interruption. Mrs. Beckford shrugged her shoulders, and Helen patted Billy on the head, and asked—

"Don't your sister Ruth play on the piano, Billy?"

"Yes, when we had one," said Billy, whose shamefacedness had vanished before Helen's attentions, "but it's sold now; and I don't believe that mother will be down to see you, for she don't come down much since the piano and so many things was sold."

Meanwhile Ruth went up stairs and met her mother on the landing, where she had been peeping over and intensely listening. Mrs. Lorman drew Ruth aside and said—

"How unfortunate that hussey Barbary went yesterday. You had to go to the door—gracious! and that brawling brat—I'll give it to him! Its Mrs. Beckford, hey! What did I tell you about, Ralph?"

"Can you not come down, mother?" interrupted Ruth.

"No, Ruth, no," said Mrs. Lorman, tartly. "What dress have I? I told your father last week that I must have a dress. He did not get it. You see the consequence."

"Surely, mother, your black silk, or your brown

one, are as good as new—and good enough for anything. Mrs. Beckford has on one just like your black silk; or there's your muslin wrapper."

"Dont dictate to me, Ruth," interrupted her stepmother harshly—"no, tell the ladies I am unwell, as in fact I am. But for your sake I would make an effort, if I had a proper dress; let your father see the consequences; tell them that I am quite unwell, Ruth." And Ruth descended the steps, while her stepmother again placed herself on the stair way, to listen to what was said, and peer over at the ladies as they left.

The ladies kept their seats but a minute or two after Ruth descended, expressed their regrets that they had not seen Mrs. Lorman, hoped she would soon be better, and rose to leave.

"Tell your mother, my dear," said Mrs. Beckford to Ruth, "that she must call very soon and see me; not to be formal, to make a sociable call—to come and spend the day with me; and you must come with her. Between my son, and nephew, and myself," and she turned and bowed to Helen—"and last, though more than all, with Miss Murray, who is spending some time with me; we will, I hope, entertain you."

Miss Murray expressed the hope, that she should have the pleasure of seeing Miss Lorman at Mrs. Beckford's, and at her father's when she returned home. They had just reached the door, when Helen was interrupted in returning her acknowledg-

ments, by a man who, with a furniture car, had stopped before the door, and who inquired "If this was Mr. Lorman's?"

"Yes," said Ruth, "but I do not think there is any furniture coming here, there must be some mistake."

"This is Mr. Harvey Lorman's, isn't it?" asked the man.

Lucy said, "it was."

"Then there is no mistake," replied he, "here is a piano that Mr. Beckford sent."

Both of the ladies lingered, and each felt tempted to ask which Mr. Beckford; but Lucy said no more, and they entered the carriage and drove away.

CHAPTER VIII.

Ralph, when he left Henry by the mill-race, repaired to the stable, obtained his horse, and rode to town. At Mr. Lorman's, which lay in the route to his uncle's, Ralph stopped; and if Mr. Lorman's house had not been in his route, there is very little doubt that he still would have stopped; though he reflected, as he fastened his horse in a vacant lot opposite, that he had visited them every day that week; and it occurred to him, there was no want of frequency in his visits. "But," thought he, "I'll see little Billy, and tell him when I will take him a fishing, as I promised him; I wonder what Henry means by visiting here so often;" and Ralph with compressed lips crossed the street, rapped at the door, and was admitted by Mrs. Lorman.

Ralph observed that Mrs. Lorman's manner was constrained, and that she seemed disposed to answer only in monosyllables; but knowing what a wayward, and at times at least, unamiable lady she was, he did not feel disposed to regard much her inclination to silence. She was too, he thought, from the way she spoke to the children, in no ill humour with any but himself; and he wondered how to interpret her manner, and why she had received him on this occasion, for he did not reflect that Ruth

might be out, as he hardly remembered when, in calling, he had not found her at home, engaged in some domestic duty; to relieve his embarrassment he asked:

"Where is Billy, Mrs. Lorman?"

"Mr. Lorman had some business in the country, he took Billy with him."

"And Miss Ruth?" asked Ralph.

"She went with her father. The poor child has had no exercise whatever lately, and I insisted that she should ride out with him."

As our readers have observed, Mrs. Lorman was kinder to her stepdaughter, after the frequent visits of Henry Beckford, than we had represented her previously. Her unkindness to Ruth, arose in a great measure from Ruth's indifference to fashion and expense; and from her general appearance, which Mrs. Lorman was in the habit of pronouncing "excessively plain and old maidish;" qualities which the unprejudiced would have been the last to discover in Ruth Lorman. But when Ruth drew so strongly the attentions of Henry Beckford, Mrs. Lorman changed her opinion materially of Ruth's person and address, and her conduct to her stepdaughter changed with it for the better. Mrs. Lorman hoped by marrying Ruth to Henry, "to lift her own head up in the world again"—we use the language in which she thought—"and through Ruth, to get her own children well settled in fashionable life."

"When does she return?" inquired Ralph, whose questions our comments have prevented us from recording sooner.

"I do not expect her till late this evening, Mr. Beckford," replied Mrs. Lorman, making a solemn inclination of the head.

Here there was a silence of some moments, which Mrs. Lorman, after sundry uneasy movements, playing with her handkerchief, adjusting her head dress, removing and replacing the foot-stool; and after much hesitancy, interrupted by asking in a way, to make the impression on the hearer, that there was a doubt in her own mind of the fact:

"I believe you are a friend to our family, Mr. Beckford—Mr. Ralph Beckford?"

Ralph started and said, "I have always felt that I was, and I had always hoped that I should be so considered."

"Well, Mr. Beckford," replied the lady, priming herself up, and plunging in *medios res*, "then I will speak plainly to you—I consider it my duty to my family—to my children—to Mr. Lorman, whom, God knows, I do all I can to comfort and support and advise in his misfortunes; to my stepdaughter, to Ruth, to speak plainly to you. And as you say you are a friend of my family—I know you will be guided in your conduct towards that family by what they feel to be their interests—interests which cannot interfere with yours." With an air of acute sagacity, Mrs. Lorman continued—"you cannot have

failed to observe Ralph, that your cousin Henry, Mr. Henry Beckford, is seriously pleased with our Ruth." Here Ralph sought to interrupt Mrs. Lorman; but that lady in her most dignified manner continued—"I beg that I shall not be interrupted, Mr. Ralph Beckford. As I was saying you cannot have failed to observe, sir, that your cousin Henry—the very finest young gentleman I ever knew—handsome, accomplished, a decided favourite of mine—is seriously pleased with our Ruth, my daughter Ruth." With a nod of the head to one side as if she were conscious of making a side-bar remark, Mrs. Lorman continued—"His mother, Henry's mother—Mrs. Beckford, was here to-day—she called with that beautiful creature, Miss Helen Murray—they have a decided liking for Ruth—I regretted very much that I was so unwell I could not come down, but I shall certainly call on Mrs. Beckford very soon. But as I was saying—you certainly, sir, have not failed to discover that Mr. Henry Beckford is very much attached to my Ruth—it has been observed, the neighbours have hinted it to me, and in fact, I have the best reasons for knowing it. With such a match Ruth would, of course, be pleased, and you know as we—myself could have no objection to it, I have do doubt ere this—excuse me, Mr. Beckford, my daughter's happiness is involved—her advantageous settlement in the world—there would have been a complete understanding between them, but for the great sensibility of your cousin Henry, who shrinks from the

many—excuse me, sir—the many interruptions he receives from your visits."

"But suppose, Mrs. Lorman," said Ralph, with a lowering brow, "that I should be satisfied that my cousin's intentions are not half so serious as my own."

"Your own?" interrupted Mrs. Lorman haughtily, "you are jesting, sir; you have no means of supporting my daughter as she should be supported—as she has always lived, alas! until lately. What profession have you, Mr. Beckford?—what means of supporting a wife?—you have nothing independent of your father—your parental affection—excuse me, sir—will rejoice to believe, that your father will live for ever—I believe it—will live for ever—such people as he never die. And, Mr. Beckford, if you were to marry a poor girl, like my daughter—Ruth has not one cent—and she has delicate health and will require attentive servants. If, I say, you were to marry a poor girl like my daughter, your father when he did die, would cut you off with a shilling. I have often heard him speak of marrying poor girls; he married one himself; he is not as romantic as your cousin Henry, who takes after *his* father (sons are very apt to take after their fathers), and he said that if a son of his ever made such a match, he would cut him off with a shilling; but you are aware of your father's sentiments; therefore, it is impossible for Ruth or me, or my family, to have any idea of you in any other light than a friend. Ruth's feelings I know are interested by

your cousin, as indeed, what girl's feelings would not be. He is every way a most advantageous match for her; his fortune is in his own right; in a few months now he will be master of it. He will make Ruth a good husband; and I feel convinced, that as a friend to her and her family, you will not let your visits be so frequent, as at all to interfere with his."

Ralph was about making some reply, when his cousin entered, and he left—they bowed to each other coldly in passing. Ralph repaired to his uncle's.

Ruth did not return with her father until long after nightfall, when she found her mother sitting at the front window, in high spirits; and the children playing around her.

"Ruth," exclaimed her stepmother to her as Ruth entered the room, "I have been doing my best to entertain company. If I had been an unmarried woman, I should certainly have pulled caps with you—have done my best to cut you out."

"With whom, mother?" asked Ruth.

"With whom would you think, but Henry Beckford? we had a delightful *tête-à-tête*—indeed he is a most superior young man. Did you ever see such a difference in your life between two relations as there is between the cousins? I can hardly believe they are blood relatives. Ralph has the very look of his father."

"O! mother," interrupted Ruth, "how can you

say so? I think Ralph has the finest face I ever saw, and his heart is as good."

"Ruth! Ruth!" exclaimed her stepmother, in a shrill tone, "do not throw me into hysterics by your perversity—do not destroy all my exertions for you, and ruin your father and his helpless family. You had better poison us at once."

"Mother, do not speak so," said Ruth, imploringly; "some one will hear you in the street."

"Then, child, let me hear no such remarks from you. Do not embitter every moment of my life. I have no doubt of Henry Beckford's intentions. Did not his mother call in the kindest manner here to-day—when did she call before? Did she not press us—I overheard her—to call and see her, in a friendly way, to spend the evening with her? And did she not bring Miss Murray with her, decidedly one of the most fashionable ladies in the city—an acquaintance that you ought to cultivate by all means. Mrs. Beckford's object in bringing her was plainly to keep you in society, as she suspects her son's intentions. Let me hear no more of it, Ruth; my mind and your father's mind are made up to it, Ruth. Who do you suppose went to the expense of buying the piano—after your father had to sell it, in his necessities—but Henry Beckford! You know how he likes to hear you play, and how often he has regretted the absence of the piano."

"Did he say, mother," inquired Ruth, "that he had sent it here?"

"Say!" interrupted Mrs. Beckford, "no, he did not *say* so, but I saw him glance towards the piano repeatedly—and he never alluded to it. He is a gentleman of the greatest sensibility and delicacy. I would have spoken to him on the subject, but when I came to reflect how things stood, I thought it best to impose that pleasing task on you. You must do it in your prettiest manner, Ruth. It was a thing of great delicacy in him. The miser's son, —you surely did not for a moment dream that the miser's son sent it, did you? Answer me, Ruth."

"Indeed, mother, I could not tell who sent it," replied Ruth.

"Ralph Beckford has not had that much money, my dear, in the whole course of his life. Money enough to buy that piano!—his father would have starved him. That is the reason he quit him, and and has to live on his uncle's charity. You have no idea what a wretch his father is—they do say that he stinted his poor wife of everything to such a degree—and she was in poor health—that it hastened her death. I have always heard so, and always believed it. Ralph has been living upon his uncle's charity for years. If I were a man I would scorn such a thing—why don't he do for himself? God knows his health's strong enough, and he's stout enough—but he's just content to live on in this way. I'd see a daughter of mine in her grave before I would suffer her to throw herself away on such a creature."

CHAPTER IX.

THE morning after the conversation between Ruth and her stepmother, recorded in our last chapter, the cousins, Henry and Ralph, met at the breakfast-table of Gladsdown Beckford as usual. They greeted each other, but not with their accustomed warmth on either side, though the want of it was not observed. Ralph's feelings were wounded, which gave constraint to his manner; and though his cousin had fallen much in his good opinion, he nursed no anger towards him, but he could not affect any great cordiality—while Henry cherished suspicions against Ralph, and felt resentment which he wished to conceal, the better to further his purposes; but he had not yet acquired sufficient control over his reckless and self-willed disposition, which long indulgence had rendered almost indomitable.

"This wily cousin of mine," thought Henry, "surpasses me by controlling himself, and particularly before the women; while I, my impulses and intentions—those held foul, at least—are always rising to my lips, and to my brow, and betraying me. Helen Murray makes a fool—a baby—of me; and I cannot keep from this miser's son, this cousin of mine, my jealousies—even of him!" And Henry ground his teeth in anger and mortification.

When they were all seated at the breakfast-table, Miss Murray said, addressing herself at once to Henry and Ralph—

"Mrs. Beckford and myself called upon the Lormans yesterday."

"So Mrs. Lorman told me," said Ralph.

"Ah! when were you there?"

"Yesterday, as I returned from the country."

"They appear to be very much reduced," said Mrs. Beckford.

"And I fear, aunt," replied Ralph, "that appearances are too true."

"It is said," remarked Miss Murray feelingly, "that they even had to sell their piano, as their little boy, Billy—he is quite an original—blunted out to us, you remember, Mrs. Beckford. Pray, by the by, which of you gentlemen was it, (pardon me that I put your modesty to the blush,) that had the piano sent back."

Ralph blushed with a woman's diffidence, and betrayed the greatest confusion.

"It was not I," exclaimed Henry, glancing from Miss Murray to Ralph, with an expression which Miss Murray thought was meant to imply that Ralph was not very complimentary to her attractions.

"It was you, then, Mr. Ralph," said Miss Murray, with a slight faltering of the voice. "Bless us, how you blush. It was unnecessary for you *Master* Henry to have made the disclaimer."

Mrs. Beckford glanced towards Helen with a good humoured smile, for she had taken up the idea

that the sparring between Helen and her son contained nothing deeper than amiable raillery, or if it did, that it was, perchance, such as is often witnessed in lover's quarrels.

"And quite as unnecessary for you to make such a remark, allow me to say," replied Henry, with ill-suppressed anger.

"If you utter your war of words, Master Henry, with such an ominous frown," exclaimed Miss Murray, laughing, "I shall begin to fear that you mean to take to other weapons, and I am a lady."

"A fact that saves you," said Henry.

"Upon my word, sir, I believe it," exclaimed Miss Murray, and she laughed with a deal of meaning.

When Ralph and his uncle were left alone, the latter said to him:

"Nephew, you need not have shown any delicacy in asking for that sum, or any hesitancy in stating to what you meant to appropriate it; I honour and respect your motives. Any sum, my nephew," continued his uncle, taking him by the hand, "that you may need, I have entirely at your service. Let me be your steward. You must not consider it any great obligation; your services here have been of great use to me. Just consider, if there should be any thing owing to me, that when you arrive at age, you will have of your own ample means of repaying me. You exhibited so much of shrinking and diffidence in asking me for that little amount, that I began to wonder to what ill

purpose you meant to devote it; so you must be bolder next time. My uncle (and I was somewhat situated with him as you are with me) had many more requirements made upon his purse, than you make upon mine, and he had no prospect of repayment, except in the deep gratitude," and the tear started in the lawyer's eye, and his voice trembled, "except in the deep gratitude I felt and feel for the noblest and best of men. Men say," continued Gladsdown Beckford, walking across his office and contemplating a picture of his uncle, which had always hung there since he had practised his profession—"men say that I have won something of a name among my countrymen; I owe all that I am or expect to be to the original of that picture, Ralph, and I wish it recorded in my epitaph. What a fine head there is, and what a beaming and intelligent eye. Painting is a holy art; not a day has passed over my head since I followed that noble being to the tomb, except when I have been worn down by sickness, and then I forget him not, that I have not sat before those mute features, and thought of the departed, till the canvass almost spoke."

"My dear uncle," said Ralph, "in your health you should not suffer yourself to be so moved. I fear the excitement of riding out yesterday, with that of the company at the wells, has not improved your health. Let me draw up the sofa for you up stairs. You had better leave the office, and I will read you to sleep."

Mr. Beckford took to his couch, as Ralph advised.

Meanwhile, Helen Murray repaired to her chamber, in not as self-satisfied a mood as had been lately usual with her; Ruth and Ralph were before her mind, and Ralph's motives in having Ruth's piano returned to her. Was it the mere wish that Ruth should not be deprived of an instrument of which she was fond, on which she played well, and which now more than ever would be missed, and now more than ever would beguile her lonely hours; hours that oftener came and longer lasted than formerly? Such considerations, she thought, would easily move one of Ralph's romantic character; or lay the solution of the why and wherefore of the action in emotions of still gentler influence, on the heart? From these questions Helen was startled by an inquiry which she suddenly and unconsciously put to herself:

"But why should I be interested in him or in his feelings?"

She was drawn from a self-examination, which might have been of service to her, by the thought:

"It is impossible that he can feel any interest in that poor and scarcely passible girl, if he thought I would hold out any hope for him. I am dissatisfied and provoked with myself to think I should have shown any emotion at the table to-day, when it was apparent that he returned the piano; no one saw it, but, nevertheless, I felt it. How *Master* Henry curled his lip; I like not that youth, his malice is too palpable. I must become closely acquainted with the

meek lady of the piano, and find out the fact. I must and will!"

Not long after this, Helen returned to her own home; she had made several visits to Ruth, which had been returned; they had spent several evenings with each other, and Helen was surprised to find that Ralph, (who had been prevented, by what Mrs. Lorman had said to him, from calling on Ruth as often as he had formerly,) was a much less frequent visiter than she expected. Henry, she was almost sure to meet there, whenever she called, and notwithstanding the war of words between them, he was as often, or oftener at her shrine, and until he was checked by Helen, whose growing intimacy with Ruth made her respect Ruth's family, he seemed delighted to make the Lormans the topic of ridicule. Ralph, meanwhile, visited Helen often, and always either accompanied her to Lorman's, or called for her when she spent the evenings there, and escorted her home. Generally he found Henry there, and latterly he left him there; for one evening, as Helen was about leaving with Ralph, Henry lifted his hat, and said, he would also attend her, but she said—

"I thank you, sir, I shall feel fully protected by Mr. Ralph Beckford; and, as you once, in spite of Lord Chesterfield's admonition, quoted a proverb to me, I will only follow your example, and inform you that there is one that says something—surely you remember it—you are profound in proverbs—about the disagreeableness of the company of three—"

Helen closely scrutinized Ralph and Ruth, when she met them together, and, as we have said, by making Ralph her beau, she was often the cause of their meeting, but she could discover no understanding between them, or anything that as yet struck her as attachment on the part of either; they conversed together on common topics, and never conversed apart from the company; and when she spoke of one to the other, the answers of each, were in the highest degree respectful, but she thought both were restrained and cold. Ruth, she thought, had something on her mind, for she was evidently unhappy, and was not so cheerful, either in look or manner—though she made an effort to appear so—as when Helen visited her with Mrs. Beckford. Helen attributed it to the increased difficulties of Mr. Lorman, preying upon her mind, and her interest in Ruth, which at first was that of selfish curiosity, now took a purer cast, and all the gentle sympathies of Helen's vain, but not ungenerous, or, when rightly touched, unsacrificing spirit, were aroused in her behalf.

CHAPTER X.

One day, while Ralph was seated in his uncle's office alone, Jeremiah, his father's stuttering factotum entered, and informed him that his father wished to see him.

"What does he want with me, Jeremiah, do you know?"

"N-n-not exactly, m-ma-master Ralph," replied Jeremiah, "but he's p-pretty p-particularly p-p-p-pleased."

"Then I'll mark the event with a white stone, Jerry, and wait on my father directly."

"Yes, sir," said Jerry, as he departed.

Wondering what could "pretty particularly please" his father in his regard, Ralph took his hat, and proceeded to the store, which was in the other end of the city, and more than a mile off. Jeremiah had got there before him, and when Ralph entered the store, he found that personage, who was as saving almost as his master, stooping, not without some difficulty from the rotundity of his person, and stepping about the floor, in a pilgrimage after sundry grains of coffee, which some prodigal purchaser had dropped.

Passing into the back room, Ralph found his father seated in the old stuffed arm-chair, and dressed in his very best—that is, he had doffed the old frock coat

which he usually wore, and had on instead a close-bodied one, made of the cloth commonly called pepper and salt, with pantaloons of the same. Ralph was somewhat surprised to see his father in his most expensive garb. He had gotten it many years previous to this date, and as Jeremiah slily averred to his young master at the time, his father had involved himself in that enormous expenditure, for the purpose of making himself agreeable to a wealthy widow, whom he designed for Ralph's stepmother. We know not precisely how this was, but it is certain, that a short time after becoming acquainted with the widow, Mr. Solomon Beckford mounted this suit, and wore it whenever he went to see her, which was very frequently, until one night, much to the surprise of even some of her neighbours, and greatly to that of Mr. Beckford, she married a young doctor, whom every body thought had attended her in his professional capacity only. The property being in her own right, and she being a sickly-looking woman, and the doctor very constant in his attendance, it was thought, at least by her elder wooer, that her life did not promise to last long, but she still lived, though Mr. Solomon Beckford had not called to see her but once, and then he did not wear his pepper and salt suit—and that was to demand payment for certain pine-apples, turkeys, and several other little things, which the lady asserted he had presented to her, and which the gentleman insisted he had not dreamed of doing. After a long altercation, and many hard words, with

some talk on the part of the gentleman, concerning the law of debt, the lady paid the amount, and Mr. Solomon Beckford and she parted, "like cliffs that have been rent asunder." Not often—not even on high days and holidays, had Mr. Solomon Beckford decked himself in this suit since; he generally, on extraordinary occasions, after the theft of the coat which he wore at his wife's funeral, of whose loss, (the coat's we mean) our readers may remember he complained to his son, wore a second-hand black one which he bought, even of a Jew, an old clothesman, at a bargain. Ralph was wondering, as he eyed his father, what had become of the black coat, and he felt very much inclined to inquire of him if it had been stolen too, when the old miser turned to him, rubbing his hand with self-complacency, and said:

"Ralph, my son, why have you not been here lately; you are never at home nowadays."

"Why, father, to tell you the truth," replied Ralph, "I did not like the last message you sent me on that speculation."

"What message?" asked the old man, peering over his spectacles; "drop that word speculation—what speculation?"

"That speculation in pews, father!"

"Well, sir, by dad, was not that a good speculation, better than any old Lorman ever made, but his first one; the six pews stood me in six hundred dollars—a hundred dollars a-piece at six months,

and long before that time expired, I sold out my whole lot, and made three hundred dollars."

"Father, you once threatened me, that you would give your whole fortune to the heathens—I should have no objection to your giving that three hundred."

"Ralph, my son, never take what a man says in a passion, as his serious determination. If you are a dutiful boy, its probable you will have all I have to leave."

Ralph looked on his father almost in wonderment, at the expression of the last sentiment, for he was always holding the threat of disinheritance over his son; apparently, intending to govern him by fears, and not by hopes. Ralph having a touch of sly humour in his character, as men of his temperament frequently have, and seeing his father in such a mirthful, benevolent mood, felt a considerable inclination to indulge it, the more, as his vision took in the parental person. The old miser sat bolt upright, as though his spinal column had been formed of a ramrod: an attitude which he preserved at some sacrifice of ease, but with a tender regard to the back of his coat, the nap of which, he seemed determined, no self-indulgence of his should endanger. Every now and then—and he held his head as erect as his person —Mr. Solomon Beckford would glance down along his dress at his hands, which he was in the habit of clasping together, twisting the while his thumbs, one over the other, and then he would throw his visual organs up over his spectacles, and eye his son with

a knowing and pleased side-glance, somewhat like that of a pigeon, when a crumb falls near it. All this was so unusual with his father, who generally wore a close, prying, fault-finding, cent-seeking look, that Ralph, as we have said, could scarcely resist the inclination to put to his parent some quizzical questions.

"Yes, I say, Ralph," continued his father, "it is probable you will have all I have to leave, and I may considerably augment it before I die, if the Lord spares me."

The idea, that his father entertained the intention of making another matrimonial foray against some widow or other, flashed through Ralph's mind, and he asked:

"Have you been out to-day, father?"

"Out," exclaimed the old man, "yes, Ralph, I have been out seeing some old friends, fine people, one of the largest fortunes in the city, the lady an old sweetheart of mine; one of the finest women I ever knew, pains-taking, prudent, and economical; she will never ruin her husband, as our Mrs. Lorman has hers. By the by, Ralph, that speculation of my friend, Harvey Lorman—that speculation in matrimony of his, was about one of his worst bargains. His first wife had a large fortune, and knew how to take care of it; how to advise her husband in the management of it; and while she lived, he prospered. His second wife was not worth that," snapping his fingers, "and does nothing but spend money, and bear children. What with her spending, and

her brats' eating, drinking, and clothing—they have fairly ruined Harvey—eat him out of house and home. The wastefulness of his house, in the heyday of their expenditure, exceeded even that of your uncle's; what has befallen him, is a providential visitation. Ralph," pursued the father; and his brow gathered together its wrinkles, and his eye assumed its most suspicious cast—"do you consort much with your cousin Henry—I mean, are you his close companion?"

"No, sir," said Ralph, "I meet him only occasionally: he is seldom at home, even to his meals; and I never, of late, accompany him any where."

"I rejoice, Ralph, to hear you say so; it confirms what I have heard."

"What you have heard! What have you heard, father?"

"Why, that you are not the companion of your cousin Henry in his iniquities."

"In his iniquities! What iniquities, father?"

"Have you not heard of it?" inquired his father, in a doubting tone.

"No, sir."

"It is precisely like his father. He might have mentioned the fact to you, if merely for a warning; but, no: he wished, I suppose, to save Mr. Henry's feelings—to spare him such an exposition. You look astonished, Ralph; but I can astonish you more. Your cousin Henry lost five thousand dollars the other night a gambling!!"

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Ralph, for he had not heard of it.

"Just so: that don't astonish me when I consider the way that boy has been brought up; but what does astonish me is—(and the old man spoke slowly, as if the conviction had hardly yet forced itself in his mind, and he was brooding in doubt over it)—what does astonish me is, that his father, a lawyer, as he is, and a man, as the world believes, of great sense—for my part I think him demented—should pay the money—when there was no law to make him! Henry is not yet of age, and, moreover, should try to hush up the affair. Ralph, if you were to be guilty of such an enormity," exclaimed the old man, shaking his bony finger at his son, in horror at the very thought, "by dad, I would publish you as no son of mine! I would hire all the bell-men in the city—all the criers—if it cost me twenty dollars, to make proclamation every where that I would pay no debts of your contracting; and I would do this just to expose you, sir—just to expose you: for I know very well that I am not bound by any of your contracts; and those who trust you will soon know it, if they poke any of your bills at me."

"Has any one, father, been poking any of my bills at you?" inquired Ralph.

"No, no," replied the old man, in a softened tone; "I speak it as a warning, while reflecting on your cousin's conduct. Five thousand dollars! by dad! God bless my soul!" The old miser's eyes

goggled with horror as he thought of it. "The iniquity of this generation—the rising generation, I mean—surpasses all understanding. Your uncle Preston, who came to such a miserable end, never at one time made such an expenditure—such a loss—threw so much money away. Henry, your cousin, is treading precisely in the footsteps of Preston, and he will, I fear, bring his father's gray hairs in sorrow to the grave."

Ralph folded his arms, and, lost in astonishment at his cousin's conduct, heard not the last remark of his father. He was aroused from his reverie by his father's adding—

"I am afraid Ruth Lorman, who, I believe, is a good girl, will have a hard time of it with him."

"How! what do you mean, father?"

"O! it's a love match, I suppose!" exclaimed the old man, with a bitter sneer—"a love match!"

"Father, it's impossible! you're mistaken."

"Impossible!" interrupted the old man, "why is this the first you have heard of it? Lorman and his wife both hinted it to me pretty plainly some time since. I wonder if your uncle knows it! No, I suppose not; he is so much immersed in business and politics that he does not pretend to think about these minor concerns—except just to put his hand in his pocket and pay five thousand dollars for a profligate son!—more than he will ever make by politics as long as he lives! And I suppose your Mr. Henry, who has so little regard to money as

to throw away five thousand dollars a gambling, is nevertheless so romantic as to marry for love! No, sir, he is a rapscallion. No man that squanders money in that way—set it down as a maxim, Ralph—that no man who squanders money in that way is is any thing but a rapscallion. I must see old Lorman and advise with him. Ruth is one of the best young women I ever knew. I must advise old Lorman to make arrangements, before any marriage takes place, to have a handsome settlement made on her; for, if it is not done, this love match—this rich love match—will end as love matches generally begin—in beggary. But you—you sly fellow you"—exclaimed the old man, in the cheerful, chirping tone, with which he first saluted his son, "you mean to feather your nest, hey?"

"I, father! why I don't understand you."

"Ah, you sly dog!" said the old man, with a chuckle, "ignorant again, hey! Ralph, I do not know who you take after. I used to think decidedly after your mother; but latterly, I think you are such a youth as I was. I—"

Here Jeremiah entered and stuttered forth, "M-mr. C-co-coil's here, M-mas-master Beckford."

"Ask him to take a seat, Jerry—I will be there in a moment. Ralph," continued the father, addressing the son, "I wish you to go out with Coil to Stockbridge Farm, and receive the rent from a tenant who is about moving on it. Lorman has concluded not to take it—two weeks and no tenant

and no advertisement for one, expecting him to take it! He, I believe, is a man who not only loses himself, but who causes all to lose who deal with him. Get the money, Ralph, from the tenant. You will stay out there all night. He moves on to-morrow, but he must pay in advance one hundred dollars—and Ralph, you may take it for your expenses"—and neither the old miser's generosity nor parental affection could sustain him to that amount unchecked, and he added, "and I'll charge it to you, Ralph—put it into the bill of your college expenses—if you determine to go to college. I expect, like your cousin Henry, you may have other engagements, hey?"

"Father, explain all this to me, for upon my word I do not understand it."

"Very well, Ralph—I will explain it to you the day after to-morrow, Ralph—he, he!" said the miser, with a knowing nod, "go, get the money, Ralph,—and understand, I will put it down with those other charges for which you are to give me that deed."

"How shall I go out?" said Ralph; "I must go and get a horse."

"No, I have saved that expense, Ralph—I have borrowed neighbour Slater's carryall,—if your uncle's fine equipage has not made you too proud to ride in it, and if it has I suppose you will not want the money,—and Mr. Coil—Hearty Coil—you know

him—has put his horse in—you will go out together; and when you get the money, put my old gray mare in the carryall—she's at Stockbridge—and drive her in; I shall put her up for sale at the horse-market."

Instigated more by the one hundred dollars than the honour of Hearty Coil's company, or the conveyance of the carryall, Ralph, after shaking hands with that worthy, who hastily shifted a bundle—which Mr. Solomon Beckford had given him—from his right to his left hand, that he might do the honour becomingly, took a seat by his side in the vehicle.

The old miser stood beside an empty sugar-hogshead near the curb-stone, giving Ralph parting instructions concerning the collection of the money and the safe conduct of the mare, when Jeremiah, who had been washing the store-lamp in a tin basin, came to the door just as the vehicle was driving off, with the basin in his hand full of greasy water and the snuffings of the lamp, and not noticing his master, who was just advancing from the shelter of the hogshead to re-enter the store, he threw the filthy liquid all over him.

"Merciful Providence!" ejaculated the old miser, starting to the shelter of the hogshead, as the liquid spattered over his suit of pepper-and-salt, "what have I done to deserve this?"

Jeremiah's eyes dilated at his misdeed till they

looked like saucers; and he stood with the basin extended in his hand in the posture in which the greasy water had escaped from it, trying hard to stutter forth an excuse.

"You infernal, stuttering, splattering personification of darkness, you will ruin me yet!" exclaimed the old man stamping with rage, and shaking his fist at Jerry, who retreated in double quick time from the door as his master entered it.

"M-m-as-Master Be-Beck-Beckford," stuttered Jeremiah.

"M-m-m-as B-B-B-eck," interrupted his master, mocking him, and then reviewing his condition, he lifted up his hands, threw them down along his person, as if struck with despair, and exclaimed—"bless my soul, its all over me—yes," to Jeremiah, "I shall be killed by you some day yet—it's a wonder you did not throw the basin too—you'll ruin me—whoever heard of any but an idiot standing in a front door and pitching filth over a pavement—a foot pavement, over which passengers are continually passing. Why, you black rascal, don't you know that you might have thrown your filth on some gentleman, and involved me in a lawsuit, which would have cost more than your head is worth. Here, get me some water and call Minty, and get my other clothes and let's see if anything can be done to get this grease out. Bless my soul," and the old miser retreated into his back room, muttering to himself—

"some cursed luck always attends me in this suit—the black knave is not worth his salt—I shall be ruined by him yet—his infernal carelessness will set my house a fire some of these nights, and he'll run away by the light!"

CHAPTER XI.

Hearty Coil, with whom Ralph Beckford found himself seated in the carryall, was a personage likely to beguile the tedium of the way, if much talking could do it. Hearty was a nickname given him from the fact, that he always addressed every acquaintance he met with: "are you hearty, Mr. ——!" and he had a peculiar style of pronouncing the word hearty—with an elongation—that gave it an effect upon the ear like a loud and long-draw-out note in music. He was an Irishman by birth; but having left his country early in life and gone to London, where he became the servant of an Englishman, and with whom, subsequently, he emigrated to the United States, he retained little of the peculiar phraseology of his fatherland, though when he was excited or much in earnest, it dashed out in the ornamental part of his conversation—his oaths. He was a small, slim man; and, like most small men, he stood as erect as possible, as if determined to make the most of his inches; and he had a way of tossing his head back, and placing his left arm a kimbo, as if he felt desirous of encouraging any propensity that his frame might have towards growing taller, while he at the same time evidently resolved, that whether it grew taller or not, he would maintain his own pro-

per dignity. Coil's dress consisted of what once was a green bob-tail coat; but which had been so frequently patched with pieces of cloth, that only approximated to that colour, that it had not a great many claims to its legitimate hue; but it was kept scrupulously clean, and looked quite imposing from its enormous buttons, that bore the hunter's emblem, the head of a stag. This coat did very little towards covering a pair of buckskin small-clothes, much patched, too, that fit Coil's nether limbs very tight. Country knit cotton stockings, made an effort to meet Coil's buckskins at the knee, while the upper garment, with aristocratic hauteur, shrunk way from them; nevertheless, a broad band of leather, dressed like buckskin, served, like the middle classes, to link the two extremes. Coarsely cobbled shoes, with dull brass buckles in them, enclosed his feet. Crowning all, a cap made of a fox's skin, with the bush or tail so arranged as to pass over the top, with a coquettish inclination to one side, and with end streaming out, was set knowingly on his head. The cap left exposed to view, a long slim nose, high cheek bones, a compressed pompous upper lip, and broad chin, that whenever its owner spoke, sagaciously disappeared, like a diving duck, for a moment or two, in the folds of a huge neck-cloth; while a little gray eye twinkled on you under a round forehead, with unmitigating self-complacency.

Hearty had put his horse "Thunder" into the carryall—as peculiar an animal as himself. The

spirit of Thunder was not spread away into fatness; he was gaunt, vicious, fiery, and as thin as beseemed a poet even, in the opinion of Byron. The gnawing in his vitals kept him restless, like a disturbed conscience. Hearty was opposed to the overfeeding of any "cretur," but himself. Notwithstanding the vicious propensities of Thunder—his lightning like-qualities in some respects—Hearty was accustomed to pronounce him with cockney enunciation—"A hanimal of fine spirits—a blooded fellow; but who was as gentle as a lamb when a gentleman skilled in horse-flesh held his reins—not the least disposed to cut up extra shines, until a green one drives him—and then, who wouldn't cut up shines, man or beast?"

"Thunder, mind sir," said Hearty, to his Bucephalus, as the steed, with his tail cocked up, for he was not used to a carryall, was exhibiting signs of discontent, by shying from one side of the street to the other, and causing the vehicle to slide right and left, according to his movements; "Thunder, be easy, will ye? Mr. Ralph, they would say that Thunder was a devil of a horse, but I tell ye he is gentle as a clear sky."

"But then there is no thunder in a clear sky, Hearty," said Ralph.

"Upon my soul you say true, sir—you have me there. I meant to get myself a bit of a carryall, to take my family to church, but Mrs. Coil is narvious, and she won't, therefore, put any faith in Thunder.

By the powers, I hope Thunder will behave decently at the funeral to-morrow;" here Hearty sighed—"you see, Mr. Ralph, Parlot is a beast of a drinking man; I have no objection myself to a little, to take the chill off of your water; for to an old countryman, who is not used to the water of this country—and there is no getting used to it—it is absolutely necessary, for his body's sake, that he should take the chill off, or he'll run away in a looseness. Father Abraham, you see how thin I am—well, there would be nothing at all at all of me, if it was not for a small drop occasionally, by way of medicine—merely by way of medicine. But, as I was saying, Parlot is so giving up to strong drink, that—be easy now, Thunder, won't ye? by the powers, if you spill Mr. Ralph in the road here, you may break some of his bones, and the carryall into the bargain, and there'll be a bubery kicked up, and you'll catch lightning, Thunder, from this whip; now be easy then.—Parlot is given up to strong drink, Mr. Ralph, and there is nobody but myself to support the dignity of the family; his wife died yesterday, and I came to town to look after matters, and see to a decent burying; you know I married Parlot's wife's sister."

Hearty, had a few years after his arrival in the United States, married a woman, who, almost in the opinion of Methuselah, one not disposed soon to throw a lady of a certain age from the marriage list, would have passed for an old maid; he married for money,

or rather for about twenty acres of poor land, which made him a freeholder, and entitled him, after he became naturalized, to a vote—he being a property holder of sufficient qualifications. Miss Silvester, Hearty's wife's maiden name, proclaimed herself of an ancient, but reduced family; and she was always impressing upon Hearty, the necessity of keeping up in her person and his, the dignity thereof. He sometimes at home, when smarting under a curtain lecture—and Mrs. Coil was as skilful as the wife of Rip Van Winkle in that respect, or Mr. Socrates—had been heard most irreverently to damn the dignity of the family, and his rib into the bargain; but abroad, he always most pertinaciously maintained it; and never at home even, ventured such denunciations; for it always when he did, involved the peace and dignity of his household, unless he was driven into a desperate disregard of all consequences, by the demeanour of Mrs. Coil. This lady having married, as we have said, when she was somewhat advanced, no doubt to make up her lost time, had brought her husband twins three times! at which Hearty was wont to assume congratulations to himself abroad, but these public rejoicings never intruded into the domestic privacy. Hearty could have made a comfortable subsistance for his family, though he could not have kept up its pecuniary or personal dignity, at least in the opinion of the world, if they believed his wife's account of its claims—by his occupation, or rather occupations—of doctoring horses, and all

kinds of cattle, pruning and grafting trees, seeking for runaway negroes, &c. &c. For Hearty could turn his hand to any kind of idle employment, but he was addicted, alas, not only to idleness, but to the vice which he laid so heavily to the door of his brother-in-law. He was in the habit of denying stoutly, any propensity on his part, to such excesses—and the deeper his draughts, the stronger his denials. Just before he left Mr. Beckford's, Jeremiah had slily slipped a stout horn to him, the effects of which were momentarily displaying themselves more and more. Hearty was well known through the county, for by way of a joke, the roystering blades about, had got him to set up once for Sheriff, on which occasion they had him repeatedly on the stump, where he afforded much amusement, for he talked with great fluency; he obtained a large number of votes, and was very proud of his poll. The carryall had no top to it, and consisted of a box body, with two seats in it, which were set on hickory springs. Ralph and Hearty were together on the front seat, and the back one kept up a perpetual bouncing, as if provoked that it was untenanted. The vehicle had not been used for some time, and it rattled like an old hearse; as if, as Hearty said, it were going to its own funeral; while the old-fashioned, dingy looking gears, that hung loose upon the lank sides of Thunder, creaked in harmony with it. The animal, as if his blood was up at such an incumbrance, seemed disposed to leave it behind, for the traces

were so long, that he was farther from the vehicle than is the custom; and it flirted and spun along some distance in his rear, over the rough pavement, like the play cart of a boy, which he draws by a rope, and over which of consequence he can have little control; for in descending an eminence, the cart will be on his heels, and wriggle to either side of the road, while in ascending, it will be far behind him.

They had left the city behind them. The day was a fine one, though rather dusty; Thunder was in a full trot, occasionally breaking into a gallop, and Hearty's tongue was going something like his horse, rapidly but unequally, and he did not appear to have a perfect control over it. Ralph was not entirely satisfied with the figure he cut, and he felt a decided shrinking, as if he would like to disappear whenever a fashionable vehicle, in which he thought might be some of his acquaintances, passed them—and there were several.

He would have requested Hearty several times to check the career of Thunder; but he reflected the dust he raised by his heels and his rapidity, would prevent himself from being recognised by his fashionable acquaintances, and a few moments of excited thought upon his situation had served to arouse his morbidness.

"By the powers of mud, Mr. Ralph," exclaimed Hearty, flourishing his whip, "now don't old Thunder make the dust fly! Horses, sir, are like men—it's hard to form a judgmatical opinion upon 'em

till you know them. You see many a lean lank man who has a surprising head work, and, sir, many a lean lank horse that has a surprising heel work. And what head work is to a man, heel work is to a horse—it is understanding," continued Hearty, unconsciously making a pun. "I do wish I could persuade my wife to let me get a carryall, and to trust herself with Thunder—but it would be a risk; what should the family—our connexions—as well as my own little—by the powers! big I should say—domestic circle do if she should leave us too? I should go to the western wilderness with Mr. Lorman, where they are building them big cities—and who knows what a man might arrive at in a few years? There's Jim Bunce, who could not pay his tippenny grog bill here, by the living jingo! I am told for certain has, out in those parts, a huge distillery, all his own. I'm thinking that is a pretty profitable business. I have an idea that I could do something at it too; for though I am a temperate man, and seldom take it but as a medicine, yet I have a taste, Mr. Ralph, that was caught among gentlemen, and I hold myself a judge of good liquor. Intemperance is a beastly vice, Mr. Ralph," continued Hearty, giving his face a twist so as to compose it into a sober expression; "a beastly vice, and I have talked my tongue tired to Parlot, concerning of it. But, sir, he is one of your drunkards, who, when he gets corned himself, by the powers, sir, thinks every body else is corned—besotted. If it

had not been for the dignity of the family," continued Hearty, flourishing his whip at Thunder, "if it had not been for the dignity of the family, I would, to speak in country fashion, have cut his hide at such a rate, the other day, that when it was tanned it would not have held corn chucks."

Here Hearty suited the action, upon the hide of Thunder, to the word, and away sprung the steed in a gallop.

"Wo-ho, Thunder, my darling—not so fast;—there's time for all things, and this is no time to be cutting your didoes: be decent, discreet, and cautious. These fashionable drivers that pass us, Mr. Ralph, think they belong to the quality; but, by the powers, I have driv a better carriage many a day than the best of them. I have did the thing, sir, four in hand, and I could strike any spot on the hanimal from the top of his ears to the tip of his tail."

"Take care, Hearty, you will upset us!" exclaimed Ralph, as Thunder started again for a gallop; "you will hurt your horse. Come, my good fellow, be gentle."

"Gentle! if you are for the gentle, Mr. Ralph, I can do it for you to a fraction. But, you see, I put Thunder a little to his trumps, for if I don't get the mettle out of him, he will disgrace the dignity of the family at the funeral to-morrow, and take the lead, by the powers, and make Mrs. Coil, and myself, and family, in this carryall, which your father was so

kind as to get for me at a small price, appear like the hearse."

As Hearty spoke, he faced Ralph with the look of one who feels he has uttered a convincing argument.

Here an open and fashionable carriage was approaching them, with two young ladies in it, and a young gentleman driving, who had disregarded the maxim so broadly displayed on the tops of the turnpike gates—☞ "*Keep to the right as the law directs*" —and was dashing along on the side, and on that part called the Summer road, which Hearty was entitled to keep had he been driving on it. That worthy was passing along on the pavement, but he turned on to the Summer road, remarking—

"That fellow may crack his whip now and hold his head high, but, by Thunder!—see to the hanimal now, Mr. Ralph—he starts as if I was speaking to him, and not to no one in particular—he must give way to a gentleman!"

This the young guider of the two mettled steeds, in the way of Thunder, did not seem disposed to do, for he waved his whip and came directly on. He was Henry Beckford, and had been taking Helen Murray and Ruth Lorman an airing in a splendid establishment, which he had lately set up, in anticipation of the fortune—that in a few months would be at his disposal.

As the vehicles approached each other closely, Henry burst into a laugh, and said to the ladies—

"Its Ralph Beckford, pish! my cousin, taking a drive: by Jove, he must give the way to beauty!"

"Ralph," called out Henry, "give way, cousin of mine, to my fair charges, or take the consequences of recreant courtesy!"

"Mr. Beckford," exclaimed Ruth Lorman, imploringly, "do not! oh, do not, Mr. Beckford! Ralph is not driving."

"Henry Beckford, would you do such a thing, and endanger all our lives?" exclaimed Helen Murray, indignantly. And she started up, impatiently, and attempted, in her fright, for the horses were within a few feet of each other, to seize the reins.

As soon as Ralph caught his cousin's remark, he said, "Hearty, my good fellow, turn out, let's give them the road."

"Give him the road!" exclaimed Hearty, indignantly; "no, by the Powers, this side's mine!"

As Hearty replied, Ralph caught the reins from his hand, but too late to clear the other vehicle entirely, at the speed in which they both were, and they came together with great violence. Hearty was thrown out into the ditch, and Thunder followed, leaving behind all but the shafts of the carryall, which had struck slantingly the side of one of Henry's horses, and terribly mangled it. The body of Henry's vehicle was much broken; and Miss Murray screamed wildly, while Ruth bowed her head and hid her face from the sight. It was not known whether either of them were hurt, but they were

evidently in the greatest danger, for Henry's horses rose and plunged violently, and he seemed incapable of managing them.

Ralph, who was unhurt, instantly sprang to the head of the horses, and, by a powerful effort, checked them for a moment.

"Are you hurt, ladies?" he inquired.

"No, no, we are not hurt!" they both exclaimed. "But, for God's sake," said Miss Murray, "Mr. Beckford, let us get out!"

"There is not the least danger!" exclaimed Henry, nettled, instead of being gratified, at the assistance of his cousin.

"I insist upon getting out, Mr. Henry Beckford!" exclaimed Miss Murray. "If you are a gentleman, sir, you will let me out!"

But Henry, in his wilfulness, disregarded everything, and cracked his whip. The horses sprang forward with such force as to hurl Ralph to the ground, who fell on his side within a few inches of the wheels. Ruth and Helen screamed fearfully, and the horses, with added fright, dashed ahead. Ralph sprang to his feet much bruised, but in the intensity of his fear for the safety of Ruth and Helen, overcoming the sensation. The horses leaped and plunged forward some twenty or thirty yards in an uncontrollable manner—Henry, all the time, with his utmost strength exerted, trying to check them. At last they commenced backing, and were hurrying the vehicle to the left hand side of the road, where there

was a deep gully, at which Helen Murray's screams were renewed, while Ruth sat in speechless fear, with clasped hands. Ralph hastened to their assistance; but, before he reached them, Henry had, by the application of the whip and the management of the reins, succeeded in urging the horses forward again, and they sprang across the road, and were brought up by a fence on the other side.

Ralph got up time enough to assist the ladies to alight; and, at his heels, came Hearty, who had been stunned by his fall, but who had now recovered. He grasped his whip firmly, and advanced on Henry exclaiming—

"By the Powers, I'll teach ye to tumble gentlemen into the gutters—you imp of the devil, you!"—and Hearty aimed a blow at Henry, which missed him; when Miss Murray, who knew Hearty, exclaimed merrily, seeing that all were apparently safe, "Mr. Coil, in the presence of ladies, you would not surely right your wrongs in this way?"

Hearty turned immediately to Miss Murray, while Henry left his horses, which Ralph had secured, and snatching up a stone, was in the act of hurling it at Hearty, when Helen exclaimed, in a most indignant tone:

"Mr. Beckford, for shame, sir, have you no respect for the presence of ladies?" Henry drew down his hand to his side, muttering, "I must defend myself from a ruffian," while Hearty said, after touching his hand in his best fashion to the ladies: "No, Miss

Murray—no madam, he has no respect to ladies nor to law. Ay, I see now who it is; it's Mr. Beckford, the great lawyer's son. And I can tell him, by the Powers, his father can't get him out of this scrape—for the law's clear, and I'll make him pay for it. And if you had not been by, saving your presence, ladies, I would have taken part payment out of his hide, in spite of that fine tailoring that's on him. You are a pretty blood relation, a'n't you, to try to run over, and murder your own cousin, when he was on the right side of the road, and was not driving." Here Hearty, discovering that his fall had made certain rents in his buckskin, sidled off in a hurry, under pretence of catching Thunder.

CHAPTER XII.

Miss Murray positively refused to enter the vehicle again; in fact, its broken state, and the condition of the wounded horse, rendered it impracticable for the ladies to return to the city in it. Stockbridge Farm was about a mile and a half off, but it was yet untenanted, and if it were not, they could get no suitable conveyance there, and they were now six miles from town. On looking round to consult Hearty, he was seen at some distance, entering a wood that skirted the road above. He held a bundle in his hand, and it was observed that he had removed the body of the carryall from the road, out of the way, and placed one of its shafts in it; the other had disappeared with Thunder, who, it was probable, from Hearty's movements, had entered the wood, and taken a short cut home.

Ralph proposed to the ladies that they should go to one of the neighbouring farm-houses, and there obtain a vehicle of some kind or other.

"Bless me, but how shall we look, jogging into town in one of your old Noah's arks of a country carriage, or perhaps a market wagon; my finery will cut a pretty figure in it," said Miss Murray.

Ralph said, it would give him the greatest pleasure to attend the ladies, and drive them in, "and,"

continued he, laughing, "you know we can wait until dark, if we can only obtain a market wagon."

"Miss Murray, you should express yourself complimented," said Henry, "for Ralph is much more careful of your appearance—of the figure you may cut—than he is of his own. Hang me if I ever could have supposed, Ralph, that you would choose such an equipage, and then such a companion! They frightened my horses. That rascal was drunk, wasn't he?"

"No, not drunk," replied Ralph; "but he was somewhat excited."

"Ay, he was, hey; I thought as much; his elevation has had a corresponding depression; his life was saved by his falling on his head."

"And your coat, at least, thereby endangered, Master Jehu," exclaimed Miss Murray, "and saved by myself. You may now practically expatiate on the fact, that if gentlemen sometimes protect the ladies, the ladies occasionally return the compliment. If I do not remember with gratitude your disregard of our safety, you will at least, I hope, do me the justice to say, that I have proved a total absence of all malice towards you, by using my influence, and saving you from a deserved castigation on the spot. Come, Ruth, come, Mr. Ralph Beckford, let us seek this rural abode, and leave Master Henry to reflections upon his horsemanship, and his chivalry with his horses. I begin to believe that the Houyhnhnms deserve the superiority that Gulliver allots to them."

While Miss Murray spoke, and she knew how well with voice and eye to barb the arrow of her sarcasm, Henry, as if he did not heed her, or hear her, busied himself about his horses, who now stood panting where they had stopped. Miss Murray and Ruth, each took an arm of Ralph, and the latter asked him:

"Were you hurt, Mr. Beckford?"

"You are not hurt?" exclaimed Miss Murray, turning to him.

"Not much," said Ralph; and as they walked away, Helen, glancing over her shoulder at Henry, said to him:

"We leave you, Mr. Beckford, like Marius in the ruins, like Phaeton in the suds, and, if you have a pocket edition of Chesterfield about you, I recommend it to your attention."

The farmer, whose hospitality Ralph intended to claim, lived about a half a mile further up the road from town, and thither they proceeded in lively chat, the current of which Miss Murray would interrupt every few minutes to express her indignation against Henry.

They soon reached a part of the road that was skirted on either side by the woods, and where, in grading the turnpike, as there was here a considerable eminence, high banks had been made, between which lay the road. It being dusty, Ralph proposed to the ladies that they should turn off into the woods, and take a very pleasant path that wound on the

bank above, and near the road. They accordingly did so. And when they had advanced a quarter of a mile or more, a foot passenger in the road, who walked at the same rate with them, overtook another who was leading a horse.

"That is certainly Hearty's horse, Thunder," said Ralph to the ladies. They had been conversing upon Hearty and his peculiarities, of which Helen was aware, for she had a beautiful riding horse, which her brother had given her, that had got lame, and been entrusted to the charge of Hearty, and Miss Murray, in her anxiety for her favourite, had repeatedly inquired of Hearty, in person, as to his condition.

"Oh, yes," exclaimed Miss Murray, "that is surely Thunder, but who can that be leading him? My! how his clothes fit him; a full suit of black, too. Can he be a preacher, or is it the 'gentleman in black,' making off with Thunder? And that bundle in his hand! why, is it not Hearty's?"

At this moment they came abreast of the man in black, just as the foot passenger passed him, who as he did so, eyed the horse and his leader.

"Why, a'n't this Hearty Coil?" inquired the man, of the leader of the horse.

"Why, to be sure it's me," said Hearty, for it was that individual. "Are you hearty, Mr. Furgus?" and they stopped and shook hands.

"Do not let them see us," said Miss Murray; "let us stop by this bush, and hear Hearty's account of

the mishap. What a figure he makes." And she could scarcely refrain from laughing aloud, as she looked at him. They accordingly stopped, where they could easily overhear every word that was said.

Those who knew Hearty, in the dress which we have described, might well be amused at his present habiliments. He was arrayed in a full suit of black, of decidedly an antique fashion, which must from appearances have been made for some one twice the height of their present wearer. This was evident, for the waist of the coat reached down almost as far as the whereabout of the extreme end of his bob-tailed green one, while its skirts spread apart, and descended either leg, nearly to his shoes; and the legs of his pantaloons hung in several folds around his ancles, where they had been rolled up. He still wore his cap, but the fox-tail no longer waived as he stepped, but was entirely covered by a piece of rusty black crape, that hung down behind in a most lugubrious manner, quite a contrast with the way in which the tail used to frisk about, as if it was merry with the cunning of its legitimate owner.

"Why, Hearty, I did not know you from Tom the devil, you are so transmografied!" exclaimed the individual, whom Hearty had addressed as Mr. Furgus.

"Mr. Furgus," replied Hearty, with a face as funereal as his garments, "I suppose you know that my wife's sister, Parlot's wife, Mrs. Parlot, has departed this transitory life."

"Yes," replied Furgus, "I understood so, she died very suddenly."

"Very, Mr. Furgus, very; and has left a disconsolate (no, that's a lie, if I have got the newspaper to say it, it's a lie,) husband, and large family, to mourn her loss. By the powers, Mr. Furgus, I have had a deal of trouble, responsibility, and worriment on my shoulders, and some charges into the bargain. But you know what Parlot is, and the family expect these things at my hands."

Mr. Furgus nodded his head by way of assent, and Hearty, after stooping down and adjusting the right leg of his pants, which had become unrolled, continued:

"To-day, this morning early, I saddled Thunder, and went into town, for the purpose of getting the obituary of Mrs. Parlot put in the public papers, in a becoming manner, and also to get my saddle mended. I rode round, first, to a printing office, and went bolt up where they (a set of lubberly rascals, were wriggling to and fro, before a thing that's made just like a school-boy's desk) were wriggling as if it was any great shakes to pick up one of the bits of lead, with reading on it, and put it by another bit. I handed my obituary notice, sir, to one of those fellows, who I took for 'sponsible persons, and told him I wanted him to go right to work, leave other things, and as this was a matter of life and death, to print the notice right off. He took my account, Mr. Furgus, I assure you—my account of the life and last moments of my

near relation, held it between his thumb and finger, at a good distance from his nose, as if there was something defensive in it, read it; and, Mr. Furgus," said Hearty, with an emphatic movement of the hand, "notwithstanding my feelings, and the family's, the blasted printing poltroon laughed in my face. By the living jingo! (be easy, Thunder, will ye,) I could not stand it, Mr. Furgus. I asked him if he was grinning at me, and he laughed out loud. Think of that, sir; at my misfortunes, and the misfortunes of my family. My blood, sir, and my fist, rose at once, and I took him just between the peepers, a real Irishman's trick, and I laid him out; and then I just, by the powers, tumbled his whole desk full of lead over him. They say they always have a devil in their printing offices, and if I didn't raise him, this horse is not named Thunder. The fellows jumped at me like fiery imps, but by the powers I knew all about it. Do you see, these lead stickers were away up on the top of the house, or the next to it—into the story that only had the shingles to keep it from the sky. I could of got out to my farm and back again, the while I was taken to find them. It was a winding stairs, that went all through the house, that I went on; and the walls were all fixed over with bits of paper—steamboat with reading to it, telling when they'd start; pictures of bottles of medicine, to cure every thing; and a power of fine looking horses, that kept me a devil of a time a reading about 'em.

And what do you think by the powers, I saw stuck up against that wall, on a piece of paper as big as the seat of my saddle, with a printed horse as big as my head;—a thing all in print, from that blackguard Hugh Tompkins, the thief of creation, telling of the horses he had doctored and cured!—"

"Well, but Hearty," interrupted Furgus, "you were telling me how you managed after you raised the fuss."

"Ay, so I was. Well, by the powers, I climbed up them winding stairs, where the walls were full of these things, blacked all over beside, like a boot black's cellar, and dirty paper scattered all over the steps. I got up, I say, and there I read on a darned little door, away next to the sky light—"no admittance except on business," with a hand pointing right to it, as I would point you the road; as if, by the powers, any body would take the trouble to lumber all the way up there, by the powers, except on business; I thought they must be a little soft as soon as I read what that hand pointed to. However, as I went to get in the door, I took hold of a key that was sticking in the key hole, for I was bewildered a getting up there, and by accident I locked the door, instead of opening it. Here the fellows came to the door, and cursed and swore through at me, in fine style; but I bethought me, they didn't know who I was, and they couldn't see me, and maybe they mistook me for some big blackguard, who had come up and played them a trick; I soon turned the key, opened

the door, and stood before them. They looked a little taken aback, so I just gave my cap a proper set on my head, and handed the obituary notice of Mrs. Parlot, which I had written myself, to the fellow, and kept my eye on him. Well, now you understand—so when I knocked that fellow down, and emptied his writing desk of bits of lead over him; by the powers, as I tell you, I raised the devil sure enough, for all the fellows came right at me; so I stood by the door, and let fly at them, a great big box of their bits of lead, that went among them like grape shot; I gave them two or three discharges before they knew what to think of it; but then they come at me like devils, throwing great big lumps of lead, that they printed them steamboats and horses with, and I just chucked a bucket of black looking water over 'em, the whole lot, and just slipped out of the door, by the living jingo, and locked them in, put the key in my pocket, and left them to their—" and Hearty pointed with his hand like the hand upon their door—"no admittance except on business."

"Why Hearty," said Furgus, after a loud laugh, in which Ralph and the ladies could scarcely refrain from joining—"it's a wonder they didn't play the devil with you—did you get clear off?"

"Play the devil with me! get clear off! I played the devil with them, how could they get on? When I got into the street, and was going to mount Thunder, there was the devils way up in their fifth story,

with their heads stuck out of the window, looking like babies, they were so far off—and hollowing stop him. I all at once thought that they had my notice, that I had writ with great care of Parlot's wife, in which I had told of her family, death, and every thing; she was my wife's sister you know; so I just hollowed to them, that if they would throw me down Mrs. Parlot's obituary, I would throw them up their key; but the rascals kept hollowing louder and louder, stop him, till they raised a crowd. You know, Mr. Furgus, I am not to be frightened by a crowd—I am familiar with them in my electioneering campaigns—I delight to address them, sir—so I took my seat on Thunder—I have often addressed my fellow citizens from Thunder's back—I gave those town folks a touch of my quality—I told them of Mrs. Parlot's, my wife's sister's, death, of our family, of the obituary, and how those rascally printers served me, and how I served them. Sir, I never was more applauded in my life—and in the midst of it, I took off my cap, made my best bow, struck spurs to Thunder, and departed."

Mr. Furgus was one of your independent farmers, who has a competency and enjoys it; and, after a fashion, he was quite a humorist—that is, though not very bright himself, he would chuckle by the hour over such a conversational exhibition as Hearty's,—listening all the while with the most becoming gravity, and never saying a word except to draw him out or lead him on. He was one of

Hearty's cronies, and he could not recover his bewilderment at seeing him in such habiliments, they broke up in his mind the associations of years; and he stood eyeing Hearty with a kind of puzzling sensation, while that worthy's tongue run on the faster as he felt himself to be an object of increased interest to his neighbour. Furgus was a great coward, and the reckless exploits of Hearty,—which lost none of their grandeur from the adventurer's own lips, and his life was a chapter of accidents, according to his own account,—often interested him.

"Hearty," said Furgus, taking a hunting-flask from his pocket,—for he always went provided against the dust, and heat, and snow, and cold,—"take a little with me, and let us rest a bit on this log here," pointing to one immediately below the bank on which our party stood, "if we go on, a few rods will part our company. Let us rest a bit."

Hearty assented with a nod of the head; for his engagement with the flask at that moment would not permit him to speak.

"Had we not better go on?" whispered Ruth Lorman.

"Not for the world," said Helen, "this is better than a play; besides, I must hear what he'll say of Master Henry—and he will surely touch upon the topic of his tumble presently. Here—here is a log for us to be seated." And they yielded to the whim of Miss Murray accordingly, and took a seat on a log which was twenty or thirty feet above that

on which the cronies sat, and entirely embowered in the overhanging trees.

"Wo-ho, Thunder. I tell you, Mr. Furgus," said Hearty, who, unless in a passion, and vituperative, or when far gone over the bottle, never dropped the mister; "I tell you, Mr. Furgus, no man loses by being polite, and he often does by incivility. Now, if those fellows in the printing-office had behaved with common decency, and paid the least regard to my feelings, and the feelings and dignity of our family, they would have got a neat little job, and all to themselves. For as soon as I saw Hugh Tompkin's huge horse stuck up there, and the publication of his doctoring—his horse looks as much like an ass as two peas, as much as Hugh himself—as soon as I saw it, I made up my mind to have just such a paper too, and I would have got the fellows, if they had been civil, to do it for me, if they had had a better picture of a horse—for I couldn't go that one."

"What's the reason you did not ride Thunder out?" inquired Furgus.

"Ride him out! what, with a mourning suit on me, without a saddle!"

Here Hearty arose from the log, and placing his bundle under him so as to protect his inexpressibles from the bark of the log, he reached out his hand, twisted the end of Thunder's reins in a sapling near by, and continued, after looking at Furgus a moment

with a steady eye, to assure him there was no joke in it—

"That bubbery in the printing office was a mere circumstance not worth mentioning to what has happened, sir. I like to have been murdered. Yes, sir," continued Hearty, letting his chin drop in his cravat, and compressing his lip, though still keeping his eye upon Furgus, who had taken a seat on the log by him, "I say murdered; but by the living jingo, if it hadn't been that the reins were jerked out of my hands, I would have given him as good as he sent—worse, worse, for I would have driv Thunder right over the whole of them, and have given cause for three obituaries, two to be lamented, sweet creatures, and one a mere robbing of the gallows. You understand, after the bubbery at the printing office, I went round to old Beckford's grocery, and told him of what had happened, and with his advisement, I writ another obituary of Mrs. Parlot, my wife's sister, but not near as good a one as the first—a mere mention of the death. I have been mad ever since that I was overpersuaded. I was determined, though, to have it stated that she was the cousin of the governor. The old fellow did not want me to put that down; but I stuck to it —I'll let certain persons see that if they neglect the dignity of their families, I don't mine."

"Did you take it to the printing office?"

"No, old Beckford took it. He told me, he would see to its being put in. They generally put such

things in for nothing—free gratis, as they call it; but the old fellow told me, that he would have it put into a paper that everybody took, and that then it would cost a dollar."

Here Ralph wished himself anywhere, but where he stood; for it was well known, that the editors in this city were not in the habit of charging for such notices; and it was therefore evident, that his father's avarice had been at play.

"I ponied up," continued Hearty, "and it will be out to-morrow to the world. We are often mistaken in men; and I myself, who have knocked a good deal about the world, I am, nevertheless, liable. Now, they say that old Beckford is a torn down miser; that he would skin a flee or sell his own teeth—what's left of 'em."

Helen wished, for the sake of Ralph's feelings, that she had not insisted on staying, but she did not know how well to propose leaving at that moment; while Ruth said nothing, but glanced anxiously at Ralph, and pulled, apparently idly, the leaves from the bushes around her.

"But," continued Hearty, "though I used to think so once, I now tell you the man's belied. Parlot's wife's death was very sudden, you know. The day before yesterday she was as well as you or me; to-day she is laid out, and to-morrow she is to be buried—it is a severe loss to the family. Well I had no time, you discover, to get any tailoring done—in fact I never thought of it—I am so used to my other

suits on extra occasions: but old Beckford in a friendly manner, asked me how I was off for mourning; I was taken all a-back by it; he seen it, and in consideration of our long acquaintance and friendship, he presented me with this suit in which you see me. To be sure, it don't now exactly fit, and I hadn't meant to wear it till I got my wife to rig it into something more of a fit—but circumstances alter cases. I was telling you of another thing that happened to-day. I left Thunder's saddle to be fixed, and went somewhere or other to get a carriage, a decent one, to take Mrs. Coil to the funeral to-morrow. As soon as I said it to old Beckford, he, at a very small price, got me a carryall, and requested me to drive his son out with me; saying that he would himself attend the funeral, but business prevented. His son's a fine young man, who knows how to value the advice and conversation of older people; so I agreed to take him along—and true enough, did so. Thunder took us along, sir, in an easy trot; I don't think I had to crack my whip at him once; I felt, you know, naturally sadly; my thoughts were on the uncertainty of things generally—it was strange when we come to think what happened—and of life particularly. I was on my own side of the road, sir, by the Powers, Mr. Furgus, on my own side of the road—when just after you pass the big culbert, where there is a field fenced in on one side of the road and a gully on the other—what should we see coming on my side of the road, but a dashy open carriage, a gentleman

a-driving? Thunder, you know, naturally spunked up when he seed what was coming—and will ye believe it, the rascally fool, who is, by the Powers, said to be the son of the great lawyer Beckford? and the chap's own cousin—his blood-kin—in with me on my own side; would you believe it, he cracked his whip, kept straight on and ordered me to keep out of the way? By the living jingo, I would have rid right over him, being as I didn't see he had ladies in with him—when his cousin, his blood relation, sitting by me, but not to save his carcass, but one of the ladies with him who he is in love with, caught the reins, and we just struck side-ways—the very way, you know, to give you a toss. And I, in spite of myself, was pitched with great violence into the gully, and completely stunned. As I was going, I thought, by the Powers, all was gone with me. When I came to myself and stood—I must have laid there in a swoon some time—I saw the young gentleman, who came out with me, Mr. Ralph, the son of Mr. Solomon Beckford, my friend," continued Hearty, adjusting his coat, "holding the horses of my gentleman, that cousin of his, and by the Powers his blood relation was cracking the whip, as if he meant to ride over him again. Sure enough, the horses broke away from Mr. Ralph and threw him on the ground; but he jumped up as quick as thought—being that he is in love with one of the ladies—and made up to them again; and by this time, after all sorts of capering, the horses had got banged up

against a fence. My blood was up—a man can't stand everything—Mr. Ralph's cousin—his blood relation, one of his own flesh and blood, of the same family; not only like to have kilt me, but by the Powers, he tried to do for his cousin twice; my blood was up—I looked round till I found my horsewhip, and then I made right up to the great lawyer's son. I didn't think about the ladies in my passion; I caught him by the throat, whip in hand, and if his coat is fit to wear, I'm mistaken. By the Powers, I would have poured it on to him till he ran away from his skin through one of the holes; but one of the young ladies with him—Miss Murray, the daughter of old Quaker Murray, who is so rich—I doctored a mare of hers, the prettiest hanimal you ever set eye on; she is a great favourite of mine; and the wonder is to me, that she can love that puppy, but she does; and she begged, implored and prayed with me to save him; what could I do? Just then I happened to cast my eyes down to my buckskins, and I discovered that my gentleman had not only like to have brought death to my door, sir, but that he did bring actual shame, so I made the company a hasty salute, and expecting they would want my services—that the ladies would to get into town again—I stepped into the woods and changed my dress, which is more befitting, in fact, the melancholy situation of my family. Have you seen the ladies? By the Powers, I have missed the whole of 'em; I have not seen hide or hair of 'em since."

Furgus said, that "just before he overtook him, he had seen two ladies with a gentleman on the top of the bank, and that by this time, they must have got a considerable way before them."

"Then, by the Powers," exclaimed Hearty, rising, "they're after getting a conveyance to town, and I must look to it." So speaking, they rose and proceeded together.

"Upon my word," said Miss Murray, as the cronies departed, "I feel myself complimented upon the bestowal of my heart. Come, Mr. Ralph, as we are searching a conveyance under your guidance, let us find one. Suppose we walk fast, that I may overtake Hearty. I'll be bound I will speak of my gentleman, as he calls Master Henry, in a manner which will convince him my love is not very strong, and prevent him from spreading any calumny against my taste and affections through the country."

The next morning, Ralph made his appearance at his father's store, when the old man said, "Ralph, you are in soon. Did you get the money? where's the mare?"

Ralph told him of the accident that had occurred, and that on the previous evening, without going to the farm, he had attended the ladies in.

"By dad," said his father, "you care less for a hundred dollars, than I would have cared at your age; but you're a sly dog, Ralph, hey? you go in for a deeper purse. By dad, though," and a shade passed over the old miser's face, "there's neighbour Sal-

ter's carryall! your cousin must pay every cent for the repair."

Our readers may imagine the astonishment of Hearty Coil, when a few days after the event recorded in this chapter, on handing to Mr. Solomon Beckford a little bill for pruning trees and doctoring mare, the whole not amounting to three dollars, that individual told him he would credit him with so much on account of the mourning suit!

CHAPTER XIII.

Henry Beckford became daily more and more a man of the world, and in the worst sense of the term. Totally giving himself up to pleasure, and entirely neglecting the cultivation of his mind, unless the occasional hasty perusal of a fashionable novel or a new play may be called mental cultivation, his associations grew more general, and his company, whenever it could contribute to his selfish gratifications, less choice. On the eve of arriving at the possession of a large fortune, he held himself entirely his own master, and would have considered a parental admonition, unless couched in the gentlest terms, an insult to his manhood. He still talked of going to college, though from his mind the idea of doing so was exploded. Conspicuous among the young men of fashion and fortune about town, he aspired to be a leader in all at which such characters generally aim; and with a recklessness that outstripped most of them, he professed to follow the bent of his pleasures and humours, with an entire disregard of the opinions of the soberer part of the community. Being a remarkable fine looking young man, with a good address, a large fortune, great fluency, and considerable powers of ridicule, he was very much courted by the ton; though he was known in several excesses or "sprees,"

as they are vulgarly called, to have abandoned himself to the company of common blacklegs, and vulgar sportsmen, to use a cant term, in a manner which would have deeply injured other young men of less fortune and pretensions. In his case it was called spirit, which, like the effervescence of champagne, proved the fine quality of the wine. In fact, in consideration of the father's standing, much greater delinquencies than he had yet been guilty of, might have been known, even to the reflecting and influential, without any harsh censure on the son.

Ralph, not being the associate of his cousin, in such courses alluded to, was one of the last to hear of them—particularly as he had no disposition to pry into Henry's habits, and latterly had very little communication with him. Though they occasionally met at the table, which was much less frequent since Miss Murray had returned home—Henry being away sometimes for weeks on pleasure excursions, to the races, &c.; and sometimes at Miss Murray's, or Mr. Lorman's—they scarcely ever exchanged more than a salutation, or a few words of common-place observation.

During a carousal after the races, Henry had lost at the gambling table a large sum for which he had given his check, and which was the subject of so much admonitory comment from the old miser to his son. Ralph, as our readers discovered, had not heard it before. Henry's father had hushed up the matter, and paid the check on the very day that he

spoke to Ralph of the kindness of his uncle to himself, as they contemplated his picture in the office. In fact it was rumoured among those likely to be interested in such things, that notwithstanding Henry had given his check for the money, and was in honour bound when the blackleg, to whom he had lost, presented it, Henry, after some hesitancy, refused to pay it, saying it could not be recovered, even if it was a common debt, as he was a minor, and that if he heard any thing more of it he would have the gaming act put in operation against him. And it was also said that his father, on hearing of his threat, paid the amount, and denied that Henry had ever made it. Henry and his father had afterwards a long private conversation, since which Henry had left the paternal roof, and taken rooms in a fashionable hotel.

Ralph meanwhile had made all his arrangements to go to college, and the time when it was proper that he should enter had nearly arrived. As his father had treated him with unwonted kindness when he last spoke to him on the subject, promising to advance a "reasonable sum," Ralph deemed it best not to mention it again to his parent until on the eve of his departure, when he resolved to wait upon him, and tell him that he had got himself entirely ready—everything packed up—and ask for the advance promised. Accordingly, the day before that set for his departure, he went over to his father's store, intending to say to him that it was his intention of starting

on the morrow. Ralph had not sought the parental presence for this week past, fearing that a cloud would follow the burst of sunny feeling, and his father would make occasion to retract. He entered the store, and found Jeremiah busy about it, as usual, and wearing more than his usual look of consequence.

"S-s-ser-servant, M-Master Ralph," said Jerry, making his bow, "ha-han't see you f-for some t-time."

"Not so very long a time, Jerry. Where is my father?"

"Le-left t-town, s-sir," said Jerry, glancing round the store, like one who felt himself in charge, and therefore a man of importance.

"Left town! When? This is the first I heard of it.'

"W-w-well, M-Master Ralph, I c-co-couldn't l-leave bu-business to t-t-tell you. Old m-master w-went y-yesterday, in a g-g-great b-big hurry, after a m-man what o-owed h-him money, as-s-sconded to New York. H-he o-owed o-old master a c-cite of interest m-money, be-besides p-principal."

"When will father be back, Jerry?" asked Ralph.

"C-can't say, s-sir—s-some t-time, maybe. M-Master Ralph, Jerry t-took as much to-d-day as a-any d-day when o-old master's to home—and a-all c-c-cash."

As Ralph had obtained the hundred dollars for

the rent of the farm, and as his father had promised him means, he thought as good a way as any to obtain the fulfilment of the promise, would be to create the necessity of it. He therefore concluded, without waiting the return of his father, to leave; to which manœuvre, he was determined by the fact, that several of his acquaintances left on the morrow, and he wanted company. As for Henry, Ralph and he had not exchanged a word on the subject for weeks; and each felt the less they saw of the other the better it would be for them.

At night Ralph called on Miss Murray to bid her adieu—intending to leave there soon enough to call the same evening on Ruth. He found Helen in high spirits, surrounded by a bevy of beaux, and dispensing smiles like the sun, that "shines on all alike." She received him like the rest; and when, after some hesitancy, for his shiness shrank from a leave-taking before so many, he told her that he had called to bid her adieu, as he departed on the morrow, she faltered in tone for a moment, as she ejaculated "Ay!" and then continued gaily, "your uncle told me so to-day. And so Master Henry is grown to be a man, and means to rely upon the intuitions of his genius! I hope its promptings will be better than some other of his impulses!" Here the young gentlemen around her laughed; and she continued, "I have just been giving an account of our adventures with Mr. Hearty Coil, and you are my witness that I saved the back of Master Henry's coat from

most contemptuous treatment. How long will you be absent, Mr. Ralph Beckford?"

"I shall return, I hope, Miss Murray, and see my friends in three months," replied Ralph.

"Three months!" she exclaimed, "a life time! Why, sir, you will grow out of the recollection of your friends, by that time. But I suppose," she continued, in a gay tone, and throwing her glance round the circle that encompassed her, "you will, before that, have formed new acquaintances, and have forgotten your old ones—forgetting and forgotten. Do, Mr. Stansbury, not treat that fan of mine so roughly. Have you seen Ruth Lorman lately, Mr. Beckford?"

"Not since I accompanied you there, Miss Helen."

The lady fixed her eye silently for a moment, and then turning quick, said again gaily,

"Well, sir, as you are not aware of the interest I take in you, and will not therefore offer to be my correspondent, I will be yours—write the first letter, if your gallantry will suffer me to do such a thing; but recollect, I enjoin it on you, unless you intend to be a recreant from all chivalry, to tell me, like a true knight, of all the moving adventures of your college life. And here I will give you this watch-chain, which I myself have wrought, sir, which you must wear in remembrance of your allegiance."

So saying, Miss Murray arose, and, with a queenly grace, placed the guard-chain round him.

"You are to be envied, Mr. Beckford," said Stansbury.

"Yes, sir, I am," replied Ralph. "I shall feel hereafter, with Goldsmith, that at 'each remove I drag a lengthening chain,' and Ralph, in some confusion at his own compliment, took his leave, and proceeded to Mr. Lorman's, to bid Ruth farewell. He found her with her stepmother, and instructing little Billy, who, seated on a stool, at her feet, and with his book in her lap, was, with an earnest face, which a hard word would momentarily contort, spelling his way through his first lessons in reading. Mrs. Lorman received him very coldly, and Ruth confusedly. Billy, glad of an opportunity of getting rid of his task, slily shut the book, and drawing near Ralph, overwhelmed him with questions about gunning and fishing. After a number of commonplace remarks, Ralph said that he had come to bid them good by, as on the morrow he started for college. Mrs. Lorman said nothing, while Ruth asked many questions concerning the professors, students, and so forth. At last Ralph rose to depart, and Ruth lifted a light to show him to the door. Arrived there, she asked, in a faltering tone,

"How long will you be absent, Ralph?"

"Three months, I presume, Ruth; it will seem an age to me: and yet I should rejoice at it, not only on account of my education, but my feelings; for here, where I delighted to visit the most, I am received the coldest—I—"

Ralph stretched out his hand to Ruth as he spoke, and she gave him hers, placing the light on the passage table, so as to prevent it shining in her face and showing her emotions. "I had hoped," Ralph was about to continue, when Billy looked up into his face, and said:

"Ralph, if mother don't love you, never mind, I love you, and sister Ruth loves you—don't you, sister Ruth?"

Ralph gazed on Ruth for a moment, pressed the hand, that made but slight if any attempt at withdrawal, to his lips, and then catching her wildly and passionately to his heart, he hurriedly left the house.

CHAPTER XIV.

After Ralph went to college, Henry, who had gained his ends, as he thought, in supplanting his cousin, almost entirely discontinued his visits to Lorman's. This gave Mrs. Lorman the greatest uneasiness—for as our readers are aware, she had built high matrimonial schemes on Henry's attentions. She became more and more addicted to the use of laudanum, and grew again harsh and unkind to Ruth, and censorious and complaining to her husband.

One evening, after an absence of three weeks, and only the second time that he had visited them, since Ralph had left for college—Henry called at Lorman's—Billy opened the door for him, and Mrs. Lorman said to Ruth, on hearing Henry's voice:

"Do you stay here, Ruth"—they were up stairs together—"and I will step down and see Mr. Beckford. Is Mr. Beckford alone, Billy?"

"Yes, ma'am, he's alone, and I asked him about Ralph, and he snubbed me," said Billy, poutingly.

"Do you stay here, Ruth," repeated Mrs. Lorman, "I will step down—I have a word to say to Mr. Beckford—I will call you in a few minutes."

Ruth answered cheerfully, that she would, though

she felt a foreboding of ill, for which she herself could scarcely have accounted.

Her stepmother descended into the room, and closed the door after her. In the lapse of a few minutes, Ruth heard Mrs. Lorman's voice, in an agitated and reproachful tone, but she did not distinguish the words. At last, she heard her own name spoken, and constrained by feelings, which in her case, formed a sufficient apology for evesdropping—if it ever has a sufficient apology; she with light but hurried step, hastened to the head of the stairs to listen—when her mother's voice struck on her ear in an hysteric exclamation, that almost amounted to a scream, as she said: "Only as a friend to my family:—My God! have you visited my house, and won my daughter's affections, only as a friend to the family?" Here, Ruth heard Henry Beckford walking across the room, as if towards the door, and something was said by him, which his footfalls prevented her from distinguishing. Fearful of being detected as a listener, she hastened to her room, and a moment after, the door below opened, and Henry Beckford left the house. It was just after dinner when Henry Beckford called; Mrs. Lorman did not go up stairs after he left, but called little Billy to her, and told him to bring her reticule. He did so, and Mrs. Lorman remained below. Not wishing to hold any conversation with her stepmother, on a topic which she feared would be introduced, should they now meet, Ruth remained up stairs with the chil-

dren—and when it was time for tea, she told a youthful servant girl they had lately hired, to go down and ask Mrs. Lorman if she would have it. The girl obeyed, and returned and said that Mrs. Lorman was asleep on the sofa. Ruth desirous not to disturb her mother, gave the children their tea in the kitchen, and putting by her father's for him, for he was very irregular at his meals, and did not take his tea sometimes until nine o'clock in the evening, when he returned from his business, she again went up stairs, and when the hour arrived, put the children to bed. Her father staid longer out than usual; nobody called that evening, and with gloomy reflections, which not even Ruth's deep sense of religion and firm reliance on the great Controller could entirely dispel, she awaited his coming.

When Mr. Lorman returned, he found his wife asleep on the sofa, and he sat down by the side of his daughter in the passage, and entered into a long melancholy conversation about his business and his prospects with her. Not until the watchman cried twelve o'clock by the door, was he aware of the length of time they had been conversing; he then rose and asked his daughter:—

"Did your mother, Ruth, go up stairs?"

"No, sir! she's still asleep on the sofa—she sleeps very long."

"She has got more laudanum, I fear," said Mr. Lorman; for he, as well as his daughter, knew his wife's unfortunate habit of using it, which they had

often tried in vain to prevent. "Shall I awake her, she should not certainly sleep there—and if I do, she will be out of humour with me, and probably keep me awake half of the night with her complaining;—Ruth, I have a hard life of it."

Ruth assented with a sigh, and said: "Mother does not often sleep so long—I fear she has taken too much laudanum; I never knew her more than twice to sleep so long, and then she was very, very sick after it."

"Yes, I know—when I told her of my failure—and afterwards, when I had to sell the mansion. Has any thing disagreeable occurred?"

Before Ruth answered, for she hesitated, a fall was heard in the room, and a heavy groan. Mr. Lorman and his daughter hastened in, and found Mrs. Lorman on the carpet, for she had fallen from the sofa. She opened her eyes wildly and looked round, raised herself on her arm, and said:

"No, we shall never be up in the world again. I have been wretchedly deceived;" and then fell back again, on the floor, muttering—"who took my reticule? Ruth, it was you," in an angry tone, "who emptied that laudanum? Here she uttered an exclamation of great pain, and was seized with a fit. It was but too evident, that Mrs. Lorman had taken a large quantity of laudanum.

With great difficulty, Mr. Lorman, assisted by his daughter, bore his wife to her room; she muttering incoherently, all the time, of being deceived, poverty,

and falling in the world; or violently attempting to retch,—while one moment a shivering sensation would run through her frame, and she would seem to have no control over her limbs, and the next they would be braced as with nerves of iron.

Mr. Lorman and his daughter were terribly alarmed. Ruth supported her mother's head, and begged her father to hurry for a physician. Little Billy, who slept in a trundle bed, in the room, had, in the mean time, noiselessly arisen and dressed himself. He stood at his mother's bed-head and was weeping wildly.

"Will my mother, oh, will my mother die, sister Ruth?" he sobbed out in choked accents.

"Oh, no, Billy, I hope not, father has gone for the doctor. You should not cry, Billy. Did mother send you out to-day, Billy, for any thing, after Mr. Henry Beckford went away?" asked Ruth of Billy, in a whisper, as her mother sunk back on the bed.

"Yes," said Billy, looking at his mother, to see if her features betrayed intelligence at his answer, and speaking low—"she told me not to tell, but I will though. She sent me to two doctor shops, and I got that nasty stuff that always makes her so sick. Oh, she did drink so much of it, before she went to sleep on the sofa. When I grow to be a man, I will whip that Mr. Henry Beckford," said Billy, bursting into tears, "for he made mother do so; he a'n't half as good as Ralph. I will break all to pieces the wagon he gave me."

Here Mrs. Lorman was seized with great agony, and she broke from the support of Ruth, and raved against Henry Beckford and his family. Poor Ruth knew not what to do, and she thought her father never would return with the physician. Presently Mrs. Lorman sunk back exhausted, after another vain effort at retching; which in a few moments was renewed more violently than ever. Ruth bid Billy hold the light, while she held her mother's head; and at that very moment Mrs. Lorman seemed to be relieved of some of the laudanum, for a large discharge broke from her mouth and nostrils.

Ruth started at the sight of blood,—her stepmother had broken a blood-vessel! Little Billy burst into tears, clasped his hands in horror, and dropped the light on the floor, where it was instantly extinguished.

"Merciful Father!" said Ruth, "it is the only light in the house; what shall I do! what shall I do?"

Little Billy, frightened beyond utterance, crouched to his sister's side, while Ruth, who felt her mother fall back on the bed, like a dead weight, exclaimed, as she placed her hands hurriedly to her mother's brow and pulse:

"Mother! oh, mother! speak to me—won't you speak to Ruth. Father will be here presently with the doctor."

At this moment rapid footsteps were heard on the stairs, and Mr. Lorman entered, accompanied by the doctor, who bore a dark lantern in his hand.

"Is the light gone out, daughter?" inquired Mr. Lorman, as he approached the bed.

"Gone out, father," said Ruth, with fearful calmness; at the same moment the light from the opened door of the lantern, discovered to Mr. Lorman, the form of his daughter, who stood by the bed, one hand supporting little Billy, who, with his arms about her, was hiding his face in her lap, and the other pressed upon the brow of his wife; and all of them were covered with blood.

"You must prepare for the worst, Mr. Lorman," said the doctor. "Laudanum, you told me you suspected the patient had taken—I presume in a great quantity. Nature, sir, made an effort to relieve itself, but the patient could not sustain it, and has broken a blood-vessel. No doubt, sir, the patient was suffocated with the discharge of the blood."

"Is she dead?" asked Mr. Lorman and Ruth, in the same breath.

"Yes, sir, yes, Miss; suffocation—death;" replied the physician.

CHAPTER XV.

HELEN MURRAY, throwing off the frivolity and *fashion* of her character, hastened to the residence of Mr. Lorman, and did all she could to cheer and comfort Ruth and the little family—now left to her sole care—under their loss, which, though it might have been much greater, had Mrs. Lorman been a loftier, a more matronly and motherly character, was, nevertheless, severely felt. In the overflowing of Ruth's grief, she told Helen all that she suspected, —and her suspicions were just—of Henry's conduct, and she spoke of Ralph in such a way unconsciously, as to let Helen, much to her surprise, into the secret of Ruth's feelings for Ralph. Helen wondered if the attachment was mutual, and felt a pang at the surmise that it might be—a pang, though, in which vanity suffered as much as any other passion. But she busied herself in assisting Ruth, with the preparations for the funeral, and afterwards was surprised at herself that the feeling was not more acute at the time; but she did not reflect, that then the impulses of her better nature were awakened, in the wish to soothe the afflicted, and that in a great measure they merged the other.

A touching incident occurred at the funeral. After the service, which was performed in the house, was

over, when the undertaker was about screwing down the lid of the coffin, little Billy, who had stood holding his father's hand in speechless grief, sprang forward, and throwing himself on the coffin, begged them not to shut his mother up in that box, and take her away from him.

"O! let her stay," said he, in choked accents; "mother sleeps very long sometimes—maybe she is only sleeping. O! if she was to wake shut up there she would die."

"My little man," said the clergyman, "your mother is dead now—she is gone, we trust, to a better place."

"Open it, then," said Billy, imploringly, "and let me speak to her—my mother may speak to me."

They undid the lid of the coffin, when Billy threw himself on the body of his mother, and exclaimed,

"Mother! mother!" and then burying his head in the folds of the shroud, he continued, "she will wake by-and-by, won't you, mother? No, you shall not take me away," he exclaimed, as they attempted to bear him from the coffin, which at last had to be done by main force; and he was carried out of the room wild with grief.

Three days after the funeral, Mr. Lorman, with a more cheerful countenance than he had worn since that event, entered the house, and told his daughter that he had received another letter from his brother in the west, and that he had very serious notions of emigrating there. Ruth, though she wished to re-

main in the place of her birth, felt it not proper to oppose any obstacle to her father's opinions, particularly as the letter held forth inducements which were peculiarly tempting and available to one of her father's large and helpless family. The letter stated that if Mr. Lorman had any capital, he might find it to his advantage to settle either in Cincinnati or Louisville, and if he had not, his brother said, that though his own means were small, he had an unimproved property, which some day would be very valuable, on the banks of the Mississippi, near the town of ——, where Mr. Lorman might locate himself, and with the help of a few "niggers," as he expressed it, clear the land, and make a considerable sum by the sale of the wood to steamboats, and after the land was cleared, he could raise cotton on it—to all of which profits he was welcome.

"What say you, daughter?" asked Mr. Lorman. "If my family were not so large and utterly helpless I would not hesitate."

"It's a stern undertaking, father—the infant is but a few month's old."

"I know it, my daughter. I could buy a girl here old enough to nurse it, for a few hundred dollars, and if I was to accept my brother's offer and settle upon his property, she would be a great help there. The journey is not half so arduous as you suppose, Ruth. We take the accommodation stage, travel only by day, rest at night, and reach Pittsburgh in three or four days, and then by steamboats

we can descend the Ohio—in a large roomy steamboat, and have everything to our hand as here. By raking and scraping together all I have left, I may have two or three thousand dollars. We may, perhaps find it to our interest to settle in Cincinnati or Louisville, and at any rate, as a last resort, if the worst comes to the worst, I can accept my brother's offer. The helplessness of my family is the only thing that makes me waver for a moment. But they will not be always helpless. In a few years they may assist me there, while here their expense is accumulating, and my means lessening; and at any rate there the cost of the support of the family would be much less. Your uncle, as you know, has no children. He was married once; his wife died a short time afterwards. I have heard lately that he is a little dissipated, but that, though a rough man, he has great influence in his way. He promised once to be a man of talents. He is good-hearted, and I have no doubt would assist me materially. Much of the money which he now squanders would be given, and with more pleasure to himself, to the aid of my family. Yes, I think I shall go west, Ruth—thence, perhaps, south-west. I shall write my brother of my wife's death, tell him everything, and it will depend upon his answer.

Here a carriage drove up to the door, which a moment afterwards was opened, and the servant maid of Helen Murray entered. She presented Miss Helen's compliments to Miss Ruth, and said her

mistress sent her to ask Ruth if she would not spend the afternoon and evening with her.

"Miss Helen, Miss," said the girl, "sent the carriage for you, and says that she will send you home whenever you wish, or that you must stay with her. She told me that I must stay here with the baby's nurse. (Mr. Lorman had been obliged to get a nurse for his infant on the death of his wife.) She's my mother, Miss," continued the girl, courtesying, "and Miss Helen said I could stay with her and play with the children. She wants to see you very particular, she says."

"Go, my daughter," said Mr. Lorman, "I am glad Miss Murray has sent for you. She has really been very kind. Do not give yourself any uneasiness about the children; the nurse and her daughter can take as good care of them as yourself."

"I am very used to being with children," said the girl, and Ruth accordingly departed.

"My dear Ruth I am glad to see you," exclaimed Helen Murray, springing to the door of her father's mansion, as the carriage drove up to it, "I am all alone; I have refused myself to a score of triflers, determined to hold a *tête-à-tête* with you."

Ruth alighted; they entered the house together, and were soon seated on the sofa in unreserved conversation.

"Do you know, Ruth," exclaimed Helen, with a scornfully curling lip and disdainful brow, "that I myself have a crow to pick with Master Henry?—the

villain and coward I would say, but that it does not become my lips—however much such epithets become his character—has dared to speak of me in such a manner that—mark my words, Ruth, mark my words—I will have my gentleman at my feet yet: yes, I will make him my humble lover—my humble servant—my sycophantic admirer—my slave; and when the whole town see and feel his subserviency and my power, I'll let him off, as easily as I cast off my cape or glove. Would you believe it!—I can scarcely bring my lips to utter it—it is like telling my own shame—and yet there is no shame in such a creature's tongue! He has dared to speak of me to his low-lived companions in the loosest language! You look incredulous, Ruth, but I heard him myself. Last night I chanced to visit Jane Wraxall: her brother had a card party there of gentlemen, and among them Master Henry. Jane and I sat up stairs conversing; and when the hot wine inflamed these cavaliers they got uproarious, and talked aloud beyond discretion. Jane proposed that we should open our door and listen. I made no objection. I have no great love for Jane; and I should have reflected that, though she was certain, in her own house, and in her brother's presence, to overhear nothing against herself, that I was not in such a fortunate situation. I should have thought of this, and and not given one, who assumes to be my rival, such advantages. Well, she had them—and she holds them. She opened the door and we sat listening

within her room, where every word that was uttered could be overheard. They—these young gentlemen—held some bold, boasting chat about their success with our sex—in which they uttered falsehood by the bushel and truth by the grain. Then Stanley Wraxall and Edward Stansbury began to tease Henry Beckford—Master Henry—about me—and, to use their elegant phraseology, they twitted him with being 'flung' by me. Master Henry instantly assumed the airs of a gay Lothario—said that he confessed that if I had hid the bait better he might have been caught—but that he had found me out—that I was a heartless coquette, whose general kindness to the gentlemen was—think of the word he used, Ruth—was general—faugh! that I should utter it—was general wantonness! Other words he uttered, more villanous than this—which, you may be sure, gave Miss Jane Wraxall no uneasiness—nor much displeasure. I had a great mind—it was my first impulse—to dash down stairs—and make him—woman as I am—and make him retract every word he had uttered. But I reflected a moment, rallied, and, laughing, told Jane we had better shut the door—that, though in her own house, the *gentlemen*, her brother's friends, had advanced so far in their orgies that not even herself would be saved. Upon my word she, believe me, took the hint and shut it in virgin haste. But that she, of all the world, should have heard it! I cried with downright anger. At first I resolved to tell my brothers, and have Master

Henry brought to a strict settlement; but I reflected upon what the consequences might be to them if the cornered coward should catch courage, and blind chance aid him in any duel that might ensue—and I determined to take my revenge in my own hands—and I will. I'll have *Master* Henry at my feet, Ruth, as humble a sycophant as ever sued for a woman's smile. Miss Jane Wraxall thinks she has him. I could see the consciousness in her eye—as well as her malicious gratification; but we shall see—as the vulgar phrase says—we shall see. When I have him in leading strings—and the whole town have seen it, and witnessed his folly—I'll cast him off like a worn out glove, to carry his bleeding heart to the gentler Jane for consolation. And, as some one says, the heart is easiest caught in the rebound, why then she may, perchance, catch it."

"But Helen! Helen! will you be doing right?" asked Ruth.

"Right!" exclaimed Helen, "has he done right? Right to me or you, Ruth. You, though the deepest injured, may forgive him; but I—one whom I have scorned and made a jest of! shall he dare to speak in such a fashion of me?"

"But maybe, Helen, he has heard that you have scorned and made a jest of him, and he is retaliating."

"Retaliating! then shall he have another opportunity of retaliation; for I will make a scorn and jest of him again, and the whole town shall ring with it.

Ruth, I tell you—I know—I feel I can make him as humble a suitor as ever a woman listened to and rejected. But come, we will not talk of it any more; it has vexed me much more already than aught that such as Master Henry could utter should."

"But, my dear Helen," expatiated Ruth, "you are so intimate with Mr. Beckford's mother."

"And would you believe it," exclaimed Helen, "that when Edward Stansbury, who behaved like a gentleman, laughed at him, and said that he never could discern that Master Henry held any interest in me, except in my sarcasm, and that wine was speaking in the place of fact—would you believe it, Master Henry, whose fondness for the quoting of proverbs is proverbial, exclaimed that in wine there was truth, and that his mother had often said to him, that I wanted him to court me! He *shall* court me. I want him to court me; but he will find, when he does, a change come over the spirit of his dream, that will crush his vanity unto the death of it, if such a camomile-like vanity as his, which 'the more it is trodden on, the better it grows,' can be crushed. I would have told my brothers, and had them to right this wrong of mine, but you know my parents were brought up quakers, and, it would wound them sorely, should either of my brothers be involved in a duel, though the result were harmless; and how could I forgive myself were it otherwise? No, no, Ruth, after all, we women can manage our affairs our own way the best. No, the contest shall be be-

tween Master Henry and me, and as I am the weaker party, the woman, stratagem is fair—all is fair in war. I'll make him my slave—that I will—I want you to remember I have said so, Ruth. I know not how to express my indignation of a man, having the presumption to pretend to be a gentleman, who gives such foul licence to his false tongue. I believe I shall learn to despise these men as wretches all. What a difference between Ralph and Henry Beckford, our cousins, who are not akin in one impulse of their hearts. O! Ruth, I am going to write to Ralph. What shall I say for you, wont you add a postscript?"

"Thank you," said Ruth, falteringly, "remember me to him, Helen; tell him that little Billy talks a great deal about him."

"Have you no softer word than *remember*, Ruth? Come, Ruth, I suspect you shrewdly."

"That word is soft enough," said Ruth, blushingly, "is it not?"

"Would you not send a softer were you writing to him?"

"But I am not writing to him," replied Ruth.

"Tell me, Ruth, tell me. I have some claims myself on Ralph's tender emotions."

"Have you," said Ruth, with a faltering voice?

"Yes, I have right down serious claims—and we two are friends you know—we should not be rival queens; therefore tell me, and I will resign all pretensions in your behalf, and as I correspond with

him I can say, you know, so many pretty things of you. But be serious, tell me, Ruth."

Helen Murray observed Ruth closely as she spoke, and seeing that she was touching a tender point, her generous feelings arose as she added:

"No, forgive me, I would not force your secret—I am jesting."

After Ruth left Helen that evening, the latter sat some time, cogitating upon Ruth's feelings towards Ralph, which she saw were interested in him, and upon the probability of the extent of his interest in her. She would not confess to herself that the desire to know was any deeper than an idle curiosity, though the conviction that it was, repeatedly arose.

"I shall have my hands full," thought she, "if I intend to catch Ralph, annihilate Henry, and manage my other little flirtations. Ralph is a worthy fellow—yes, I do like him—but he is too shy and reserved; in fact he is sometimes often gawky. He certainly made demonstrations to me—No, he always gave place to his cousin. Why should I feel angry towards him and Ruth? I never thought of having him—why should I shrink from another's having him then? Ruth can never be a rival of mine—I must not—I cannot do aught that would wound her. She would have told me if I had pressed her; and had not her feelings been deeply touched, and her womanly delicacy so shrinking, she would have told me at once—I should not blame her, for such is no want of confidence—No, no, I must not entertain a

harsh feeling towards her. Poor girl, she has trials enough, and ought to have at least one friend. That base Henry! how he deceived her foolish stepmother. I saw Ruth never liked him. I will revenge her injuries in that case, and my own. And if Ralph loved her, he has been a sufferer too, by the attentions of Master Henry."

"Yes," exclaimed Helen to herself, clapping her hands together as the sudden thought flashed through her mind—"this accounts for Ralph's shiness to her and the infrequency of his visits to Ruth, while Henry was so attentive there. Why had I not sense enough to see that such conduct proves anything but disregard? But he acted just so towards Henry and myself. I could have caught him—but, but Master Henry shall receive my attentions at present, and I will make a scoff of him. I'll curb in my 'general wantonness' for his especial benefit; I would be proud enough to scorn him, did I not feel that I had such an exquisite revenge. What letters he shall write me, I'll show them every one—but can it be that Ralph loves Ruth?"

These thoughts passed through Helen's mind a hundred times in the course of the night, which was almost to her a sleepless one. Her vanity would have felt more wounded at the idea that Ralph might be attached to Ruth had not Henry's remarks at Miss Wraxall's perpetually intruded upon her reflections, no matter upon what subject they were engaged—in fact, almost occupied them.

The next morning Ruth sent Billy to return a book to Helen, which she had sent to her some days before, and which she had just finished reading.

"Who brought the book?" inquired Helen of the servant.

"Miss Ruth's little brother, Miss Helen," was the reply.

"Bring him in," said Helen. "Why, Billy, how do you do?" said she as he entered—"come and kiss me, my little sweetheart; don't you know I am going to wait for you until you grow to be a man? How is sister Ruth?"

"She is well," said Billy, wiping his lips after Helen's kiss, (he was not old enough to appreciate the dewy moisture)—she says, are you well to-day Miss Helen?"

"Very well, Billy. Tell sister Ruth, I am going to write to Ralph to-day."

"I wish I could write," said Billy, "I would write to Ralph too. I think sister Ruth ought to write to him—don't you think so?"

"Why so, Billy?" asked Helen, pushing back his hair and kissing him.

"'Cause she ought," replied Billy.

"No; but, Billy, maybe I am Ralph's sweetheart."

"Sister Ruth is too then," said Billy with a knowing nod.

"But you can't have two sweethearts. Billy, what makes you think that sister Ruth is Ralph's sweetheart? Come, you know you are my sweetheart,

that I love you dearly," patting his head, "and you must tell me everything."

"Why," said Billy, after some hesitation and sheepishly, "'cause, when Ralph went away he kissed sister Ruth and she let him; and I don't believe anybody ever kissed her before; and he said something that I know meant he wanted to be her sweetheart —and when he went away, Oh! sister Ruth did cry like anything. But you must not tell I told you."

"Oh! no, certainly not. Come with me to the side-board in the next room, and I will give you some cakes."

Billy played about the room, eating his cakes and looking at the pictures on the walls; and those in the Souvenirs and Tokens, and books of beauty; while Helen reclined moodily on the sofa, and scarcely answered—and then incoherently—the questions which Billy continually put to her concerning the pictures, &c. She discovered that Ralph had a deeper hold in her feelings than she suspected. She had always deemed her intercourse with him but a flirtation, that it would give her no pain to break, though she had often feared, that to break it, would cause no little unto Ralph. The mistake was a blow, such as her vanity and her heart were not in the habit of receiving; but she resolved to overcome all unpleasing reflections on the subject, and act as Ruth and Ralph's friend in their loves; and she transferred all the bile it originated to Henry Beckford, on whom she determined to be revenged, by making

him her suitor and rejecting him. She was aware it was the general opinion, that Ralph only wanted encouragement to court her; and the knowledge that such an impression was abroad, gave great relief to her pride, when she reflected that the case was, in all human probability, otherwise. Ralph had always treated her with the profoundest respect, and in contrasting his conduct towards her, and what she had always heard were his opinions of her enthusiastically expressed, with Henry's, she became the more angered with the latter.

A few days after this conversation with Billy, Miss Murray gave a small party, to which she did not invite Miss Wraxall, as she did not wish her operations upon Henry to be observed by her rival, until she had him in leading strings, and which Ruth did not attend, of course. She contrived, without being observed, to reinstate "Master Henry" in his former good opinion of his standing with her, while she showed him by the attention and adulation which she extracted from the other beaux, how much her smile was sought. This was the very way to win such a man as Henry.

As the evening advanced and as Henry handed her a glass of wine, she said in a low tone, and in her gentlest one: "Do fill for yourself also, Mr. Beckford," and, touching his glass with hers, she continued, "let us be friends. And to show me that you agree to the proposition, you must take me out

on an early ride, and the proof of your friendship shall be the care with which you drive me."

Henry bowed with a radiant brow, and in a week was a more devoted worshipper at Helen's shrine than he had ever been.

CHAPTER XVII.

One day, some time after Mr. Solomon Beckford's return from New York, whither he had gone, as Jeremiah informed Ralph, in pursuit of an absconded debtor, and some weeks after the conversation and incidents recorded in our last chapter, Ralph Beckford entered his father's store, much to the surprise of that worthy who deemed him at college, quietly pursuing his studies, and some months to pass yet ere he would involve himself, in consequence of the vacation, in the expense of a visit home.

"Bless my soul! by dad, is that you, Ralph?" exclaimed the father, snatching his spectacles from his nose, as the son entered the little parlour behind the store, "why I thought you were safe at college —you were anxious enough to get there, I am sure— pursuing your studies. What, in the name of common sense, has induced you to make this move?"

Ralph hesitated for a moment, and then said:

"I got a letter."

"Got a letter!" ejaculated his father, interrupting him. "I wrote you no letter except one of advice with regard to your expenses, I—"

"No, sir, I know you did not," interrupted Ralph, in turn, "and if my uncle had not sent me money, I

don't know how I should have got the expenses you advised me about paid."

"You took a hundred dollars with you—went away, in fact, without my full concurrence, while I was in New York, or on my way there, in pursuit of a runaway rascal who would have ruined me—and after awhile, after you had felt and knew what it was to want money, knew the value of it, I would have sent you a reasonable sum; but what letter brought you—who wrote it?"

"I received a letter, sir," replied Ralph, "from Miss Murray."

"Ay, you dog you," exclaimed the old man, the wrinkles disappearing from his brow, as they would pass from a cambric pocket-handkerchief under the flat-iron. "So that's it, hey? There's many a slip between the cup and the lip. I should like to have had that business consummated before you went to college. Then why go to college? I wondered, then, how you could leave a young, a beautiful, a rich, rich lady for hard studies—but, you sly fellow, you, you've come to, hey! The very day you rode out for the hundred dollars I gave you, with that rapscallion Coil who broke the carryall, and it's not paid for yet; that very day I was over at neighbour Murray's—he and I are old friends, (his wife's an old sweetheart of mine,) grew up boys together—I had money matters to transact with him. After we got through, he spoke of you; said that he liked you very much; that you came often to his

house, and that he thought the young people—meaning you and his daughter, you sly dog—liked each other. I told him I was pleased to hear it, of course, —it delighted me—and we talked it over. I there learned, too, what has since proved a mistake, that your cousin, who is going the broad road to ruin, was to marry little Ruth Lorman."

"I believe, sir," said Ralph, "that one will turn out to be as false as the other."

"What! bless my soul! and so you have been neglecting such an enchanting, beautiful and rich girl, very rich girl, as Miss Murray—my old friend's daughter—at such a rate that she has written to you on the subject, and threatens to discard you. Why, Ralph, bless my soul! by dad, you are a damned blockhead—the Lord forgive me that I should swear, it would make a saint swear—yes, you are a stultified, damned blockhead, and no son of mine. Bless my soul! I suppose you have come here now to cry after your spilt milk—to catch the filly after she has gone out of the door that you left open yourself, you nincompoop!"

Ralph could not help but laugh at his father's violent manner and language.

"Oh! yes!" exclaimed the old miser, when he observed it—"beautiful conduct, young gentleman, to laugh at the admonitions, and advice of your father. You reverence scripture, sir—you reverence scripture; you mean that your days shall be long in the land; yes, they may be, and may be you'll have

to get the bread that keeps ye by downright beggary; and die at last for the want of it. It's what you are coming to by such frivolity and stupidity. This I suppose, you have learnt at college!"

"Father, you are entirely wrong—you are, I assure you; you are labouring under a great mistake."

"Listen to me now, Ralph," said his father, "hear what I have to say to you, and don't interrupt me—now don't. When I was of your age, full of high notions of myself, and honourable feeling—as the world calls it—and scorning to make advances, and all the etceteras of that kind of thing—bless my soul—I became pleased, attached, as you call it, to a young lady of large fortune. She was not handsome, but, Ralph, she had what I wanted, and what you want—money. She was not to compare to Helen Murray in appearance, nor in fact in means; but she had, what was called in those days, a large fortune. Well, I attended her with great assiduity—and while waiting on her, I became acquainted at her house with your mother, who was pretty, and sprightly—I didn't know that sprightliness was temper then—and as poor as poverty itself. The rich lady did not act, on several occasions, exactly to please me; I have learned since, she was just trying to draw me out; I hadn't the sense to see it then; I grew huffish, was off, fancied myself in love with your mother, because she had a pretty face—she had nothing else—made a love match—that is, I

must have married her to spite the other—the rich girl; and, by dad, she must have married me to spite somebody, for it was nothing but spite between us, while she lived."

"Let's drop this subject, if you please, father," said Ralph—"It must be disagreeable to both of us."

"Certainly, it is!" exclaimed his father, "and therefore I wish you to know it and be warned. Your love matches are worse than folly, they are misery; love—pugh—let reason, let reason, I say, son Ralph, control every reasonable man. But tell me, concerning this letter. How do you and Miss Murray—isn't she a beautiful girl—stand—nothing that you can't remove easily—hey, boy! Remember my case, and what I might I might have done, had I been discreet and less wilful."

"Father, you are entirely under a mistake," replied Ralph—"I never courted Miss Murray, and she never expected me to court her that I know of."

"Ralph, you are beside yourself; what does this letter mean then, that you have received from her—why should she write to you—why, I ask you, should a letter from her bring you home from college?"

"Why, father, she (laughing) told me when I left, that we must be correspondents—and I received a letter from her, telling me, that my old friends, the Lorman's, were on the eve of starting west—and, and—"

"And what?" ejaculated the old man—"and what

are the Lormans to you—because the Lorman's are going west, must you quit college? Ralph you are, I fear to say, acting, I believe, with duplicity."

This last remark of his father stung Ralph, and he said:

"I expect father, it will be my destiny, to do the very thing which you have been advising me not to do—to make a love match."

The old man sprung to his feet with such violence, as to overturn the arm chair in which he was seated—exclaiming, as he arose: "with whom, with whom?"

"Maybe, father, with Ruth Lorman!" replied Ralph, firmly.

"With Ruth Lorman"—exclaimed the old man furiously—"with Ruth Lorman! You are demented, by the Lord, you are demented; I shall have you thrust into a hospital, and your head shaved for a lunatic, and your carcass in a straight jacket, before you commit that folly be assured. Yes, I can and will do it—I'll keep you there for life—I'll not leave you that much"—snapping his fingers—"not that much, not enough to buy a rope to hang yourself. Yes, I see it—you intend to run the career of your cousin—he will ruin his father, and you mean to do your best to ruin me; but I am not made of such ruinable stuff. If you dare to dream of marrying that little minx, I'll cut you off without a shilling—and denounce you in my last will, testament, and codicil, to the whole world. Chew that cud, sir,"

said his father, darting out of the room furiously, and snatching up his hat and cane as he went. "It is my solemn determination—chew that cud, sir."

"The die is cast," said Ralph to himself, as his father's footsteps died away through the store—"truly, like old Priuli, he has made his exit in a rage—and worse than bid me 'get brats and starve.' Whither can he have gone?—I will not sacrifice my feelings to a father, who never sacrificed one feeling to me—whose conduct towards me, has been a perpetual and abiding cause of mortification all my life—who takes every opportunity to revile a mother's memory to her son—who has scarcely ever given me a cent, and who thrusts me, without the least regard to my feelings, upon the charity of my uncle. God bless my uncle, I have a friend in him. My father would wed me to the Witch of Endor for money. Can it be possible, that Mr. Murray spoke of—"

Here Ralph was interrupted in his reflections by the entrance of Jerry, who exclaimed,

"M-m-master Ralph, wh-what's the m-mat-matter with old m-mas-master? he went out into the street like mad."

"I don't know, Jeremiah," replied Ralph, bitterly. "Maybe another of his debtors has absconded, and he has gone in pursuit."

Ralph had scarcely made the remark, when his father re-entered the room, as Jeremiah left it, and facing Ralph, exclaimed—

"Tell me—am I bewildered? am I in a dream?

are you not mad?" and he gazed at Ralph intensely, as if he suspected the fact; then making an effort to be cool, he continued, "Ralph, tell me one thing—did you never court Miss Murray?"

"Never, father; I am surprised at what you tell me her father said."

"Well he did say it, I tell you; and that proves to you your chance with her, hey—don't you see it does? Why don't you court her?"

"Because, father," replied Ralph, "I am not in love with her. I could—"

"In love with her!" interrupted the old man, throwing his hands up above his head, as if struck with horror.

"No, father; I admire her greatly, but I am not in love with her: and I believe, from what I have seen of her character, that she is the very last lady that would ever fall in love with me. To speak frankly, father, I am in love with another."

"You are, hey?" said the old man, with intense bitterness; "may I inquire, sir, who is the happy lady."

"I have already told you, father—Ruth Lorman."

"Ruth Lorman!" repeated the old man, striking his cane on the floor, compressing his lips, and nodding his head to and fro. "Ruth Lorman! Well, Mr. Ralph Beckford, you deem yourself your full master, I observe, sir. This determination, this love, has been made without even honouring me with a

consultation, leaving me under other impressions, and thereby swindling money out of me. I understand it, sir, and I wish you to be informed that I have done with you, sir; I shall advertise in every paper in the city that I shall pay no debts of your contracting. I shall let, thereby, the world know what I think of you, and then you will see what you are thought of. I leave you to think about it. I'll leave every cent I have in the world to Jeremiah—I'll burn it up and myself with it before—but its no use talking, sir, it's no use talking—just chew that cud." And jerking his hat over his brows, and planting his cane with decision on the floor, Mr. Solomon Beckford went forth again.

CHAPTER XVIII.

With a quick step, muttering to himself, and with a twisted brow, Mr. Solomon Beckford proceeded directly to the house of Mr. Lorman. Little Billy was playing on the pavement, and Mr. Beckford asked him if his father was in; and without waiting for a reply, or rapping at the door, he opened it and entered.

Mr. Lorman was seated in the front room, looking over a number of accounts, with bills paid and unpaid, large legers and day-books, scattered promiscuously around him. He received Mr. Beckford very coolly, and, without intermitting his avocation, waved him to a seat.

"Friend Lorman," said Mr. Beckford, after a premonitory clearing of the throat, "you were much too hasty with me the other day in the matter of that loan. You snapped me up so short that I hardly had time to think."

Here Mr. Lorman laid down the account he was inspecting, and looked at Mr. Beckford.

"Hardly time, I say, my friend, to think. You say you want a thousand dollars to aid you in going west, and that you will give good security for the advance. I have no doubt upon reflection—I did not think so the other day,—but upon mature

thought I have changed my mind. I have no doubt that, with your family, taking your daughter Ruth with you to take care of them—I have no doubt, I say, that it will be ultimately to your advantage. Ruth is an engaging girl, and will marry well there, and her husband being with you, it will be a great assistance to you and your family. Upon a second thought over these things, I concluded it would be to your interest, and when you say you cannot start without that sum—a thousand dollars—a very large sum—hard to raise—but upon good security, by borrowing I think I might compass it. You say the security is good, and that you will make over debts due you to the amount of fifteen hundred dollars, to secure the payment of the thousand with an interest of ten per cent?"

"I will," said Mr. Lorman, "and will esteem it as a favour—a great favour—if you will let me have the money on these terms. I am all ready to start, but I must have that sum. My brother, as I told you, though he has little command of ready money, will assist me when I arrive west. I want to be off; I have made up my mind to go, and Ruth had got partly reconciled to it; but, as the time approaches, she somehow, particularly lately, seems to shrink from it."

"Ahem! ahem!" ejaculated Mr. Beckford. "Friend Lorman, upon reflection, as I have told you, I believe it will be greatly to your advantage, and to the advantage of your daughter and family, for you to

emigrate west, and therefore, ahem! I will try and advance you the money—I will."

"Thank you, thank you, Mr. Beckford!" exclaimed Mr. Lorman, jumping up and seizing the old miser by the hand, "I shall be deeply indebted to you! I thought, from what was owing to me, I should be able to raise two thousand dollars of my own, clear of the world; but I find my good debts—what is owing to me I mean with good security for payment—only amount to fifteen hundred dollars—and I am willing to give them as security for the payment of the thousand dollars, with ten per cent. interest on the loan."

"You shall have it, friend Lorman," said Mr. Beckford, returning the shake of his hand, "ahem! you shall have it! You have what may be called a large family, and the fact is, between you and I, this is no place—your old city is no place to raise up a family in. You know what a trouble my brother—distinguished man as he is—has had with his son, my hopeless nephew! Well, I declare to you I do not know that my boy, Ralph, will be any better! I could not advise any father, son though he is of mine, to suffer seriously his visits to his daughter. Ralph has been so indulged by his uncle that his habits always have been idle, and I fear me, friend Lorman—recollect what I say to you now is of my own son, and therefore in strictest confidence—that latterly they are becoming vicious!"

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Mr. Lorman, in great

surprise. "I had no idea of such a thing; indeed, I felt convinced that quite the contrary was the fact."

"No, my dear friend, no; he squanders money abominably, and is getting into evil habits. He, in the midst of his college courses, leaves, a few months after his entrance, and comes home—for what purpose no one on earth can tell—for a profligate excess I have no doubt. He is sly—I fear he is sly—but of course this is between ourselves—entirely confidential: he is my own son, and what I say to my friend I would not say to the world. I expect I shall have to cut him off in my will without a sixpence. I cannot and will not have my hard earnings squandered by a prodigal son, who has no respect for me, living or dead—no, I would rather educate the heathen with it. My will is made, and pray God Ralph may amend before I die. Good morning! good morning! the west is the place for you! yes, upon second thought, I am satisfied it is the place to marry a daughter well, and to bring up a rising family! This evening I will call with the amount. Get all your accounts ready, and with the vouchers, that I may see them; and I will bring the amount with me. If you get it this afternoon, when will you start?"

"In three or four days at farthest. Won't you stop and see Ruth?—do; she's up stairs—I will call her—and then step round to Hawbuckle's store, where I left some of my vouchers with him."

"Yes, yes," replied Mr. Beckford; "Ruth is a great

favourite of mine: do call her, and I will keep her company till you return—if you are not gone long—and then I can look over these vouchers, notes, &c. hey!"

"Ah! Ruth, my good girl," exclaimed Mr. Beckford, as she entered the room, "come and shake hands with me! So you are going to leave us?"

"So father says, sir," replied Ruth, giving him her hand and sighing.

The old man twitched as he observed it, and then said gaily, "It's a delightful country; I at first opposed your father, but, upon reflection, I am convinced it is for his benefit. You will catch some of the nabobs of the land there, Ruth—some of the nabobs—who will bring you to the east to the springs in your coach and four—particularly if you go down to the south-west, where they have negroes a plenty and half of a state for a plantation. I see how it will be: you will be visiting us some of these days in fine style—and hardly know us, hey! Much better matches made there, Ruth, than here. The young men here have degenerated from their sires. I don't know one—no, not one—a sense of justice will not let my parental affection except even my own son—who would make a young girl the proper kind of match. The young men do no work nowaday—they depend upon their fathers for support; and when a man is actuated by a public spirit—as I hope I am—and thinks of leaving what little property he may possess to some great public charity or school

—what, in such an event, I ask you, can their thriftless sons do but starve, with their wives and families—if, indeed, any woman would be such a fool as to have such graceless, prodigal, spending rascals!"

"But, Mr. Beckford," said Ruth, timidly, "why should you include your son Ralph in such a list? I am quite sure he deserves to be placed in better company."

"My dear Miss Ruth," replied Mr. Beckford, attempting a look of amiable confidence, while that of scrutiny and mistrust prevailed, "I make no exception. Unless Ralph marries a rich girl, he will be as destitute a wretch as lives in the broad world. Between you and I, Ruth," continued Mr. Beckford, drawing close to her side, "though the world imputes considerable wealth to me, it hardly more than doubles the sum which I am to loan to your father to take him to the west, scarcely more than doubles that sum. But I do not choose, you know, to correct the impression; for now when I am pushed, as I often am, to pay for a hogshead of sugar, this impression is the means of my obtaining a little credit; it is the only thing that keeps me up. Ralph's college expenses came very heavy—he has no idea of any profession that I know of—he might, if he were another sort of a lad, assist me, but he is a mere drone. Ruth, you are going west, you know, where you will be happily, splendidly married; you will not, of course, repeat one word of what I have said to you; but it relieves an old man to unburden his mind

sometimes. Good-bye, Ruth, tell your father I could not wait any longer for him. I have nobody in my store—Ralph might have assisted me in my old age there—but my negro, Jeremiah, and God above only knows how much he filches from me. Good-bye, my dear." So saying, the old miser departed.

CHAPTER XIX.

Ralph had arrived in the mail-stage, little more than an hour previous to his seeing his father. He made his toilet hastily, and hurried to Lorman's. On arriving there, he learned that Ruth had ridden out with Helen Murray. He then called to see his uncle—was informed he was very busily engaged in a trial at the court-house, and not wishing to interrupt him, he proceeded to his father's. He expected a scene with his father, and as the latter had not sent him the remittances he promised, and thereby had subjected his son to a great deal of mortification, he felt the more indifferent to the result, convinced in fact that it was in vain for him to hope for any pecuniary aid whatever, from that quarter. His determination, therefore, was to trust wholly to his uncle, whom he hoped to remunerate on coming of age, out of the property which he would then possess in right of his mother. His uncle had sent him liberal supplies of pocket money, but he was not aware that it was all the means his nephew had to meet every expense.

Ralph sat ruminating upon what had passed, may be an hour, when he departed with the intention of going to Lorman's. On his way there, he saw his

father at some distance, but that worthy, on beholding his son, darted round a corner to avoid meeting him. Though Ralph had called at Lorman's in Ruth's absence, she was not aware of it, as by some neglect she was not informed of the fact. He found Ruth alone. Those few moments at their last parting had established a mutual understanding between them—an understanding stamped with the silent seal of their hearts, and which sought no pledge of words. Each in their separation had thought of the other, as each would have wished. The affection of years, though only confessed at parting, and that silently, and after apparently a long estrangement, seemed now as they met, to have been the acknowledged theme of all that time, and as Ruth sprang towards Ralph, he advanced and caught her in his arms. She leaned her head upon his bosom and wept. Ralph could scarcely restrain himself from tears, but he kissed away her's, and said faintly:

"Ruth, dear Ruth! speak to me."

"Oh! Ralph, Ralph! we have met again, but to part again—I am overcome—I did not expect to see you. This is unbecoming;" she released herself from his embrace, and dried hastily her tears. "I did not think to see you, Ralph."

"Miss Murray wrote me, Ruth, that your father was on the eve of departure. I feared that you would be gone, before I could get here. Is it not strange that we should not have written to each other? Dear Ruth, I knew that we should thus meet. When I

pressed you to my heart as we parted; I felt that we should thereafter understand each other. Ruth, you must not go west."

"Must not, Ralph?" and she shook her head sorrowfully, "alas, I must!"

"Must, why must you?" exclaimed Ralph, "Listen to me, Ruth. I will leave college, if you say so, and read law with my uncle—in a year I shall be of age—in one more year I should be qualified to practise, perhaps before then—my uncle will assist me. I shall have, when I arrive at age, some nine or ten thousand dollars of my own—that will support us until I get a practice—or Ruth, I have another plan. In a year, as I tell you, I shall be of age—my money will be my own—your father and I can go into business together. At my father's death, I shall inherit a handsome fortune."

"But, Ralph," said Ruth, "you must not calculate too sanguinely on your father's fortune."

"Must not. Why not?"

Ruth hesitated. Ralph insisted that she should tell him unreservedly why she made the remark, and, after some hesitancy, she told him what his father had said to her.

Ralph could not prevent a smile, though very much provoked. "My father," said he, "has been diplomatizing, playing Talleyrand. I told him this morning of my love for you—you know how he hates love-matches—he supposes that if you think I shall be pennyless you will reject me."

"O! Ralph, you do your father injustice."

"Indeed I do not. But, Ruth, away with that; why should you go west—what should take you there?"

"Duty, Ralph, duty," said Ruth, firmly. "My father's brother, my uncle, has offered him advantages there, which he is thoroughly convinced he ought to avail himself of. The idea of emigration has put new life into his energies. He has been so long struggling with so many ills here, misfortunes upon misfortunes, that he has persuaded himself that scarcely under any auspices could he raise his fortunes in this place again. Then his rising family will be a great expense to him in a few years—therefore he ought to go, Ralph—he ought to go, Ralph, for his own sake, as well as for the sake of his family, and Ralph, I must go with him—that family have no mother now, and I must be mother and sister both to them. It is my duty, Ralph, my religious, my Christian duty."

Ruth spoke in so gentle yet decided a tone that Ralph made no attempt at reply, but handed her a chair, and sat musing by her side. The farther conference of the lovers was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Lorman, who asked hastily for old Mr. Beckford, and saluted Ralph, but not with his wonted warmth; the latter after a few moments took his leave.

In the course of the day Ralph called on Helen Murray, and found her, as usual, with several

beaux beside her, and, among the rest, his cousin Henry.

"Mr. Ralph Beckford!" exclaimed Helen, rising, and offering her hand to Ralph as he entered, though with more coldness of tone, and more formality of manner than Ralph had expected, for she spoke like one who has been piqued, but who endeavours to hide it, perhaps from the fact that her reason told her she had no right to indulge it. "You are welcome back, sir; I thought my letter would bring you." Ralph felt himself blush beneath the gaze of the gentlemen. "You still wear the guard I gave you—let me see it." Ralph advanced close to her, and she took the guard in her fair hand. "It is, I observe, sir, in a state of high preservation, I feel complimented, sir, honoured—be seated, Mr. Beckford."

"Thank you," said Ralph; but ere he took a seat, he advanced towards Henry and offered him his hand. Henry, after a moment's hesitancy, in which Miss Murray said, "Mr. Henry Beckford, your cousin, sir," took his hand with apparent cordiality, and said, making an attempt at a pun:

"Ralph, you were well guarded at college."

"And well regarded here, Mr. Ralph Beckford," exclaimed Miss Murray, though in a tone that showed she was more anxious to be witty than to compliment.

Henry glanced a suspicious eye at his cousin, who, unobservant of it, replied:

"I feared, Miss Helen, I was in the predicament of the Reverend Mr. Byles, of revolutionary memory, who, being suspected by the colonists of not being on their side, was treated accordingly. To express the varieties of his treatment, he said he had been 'guarded, regarded and disregarded.'"

"Yes, but, Mr. Beckford," exclaimed Helen, quickly and with some sharpness, "your quotation is an unfortunate one; remember it was made by a tory, as a jest for the punishment and neglect which he received for his want of patriotism—allegiance to the true power."

The instant Helen uttered this remark, she reflected it might occur to Henry that it arose from pique on her part at Ralph's indifference to her, an impression which few women would willingly make, and least of all Miss Murray, in the premises, she therefore added, with a conscious smile, bowing, as she spoke, to Ralph—"Of which I do not accuse you, sir; you are my knight, you wear my colours, and I will consider your college adventures as the war from which you have just returned; therefore, my gallant troubadour, you are welcome home."

Ralph bowed and blushed, and the conversation became general, which gave him leisure to observe. He could not but perceive that Miss Murray received Henry's attentions as if she expected them, and was pleased with them, while they were evidently given with the air of one who flattered himself

—from what cause, judging from what he had seen previous to his departure for college, Ralph could not divine—that he stood above his compeers in the lady's good graces. In the two or three letters which Ralph had received from Miss Murray, she had written of his cousin in the way she always spoke of him, as "Master Henry," and Ralph concluded that her feelings were the same towards him: he, therefore, wondered why the "Master" was now entirely dropped, with the tone of sarcasm in which it was generally uttered. He remembered that in one of her letters she had told him that Henry was a more constant visiter at her shrine than ever, but she made no comment whatever on it, though the lines were underlined. As Ralph had always suspected the lady of being somewhat capricious, he concluded that Henry had been taken into favour, yet he thought he as plainly perceived that other young gentlemen did not imagine their cases hopeless.

His cousin he thought altered, and not for the better; he wore even a more *roue* air than formerly, and a tone of ridicule at most things held above it, seemed to pervade his feelings. This did not strike Ralph till he had seen him often, and met him sometimes alone, as something like their former intimacy was renewed; for Henry could, when the motive was strong enough, play the accomplished gentleman, and seem to be what some one has defined a gentleman—"humanity refined."

Ralph's uncle received him with great kindness;

but in a tone of friendly reproof he asked him, why he had left college before the vacation? Ralph instantly confessed to his uncle his attachment to Ruth Lorman, and said the wish to see her, before she started west, was his motive for leaving college, as he did; he added, with some hesitancy, that not having received any remittances from his father, he was subject to many mortifications, and that he had been compelled to leave behind him debts, some of which were for borrowed money.

"Ralph, you have not acted as you should have done," said his uncle in a tone of reproof. "Why did you not let me know it? I expected that you would—have you no confidence in me? But no, I must not blame you; I had such feelings once myself. It shall be refunded when you return to college. Ruth Lorman, hey! Well, she is certainly a sweet girl, worthy of a man's love. These mercenary money matches are not as pleasure fraught as is generally supposed—but Ralph, what says your father to this 'love match' in perspective?"

Ralph told his uncle of the scene he had had with his father.

"You have not played the diplomatist, Ralph, with your father. When you leave college, nephew, what do you mean to do?"

"What shall I do uncle? I have thought of going to the west when I am of age, as I, it seems, must expect nothing from my father; and with the little

means I may have, pushing my fortunes there, either studying one of the professions—or—or—"

"Speak out," said his uncle, smiling.

"Or if my 'love match' prospers, going into business with my father-in-law, that I hope will be, if my father has not irrevocably prejudiced him against me. Do advise me, uncle, what shall I do?"

"Ralph," said his uncle, after some reflection—"I never thought the law would suit you; you are too shy and too sensitive for the practice. It is your temperament, and I do not believe you could become indurated; besides, your exclusive literary partialities would make you consider the law a perpetual drudgery; and those who so consider it, never advance far in the profession. The practice of medicine would suit you better; and, perhaps, best of all business with Mr. Lorman, if you could grow fond of it. There's the rub, my dear nephew; but I will believe, that you have the energy and the unconquerable will to do it if you determine to try. You must court fortune as you have courted your mistress, in spite of lowering clouds, looking through them to the sunlight beyond."

CHAPTER XX.

RALPH exhausted all his powers of persuasion to induce Ruth to remain and marry him at once. Tearfully but resolutely she refused; yet she wept to think, that now, when they had confessed their loves, and the currents of their lives, like mingling streams, might flow tranquilly and happily, they must part.

"But, Ralph," she would say, "part we must; and you will love me more, I know you will, to think I have fulfilled my duty. We will hear from each other often, Ralph; and you will come west soon, will you not, Ralph?"

"I will, dearest Ruth, I will. You must not be surprised to see me there at any time. What an interest I shall take in the west now; where you settle will be a charmed place to me; its very name will be a spell to call up the holiest emotions of my heart. Dearest Ruth, I cannot but dwell upon it,—is it not strange that, loving you as I have loved for years, the confession should not have passed my lips sooner? I thought at one time that you loved my cousin Henry, and you thought that I loved Helen Murray."

Ruth blushed, but she spoke not. And, after such a remark, they would set for hours together without

scarcely exchanging a word. The idea of their love and their parting occupying their hearts with thought too deep for words.

Mr. Lorman sometimes thought he observed an attachment existing between them, but mindful of, and impressed by, what Mr. Solomon Beckford had told him, and not at all aware of the strength of their affections for each other, he deemed it best to act as if he did not at all notice it. He thought that absence would wean them both, and that in the new scene to which his family was bound, Ruth would not only soon forget Ralph, but soon make a much more eligible match, for he had built many airy castles in the western skies.

Too soon the day of their parting, which would not be procrastinated, arrived. They were to start early in the morning in a stage which Mr. Lorman had chartered for the purpose. Helen Murray and Ralph, with some other of their friends, were there by-times, to bid them good-bye. There is one blessed thing in these partings, viz., that the hurry and bustle, the anxiety, to know that all is right, that nothing is left, that every arrangement is properly made, distract the mind somewhat from the idea of the separation, and thus rob it of some of its agony.

Ruth threw her arms around Helen's neck as the stage drove up to the door, and, unable to control herself any longer, she wept wildly as she said:

"Farewell, Helen, farewell! God bless you. I

feel the world is all before me, but that I have left my only friend behind. Ralph!" she said, addressing her lover, while she attempted in vain to dry her tears, "Ralph!" She could say no more.

In silence he pressed her hand to his heart, and she entered the stage.

"Good-bye, Miss Helen, good-bye, Ralph," said little Billy, calling out of the stage window. "Don't forget, Ralph, to come and see sister Ruth and me as you promised. I shall be a bigger boy then than I am now."

Ralph waved his hand, and away the coach drove. As it turned rapidly round a corner not far off, he caught a glance of Ruth, in a flood of tears, and of Billy offering her his pocket handkerchief.

Helen Murray's carriage was in waiting. "Come," said she, as she hastily replaced her handkerchief in her reticule, and impulsively drew the strings, "come, Ralph—I beg pardon, Mr. Beckford—ride home with me. I suppose I shall have some triflers calling to whom I shall not be at home—I wish company that has some heart."

Ralph handed Helen to her carriage, and without answering, took a seat by her side. How desolate Lorman's late residence looked to him untenanted. How saddening the associations it called up. As they passed the corner round which the stage had just turned, Ralph beheld his father beckoning to the driver, and heard him calling on him to stop.

The driver would have continued on regardless,

but Mr. Lorman ordered him to stop, when the old miser hurried up to the coach-window, and as soon as he could catch his breath he ejaculated,

"Bless, my soul! off a'ready—I thought I should be time enough—ahem! ahem! Friend Lorman, I shall have some heavy payments to make in the coming year—don't fail to be punctual in the remittance of the interest."

Mr. Lorman assured him that he would not, and ordered the driver to proceed. As he did so, Ralph caught another and a last look from Ruth Lorman.

CHAPTER XXI.

Were we to trace particularly the journey of the emigrants, passing as it did, without any incident of importance, we feel satisfied, our readers would skip the pages which contained the account. At Pittsburgh, where they arrived in safety, Mr. Lorman received a letter from his brother, whose Christian name was James—and whom some weeks before his departure, he had apprised of the time when he should leave—informing him, that when James had heard that he was fully determined to come, he had "swapped" his unimproved land on the Mississippi, for a handsome farm near the village of ——, which he particularly designated. James advised his brother, to take passage on some boat, bound down the Ohio, at least as far as that point—and not to make any more stay at Cincinnati, Louisville, or any intermediate place, than the boat made, for he was anxious to see his brother and family, and his business would require him soon to leave for the Southern country. James described the farm as a very pleasant one, and said he had made a great bargain. Harvey, upon the receipt of the letter, determined to do as his brother advised him, particularly as he was anxious to see him. James Lorman was the younger of the two brothers, and they were the only children of very re-

spectable parents, who had been inhabitants of the city, from which Harvey had emigrated. James, in early life, went to sea, much against the will of his parents, who possessed a handsome fortune, and who were desirous of bringing him up to a more reputable calling, as they thought. When he arrived at manhood, he obtained the command of a vessel trading from New York to Liverpool, and became attached to an English lady, who was one of his passengers from the latter to the former place—to whom, on his arrival in New York, he was married. His father dying about this time, James, with his share of the property, went into business in New York, and sent for his mother to come and live with him; she was scarcely settled in his house, with his bride, when they were all three taken with sudden illness, from which his mother and wife never recovered. It was suspected afterwards that they were poisoned, from the fact, that a servant whom James Lorman then had, and who, for his bad conduct, he was compelled to punish, was afterwards hung for poisoning an old French refugee, with whom he lived. The death of his wife and mother produced such an effect on James Lorman, that he immediately sold out his store, turned all his property into ready money, and emigrated to the western country; then as sparse and spare of inhabitants and improvements, compared to its present condition, as it now is, to what in the progress of a few years it must be. Preferring the roving life of excitement, to

which he had been accustomed, James Lorman engaged in "steam-boating," to use a western phrase, shortly after steamboats were first introduced on our western waters, at which he might have made a fortune, had prudence been one of his virtues. But to make his expenditures meet his receipts, seemed to be one of his maxims. Hearing of his brother's reverses, he had repeatedly written to him, advising him to emigrate, and offering him all the assistance in his power. As our readers are aware, his advice at last prevailed with his brother.

From a paucity of imagination, or, if our readers please, from propensity, being compelled to mingle much of fact in our fiction, we may not particularly name or designate the locality in which our emigrants were to fix their abode. They must be content to know, that it was on the banks of the Ohio, in the state of Kentucky, and some considerable distance below the falls, near a village—which we will, for the sake of a name, call Perryville. It was a beautiful spot—La Belle Revere made a bold, broad sweep round the farm, just below the village, and then stretched away directly on its course. On an eminence, that gradually sloped to the river, and which commanded a full view of it, their house, a small one, which had been originally of frame, and to which a brick addition in front had been added, stood. It was considerably out of repair when Mr. James Lorman took possession of it—but it had been fitted as well as the time would permit, for the re-

ception of his brother and family. The banks of the river, except on the side immediately before the house, were shaded by immense sycamores, which stretched their snowy trunks far into the air, and spread their luxuriant branches abroad. Three log cabins—where the slaves of the former proprietor had lived—and behind them a barn, stood below the dwelling-house, and nearer to the river. Beside the barn was a field, that had been but a few years cleared, in which the gnarled, blackened trees tossed their bare branches, and appeared like spectres of famine let loose upon the vegetation. Behind the field, stretched afar the primeval forest, now just beginning to be touched with the hues of autumn. At the distance of half a mile or more above, in a bend of the river, the village could be seen. The stillness of this scene was interrupted but by the occasional sound of the woodman's axe, the bark of a dog, the song of a passing flat-boat man, and the puff, or "bark" of the stately steamer, whose winding way might, of a clear day, be traced for miles, by the curling cloud that was continually ascending above her.

Mr. Lorman was lucky enough, on the day of his arrival at Pittsburgh, to obtain passage on a steamer, whose destination was below the falls and beyond Perryville. Fatigued with their jolting journey over the mountains, during which they saw little of the scenery, for a misty rain had prevailed for the last two

days, they were glad to find themselves in the cabin of a steamboat, surrounded with its conveniences.

At Cincinnati, the boat stopped only half an hour to discharge some freight, and Ruth could not leave it to see the city, which she the more regretted, as she was struck with the beauty and cleanliness of the landing. At Louisville, the river was sufficiently high to permit the boat to pass over the falls; and it immediately proceeded onward. It was near ten o'clock at night, while Ruth was sitting in the cabin, before her opened trunk, looking over the many little presents that Ralph, during their acquaintance, had made her; when her father entered and told her, they were within a few miles of Perryville. With a flutter of the spirits, and a sensation of sorrow, Ruth passed out of the cabin and took a lonely seat on the guards. She strained her vision to see if she could discover aught of the village, but she could not; and she looked around on the night. It was a beautiful one: away above her, in the blue vault, the innumerable stars shone forth, and were reflected in a thousand glancing lights, in the waves made by the boat. The tall trees that skirted the banks of the river, caused a shadow on either side. This made the river appear much narrower than it was, for the shadow rested broad and deep in the water, that reflected in dark mass, the forms of the forest, whose undulating outline appeared in the wave in strong contrast with the track of light in which the boat glided. In the distance, a steamer, advancing to-

wards them, cast a track of light on the waters, which, meeting that thrown out by the boat on which Ruth was, produced the impression at first upon her mind that she was passing from the shadow into the light. "Alas!" thought Ruth, "it is ever thus, while we journey in this life in darkness and shadow, hope beckons us on with the light of promises, which we never realise. It is before us, and we never reach it; while the dark forms of misfortune and sorrow, like these lowering forests, frown around us. But no," thought she, more cheerfully looking up—"there is a light above us, which, like these holy stars, cheers our path, nevertheless, and the very frowning forms around us, assist us to trace it." Prayerfully, for a few moments, Ruth gazed above, and then covering her face with her hand, she wept in spite of herself. "Forgive me, merciful Father," she said, "these are not tears of repining; they are tears of relief,"—and she shed a flood of them.

Here several lights from the windows on shore attracted her attention; and in a few minutes more, the boat rounded to at Perryville. Mr. Lorman entered the cabin to say to Ruth, that he would go ashore and inquire at the tavern for his brother, who was well known; and that he, therefore, should soon learn if he was in the place, and find him.

"The boat will stop here at least an hour," said he, "for the captain tells me, they must both discharge freight here and wood."

Mr. Lorman accordingly went; and returned in a

half hour with his brother—a fine, looking man, with a bold, open countenance; who was deeply affected in meeting with his brother and family. Ruth had re-entered the cabin when her father left, and when he returned with her uncle, she sat reading by a centre-table, the light from which shone full upon her lovely features. The door between the ladies and gentlemen's cabins was open, and as the brothers advanced, unperceived by Ruth, Harvey said to James:

"Here sits my daughter, brother."

James stood for a moment, observing her in silence, till the thoughts of other years arose upon his memory, and awakened bygone emotions in all their tenderness; for he thought she resembled his deceased wife. He advanced and was presented to his niece by her father, when taking her in his arms, with deep emotion, he said:

"My dear niece, I feel now, that I have something to live for; you are welcome, thrice welcome! My God, brother, she is so like my poor Rachel;" and unable to control emotions, which he shrunk from exhibiting, he walked hastily out on the guards.

The captain of the steamer here entered the ladies' cabin, and said, they had better remain on board all night, as he should be compelled to stop until daylight, a fog having arisen, which would prevent his proceeding. James Lorman being a friend of his, he pressed them to stay, saying, that if they would do so, he would land them at the farm in the morning. They cheerfully accepted his invitation.

When Ruth arose in the morning, the steamer was under way. The fog was fast dissipating under the rays of a brilliant sun. The gloom on her spirits passed away like the mist from the face of nature, as she called up the kind reception of her uncle, and beheld before her the neat farm we have described, now in full view, which her uncle, who stood beside her, holding Billy by the hand, was pointing out to her. Again a shade passed over her countenance, as the image of Ralph Beckford arose in her mind, and she turned away to check the starting tear, as in her heart the intense wish arose—"Oh! that he were with us."

CHAPTER XXII.

The inhabitants of the village of Perryville, or, to give it the title which the good people of the place always gave it, the Town of Perryville, for there were some of them who would assert that though it numbered now but a few hundred, at the next census there would be rising of a thousand; which assertion was not so apocryphal, when we consider the rapid increase of western population, as at first blush would appear: the inhabitants of this good town, received the Lormans with all the frankness and cordiality of proverbial Kentucky hospitality. They had been on the farm but a few days, when many called to welcome them, and invite them to their houses. Ruth could not but be struck with the independent bearing of the people, and the absence of all servility to wealth or power. True, envy, jealousy and uncharitableness prevailed, more or less, here, as they do everywhere where the foot of man treads, but with some exceptions the good folks of Perryville could not be said to be addicted to these vices. This might be owing to the seclusion of the village, which, though on the banks of the Ohio, was not much visited, to which there was little emigration, and where, except in two or three instances, there was no great disparity in worldly goods. This town, from

its retirement, if we may use such an expression, preserved more vividly than many other towns on the river the character of its early settlers, yet Ruth was not half so much struck with the difference between the manners and customs of this and her former home, as she expected to be. In fact, in most respects she was impressed with the resemblance, and if she could have spent a week or two in Cincinnati or Louisville, it would somewhat have puzzled her to mark any very distinct and decided difference between them and the Atlantic city she had left.

On the Sunday after their arrival, Ruth, accompanied by her uncle, went to a Presbyterian church in the town. As she passed along, she was enabled to take a closer view of Perryville than she had before done. It stood at the foot of a hill that rose to a considerable height above it, and was covered with tall forest trees, except here and there where could be seen a clearing—consisting of a few acres of tilled ground, with a log cabin upon it, or a dwelling, sometimes, of more pretension, made of boards, or bricks, or stone. Several of these dwellings, though rudely built, made some attempt at architectural display, having a porch perhaps, with disproportionate pillars to it, formed of trees, so large as almost to throw the house in the shade; and sometimes ornamented after a fashion with carving, to the effect of which many cracks in the wood, often of an inch or two in width, did not add. Some

of the houses in the town, were in the same style, and looked straggling as you walked among them. Others were remarkably well built and neat. It was evident that every man had consulted his own taste and habitudes in building. At a distance the village produced a favourable effect, owing to its situation on the banks of the river, and the relief given to it by the surrounding forests, above which the smoke from the dwellings of a still twilight went quietly up, and struck the observer with the idea that peace and happiness there dwelt.

The church was a neat brick one, and the sermon was preached by a celebrated Divine, formerly of New England, and now of Cincinnati, who was travelling in his ministerial vocation, and who is remarkable for his sterling common sense, and the strength, vigour, and directness of his language. He dwelt upon the necessity of spreading the Gospel truths in the great valley, in connexion with what would be that valley's influence (from its great extent, its abundant fertility, and the population which it must soon number,) for good or evil, according as these truths rose or fell. He said, the seat of empire must be in its bosom, and that if that empire was not upheld by Christian principles in their purity, our republican institutions could not last long.

Mr. Bennington, the member of Congress from that district—a wealthy farmer—who had built himself an elegant mansion, above the town, on his estate, and whose family had been very attentive to

the Lormans, invited them to dine with him—saying that the clergyman who had officiated was also to be his guest. Mr. Lorman having remained at home, and the children being under his guardianship, Ruth and her uncle willingly accepted the invitation, taking care to send word to her father by the servant who had attended church of the fact.

Mr. Bennington had a daughter—a very interesting and agreeable young lady—named Catharine, about Ruth's own age, and a son, some years older, who was reading law in the town. He was a superior young man—had received a college education—spent a winter in Washington with his father—had visited the principal eastern cities, as well as those of the west—was familiar with their fashionable society, and with that which congregates from all parts of the United States at the principal watering places. He was in bearing and in character a gentleman—though a little wild, and fond of practical jokes—and he was, withal, very handsome, and possessed of fine talents. The Benningtons knew how to appreciate the Lormans, and an intimacy soon grew up between them.

At the table of Mr. Bennington, also a guest, was a Miss Elizabeth Judson—a prinky lady, of a certain age, whose brother kept a hardware store in Perryville. He was an uncouth and vulgar, but a worthy man—who had emigrated some five or six years previous to the date of our narrative to Perryville—and, on establishing himself in business, had

sent on for his sister—who had arrived a few days only before the Lormans. Miss Elizabeth assumed to be the pink of propriety and glass of fashion, though she possessed more of the characteristics of her brother than she was aware of. She had come to Perryville with very high notions of herself, and as lowly ones of the good people among whom she expected to tarry. She had looked upon the west as quite a wilderness, where bears roamed in such close proximity to man that the latter had imperceptibly, from association, caught much of the ways of the former. The vividness of these impressions were somewhat giving way before the facts—which were so startling as to strike even the self-shrouded vision of Miss Elizabeth. But while she was compelled to place the good people of Perryville much higher in her opinion than she expected, she was not disposed to abate one jot or tittle of her self-estimation—particularly upon the score of her personal attractions. These attractions consisted of a thin form—very much padded to give it the proportions deemed proper—and arrayed in the most glaring colours—features, that never were handsome, and which were now sharp and somewhat shrivelled—and there was a pugnacious upturning of the nose, wearing often the expression of one whose olfactories had encountered a disagreeable odour, and were indignant thereat; yet the lady prided herself upon her courtesy, and the bland, honied way in which she said things.

As Ruth, with the Benningtons, was leaving

church, she could not but inquire of the younger Bennington, whose name was William, who that person was—indicating a strange looking personage who sat directly before her in church, and annoyed her excessively by turning round and facing her with a steady stare nearly all the time of service.

"That," replied William Bennington, with a merry laugh, "is Doctor Julius Cake, of 'our town.' I observed him staring at you in church. You have made the doctor's heart ere this a perfect bee-hive—perforated it in innumerable places—and, as soon as he gets acquainted with you—an honour I have already refused to bestow upon him, out of sheer envy—he will have many honied words for you. If you are desirous to hear them I will invite him to dine with us."

"No, brother, no, you shall not," said Miss Bennington—"he will bore us to death. Miss Lorman, you will have the honour of his acquaintance soon enough, I assure you. You will have him a fixture at your house unless you get rid of him as I did. Though I have a great mind to ask him, and see if we can't get up a flirtation between him and Miss Judson—hey, brother?"

"Would you not rather hear our preacher—such a distinguished man—converse," said Ruth to Miss Bennington, "than witness the flirtation."

"Indeed, you are right, Miss Lorman!" exclaimed William Bennington. "So, sister, do not let us have the doctor, unless you mean to appropriate him en-

tirely to yourself—or so arrange it that you introduce him to Miss Judson, and get her to make the appropriation."

Meanwhile Dr. Julius Cake, the subject of this conversation, wended his way on the opposite side of the street, some twelve or fifteen feet before our party; and, as he turned to cross the street to go to his office, which lay in that direction, Ruth had, or could have had, a full view of him.

Dr. Julius Cake was a tall and very slim man, with a saffron complexion, like that of a patient far gone in an ague and fever. He wore a rusty black coat that hung very loose upon him, the skirt of which, nevertheless, spread out below like the tail of a turkey-gobbler in full strut. The doctor held himself very erect, and he seemed perpetually striving to curb the natural bustle of his temperament into professional solemnity. On Sundays, therefore, on this occasion, the doctor's innermost garment displayed a depth of collar that came close up under his ears, and evidently threatened to lift him by those members from the ground, or compel his head to dispense with them, while the frill stuck out like the sign of the great saw at Mr. Judson's hardware store. This was the more remarkable, as, often on the succeeding days, until the sabbath came again, the innermost garment gave no signs of existence whatever, as no collar appeared above his stock, and his moleskin vest, garnished with glaring buttons, was buttoned tight up to the neck. He

wore his inexpressibles very wide, so as to hide, not only the smallness of his supporters, but their propensity to form a bow. His inexpressibles were strapped down, so as somewhat to diminish in appearance, the size of feet, which the boys of Perryville were in the habit of remarking were the largest ant-killers they had ever seen.

His face was long and narrow, with a very solemn expression. He always looked as if he were going to the funeral of a patient. His nose was a pug one, and protruded over a very large mouth, like a promontory over a chasm.

The doctor was a great believer in phrenology; and in reference to his eye—he had a pop eye—it was his custom to remark that the organ of language was powerfully developed in his cranium. For phrenological reasons—to prove at once his capacity and the science—he wore his hair very short, but cultivated the growth of an enormous pair of whiskers, which made it appear, particularly when you saw his profile, as if the hair had all left his head for his cheek. He carried an ivory-headed cane, which, in conversation, he grasped by the middle, in his right hand, and he gesticulated with it by placing it with great formality in the palm of his left one. To see him when conversing in this way, it was hard to remove the impression that he was not enacting the caricature of his profession in some popular farce. Yet the doctor was as serious as a death's head.

Ruth spent a very pleasant afternoon at Mr. Bennington's; and as it grew towards evening, William and his sister escorted her home, with the intention of taking tea with her. Just as the sun was descending behind the huge trees that skirted the river, while they were all sitting in front of the door enjoying the prospect which we have described, Billy went up to his sister, and presenting a letter to her, said:

"Here, sister Ruth; I was playing by the bars, and a black man gave me this to give to you."

"To give to me," said Ruth, looking at the superscription, where her name, "Miss Lorman," appeared in a full round hand, and smiling as she observed the seal, which was nearly of the size of a quarter of a dollar, with an arrow-pierced heart most deeply impressed upon it. "Who can it be from? There must be a mistake."

"No," said Billy, "he said it was for Miss Lorman; and I told him that was my sister; and he told me I must give it right into your hands."

"There then can be no doubt for whom it was intended, Miss Lorman," said William Bennington. "Billy is a good Mercury, if the blacky was not."

"Do open it," said Miss Bennington, whose eye had caught the seal; "it looks as if a host of little loves would fly out."

Ruth opened what proved to be an envelope, and beheld an epistle apparently in a schoolboy's hand, written with a great attempt at display, there being

tremendous gyrations, to the g's and l's, and flourishes to the capital letters, that appeared to take everything *ad captandum.* We give it verbatim, as it was written; what the writer underscored, we give in Italics. We suspect the letter is an effusion of original genius, assisted in its outpourings by the "Complete Letter-Writer."

"Adorable and dear Miss,

"I sincerely hope that the justness of my intentions will plead my excuse for the freedom of this letter, when I assure you that the irresistible impulse of love alone induces me thus to address you. Madam, I say, from the first time I had the pleasure of beholding your adorable countenance I have never ceased to love you with the most *ardent* affection. It has created a *flame* in my bosom that I am confident will never be extinct unless *estrayed* by your disdain. From the amiability of your *countenance* and the *sensibility* it indicates, I have no doubt, I say, but your mind is susceptible of *impression,* and will not deny encouragement where honour alone is found to prompt the action. *Happiness* alone is the object of my suit, and I trust that that *happiness,* which is in your power alone to bestow, will not be *denied.* I doubt not from external appearances, that *you* would be a *treasure* to any man, and believing you such, I beg to offer you my *hand,* my *heart,* my *all,* which, if you think worthy of acceptance, my constant study and the height of

my ambition will be to make you happy. If, I say, you think I have violated gentility in thus addressing you, I ask your forgiveness, as you are a stranger to me, and a gentleman—one who calls himself a gentleman, I should say—who I wanted to introduce me to you said he wouldn't. I suspect he had some intention himself, and therefore a good reason why he wouldn't; and as I had no other way of *introduction* to you by any other means, I wrote this letter. I say, in order to give you an idea of the person who addresses you, I must inform you that I am the person who walked on the other side of the street from you on this very morning; and I am the person who sat before you in church and looked round at you, and could not take my admiring gaze off of you; also, I am the person, who, when the church let out, and I had walked on the other side of the street above you, crossed over, as you walked to Miss Bennington's. I was then going to my office; for, adorable creature, I am a practitioner of physic. By answering this letter you will greatly oblige, and at all times command,

"Madam,

"Yours, affectionately,

"JULIUS CAKE, M. D.

"P. S. Adorable Madam,—

"I want to know you soon, for how do I know but what you may be taken sick in this land of strangers. O! how I would watch over you, I say, free of all charge, and feel myself a thousand

times compensated in being beside you. My office is just round the corner, where I past you, where your answer would be thankfully received, or should it meet your approbation to address me through the post office within four days, it will also meet with immediate attention—Adieu.

"To conclude, I beg to refer you to the 1st chapter of the 2d Epistle of John, 12th verse. J. C."

"Some one is making a jest of Dr. Cake, the gentleman you pointed out to me this morning," said Ruth, handing the letter to Miss Bennington. "They must have observed him staring at us," and she could not refrain from laughing.

Miss Bennington glanced at the letter, caught an idea of its contents, and burst into a merry laugh. "It's true—true, and in right down earnest," she exclaimed. "I had the honour of receiving just such an epistle from the doctor. I was very much provoked at first, and had made up my mind to request the pleasure of his absence the first time he came to our house afterwards; but you know, Miss Lorman, my father is a 'public character,' and the doctor is one of his constituents, so I laughed at it; and I am very glad I did; it was the best thing I could have done. He's cracked, surely cracked."

Here William Bennington took the letter from his sister, and, as Ruth expressed no disapprobation, he read it with an irresistibly ludicrous manner. It was amusing to see Billy, who, with a broad grin on his countenance, stood looking up in the face of the

reader, twisting his own features in unconscious imitation.

"Ha, ha, ha! excellent well," exclaimed William Bennington, bursting into an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

"Perdition catch my soul, but I do love thee."

"Miss Lorman, have you a Bible? Do let us see what the first chapter of the second Epistle of John, twelfth verse says! by that text there hangs a tale, no doubt."

Ruth rose to get it.

"Tell me, Miss Lorman, where it is—I should go."

"Thank you, sir," replied Ruth, "I will get it," and in a moment she brought it. Mr. Bennington took it and found the passage, when, with nasal twang, he read as follows:

"Having many things to write unto you, I would not *write* with pen and ink; but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full."

"Hurrah for the Doctor!" exclaimed Mr. Bennington, in unrestrained jocularity. "Doctor Julius Cake, he should have been christened after the Doctor in the Merry Wives of Windsor, and then his title would be so euphonious—Dr. Caius Cake. A rose, Miss Lorman, a rose, as the sweet Juliet said, by any other name; and why not a doctor? 'I do remember an apothecary,' ha, ha! I am the mortal he that 'wouldn't introduce the Doctor.' Miss Lorman, be

merciful in your displeasure, as you love mercy. Well, I will say this much for the doctor, that this is as appropriate a text as was ever quoted."

"What shall I say to him?" asked Ruth, "Mr. Bennington, Miss Bennington, tell me."

"The Doctor is quite an inoffensive fellow, I assure you, Miss Lorman," replied William Bennington, "he has the best intentions, had he not, as I am the gentleman who 'wouldn't,' there would be cause of fear. If you will give me the letter, I will return it to the Doctor, and say to him, 'that you cannot but feel complimented at the offer he has made you, but that your heart is already lost—that you are engaged.'"

"Do so," said Ruth, "if you please," and Mr. Bennington retained the letter.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Dr. Cake's epistle afforded amusement to the little party at Mr. Lorman's for the rest of the evening. William Bennington was determined the sport should not stop there; accordingly on his return home, he enclosed the letter—which bore Ruth's name only on the cover—in another envelope, and directed it to Miss Judson—for, after a careful perusal, he saw that without any alteration, Miss Judson might take it to herself. Being aware that she was unacquainted with the Doctor, and was of a character easily to imagine, that "admiring gazes" were fixed on her at church, and gentlemen would cross the street, the nearer to behold her; he knew whether she had observed any one admiring her or not, or passing her with smitten heart, that on the reception of the letter, she would easily fancy, and naturally, it had occurred. There was a lazy loafer of a free negro in Perryville, called Sam, who played the fiddle at parties, and did odd-and-end jobs about, by which he lived. William instantly concluded to enjoin secrecy on him, enforce it with a consideration, and make him the bearer of the letter to Miss Judson. Luckily, as he entered the town in the morning, he met Sam, who was shuffling along at a lazy pace, with odd slipshod shoes on his feet,

and carrying a little basket containing blacking and shoe brushes—for among Sam's other vocations, he had taken to that of an itinerant boot-black.

"Sam, which way this morning?" said William Bennington, addressing him; "take care, or you'll leave your shoes behind you."

"I'm gwine, Master William," replied Sam, touching his hat, and thrusting his feet further into his shoes, "to clean Dr. Cake's boots."

"The Doctor is getting to be quite a dandy lately, Sam!"

"Yes, sir!" said Sam with a knowing leer, "good reason for it may be, Master William."

"Sam, you black rascal, tell me—did you take—here"—putting a bit of silver in Sam's hand—"did you take a letter for Doctor Cake on Sunday, to Mr. Lorman's—the family who have lately come here?"

"Master William—but you mus'n't tell the Doctor though—he'll be for flaking me, and stop his shoe-blacking."

"No, I won't tell the Doctor, don't you fear—and if you lose any thing by it, I'll make it up; when did he write the letter?"

"After church time, in the afternoon, sir—he was a mighty time at it, and he tared a good many of 'em up afore he could get it right—he kept me there all the while, and I ha'n't seed the colour of his money for my trouble yet neither! that's sep'rate thing from boot blacking, and sweeping he office—a'n't it now, Master William?"

"I should think so! Sam, you have seen the colour of my money already, and you shall see more of it. I want you to carry a letter for me, and—"

"What, Master William, he, he, he! to the same place, sir?"

"Hide your ivory and hear me, you black rascal," exclaimed William, unable to suppress a smile at the cunning laugh of Sam; "no, not to the same place—you must take it to Mr. Judson's—do you know Mr. Judson and his sister?"

"Yes, sir!" exclaimed Sam, evidently surprised at what he supposed to be the purpose of his errand there.

"Now, pay attention to what I say, Sam. You must take this letter there—don't take it into the store, but take it to the door beside the store, that lets into the part of the house where the family live—rap at that door, and give it to whoever comes. Don't you stay about there after you give it—come away—and mark now, do not on any account tell who sent you."

"But s'pose they say I must tell," said Sam, wiping his thumb and finger, preparatory to taking the letter.

"Say a gentleman, whose name you don't know, but that you believe he is a doctor."

"A doctor—this here letter does look like the Doctor's any how," said Sam, turning it over and casting a curious glance on it.

"It does, hey? mind Sam—don't mention my

name—be off with it now—and if you want to see the colour of my money, let me see you at Mr. Bowers' book store, as soon as you have delivered it."

Sam proceeded with a quickening step towards Miss Judson's, whose residence lay in the direction he was walking when William stopped him, and at no great distance beyond Dr. Cake's office. The Doctor happened to be standing in his door, and seeing Sam advancing towards him with a letter in his hand, he took it for granted that it was for himself, in answer to his of Sunday.

"Ha! Sam, Samuel, I say, step quick; the prescription is taken, hey? I say, Sam—and the medicine has operated? The sweet creature is certainly quick on the trigger!"

But Sam drew back, and told him the letter was not for him.

"Hey! I say, Samuel, did you not deliver my letter?"

The Doctor generally, had a very precise manner of conversation.

"Yes, Doctor, I give it, and a mighty long scramble I had on't—to my hidear it's rising a mile."

"I say, Samuel, did you give it to the lady herself? Samuel, I hope—speak out, did you—I hope you did not boot black it as you have that—I say, did you?" said the Doctor with anxiety, looking at the letter which Sam held, and which plainly bore his post mark.

"No, sir," ejaculated Sam, looking at the soiled

letter, and making matters worse by wiping it on his cuff, "consarn it! I washed my hands then, and carried t'other in a piece of paper, till I seed the little boy."

"I say, Samuel, did you not give it to the lady herself?"

"N-no, sir, but I give it to the little boy, and I stood at the bars and seed him give it to the lady. And you may ask Master Bennington and Miss Bennington, they were a-sitting with her—and they all read it and liked it, I tell ye, Doctor, for they did laugh—he, he, he!—mightily!"

As Sam spoke he hurried on. The Doctor, after a moment of speechless wonderment and chagrin, recovered himself, and, burning to know more about it, called after Sam lustily, but that worthy pretending to be out of hearing, hastened on. The Doctor seized his hat and cane, and making after, soon overtook him.

"Why, I say—why did you not stop when I called you, Samuel?" exclaimed the Doctor, as he drew near Sam, and in so angry a tone, that fearing something might happen between the Doctor's cane and his head, Sam stopped, for he had never heard the Doctor's voice sound so belligerant before. "Why did you not stop—I say, Sam—when I called you?"

"Did you call me, sir?" said Sam, with a look of inquiry; "I'm hard of hearing, you knows, Doctor, and I'm in a torn down hurry; if you be's a-gwine this way I'll tell you—'cause I must be gwine."

The Doctor, putting animated interrogations, walked a step or two before Sam, until they arrived immediately opposite to Mr. Judson's, but without extracting from him anything more than he had already heard, saving that they not only laughed mightily, but that they "kept a-laughing."

"Damnation!" muttered the Doctor, "you are a-going to make another damned Tom-fool of yourself with that letter."

"No, sir, the gentleman what sent this, paid me before I started."

"That was right—I say, Samuel, that was right—the pills I gave you last week for your griping, Samuel, will pay for all errands of that kind in my behalf. Who's that letter for?"

"It's to go to Mr. Judson's, Doctor," replied Sam, evasively.

"Well, there's Mr. Judson's, I say, Samuel," quoth the Doctor, pointing emphatically at Mr. Judson's house with his cane. "Why do you stand gaping here, Samuel—why not go about your business?"

"It would ha' been done if you hadn't a-kept me," muttered Sam, as he stumbled across the street.

The doctor stood in a brown study, gazing unconsciously at Mr. Judson's house, and not until he was aroused from his reverie by Sam's rap at the front door, did he retrace his steps to his office.

Miss Elizabeth Judson happened to be seated at her front window over her brother's store—for the

lower room of his dwelling-house was thus occupied —and from the sewing, which she would have alleged claimed her whole attention, she not unfrequently cast her eyes into the street. On beholding the Doctor, for she knew him by sight, though she had never been introduced to him, and Sam in earnest confabulation, she very naturally remarked them. And when Sam with a letter in his hand, stopped opposite, with the Doctor, and the latter pointed to her house, and she heard the rap of Sam, she called to a little black boy who she said was her foot-boy, and who was master of all work, and named Washington. (Washington's name she never abbreviated, and when she heard it done by the boys or her brother, it gave her almost as much pain as when her brother, from an olden habit of which she was endeavouring to break him, called her "Lizzy.") On this occasion she particularly elongated the name.

"Wash-ing-ton, run down stairs and go to the front door; did you not hear the rap."

"In a minute, Missus."

"Never mind slipping on your livery-jacket, Washington, run." To herself she said—"It's a letter for me from Dr. Cake—what can it be about? —I do not know him to speak, but I have often caught his eye."

Here Washington, a knotty-headed "foot-boy," in an under-garment the condition of which, for the honour of foot-boys, required the aid of the

livery-jacket, entered the room and presented the Doctor's letter to his mistress.

Miss Elizabeth Judson read and re-read the letter—examined the superscription again and again, arose and looked in the glass, and then called Wash-ington, and interrogated him over and over again as to what the bearer had said.

"Nothing," Washington reiterated, "but he telled me to give it to you, ma'am."

"The dirty fellow, he might have washed his hand doing such an errand, I think."

At this remark of his mistress, Washington cast suspicious glances at his own hands and slid them down his sides.

Miss Judson was certainly delighted—she wished the letter had come from a handsomer man—but she was delighted nevertheless, for she had arrived at that age when, if such epistles come at all to a portionless lady, they come like "angel's visits." She being a new comer in the town, knew nothing of Dr. Cake, but that he was a doctor, and that title, she felt, must belong to a respectable man—quite a respectable man—and that any peculiarities in his dress might arise from the hurry of professional business, or the eccentricity of genius—thus thought Miss Judson, at least after the receipt of the letter. Previous to this, when the Doctor had been pointed out to her—it was on Sunday, and, strange to say, the Doctor was at that moment with his head turned from Miss Judson, gazing at Ruth—she looked as if

he had administered to her one of his vilest drugs. Now, in reflecting upon the Doctor, she said unto herself—"Ay, yes, when I saw him on last Sabbath, with his head turned, it was his modesty—yes, as soon as he saw my head turned towards him, his modesty arose. That is always the way, they say, with a true passion. I declare he is very respectful —very indeed. He saw me at the window, and how intently he looked, but the moment he caught my eye he turned away. Only think, only here a few days, and this to happen! I shall write home to-morrow. I wish the people wouldn't keep coming in the store, so I shan't have a chance to talk to brother about Doctor Cake till dinner-time. I wonder if I had better send for him?—Wash—no, I shall get nothing out of him if I do. He wants me to stay and keep house for him. I'll let him see that I have chances, anyhow, so that he may set a right value on my kindness." Here Miss Judson arose and descended the stairs to see if her brother was unengaged; he was busy with a customer. She ascended again, took a pen and ink, and thought she would indite a note requesting to see the Doctor on the tender subject—then she thought she had better send a verbal message by Washington, but at last she concluded to wait and consult her brother, but she got completely into the fidgets before dinner-time.

Dinner was on the table, her brother had been

twice sent for before he came. He entered in a hurry, saying:

"Lizzy, fine day's business this—I have had the store full of customers all day."

"Brother," said Miss Elizabeth, bridling, "I rejoice to know you are doing so well, it gives me great pleasure—but, brother, you convey your good news in a way to give me pain"—

"Pain! why what's the matter, Lizzy," ejaculated Mr. Judson, scarcely able to articulate, his mouth was so full.

"There it is again, brother, I have repeatedly requested that you would not call me out of my name—my given name is Elizabeth."

"Pooh, pooh, nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. Judson, as he transferred a goodly portion of roast beef from the dish to his plate—"I remember the time when you hated to be called Elizabeth, you thought it was too formal."

"That was when I was a child, brother—I now request you would call me by my given name—Lizzy sounds vulgar."

"Well, well, Liz—Elizabeth I will call you—why don't you eat?"

Miss Elizabeth Judson heaved a sentimental sigh—

"Brother, do you know Doctor Cake?"

"Know Doctor Cake—why don't you eat your dinner—to be sure I know Doctor Cake—why what the devil have you got to do with Doctor Cake, Liz—Elizabeth?"

"What kind of a gentleman is he, brother?" pursued Miss Elizabeth.

"Gentleman! he's a doctor here, and was afore I came to Perryville. He don't seem to have made much money—Doctor Wickelmous tends on me—I never was sick but once, and that was the summer after I came here—I was down, as I wrote you, with the bilious fever—Doctor Wickelmous boarded in the same house with me. I called him in—he got me through nicely, but he worked me with his medicine powerfully—my ribs were as plain to see, as a gridiron's—What's the matter, are you ailing that you don't eat—do you want a doctor?"

"May be a Doctor wants me, brother," said Miss Elizabeth, with a simper and an effort after the girlish manner of other days. Mr. Emanuel Judson laid down his knife and fork, and laughed heartily.

"Wants you! what, Lizzy, for a subject, a skeleton?"

"Brother," exclaimed Miss Elizabeth, rising from her chair in all the might of her dignity, "such language is unbecoming any man to a woman, any gentleman to a lady—let alone these ties of blood between us—let alone our blood relationship, I say."

"I mean no harm, Elizabeth—why what the deuce has got into you—what has happened? Damn Doctor Cake and his skeleton for a pair of jackanapes if you choose—What's the matter? sit down, sit down."

Miss Elizabeth, after some hesitancy, took her seat, and then putting on her most maidenly and modest

look, she narrated to her brother the whole affair of the letter, and ended by placing it in his hand, ordering Washington at the same time to hand her the Bible, in which, with an immense dog-ear, she had marked the text referred to by the Doctor.

Mr. Judson read the letter with great attention, every now and then making an exclamation at the complimentary passages. When he had concluded, he held it between his finger and thumb for a moment, as if he wished to comprehend the whole of it at once, without any obstruction, then handing it to his sister, he asked:—

"What are you a-going to do with this?"

"Why, brother, this is a matter of importance, what do you advise me, brother?"

"A matter of importance! pooh—Lizzy just give the letter to Wash and let him take it to the Doctor, and so end this foolery!"

"Foolery! how you talk, brother—because you have never felt the power of our sex, you think no one else can feel. Doctor Cake's feelings are evidently interested, and I do not want to wound them."

"Interested! wound them! ha, ha, ha! Lizzy, don't be upish now—ha, ha! I can't help it."

"Brother, I have feelings at least, I hope you will admit"—saying which, Miss Elizabeth Judson, between anger and mortification, began to sob.

Her brother, though a rough, was not an unfeeling man. He subdued therefore with a strong effort, his almost unresistible propensity to laugh, and

in the most coaxing tone he could assume, soothed his sister. She had only been with him for a short time—he was a bachelor, and having no one else to be interested in, he was attached to her; he therefore shrunk from giving her pain.

"Come, don't be upish, Lizzy—hang it—Elizabeth I mean—do just as you think best—have the Doctor if you choose."

"I have not said I would have him," replied Miss Elizabeth, drying her eyes, and a little nettled with her brother for his indifference to her marriage; "but I wish to do, in all events, what's genteel, lady-like, and proper."

"Well, you know, Elizabeth, I have no pretensions to know what is lady-like and proper—I am not in that line."

"Well, brother, my mind is made up; I don't wish to write to Doctor Cake—I wouldn't know how to say it. You know him—suppose you just ask him to step round here this afternoon, you can then introduce him to me, and leave us together. I can then, at least, thank him for the honour he has done me—while I let him know, that I should be happy to see him as—a friend. And, you know, brother, as things may turn up, I can afterwards make up my mind."

"Well, sister, as you choose, as you choose—I will ask him round here, this afternoon."

Mr. Judson here arose from the table and entered the store, while Miss Elizabeth repaired to her toilet, to put on all her charms, saying to Washington as she went:

"Wash-ing-ton, take the tin basin into the back yard, and get the towel, which you will find among the dirty clothes, and give yourself a good washing; then brush your livery jacket nicely, and come to me—do it instantly. Wash-ing-ton, I shall want you."

While Miss Judson was at the toilet, she called Washington several times, and ordered him to go and see if her brother was in the store. He returned with: "yes, ma'am, master's there." Miss Judson thought, he never would go to give the invitation. After she had arranged her toilet with all possible care—displaying old-fashioned gold—or apparent gold beads—"all is not gold," &c.—close round her neck—and an enormous pair of modern earrings, with a cameo breast-pin, she with a stately step, in which she tried to coax a little timidity, entered her parlour, and called on Washington again to see if his master was in the store. Washington obeyed the order, returned, and said:

"Master's just this minute gone out, ma'am—I seed his coat-tail as he was gwine."

"Going, why don't you say, Washington? I declare, you associate so much with these bad boys in the street, that it not only spoils your clothes, but your pronunciation. I wonder (to herself) if I should remain in my room and not enter the parlour until Doctor Cake has been brought in by my brother; or had I best be here to receive him? he is, I have no doubt, very diffident. I think I will remain.

Cake certainly is not a pretty name, but Julius certainly is."

Meanwhile, Mr. Judson, anxious to get back to his store, with his mind intent on business, for his fall customers were now coming in, it being that season, hurried round to Dr. Cake's, and entering that worthy's office, found him sitting there.

The Doctor arose with professional courtesy and gravity, and offered Mr. Judson a seat.

"Thank you, Doctor, I am much obliged to you; I must not tarry, Doctor,"—here Mr. Judson cleared his throat—"Doctor, I wish you would call round and see my sister—she is—"—here Mr. Judson, in glancing into the street, beheld one of his largest country dealers, who, he had heard, had been in town several days, and he had wondered, why he had not called at his store—the fear arising in his mind that he might be accommodated elsewhere, as a rival in trade had lately opened a hardware establishment. As soon, therefore, as Mr. Judson espied him, he called out—"Ah! my old friend, Mr. Blowglass, how do you do? how is your family?" and he hastened out to meet Mr. Blowglass, shake him by the hand, and abduct him to his store. As he went, he said hastily to Doctor Cake—

"Doctor, don't forget to call round as soon as you can. My sister wants to see you."

"Certainly, sir—I say, certainly, Mr. Judson, I shall wait on Miss Judson immediately. Are the symptoms—I say, are the symptoms dangerous, Mr. Judson?" But Mr. Judson was out of hearing

across the street, shaking hands with his friend, Mr. Blowglass.

"Ah!" exclaimed Doctor Cake in self-congratulation—"A patient—I say—a patient—I get along with the women, wonderfully." Looking at himself in a bit of broken glass, that he had fixed against the wall, the Doctor continued—"I say, Doctor Julius Cake, you are not handsome; but you are certainly genteel, Doctor—Judson, Mister Judson, employs Wickelmous, the quacking fellow—but *Miss* Judson employs Doctor Cake! I opine from this day and date, I'll have the two of them. Something bilious, I expect; though that old maid Judson looks knotty—she'll last, I say—but she must be acclimated." With such thoughts, the Doctor proceeded forthwith to Mr. Judson's. Washington answered to the rap, and ushered him into Miss Judson's parlour, where he found the lady on the sofa, with her head in pensive attitude on her hand, that was supported by the arm of the sofa. The lady half rose, as the doctor entered, and said, in a soft low voice, with glance somewhat downcast:

"Doctor Cake, I believe?"

"My name, ma'am. I believe, I have the honour of addressing Miss Elizabeth Judson?" Miss Judson bowed, and played with the tassel of her cape; while the doctor, placing his hat and cane on the chair, with tiptoe step advanced. She requested him to be seated. He placed himself on the sofa beside her, and gently took her hand. The lady bowed her head, and said:

"Doctor, I have," she was about to add, "received your letter," but the Doctor interrupted her with—

"A fever, I perceive, Miss Judson!—please to put out your tongue."

"Sir!" exclaimed the lady, starting.

"Yes, Miss Judson—I say a fever! Your system is in a state of excitement; purgatives and bloodletting may be necessary: but, I say, madam—Miss Judson, don't be alarmed." So speaking, the doctor pressed his finger upon her pulse, and drew his watch from his fob.

"Alarmed! Dr. Cake—I do not understand! Did you see my brother?"

"I say surely, ma'am—Miss Judson. I had not time particularly—I say—to inquire of him into your symptoms, but I know, from your delicate frame—I say—Miss Judson, and your habits, that your disease would be of the bilious character."

The lady looked bewildered for a moment, and then exclaimed, "This is a mistake, sir; I am not sick! I!—my habits!"

The doctor instantly concluded that Miss Judson was flighty, and that her brother, without informing her—as, like many patients, she might refuse to have a doctor—had sent him: he therefore said—

"I say, Miss Judson, your brother did not deem you at all ill—merely—I say—a little indisposed; but, Miss, a lancet in time is like a stitch in time. This sofa is not a good place for the operation: had you not better—I say—Miss—had you not better let me attend you to your chamber?"

"To my chamber!" exclaimed Miss Judson, starting up in amazement and indignation—"you vile, abandoned man, you!"

"She's as crazy as a bed-bug—mad as a March hare"—thought the Doctor. "I sha'n't be able to manage her. Boy (aside to Washington, who stood looking on with his eyes like saucers) go down and ask your master to step here."

"What! dare you send my boy away, you vile villain!" exclaimed Miss Judson, who had not overheard exactly what he said, but who concluded, from Washington's attempting to obey the order, that the doctor had told him to leave the room. "Wash, stay where you are, sir. If you dare to budge I'll skin you—that I will. There, sir"—and suiting the action to the word—she snatched the Doctor's letter from her bosom—"there, sir, take your vile letter, you most infamous person!" So saying, with the eye of a fury, Miss Judson flung past the amazed doctor, and slammed the door after her with a bang like a musket.

The doctor snatched up the letter—looked at the superscription—"Miss Elizabeth Judson"—hesitated a moment—"She is certainly cracked," thought he—opened it—and beheld his epistle to Miss Lorman! He stood a moment in perplexed and awful cogitation; then, grasping his cane firmly, he darted out of the room, with fell purposes on Sam; but, as he reached the turn of the step, he stopped—thinking it best to see Miss Judson and make an explanation, before she should circulate her present impressions

through the town, which he feared would be greatly to his injury. He heard a door open, and, on looking up, he beheld the lady.

"Miss Judson—madam—I say—I implore you to listen to me for one moment. This letter was not intended for you"—and he stepped towards her.

"Not intended for me! you vile, beastly falsifier!" exclaimed the lady, shutting the door to within a few inches, and screaming through the aperture—"didn't I see you direct your black boot-black to my very door—yes, didn't I see you myself!" With this Miss Judson shut the door, and the doctor heard her lock and bolt it. He hurried out into the street in search of Sam.

William Bennington, who had been duly informed by Sam of the delivery of the letter, had been prying about the doctor's office thereafter—expecting a *denouement*—and had seen Mr. Judson enter, and the Doctor leave in a hurry, in the direction of Mr. Judson's. He therefore followed him—and, from a store opposite, watched his smiling ingress and his wrathful egress. Stepping out, he joined him with the salutation—

"Doctor, good evening!—how does the world treat you, Doctor?"

The Doctor started, as a nervous patient would under his lancet.

"Sir—I say—Mr. Bennington—you were, I am informed by that infernal black rascal, Sam—I'll Sam him"—clenching his cane closely—"you were the last Sabbath at Mr.—"

"Ah! Doctor," interrupted William, "I have been in search of you. Yes, as you say, I was the last Sabbath at Mr. Lorman's, when your letter to Miss Lorman was received by that lady. She felt very much complimented."

"Complimented!—yes—I say—I understand!—she returns compliments with—I say—laughter, sir!"

"Who told you so, Doctor?"

"Sam, sir, Sam."

Here William contrived to extract from the Doctor, though he could with the greatest difficulty suppress his laughter sufficiently to question him with gravity, an account of all of which our readers are aware,—which the Doctor concluded by saying—

"That's your sweet girl—I say—Mr. Bennington, that you have been puffing up to me, sir—not only to laugh at my letter, sir—I say—which was meant honourably—but, sir, she must send it to this vixen, and ruin my character—ruin my character—I say, sir; for she will report all over town that I—"

"Doctor," interrupted William Bennington, "let me explain to you, give me your attention a moment. Sam misinformed you, the letter was received by Miss Lorman—you should never send such messages by Sam—while my sister and myself were present. We therefore insisted, as in politeness bound, that she should read the letter, and not stand upon ceremony; she accordingly did so, she was evidently agitated when she read it, and not knowing you, and being a stranger in the place, it

was quite natural that she should make inquiries. In this way my sister and myself saw the letter; what we laughed at—myself and sister, I mean—was at Sam, who stood peeping over the bars. I assure you, Doctor, you should never make Sam a messenger in these affairs. Miss Lorman felt very much complimented—she is indeed a sweet girl—she fully appreciates the honour you intended her; she sighed, and requested me to say to you, that she was engaged. You know, if a lady's hand is already given away, there cannot be the slightest grounds—"

"Yes, I say," interrupted the Doctor, "that is very true, Mr. Bennington; but, sir, I say, how came she sir—how came Miss Lorman to send my letter, sir—to alter the superscription, sir—which I believe is an indictable offence, and send it by Sam to that vixen, sir?"

"My dear Doctor, I am about explaining the matter to you."

"If you please, sir—I say, if you please, Mr. Bennington."

"Miss Lorman knowing," resumed William, "that I was acquainted with you, requested me to tell you what I have related, and at the same time, she handed me your letter to return to you; I took the letter home with me on Sunday evening for that purpose—and enclosed it in an envelope, with the intention of putting your direction on it; but after I had sealed it, I found that some one had taken away my inkstand. I went to my sister's room for it—she

had just folded a piece of lace in a note for Miss Judson, when I entered her room, and asked for my inkstand; she handed it to me, and at the same time, gave me the note, requesting me to direct it to Miss Judson, and leave it at her brother's store, when I went down town, or send one of the servants with it. I am very sorry, Doctor, very sorry indeed—but the fact is, that a misdirection of these letters has made your *cake* all dough, at Judson's."

"All dough at Judson's"—ejaculated the doctor in his earnestness, not at all taking William's play upon his name—"sir, I say, the cake 'll be all dough all through the city; I say, sir, I shall have my character and professional prospects entirely ruined by Miss Judson's representation of this affair; I say, sir—Mr. Bennington, you have no comprehension of what a fury she was in. If she holds on in this way, by God! sir, I say, I believe she'll go before the grand jury, and try to put me in the penitentiary!"

"Doctor, if you think the business is so serious as this, I will go instantly and explain it to the lady. I believe, Doctor, she would like to be made a *cake* of."

"Damn me, if ever I make a *cake* of her, sir; no sir, not to save the race from utter extinction. She may stay dough to the end of the chapter. But you will see her at once, will you, Mr. Bennington?"

"Instantly," replied William, "and he accordingly repaired to Miss Judson's, and made the explanation.

END OF VOLUME I.

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