HOWARD PINCKNEY.

A Novel.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "CLINTON BRADSHAW," "EAST AND WEST," ETC., ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO THE HON. OGDEN HOFFMAN,

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DEAR SIR:

When some of the "ungentle craft" attacked with asperity my first essay at novel-writing, which was an attempt to portray the adventures of one of that profession of which you are so distinguished an ornament, you were so kind as to come to the rescue, though I was then personally unknown to you, and to say that the portraiture was not unfaithful.

Mine, I fear, is not the only bantling whom your eloquence has saved from the consequences of error. Be that as it may my gratitude is none the less; and I am proud of this public opportunity of avowing it, and of inscribing with your name, in token of my thankfulness, an effort which I hope is worthier of your approval.

Yours, with great regard,

THE AUTHOR.

ST. LOUIS (*Missouri*), August 15, 1840.

HOWARD PINCKNEY.

CHAPTER I.

"Ah, whither away, Fitzhurst?" said Colonel Bentley to his friend as they met in a fashionable street of a certain gay metropolis; "you step as if you were carrying your skirts from a rascally bailiff, and that's more in character with me than with you."

"Colonel, how does the world treat you?" rejoined Fitzhurst, taking the proffered hand of the military gentleman of the militia,—for the command of a regiment of such soldiers had given the colonel his title.

"So, so—merely so, so," replied the colonel; "which way are you going, Fitzhurst?"

"I am walking towards the wharf," replied Fitzhurst, raising his hand from his side with a letter in it as he spoke; "I have just received this from my friend, Howard Pinckney. He has arrived in New York from England, and I expect him to spend some time with me before he returns to Charleston."

"Ah, the gentleman you travelled on the continent with, whom I have heard you speak of so often and so highly?"

"The same."

"Egad, if your account of him be true, he'll make a sensation among the fair folks—hey?"

"Yes, if he tries; but he writes as if he were worn out with excitement, and wished to get into some quiet nook and vegetate awhile. My father, in consequence of the gout, thinks he will remain in the country this coming winter. The old gentleman fears that the temptations of the table at the dinner parties in town will be too much for him. My aunt and sister will not of course leave him, and I of course must not leave them; so if Pinckney has any wish of imitating those beasts that burrow through the winter, I can accommodate him with quarters."

"'Quarters!' that's a military phrase, Fitzhurst, hey? quartering on the enemy—that's a good *tale*, is'n't it? I must quarter somewhere, and as I don't believe I have an enemy in the world, I must quarter on my friends. Fitzhurst, I tell you that she-dragon of an aunt of mine is as close as a money-box that is only meant to receive and not to yield a cent until its dissolution, or until it bursts with the hoarding. I am almost tempted to wish her mortal,—oh! I tell you, Fitzhurst, I want the trifling matter of a hundred dollars—can't you let me have it?"

"Yes, colonel, I can accommodate you, and will do so with pleasure. I must step down to the boat, which must be in by this time, and will meet you at the hotel in half an hour."

"Fitzhurst, I shall be obliged to you."

"Not at all. Good luck to you till then, colonel," replied Fitzhurst, and they parted—the colonel proceeding directly to the hotel to await the coming of Fitzhurst, while that gentleman hastened to the wharf.

Preferring to walk, Fitzhurst had ordered Pompey, the woolly-headed official of the coach-box, to drive to the place. There he was, sure enough, propt high up in

his seat, and looking with an air of aristocratic disdain upon the hacks and hackney-coachmen around. The hackmen had ordered Pompey not to approximate too closely to their stand, as they had taken upon themselves to call the right of way, and he with much such a feeling as one of the noblesse of the ancient regime would have entertained if ordered by a mob of the canaille not to approach them, was holding back his horses in fear and contempt.

"See here, darkey," said one of them to him on observing that there was no one in the coach, "keep back and wait till your betters are served; you're sure of your load, old boy, so just wait for it there. A little walking wont hurt 'em, and if it does I'll bring 'em to you for a small charge."

"I say, Bob," called out another hackman to him who had just spoken, "twig that blackey's wool, will ye; hang me, if it don't stand out like a turkey-cock's feathers when he's a strutting, and its combed back as if the feller was a preacher. I took just such a looking feller the other day, only he had a white skin on him; dang me, if I know how far—I only charged him two dollars for the ride, and he poked the new ordinance at me, and I had to let him off for fifty cents. I say, Mr. Darkness (to Pompey), what will you take to take me all about town?"

Pompey disdained to reply. If any one had been sitting along side of him, he would perhaps have heard him murmur something about "white poor trash being below a coloured gentleman's notice." Nothing that Pompey said, however, reached the ears of those around. Pompey was evidently, in the abundance of his contempt, doing his best to produce the impression upon the hackmen that not a word of their's fell upon his ears, and that his eyes fell upon vacancy, though the latter organs every now and then, by a sharp glance, betrayed the fear, on the part of their

owner, that the hackmen might play him some scurvy trick or other.

If they entertained any such designs against Pompey's peace and dignity, they were deterred from fulfilling them, for it was at this moment that Mr. Fitzhurst made his appearance, and Pompey took care to address him, and ask if he should move any farther forward. His young master said "No," and stood in the crowd, near by, watching the advance of the steamboat, which, unlike those of the western waters, could be seen in a near bend of the harbour hurrying to its place of destination—punctual to the time at which it was advertised to appear.

Fitzhurst could not but be amused, as the boat was approaching, with the crowd about him. "Will you have a Gazette, sir; the last news is in it," asked a ragged boy, poking at the same time a newspaper almost in the face of Fitzhurst. "This is the Courier," said another boy, dovetailing himself between the first vender of news and the person addressed; "it has all the news of the week, and to-day's into the bargain, and its only a 'levy.'" "This, sir, is only a penny," quoth another lad, who, like his paper, was smaller than either of the others, and had contrived to get before both of them as Fitzhurst drew back to avoid the personal contact of the last supplicant.

"No, no; I want none of them," said Fitzhurst good-humouredly.

"Stand aside, boys," exclaimed a great lubber gruffly, as he edged the boys away with two large baskets that he bore on either arm containing cakes and fruit, by the sale of which he gained his livelihood. "Stand aside, you're always in the way of gentlemen." Then, in a coaxing tone, after he had shoved the boys aside, he said to Fitzhurst, "Won't you have some fruit or cakes, sir?" Fitzhurst shook his head.

"Do, sir, they're very cheap;" and, thrusting his right arm through the handle of the basket which he carried on that member, so as to enable him to raise the napkin from the cakes which he bore in the left-hand basket, he turned his head in the act, when the smallest boy took the opportunity slily to slip his hand in and purloin an apple. As soon as he grasped the forbidden fruit he withdrew it so suddenly as to strike the arm of the fruitman, who turned quickly and detected him. Enraged at the theft, and having his hands occupied, the fruit-vender drew back his foot to inflict summary vengeance on the boy. As he kicked at the urchin, a hackman, standing by, raised his whip, the thong of which he held in his hand, so that it formed a loop, and caught in it the foot of the fruitman, who consequently lost his balance and pitched over on his back, scattering his fruit and cakes around like the gifts of Ceres—though certainly not making a free-will offering. On the first moment of the fellow's confusion at his mishap the boy made his escape, while the hackmen caught up hastily sundry of his cakes and apples, to save him the trouble. The moment he recovered himself they stood with their hands in their pockets, whistling and gazing at the steamboat which had now reached the wharf, as if they were perfectly unconscious of his misfortune.

Fitzhurst had just time to offer the fellow the only consolation he could appreciate—a pecuniary consideration for his loss, when, on glancing towards the steamboat, which was now rapidly discharging her passengers, he beheld his friend, Howard Pinckney.

CHAPTER II.

It was not without reluctance that the family of Mr. Fitzhurst, senior, consented to remain on his estate during the winter. That family consisted of the son whom we have already introduced to our readers, whose Christian name was Sidney, a daughter Frances, or, as she was generally called, Fanny Fitzhurst, and a maiden lady, the aunt of these two last-named individuals; a sister of Mr. Fitzhurst, senior, named Rachellina Fitzhurst.

Paul was the Christian name of the old gentleman. He had lately been suffering severely under an attack of the gout, and it was not without several mental struggles, in anticipating those of speech which he feared to hold with his sister on the subject, that he made up his mind, if the contest alluded to should not be too severe, that he would remain in the country. He determined if he could not hold out, however, to capitulate upon what terms he might—perhaps yield himself a prisoner, and be taken into town.

"In the country," thought he, in turning over the advantages of the project in his own mind—"in the country I shall have my children's society more. I shall escape such an eternal round of company, for, though I like company when I am well, what good does it do me when I have the gout? In town if I go into the parlour I must be fixed off into something like what becomes a gentleman of the old school; yes, from self-respect—for company will be constantly coming. It's not so delightful a matter to deprive myself of the comforts of a morning-gown and squeeze my limbs into the tight circumference of a coat. If I go into the parlour I feel I ought to do it, for I am

not comfortable if I don't; and if I do, the gout takes possession of every limb;—and then if I remain in my room I have no company at all. Fanny's willing to stay with me, I know, but when her friends call, she must see them—and parties—parties—she must go to parties; and if I send for Joe Hartley to come and take a game of chess with me up in my chamber for company's sake, the fellow only irritates me. He must make, he does make, a sly move when a twitch seizes me, for I know I am the better player. He never beat me in his life when I was well, if I was in the humour for playing; and there's Sidney, he must be out and about, I don't like to confine him to the game, and what's the use of playing with him. I can always beat him, and he never cares if I do; he pays no attention to the game whatever; it's throwing time away. No, no; I must stay in the country; then Fanny will be with me, and not so much company to take her off. When she goes, Sister Rachellina can't attend me, and I'm left to that black jade, Beck. She tosses my bandages about and around my poor limbs as though she were playing with Rachellina's pet puppy. It don't signify; old maids are a crabbed set. I have no doubt before I can accomplish this arrangement the excitement and worry of mind will increase greatly my gout. But I must remain here—I must settle it the first favourable opportunity."

It was some time, however, before this favourable opportunity occurred. Miss Rachellina had suggested several alterations in the furniture, and was somewhat surprised to hear her brother instantly consent to them. On the next morning the order was given, and Pompey was despatched to the city, twenty miles off, to hear it fulfilled. On Pompey's return, he brought with him a package which he said Colonel Bentley had told him to give to his master. It proved to be a splendid set of jewellery, which, without informing his

daughter of his intention, Mr. Fitzhurst had ordered from Paris for her.

With perhaps less of parental ostentation than he would under other circumstances have exhibited, Mr. Fitzhurst presented them to Fanny. While she was looking at and admiring them, her father, after two or three premonitory coughs, and after twisting in his huge arm-chair as if his gout was more than usually severe, said:

"Fanny, my dear daughter—ah, ah! oh, my Fanny, my dear, fix this bandage a little looser. Be very careful, my dear child, do not in mercy touch my great toe. I feel as if it were a pincushion—as if ten thousand pins and needles were running into it. Daughter, do draw the centre table a little nearer to me, and spread the map of the county on it. Ah, our county road has been so well mended, the supervisor tells me, as he was here for the tax yesterday, that it will be almost as good as if it were M'Adamised."

"As if it were M'Adamised, brother!" ejaculated Miss Rachellina Fitzhurst in some heat.

"Upon my honour, sister," rejoined the old gentleman with considerable emphasis, "you said that like the report of a pistol. Yes, as good, almost as good as if it were M'Adamised—so the supervisor tells me. I don't know the fact of my own knowledge—I have not, as you know, travelled the road for a month. I don't believe I shall see a foot of it for the whole winter. Sister and daughter (in a subdued voice as though his regret was great), I don't believe but what—that is, I fear we shall have to spend this winter in the country."

"In the country!" exclaimed Miss Rachellina in the tone of one who had heard some awful calamity. "Why, brother, twenty miles from the city—the Hartleys gone to town, and the Bentleys going—with no neighbours but the farmers about here and the

people of the village; and the road to the city so bad that it will be impossible—it's worse than imprisonment. I would not myself, nor would I have Fanny, travel that road in winter. Twenty miles! and such a road—no, I would not travel it, brother, for your estate. The consequence is, we shall be here all winter without once seeing the city."

Mr. Fitzhurst, who claimed some honour himself for the locality of the road, which he was often heard to assert would be an excellent one when it come to be M'Adamised, felt somewhat offended by what his sister had said against it. He, therefore, replied—a twitch of the gout seizing him at the same time—with more than his usual asperity:

"Upon my honour, Miss Fitzhurst—you do not, upon my honour, madam, deserve the safety, and convenience, and pleasure, of a direct road. Show me a straighter road? There are five miles of it M'Adamised now—and as soon as the spring will allow, it will be finished to the city. It has been thoroughly repaired—the supervisor told me so yesterday,—you saw him here yourself. Why, yes; now I remember, you spoke in praise of the road."

"In praise of the road," replied Miss Rachellina, feeling that at this point it was necessary for her to make some defence; "so I did speak in praise of the road, such as it was in the summer—but summer is not winter, brother."

"Sister, I am certainly aware of the fact," said Mr. Fitzhurst with a solemn inclination of the head; "I am certainly aware of that fact—but the supervisor, Mr. Lenson, tells me that arrangements are made to have hands on the road all the winter;—that thereby all the mud-holes will be filled up, and that rails will be laid across the soft places."

"Rails! such travelling, I suppose, you call riding on a rail-road. Do you, brother?"

"Yes, sister, it's a *rail*-road, I suppose, if it's composed of rails, but"—

"Yes, brother, but the jolting, the jolting—it will be enough to shake one to pieces."

"I know it, sister; upon my honour, I know it; and how do you think that I, with my gout, my infirmities, am to get into town over it?"

During this discussion Fanny said not a word. She received the announcement of her father's intention of staying in the country with a face that was quite solemn at first, but which soon relaxed into an arch expression as the debate waxed warm. These discussions between her father and aunt never had anything serious in them; they generally ended in a miff of the moment, which was soon forgotten. There is no telling how far, however, this solemn subject might have carried them, for it was one of the gravest controversies they had ever held, when the servant entered—Miss Rachellina's especial servant, a little black girl, named Thisbe by the lady herself—and announced that there was a carriage coming up the lane, and that she believed it was Miss Bentley's. Miss Bentley and Miss Rachellina were especial friends. The latter rose, therefore, to proceed to the door, receive her friend, and herald her in; but as a parting shot, ere she closed the door after her, she said:

"Well, brother, I suppose, as usual, you will have your own way; but I don't see how you can reconcile it to your conscience, to your duty as a parent, to keep your daughter out here all winter without any society, except such plebeian people as we shall have visiting us from the village. I don't see, for my part, how you can reconcile it to your notions of family respect and regard for your daughter."

So speaking, Miss Rachellina, with her highest touch of dignity, threw back her head till the bow

of ribbon on the top of her cap bobbed as if it would snap off like a hollyhock in a high wind, and closed the door.

"Ahem! ahem!" commenced Mr. Fitzhurst, clearing his throat, on being left alone with his daughter. "Fanny, my dear, how do you like your present?"

"Very much indeed, father; they are set so chastely, and are indeed beautiful, exceedingly beautiful; but, father, indeed I wish you were well of your gout, for you suffer so much with it; and if you were, I would lean on your arm at the parties this winter, and wear my present, and say that my dear father gave it to me."

"Well, daughter, I tell you, you shall have the carriage whenever you choose, and no doubt my gout will be better with your good nursing; and then you shall go in town and stay as long as you wish, and go to all the parties."

"Heigh, ho! father, it is for your gout I care, not for myself; but last winter was such a delightful one, and I don't see why you should have the gout this winter. No matter; I will stay at home and read, and improve myself, for indeed I felt a great many self-reproaches last winter after I had returned from a party and sat over my solitary fire in my room. I used to think so often that I had wasted time, or been giddy, or something always arose to worry me. Recollect now, father, whenever I want a book, no matter what Pompey or the servants are doing, they must go to town for it. I don't believe Mr. Pinckney's brother's friend will stay very long with us if he has to spend his time in the country."

"My daughter, I hope that"—

Mr. Fitzhurst was interrupted in his remark by the entrance of his sister and her friend.

"Niece," said Miss Rachellina, with a much brighter look than that which sat upon her brow when

she left the room, "we have one consolation and comfort in remaining in the country at any rate: Miss Bentley has just come over to tell me that she thought of remaining; and when I told her that brother had made up his mind to stay in consequence of his gout, she at once decided upon it."

"Yes," said Miss Bentley, after saluting Mr. Fitzhurst and his daughter, "I have repeatedly thought to myself that I should like to spend this winter in the country, and now I am resolved."

Both Mr. Fitzhurst and his daughter expressed themselves delighted at the news. As it was growing dark, lights were now brought in by the servants; and as Mr. Fitzhurst could not move, without pain, to the parlour, the evening meal was handed round in the room in which they were assembled.

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Paul Fitzhurst was the son of a former governor of the state in which the scenes of our narrative occurred. He was descended from a very old and noble family of England: one of the younger branches of which emigrated to the United States when they were colonies of Great Britain. They acquired wealth in their new homes, and transmitted it to their descendants, who were so fortunate as to retain it, notwithstanding the repeal of the law of entail. Mr. Paul Fitzhurst was as proud of his pedigree as any Hidalgo of Spain could possibly be, notwithstanding he avowed himself a thoroughgoing republican. His

ancestors, however, at the time of the revolution, were not supposed to be remarkably attached to the new order of things. In fact, the cry of "tory" had been raised against one of them about the time that the colonial cause was darkest; but in the progress of events, when the thirteen stars waved to successive victories, and threatened their stripes in the shape of confiscations to the disaffected remnant who might remain after their national establishment, this ancestor of Mr. Fitzhurst received new light, and though he might have been reproached, in the phrase of the present day, with being an "eleventh hour" man, it is certain that what he lost in time he made up in zeal as soon as his eyes were opened upon the error of his way. Since the conversion of this ancestor to the republican cause, all the Fitzhursts had been advocates of it. The election of one of them to the gubernatorial chair, fully proves that the people of their state believed, at least, one of them sincere.

Mr. Paul Fitzhurst, while he loved republicanism, was wont to eulogise privately the British system in some respects, but he never could bring either his son or daughter to his way of thinking, though, strange to say, his sister coincided with him.

In fact, Mr. Fitzhurst looked upon himself, particularly when he caught the reflection from a mirror of his powdered head and queue, and his face calculated to set them off, as one of the last surviving representatives of the old aristocracy. Though of a quick temper, Mr. Paul Fitzhurst was never known to have but one quarrel, and that was with his elder brother, who, at the period at which our narrative commences, had been dead many years. The circumstances were as follows: His elder brother Josiah was a bachelor, a most singular being, a man of most eccentric habits, who became a fanatical member of the methodist church, a class of Christians against whom, we wish it under-

stood, we would not say one word, for we consider that they have done as much good as any other religious denomination. It was thought that Josiah had gotten a maggot in his head before he joined the methodists, but, be this as it may, a short time after his membership he came to the conviction that his brother's queue was a mere adornment of vanity, a meretricious, unsightly, and unrighteous appendage to the human form, and that it ought by all means to be abated—cut off from setting a bad example.

After this conscientious opinion had for some time possessed Josiah's head, he made a serious call upon his brother, formally introduced the theme which had caused himself so much uneasiness, and concluded by begging and praying him to lop off that excrescence of vanity forthwith.

As may justly be supposed, Paul was highly indignant thereat. He peremptorily refused; and so strongly was the impression that Josiah was insane made upon Paul's mind by the interview, that he had strong notions of taking out a commission of lunacy, for he was fearful if Josiah was left to himself he would not only squander his estate, but that under his strange hallucination he would commit some rash, perhaps awful act.

While Paul was debating this subject with himself, Josiah called one day, and with even more earnestness than before, renewed his supplication that Paul would consent to his proposition. Josiah averred, that he felt satisfied that, if Paul did not comply, some terrible dispensation would overtake both of them. Paul, as firmly as before, refused to part with his queue, but he became thoroughly convinced in his own mind that Josiah was insane, and he resolved that the very next day he would ride into town, and consult counsel as to what steps he should take with regard to his brother's unfortunate mental malady. Finding

that he could not prevail with Paul, Josiah appeared to drop the idea. He remained with his brother for several hours conversing upon indifferent topics, until dinner was announced, when the brothers sat down together, and partook of a very hearty meal. They broached some of Paul's best Madeira, and afterwards, when reflecting upon the matter, Paul could not but be of the opinion that Josiah tried to get him to drink more than was his custom. However, it is not known whether Josiah succeeded or not, but after they had cracked a bottle apiece, and smoked several segars, Paul fell asleep in his chair as they sat together.

It is not known what could have tempted Josiah; whether the deed was predetermined, or whether, on beholding his brother's queue sticking out at full length over his coat collar in pugnacious defiance, the sudden hallucination entered his mind, must ever remain in doubt. But this is a fact, that as soon as Paul gave evidence that he was asleep by a lengthened nasal announcement, Josiah deliberately drew a pair of large shears from his pocket, and with one clip he cut his brother's queue close off.

On the instant of the decapitation, and before Paul, awakened by the deed, was aware of the extent of the injury done him, Josiah made a precipitate retreat, bearing with him the dismembered trophy, like an Indian with the scalp of his enemy. Paul, notwithstanding he had asserted and believed that his brother was *non compos mentis*, and should therefore have forgiven misdeeds for which Josiah could not have been held morally responsible, nevertheless became maddened almost to insanity himself. The brothers never spoke together again. Paul always maintained that Josiah was insane, though from a brotherly regard he never cited the decapitation of his queue as a proof of the fact. Josiah, after a life of eccentric and humorous adventures, gave himself a mortal injury,

in attempting, from the top of his house, the experiment of flying with a machine which he had made for that purpose. He humorously said, as his servants were bearing him to the house, that he had come to the conclusion of the Dutchman who had tried a similar experiment with similar results—"'That flying was easy enough, but that lighting was the devil.' But," said he, when he had been laid on the bed, "hurry to the village for Mr. Maulsby, the lawyer; I'll leave all my property to my little nephew Sid, and that I think will prove to my brother that I am not clear cracked, if I did cut his queue off. Ha, ha!—oh, my side! No, there's some method in my madness." And this was the end of a most eccentric scion of the family of Fitzhurst.

Miss Rachellina Fitzhurst was a maiden lady, of whom we might say, as of Campbell's beechen tree:

> "Thrice twenty summers has she stood
> In bloomless, fruitless solitude."

This "single blessedness," however, we have the best authority—her own—for averring, was her own fault. But Miss Rachellina's heart could not be said to resemble the bark of the above-named tree, on which, we are told by the poet, was carved

> "Many a long forgotten name."

On the contrary, though it was evident from the maidenhood of the lady that the impressions made upon her heart were not very deep, it nevertheless could not be said that they were "forgotten," as Miss Rachellina was in the habit of recounting to Fanny the names of a list of despairing swains whom she had known in her time. But then it might have been that the impressions were only made upon the hearts

of those unfortunate gentlemen, and that Miss Rachellina, as she could not reciprocate their passions, remembered them in pity.

Miss Deborah Amelia Bentley, whose visit to Miss Rachellina we have recorded in our last chapter, was also a maiden lady of about Miss Rachellina's age. In a little back parlour which Miss Rachellina held to be her especial room, over a fragrant cup of tea, it was much the custom of these ladies to rehearse, for the edification of Fanny, the chivalrous attentions which they had received in their bellehood. If Fanny did not allow something for the imagination of these ladies, the degeneracy of the present age must have been made manifest to her. Fanny knew the history of every beau they ever had, or even thought they had. When alone, however, with her aunt, Miss Rachellina would more than insinuate, after one of these conversations, particularly if Miss Deborah had taken the lead in it, that her friend was a little fond of exaggeration with regard to her beaux. And Miss Bentley, when similarly situated with Fanny, would frequently renew the theme which had been broken by the absence of Miss Rachellina, when she would smile with peculiar incredibility while alluding to the interpretations which her absent friend had given to the alleged attentions of certain gentlemen. Miss Deborah would, moreover, recount, as if she designed a set off to Miss Rachellina's narrative, certain passages between those very gentlemen and herself which had a marvellous cast towards the tender. But these two fair maiden ladies were devoted friends; and for years past, at least, nothing had disturbed the harmony of their friendship. Miss Deborah had a large fortune, and Colonel Bentley was her orphan nephew. As the colonel was a gentleman at large, and had no means of his own, he depended entirely upon his aunt for resources; and as the

good lady did not bleed as freely as he could have wished, the greatest source of annoyance that the colonel had in the world—quite a common annoyance by the by—was the occasional want of the needful.

CHAPTER IV.

The estate of Mr. Fitzhurst was called "Holly," from a singular event, which was the subject of a tradition in the family. The first Fitzhurst who came from England received a large tract—a grant from the crown. He was fond of hunting; and one day, in an excursion of the kind, he ascended a precipitous hill. In the reckless pursuit of game, his foot slipped on the very brow of a precipice, and he would have been dashed to pieces in the valley below, had he not seized on the instant a holly bush, and regained his foothold. One of his descendants subsequently built a house near this hill, and in commemoration of the event called his estate Holly.

The evening of the day on which we introduced Sidney Fitzhurst to our readers, he made his appearance at Holly a little after dusk; but without his friend Pinckney. When he had disencumbered himself of his cloak and riding cap, Fanny took a seat on his knee, and passing her hand playfully through his hair, asked:—

"Well, brother, what news do you bring from the city? Did you see Jane Moreland? What did she say?"

"Fanny, Howard Pinckney has arrived."

"Has he—come at last—but, I suppose, as he cannot bear the dulness of the country, he will only pay us a flying visit, and then flit away like a summer bird."

"Daughter," said Mr. Paul Fitzhurst, who, with his gouty limb on a cushion, was seated in a velvet-covered arm-chair, which would have delighted the Sybarite, provided he were goutless, "I hope we have inducements enough even in the country at Holly to interest even Mr. Pinckney. His father was an old friend of mine, a gentleman of capacity and distinguished, and he found amusement enough here when we were young men together to spend some time with me."

"Ah, but father, that was in the summer."

"In the summer—yes, it was in the summer. His duties required his presence in Washington City in the winter; and if they had not, I trust he would not have died of ennui if he had spent a winter with me; upon my word, daughter, it is a bad habit you are getting into of jeering at the country."

"Oh, father! this is the very first intimation I have uttered, that could lead to the suspicion that I did not think the country a very paradise. I am satisfied that such an intellectual gentleman as the elder Mr. Pinckney could easily have killed a winter in the country. That is (and she spoke in a whisper to her brother), if the winter did not kill him. But (*aloud*) do, brother, tell us what kind of a gentleman is your Mr. Howard Pinckney."

"Why, my dear Fanny," replied her brother, playing with her side curl as he spoke, "a very clever fellow—so you must look out for your heart."

"Look out for my heart—heigh ho, there is no need of looking out for it here—it's of no use to me—I can let it run entirely at large. Who's here to catch it? I'd give it for the asking."

"That's right; but mind and keep it till it is asked for; don't let any one steal the stray, Fanny."

"But, brother, tell me what kind of a looking man is Mr. Pinckney; is he tall or short, or ugly or handsome?"

"Fanny, you have heard me speak of him before."

"I know it—but now that he has returned from his travels I suppose his head's turned, and indeed I have forgotten your description of him, if you ever did describe him—I think you said he was good looking."

"Good looking! yes, I should say so—very."

"But tell me,—particularize."

Sidney laughed—"Fanny, you are a regular descendant of Mother Eve—well, then, he is tall, and very slim."

"Like his father," remarked Mr. Paul Fitzhurst.

"He has a high forehead, shaded with dark hair that is rather thin—he has a deep, sunken, and very black eye; a nose inclining to the Roman; a dimple on his left cheek and chin."

"Dimples! that's a woman's beauty."

"And whiskers that meet under his chin according to the fashion."

"Whiskers!" exclaimed Mr. Paul Fitzhurst,—"that's a most disgusting fashion. The old school of dress,—the old school of dress, Sidney, is the true habit for a gentleman."

"Father," said Fanny, mischievously, "I don't think—indeed I don't, that whiskers are stranger looking appendages than a queue."

"A queue—why, daughter, all the most distinguished men of England of the last age wore queues—most all the signers of the Declaration of Independence wore queues."

"Father, if you won't think I am saucy, I'll say that in the progress of human events they should have

made a Declaration of Independence against them—that when they cut off their allegiance from the crown they should have cut——"

"Daughter," interrupted her father, a disagreeable reminiscence crossing his mind at the moment, "that is being saucy,"—and after an instant he added, smiling, "you are a rebel, you—in all respects, but I forgive you."

"You should, my dear Pa," said Fanny, laughing; "for, to tell the truth, I do think powder and a queue set off a fine face admirably."

"I think so," said the old gentleman complaisantly.

"But, father," continued Fanny, "there are some faces that a queue makes very funny—there's Mr. Hartley's (here the old gentleman laughed), his nose sticks up before, and his queue sticks out behind, just as if there was a rivalry between them (at this the father laughed heartily); indeed I never see his queue sticking out so but I want to cut it off."

This last remark caused a frown to gather on the parental brow. Sidney turned his face from his father to hide a smile, and said:

"Fanny, Mr. Pinckney will come out with me to-morrow—he talks as if he would spend the greater part of the winter with us."

"Does he?—well I hope he'll like the country. Now I must play my lady—throw off my dishabille, and prim myself up."

"Fanny, Fanny," said her father, reprovingly, "I hope you always play the lady."

"To be sure I do, father; but, you know, I sometimes play it in dishabille, and that won't do before a strange gentleman."

"Daughter, it won't do before any gentleman,—there's excuse for me in my age, my gout, and my infirmities, but a lady,—fie, Fanny! there's none whatever."

"There, father, you agree with Aunt Rachellina—you said that precisely like her. Now, brother, as you have told us how very good looking Mr. Pinckney is, pray what are his other good qualities?"

"He is a man of talents, sister—his fellow collegians thought, of genius; he has a large fortune, does nothing, and is of course sometimes afflicted with ennui."

"Well, well," said Fanny, and she sighed, and turning to her father, said: "father, I did not mean that sigh for town, but I could not help thinking that sometimes when it is my lot to entertain Mr. Pinckney, while you are lying down, and brother is out, and Aunt Rachellina is at Miss Bentley's, particularly when this Mr. Pinckney is affected with ennui, that he will sit on one side of the fire-place and I on the other, and we will yawn at each other so sentimentally. No, father! don't frown so, you know it's the captive's privilege to complain, and I am in a very bad humour to-night. But," she continued, rising from her brother's knee, "I must go and tell aunt, that all due preparations may be made for the reception of this courtly Mr. Pinckney from abroad—I do believe that aunt will find out that Mr. P.'s father was an old beau of hers."

So saying, Fanny, with the agile and graceful steps of youth and health, and hope and beauty, glided out of the room.

CHAPTER V.

LETTER FROM HOWARD PINCKNEY TO CHARLES MATEMON, OF CHARLESTON, S. C.

MY DEAR MATEMON:—

Here I am once more on the *terra firma* of my native land. We were just twenty-four days on our voyage. No accidents, or incidents, except the loss of one poor fellow overboard in a gale. My fellow passengers were not much to my liking, and so I spent the most of my time in reading, or in leaning over the vessel sides and musing on the waste of waters around me.

"The sea, the sea, the open sea."

What a glorious song that is. You should hear it as I have heard it, while the stiff breeze bore us rapidly ahead, sung by a sailor whose enthusiastic tones made the nerves tingle, while they seemed to stretch to an illimitable distance over the waters, and make the wild waves merry with their melody and language so appropriate to the scene.

How sometimes a scrap of verse lives in one's memory. We know not how the deuce it got into our minds, but out it pops on some occasion, and then for the first time we know that we have remembered it. Often as I have looked out upon the waves I found myself repeating Byron's lines, as though they were my own spontaneous thoughts:

"Once more upon the waters—yet once more;
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
That knows its rider."

I have trod the deck beneath a bright and holy

moon, and felt as if the sensation of drowsiness would never weigh my eyelids down again. Those three lines which I have quoted pleased me more than all Byron's Address to the Ocean, in the conclusion of Childe Harold. There is too much effect in the address—too much theatrical effect—it seems studied for the occasion, like a player's dignified exit in the last scene; but what has this to do with my whereabout now. On my arrival at New York I received a letter from our old friend, Sid Fitzhurst, inviting me to go to —— and spend some time with him. Well, as I had nothing else to do, no fair cynosure to draw me east or west, or north or south, I determined to accept his invitation. You know well what a fine fellow he is, and I felt satisfied that his society would afford me great pleasure. Besides, as I wrote you, I have business relative to my pecuniary matters, which requires my presence here for a while.

On my arrival in ——, in the steamboat, I met Fitzhurst on the wharf ready to welcome me. Business detained me in town that day, and the next I proceeded with him to his father's.

Holly is the name of the estate, and it is beautifully situated. Arriving from a country so richly cultivated as England, the scene around me, as I proceeded to Holly, arrested my attention from the striking contrast. After passing five or ten miles from the city, the country appeared apparently uncultivated compared with those to which my eye has been lately accustomed. After journeying in an aristocratic old family coach (I like these family vehicles), over hill and dale, and through stream and woodland, we wound for several miles around the foot of a chain of hills through a wild country, and came all at once in view of a baronial-looking estate, with a village romantically situated beyond it. The village is called Springdale, and appears picturesque and beautiful; but I

suppose on visiting it, if I ever do, it will disenchant me, as have many beauties, whose attractions, reversing the general law, were greater in the distance.

I remember you wrote me that you met Sidney's father and aunt in one of your flying visits through their city, but that you were not fortunate enough to see Sidney's sister, as she was then indisposed. Well, sir, I have seen her for you. The family received me with the greatest kindness. Old Mr. Fitzhurst and his sister appeared to vie with each other in welcoming me with old-fashioned courtesy. Sidney's sister—I was impressed with her beauty at the moment of presentation—greeted me as demurely as her aunt, and yet I thought I saw a lurking humour in her eye. In the course of the afternoon we chanced to be left alone, when the lady changed her manner instantly, and said laughably:

"Do tell me, Mr. Pinckney, don't you think when I come to be aged—as old as aunt—that I will make a most dignified old maid? I am now in the course of study to that desirable end; and if I am not a little perfect, as the actors say, it will not be Aunt Rachellina's fault."

Before this I had felt dull as an oyster: but the maiden gay so completely altered her address—I had thought her the very pink of primness—that I really laughed outright.

"Come, Mr. Pinckney," said she archly, at the same time putting her finger to her lip to enjoin silence, "if aunt hears you I shall get a lecture; and aunt will insist upon it that, notwithstanding you are a gentleman of travelled experience and practised courtesy, you could not resist my hoydenish ways, and your mirth exploded in spite of you."

Matemon, this fair Fanny is certainly well calculated to make the hours pass uncounted. You are a

marrying man—therefore do I advise you at your earliest leisure to make a visit to Holly. I do, upon my honour, believe that this fair one would soon become your ladye love.

I will describe her to you—paint her with my pen. She is, perhaps, above the middle height. I am, you know, a connoisseur in beauty, and I hold her height the very one for woman—at least if her lover be tall. Her form slightly approaches *embonpoint*, and she has a *wavy* walk—do you understand—like Celeste's, for instance. I fancy that when Pigmalion's prayer was granted, the creature of his creation, endowed by the merciful gods with Promethean heat, approached him with her tread. How prettily her feet, as that saucy fellow Suckling has it,

> Like little mice stole in and out
> As if they feared the light.

Nothing in the wide world, Matemon, arrests my attention quicker than Cinderella's slipper when it is performing duty. She has a fairy little hand full of rings, and when I see it playing with her curls I understand the poetry of motion. Her bust is like the young swan's when it first swells to the wave, and her neck is worthy of it, and delicately fair. As the southern sun has browned my cheek, I confess my devotion to its contrast, and therefore worship I a fair complexion. The mouth of this gay girl you would call, perhaps, a thought too large, were not her lips so finely moulded—the upper the very type of the little god's bow, and the under one pouting, and apparently formed of a rose-leaf—and did they not develop teeth of dazzling white. Her nose is straight, and the chisseled curve of the nostril would have bewitched Canova. Her forehead is high and fair—I might say pale; and, being shaded by dark brown hair, it

gives an intellectual cast to features which otherwise would be marked only for their beauty and archness. Her eye—here's Byron again—

> "Which, wild as the gazelle's,
> Now brightly bold, or beautifully shy,
> Wins as it wonders, dazzles where it dwells,"

is of dark hazel and the best feature in her face. It is formed for every expression—the gayest or the gravest. Her voice is music itself, and she repeats poetry as a nightingale sings. She would have made a great actress—a very great actress. In short, such a form, when I have been drunk with the witchery of the arts, has come to me beneath Italian skies, when my spirit was lapped in the fairy land, and my dreams were of heaven.

There, sir, is not this a phœnix of a fair one? I think I hear you say as Sheridan said of Whitbread's treatise on this celebrated bird:

"A poulterer's description of a phœnix." Maybe it is such—I described her to you just as she appears to me, and just as I would describe a picture which had touched my imagination, but which could make no impression on my heart. I do certainly admire Miss Fitzhurst—but, Matemon, I have seen enough of the sex. "Man delights not me, nor woman either." I make one or two exceptions to the first assertion, but the other is the rule without an exception, a rare thing in logic, but you know there is no logic for the heart.

Furthermore of the above described lady (you must court her, Matemon), I believe, though you would not think so at first, that she possesses not only wit and playfulness, but deep sensibility. I think, too, she has a superior genius: she has read much, particularly James's plays and novels. And if I might

say so, I suspect she has a little wilfulness and waywardness mixed up with her good qualities. But, Matemon, she will suit you exactly; come and court her; make me your groomsman, and I'll go south with your bridal party, and enjoy happiness by reflection; I never shall catch it in any other way—shadows, shadows.

"Who lost Mark Antony, the world," &c.?

You know the rest, and I know the sex are now as they always were and always will be. No, I have seen enough of them abroad; and of one in particular, but no matter—I have written you upon that theme, and would to God that I could make by-gones by-gones in all respects.

I have made up my mind to spend this winter with Fitzhurst. I think I can quite sedately enjoy myself here in the country, and should I want excitement the city is not many miles off, and I can soon throw myself in its whirlpool.

It is wearing towards night. I have been setting alone up in my chamber, which commands a glorious prospect of hill and dale, and river winding through, writing to you. Such is not solitude. For the last five minutes I have been nibbling my pen unconsciously, while looking out on the setting sun as he hides his broad disk behind a clump of oaks that caps the very summit of a hill not far off. He flings his parting radiance there like the halo round the brow of the martyr, while the vale below is as rayless as the valley of the shadow of death. This coming of still twilight on, particularly of an autumn evening, has always had a melancholy fascination for me. The many tinted, rustling leaves that fall in the silence around you, seem like the hopes which a few months ago were green, but which are now strewed on the ground—midst the dirt and ashes of the past—never to rise more.

I tell you what, Matemon, a man should have some

steady aim in view through all his wanderings—to travel in pursuit of pleasure is to chase a butterfly, that only lives in a summer's day, or a phantom that lures you to the shades of unrest and inquietude. I have a kind of moody, morbid discontent hanging about me which I cannot dispel. I seek for enjoyment, and find it not. The fruit whose taste gives pleasure to others turn to ashes on my lips. This is expressing myself, perhaps, too strongly; but what I mean to say is, that I have a perpetual and wayward restlessness upon me, from which I in vain endeavour to escape. The cause of it, I do believe, is the want of a settled object in life. Until I was eighteen, you are aware I expected that it would be my lot to make my own fortune. While preparing myself in college with the double motive of necessity and ambition, as incentives to action, my energies were elastic, and my spirit fearless and, panting not only for collegiate honours, but the broader and showier ones of the world. True, sometimes I wished for wealth, for I knew if I possessed it the harassing cares of pecuniary want would not intrude upon me—and all others, while health remained, I believed would be merely a pleasurable excitement in the career of ambition.

One gloomy evening in college, while I was indulging in such a reverie, and longing for the philosopher's stone, the postman brought me a letter sealed with black. I started—from whom could it be—I paused ere I opened it. My father and my mother were in their graves;—I was an orphan with extensive connections, but without any near relation except a cousin. I left him in high health, on the eve of being married to a lovely woman, and in the possession of one of the largest fortunes in all the south. He was several years my elder, and it was by his assistance that I was then at college. A strange, unnatural, and shuddering excitement ran through me as I thought

of my cousin, of his immense possessions, of my dependance, of that black seal. I tore it open. My cousin was no more. He had been shot in a duel by a former rival in his love affair, whom he had supplanted. The rival had been secretly practicing for months previous to challenging him. He had succeeded in his murderous intent. My cousin was shot through the heart. Before going on the ground he had made his will, and left me his sole heir. I sprang to my feet with a bound, at the thought of the immense wealth of which I was master. The next moment I threw myself on my couch in humiliation and shame. I cursed myself from my heart at the idea that I should have such an impulse on the acquirement of wealth by the death—and such a death —of one so near and dear to me. One who had been my benefactor, and had left me his all. Matemon, the deepest sense of self-degradation I have ever known was then. You were at college with me when this occurred. I do not know why I should call it up now except to say, that the wealth I thus acquired, while it left me open to pursue any path of ambition I might desire—what I had been so ardently wishing for—gave me also the means of sensual gratification—presented the Circean cup, and all the deity within me became of the earth, earthy. But though I did taste of this cup, my "misery" was not so "perfect" as Milton, in his splendid Masque of Comus, describes that of Circe's votaries to have been, who,

> Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
> But boast themselves more comely than before,
> And all their friends and native home forgot,
> To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.

No! I panted to see my native home again. You must present my remembrances warmly to all our

mutual friends. In a few months I shall be with you all. Write me, write me; give me all the news. I have an idea of following Washington Irving's example: taking a tour upon the prairies; or something like it. There would be excitement in such adventures—and what a contrast with the scenes I have left behind me! This contrast would be the zest of the enjoyment. Is it not wonderful that he who had been housed so carefully and luxuriously should have been exposed to the open lodgings of the wilderness, the skiey canopy, not only without detriment to his health but to its improvement. He tells us that, after returning from his tour, he experienced a sensation of suffocation on awaking in the night and finding himself in a room. How many of our aches and troubles we bring upon ourselves. What a free pulse I should have now were I treading on the prairies!

Sidney Fitzhurst and myself have been reading Irving to-day together. Sid has just entered my room, he says:—

"Come, Pinckney, if you wish to imitate Irving, suppose you accompany me to a neighbouring farmer's, where there is to be a husking match."

What is that? I asked.

"After the corn," said he, "has been gathered from the field, it is arranged in a pile near the corn-crib, and the labouring people, white and black, meet there on some night and strip it of the husks. They form themselves into parties, divide the corn heaps equally, and the contest is, which shall finish their pile the soonest. Come, it will amuse you—I do not know but that I may be a candidate some of these days for popular favours, and shaking hands with the sovereigns; these may be of service to me;—and frankly, apart from such considerations, I like these gatherings."

I agreed; and so here I go, Matemon, to a husking-match. Sidney sends a thousand good wishes to you. Adieu!

HOWARD PINCKNEY.

CHAPTER VI.

THE country road to which we have alluded passed between Holly and the village of Springdale. A gravelled and winding lane led from it to the residence of Mr. Fitzhurst. At the entrance of the lane stood a cottage, or log-house of the better sort, to whose precincts we would call the attention of our readers. The cottage was inhabited by an old woman, named Gammon, who was known in the neighbourhood for miles around as Granny Gammon, together with her grandson, Robert Gammon, a lame boy, and a granddaughter, a cousin of the boy, named Peggy Blossom. These two last were all that remained out of a large progeny of the race of Granny Gammon. She had been married twice, and had had a very large family, but they seemed destined, both by fate and nature, for a short life, as accident or disease had carried them all off. Peggy Blossom was the daughter of one of Granny Gammon's sons by her first marriage. A short time after the birth of Peggy her parents both died, and she was left to the charge of her grandmother.

Robert Gammon was the descendant of the Granny by her second marriage. His mother died in giving him birth, and some years afterwards his father was

blown up in the explosion of a powdermill in which he was a labourer. Robert Gammon, or Bobby Gammon as he was generally called, was extensively known in the neighbourhood.

In his childhood he had been remarkable for his beauty. Now beauty of face was all that was left to him. Bobby was very fond of horses, and as he was a most expert horseman Mr. Paul Fitzhurst had employed him to ride several races for him, in all of which, except the last, Bobby was successful. It was thought by the jockies that his skill and management as much as the speed of the horse led to results favourable to Mr. Fitzhurst. In the last race Bobby rode, as he was approaching the goal the foremost rider, the girth of his saddle broke, and he was precipitated to the ground with great violence. By the accident his collar bone was broken and his left leg. Bobby was taken to his grandmother's, the physician of the village sent for, and the broken bones set, but after such a fashion as to leave Bobby a cripple for life, with his right shoulder much higher than his left one, and his left leg much shorter than its brother. Bobby lay a long time at the point of death. He slowly recovered, but the accident gave such a shock to his frame that, though he grew older, he did not appear to increase much either in size or height. The accident happened when he was in his fourteenth year,—he was now approaching his seventeenth. His cousin Peggy, who was a year his elder, had watched over his long confinement with the faithfulness of a sister, by which she had acquired more control over Bobby than other human being, not excepting his grandmother.

Mr. Fitzhurst, as some remuneration to Bobby for the injury he had received in his service, gave him a deed for fifty acres of land, and had built on it the log house in which Granny Gammon lived. Besides which,

he frequently sent flour or marketing to the grandmother and her grandchildren; in fact, it might be said that he entirely supported them. Their condition was much better now than it had been before Bobby's mishap.

Peggy was a great favourite at Holly; particularly with Miss Rachellina and Fanny. She was a good milliner, and was often sent for by the former lady to make caps, &c., for her, when Peggy would remain at Holly for a week or two; for Miss Rachellina was very careful in her toilet, and had her habiliments made under her own eye. Besides pecuniary recompense, she frequently made presents of articles of dress, capes, bonnets, edging to her *protegé*. Peggy's costliest gifts, however, of this kind, were received from Fanny, for Miss Rachellina had no idea of putting notions into the girl's head above her station, by giving her the means of extravagant display. Fanny often thwarted her aunt's views in this respect; and Peggy was wont to make her appearance at the meeting-house in Springdale in an attire which created more envy amidst her female acquaintances than even her superior beauty—for Peggy was beautiful, and not unconscious of it. Her form was fine, her step springing, her cheek rosy, her eye bright, and she had caught, with a quick spirit of imitation, a certain air in her sojournings at Holly, from her observance and admiration of Fanny Fitzhurst, that distinguished her as much as her beauty. The girls of the village who envied her were in the habit of speaking of her, tauntingly, as "Lady Peggy."

Peggy was an arch coquette. There was Bill Hilt, the blacksmith, he had been suing and suffering for years. Bill Hardy, the miller, was in the same predicament. Though he had his Sunday suit on, scrupulously freed from the least speck of flour, Peggy could make his face wear its every-day hue, and turn

him as pale as one of his own meal-bags. It was even said that the village doctor, who had a pretty practice, was not insensible to her charms. It is a fact that he often stopped at Granny Gammon's unsent for, to inquire about the old woman's rheumatism, and he prescribed for her without charge. Lawyer Lupton, too, was known to visit Mrs. Gammon, to make inquiries as to what she had heard in by-gone days concerning certain landmarks, whose locality was involved in a suit in which he asserted he was engaged. It must have been a case of considerable perplexity, for Mr. Lupton had frequently to repeat his visits, in order thoroughly to understand what would be the evidence of Mrs. Gammon should he require her testimony. And often, when the old woman has been doing her best at an explanation, she was not a little offended at Mr. Lupton for suffering himself to be drawn off entirely from the subject by the idle conversation of Peggy.

Notwithstanding all these demonstrations against the heart of Peggy, as the village gossips held them to be, it could not be said that she herself had any very decided preference. Latterly, Peggy had very little to say to the lawyer when he visited her grandmother, and when some one asked her the reason, she replied:

"She didn't believe in people who could laugh and talk with her at home, but who couldn't be the same when they met her at other places."

There was one John, or Jack Gordon, as he was called, a—handsome, reckless fellow—who formerly lived in the village, but who had left it within the last six months, though he frequently visited it, for whom it was thought Peggy entertained a liking. Gordon had a dashing, daring way with him. He was a hanger on about races; sometimes had a faro-table at such places, and he spent much more money than he

apparently earned. His character did not stand well with the villagers; he bore himself with a swagger among them, but he spent his money freely, would treat anybody, and everybody, and was not without tact—and a power to hide his natural propensities, where he had an object in view. Latterly, when Jack Gordon visited Springdale he made a much more ostentatious appearance than formerly. He dressed with the flare and flash of a circus-rider; wore a gold watch, with an immense chain; rode a horse that he alleged had cost three hundred dollars, and for which he wouldn't take five hundred, and put up at the best tavern in the place.

We opened this chapter by conducting our reader to the plain but comfortable domicil of Granny Gammon. It was the evening of the husking-match. The little family had just finished their supper. Peggy, with a cloth caught on the end of a fork so as to save her hands, which were delicate and fair, was washing the cups and saucers. Her grandmother was sitting in a high-backed, rush-bottomed, old-fashioned chair, engaged in knitting a coarse woollen stocking. Near her lay a large house-dog asleep, and between the dog and Peggy sat Bobby. He eyed the dog a moment as the animal lay upon his side, with his large ear thrown back, and, unperceived by his grandmother or cousin, he stepped to a broom which stood in the corner, and extracted from it the largest and longest straw he could find. Bobby then resumed his seat very demurely, and amused himself with inserting the straw into the dog's ear. The boy seemed to derive no little amusement in beholding the dog's efforts to rid himself of what he doubtless considered a fly. The animal shook his head, and twisted his ear, all to no avail. At last he uttered a fierce growl.

"Be still, Towser!" exclaimed the old woman in

a querulous tone. What's the dog after: there's nobody here."

At this remark Bobby renewed his efforts to make Towser growl louder, and in the act his grandmother turned and observed him.

"Bobby, Bobby Gommon! its you, is it, teazing the dog? You'll ruin him; don't you know that's the very way to ruin a dog? Be done, you—indeed, indeed, you'll worry me to death. Yes, you'll be the death of me yet—and Iv'e nursed you from a baby: you don't mind me no more 'an I was a log."

"Granny," said Bob, in a half expostulating, half quizzing, tone, "I want to wake Towzer up—he must go with me to Mr. Elwood's."

"To Mr. Elwood's—can't you call the dog if you want him, and not spoil him in that way, and worry me as you do—And for what do you want to go to Mr. Elwood's?"

"To the husking, granny."

"To the husking! what can such a cripple and limater as you are—and so weakly, do at a husking?"

"Granny, you needn't be always telling me I'm a cripple, a limater as you call it—I do hate that word. I can't help it—and don't I know it?"

"Yes, know it—and don't I know it! And didn't I warn you agin riding races long since—didn't I—answer me that? It's a judgment on you—this racing is an abomination in the sight of the Lord—You'll be punished for it worse yet, if you don't mend your ways."

"Granny, Granny!" remonstrated Peggy.

"Peggy, my child, hold your peace—Didn't I see Bobby riding by here this very day on that fiery varmint of a horse that belongs to Mr. Elwood; the worst cretur in all the country? Yes, didn't I; He didn't think I'd be a standing at the door—no, he thought his poor old granny was sick in the chimley corner

and he come tearing by like mad. It was such a sunshinyday that I crawled to the door while you were up at the big house; and I declare I han't got over it since. Yes, he turned his head away, and tore by like mad; and I wouldn't ha' known him if he hadn't a had Towser jumping after him. He wants to have another fall, and wear us all down attending on him. He'll come to no good, never; and he'll ruin the dog."

"Granny," said Bob, "I was a riding bare back. I'd like to know if I was ever thrown from a horse a riding that way. It was a riding a race I was thrown. Roanoke's saddle turned with me—broke the girth. There's many a chap's been throwed before me, without being hurt at all. And," continued Bob, with bitterness, "I think the hurt is enough, without telling a body of it. You need not think, Granny, that I can forget it—there's cousin Peggy's big looking-glass there, that Jack Gordon give her, it tells me of it all the time."

"Robert Gommon," exclaimed Peggy, quickly, "I told you before to day that Jack Gordon didn't give me that looking-glass. He was driving by here one day in a cart, and he said he had won some things at a raffle, and he asked me if I wouldn't take care of the glass for him till he could call for it, as he was afraid of breaking it."

"You've had it here long enough to make it a gift, any how, Cousin Peggy," said Bob, though in a subdued tone. "And I wonder if there's any harm in riding, if every body don't know that Jack Gordon is a torn down rider—he rides at all ho—"

"Bobby," interrupted Peggy, "Granny don't care about your riding if she didn't fear that you would get hurt again."

"Hurt again," exclaimed the old grandmother;

" yes, and only think how he wears out his clothes riding horseback !"

" Well, Granny ; I reckon Mr. Fitzhurst give me the clothes."

" And don't I know it ; and is that the reason you should wear them out—Mr. Fitzhurst won't live forever, and who will you get clothes from then—I had a dream last night, and it bodes no good to nobody."

" Granny," said Bob, rising from his seat, and stepping from before the glass, so that the reflection of his person might not appear in it, " I don't care what you say to me, so as you let me alone about being a limater. My God ! I can't help it."

" Robert, don't you know better than to take the Lord's name in vain ! That's a sin, now that's a sin—Mercy on me, this rheumatiz.

" Come, Towser," said Bob, to the dog. The animal arose, shook himself, and stood prepared to follow. " Come along old boy, we shant see the fun." Saying which, and followed by the dog, Bob left the house.

" Be back, Bobby, early," screamed the old woman after him ; but Bobby unhearing or unheading walked on with Towser by his side. He had not proceeded ten steps when the door opened, and Peggy called to him. He turned with alacrity to meet her. She closed the door after her and advanced to the fence that lay between them.

" Bobby," asked she, " have you seen Jack Gordon lately."

" No, I have not, Cousin Peggy ; why ?

" How the moon shines. Look at your hat—put it back further on your head, that way (and Peggy fixed it) ; why don't you brush your hair, Bobby, and keep yourself more tidy ? The ladies at the big house think you have such a good looking face—I'm sure I mend your clothes and make your shirts—let me turn over

that collar better—and do all I can to keep you neat—you ha'nt seen Jack Gordon, lately."

"No, Cousin Peggy?"

"Well, Bobby, if you see him, tell him that I say he must come and take his glass away?"

"You ha'nt seen him neither, lately, have you, cousin Peggy?" asked Bob, archly.

"No, no," replied Peggy, quickly; "and I don't want to see him—Tell him, if you see him, to come and take his glass away."

"I don't believe I shall see him—he's got above husking matches—or below them, I don't know which."

"Bobby, are you going through Holly."

"Yes, I am—don't you hear them chaps hallowing, now, Cousin Peggy? theyr'e going; its the nearest, an' I want to see old Pompey."

"Then, Bobby, if you do, just step and ask Miss Rachellina if she will want me to-morrow. You can bring me word as you come home. They're got a noble, polite gentleman up there; and I do believe he's come to court Miss Fanny."

"Have they," said Bob, "well I'll tell Miss Rachellina what you say, and Jack Gordon too, if I see him. Good night, Cousin Peggy."

"Good night, Bobby, be back soon," rejoined Peggy as she turned and entered the house; while Bob, with Towser playing round him, went whistling on his way.

CHAPTER VII.

NOTWITHSTANDING the difference between the colour and years of Robert Gammon and Pompey, the formal old negro coachman of Mr. Fitzhurst, to whom we called the attention of our readers in our first chapter, they held quite a partiality for each other. When Bobby was thrown from the horse on the race course, Pompey was the first to hasten to his assistance; and the faithful old negro frequently called at Granny Gammon's during her grandson's confinement, to inquire after, and have a talk with him. 'Twas by Pompey's hand, too, that Miss Rachellina sent him many little delicacies; when the coachman never failed to take a seat, and hold long discourses about horses and races—for the boy's fall, poor fellow, had not changed his partialities for the race course and the stable.

Bobby, too, a short time after he was able to go out had done Pompey an essential service. A neighbour of Mr. Fitzhurst named Thompson, had had with that gentleman a lawsuit, concerning a certain tract of land, in which he was defeated. Thompson was a malicious man, and the result rankled in his bosom, and aroused feelings of intense hatred within him towards the victor. One day as Pompey was returning from market his wagon broke down; and with a hatchet and rope that he happened to have with him, he entered a wood belonging to Thompson, which skirted the road, to cut a sapling with which to mend his vehicle, and proceed homeward. While Pompey was in the act of cutting it Thompson came through the wood with two of his slaves; and, know-

ing the intruder to be the slave of Mr. Fitzhurst, he determined to inflict revenge on him. He charged Pompey with the intention of stealing his wood; said he believed he was sent to do it by his master; and, in spite of his prayers and entreaties, ordered his slaves to seize, and tie him to a tree, while he, himself, proceeded to cut a stick of no inconsiderable size, with which to inflict the castigation. At this very moment Bobby, who had borrowed a gun from Jack Gordon, for the purpose of a little sport, came up to the group just as Thompson was trimming his weapon, and swearing that he would flog Pompey within an inch of his life.

"What's the matter?" said Bobby, in astonishment. —"What's the matter, Pompey?"

"O, my mercy, Mister Bobby," exclaimed the affrighted black, "indeed I meant no harm—O! do beg Master Thompson for me."

"Beg for you!" exclaimed Thompson, furiously, "You're past begging for, you black rascal—I'll learn you to steal. Tie him up, you knaves—strip him, strip him, I'll make you beg."

"What's he done, Mr. Thompson?" inquired Bobby.

"Done! what's it your business?" exclaimed Thompson—"I've caught him stealing my wood, and, by G—d, I believe he's at it by his Master's orders."

"What," says Bobby, "do you mean to say that Mr. Fitzhurst sent him to steal your wood?"

"Yes, I do." replied Thompson, flourishing his stick and advancing towards Pompey.

"Mr. Thompson; I don't believe you think that yourself," exclaimed Bobby, indignantly.

"Begone, you limping little rascal—quit my presence immediately,—or I'll serve you the same as I mean to serve him."

"Limping, rascal! Try it if you dare!" said Bobby, lifting his gun from his shoulder.

Thompson looked at Bobby for a moment, firmly, and said, "Dont you mean to quit my ground? are you stealing too?"

"Look here," said Bobby, who was a boy of high spirits when aroused, and who was stung deeply by Thompson's taunts on his lameness, and his last remark; "I'm no negro, mind that; if you hit that old fellow, if I don't shoot you it will be because my arm is as lame as my leg."

Thompson was an arrant coward; and he knew the character of the boy. He, however, exclaimed; with an effort at fierceness. "Do you mean to say you'll commit murder—I'll have you hung, Robert Gammon—mind that, my boy."

"Try it," said Bobby; "I'll abide by the law; and if Pompey's been stealing let him abide by the law too."

"Seize him," said Thompson to his slaves; "seize the boy." But the negroes, notwithstanding their dread of their master, dared not obey his mandate.

"I'll make you sweat for this," exclaimed Thompson, firmly, to Bobby; but seeing the fixed resolution of the boy's manner, he ordered his slaves to follow him, and hastened through the wood, swearing as he went that he would put Bobby in the Penitentiary for life. Bobby speedily released Pompey. The black hurried off, leaving his rope and hatched in his fright.

"Stop, Pompey," said Bobby to the negro, as he was hastening from the fatal wood, "take your things, now. Thompson can't scare me if I am a weakly boy. He insulted Cousin Peggy one day, an' if I'd a been by them with this gun he'd a caught a load to a certainty; you see, Pompey, being that I'm cripple I won't put up with these things from nobody."

Pompey hurried out of the wood without attending

to what Bobby said. The boy, however, picked up the hatchet and rope; and following after him observed; "I always thought Thompson was a coward, and now I know it."

Pompey begged Bobby in mercy not to leave him; and with the boy's assistance he soon repaired the wagon, and, attended by him, reached home in safety. Pompey told the matter to his master, who was most indignant at the treatment which his favourite servant had received at the hands of Thompson, and loud in the praise of Bobby.

Thompson, in the meantime repaired to Squire Morris, to obtain a warrant against Bobby for threatening his life, but the Squire, on hearing the whole affair advised him to drop it, which he reluctantly did. The story nevertheless became the talk of the neighbourhood; and Bobby was as highly praised as Thompson, who was generally unpopular, was censured.

Merrily, in the bright moonlight of a mellow autumn evening Bobby proceeded to Holly. As he walked round the house to enter the kitchen he met Pompey, and asked him if he would not go to Mr. Elwood's to the husking match.

"Mister Bobby, that's the very place I purpose visiting. Don't you see I've got my violin," said Pompey, with an air of self-respect, holding out at the same time the instrument which he carried in his hand, and which was carefully covered in a green baize bag. I thought at first I should not be able to enjoy myself fully, 'cause Miss Fanny, I thought, would want me to drive her over to Mr. Elwood's this afternoon; but Master Sidney drive her over, with company that we have, in the open carriage; so I can go—Its a good distance from here, let's proceed."

Pompey was an aristocratic, old family servant, who by personal attendance on his master had heard the best conversation among "the quality," as

he called his master's acquaintance; and he had no slight ambition in the way of correct phraseology. He held himself as far above the field negroes as his master held himself above the daily labourers. Pompey was generally known by the title, and answered to the name of Pompey Fitzhurst.

"You observe, Mister Bobby, I don't care much bout playing the violin at these places, because I play's for the quality at all their parties, and it is a descention, but I suppose Nat Ramsey, being that his leg is as big as his body with whisky, won't be there; and if he is, you know he can't give the company any satisfaction, for he's only a squeaker. You disciver Mister Bobby, a coloured gentleman, no more an' any other gentleman, should never demean himself. If old master had kept me to driving the coach, what I was brought up to, and not put me to that market-wagon, that are affair in Thompson's wood would never have begun to happen."

"That's true," rejoined Bobby, as he limped along beside the old negro. "But, Pompey, I like some of old Nat's tunes."

"Not meaning to disparage your liking, Master Bobby, replied Pompey, with the air of a connoisseur, "but you disciver and observe that you have an uncultivated taste, else you would like some of the quality tunes better. When I am in Room I does as Room does, Mister Bobby, and I am not gainsaying that I like some of our husking tunes after all. I am going to give 'em to the boys to-night, with a little quality touch to set 'em off. Its to be a pretty big husking they tell me; and when I gets tired about the big house here, I like the relaxation of going about among the Africans.

Proceeding along the lane, that led by the mansion through the estate, to the foot of the hills, and there terminated in a country road that led up a valley, our worthies continued their conversation. Every

now and then a wild halloo, uttered by an individual, perchance by a party, bound to the same point, would reach the ears of our characters, at which they would hasten their speed with increased hilarity. The moon had by this time arisen and o'er topped the hills. The moonbeams, struggling through the trees that skirted the road, shed their checkerd light upon their path, and added to their cheerfulness. To an observer of character it would have been amusing to have seen Bobby limping by the side of Pompey, with Towzer following close at his heels; while the old negro walked very erect with his snub more elevated, and holding his violin under his arm in a professional manner, like a dancing master, as he trips it to a fashionable party. Bobby held his head down, with an old hat cocked careless on the side of it, which every now and then he would take off for a moment, and bear in his hand while he glanced up at Pompey.

"There's fun in husking, Pompey," observed the boy, as a loud halloo broke over the silence; "them fellows are ahead of us."

"Yes, Mister Bobby, I like it, considerably; it is a harmless gathering, as old master says, and he likes to see it going on."

"I wonder if Jack Gordon will be there."

"I don't know, Mister Bobby; you observe and discover that Mr. Jack Gordon ain't liked among the folks much; they say hard things agin him."

"I know they do."

"Yes, he has a power of money for one who haint got any property; and it's all got by gambling, if it ain't got in a worse way. We'll soon be there now."

In a bend of the valley to the left, and joining the estate of Mr. Fitzhurst, lay the farm of Mr. Elwood. He was a plain, rough farmer, and owned some hun-

dred or more acres, which he prided himself in keeping in a high state of cultivation. He was a widower, and childless. An orphan neice was living with him; the mistress of his household: her name was Sarah Grattan; and she was remarkable for her mental as well as personal attractions. Though she had received none of the advantages of a city education, her manners, from the native delicacy of her mind, were prepossessing; she was strangely timid and shy, and easily influenced by those around her. She scarcely ever went to the city; seldom to Springdale, and she shrinkingly received the attentions of those who visited her. Fanny Fitzhurst occasionally went to see her, and would have gone much oftener had her visits been sooner returned. But while Miss Grattan was delighted to see her, and entertained her each time with less embarrasment, she hesitated to return the call until requested to do so by her uncle. And when she did visit Holly, the splendour of that establishment compared with her uncle's dwelling, together with the superior beauty, intelligence, ease, and fashion of Fanny, without exciting her envy, awoke all her diffidence, and kept her in a state of nervous inquietude for fear her demeanor should not be proper, and might excite ridicule. For hours after she had returned home she would sit and think over every thing she had said and done, and torture herself with the idea that she had committed some impropriety. Her situation was lonely, and she seemed deeply to feel it. It was thought, too, that her uncle was not as kind to her as he might have been; and those who esteemed themselves gifted with penetration thought they could at times observe that she brooded over some secret sorrow. There existed no particular reason for believeing it, however. Her uncle—a rough, blunt man, somewhat addicted to his cups, and when excited fierce in his speech, and severe to his slaves—appeared kind

to her, and anxious to press her into society. He gave her not only every comfort, but every elegance of dress; yet he seemed to expect that she was to have no will of her own. Mr. Elwood was unpopular in his neighbourhood; though fond of company it was not always of a character to interest his neice. When Fanny has been at Mr. Elwood's he would often jest his neice, doubtless with a view of showing her off, about certain persons whom he asserted were her beaux; which would make the maiden glance at Fanny, and blush as much with a sense of shame at the characters and standing of her imputed admirers, as from any other feeling. Her uncle did not understand such to be her feelings, or if he did he paid very little regard to them. Some held the opinion that Colonel Bentley was not indifferent to Miss Grattan's charms. On this afternoon the colonel had visited Holly; and when Sidney made the proposition that his sister, with Mr. Pinckney and himself, should visit Mr. Elwood's, he agreed with alacrity. Perhaps the pleasure though of Miss Fanny's company of itself influenced the colonel. There was a person named Joseph Bronson, a store keeper in Springdale, and reputed wealthy, who boasted himself a most honest and pious citizen, who, it was notorious in the neighbourhood, aspired to Miss Grattan's favour. He was a large, raw-boned, freckled-face man, and he wore an immense sandy wig, that did not, certainly, subtract from his homeliness, though he was not himself, as might be supposed, aware of the fact. It was gossipped around that Mr. Elwood favoured Mr. Bronson's suit, Bronson's modest assurance was proverbial. He had repeatedly transacted business for Miss Deborah Amelia Bentley, and the colonel's friends used jocosely to tell him, that this worthy only wanted encouragement from his aunt to forsake Miss Grattan for the much larger and surer fortune.

CHAPTER VIII.

Bronson, no unusual occurrence, happened to be at Mr. Elwood's on this evening when our party from Holly called. While they were at tea, the voices of the huskers, gathering from all quarters singing and giving a loud halloo as they came, sounded widely through the valley. In a short time nearly a hundred negroes, with a few whites, had met by the corn-crib, which stood some distance from the house, where the corn had been thrown from the carts in a continuous line. This was equally divided, and several rails were laid between the two rows of corn, to mark the division and prevent foul play. After these preliminaries, and after taking all round several drams of whisky from a tin cup, into which the liquid was poured from a large earthen jug of which one of Mr. Elwood's trusty servants had the charge, the huskers divided themselves into two parties, and set to work joyously, the contest being which party should finish their pile first. While they worked, some negro or other, reputed a good singer, sung a sort of song, with a chorus, in which all joined. Their united voices swelled wide and far through the valley. A poetic mind hearing them at a distance might almost have supposed that the Indians still held possession of the land, and were preparing, by a war-dance in the deep woods, for some fearful excursion, or were shouting their exultations round some victim at the stake. This harmless amusement of the humble negro has no such terrors; and here these joyous, good-natured beings, making a pleasure of a labour, after performing their allotted day's work, were gathered, and accomplishing, in a

frolic, what, to the unaided hands of the farm, would have been the task of days. On this occasion Pompey was not a little chagrined, by the fact that Nat Ramsay, the negro whom he had pronounced a mere scraper to Bobby, was requested to sing. Not having the affected diffidence of the connoisseurs of the art in the refined circles of humanity, Nat instantly complied. He sang a song of which the following verses are a literal specimen. The four first lines of each verse he rolled out with a stentorian voice in solo, while all combined the power of their lungs to give effect to the chorus. Our readers have all heard the celebrated Rice, the Jim Crow of two hemispheres, sing similar songs. Could Nat have heard him, he would not have been as vain of his powers as he was to-night. He certainly, if at all an envious individual, would have hung his harp on the willow. The following is the specimen:

"Work on, boys, if we work 'till morn,
The nigger boys will husk de corn;
You mind your pile, an' I mind mine,
The coon he listen, de moon she shine.
O! clar de kitchen, old folks, young folks,
Clar de kitchen, old folks, young folks,
Old Virginny never tire.

"When massa come de work to see,
The possum laugh in de old gum tree,
When winter come me set de trap,
Den nigger laugh at dat ar' chap.
O! clar de kitchen, old folks, young folks,
Clar de kitchen, old folks, young folks,
Old Virginny never tire.

When the moon had entirely cleared the tree tops the party at the house walked forth to observe for awhile the care-defying huskers. Pinckney, who appeared to be struck with the womanly shrinking and

sensitiveness of Miss Grattan offered her his arm, and exerted all his powers of address to interest her. Fanny took the arm of Colonel Bentley. Mr. Bronson, somewhat in the dumps at the attention shown by Pinckney to Miss Grattan, made at first an attempt to keep by her side, but in a few moments he fell back and joined Mr Elwood and Sidney Fitzhurst, who brought up the rear.

"Do you feel very romantic to night, Miss Fitzhurst?" asked Mr. Pinckney, turning towards Fanny, who was a few steps behind Miss Grattan and himself.

"You proclaim yourself such a skeptic about love and romance, and all such things, sir," rejoined Fanny, "that you act upon me as the disenchanter of such dreams. I declare your conversation for this last week has been that of a staid old bachelor of fifty or seventy, rather than that of a travelled gentleman who I hope still holds himself young."

"Young in years, I hope, Miss Fitzhurst, but still old enough to believe that your true love is a dream, which like all other dreams must be interpreted adversely."

"Ah, is that it? I thought it was only an old woman's privilege to interpret dreams?"

"Precisely so, Miss Fitzhurst; and a young woman's fate to find that all her golden ones lead to such an issue. The misfortune is though, Miss Fitzhurst, that she does not find it out until she herself is qualified to become an interpreter; and then to all the youthful of her sex her fate is that of Cassandra."

"Sir," rejoined Fanny, laughingly, "then were I to prophesy that Mr. Pinckney would one day become a gallant gentleman, and a believer in love, would mine be like all other prophesies?"

"I fear so, Miss Fitzhurst; a prophet is not without honor save in his own country. Could they see

the propheteas in that far land I've left, I have no doubt, however, that then they would believe the prophecy."

"Thank you, sir; Iowe you one," replied Fanny, and she made some remark to Colonel Bentley, which Pinckney did not overhear.

"Do you know, Miss Grattan," said Pinckney to the lady by his side, in a low voice, "that our fascinating friend behind us spoke of you so highly, as we rode here, that if she were of my sex I should say most decidedly that she had fallen in love with you."

"Did she?" replied Miss Grattan tremulously, and with a blush that might have been detected by the moonbeam. "Indeed I know no one whose good opinion I would rather have. But," rejoined she, with confusion, "you are jesting with me."

"Jesting with you! You do me great injustice. I suppose you have plenty of time to grow romantic here. And really, notwithstanding Miss Fitzhurst's allegations against me, I should be surprised if you did not. What a beautiful sweep those hills have! And look at the graceful windings of that silvery stream, stealing away like a great and happy life to be lost in the great ocean. Yes! you might fall in love here; have some one who should be

'The ocean to the river of your thoughts.'"

"Ah!" exclaimed Fanny Fitzhurst, who had overheard the latter part of this remark, "remember, Mr. Pinckney, that you are quoting from a dream—a most powerful poet's *dream*."

"Yes, Miss Fitzhurst, you have me fairly; for that dream tells of two beings, the life of one of whom ended in madness, and both in misery. Remember that dream was 'shaped out like a reality, and from a reality. It was a foregone conclusion."

Here the party had approached so near the huskers as to be seen distinctly by them. This was apparent from the increased and ambitious alacrity with which they worked, and the evident effect which they tried to throw into their song. When Nat, the singer, saw them coming he did not join the chorus of the last verse, but paused longer than usual before he commenced again. He was taxing his powers to produce something extemporaneous in honor of the ladies. His gifts as an improvisatore were proven by the following verse, which he gave forth in his best manner:

"The coon likes corn, and we like he,
Wid the possum fat and the hominee,
O! the ladies come; don't you see e'm dar?
Their lobely eyes shine like a star.
O! clar de kitchen, old folks, young folks,
Clar de kitchen, old folks, young folks,
Old Virginny never tire.

"There's poetry and romance for you, Miss Fanny Fitzhurst," said Pinckney, with a hearty laugh.

"In intention, at least, Mr Howard Pinckney," rejoined Fanny, "and that, when it is good, makes the humblest offering praiseworthy."

"True, true; and truth in this instance is poetry's handmaid. We have the authority of the poets of all time for comparing the ladies eyes to stars. They are not only brilliant, like the stars, but like them they control our destiny.

At the foot of an oak, near the west end of the corn heap, not at all satisfied, so far, with the events of the evening, sat Pompey. He had mingled with the huskers but for a short time after Nat commenced his song; when, complaining that he could not keep time with such a grunter as the singer, he withdrew from among them. He sat

wrapped in an old coat with his back against the tree to keep the cold off, and with his feet and part of his person entirely covered with corn husks. His wool was amplified into the dimensions of an ancient wig, and his hat was cocked a little on one side, on the top of it, as much from an air of self-importance, as for the purpose of hearing the conversation of his companion. Bobby had his hands thrust into the pockets of his pantaloons, which were made of the stuff called corduroy, and considerably worn. The collar of his jacket was turned up, and the brim of his hat turned down so as to meet it, and keep him, as he said, as snug as a possum in a gum tree.

It was not at all cool to any one who was exercising the least; but after walking and husking a short time the worthies paused from their labours and sat down, when feeling slightly chilled they had resorted to the mode of keeping themselves comfortable which we have described. At Bobby's feet, by way of a footstove, Towzer, his dog, was crouching. Every now and then, when the huskers sang remarkably loud, Towzer would lift his head lazily from his master's feet, glance carelessly around, and nestle in the corn husks again. Occasionally Bobby would pat him on the head, when he would wag his tail, and gather himself up closer to his master's person.

"Ah," exclaimed Bobby, "look out in the moonlight, Pompey, there's Miss Fanny—I forgot cousin Peggy told me to ask Miss Fanny if she would want her at the big house to-morrow."

"There's time enough," said Pompey. "Master Bobby, aint that Colonel Bentley there?"

"Yes," said Bobby, "I believe it is."

At this point Nat Ramsay rolled forth his compli-

ment to the ladies. Pompey jerked his hat over his eyes as he heard it, and exclaimed:—

"Mister Bobby, now just listen to that nigger—he's in liquor now, he's in liquor—'nebriated, an' he thinks he's taking the shine off of everything. To give you a hidear, Mister Bobby, of what a fool nigger that Nat is, I'll tell you. You diskiver and observe that one day I driv my young Mistress, Miss Fanny, over to Miss Bentleys, and I was a setting on my coach box a thinking a great many things. I can think my hardest on a coach box. In the midst of it here comes Nat Ramsey, black as the driven charcoal, toting his big foot right by Miss Bentley's door, between me and the coach and the house."

"But I tell you, Pompey," observed Bobby, "Nat can't help it if he has such a leg. It aint his fault—he cut it with an axe last winter, and now its all out of shape."

"Its hard drink, Mister Bobby, its hard drink—he gets 'nebriated. Well, as I was telling you, there he comes, black as the driven charcoal, right between me and the house, and sure enough he stops. You know he's a Guinny nigger—he was caught on the Gold Coast when a boy, running wild as a baboon, and brought to this country to be sold as a slave, and civilized. For my part, I was born in my master's family; and so was my mother and father before me. Well, Nat did'nt know that I knowed whar he come from, and so we got to talking 'bout the difference between a coloured man and a nigger; and I 'lightened him on the subject. I told him what are a fact, that a nigger is a black man what comes from over the waters, an' that a coloured man may be a mulatto or a darkey, but if he is born in this country he can't no how be a nigger. Now aint that plain? I was born in a free country, for I heard Master Sidney

say this was a free country in a speacharification, last fourth o' July. I 's a American coloured person. Nat, being that he's born in Guinney, is a African nigger. Nat was hit all aback, I tell you. He tried to laugh, an' chawed and hawed right out. Colonel Bentley was a standing all this time right by the side, neither of us observed or diskivered him, till he stepped right out and laughed, so I thought Nat would ha' turned white with shame."

"What did Colonel Bentley say?" asked Bobby.

"When he had done a laughing at Nat, he put his hand in his pocket and give me a half-dollar. He said I was a magician in argufication."

"Did'nt he give Nat any thing?" asked Bobby, archly.

"Yes," replied Pompey, "he give him a half-dollar too, for sticking up for his country—a pretty country to stick up for—that's what the Colonel said he give it for; but sticking up for one's country, Mr. Bobby, aint argufication."

"Indeed, Pompey," said Bobby, "I must leave you, I'll be back again; but I must go up to the house and ask Miss Fanny if she will want Cousin Peggy."

"Mister Bobby, before you go, just oblige old Pompey so much as to get him a drink of the whisky. As I have not been husking much, Sambo might want to say no to me; an' I don't want to object myself to insults from any African nigger."

"Yes, I'll get it for you," replied Bobby. "Keep Towzer there—Towzer! stay back, sir." The dog which had arisen now lay down again; and Pompey, as Bobby went to obtain the liquor, said, patting the dog:

"Keep still, Towzer; I like you, old pup—I like Mister Bobby, too—he good to Pompey, accommodating—Pompey good to him. I should ha' catched a awful scorching in the woods thare from that varmint

Thompson, if it had'nt been for Mister Bobby. He would ha' shot him to a certainty, if he had put the weight of that stick on Pompey. I never could diskiver or observe how any one so small as Mister Bobby could have so much spunk in him. Ah! there comes Master Bobby; hang that horse, I wish he had been racing in Nat Ramsey's country afore he had throwed Mister Bobby."

"Here, Pompey," said Bobby, advancing to the negro, and handing him a tin cup, "here's the stuff."

"Won't you take some first, Mr. Bobby?"

"No, Pompey, Cousin Peggy will find it out if I do, and Granny will talk all day about it—I can't, neither; I'm weakly, and can't stand it. Come, Towzer."

And Bobby whistled to his dog, stood for a moment listening to the song of the huskers, and then hastened to the house after the party, to deliver the message of his Cousin Peggy.

CHAPTER IX.

Bobby soon reached the house. It was a comfortable two story brick building. Its best room was on the ground-floor. The windows of this room opened three feet or more above the grassy yard, in which, on this side of the house, there were many cedar trees. Clinging around and above the windows was a wild vine, which Miss Grattan had taught to spread its graceful tendrils about them. Seeing the light from the windows, and hearing the voices, Bobby walked up to it. The centre and lower pane happened to be

broken; and the lad leaned his arms on the sill of the window and looked in, while Towzer stretched himself at his feet. A curtain spread its folds on either side of the window, and partly obstructed an observation of the room from the point where Bobby stood through every pane except the broken one, which being in the centre was not hidden at all by the drapery. There was still an obstacle in the way of Bobby's vision, and that was the wig-covered head of Mr. Bronson, which was within a foot of the broken glass, and towered up nearly to the top of it. Bobby could only catch glimpses of the room on either side of Mr. Bronson's head, and an imperfect view over it. While Bobby stood there Colonel Bentley observed him. A sudden thought seemed to strike the colonel. He arose from the side of Miss Fitzhurst, by whom he had been sitting, passed out, and walking round to the side of the house, touched Bobby on the shoulder. The boy turned round, when the colonel stepped aside from the window under the shade of the trees, and beckoned Bobby to him.

"Bobby, I want you to do something for me."

"What's that, colonel? I expect I can do it."

"Wait till I return into the house and then stretch your hand into the window and pull that fellow's wig off—"

"Ha! ha! ha!"

"Hush; don't laugh so."

"Colonel, I wanted to do it of myself, but I mus'nt —Granny would never let me hear the last of it, and it would displease Mr. Elwood."

"Bobby, I know you don't like Bronson."

"To be sure I don't, sir. Did'nt he call out to me the other day in meeting. He said I made the noise when it was Joe Giles, and he knew it. And you see Granny's religious-like; and if she hears it she'll pester me to death. I don't hide that I don't like him."

"I don't like him either, Bobby."

"Folks say so, sir. They say he's a courting over at your house as well as here."

"The devil they do. The plebeian rascal—he never was there but on business in his life. I tell you what it is; if you will do it I'll give you that beautiful little fowling-piece, with the powder horn and shot bag complete."

"Will you, indeed, colonel?"

"I will, upon my honor."

"Then hang me if I don't do it," said Bobby. "Mind, colonel, the gun, powder horn, and shot bag complete."

"Yes; and plenty of powder and shot into the bargain."

"I'll do it, sir. When shall I have the things?" asked Bobby, as the colonel was leaving him to enter the house.

"To-morrow morning early, if you come for them. Wait until I get into the house before you do it."

As the colonel walked away, Bobby turned and beheld a cat with its back bent up in a belligerent attitude towards Towzer. A sudden thought struck Bobby, by which he believed he could save himself from the risk of discovery. He felt that the cat in her fear of the dog would, if held to the window, having first been held to her foe, make an effort to escape into the room, which doubtless was familiar to her, and where her instinct told her she would be in security. And he knew that by giving her tail a pinch and pull at the instant it would mingle fury with her fear.

In the mean time Colonel Bentley re-entered the room, and, as he resumed his seat by Fanny, he asked:

"Did you really, Miss Fitzhurst, mean what you said, when you remarked the other day that you con-

sidered there was no impropriety in wearing false hair."

"I do really think so, colonel," replied Fanny, in a satirical tone. "Pray what suggested this profoundly interesting question to you."

"Mr. Bronson there, Miss Fanny, has some pretentions to pretty, as I am told; and as I differ with you in opinion, suppose you take my arm, and we step up to him and ask him the question?"

"Colonel, you are pleased to be facetious! I never ask Mr. Bronson any questions, sir, but the price of his ribbons."

"Well, Miss Fitzhurst, as you won't ask him, I must do so myself. Do listen to his answers, and observe him."

Accordingly, the colonel advanced to Bronson where he sat by the window, beside Miss Grattan, who was listening to the conversation of Mr. Pinckney, who was seated on the other side, and said:

"Mr. Bronson, I have had a dispute with a lady, sir, which, as you are the oldest man in the company (Bronson looked grave at this, but endeavoured to look honoured), and the most rigid in your morals, I have determined to leave to you—"

"What's that, Colonel Bentley? asked Bronson, putting on an amiable look."

"Do you think, sir, it is proper to wear false hair? a wig for instance."

"Colonel, sir—I—do I—"

At this instant the angry growl of a cat was heard at the window; the next moment, looking as furious as an enraged wild one, it sprang on Bronson's head, and fixed its claws deep into his wig.

With a cry of horror Bronson started to his feet, and dashed the cat from her perch. The animal fell to the floor, but bore the wig with it; and, furious with the pain

which the blow and fall had inflicted, she tore and bit it at a desperate rate.

The ladies ran to the gentlemen for protection, while Bronson, for a moment, stood speechless and motionless like Hamlet, the Dane, when he sees the ghost of his father. Recovering himself, he caught up the the chair on which he had been seated, and made at the cat.

"Hiss, cat!" ejaculated the colonel. The affrighted animal at this darted into the passage, the door of which chanced to be open, leaving the tattered wig beyond a barber's art.

"Really, sir," said Colonel Bentley to Bronson, "I should not have been surprised if your hair had stood on end at the sinfulness of my question, but I had no idea that it would run away with affright."

Amidst the confusion, and forgetting his Cousin Peggy's request, Bobby hurried away to mingle with the huskers, and escape suspicion if any should arise as to whether the cat had any instigator to its misdeeds. Bobby had some fears, for Towzer had barked fiercely when he heard the din within. He found Pompey where he had left him, seated snug against the tree, and a little elevated by the drink which he had obtained for him. The huskers were engaged might and main. They had nearly gotten through with their labour, and it was very doubtful which side would gain the victory, for their respective piles, though very much reduced, were about the same size. A large pile of loose and rustling husks had accumulated behind the workmen, while some ten feet before them the husked corn, thrown into a heap, glittered in the moon-beam. Nat, in the intensity with which he worked, had ceased his song; silence prevailed, except now and then when some enthusiastic negro would send forth a shout that started the echoes around. The negroes of each party glanced at the

pile of their opponents, and in intense and low tones exhorted their comrades to "go ahead." Each party seemed fearful that the other might discover the exertions they were making. It was an interesting scene.

"They'll soon be done, Mister Bobby," said Pompey, "You diskiver and observe they're going their death: it'll be about a tye. I don't take much interest in it. But I want to wait and get a bit of something to eat, and may be I'll give 'em a touch on my violeen. Some body has hid Nat Ramsey's away,—the nigger was jumping about here just after you went, axing every body if they had seed his "fiddle." He call his violeen a fiddle. It's just so with vulgar persons. He hates it, so he stopped his pipes. I never liked his singing no how. He thinks he can play the violeene. But he don't even understand how to hold it. He jams it up way down below his shoulder. Now that's not the way to hold a violeene. You must hold it light an' easy, and just rest it agin the shoulder. And another thing, master Bobby, them are niggers what works in the cornfield you know, and does every thing about the farm, they are a kind of stiff in the jints, they aint got the touch in the eend of their fingers to make a violeene speak. And as for Nat's singing; I assure you, Master Bobby, that I has heard a wite gentleman in the circus beat that very Nat Ramsay all hollow at one of his own nigger songs."

"Who is that?" asked Bobby.

"Why, Mister Bobby, its Mr. Rice,—Mister Jim Rice."

"I heard Jack Gordon speak of him," said Bobby, "an' I must go and hear him some of these nights when we stay in town."

"Yes, I assure you, Mister Bobby, he can do it. When he comed out he was blacked all over, and I would ha' sworn that he was a real African nigger. He had them same kind of legs, an' his leg seemed

right in the middle of his foot." Here a loud, prolonged shout disturbed the further conversation of our worthies.

"Hurra, for our side!" shouted Nat Ramsay; and, notwithstanding the condition of his foot, he threw himself in the cornhusks and rolled about in delight, throwing them over him as a frolic swimmer would sport with the waves.

"Look here," exclaimed one of the opposite party, a black, named Cæsar, belonging to Mr. Elwood, kicking the husks aside where Nat had worked, "see how they've shyed and chiseled—I axe you if dem ar husks haint got corn in 'em."

Nat jumped up, and, throwing aside the husks of the other party, he picked up several ears of corn with the husks on them.

"Look a here now,—I wonder if them are aint got corn in 'em too. You don't think niggers is as cute as coons, do ye, to find ebery single corn. There's some o' your side husking yet—dar a heap afore em as big as a barrel."

This part, plain to every eye, decided the victory.

"The Lord ha' mercy," exclaimed Nat, going to the tree where he had deposited his fiddle; "did any body ever see the like of the niggers about here,"—come help me look for it, boys—it's smashed I speck, or stole."

While some of Nat's friends were assisting him to search for his fiddle, Pompey was called on for a tune. The husks were cleared away from the place where Pompey sat preparatory to a dance. The old fellow brought forth his violin with great dignity, arose, and placed his back against the tree with his hat off, and removing the husks from his foot so that he might keep time with it, he gave them the juba song in great style.

When Bobby saw Pompey fairly underway he went

to the spot where Nat was looking for his fiddle. After affecting to assist him in the search for a few minutes, Bobby looked up into the crotch of a tree, a foot or two above his head, and pointing to an object, he asked Nat if that was not his fiddle.

"Master Bobby, you're right—the very cretur," said Nat, taking the instrument from the place; "concarn it, who could put it thar?"

"Cæsar," said Bobby to that person; "tell Pompey that I had to go home." I musn't stay for him, said he to himself, but I must get up early and go for the gun.

Bobby congratulated himself as he proceeded on the successful issue of the trick. He stopped short; and, placing his hands upon his knees, laughed aloud at the idea of the ridiculous figure which the baldpate of Bronson cut, of which, ere he retreated, he had suffered himself to snatch a glance. As Bobby jogged on he looked round through the woods, and thought to himself what gunning he should have therein, and with such a gun—the very best one he had ever seen.

Bobby was interrupted in his pleasant reveries by the quick tramp of horses, which he thought from the sound must be descending a precipitous bridle-path which led to the hills. Bobby listened, and looked, and in a few moments distinguished two horsemen entering the road on which he trod. The road, an old county one, led round the hills by the property of Mr. Fitzhurst and Elwood to a mill, which some years before the date of our narrative had been burnt down by the carelessness of the miller. Since this event the road was of no use to any one, but Mr. Fitzhurst and Elwood, in the transportation of their wood or grain from distant parts of their property.

Bobby wondered who the horsemen could be, and what they were after. As they approached him they seemed in anxious conversation, and Bobby, without.

any fear, but with the desire of observing them unnoticed, withdrew to the shadow of the wood at the very point that Mr. Fitzhurst's lane, which passed through his estate, let into the old road.

"You think its all right, then," Bobby heard one of the horsemen say, as they neared the spot.

"Yes, I'm up;" replied the other, whom Bobby recognised both by voice and person as being Jack Gordon. "You ride on to the village in that way," continued Gordon, "and I'll cut through this lane. We'd better not be seen together,—I know the folks all about here, and can take liberties. And I've got other reasons two that I'll tell you of some day; don't be so fast." They had slackened the pace of their steeds as they drew near the mouth of Fitzhurst's lane, and this enabled Bobby to hear so much of what was said. At the last remark of Gordon they stopped, and he asked:

"Do you think that husking match is over yet?"

"I should say not," replied Gordon's companion; who wore his hat very much over his face, which prevented the lad from observing his features.

"Then I'll push ahead," replied Gordon, "and meet you at the village to-morrow—keep dark."

"Never fear me," replied the other person. So saying, they put spurs to their horses, and parted company: Gordon entering the lane, and the other pursuing the road.

"Gordon's at some devilment," said Bobby to himself, as he stepped into the lane again. "There now, I forgot to tell him what Cousin Peggy said. Jack Gordon wont bear watching. I've forgot twice to-night what Cousin Peggy told me. I wonder what he's after."

When Bobby passed by Mr. Fitzhurst's mansion it was wrapped in profound repose. As he approached his home, the sound of a horse's tread broke

suddenly on his ear, as if it had just started from some point or other. In a musing mood, he quietly entered the back door of his grandmother's humble dwelling, and stole to bed.

CHAPTER X.

Bobby was up with day-dawn in the morning on his way to Colonel Bentley's, which was perhaps a mile or more from his granny's, for the purpose of closing the fulfilment of the promise made him on the previous evening.

The colonel had not yet arisen when Bobby reached his residence. On learning the fact, the boy sat down very impatiently by the front door, determined not to leave until he had received the "gun, powder-horn, and shot-bag complete."

At last Colonel Bentley, having been informed by a servant that Bobby was at the door, made his appearance, bearing in his hand the gun and its appendages.

"Good morning, Bobby," quoth the colonel.

"Good morning, colonel," rejoined Bobby, eyeing the gun.

"Bob, you certainly managed adroitly last evening, ha, ha. I wonder if Bronson has another wig?"

"I don't know indeed, colonel. Did the cat use that one up?"

"Pretty much so, Bobby. Here Bobby," handing him the gun, &c., "you must never mention this affair."

"Me mention it! It was the very thing I was going to ask you, colonel. If it gets out they'll be for playing the deuce with me. But aint this gun a peeler. Thank you, colonel, I must go home," said Bobby, as he arose to depart.

"Take care of yourself, Bobby."

"Ay, aye, sir," said the delighted lad, as he proceeded homeward. If ever since his misfortune Bobby dwelt upon his shadow with complacency, it was now as he beheld it elongated by the morning sun, with all his brave equipments. As he marked his shadow, almost stretching across the road, his egotism mounted nearly as high as Richard's when, after that worthy's successful suit with Lady Ann, he resolved to buy a looking-glass. Bobby for once thought with what pleasure he would stand plumply before Jack Gordon's mirror, and take a good look, at least, at the comeliness of the gun, powder-horn, and shot-bag, when properly arranged on his person.

As it was yet quite early in the morning, Bobby concluded that he would go on to Mr. Fitzhurst, where he could deliver his message of the previous evening, which he had forgotten; and learn from Miss Rachellina if his cousin's services would be needed at the mansion that day. Accordingly, he resolved to pass by his grandmother's, which was situated between Miss Bentley's and Mr. Fitzhurst's, if when he got there he found the family were not up. He had scarcely formed this resolution, while he still gazed at the shadow of his gun, when a well-known voice addressed him:

"Bobby, where did you get that gun? Aint you ashamed, you; to leave the door open this morning on your poor old granny?—aint you a pretty boy?"

"Cousin Peggy, indeed I shut the door after me—I ask you, what do you always call me boy for? aint

I seventeen come next May? I don't suppose I am always to be a boy?"

"Always to be a boy!" rejoined Peggy, repeating his language and laughing; "shall I call you a man then—I was seventeen a year ago, and I believe I am a girl, Mr. Man! Your thinking about your shadow, Bobby—that I caught you looking at, though you don't like Jack Gordon's looking-glass."

"If a girl is a woman at seventeen, and folks say she is, I want to know why a boy aint a man. I hope, Cousin Peggy, you are not making game, 'cause I'm stunted."

"No, Bobby, I am not—that's your misfortune, not your fault," said Peggy, in a serious tone; "it would be a sin if I did—I am sure I never thought the less of you on that account, but where did you get that gun?"

Bobby felt perfectly reconciled to his boyhood by this remark; and, to the interrogation, he replied:—

"Isn't she a peeler? she's mounted with silver, and has a gold touch-hole—that's to keep her from burning out. Then here's a powder-horn and shot-bag, in style. Cousin Peggy, the birds 'll have to look out, I tell you—I'll shoot you and granny just as many as you want. Do you see where the old road comes in by the burnt house; now suppose that black thing was a bird"—as Bobby spoke, he elevated his gun as if to take aim at the object, which was within ten feet of him; when, at the very instant, Mr. Bronson, well mounted on his gelding, issued from the side of the house into the road on which Peggy and her cousin stood. He had his hat tied over his ears with a large black, silk pocket-handkerchief, and was on his way to the city to renew the lost honours of his brow."

"Mercy!" exclaimed Mr. Bronson, dodging his head, and jerking his horse back, as he beheld the gun pointed at him.

Bobby shouldered the gun, and said, "Good morning, Mr. Bronson."

"Bob—Robert Gammon, a little more, sir, and you don't know what might have happened. Merciful father! such a sudden death—such an unaccounted for life! Are you aware, Robert Gammon, that it is against the law to be firing on the highway?"

"Why, Mr. Bronson, I was only making believe here to Cousin Peggy."

"Ay, Peggy, my good girl, how do you do? how is your grandmother?"

"Granny is still ailing, sir; but we hope she will be better soon."

"Let me tell you, Robert," exclaimed Mr. Bronson, turning to the boy, "you do very wrong to be trifling with fire-arms. Have you forgotten Mr. Thompson's business already? your grandmother told me, after you had threatened my friend, Mr. Thompson's life, that she would not suffer you to have a gun. I shudder to think of the consequences if you had discharged that instrument of death. The result would have been the death of a peaceable, I may say, I hope, pious and useful citizen, in the harmless pursuit of his vocation, shot down on the public highway—Murder!" (Here Bronson caught the eye of Bobby fixed keenly on him.) "I don't say that you would have designedly shot me—heaven forbid that any one should entertain any such feeling against me. But you might have been hung, nevertheless. Circumstances would have worn the appearance of evil intention, very evil intention. Suppose the evil one had caused you to fire at the very moment I appeared—the evil one I say—would'nt that have been murder? And that, I take it, is what the lawyer's call being moved by the instigation of the devil."

"If the old boy had instigated, as you call it," said Bobby, with a cunning smile, "I couldn't ha' done

any harm,—this gun is like some people's heads, Mr. Bronson."

"Robert Gammon, what do you mean by that," said Bronson, with a menacing look.

"Cause she empty, Mr. Bronson," replied the lad, with a simple smile.

"Robert, I do not know what to make of you," said Bronson, endeavouring to hide his indignation under the cloak of pity. Before you were thrown from Mr. Fitzhurst's racer, you were comparatively a steady, sober, sedate lad,—I never had any fault to find with you, but that you were fond of the improper and carnal gatherings of horseraces, but in that you had the example of your betters, and you got your bread by it. But, poor child, since your fall, I agree with my friend Doctor McVittee, who is of the opinion that the contusion on your head and shoulders has caused an aberration of mind."

"What do you mean by that, sir; Mr. Bronson?" inquired Bobby.

"Poor lad; Robert, Robert, you are very ignorant. Why, in the name of mercy, in consideration of your welfare here and hereafter does not your grandmother compel you to go to school. Peggy, my good girl, why don't you prevail on your grandmother and use your influence with this misguided lad to make him go to school."

"He's agoing, sir, in the winter. But, O! Mr. Bronson, what's the matter with your head?"

"An accident, Peggy, my good girl; an accident."

"What does that word mean, though, Mr. Bronson? I want to know that."

"Robert, indeed, you are very ignorant: how old are you?"

"Seventeen, come next May, sir."

"It means, Robert, that Dr. McVittee and myself are of opinion, that since you were thrown

from Mr. Fitzhurst's horse—it is not your fault, Robert, only inasmuch as you would ride races—it is our opinion that since that unfortunate event for you, that at times you are a little flighty."

"Mr. Bronson," said Bobby, in a tone of sympathy, "I hope the cat what jumped on your head there, and cut up so, didn't hurt you?"

"When did you hear that?" inquired Bronson, with much confusion.

"Last night, at Mr. Elwood's husking, sir."

"What did folks say about it, Robert?"

"They said it was a trying sight. Hangnation, but I hope though that the cat didn't bite or scratch your head; did it, Mr. Bronson?"

"Robert, do you mean to be impertinent."

"Impertinent! I don't know what that means. Folks say that if the cat did bite you it will be awful; she was raving mad; she bit a dog that's agoing to have the hydrophoby."

"The hydrophobia," exclaimed Bronson, horror-striken, "impossible! Mercy! impossible!"

"Folks say so, sir," rejoined Bobby; "but, Mr. Bronson, did the varmit bite or scratch you?"

"Robert, my good boy, I fear so; I fear so—I did not examine my head particularly this morning, but I did think I did see a bite or a cratch there. It can't be a bite; my God! it can't be a bite."

"Are you sure it is only a scratch, Mr. Bronson?" asked Bobby.

"Sure, sure, no I'm not sure; come here, my good children—Peggy, my good girl, come here."

Mr. Bronson, so speaking, dismounted, and with nervous haste untied the handkerchief, and took off his hat. He had another handkerchief tied close round his head in the place of the wig, for he was very careful of his health, and was fearful that he might

take cold. This he jerked off, and presenting his head to the inspection of Peggy and Bobby, said:—

"See, my good children; see—are there any marks, any scratches, any bites?"

"Yes, sir. Mr. Bronson, there's one right on the tip-top of your head," said Bobby: and at the same instant, unobserved, he contrived to hit the horse with his gun. Bronson had dropped the bridle as he sprang from the horse, and the animal on being striken by Bobby, darted with a neigh round the corner of the burnt house in full speed for his stable in the village.

"My horse; my head!" ejaculated Bronson; "catch him; catch him."

"He's too quick for me, sir," said Bobby; "he's off, as hard as he can go it."

"What shall I do, what shall I do?" exclaimed Bronson, trying to feel the affected part with his finger; "look, Peggy, my good girl, is it very bad!"

The bewilderment of Peggy at the whole scene had prevented her usual loquacity. Now directly appealed to, she examined Bronson's head particularly, and could not but observe quite a large scratch across his crown.

"Yes, sir; it is some hurt," said Peggy.

"Mercy, is it a bite or a scratch?" eagerly enquired Mr. Bronson.

"Indeed, sir, I can't tell," said Peggy; "but it looks to me like a scratch—it is long across the head."

"I hope it is not, but it may be a *bite*," said Bobby.

"Yes, it may be, it may be," exclaimed Bronson, clasping his hands together; "I may go mad; the creature was certainly furious, rabid, mad, herself; and I may go mad."

At this Peggy started from Bronson's side, and got some feet from him, when she stood staring at him in evident alarm.

"If I was you, Mr. Bronson," said Bobby, "as you know Doctor McVitte knows everything, I would go right off to Springdale and ask him."

"But my horse is gone," said Bronson, wofully; "it will take me so long to get there; come, go with me—I may go mad on the road."

"Then I'd best not go with you, sir," said Bobby; "cause you know, Mr. Bronson, if you should go mad on the road, you'd be for jumping right at me to bite me, and then I'd have to shoot you down to save myself—I must load my gun."

"Wait, wait," exclaimed Bronson, springing up, "wait till I'm off;" and, so speaking, he darted round the burnt house, and made with all speed for Springdale.

"Bobby, what does this mean?" asked Peggy, in a moment.

Bobby was too busily engaged in loading his gun to reply. As soon as he had done so, he discharged it upon the track of the flying Bronson, and said:

"That 'll quicken his speed. Hangnation, if he was to go mad I'd much rather shoot him down than I would the poor cat."

Then the ridiculous figure Bronson cut occurred to Bobby, and he threw himself on the side of the road, clapped his hands, struck his heels together, and shouted with laughter.

"Bobby—Robert Gammon," exclaimed Peggy, angrily, "what does all this mean?—a second time I ask, won't you tell me?"

Bobby arose to his feet and told his cousin all that had occurred, except his own agency in the matter.

"My stars," said Peggy; "you say, Bobby, that a mad cat jumped right through the window on to Mr. Bronson's head, bit and scratched him, tore his wig off, and tore it up."

"May be she might a' eat it," said Bobby, "for

what I knows. It would be just like such a wild varmint if she was to—"

"What become of the cat, Bobby?"

"I don't know, Cousin Peggy.—Folks say that she hissed an' spluttered, and snarled about the room like mad; and for a good reason, she was raving mad."

"An' the thing bit his head."

"You saw it, Cousin Peggy."

"Yes, yes; I did so.—It looked like a scratch; but a scratch, Bobby, may be just as bad as a bite. And if Mr. Bronson don't go right off hydrophoby crazy now, yet he may some time or other. Joe James didn't go mad, it was said, till more than a year after he was bitten by squire Norris's dog. Some people thought it was drink that made him carry on so; but the best judging thought it was the bite. I know one thing."

"What's that, Cousin Peggy?"

"Why, I wonder how Miss Gratton ever could 've thought in the first place of having such a looking man as Bronson."

"Looks is nothing, Cousin Peggy," said Bobby, quickly.

"Well, he's not only an ill-favored man, but he is an ill-grained man, I believe, in spite of his church-going; and then he's old enough to be Miss Gratton's father, and she's such a sweet young lady. As I was saying, I don't see how she could ever have thought of having him, but if she has—if she has made up her mind, if I was in her place I would change it,—I couldn't be made to have him—only to think, Bobby, who can tell at what time he may go mad—it may come on him like the thief in the night, in the very night he's married, and he might bite his poor young wife to death before any one could get to her. No, if I was Miss Gratton I wouldn't stand it."

"What's one man's meat is another man's poison,"

said Bobby, "there'll be another wig to make, that's certain, if he lives,—I hope he won't go mad for he's not worth the powder that would blow his brains out. He speaks against everybody—I reckon I understand his big words better an' he thinks I do. He runs down everybody, Cousin Peggy,—I want to know did you see Jack Gordon last night?"

"Did you see him, Mr. Bobby?" said Peggy, with some confusion, but with the effort to look archly.

"Yes, I did see him."

"You did, Robert Gammon?" Bobby nodded his head solemnly. "Then why didn't you tell him to come and take his glass away. That's a pretty way to do what I ask you."

"How did you know I did'nt tell him?"

Peggy made no reply, but hummed carelessly the words of the Scotch song:

> "Come up the back stair when you're coming to see,
> But come as you were na' coming to me."

The words of the song irritated Bobby, for he said, "Cousin Peggy, if folks come as they was'nt coming to see me, I'd tell 'em to talk as if they war'nt talking about me."

"What do you mean by that?" asked Peggy, with alarmed curiosity.

"I said to myself that I would'nt tell you, but I will. The last time I was at Springdale there was Jack Gordon, Joe Hitt, and the Miller, afore Mr. Bronson's door, and all a little corned. They got to cutting at me because I always walk by your side to church; and Jack Gordon asked me if I did it to keep the dogs off. I told him I was not big enough to keep the dogs off; but that I was too much for a puppy. At this he got right red in the face, and the other fellers laughed at him. Then he asked me if

I had ever kissed you. Well I hav'nt kissed you since I was so high, though I am your born cousin; but I told him that if I had he hadn't. He laughed outright such an infernal laugh, and said I had better keep beside you. An' I think so, too."

"What do you mean, Robert Gammon?" said Peggy, angrily.

"Cousin Peggy, so help me God, and that's what they say in the court-house when they kiss the bible, an' its perjury to break the oath, now I've got a gun, so help me God, if them chaps get ——"

"I thought," exclaimed Peggy, "that that gun would lead you into mischief; you've got to threatening already."

"If you had heard Jack Gordon?"

"He lies," said Peggy, "he never kissed me; I never scarcely shake hands with him. But you believed him, you mean thing, you believed him; and so you don't go with me to meeting and about, because I'm your cousin, and for relationship, but to keep a watch on me? That's it; go your ways, Robert Gammon, go your ways; you can go your gaite an' I'll go mine; I've done with you." And Peggy walked away from him, indignantly, and burst into tears.

"Cousin Peggy, indeed," exclaimed Bobby, advancing to her, "I didn't;" but Peggy forbid him to speak to her, and hastened away.

"Hangnation to Jack Gordon, the gun, and everything!" said Bobby, as he threw himself beneath a tree by the road side, and cast a regardless eye upon his gun which he tossed carelessly from him.

CHAPTER XI.

A FEW weeks after Howard Pinckney had arrived at Holly, we find him alone in his room on a cloudy autumnal day, when the wind moaned and sighed through the branches of the trees, from which the whirling leaves fell by thousands. Pinckney's feelings seemed in unison with the day. Sidney Fitzhurst had gone to town, whither Pinckney had declined accompanying him, saying, "Excuse me, I'm not in the vein."

After Sidney left, Pinckney sat for a short time conversing with Fanny, when seizing the first opportunity to leave her without abruptness, he gracefully withdrew and repaired to his chamber. He closed the door, stirred the fire which he had requested should be lighted, and paced his apartment like one who felt restless and unhappy. One moment he would pause before his window with folded arms, and look out upon the hills on which the dark masses of cloud seemed to rest; and the next, he would turn and bend his brow to the floor, and with quickening footsteps tread it.

"While through the shadowy past,
Like a tomb-searcher, memory ran,
Lifting each shroud that time had cast
O'er buried hopes."

At last he drew his large travelling trunk near the fire and seated himself beside it. After opening it, he took from it a small case or casket, which he unlocked with a key that was suspended to his watch-chain. The casket contained several rings of great value, and a number of letters, most of them written

in a female hand, together with a miniature of a lovely woman. The miniature was beautifully set in gold, and in the back of it a lock of fine dark hair was inserted. There was a singular expression in Pinckney's countenance as his eye rested on it, a frown clouded his brow, while a smile, that had a touch of sorrow, played upon his lip.

"A fair, false face," said he to himself, "and yet how beautiful — thy power is departing, even the memory of it grows dim. My heart is like the ocean after a storm, a fearful storm; while the fragment of my hopes are around me, a calm has come so deadly, that those very hopes sleep in its bosom, as though they wished not life—sought death. Yes! I could gaze upon you now," said he, looking upon the miniature, "and feel as little emotion as your image feels beneath my eye. But to no one, to man, nor to woman, will I ever tell, or shall they ever know, all you have made me suffer. The hell of passions—jealousy, love, pride, hate—have all at once been at war within my heart, have scathed it like the angry elements when they meet in wrath and desolate the earth; but the blackness and desolation that they leave may afterwards produce a more abundant fertility—you have not seared me to the quick, my gentle goddess. I have discovered that my worship was idolatry; and when I reach the true shrine my zeal shall be the more constant—yet how she wrote, and in such language, beyond her sex's custom."

So speaking, he opened one of the letters and read as follows:

"My dearest Howard:

"In the land of your birth, which is to be that of my adoption—mine own becomes yours.

'East, West, alas! I care not whither,
So thou art safe—I'm with thee.'

In that land of yours the travellers hold there were

fountains of perennial flow, from which they might drink and perpetuate their youth and comeliness. Our hearts shall be unto our loves such a fountain; and like the waters in the vale of Avoca, they shall mingle into one.

"As you discovered my secret without my knowledge, as Romeo discovered Juliet—I, like her, throw off my maidenly reserve, and give utterance to the language of my heart. Though descended from American parents—but an Italian by birth—my native skies have touched my heart with Italian influences and feelings. To meet some one whom I could love, and on whom with undoubting faith I could fling all the wealth of my heart, has been the only dream to which my imagination has been constant. And if, sometimes, o'er the heaven of my hope a cloud arose, the winged torch-bearer would flash the mists away and reveal the star. O! Howard, Howard! your letters speak such a strength of love, that while my heart echoes it I feel my pen cannot express it. And yet confess, do you not think less of me for attempting it—is there not a feeling in your sex, which, while it hoards a woman's love with a miser's care, yet experiences a sensation of coldness towards her when she tells it? While your sex tell their love with a prodigality of language, and while they expect all devotedness from ours, why is it that there is so much waywardness mingled with it, for I maintain that your sex are much more wayward and *capricious*—start not—in love than mine own. When a woman gives her love, she gives her all—her diffidence may have kept it hidden in her heart for a while, but that very secresy increases its powers like the restrained waters of a torrent, which, when they break forth, can never be rolled back again. Tell me, tell me, do you not think less of me because I have spoken so plainly to you—you are a Southerner, and while your blood is all

meridian, yet is it not, tell me, is it not sometimes capricious in its currents, if not icy in its flow. I will believe that you will never suffer it to become frozen towards me; but am I as sure that it will never become chilled?"

"Chilled!" exclaimed Pinckney with bitterness; "yes it is chilled, and I would that it were frozen." "But," said he, and he made the quotation from his favourite, slowly, like one who is impressed with the truth of every word. "I suppose she thinks

> 'The deepest stream that ever froze,
> Can only o'er the surface close;
> The living stream lies quick below,
> And flow'st and cannot cease to flow.'

"But why should I read them. Often," said he, as he placed the letters and likeness in the casket, and locked it within his trunk, "often have I determined to destroy those memorials, as I have flattered myself I had overcome my foolish passion. But what folly; the very effort that I vainly make to destroy them, shows that some of the old feeling survives. There let them remain; yes, there they shall be until they are as indifferent to my eyes as the commonest object in nature, which I look on without being aware of it."

Here the sound of Fanny's voice, as she sung and accompanied herself on the piano, reached Pinckney's ears. He pushed the trunk from him, arose, and with scrupulous care adjusted his dress before the glass; and after taking two or three turns up and down the room, as if to compose his feelings, he repaired to her presence.

As Pinckney entered the room, Fanny arose from the piano, humming as she did so the words of the song:

> Its good to be off with the old love,
> Before you are on with the new.

"Do you believe that, Mr. Pinckney?" she asked

gaily. The shadow of a moment passed over Pinckney's brow, and then he answered as gaily.

"Had I experience, Miss Fitzhurst, I should probably say with the poet. But I am no believer in love, as I have told you, and therefore my advice would be not to be *on* with any love at all. Love is the vitality of a novel, the life of it; but to life itself, to the reality, it is the simoon of the desert to the flower that springs by the fountain; it withers up both fountain and flower. There," said he, changing his tone, and seating himself beside her, "in so fair a presence have I not spoken like a most skeptical cynic. But, Miss Fitzhurst, maybe I have found the grapes sour."

"I should really think so myself," said Fanny, "sometimes; did not brother and others give such account of the smiles you have won."

"And lost," interrupted Pinckney; "say they nothing of the smiles I have won and—lost."

"No, not a word of what you have lost; as their authority for what you had won was probably an autobiographical account, the hiatus may be accounted for."

"You are severe, Miss Fitzhurst, this morning; what has perplexed you? would not your curls obey the schooling of your fingers or your maids? or were you disappointed in getting your new bonnet yesterday?"

"No, sir; neither of those awful calamities has occurred. I have my hair this morning plain as a Madonna's, not because of the merits of the morning, but because it suited my whims. And as for new bonnets I am condemned all this winter to the country, Mr. Pinckney, and a new bonnet would be my aversion, for it would put me in mind of town."

"I am to be envied," said Pinckney. "How many of the gay gallants of the city would like to have the pleasure of sharing your exile. Alas! there is this

great difference, however, that you sigh for town, while you put me in raptures with the country. There be those in town who could make you think, are there, that the country was a paradise?"

"No, sir," said Fanny, with perhaps a little frankness, as though she were provoked at the levity of Pinckney, "no, sir; there be no such person either in town or country."

Pinckney fixed his eye for a moment on the carpet, and then, laughing, said: "I am like many an unfortunate fellow who is envied for what I acknowledge is most enviable; but for that may eventually make him miserable."

"You said that quite gallantly, Mr. Pinckney. Like many a dramatic gentleman whom I have seen upon the stage, who having been often applauded for the fine way with which he uttered compliment by rote, always does it with a consciousness—"

"That his fair listener deserves it," said Pinckney, continuing the sentence; "come, will you not play for me."

"Certainly, sir. And as you would have me believe that you are the victim of unrequited love, O! la"—

"You do me wrong, Miss. Fitzhurst, I am as heartless as the bamboo that grows up without a heart —hollow."

"There is many a true word spoken in jest. I don't believe you are capable of love. You are a male flirt and a flatterer. But, sir, hoping that some day you may require by art, what you have not by nature,—a heart, I will sing you a song on 'Love.' The words were written by a college chum of brother's, so you may say of them what you please; but I'd have you know, sir, that I set them to music myself.

LOVE.

Love has a home in every heart,
A consecrated shrine,—
The natural and the schooled in art,
Both hail him as divine;
One greets him with a smile or nod,
The other as a household god.

Love has a home in every heart,
Yet there are some who love
As though it come but to depart,
To rest not, but to rove;
As bees that are for summer born,
Woo the rich flower and fly the thorn.

Love has a home in every heart,
And there are some who love
As though it formed of life a part,
And blessed them from above:
A dream, which when awake, they keep,
And yet they do not wake to weep.

Love has a home in Mary's heart,
'Twas Henry placed him there,
And taught him many a wily art,
And many a burning prayer:
Happy Love! who would not be
Nestling in that heart with thee.

Love has a home in Henry's heart,
'Twas Mary's eye and smile,
That struck him with the Parthian dart,
She trembling all the while;
Half fearless, and yet half afraid,
He whispered to the blushing maid.

Love has a home in every heart,
And O! how happy they,
Who when they their deep trust impart
Throw not their love away,
But who receive for what they give
A love that bids their passion live.

CHAPTER XII.

"WHAT a great admirer you are of Byron, Mr. Pinckney," said Fanny.

"Yes, Miss Fitzhurst, I love his poetry as much as ever lady loved himself. Byron is as remarkable an instance as can be quoted in proof of the fact that circumstances hold a controling influence over, give the hue and colour to talent, while they develop it."

"How?" asked Fanny.

"In his early youth he was very poor; by the death of his uncle he received his title and fortune, at a time of life when so sudden a change of fortune would be very apt to have an injurious effect on an unregulated mind like his. He burst into tears, such was the proud swelling of his heart, the first time he was called Lord Byron. Such a susceptible and sensitive spirit should have been most carefully watched and instructed. How was he instructed? The mother was more wayward even than the son; and, withal, the victim of that vice that makes a man a brute, and a woman a fiend. "Stop," said Pinckney, "excuse me one moment; I saw an article to day in the library, in a late number of the Edinburgh Review, which is written

with a force of language that is seldom surpassed—I will get the Review."

Pinckney left the room, and Fanny sat musing upon his literary enthusiasm. He returned in a moment and read as follows:

"The pretty fable by which the Duchess of Orleans illustrated the character of her son, the regent, might be with little change applied to Byron. All the fairies save one had been bidden to his cradle. All the gossips had been profuse in their gifts: one had bestowed nobility, another genius, a third beauty; the malignant elf, who had been uninvited, came last, and unable to reverse what her sister had done for their favourite, mixed up a curse with every blessing. The young peer had great intellectual gifts, yet there was an unsound part in his mind. He had naturally a generous and tender heart, but his temper was wayward and irritable. He had a head which statuaries loved to copy, and a foot, the deformity of which the beggar in the street remarked. But, capriciously as nature had dealt with him, the relative to whom the office of forming his character was assigned was more capricious still. She passed from paroxysms of rage to paroxysms of fondness; at one time stifled him with caresses, at another insulting his deformity."

"Yes, that is true," said Fanny.

"All except where the Review says, that there was an unsound part in Byron's mind; and it certainly must have called forth all his penetration to have discovered *that*. Byron had violent passions, and they often eclipsed his judgment; but his letters, and particularly his journal, show that the sagacity of his observation was equal to the brilliancy of his genius. His mother would fly in a passion, and throw the shovel and tongs at him; at other times she would run furiously out of the room, and as she did so, he would exclaim, 'exit Mrs. Byron in a

rage.' To such a height did their natural misunderstanding arise, and such was their mutual idea of each other's temper, that after one of their quarrels, they both have been know to slip round to the apothecaries to inquire if the other had been there to purchase poison. At school, Byron was not remarkable for anything except for his fighting propensities and very superior talents for declamation, which leave us no reason to doubt that if he had devoted himself to oratory, Brougham and Canning would have had a fearful rival—in all human probability, a superior."

"But, Mr. Pinckney," interrupted Fanny, "did not Byron make one or two speeches in the House of Lords, but without remarkable success?"

"He did; but that does not prove that he would not eventually have succeeded. Sheridan, who failed himself in his first attempt, and who, one of the best judges of character and talent, frequently advised Byron to turn his attention to oratory; telling him that he felt satisfied he would succeed if he did. Oratory is the art of all others the most difficult to excel in—with one or two exceptions almost every great orator has failed in his first attempts. Byron had all the qualifications to make an orator—voice, manner, expression of countenance, depth of passion, wit, sarcasm, sublimity, and he possessed a fearlessness which would have given him full power in the combat over all their intellectual weapons. In all probability if he had not inherited a title, but had been compelled to devote himself to a profession, he would now have been the first statesman of the day, the Chatham of the age."

"Mr. Pinckney," said Fanny, smiling at his enthusiasm, and yet fascinated by the deep tones of his voice and the intense lustre of his eye, "the world would say that there is great speculation in that opinion."

Pinckney smiled in return, but continued, "Not so much speculation as at first blush appears. Canning was a devotee to literature. At the age of seventeen he wrote many numbers of the Microcosm. He has written a satire and fugitive pieces of poetry which are beautiful. It was imperious poverty which drove him into the arena of politics. He set out with the determination of becoming prime minister of Great Britain, and succeeded; but the wear and tare of ambition laid him prematurely in the grave. If we may conclude from Byron's superiority over Canning in literature that he would have been as far his superior in politics if he had devoted himself to them, there could be no comparison between the two. But I weary you."

"No, no," said Fanny, impatiently, "go on; unless," she added, in a sarcastic tone, "it has just occurred to you that you are wasting your breath upon a woman, and a very young one!"

Pinckney gazed on Fanny for a moment with an eye of open admiration, ere he said, "Byron, Miss Fitzhurst, we are told once stood before the glass and, as he contemplated his pale features said, 'I should like to die of consumption.' 'Why so?' asked a friend who was by; 'because,' he replied, 'the women would say, 'poor Byron! how interesting he looks.'" A commonplace man would call that affectation and folly, but one who can appreciate such gorgeous dreams of beauty as Byron personified—such creations as Zuleika, Medora, Zelia—would say that it was the intense passion of a poet for an abiding interest in gentle hearts. A longing to have those interested in his fate who suggested to his imagination such life devoted love—and such matchless beauty.

"My own, Medora sure thy song is sad—
In Conrad's absence would'st thou have it glad?'

"Therefore, before your fair self would he wish to be vindicated. At school, as I have observed, Byron was remarkable only for his fighting propensities, and his powers of declamation. He was self-willed, obstinate and wayward, but frank and generous. His friendships were at least as lasting as his enmities. The letters he received from his school-fellows he treasured up—he delighted to read them in after years, and to dwell upon the companions of his boyhood. He was the champion of all the smaller boys, and would suffer none of the larger ones to domineer over them. These are high traits in a boy. His first love—his strongest and his purest—loved another; and this unrequited affection cost him many a pang. How coldly she treated the unknown and fameless boy. She afterwards repented, but alas! too late—her regrets came like the monarch's gift to the dying philosopher. In that, to me the best of his poems, how elegantly he describes his feelings when he dreamed that Miss Chaworth loved him not:

'As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge
The maid was on the eve of womanhood;
The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
And that was shining on him; he had look'd
Upon it till it could not pass away:
He had no breath, no being, but in hers;—
She was his voice; he did not speak to her,
But trembled on her words; she was his sight,
For his eye follow'd hers, and saw with hers,
Which colour'd all his objects: he had ceased
To live within himself—she was his life,
The ocean to the river of his thoughts,
Which terminated all upon a tone,
A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,
And his cheek change tempestuously—his heart
Unknowing of its cause of agony.
But she in these fond feelings had no share.'

"O! how beautiful," exclaimed Fanny with enthusiasm, "I have read the dream often, but I never felt that passage so forcibly before."

Pinckney bowed, and flattered by Fanny's evident attention, he continued:

"Byron flew from love to seek fame, and published his first poem, the "Hours of Idleness." Fame at first was as unkind as his mistress. The unmerciful and unmanly critique of the Edinburgh Review on them, bruised his feelings to the heart's core. He tells us, himself, that on the evening he read the review he drank three bottles of wine, but oblivion would not come. He soon determined on a better course than oblivion—he set to work, and wrote his satire of the 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,' and damned his foes to everlasting fame. He reminds me of Curran, who said that he was always frightened to death in the Court House until one day the judge insulted him. 'When sir,' said he, 'I looked him steadily in the eye and broke out upon him, and he has not looked me in the eye since.' So it was with Byron, he met the

> 'Lion in his den,
> The Douglas in his hall.'

And the lion roused him as gently as a sucking dove. To a spirit so proud and haughty, and acutely sensitive as Byron's, such a triumph as this must have given moments of intense and burning exultation. After the publication of "The English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," he repaired to the Continent, where he travelled, and wrote the first cantos of Childe Harold, and returned and published it. On its publication the Edinburgh Review, who had said that Byron's first poem was 'fit for neither God nor man,' declared that he was the first poet of the age. It but echoed

public opinion throughout Great Britain. Thus, he who had left England unnoticed, and almost unknown, returned to be courted and eulogised more than any other man in the kingdom. For him the daily press teemed with approbation; for him the fete was given; the proud courted him; the ambitious sought his applause. For Lord Byron the brilliant hall was lighted; for Lord Byron beauty wore her most winning smiles, and put on all her fascinations—it was discovered that he had the head and bust of an Apollo; his address, too, was so insinuating, there was such blandness in his smile—his very deformity was a grace, it made him so interesting. What young man would not have been guilty of indiscretions under such circumstances? What old man's head would they not have turned? Amidst all this, Byron met Miss Milbanke, a beauty, a fortune, a favourite; one, too, who wrote poetry and loved it; quite a blue, blue as the sky, but without storm or cloud.

'Miss Edgeworth's novels stepping from their covers.'

"How interesting to be the town talk, and to reform such a man. They were married; soon quarrelled and separated. The fashion, then, like that from abundant sleeves to no sleeves at all, changed completely. It became the *rage* to abuse Byron. He was called vain, conceited, haughty, overbearing,—a perfect monster, with passions darker than the darkest he had drawn. His deformity was pointed at, in proof that he was the imp of the old one, with the curse stamped upon him, like Cain's, by the hand of Deity. All the hearts that might, or could, or should, or would have been broken by him, now were up in judgment against him; and many an old dowager, and many a young duchess abused the abominable Byron. Those who thought themselves entitled to be the talk, but whom he had entirely

eclipsed, now made at him. What a beautiful moral spectacle! Lady Caroline Lamb published her celebrated novel of "Glenarvon," in which his character was so darkly painted, and which it was said contained many of his letters to her. But one of your sex, I think he states, had boldness enough to be his friend. In this state of things he left England to return no more. The ban of ostracism was against him; whether justly or unjustly, I shall not pretend to determine. I mention all this to show how greatly circumstances influenced the development of his talent, as well as his morals. He had all that ambition can aspire to—fame, fortune, friends, the world's applause; he drained the burning bowl to the dregs. Yet amidst it all, he could not be happy. Look at his early life. Think of his temperament; his sensibilities; his passions; his untutored youth; his pride. His mother, had she been a mother to him—his father was in the grave, but his memory was a stain and a reproach. His first affections were blighted. He plunged in revel, perhaps in crime, to forget it. But think of the peasant poet's prayer, who resembled the peer much:

> 'Thou know'st that Thou hast formed me
> With passions wild and strong;
> And list'ning to their witching voice
> Has often led me wrong.'

And, in reflecting upon it, it will perhaps occur to us that, from the difference of men's impulses arose the justice of the text 'judge not.' He published his first poems—they were satirised—he retaliated. His reputation came upon him so suddenly, that, as he himself said, 'he awoke one morning and found himself famous.' He ran his brief career of splendid misery; for unhappiness was at his heart even then. He was banished by public opinion, without the public knowing anything of the facts of the case in

which they condemned him. Let me repeat you his own language on the subject; I have it by rote, and it is as eloquent a passage as any in his poetry. He says: 'I felt that if what was whispered, and muttered, and murmured was true, I was unfit for England; if false, England was unfit for me. I withdrew, but this was not enough. In other countries, in Switzerland, in the shadow of the Alps, and by the blue depth of the lakes, I was pursued and breathed upon by the same blight. I crossed the mountains, but it was the same; so I went a little farther, and settled myself by the waves of the Adriatic, like the stag at bay, who betakes himself to the waters.'"

"Indeed," said Fanny, "that is eloquent."

"Disgust, satiety, wounded pride, impaired health, were his companions in exile. Then came forth the dark strains of his muse; in which loathing and love, sadonic laughter, heartfelt anguish, misery and pride, were so strangely and so strongly blended. His soul was a chaos of passion, and his poetry expressed his soul. His was

> 'The settled, ceaseless gloom
> The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore;
> That will not look beyond the tomb,
> But cannot hope for peace before.'"

All at once, remembering the length of his talk, Pinckney stopped abruptly, and in some confusion.

"Ah, Mr. Pinckney," said Fanny, shaking her head, "but he should 'have looked beyond the tomb.' O! you enthusiast, I did not think you were capable of as much admiration of anything—of a man, not to speak of a woman. Well, sir; you have treated me like a rational being to-day!"

"Take my arm, Miss Fitzhurst, will you not? and let us walk. And you believe I have impulses of ad-

miration." Fanny took his arm; and as she did so, Pinckney continued, "If you had been anything of a physiognomist, you must have discovered it before; but no eyes are so blind as those that will not see."

CHAPTER XIII.

As the season advanced Pinckney frequently visited Miss Grattan, and frequently attended Fanny to Mr. Elwood's; for between her and Miss Sarah there was a much greater social intercourse than formerly. Fanny began to understand Miss Grattan's character; she perceived that there was a settled melancholy preying upon her mind, which seemed to be increasing. Yet it was evident that, while Miss Grattan's sensitiveness appeared to be augmented to an almost nervous degree, she loved Fanny's company more and more, she would press her with almost weeping earnestness not to leave her yet, when Fanny would rise to depart. This was particularly the case when Mr. Bronson was present. Fanny considered Bronson as a low, vulgar, unfeeling man, and she could not be made to believe, notwithstanding the reports she had heard, that Miss Grattan could, under any circumstances, possibly consider him as a suitor. She thought that Bronson was the friend of Mr. Elwood, and that Miss Grattan received him as such, and was possessed of so shrinking a sensibility, that she knew not how to reject attentions which were evidently revolting to her.

One afternoon, while the girls were sitting together

at Mr. Elwood's alone, Fanny interrupted the silence of several minutes, by saying, with the abruptness of one who cannot refrain from giving utterance to the thought over which she has been brooding—

"Sarah, is it possible that what I hear is true; that you and Mr. Bronson are engaged?"

Sarah clasped her hands together, as if startled by an electric shock, fixed her eyes vacantly on the wall for a moment, and then turning them imploringly on Fanny, burst into tears.

Fanny was shocked at the effect which her hasty question had produced. After a moment of amazement she said, taking the hand of Sarah,

"My dear Sarah, you must forgive me; indeed, I would not have wounded your feelings for the world; I am prejudiced against Mr. Bronson."

"Oh! no, no; I know you would not wish to wound my feelings. It's not prejudice; but what shall I do? I owe my uncle everything; what shall I do? what can I do if he wishes it?"

"But, Sarah, I can't think that he does wish it. You are mistaken, if you do not like Mr. Bronson; your uncle would not certainly have you make a sacrifice of your feelings."

"But, Miss Fitzhurst, uncle does not think that there is much feeling on such subjects."

"You do him injustice."

"No, no, no; but no matter, no matter."

"I am sorry, indeed I am, that I should have spoken so unguardedly," said Fanny; "but, Sarah, you must not consider me other than as a friend."

"A friend; I want a friend. Oh! I have so wished that I could find some one to whom I could unbosom myself. Indeed, Fanny, when I first saw you I thought I should be so happy if I could only find a friend in you, one to whom I might say what I thought, and who would feel for me. Will you listen to me."

"Listen to you, yes, Sarah; but be comforted. I don't see why you should be so cast down."

"Fanny, Miss Fitzhurst, my character and situation have been entirely different from that of most girls. I am an orphan; I lost my parents when I was so young that I do not even faintly remember them. On their death my uncle brought me to the country, where I was nursed by Aunty Agnes, you know her, she watched over my infancy. As I grew up I saw no company at all but those who came to visit my uncle. I am entirely ignorant of the formalities of fashionable society, and I have suffered more on that account than I could possibly tell you; I have had no one to talk with; to exchange thoughts with. I brooded over my thoughts and feelings in my own mind until I hardly know what I thought or felt myself. What I had seen and heard, and known, seemed mingled in a confused mass in my memory, and from the want of companionship, and maybe the bias of my character, I grew into a dread of the very society that I panted so much for, which I felt to be a want. I don't know how it was, but an indefinable dread of something that was to happen to me, hung over me like a cloud. I could not escape the idea—it followed me like a shadow; I had no mother to watch over me, to advise me, to tell me of things of the world, of all around me. If I could write down all the strange and awful feelings I have had, it would fill a volume; but my life is without an incident. But I was saying, just from this loneliness and want of communion with some one of my own sex whom I could look up to, this dread grew over me. Indeed, I became so superstitious that a thousand things disturb me that I know should not—which have no reason in them; but it seems a kind of fatality that they should perplex me. But I've nothing to say—what should—what have I to tell you—yes. Well,

Mr. Bronson has been visiting my uncles for years past, and some months since he addressed me. I was startled; I had no idea he thought of such a thing. He said I had given him encouragement, he spoke to my uncle the other day. He—my uncle—had often hinted to me his wishes with regard to Mr. Bronson, but lately he has spoken them out directly—indeed, Miss Fitzhurst, almost like a command. He says, but don't mention it for the world—that there is a necessity that I should marry—should marry Mr. Bronson."

"What necessity can there be for such a step, Sarah?" asked Fanny.

"Indeed I cannot tell, but my uncle says that there is a stern necessity; my God, it is a necessity to me, indeed."

"And you, Sarah—"

"I have asked for time, for time to think; but I should not have told you this, should I—was it not wrong? Certainly if I can please my uncle, should I not do it?"

"No, you should not do it at the sacrifice of your happiness; certainly not. Marry that Bronson—why I see, Sarah, that you do not love him—that you cannot bear him. I would'nt—father, aunt, and brother, all combined, could not induce me to marry such a man."

"Don't speak so, Fanny—Miss Fitzhurst, it tortures me. I cannot tell you all now, but—"

The further conversation of the ladies was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Elwood. He was much more kind to his niece than usual, and seemed anxious to keep her in good spirits. Fanny exerted herself for the same purpose. In the evening her brother called with the carriage to take her home, and on the way Fanny could not resist telling him what Sarah had told her. Sidney was very much surprised. As soon as Fanny arrived at home, she

hurried to her aunt's room, and after enjoining secrecy on her, as she had on her brother, narrated to Miss Rachellina, with feelings of tearful sympathy for Sarah, and of deep detestation for Bronson, and of condemnation of Mr. Elwood, every word that Sarah had uttered. Fanny's heart was full of various emotions; for after this she gave her aunt an account of the loss of Bronson's wig, to which Miss Rachellina listened with most portentous solemnity, and Fanny recurred to poor Sarah again, and burst into a flood of tears.

"I declare, my niece," said Miss Rachellina, "you are quite hysterical; you act worse than if you had been reading a novel."

"This is worse than a novel, my dear aunt—it is a reality."

"It is shocking, certainly, my niece; but I cannot think that Mr. Elwood would wish to force his niece into a marriage connection against her will with such a man; though, for my part, I can see not the least harm in the mere circumstance of his wearing false hair, nor why you should laugh one moment and cry the next, in such a childish manner. It is decidedly unbecoming of you as Miss Frances Fitzhurst. There, you have your bonnet on. You come rushing into my room, my niece, as nervous as if the house was on fire. See, you have spoilt that new satin ribbon on your bonnet with your tears. Upon my word and honor you wiped your eyes with it. Now, Fanny, that is acting without the least reflection—a child, Fanny, a child would have done just so. I don't blame you, niece, for having your sympathies awakened for Miss Grattan. Mr. Bronson is certainly a very common, vulgar spoken person, and not fit even to be the waiter of a lady of refinement and delicacy, both of which qualities Miss Grattan, considering her advantages and education, eminently possesses. Indeed, I

have wondered, repeatedly, why Miss Bentley receives him as she does; but she must be polite to him, as he transacts her business for her. Still, there is reason in all things. But, niece, I wish to impress upon you, that you should on no occasion loose your self-control. It is unbecoming in a lady, and it often leads her into a great many misdeeds."

"My dear aunt," exclaimed Fanny, rather pettishly, "by the time I have learned to control all my feelings I shall have lost them all."

"No, niece, that is speaking irreverently," said Miss Rachellina, fondly; "I hope I have all the warmth of my early feelings; I am sure my young days have not been gone so long that I should not have them—but I pride myself on my self-control. No woman can be a perfect and finished lady, I assure you, niece, who has it not. I have had to school myself to acquire it, I don't deny. All that I wish is to impress upon you the necessity of doing so, too. You have no idea in what a flurry you entered my chamber! Your bonnet-strings were all flying loose. I suppose you had not tied them at all. The collar of your cloak—your new cloak—was all rumpled in; enough to put it out of set for ever; and your side hair was all uncurled and draggling on your cheek. My child, I would not wound your feelings unnecessarily, but you looked frightful. Suppose I had been in the parlour, and I might just as likely as not have been there, and suppose Mr. Pinckney had been sitting with me; you would, I suppose, have bounced right in to tell me this, looking as you do. Indeed, if you had, I should have wished the floor to open and swallow me up. I can assure you, niece, I have known engagements broken off by gentlemen, yes, by *gentlemen*, on discovering the lady's extreme want of personal neatness. There is no excuse for the want of it in a lady. I say, decidedly,

no excuse whatever. Let me beg of you, never to make your appearance anywhere—not even in my room, looking so dowdy, when you have pretended to dress yourself. I tremble to think if I had been in the parlour with Mr. Pinckney, such a polished and accomplished gentleman, and you had come dashing in in such a flurry of face and dress. Niece, I am exceedingly sorry to learn that Mr. Pinckney leaves us in a few days."

"Leave us in a few days!" ejaculated Fanny; "this is the first I've heard of it."

"Yes, niece; he told me so this afternoon, after he returned from town, where he received a letter, which, he says, requires him to be at home soon. I regret it very much; we shall all miss him. I discovered the other day that an uncle of his, who is dead, was an old beau of mine. Where are you going, Fanny?"

"I am going to my room to arrange my dress, aunt."

"My dear niece, what you have told me about Miss Grattan, poor thing, and then Mr. Pinckney's going to leave us, too, has quite unsettled me. Fanny, if you see Pompey, tell him to bring me a slice of the poundcake which he will find in the sideboard; that which has plumbs in it; the other is not quite done. Dickson is getting quite careless with the pastry and cakes lately: tell him to bring me that on the salver, with a glass of wine."

Fanny obeyed her aunt's request. She then went to her room, where she with much care removed all the traces of negligence and "flurry," as her aunt expressed it, from her dress and fair countenance, and then proceeded to the drawing-room. On looking in, she discovered no one there but her father asleep on the sofa; and wanting a book to amuse her, we sup-

pose, she entered the library, and there found Pinckney seated alone.

"Ah! Miss Fitzhurst," said he, rising as the lady entered, "you have the impulses of Mother Eve, I discover."

"Yes, sir; and instead of riding over with brother," replied Fanny, taking a novel from a book-case, and opening it carelessly, as if she were about to leave the room, but lingering for a moment, "instead of riding over with brother, and thereby showing your gallantry to forlorn ladies imprisoned in the country, you choose to mope in the library, and pretend to be literary."

"I was moping, indeed, fairest flower of the wilderness and brightest belle of the city; but it was in trying to reconcile myself to your absence."

"Then you do leave us, Mr. Pinckney?"

"Yes, Miss Fitzhurst, such is my necessity; and in a few days. Business! Hours were made for slaves, and for what was business made, but for the same animals. Business brought me here—other influences threw their fascinations around me, and held me here; and now business, like the disenchanting wand in some glorious spell, bears me away. In truth, Miss Fitzhurst, my estate has suffered much in my absence. I have been squandering money; and now I must nurse and attend to it. When shall we two meet again?"

"Heigh, ho! I am indeed sorry that you're going. Only think, I shall have no one to dispute with about love, and poetry, and romance, when you are gone. And Miss Grattan—do not fail to made your adieus to her."

"I shall not, indeed: she is a most interesting lady; she is deeply attached to you, Miss Fitzhurst; and you should go frequently to see her. I am persuaded she has 'a silent sorrow here,'" said Pinckney, laying

his hand on his heart. "I feel greatly indebted to your family for their hospitality, Miss Fitzhurst."

"We shall see you again, Mr. Pinckney, certainly —you will come this way in the summer, will you not?"

"Will you bid me come, Miss Fitzhurst?" said Pinckney, advancing to her, and taking her hand.

At this moment the servant entered, and announced tea.

CHAPTER XIV.

The next day in the afternoon Pinckney proceeded to the city to make arrangements for his departure. On his way in he met Sidney returning home, and communicated to him his intention. Sidney received the information with deep regret.

As Sidney was passing by Granny Gammon's, the old woman hurried to the door, and begged him for mercy's sake to step in a minute, for that something awful had happened to Bobby. Sidney dismounted, and throwing his horse's reins over the pailings, instantly complied.

"Oh, Mister Sidney!" exclaimed the old woman, tottering aside from the door, to suffer Sidney to enter it. "I'm disgraced, Peggy's disgraced, we're all disgraced—the boy is wilful and worrying; but I don't believe it—no, as God's my judge, I don't believe it!"

"What's the matter, granny?—sit down—where is Peggy?"

"Gone up to the big house to see your father and you, and everybody, on this very thing—on the poor

boy's befalment—that I should live to see it," she continued, wringing her hands "I thought my troubles couldn't be worse when he was throw'd from that racer and limated for life; but they just began then. You see the day before yesterday, he, that's Bobby, was pestering round, and he said as how he meant to go to town. Well, I suspicioned no good of it, and I axed him for what, and he grew deceptious right off, and didn't seem to like to tell. Howsomever, I talked to him so, wo's me, that he up and said that he wanted to go in to go to the circus. Soon as I heard that, I knew that the evil one had beset him—I knew that he was tempted to the pit of iniquity, and defilements, and abominations—I told him he should go on no account; but in his perversity he'd set his mind right on it, and go he would; and his cousin Peggy (Peggy Blossom is not the gal she used to be), took side with him, and what could I do? Consent, I couldn't and wouldn't; I felt that something must happen, and I told them both so, and made my mind a kind a up to it. To think of this; I'd no hidea it was coming to this, though. Joe Hitt came out from the city this blessed day, and he stopt in and told us that they had Bobby, my Robert, poor child, Robert Gammon, up for passing counterfeit money."

"It can't be possible, granny—who could have put him up to it?"

"Who? Satan, the circus, the black devil himself, with his conjurations that he carries on in them places; but I don't believe one word of it—I don't believe he'd do such a thing, do you, Mister Sidney?"

"I do not, indeed, Granny; but what did Joe Hitt tell you about it?"

"That he was up for passing counterfeit money; that was all he knowed—that he seed them dragging the poor child through the street: he was all knocked

aback, he says, and he left his horse and cart right in the street, and followed after the crowd a good piece. He says he tried to get a chance to speak to Bobby, but it was too big a crowd; and that the people told him a site of money was catched on him—Joe Hitt said he couldn't go on to hear tell it, for fear his horse and cart would run off, and that's all he knowed; but he saw the child as plain as day; he says that Bobby looked at him, but didn't speak—that he seemed bewildered and stunned like. Mr. Sidney, oh! can't you do something for him; see, there—there's Towzer, poor dumb beast, he knows Bobby's in harm—he's been kind a dumpy all day."

"This is a strange business," said Sidney, musing; "when he went in I gave him three hundred dollars, which I had collected at the iron works, to leave with Colonel Bentley."

"You did! my mercies, Mister Sidney; how could you do it? That's it—the evil one has, just on account of his sins, took away the good money, and put the counterfeit in."

"It will all come right, granny, I hope, in spite of the evil one. I have often sent money by Bobby; I have every faith in his integrity. The money I gave him certainly was good, but if it were bad, who could he have attempted to pass it on? I requested him to give it to Colonel Bentley—I desired him to make no purchase whatever."

"O! I have had awful dreams lately; I warned him of it the night of Mr. Elwood's husking; but no, they think I'm old, helpless, and a know-nothing old woman. He's been beset by Satan himself in some lonely part of the road, and has the whole money changed in his pockets unbeknown to him. I mind many years gone by, that old Michael Cash was served that very way. He was an old well-to-do farmer, that's now dead and gone, and he used to tend market of Saturday's.

Well, he gets belated with some wild chaps—cronies of his'n, who was no better an they should be; and after drinking with 'em till long after night-fall he starts for home—he always said that his money was safe in his pocket when he left 'em, for he counted it afore 'em, and got on his horse, and come right hom—and when he got there, and come to look the next morning for it, there was just nothing but a bit of old rumpled newspaper where he had put his money. I've often heard him say, after he joined the church, that he believed the devil himself tricked him—for he said as how he felt his head go round by the old grave yard, which everybody knows is haunted, and that his horse a kind of stopt there in spite of him, and jerked down his head so, that the reins went over his neck, and Michael had to get down to get things right again. He says somehow a stupor a kind of overtook him, and that he heard horses gallop by faster than any natural horse could go, and he hardly knows how he got on his horse to get home in such a bewilderment—some people used to laugh at this, and as some of the money, was money that Michael was bringing home for his neighbours, they talked hard agin him; and some said one thing and some said another; but I've heard him tell every word on it after he jined. Mercies, how I'm running on—but the poor boy—you'll see to him; wont you, Mister Sidney?"

"I certainly shall, granny—I'll ride over to the house, instantly change my horse, and return to town. Peggy, I suppose, can tell all that Hitt said?"

"Every word—poor thing, she was in a terrible taking, and hurried up to the big house. I knowed all this was coming," continued the granny, calling out after Sidney as he rode off, "I knowed all this was coming.—I've had awful dreams lately," she muttered to herself as she gazed after him.

Sidney on arriving at Holly found Peggy weeping

over the misfortunes of her cousin, and between her tears relating, for the twentieth time, what Joe Hitt had said. He could learn nothing more from her than he had already gathered from her grandmother. He therefore ordered another horse, and determined to proceed to the city, where, on inquiring at the Mayor's office or jail, he hoped to hear the particulars of the boy's case. His fear was that he should not be able to reach the city until some time after nightfall, which might prevent him from being of service to Bobby until the next morning.

Sidney therefore proceeded at a quick pace. As he passed by Granny Gammon's the old woman came to the door, and looked anxiously after him.

He had not advanced more than half way when the gathering shades of night began to render objects indistinct, which warned him to increase his speed. He did so; and as he entered an uninhabited part of the road, that was skirted on either side by tall majestic trees, whose falling leaves and autumnal hues rendered the twilight still darker, just where a bridle-path led to the hills of which we have spoken that bound the western side of Holly, a horse without a rider galloped by him in evident affright, with its bridle broken, and the stirrups dashing against its sides. It occurred to him as he marked the horse, that it was the animal that his friend Pinckney had ridden to the city. He was soon satisfied that such was the fact; for the horse had scarcely passed him, when it turned its head, neighed as if in token of recognition of the animal he bestrode, and cantered to his side. Sidney grasped the broken bridle, quickly knotted the ends, and hastened down the road to the succour of his friend. He had proceeded nearly a quarter of a mile in fruitless search, which the increasing darkness rendered every moment still more difficult, when he thought he saw a man hurry away

at his approach from a spot in the skirt of the wood on the right-hand side of the road.

This awakened his suspicions, and though, unarmed, he hurried to the place, without thinking of any danger to himself. The person disappeared rapidly in the forests towards the hills as Sidney drew near. His fears were true; for, on dismounting beside an individual who was stretched insensibly on the ground, he discovered Pinckney. His watch and pocket-book were gone, and he seemed to be wounded, though in what manner Sidney could not discover. Sidney supported Pinckney's head upon his knee, and while in the act of removing his neckcloth, Pinckney opened his eyes, and after a moment's confusion recognised him.

"Fitzhurst," he said, faintly.

"My God, Pinckney, what has happened?"

"I have encountered a gentleman of the road—that's all. The rascal has given me a dangerous wound. I was stunned by a blow when you came up; have you been here long?" asked Pinckney, as he leaned on his friend, and endeavoured to regain his feet."

"Do you think you can ride?"

"Yes, I hope so—I hope so. He stopped me with a pistol at my breast; and after I had delivered up to him my watch and pocket-book, he snapped it at me."

"There, my friend, so, place your hand so. This exasperated me, and I struck him a severe blow with my whip, and endeavoured to ride him down, at which he drew a Bowie knife, I suppose it was, and struck at me;" Pinckney paused a moment from pain, and continued, "the weapon cut the bridle and pierced my side. The horse sprung from under me as he made another blow, and I, not being able to control him, fell to the ground with great violence. Your coming up must have saved my life, for the ruffian was, I believe, determined to take it."

While Pinckney spoke, with the assistance of Sidney, he uncovered his person, and bound a handkerchief round him, and over the wound, which was bleeding profusely. The shadows of night would not permit Sidney to observe the extent of the injury. He assisted his friend on his horse, saying:

"Holly is as near as the city; we had better go that way, and stop at the nearest farm-house,—the nearest one to us is in that direction. You could not have staid but a very short time in town."

"But the half of an hour. I expected letters, and not receiving them, there was nothing to detain me in the city. Hang the ruffian, I wish I had been armed. You have not been home?"

Sidney briefly narrated to Pinckney the purpose of his return, and while he was speaking—they reached the farm-house.

Here Sidney examined Pinckney's wound, and as far as he could judge, not having any medical skill, it did not appear to be a dangerous one. The farmer, with his wife, pressed Pinckney to remain beneath their roof through the night, but he insisted that his wound was but a slight one; and after thanking them for their hospitality, he departed with his friend at a slow pace towards Holly.

CHAPTER XV.

The night of the robbery of Pinckney, about nine o'clock, a horseman came in the direction from the hills, and proceeded to Granny Gammon's. He hitched his horse at the palings, and after pausing a moment, perhaps in thought, or perhaps to distinguish the voices of the individuals within, he rapped with the end of his riding whip against the door. Granny Gammon, in a querrulous tone, bid him enter.

He did so, and after saluting the old woman in a half-respectful, half-dogged manner, like one who felt he was not liked by her on whose premises he stood, he asked if Peggy was in.

Granny Gammon gave a short cough before she answered. "No, she's out; what would you with my Peggy, Jack Gordon?"

"Has she gone to the village?" proceeded Jack, without answering the question.

"John Gordon, you are no respecter of age," said the old woman, sharply; "I axed you what you wanted with my Peggy."

"Why, Granny," said Gordon, in a coaxing tone, "I want to see her."

"She's gone out, I tell you, gone out. The Lord in his mercies be merciful, we're sore afflicted. Are you from the city, Jacky? did you see or hear anything of our Bobby?"

"What's happened?" asked Gordon, throwing himself into a chair.

"Happened! was it you that took him to the circus, Jack Gordon? answer me now that question."

"He took himself, I suppose; I saw him there."

"Well, well, an' do you know anything of this money, of this counterfeiting. In my old age, to think of this; the very first one of our fam'ly that was ever taken up. Jack Gordon, you've been misleading him."

"I mislead him?" exclaimed Jack, starting; "who said I misled *him*?"

"I say so: you've been putting races and circuses in his head, this long time; and now you see what's come of it."

"Ay, I thought you said, old lady, that I put counterfeiting in his head. I know nothing about it; and as for the circus, I see no more harm in the circus than some people do in the meeting-house."

"John Gordon, don't speak to me in that way; now don't, I tell you. Peggy's not to home, an' I'll just out and tell you, that there's no occasion for yo're coming here."

"Granny, I suppose if Peggy wants to see me, you don't care?"

"But Peggy don't want to see you, nor I don't want to see you, nor Bobby don't want to see you. An' I can tell you the whole neighbourhood would be mighty glad to get quit of you. I lay the whole ruin of Bobby at your door. Yes, you may look; I do. An' I don't see why people should come where the're not wanted."

"Maybe I can be of service to Bob?"

"No you can't be of sarvice to him; he's clean ruined now, by bad samples. Only to think what a condition I'm in, a lone woman. And Peggy, poor thing, she's gone up to the big house, crying all the way; and I suppose she'll go crying to the village, to hear what she can hear."

"Ay, has she!" said Gordon; and, after lingering a moment, he arose and, bidding the old woman good night, left the cabin. Gordon mounted his horse and

road slowly to a clump of trees that stood in an old field, some twenty yards from the house, when he dismounted and fastened his horse within the shadow. After doing this, Gordon placed himself with his back to a tree, in a situation to command a view of the lane that led by Granny Gammon's to Holly. He had not remained there long when, on hearing footsteps approaching from the village, he stepped forth, and met the person, who proved to be Peggy. He had gained her side, and addressed her before she observed him.

"Is that you, Mr. Gordon?" she asked, in a tone very different from the lightsome one that was her wont.

"Yes, Peggy, it's me. I was down at the house, but the old woman was in such a brimstone humour, that she fairly turned me out."

"Old woman! brimstone humour! Who are you speaking of, Mr. Gordon?"

"You're as short as pie crust too, Peggy; what's turned up? I'm speaking of your Granny."

"Persons wouldn't think you had much opinion of your company, to speak in such a fashion of one's relations, Mr. Gordon."

"I've told you often enough what I thought of you, Peggy," said Gordon, in a subdued tone; "it seems you don't think well of me—though it didn't always seem so."

"Have done with that, Jack Gordon; I'm in no humour for such talk to night—good evening; Granny's alone, and it's late."

"Not so very late," said Gordon; "we've talked together later than this."

"Well, there's no occasion to waste time hereafter," replied his companion; and she walked on, briskly. Gordon, however, kept her side, and asked:

"Peggy, what does all this mean? you did'nt use to treat me so."

"I told you the night of the husking what it meant. Granny's against it—Bobby's against it."

"Bobby's against it," exclaimed Gordon, mimicking her in a tone of anger that he seemed unable to suppress. "What do I care for Bobby's being against it? Bobby 'll have enough to do to take care of himself."

"And suppose he has," said Peggy, indignantly, "enough to take care of himself. Well, I've got enough to do to take care of myself. Yes, Granny's against it; Bobby's against it; and, to tell you the truth, John Gordon, I'm not for it, and I've told you so before."

"Peggy, stop one moment." Peggy hesitated. "Do stop one moment, Peggy, and listen to me." She stopped. "Why should there be such words between us? I know I spoke tauntingly the other night, and said what I oughtn't say; but you kept throwing up to me what the villagers said about me, and it aggravated me. What do I care for them, Peggy? I tell you I have money enough to buy them. I can make as fine a lady of my wife as is your Miss Fanny. As for Joe Hit, why he's a foul blacksmith. I don't see how a girl with a fair skin could come near him, unless she wished to be made black."

"Pretty is that pretty does," interrupted Peggy.

"What does he do that's pretty?" exclaimed Gordon, contemptuously; "the chap's a fool. Peggy, you don't think well enough of yourself. Bill Hardy's of no account—he mills; gets a few dollars a week by the hardest kind of labour, and goes about as mealy as a rat from a bin. I can buy and sell both of them."

"And where did you get the money?"

"From the old country, my pretty Peggy; from

the old country. I was under the weather at one time, because I was waiting for it; and as I was brought up a gentleman, I couldn't turn my hand to anything but gentlemanly sports to get a living by. People here pretend to say such things are wrong—it's because they know no better where I come from."

"I must go; good night," said Peggy."

"Peggy, not so quick," said Gordon, seizing her arm; "you think to cast me off in your tantrums; and, I suppose, if it's for neither Joe Hitt or Bill Hardy, it's for Cousin Bobby, whose name you don't seem to like to mention to-night."

"No, not to you; for if the boy's gone wrong, it's you that's to answer for it."

"I answer for it! do you mean I led him to counterfeiting. By G—d, I let nobody say that of me."

"Tell that in the village. I don't say it of you," exclaimed Peggy.

"If a man was to say it of me, I'd have his heart's blood!" continued Gordon, "but, Peggy, I've borne from you what I never bore from man or woman before; and all, Peggy, for the love of you: but I've found you out. It's 'Cousin Bobby' that cuts us all out. Yes, 'Cousin Bobby,'—whew! you're against me, after all that's past, just because folks don't choose to like me, and think hard things against me, what will you say to 'Cousin Bobby' now, when he's done the thing?"

"Done it! I don't believe it: the whole world couldn't make me believe it," exclaimed Peggy, bursting into tears, and stepping away from Gordon.

Gordon compressed his lips, as if with a stern resolution he was suppressing an emotion; and then said, soothingly:

"Peggy, if you'll consent to that—if you say you'll have me, Bobby shall be cleared. He shall—I'll it swear to you on a stack of bibles. I like him;

and I've money to buy them land sharks up, and make 'em talk their tongues off, and their brains out for him."

"He's got help, if any one can help him," said Peggy, proudly.

"What help?"

"As soon as Mr. Sidney Fitzhurst heard it, he rode right into town; and there he'll see Mr. Pinckney: they together will do for him, if anybody can."

"Ha! Mr. Pinckney—he's the one that you heard say did'nt like my looks. He thinks his looks are mighty taking at Holly, does he. Maybe I know something of him, and know people that didn't like his looks: let him look to himself. I tell you, Peggy, I can help Bobby more than any of them. I know all the officers and deputies in town.—An' I'm the boy what can manage 'em. I've got friends afore now out of scrapes worse 'an this—let us be friends—say—I know you like your Cousin Bobby; I like him, but it aggravates me to hear you repeat what these village people say against me, and I bolt out in a passion what I don't mean: there's no harm in me towards Bobby: just say that things shall be where they were before our little spat, and I'll stand Bobby's friend. Shake hands and say so; an' if he's not out here by to-morrow night, then never speak to me again."

As Gordon spoke, he took Peggy's hand; when the sound of some one approaching caused her to start, and hasten towards her grandmother's.

Gordon, with a noiseless step, proceeded to the clump of trees, where he stood watching for the walker to go by, e're he mounted his horse. The starlight was bright enough to suffer him to observe the direction the passer-by took. It was directly to Granny Gammon's; which he entered immediately after Peggy. When the door had closed on the

visiter, Gordon trod with noiseless steps to the house, and, placing himself beside the window, where he could look in unobserved, and overhear what was said, he remained for nearly a quarter of an hour. He then repaired again to the clump of trees, and when the cottage door opened, to suffer the departure of the visiter, which Gordon knew by the flashing forth of the light, he mounted his horse and rode forward, apparently with the wish to overtake him, though at some distance from the house. On reaching the individual, he said, in a respectful tone:—

"Mr. Sidney Fitzhurst, is that you?"

"Yes, it is I; are you Jack Gordon?"

"Yes sir, Mr. Fitzhurst; I was just going to your house to see you; I'm just from town, sir; where I heard that they had Bobby, the old woman's grandson that lives there, up for passing counterfeit money, an' I thought I'd come and tell you, being as I know that you wish him well, and that he's your tenant."

"Yes," replied Sidney; "I am now returning from his grandmother's, whither I went to speak to the old woman on the subject. Do you know the particulars; I am satisfied the boy is not capable of such a thing. Do you know if they have him in jail?"

"I don't know, sir, much about it. He went, I believe, to the circus last night; I believe he drank too much there; this morning I heard from one of the neighbours that I met in town that he was in trouble, and as I was bound out to Springdale to night, I thought I'd ride over to your house and tell you."

"Thank you, Gordon, thank you; I shall ride in to-morrow and see if I can do anything for him; I started this evening. Which way did you come out?"

"Sir, oh! early this afternoon; good night, sir."

"Good night, Jack," replied Sidney as he proceeded homeward.

Gordon turned his horse as if it were his intention to visit Springdale, but after Sidney was out of

hearing of the animal's steps he spurred at a brisk rate towards the city.

"I must take a near cut through the hills," he muttered to himself, "where I can change my horse. The thing was done well: I've good proof of what a friend I am to the little limping rascal."

With a fearless rein at the top of his horse's speed Gordon struck for the hills. If his object was to gain the city as soon as possible a cut through the hills was certainly much shorter than the roundabout way of the road; but then the difficulties in this direction were held hazardous both to man and beast. And surely the night would not facilitate his progress if such were his object. The hills were in many places barren, entirely uncultivated, and scarcely ever traversed, for game was scarce upon them, and they were mostly uninhabited. Here and there where there was a spot capable of cultivation, and there were many such, a miserable shanty might be seen, but it was often uninhabited, and was evidently built for some temporary purpose. In some places through the hills, in strong contrast with the barren and bold masses of rocks, immense forest trees would stretch along for miles, of the shortest and most luxuriant growth. A long tract of wood marked the head of a stream, which was called the Falls. Over the water, and through the wood, and along the very brow of the precipice, Gordon rode as fearlessly as if he had been travelling on the common county turnpike. However, there did not appear any great management of the steed on his part, though, no doubt, the rider was capable of it. The horse seemed to know the road as an old stager would the turnpike, and dashed on apparently with a similar desire to reach the goal. Gordon had perhaps penetrated seven miles into the hills, when he came to a place where the stream ran deep and narrow for a considerable

distance between overhanging precipices. Here it was so dark that Gordon could scarcely see his hand before him; yet horse and rider advanced recklessly into the stream, as if its bed were their road. They guided themselves by the glimmering of starlight that flashed from the water, where it broke away from jutting rock, and hill, and tree, and sported unshadowed. Before, however, he reached the opening, Gordon turned his horse to the right, and spurring him up a steep ledge of rock, he stopped where two huge trees were entirely covered with clustering vines, that descended in such luxuriance from their topmost branches as to dip in the water. A quantity of drift-wood and brush seemed to have floated against the face of the rock to which there was evidently no approach but by the watery pathway Gordon had chosen. Here Gordon dismounted, and busied himself in removing the brush-wood, while he did so he imitated the rough note of the screach-owl, when a portion of the rock appeared to give way, disclosing an aperture large enough to admit the horse. A very dim light, such as might easily be mistaken for the phosphorescent glimmer from decaying wood, appeared for a moment, and with it disappeared both the horse and rider.

CHAPTER XVI.

About an hour after Sidney left the dwelling of Granny Gammon, as the Granny and her granddaughter sat together talking over Bobby's misfortune, the door opened, and that worthy covered with mud and dirt, and much exhausted, entered the room.

"Father of all mercies!" ejaculated the old woman, clasping her hands together with an hysteric scream. "Bobby! cousin Bobby!" exclaimed Peggy, springing towards him, and giving relief to her feelings in tears, "we have been so troubled about you."

Towzer leaped upon his master, and then darted around the room in wild delight.

Bobby threw himself on the floor without saying a word. His old grandmother looked at him as if expecting him to speak, and then said, impatiently:

"Why don't you speak, child? why don't you speak, after bringing all this trouble on us? why don't you speak?"

Peggy had taken a seat by Bobby, and was gazing on him intently. As his grandmother spoke he hid his head in his cousin's lap, and said in a low voice,

"Cousin Peggy, you will not believe anything against me, will you?"

"No, Bobby, not a word that goes against your honesty."

"I knew you wouldn't," said Bobby, rising proudly, while the tear started to his eye. "I knew you wouldn't. I'll tell you all about it."

"Do, child," said the old woman, impatiently.

"Well, you know, I started off for the circus?"

"Yes, yes; what, Bobby? ha! I always told you about the circus."

"Granny, if you don't let me speak, how can I tell? Well, I went into the circus, and there I saw Jack Gordon and a whole parcel of fellows. But before I went to the circus though, I went to Colonel Bentley to give him the money. Jack Gordon knows I did; for the pin somehow came out of my pocket where I pined the money in, and it dropped out just as I was standing talking to him. The money was wrapped up in a bit of printed paper; and Gordon said (it was near by Colonel Bentley's lodging place that I met him); he says to me, 'Bobby, you dropped something.' I stooped down and picked up the money. I was so awful frightened, thinking that something had gone wrong; but I turned in and counted the money and it was all right. Well, after that, as I couldn't see Colonel Bentley that night, I thought as I'd come in to go to the circus, I'd go."

Here Granny Gammon heaved a deep sigh, and shook her head ominously.

"To the circus I went," continued Bobby, affecting not to notice his grandmother, and addressing Peggy, "and everything was right My own money—two paper dollars, a silver one and a quarter I had in my other pocket, and Colonel Bentley's by itself and pined down. Well, I'm not a going to tell a story; so I'll tell the whole truth. Jack Gordon got me to drink with him, and so did another fellow. After the circus was out, when we got to the tavern where we were going to stay all night, I treated all round, and all I know is that the next morning I was seized while I was in bed, and accused of passing counterfeiting money. The constables, or whoever they was, searched my pockets, and there they found ever so much money; it wasn't the money though that Mr. Fitzhurst gave me, for that was rolled up in a bit of paper. This looked like newer money. Somebody

must have come in my room and tricked me, indeed they must."

"What become of you then, Bobby?" interrupted Peggy.

"Why," said Bobby, "they called it a penitentiary affair, and said they must take me before a squire; they did so, sure enough. They took me away over into old town, where I did'nt think a squire would keep, it was in such a mean-looking place. When they got me there, they threatened me awful, but then Jack Gordon came in—and, and—"

"What about Jack Gordon, Bobby?" said Peggy, "speak it out."

"And Jack Gordon come to me, and asked me about it, and I told him everything. He said that he'd stand my friend, but that it was an awful business; he talked to the squire, and the squire said as how as Gordon asked it, that he would keep me locked up till evening in his own house and would not send me to jail; and that, by that time, Gordon maybe could get some witnesses for me, and would let my friends know. Then Gordon come and spoke to me—I asked him to keep it away from you if he thought I could be got off without telling you. He promised to do his best for me, and said he was all sorts of a friend of mine. There I staid in that room locked up, hour by hour; you may know how I felt. While I was standing looking out the window near night time, I see Jack Gordon a laughing and talking in the road with the landlord and the man that searched my pockets, and they were laughing and as merry together as pickpockets. Jack Gordon looked up at the window and saw me, and then they stopped talking together, and Jack said that he would be with me presently. There I staid. It grew long after night—no Jack come, and I began to mistrust something, so I thought I'd get off if I could—I watched round, and after a while I got

out of the window softly on to a shed, slipped down into the yard, climbed the fence, and after puzzling about the town at an awful rate, I found the market, and then I knew which way to strike for home—Hangnation."

"You a cussing, Robert, hey? you a cussing, are you?" said the granny. "What's to be done about this business? it's an awful sum of money that's lost, child; they'll be after you to a certainty."

"Let them come," said Bobby, "I know I shan't go to them. But if I only could get Mr. Sidney's money. They give me liquor just to trick me—I ought to have knowed it, I ought to have knowed it. I must first see Mr. Sidney and tell him the whole truth—I can't help it, I can't help it."

We leave Bobby in the shelter of his grandmother's roof, and return to Jack Gordon. Two hours or more after his mysterious entrance into the cave, in the dead of the night, the quick tramp of his horse's feet might have been heard in the purlieus of the city. He rode quickly on, with the confidence of one to whom the streets were as familiar as the dangerous pathways of the hills, and stopped not until he arrived at the house from which Bobby had a few hours before effected his escape.

The house was a two story frame building, through a shutter of which a dim light twinkled forth. Gordon kept his seat on his horse until after the echoes of its footsteps had died away, apparently for the purpose of listening if any one approached. All was silent; and he threw himself from the horse, peeped into the room through the shutter where the light shone forth, and then with confidence stepped to the door, and gave three distinct raps. A voice from within asked, 'Who's there;' and on Gordon's answering "A true man," the door was immediately opened, and he entered. The person who admitted Gordon was

a tall and remarkably slim man, who seemed, as the vulgar phrase is, double-jointed, for he appeared to have the power of bending in any direction. His forehead was villanously low, and his nose long and snipe-like, with very narrow nostrils; nothwithstanding which, he did that member the honour to speak through it. He had a small, twinkling, gray eye, which was keenly suspicious in its glance, and conveyed to you the idea that its possessor was both cunning and timid. He was so; though more than once the hope of great gain had led him into acts of daring that had surprised himself.

"Benbow, let me see, my chap," said Gordon to the worthy we have described, for such was his name.

"The bird has flown," said Benbow, trying to throw an honest expression into his face, for he was aware that such was not its habitual one, for even when he told the truth his face seemed to contradict him.

"Flown! Benbow, this is some trick of yours."

"No trick, on my conscience. What motive have I for tricking you? I'm running deep risks to please you,—the boy never did me any harm."

"Never did you any harm! And I suppose for that reason you must let him off."

"I tell you I didn't let him off. I went up into the room to see if all was right, and I found that he had hoisted the window and escaped. The risks I ran was for you. I made my mind up to do it, and I did it. Maybe it's a good thing that the boy has gone. I don't believe that you could have convicted him if he had showed a good character, and since you have been gone Tom Fenton was here, and he thought it was a foolish business. He couldn't see what you were after; he says the boy can show a good charac-

ter; and that old Mr. Fitzhurst and his son would stand by him to the last."

"It's not needful that I should tell Tom Fenton what I am after—it's my own business."

"It's our business too, Mr. Gordon, I calculate, on my conscience; it's our business, too, if we run risks, sir: and I suppose you'll admit that I'm under some responsibility."

"I told you," said Gordon, "I didn't wish to push matters to the hardest. I wanted the money—I wanted to ruin the character of the boy, and to seem to stand his friend. You've been well paid for it, and be damned to Tom Fenton. And so he's clean gone?"

"Yes, clean gone."

"Well, I suppose I'm somewhat baffled—if the boy's friends come to see you in the matter you must tell them that I stood by him, and stuck to it he could not be guilty. Say the boy was drunk, and hint hard against him. Speak it out, and say you believe him guilty, but that considering his youth it had better be dropped."

"I will, I will, Gordon; but I don't like these proceedings out of the regular business. No good will come of it. You're too fond of going on your own hook, Gordon; and that's the complaint about you. I tell you plumply that's the complaint."

"You're a lilly-livered chap, Benbow; never fear me. Well, I must make the best of these matters—but I wish you'd kept a tighter eye on the little rascal. He's keen, and if he hadn't been so infernally corned—but I must stop, or I suppose you'll get frightened at that child. You think he's gone home, do you?"

"To be sure I do."

"Yes; I suppose he has—I'd like to hear the tale he'll tell. Mind, tell them I was his fast friend. Here, give me something to drink—brandy, brandy. I've

done more things than one to night, and I must to the hills."

Benbow produced a flask, which he said contained champagne brandy of the highest proof. He bid Gordon say when, as he poured the liquor in a tumbler which that worthy held for the purpose, and it was not until the glass had lost more than half its natural hue, that the word was pronounced.

After seeing the bottom of this stump cup, Gordon left the house, and, mounting his horse, departed.

CHAPTER XVII.

Sidney with his wounded friend reached Holly with less difficulty than he had imagined. Pinckney's loss of blood, though, was considerable; and on being placed in his chamber, it was with great difficulty he was kept from fainting. Pompey was immediately despatched to the city for the best medical aid. It was not until after daybreak that the surgeon arrived. After examining the wound he expressed himself uncertain as to the extent of it. He thought it critical, if not dangerous; and said he believed that the patient had received some inward injury from the violence of his fall from his horse. By his advice, and for the sake of his frequent attendance, Pinckney resolved to remove to the city as soon as practicable. Another consideration which induced this resolution, notwithstanding the pressing invitation of Mr. Fitzhurst and his family that he would remain with them, was the fear of the trouble he

should give. A week had elapsed, however, and the patient was not yet in a state to be removed. In the meantime every exertion was used to discover the robber. A description of the stolen watch and pocket-book was left at the pawnbrokers, and published in the public prints, with an account of the contents of the pocket-book, so far as Pinckney could recollect them; but as yet it was without avail. A source of great annoyance to Pinckney was the loss of a peculiarly-formed locket, containing the hair of the same lady whose miniature he possessed. From a feeling of delicacy, or from some other motive, he did not mention it in enumerating the contents of the pocket-book.

As soon as Sidney could spare the time from his friend, he turned his attention to Bobby's misfortunes. The boy, after many internal struggles, had called on Sidney the morning after his escape from Benbow's, and narrated to him the circumstances attendant on the loss of the money, just as he related them to his grandmother and cousin. Sidney asked Bobby if he could find the way to the squire's where he had been confined. He said he thought he could not, and evidently had no wish to try. Sidney then sent word to the tavern in the village at which Gordon stopped, for that person to call at Holly. In reply to the message, he learned that Gordon was not there; that he had said, on leaving, he should be absent a week or more.

At the expiration of that time Gordon returned to the village; but without waiting on Sidney sent, by Joe Hitt, with apologies for not calling in person, the name and residence of the magistrate from whose house Bobby had escaped. Gordon asked Hitt to say that he would have gone in person to Holly, but that he had pressing business that took him away. That

day as Sidney was proceeding to the city, for the purpose of seeing Benbow, he stopped at the village, and there saw Gordon himself, who gave him a full account of all he knew of the matter, as he asserted, making, as he did, so many protestations of his friendship for Bobby.

Gordon offered to accompany Sidney to the magistrate's; but Sidney said it was not worth while, and proceeded thither alone. Benbow gave him no clue to the mystery. He exhibited from among his papers, where he had it carefully placed, the counterfeit money which had been found on the boy; and told Sidney the name of the tavern-keeper who lived nearly, at whose house Bobby had been arrested. Thither Sidney repaired, but not before Benbow had repeatedly told him what a friend Gordon was to Bobby, remarking at the same time—as Bobby was young, that the affair had better, on his account, be dropped.

All that the tavern-keeper could inform Sidney of, was, that a man offered a note at the bar which was counterfeit; and on being told so, he said he got it from Bobby, who was a stranger to him, and that he had changed it for the boy. The man grew angry; the tavern-keeper asserted and insisted that Bobby should be searched. The search was accordingly made, and the counterfeit money which had been left at the magistrate's was found on the boy. The next day, the man who had changed the note, according to the tavern-keeper, went to Benbow's to appear against Bobby, and returned and said that the magistrate told him the boy had escaped. The witness, after much fault-finding, said that he could not stay and throw more money away, that he lived in the country, and he departed.

For the mere loss of his money Sidney cared not.

He was provoked at the villany practised on the boy; but he discovered that at present any effort to find out the perpetrators of it would be fruitless.

Poor Bobby's troubles arising from this matter were not to stop here. The whole village and neighbourhood received with various exaggerations the history of the affair, and somehow or other the majority of them—particulary those in Bobby's own sphere, were disposed to look upon him in a different light from that which the facts warranted. Divers persons had been busy in putting a dark colour on his conduct. Among these, if not the most open, at least of the busiest, were Bronson and Thompson. The consequence was, that whenever Bobby went to the village, or met the villagers, either in groups or singly, he was sure to be questioned on the subject; and had often to undergo the infliction of no very delicate hints with regard to the matter. Once he was required to give an account of the manner in which he obtained his gun, and the powder, which it was asserted, he wasted by the pound. Colonel Bentley happening to pass by at the very moment, Bobby appealed to him, and put their fears as to his integrity on that score at rest at once. If the majority were disposed to think ill of the boy, he, nevertheless, had many well-wishers, not only among his own class, but among the wealthier portion of the neigbourhood. Mr. Fitzhurst and family were his fast friends. Indeed the old gentleman felt many misgivings as to the effect which the misfortune at the horse-race might eventually have on the boy's character. Not that he believed him at all a bad boy now, but he began to fear the result of idle habits upon him, and he resolved to send him to school by way of weaning him from his ways, and give him a liberal education if his capacity proved superior. Perhaps push him forward in some profession. When this

idea struck the old gentleman, he wonders at himself for not thinking of it before.

While Mr. Paul Fitzhurst was indulging his benevolent imaginings in Bobby's behalf, the lad one day, as was much his custom of late, proceeded to the village with his gun on his shoulder. It was the day of the election for members of the legislature, and as the polls were held in the village of Springdale, there was, consequently, a large concourse of people assembled. It being in the afternoon, the political excitement, assisted not a little in its throes by the stimulus resorted to on such occasions, had reached its height. Groups, containing many noisy and drunken men, might have been seen wrangling about the corners, and before the polls, which were held at a tavern window.

In the midst of one of these stood Lawyer Lupton, the gentleman who had formerly been fond of talking with Granny Gammon about certain boundaries while he glanced at Peggy. Mr. Lupton was shaking hands and making friends with might and main. To the groups that encompassed Lupton, Bobby stepped up just as the village politician and pettifogger was pressing the hand of Joe Hitt, who had not yet voted, by way of squeezing a vote out of him. The night before Hitt had been to see Peggy, who, having no other person to play off upon him, had been prodigal of the repetition of "Cousin Bobby" in her tenderest manner. The memory of this fact had added to the cups in which Hitt had toasted his political sentiments. As Bobby approached, Hitt cast a lowering brow on him, and exclaimed:—

"Here, squire, here comes a case; a full blown chap—if he ain't I'm blowed—he thinks himself a man any way you can fix him; though they do say that he did the thing that some men wouldn't. Get him to vote for you."

"He's but a boy, Mr. Hitt, he's but a boy," said Mr. Lupton, with dignity. "It is the universal law, sir, throughout our whole country, even, I assure you in those states where there is a property qualification —a principle which I am opposed to, gentlemen, *ab initio*, root and branch, as being totally anti-democratic—it is the law, I pledge you my professional reputation—the law in every state that no person is entitled to a vote who is under twenty-one years of age. I approve of it—I go for it—I sanction it heart and hand. I would not have the Constitution altered in that respect, though I could get thereby the vote of every child in Christendom. I have no doubt were such the law here that my vote would be considerably increased; don't you think so, Bobby, my boy?"

"Why, squire, I haint got a vote yet," said Bobby, "so it's no use to ask the question—though I'm not so far off, neither."

"Not so far off," exclaimed Hitt, contemptuously, "why, you blasted little runt, you—you'll never be a man."

"Joe Hitt, speak when you're spoken to," said Bobby, angrily—"I didn't say I was a man, and I don't believe you're much of a one either."

"Hush up, 'Cousin Bobby,'" said Joe, scornfully, and making at the same time a gesture suited to the word, "or I'll serve you as they serve a naughty baby, you can't call on Granny, or 'Cousin Peggy' here."

"You'd better keep away, and not call on 'Granny' or 'Cousin Peggy' either," said Bobby, significantly, as he walked away.

Hitt was not an ill-natured man when sober, but he was one of those in whom intoxication awakens the worst passions. This taunt of Bobby maddened him. As the lad walked off Hitt stepped into the middle of the street and, picking up a stone, threw it

at him. The first missed; but a second took effect, and struck Bobby so forcibly on the back that it nearly knocked him down. As soon as Bobby recovered himself, he turned round and faced Hitt, who was in the act of hurling another stone at him. They were by this time thirty or more feet apart. As soon as Bobby turned, he clapped his gun to his shoulder, exclaiming, "I can't stand every thing." Hitt had scarcely time to change his position, and save his front, when the whole of the load of Bobby's gun, luckily it was small, bird shot, took effect in the most fleshy part of his person.

Hitt fell to the ground, uttering a yell that awoke an echo from the hills. He rolled over and over, calling out "murder! I'm a dead man!" in tones that soon drew the crowd from the polls in a mass around him. They bore him into the tavern. On an examination of his wounds by Doctor M'Vittee, they were pronounced not to be mortal.

Thompson, while they were bearing Hitt to the tavern, called on the constable to arrest Bobby. That worthy deemed it his duty to do so, and attended by Thompson, and followed by the crowd, he conducted the unfortunate lad to Squire Norris's. Here there was a deal of confusion. Popular opinion, however, notwithstanding Bobby had lost ground lately, set in his favour. Thompson openly told the magistrate that it was his duty to commit the rascal to save the lives of the citizens, asserting that his own life was once put in deadly peril by him. Bronson, who had hurried over from his store as soon as he heard of the matter, took the squire aside on pretence of especial business, and advised him by all means to commit Bobby instantly, and to refuse to take any bail. The squire said he'd think about that, but in the meantime he would commit him until Hitt's situation was

decidedly known. Deprived, therefore, of his gun, powder-horn, and shot-bag, and attended by a gaping crowd, Bobby was led to the jail, and locked up with a care that certainly conveyed a high idea of the jailor's notion of his prowess.

CHAPTER XVIII.

In one of the merchant palaces of the gay city near which we have laid the principal scenes of our narrative, dwelt Richard Langdale, between whom and Pinckney, it was not necessary to mention it before, there had grown up a close intimacy. Whenever Pinckney went to the city he spent his time chiefly with Langdale, and though their characters in many points were entirely different, yet there was something in each that deeply interested the other. Perhaps the difference in their ages, pursuits, and opinions, gave more zest to their friendship than if the affinities between them had been apparently closer. It is often as difficult to account for the impulses of friendship as for those of love, and those of the last we know are of such unaccountable characteristics that the deity who controls them is painted blind.

When he heard of Pinckney's misfortune he visited him daily, taking the surgeon in his carriage with him; and as soon as Pinckney could suffer a removal, Mr. Langdale had him borne to apartments in his own

house in the city, where he could have every advantage of medical attendance.

Pinckney suffered more from weakness, and consequent nervous irritability, than from his wound, which was healing very fast. He was oppressed with low spirits, which Langdale exerted all his conversational talents to remove. Pinckney was one day so struck with his powers in this respect that he said:

"Langdale, pardon me if I compliment you at the expense of your vocation; but really you are an exception to the generality of merchants. I know that you have held high political stations, and I wonder merchants do not oftener aspire to them."

"Well, that is a wonder, for it can be shown that some of the leading men in the tide of time were merchants. Think how much commerce has done for the world! How much the world is indebted for its enlightenment to commerce. And surely there is as much liberality among merchants as among any other class. I venture to say this, that merchants, take them as a body, are as conversant upon the general matters and concerns of men, apart from professional subjects, as either the professors of medicine or law."

"I am inclined to think you are correct," said Pinckney. "Yet you are generally self-made men."

"Not more so than the generality of lawyers or doctors."

"You have more of a professional air," said Pinckney, "have you not?"

This remark Pinckney felt did not apply to his friend, for Langdale possessed remarkably the air of a man of the world. His address was polished and easy, and his person very handsome. His eye was brightly blue; his nose well formed; his lips full but expressive; and his forehead high, a slight baldness

made it appear higher than it really was. This, with the wrinkles which began to gather about the eye, and as yet only gave to it a shrewd expression, denoted to the observer that Mr. Langdale had reached the meridian of life,

"Why, there is an air of great precision about your thoroughbred merchant," replied Langdale to Pinckney's remark, "but not more so than that of the physician, to say nothing of the lawyer."

"Precision certainly is not the characteristic of the lawyer?"

"No, it is not," replied Langdale, "a free air, and an affectation of bustle and business mark them. Doctors are the most precise race in the world, with the gravest faces. We naturally take our hue from the associations to which we are most accustomed, and as doctors see more death-scenes than anything else, their phizes are gravitated, accordingly look like death-heads. A bank clerk has generally a precise air, they are generally very cleanly in their persons. Bank hours are closer kept by them than the trysting time with their lady-love. Instead of the poet saying, 'punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,' he should have said, punctual as bank clerk to the hour of opening. All those connected with banks are generally courteous but prim. It has been to me a source of no small amusement to look around and mark the difference that professions make in the character. At the same time, how amusing to observe individual traits in spite of habits long engendered, and the enforced routine showing themselves and marking the man from the mass."

"Do you think a city life makes a man better?"

"Yes; in the qualities of the rat and the wolf, who congregate to prowl and to plunder. You and I, Pinckney, have looked on life from different positions and associations—now, I'll lay my life, you believe in

such poetic things as disinterested friendship and devoted love?"

"Why, yes; I hold," said Pinckney, "that such things have been—are, in fact; but I don't believe they are plants that grow spontaneous in every soil."

"You have been in love, then?"

Pinckney really blushed. After a slight hesitancy, he said, "Yes; I have been in love;" and then in a lighter tone he added, "that is, I fancied myself in love; do you believe a man may love twice?"

"Why not! Yes, I think every man of ardent imagination and southern temperament, like you, who has led a life of easy indolence, which give the passions the full play of rumination and imagination, has indulged, ere he arrives at your age, in scores of 'fancies,' as a boarding-school Miss would say; has perhaps, done all he could in the power of indolence to nurse a little cross of the kind into a sullen misanthropical despair."

Pinckney laughed. It was not a happy laugh, but the laugh of rumination whose retrospection was not all sunshine.

Langdale observed it; but without noticing it, said:

"My life has been somewhat an odd one. The links of events in it have not been all bright ones; there are a great many hard knots in the chain. Love! ha! I fancied myself in love once; maybe I was. I'll tell it to you—there is a moral in it; but situated as you are, I do not think its point will be of any service to you; but it may amuse you. I am," said Langdale, with a smile of self-complacency upon the lip, but with something disagreeable upon the brow, which plainly told that the present could not entirely gild the past. "I am entirely a self-made man. I take a pride in it, Howard, notwithstanding the pain this self-making gives in the operation. How

we shrink from pain when enduring it; yet the fact that we have endured has pleasure in it. I am the youngest of five children; my father died when I was fourteen, leaving us nothing but an honest name, and poverty to the lips. I had three brothers and one sister, she next to me, and I loved her with the devotion of my whole heart, more than all the rest of my family together. My brothers were men grown, but they hung loose upon society; and it was plain even to me, then a boy, that their lives, if not criminal, would be obscure, and their ends wretched. My father was a merchant in a very large business, and by indorsements became a bankrupt to an immense amount a short time before he died. In fact, it killed him. While he was reputed wealthy my brothers lived in fashionable prodigality, and after his death—but no matter, I need not dwell upon them; two of them are dead, and the other, after scenes which I will not rehearse, went to sea, a sailor, before the mast—I have not heard of him since. My mother was compelled to keep boarders; and my sister, then in the bloom of beauty, and she was beautiful, was reduced from being a leading belle, with high expectations, to the drudgery of assisting my mother in the menial offices about the house. I was almost the servant of the boarders. Faith, Pinckney, the very heart of boyhood is corrupt. The youths of expectations about town, my former associates, knew me no more. Then it was that the iron entered into my soul. To make the bitterness still more bitter, an adventurer, a boarder in our house, won the affection of my sister, married, and left her in a month. A year afterwards my mother and myself were almost the only attendants on her funeral. My mother did not long survive my beloved sister. While she was lying on her death-bed the officers of the law entered her room, with an execution at the suit of the livery stable keeper from whom the hearse

for my sister's funeral had been hired. My poor mother looked at me when she heard the purpose of the intruder, and said, in the very bitterness of her soul, 'My child, it will not cost much for my funeral, there is no one to attend it but yourself. Oh, God!' she added, in an altered tone, 'that I should leave you so destitute:' saying which she covered her eyes, as if to shut from them some terrible sight, murmured a prayer, cast on me a glance of unutterable wo, and never spoke after."

Langdale rose, and paced the apartment, hurriedly, several times, and then stopping by the couch of Pinckney, he said:

"'Tis strange that I should call up these things after so many years have transpired, and after striving so long to forget them. What an intense egotism there is in our very sorrows, Pinckney. I pass over my mother's funeral. How often in a melancholy, if not misanthropical moment like the present, I have wished that I had passed away with it, and had been placed by the side of my mother and sister. You know for what a worldly man I am taken by the mass, for a cold, callous, worldly man. I hope I am mistaken in my species as much as they are mistaken in me. 'Ha!' as Voltaire said after expressing a good opinion of Haller, and on being told that Haller had not expressed a good one of him: 'Perhaps we are both mistaken.' That's a good sarcasm upon my egotism—hey, is it not?"

"A Scotch merchant, a friend of my father's, not one of those for whom he had indorsed, but one who had advised him against his frequent indorsements, and with whom my father quarrelled on that account, with the request that he would mind his own business—this friend, a merchant, took me home with him. He domesticated me in his own family, and after giving me schooling sufficient to render me a good ac-

countant he placed me as a clerk into his counting-room. He had a daughter, Pinckney, two years my elder; a fat, tumid creature, who considered herself a beauty upon the principle of the Chinese, with whom bulk is beauty. She was as vain and envious as she was protuberant, and malignant as Zantippe. I was attentive to her, of course; my duty to my benefactor required that I should be, and I never, I hope, have wanted gallantry. A fellow clerk of mine had a beautiful sister about my age. He and I were intimate, and I frequently visited him at the house of his parents, who were poor, and in the lower walks of life. With his sister, Henrietta, I fell in love, but while the insidious passion crept over me, my worldly interest, like a fiend at my elbow, or like a better prompter, as many would say, was perpetually reminding me of the opportunity of wealth there was in the winning of Mr. Churchill's daughter, Miss Clarissa Churchill. The lady, the while, accepted my attentions when there were no other beaux present: she made me her convenience. The old gentleman thought he perceived a growing affection between us, and one day with the most benevolent and fatherly feelings he broadly hinted to me that he was pleased to see how matters were going; and that if I continued to please him as I had done, when I became of age he would take me into business with him.

That very night I visited Henrietta—she never looked lovelier. A rival of mine was by her side, and she seemed not indifferent to his attentions; you know the ways of women. I out sat him; and when he had gone I told my tale of love, and was accepted. I had hardly left the house, with her kisses glowing on my lips, when this worldly fiend I wot of, whispered me what a fool I was. On entering Mr. Churchill's house there was Miss Clarissa, looking the full consciousness

of her powers, and surrounded by a whole bevy of beaux. Success with Henrietta had elated my feelings, given me a strange excitement, and I joined in the conversation with a gaiety and wit, if you will pardon the vanity of the phrase, which was not usual to me. At the same time I did not display that devotion to the lady, which at all other times I had been most studious of practising. Here, now; behold the foul inconsistencies of human nature, or rather, not to libel human nature, of my nature. My master this very day had as much as told me that he wished my alliance with his daughter. That alliance, whenever I thought it a matter of impossibility, I looked to as the greatest advancement that could happen to me—yet here was I indifferent to the lady, and, to tell the truth, not so much from thinking of the one I had won, as that there was not such a great difficulty after all in winning the other. I am laying bare not the most honourable impulses in the world to you, Pinckney; but I believe I share them with the rest of my species, and thus divide the burden, and lessen the infamy.

"My new manner to the lady piqued her to the core; I saw it instantly, and felt my advantage. She thought me one she could play on and off *ad libitum*; and that she held me as a cat does a harmless mouse, which she could torment to death if it pleased her. She deemed herself a very hero, and me, a Leander, I suppose, who would have braved the Hellespont, or deeper difficulties, to win her. Oh! the wrath of a woman, and such a woman, when she finds herself at fault in such a calculation.

"For several days she treated me with high-wrought indifference, which I bore with the philosophy of a stoic. Then she relapsed into tenderness, almost tearful tenderness, and by some promptings of the arch-enemy I met her half-way. It was her pride that was wounded, not her love, and I had my reward—I never

should have acted as I did, had not several debts in which I had involved myself pressed rather heavily on me at this juncture, and reminded me forcibly of the advantages of wealth. When we feel one want heavily, we forget that we may make sacrifices to gratify it, which will eventually give more pain than the relief can possibly afford pleasure.

"Well; I shared my leisure time between Henrietta and Miss Clarissa Churchill; or rather, I devoted most of my time to the first, and made the apology of urgent business as preventing me from devoting more to the latter.

'O! what a tangled web we weave,
When first we venture to deceive.'

This state of affairs could not last forever—Henrietta made her brother, my fellow clerk, her confidant; and one day Mr. Churchill paid him the same compliment, and told him that I was addressing his daughter with his approbation and consent. This was a great error of my life, as old Franklin would say. Here was an explosion for you. My fellow clerk, Mr. Knight, on the instant, informed Mr. Churchill of my engagement with his sister. He asked me—I did not deny the fact; he informed his daughter; she said she scorned me for my base conduct—asserted I had made love to her over and over again, and but in pity, and because it was her father's wish, she had thought of accepting me. I did'nt know that I had addressed her. However, it was all right. The old gentleman dismissed me at short warning—I flew to my Henrietta determined to marry her, and live on love. She let me down the wind, by informing me that on hearing of my 'perfidy,' she had plighted her faith to my rival. I quarrelled with her brother on the strength

of it, and nearly added murder to my other virtues; we fought, and I gave him a desperate wound, and flew for it. He recovered; and while I was a wanderer without a sixpence, my kind Clarissa solaced him for all his suffering by giving my rival her hand—she now is Mrs. Knight."

"Mrs. Knight—the lady I know!" exclaimed Pinckney.

"The very she. Knight took my place in the counting-room, and in the daughter's heart instanter. A short time afterwards, her hand followed her heart. Last of all, to end this strange eventful history, the father's fortune blest their love. There's a tale of love all round for you, Pinckney, hey—all for love and a little for the lucre."

Pinckney smiled. "Upon my word, Langdale, you are a strange man."

"No, sir; quite a common-place one."

"Knight, I know Knight; why he's a very indifferent fellow."

"Yes, yes; but it is circumstances, Pinckney, that have made him so. He has been vegetating upon his father-in-law's fortune—he suffers as much from the twitches of gout, as ever I suffered from those of conscience; and either of the ladies is as happy as I believe she would have been had she married your humble servant—and yet we all had our first loves—

> —'that all
> That Eve has left her daughters since her fall.'"

"And what became of Henrietta?" asked Pinckney

"She is the happy mother of a host of heroes—that are to be," replied Langdale, laughing.

"Go on with your history, Langdale."

"Some other time. I thought I'd give you this by

way of my experience. Allow me to say this for myself, though; that afterwards, when Mr. Churchill became embarrassed, and I had gained a fortune, I assisted him and saved him from bankruptcy."

"Do you believe not in love?"

"Not in its martyrdom. Henrietta's conduct shows you that she had what the world would call towering pride, and what I would call towering temper. She leads, I am told, her lord a life of it; had I married her, we should have realized the happy habitude of cat and dog, with occasional make-up by way of variety. They would have come through like sunshine in a Lapland winter. As for Clarissa, if I had married her my life would have been a continual mortification over the flesh and folly of my bride. I like a large woman, observe you, for my taste is Turkish; but give me one who has sweetness of disposition, intellectual cultivation, and ease of manner. I have known such a one; and were I to tell you about her, I could prove to you that a second love may be stronger than the first."

"Let's hear it."

"No, no; some other time."

Pinckney mused in silence, and the conversation took another turn.

CHAPTER XIX.

Now there dwelt in the village of Springdale a certain widow, in whose bosom the storms of life had turned the milk of human kindness sour—if the peculiar temperament of the lady had not soured it at her birth. Mrs. Maddox was a starch widow, who had a starch daughter, as renowned for her ugliness and ungainliness, as was Peggy Blossom for her beauty and grace. This fact had engendered no very kind emotions towards Peggy in the bosoms of the mother and daughter. The feeling was reciprocal; for it cannot be denied that Peggy was wont to toss her head with the airs of a My Lady wherever she encountered Mrs. or Miss Maddox.

Mrs. Maddox and her daughter were the fashionable milliners of Springdale. Miss Maddox read novels, and was sentimental and spiteful; qualities which she inherited, and which, like an estate entailed in the hands of a careful heir, had not been suffered to run to waste.

"Yes," said Miss Maddox to her mother, on the evening of Bobby's incarceration, as they sat together in the backroom of their shop; "it's all that hussey Peggy's fault. She'll come to no good, ma; I know it, and feel it. Only to think how she cuts up with Mr. Gordon, Mr. Hardy, and Mr. Hitt. Hitt's a vulgar person, I know; and I suspect she didn't like him, and put that abominable Bob up to shooting him."

"Vulgar person, Lucinda; that's the very reason that she used to like his visits. He is the most vulgar

spoken person I ever knew. But he's but a blacksmith; and you can't expect fur off of a sow's back. I understand it, my dear. She was all smiles to Hitt and the rest of them, until Lawyer Lupton used to go there. She thought he used to go to see her—jost like her vanity, when he went to ask her old grandmother concerning a boundary line, as he told me himself—he, he. Yes, she thought she'd catch the lawyer, and so dropped the others; and Mr. Lupton, as he told me himself, dropped her. Then she took up with Hitt, and misled the fool into thinking that she liked him, and now it's all for Gordon. This aggravated Hitt, and he spoke her whole character out before the people this evening; and that caused the fuss with Bob Gammon. That child is raising this moment for the gallows. It's so plain to me, that I see him swinging now.—It shocks me. How I pity that poor, wretched, old woman."

"That Peggy has been ruined by the Holly folks, ma; they have made too much of her. Miss Rachellina gives her her cast off dresses, and Miss Fanny gives her new ones, and this has put her above herself."

"That reminds me, Lucinda, that Miss Rachellina—such an old thing, to think so much of dressing herself up,—wants to see the new pattern of a cap I got yesterday,—what caps that Peggy makes for her; so I'll put it in a bandbox and call by Mr. Bronson's, and take his Tom with me, and go to Holly."

"Do, ma, do; and see what they have to say for Miss Peggy Blossom—what a name—now."

Mrs. Maddox accordingly placed the cap in a bandbox, put on her bonnet, and departed, saying: "Lucinda, if Mr. Lupton comes, show him how beautifully you stitched his collars. I told him this blessed day that they were all your work. Put on your other cape, my dear, and tye it with the pink ribbon—it becomes you most."

Mrs. Maddox proceeded directly to Mr. Bronson's store; and after telling him that his prophecies about Bobby Gammon had come exactly true, she asked if he would suffer his boy Tom to attend her to Holly.

The milliner and Mr. Bronson, in their respective vocations, were of great service to each other; and consequently very good friends. Her request was therefore politely complied with, and Tom, with the bandbox under his arm, was ordered to attend Mrs. Maddox.

Holly was but a short distance from Springdale, and Mrs. Maddox soon arrived there. She was shown into Miss Rachellina's especial room, where, with the profoundest deference, she exhibited the cap, and expatiated upon its beauties to that good lady.

"Indeed, Miss Rachellina, don't it suit your taste—I hope it will, ma'am," she said, displaying the cap on her hand, and bobbing it about as though it were on her head. "Your taste in caps is quite according to the prints. Miss Blossom, too, is quite a milliner,—poor thing, indeed she is to be pitied, though it's somewhat her fault, yet misfortunes never come single."

"Her fault—what's the matter," exclaimed Miss Rachellina, somewhat astonished at the volubility of Mrs. Maddox, "what's her fault, Mrs. Maddox?"

"Haint you heard it, Miss Rachellina"—

"Heard it! no, ma'am, I have not heard it—what's her fault, what's she been doing?"

"Then you hav'nt heard, Miss Rachellina, as what a trouble she's got her poor lame cousin into."

"Trouble! why no, tell me—do tell me?"

Mrs. Maddox composed her features into a sympathetic expression ere she said:—

"Why, Miss Rachellina, I know that Miss Blossom is a great favourite of yours, and I wouldn't say anything for the world that would hurt the child in your

good opinion. She is pretty—very, everybody says that, and they say that your kindness to her and the many presents you give her, gives her looks and ways far above her situation in life."

"No matter what people say, Mrs. Maddock; tell me, what has she done?"

"Why, ma'am, you must know, that folks say that she is a great flirt-coquette; and that she trifles with the feelings of the young men who call to see her, with the best intentions."

"What's that to do, Mrs. Maddox, with the present business."

"Why, ma'am, give me time; your indulgence, Miss Rachellina. There be many young men who go to see her, and she, ma'am,—I only say what folks say, I don't want to harm her in your good opinion, but folks say that she has caused somehow or other frequent quarrels amongst them. This I have heard over and over again. Indeed, they do say that she gets sometimes a little above herself. But the long and short of it is this; that Mr. Hitt, Joe Hitt, the blacksmith, ma'am, to whom everybody said she was going to be married, he was there last night, and they do say she treated him very badly, indeed. She has involved herself with that scamp Gordon. This morning, ma'am, Hitt's feelings were so hurt, and it being election day, he got intoxicated, ma'am, and he being in liquor asked Bobby what his cousin meant. Bobby took him up, snubbed him on the spot, and told him he had no business to come to the house. At this, as was natural, you know, Miss Rachellina, considering what had passed between Miss Blossom and Mr. Hitt, he, Mr. Hitt, got angry, and spoke his mind out against Miss Blossom. Bobby all the while had his gun on his shoulder,—a gun Colonel Bentley gave him, ma'am—it was injudicious to give a gun to such a boy who, everybody says, is disposed to be vicious.

Well, ma'am, Mr. Hitt could scarcely turn round before the boy fired the whole load into him."

"Terrible!" ejaculated Miss Rachellina; "is he dead?"

"No, ma'am; but dangerous—very dangerous."

"Where was he wounded—where was he wounded?" inquired Miss Rachellina, with intense earnestness.

"Ahem, ahem. Mr. Hitt now turned round, when the boy fired, and the load, ma'am, nearly half a peck of buckshot, hit him in the back. Indeed, ma'am, it was the doings of Providence, for if it had have been before it would have ruined him forever."

At this moment there was a tremulous tap at the door, and on Miss Rachellina saying "Come in!" Peggy, with a face pale as Mrs. Maddox's cap, entered the room.

"Peggy, my child, this is sad things, I hear," said Miss Rachellina, with much sternness.

Poor Peggy burst into tears.

Mrs. Maddox stood with her cap in her hand, not knowing what to say. "Not now, Mrs. Maddox, not now," said Miss Rachellina, turning away from the milliner and her cap, and looking compassionately at Peggy, "my nerves, my sensibilities have been too much tried. You must call again, Mrs. Maddox."

The milliner lingered for a moment with the wish to hear what Peggy should say; but on Miss Rachellina's repeating, "Not now, Mrs. Maddox," with a bow that said as plainly as ever did a regal one that the audience was over, she felt compelled to take her departure. As soon as the door had closed on Mrs. Maddox, Miss Rachellina seated herself in her high-backed rocking chair, and motioning Peggy to a seat, she crossed her arms in her lap, and said:—

"Peggy Blossom, this is terrible news I hear of your cousin and yourself."

"Of me, Miss Rachellina?"

"Yes! of you, Peggy; I am astonished; shocked beyond measure. My kindness to you was founded upon the opinion that you were a superior young woman. Not superior as to mere appearance—I do not mean personal appearance, that is a very fragile and fleeting quality—but superior in disposition, in conduct, in that which constitutes the chief charm of the female character. I am surprised to hear, Peggy, that you are given to flirtation and coquetry (here Peggy's astonishment subsided into a sheepish expression), and in this way—a very common way, Peggy Blossom, you have caused perhaps the death of two persons."

"It can't be, Miss Rachellina," said Peggy; "for they say Joe Hitt is not hurt badly; and if he is not, how can they harm Bobby. Besides, if he was, he threw at Bobby, a poor lame boy as he is, three or four times, and once like to have knocked him down, before Bobby fired."

"Well, child," resumed Miss Rachellina, "you have relieved my mind from an oppressive load, if such is the fact; I rejoice to hear it. Peggy, Peggy, let this be a lesson to you, let what may be the event. I am told, much to my surprise and grief, that you suffer that young man Gordon, whose character is, to say the best of it, on a very doubtful footing, to visit you on familiar terms. Peggy, let me caution you; do not at all encourage that man. I am told it is notorious that you prefer his company and conversation to that of any other young man in the village."

Here Sidney Fitzhurst entered his aunt's room, and that lady, ere she turned to him, said to the girl, "I hope I have said enough to you Peggy;" and then, addressing her nephew, asked: "What news do you bring, Sidney? you are late; can you tell me of Robert Gammon's unfortunate case?"

"Yes, aunt; I am fresh from the village, and can tell you all about it,—I have just had the honour of

becoming Mr. Robert Gammon's bail; the poor fellow was in a peck of troubles."

"Bail! what's that, Mr. Fitzhurst, if you please, sir?" asked Peggy.

"Why, Peggy, I have become his security for his appearance at court, for his future good behaviour, and they have let him out of jail on that condition. So you must tell Bobby, that if he does not behave himself I shall have ten times as much money to pay for him as he has lost."

"I will, sir! is he out, sir? has he gone home?"

"He has, Peggy."

"Then good night, Mr. Fitzhurst; good night, Miss Rachellina," said Peggy, as she hastened to the door.

"Good night, Peggy," replied Miss Rachellina. "Remember, child," she continued, impressively raising her finger, "what I have said to you."

With a downcast head, Peggy closed the door and hastened out of the house. Without stopping to speak to any one she took her solitary way home.

"If I were to meet Jack Gordon," thought Peggy, as she drew near grandmother's, "I'd be bound I'd tell him a piece of my mind. I always had a misgiving, just like one of granny's dreams, that he would bring trouble on me."

The adage, which says talk of a certain person and he appears, was not verified in this instance, perhaps it might have been because Peggy was only *thinking*. She entered the house without meeting any one; and beheld Bobby giving an account of the day's adventure to his grandmother.

CHAPTER XX.

PINCKNEY, in the city, under the constant attendance of the best medical aid which it afforded, recovered rapidly.

"Langdale," he said to his friend one day, "I have arranged my business by letter, and I shall be in no haste to leave your city."

"I rejoice at it," replied Langdale, "and, Pinckney, I have certain suspicions that there are attractions for you here, which the north, with all its allurements of home, cannot offer you. Do you know that you talk in your sleep? and that one night when I watched with you, I made discoveries?"

"Ay! of what character were they? If you had been laid up about the time of Miss Henrietta's cruelties, some watching friend might also have made discoveries in your case."

"Do you believe in second love?"

"Suppose I subscribe myself your convert, what then?"

"I should say that you were rapidly recovering,—that the sound state of your mind was a prognostic of the sound state of your body. Second love, Pinckney, upon the heart, is like the moonlight upon Rome, as your favourite bard has described it.

> 'Leaving that beautiful which still was so
> And making that which was not.'"

"Ah, Langdale," replied Pinckney, "your quotation

is poetical, but not true: remember, that the bard says the moonlight

> ——— 'softened down the hoar austerity
> Of rugged *desolation*.'"

"Certainly," rejoined Langdale, interrupting Pinckney,

> ——— 'and filled up
> *As 'twere anew*, the gap of centuries.'

"That's the idea, my dear Pinckney; all these 'gaps' in the heart on the first love will be 'filled up as 'twere anew' by the second passion. There's poor Burns who, though peasant-born, had such a capacious heart for true sentiment—whose songs upon love are the best and truest that were ever written, he fell in love with fifty different women."

"Yes; but do you not believe that his love for highland Mary—the girl who died, and to whom he addressed those touching lines to "Mary in heaven"—Do you not believe that his love for her was the strongest passion of his heart?"

"He might have thought so; she died after their loves were plighted, and so strongly plighted, over the running stream on the Bible, as they were parting. Nothing occurred—no jealousy or suspicion between them to make one doubt the other. When those lines were written she was in her grave with associations of youthful tenderness around her, close as her shroud—hallowed, not buried by its folds.

> 'The love where death has set his seal
> Nor age can chill, nor rival steal
> Nor falsehood disavow.'"

"But, remember, all first loves have not such hallow-

ed remembrances, and all lines to Mary are not to—Mary in heaven."

Pinckney laughed. "True as the book," he said; "I'll tell you, Langdale, and it is strange, as we are men of such different views of life, that I should wish to tell you. But 'mid the chief beauties of almighty Rome on such a night as the bard has described I made the acquaintance of a lady who has considerable influenced my destinies, at least the destinies of my heart for some time. Though descended from American parents she was an Italian. She had that style of beauty; the dark hair and eye, and the voluptious grace—but I won't weary you with a description of a loveliness that I thought equal to anything that sculptor or artist of that fairy land had ever fancied; you would laugh at me. She was some one or two years my elder, and knew the world. I have since discovered this, like one on whom had been particularly conferred its master-key. I left home for foreign travel full of deep-wrought sentiment and romance. After some rough trials, I had received by the death of a dear relative, a very large fortune, and, like the o'ertasked labourer when the day of feasting comes, I plunged too deeply into pleasure, forgetful of the high hopes to which before I had been sacrificing my health. Pleasure did quickly, what study was slowly doing. My energies were prostrated. I wanted an object in life, and I determined on travel, as I have said. To Italy I looked as the land on which the Promethean fire descended. There I promised myself all that the prospects of the beautiful which one of our own country's best bard has painted as well as ever yet did poet paint them. Did you know my namesake, Edward C. Pinkney, of Baltimore, the poet?"

"No: I have often heard of him; was he a relation of yours?"

"No, not relations; he spells his name without the

c; he was a son of the celebrated lawyer. I knew him slightly. He was one of the handsomest men I have ever seen. He was older than I—I met him some years ago when I was in my teens, in New York. He presented me with a copy of his poems. They are beautiful exceedingly—gems all. That serenade of his, 'Look out upon the stars my love,' is the best in the language. It puts one in mind of the two or three fragments we have of Lovelace, the chevalier poet of the olden time, who wrote so touchingly to his mistress from prison:

'Look out upon the stars, my love!
And shame them with your eyes,
On which—thou or the lights above,
There hangs more destinies.'

"How beautiful, hey?—again:

'Sleep not, thine image wakes for aye
Within my watching breast,
Sleep not, from her soft sleep should fly,
Who robs all hearts of rest.'

"There is the spirit of the loves of the knights of old in that; and then his piece called 'The Health.' I made his poems my companion. I have been wandering. I introduced his name to say, that I looked upon Italy as he has described it in a short poem bearing that title. Pardon me, if I quote a stanza or two."

'It looks a dimple on the face of earth,
The seal of beauty, and the shrine of mirth;
Nature is delicate, and graceful there,
The place of genius, feminine, and fair;
The winds are awed, nor dare to breathe aloud,
The air seems never to have borne a cloud,

Save where volcanoes send to heaven their curled
And solemn smokes, like altars of the world.
Thrice beautiful to that delightful spot
Carry our married hearts, and be all pain forgot.'

'There art, too, shows, when nature's beauty palls
Her sculptured marbles, and her pictured walls;
And there are forms in which they both conspire
To whisper themes that knows not how to tire;
The speaking ruins in that gentle clime,
Have but been hallowed by the foot of time,
And each can mutually prompt some thought of flame,
The meanest stone is not without a name.
Then come, beloved! hasten o'er the sea,
To build our happy hearth in blooming Italy.'

"There, is not that most beautiful; surpass that description from any poet!"

"What became of Mr. Pinkney?"

"He died some years ago. A thousand times have I beneath Italian skies repeated those lines. I could not woo a beloved one to go with me to 'blooming Italy,' but I thought I had found one there who would win me to stay. I had no premonitory symptoms. I took the disease at first sight; perhaps it was owing to the climate."

"Ah, you're getting cured," said Langdale, laughing, "inasmuch as you can jest with the wounds, they will eventually heal over without a scar. Nothing turns the arrow of the blind god aside like a jest, after all. But, go on; go on."

"Her parents being from America—she claiming to be an American woman, though born in Italy; and speaking the mutual language when I could not speak Italian: all this, had she not been so beautiful, would have thrown me into her society. As it was, every hour that I possibly could, I devoted to her.

Her mind, naturally strong and highly cultivated; her manners, though I have thought since, they possessed no little mannerism and display, were winning beyond resistance, and her form was such as Pinkney, my namesake, speaks of in the last stanzas which I repeated to you. I used frequently to tell her so. I was a year under her spell. What's the purpose of dwelling upon what a fool I was; I might have done so then, but a light has broke in upon me since, enough to give me an inkling of what a Billy Lackaday I was."

Langdale laughed heartily.

"Confound you," said Pinckney, "your comical laugh won't let me be sentimental. What a fool I was to pretend to talk to you on such a subject."

"Indeed, you were not—believe me, I think you'll remove the image by an' by. The best way to prevent its return, remember, is to put another in its place—but go on."

"Some other time, Langdale; your laugh has scattered all my sentimental reminiscences. I could give you but a history of my feelings. But to probe them—they are a little sore yet, maybe."

"You're convalescing. But, believe me, I laughed in reflecting upon myself, not at you. I think our characters are alike in many points, but there is a great difference between them, and in that difference consists what would make you happy, I believe, as a married man. That is, provided you did not marry your Italian love.

"That's a strange remark"—

"Not at all; it is a just one. That fair lady of 'blooming Italy,' I plainly discover, even from what little you have said, was a splendid—an accomplished woman—of the world. And from all such deliver me. She would have spent your fortune—not cared to have any hold upon your affections, except as she

could hold some purse, and would have worried you to death with her whines and waywardness.—Kept all her amiability for company, and all her fault-finding for your private ear. Such a woman is worse, Pinckney, in my opinion, than those of her sex who, in the world's opinion, are deemed the most worthless."

Pinckney coloured deeply at this remark. 'Tis strange when one man of the world meets with another profounder in its knowledge than himself, how almost child-like he will frequently become when with him. His elder's knowledge and experience place him in the predicament of the schoolboy, who not only feels that his teacher is his superior in knowledge, but that he thoroughly understands and penetrates the feelings of his pupils. Pinckney's confinement, however, and debility, which affected his nerves, assisted much in producing at the time a state of feeling, which at another he would not have believed was natural to him under any circumstances.

"Understand me," said Langdale, quickly observing Pinckney's emotion; "let not your feelings be aroused for the lady. I mean to speak of your class of worldly women. And maybe she is not of that character—is without the rule if she is. She may furnish one of those exceptions that logicians tell us make general rules stronger."

Pinckney remained silent, but he smiled archly, and Langdale continued:

"I'm held to be a man of the world—but as the world goes, I flatter myself I am not so much so as the world thinks—not so much so as the generality of its good people."

"You are proverbially so," said Pinckney.

"Well, then, perhaps I am so heartless myself, that I want a person all heart, as a friend or mistress, to make up the deficiency on my part. We love our opposites, you know—I must confess that I have what

is called a *liking* for a man of the world—one who has travelled and knows a thing or two, and is withal a gentleman. I have, I say, for such a man a liking; and for such a woman, an admiration—and that's all. If I have not the domestic ties about my hearth, I have their appreciation about my heart the stronger —you start?"

"Start!" only think of the history of your first love which you gave me."

"True, think of it; the antagonist principles were then fighting in me, which plainly prove I was not a worldly man. Had I been such, I should certainly have married Clarissa Churchill; as it was, I never even courted her, but went in for love. It is true I may have wavered for an instant, but never when brought to the point. The vast majority of young men would not have wavered for a moment. They would have fawned, the sycophants of Clarissa, and never once have thought of Henrietta but as a 'poor girl,' which, from being repeated by them in a depreciating tone, would soon in their minds have taken its broadest signification, and they would have got to denouncing her as a 'poor girl in every sense of the word.'"

"You are too harsh, Langdale, in your opinion of the world; I don't esteem men so mercenary. I believe that most young people would make any sacrifice to their affections."

"Most of them will tell you so; but I believe in original sin in that respect if in no other. Selfishness is inborn in us; it is as strong in the young man as in the old one; but it has different ways of developing itself in them, because their aims are different. No really great scoundrel ever made a confession of his rascality except on his death-bed, or under the gallows. and then he was for being heroic and dying game.

I never knew a man yet, who frankly confessed his vices who had not many virtues. And I never knew a man who made proclamation that he had all the virtues, whose vices did not greatly out-number them. The man who knows himself a thorough-paced scoundrel, does all he can to hide the least delinquency, because he fears if one is discovered, it will furnish a clue to his whole character. The tendency of these remarks might seem to eulogize a character like my own, perhaps; but I make them because I know they are true. I lay my life, this bird of the Italian skies, and who was just suited for its glories, and pined if met them—I lay my life she spoke much more plainly to you about love, and made much freer acknowledgment of her passion, voluntarily, perchance, than you could ever wring from Fanny Fitzhurst, though you had courted her, and she had accepted you. What we feel deeply, we treasure deeply. Lip service is easily uttered. And when we are profoundly good or bad we never tell it; the first from modesty, the second from interest: but when we would be what we are not, the lips very easily play their part; 'tis our actions that betray us. Suppose two streams to be endowed with language, the shallow one would no doubt make its ripples tattle to you of its depth, while the deep one would roll upon its waveless course, satisfied that it was deep, and wait for the testing if it was doubted."

"What, pray tell me, put Miss Fitzhurst in your thoughts by way of illustration?"

"What caused you to ask me the question? Pinckney, the condition of a man, as described by Shakspeare, 'between the acting of a heedful thing and the first motion,' is pretty much like the struggle between first and second love. Not that the contest has any ferocity in it:

'But the state of man
Like to a little kingdom suffers then
The nature of an insurrection.' "

"No," said Pinckney smiling, "your illustration to me is not a good one. My notion is, that between the first and second love there is an intervention of a blank, an unimpassioned blank; darkness like the night between two days—that one gradually fades off like a summer sunset, leaving the highest hopes last like the highest hills; and that the other rises out of deepest darkness, long after the past day has gone to the years beyond the flood. There is no passing from the one to the other without a long interval of calm, like night between."

"You won't admit any thunder-storm through the night then," interrupted Langdale, "engendered by the heat of the previous day."

"Oh, yes; perhaps a little through the night to make pure the atmosphere for the second love; but if there be any through the day, I claim it as a proof of what my favourite said:

'The day drags on though storms keep out the sun,
And thus the heart will break yet brokenly live on.' "

CHAPTER XXI.

After Pinckney had been some weeks the guest of his friend Langdale, one day, when the inmates of Holly were assembled round their social hearth, for it was now generally cold enough for fires, though on some days they were not necessary, the following conversation occurred:

"Well, brother, how is Mr. Pinckney?" asked Fanny.

"He is better," replied Sidney, "though he has not been out but once since the day he did us the honour to dine with us in town."

"That was a most imprudent step," said Miss Rachellina. "I have never thought of it since without being provoked with you. To invite a gentleman so much injured as Mr. Pinckney to a house, so damp and unaired as I know our town-house must be, was the height of imprudence."

"My dear aunt, I can assure you," rejoined Fanny, "that fires were made in the rooms early, and everything was comfortable. Mr. Pinckney, in proof of it, received no injury whatever—not the slightest."

"I wished Fanny to go with me to our friend Langdale's and see him, but she foolishly refused," said Sidney.

"Foolishly! I think not, nephew. If it had been necessary for Fanny to go, it would have been from the necessity proper, not otherwise."

"Why aunt," replied Pinckney, "did not all the ladies on Mr. Langdale's birthday attend a splendid party there?"

"Yes, nephew; but remember one of the first ladies of our city, Mrs. Allan, did the honours for him."

"Aunt," said Sidney, archly, "you have called repeatedly to see Pinckney."

"There is a difference, Sidney," replied Miss Rachellina, bridling, "between the age and situation of myself and niece."

Sidney bowed low to his aunt, and then said to his sister, as if he were determined to teaze somebody:

"I believe Fanny meant to have gone, until she heard that Pinckney was able to go out, and then she proposed that I should invite him to the house."

"There was some manœuvring in that, I confess," said Fanny, blushing but rallying, "and, brother, it's in our family. At least you and I have the gift, for you have practised considerable diplomacy in finding excuses for visiting Mr Elwood's lately."

Sidney looked at his sister, and unobserved by his aunt and father, shook his head.

"Niece," said Miss Rachellina with a decided air, "I have heard you rally your brother repeatedly lately on the frequency of his visits to Mr. Elwood's. But there are some things that should not be jested on—I beg you will drop it. Miss Sarah Grattan is a very fine girl, considering her advantages. A very fine girl; but the possibility of her alliance with our family is not to be even remotely hinted at. This familiar jesting upon certain subjects takes off imperceptibly their impropriety in our minds. Your brother's visits to Mr. Elwood's have no such character as your jests would imply; yet by your raillery upon the subject, the impression may be made upon the servants and upon the neighbours, which would compel us to treat Miss Grattan coldly,—a thing I should be very sorry to do."

"That is what I don't think I shall ever do under any

circumstances, my dear aunt, for she is the very best girl I ever knew; and, indeed, she has a great deal of mind. As for brother, aunt, they say in town, you know, that he is courting Jane Moreland."

"A very fine young lady is Miss Moreland; her family is one of the best in the state, and her fortune is ample."

"Who told you that, sis?" asked Sidney.

"O! how very ignorant you are, brother of mine," rejoined Fanny. "Mrs. Allan asked me if it were true the last time I was in town; and so did the Swifts."

Mr. Paul Fitzhurst was seated in his arm-chair, apparently reading the newspaper and inattentive to the conversation. A frown succeeded Fanny's remark, when the old gentleman laid the newspaper on his knee, and said:

"There has always been something mysterious about the intimacy existing between Mr. Elwood and Bronson, who, some one told me, was to marry Miss Grattan. I wonder at her choice. Miss Grattan's father was a highly respectable man; he was a physician in extensive practice, and a fine companion he was, too. I knew him well. He married a very respectable girl, a Miss Gilmore, I think, of an old but reduced family. Elwood bore in those days a very bad character; he was held to be a low, dissipated gambler; and it was a matter of surprise to every one when the other Miss Gilmore ran away with him. He and Bronson were always intimate; I remember then that both of them were held in little repute. Elwood, however, I have always thought a much better man than Bronson."

"I think not, brother," interrupted Miss Rachellina; "he treated his wife shockingly. I, in respect to her family, used to visit her occasionally, and I protest that the brutality of her husband shocked me. I gave him a setting-down once that he remembers to this

day. Bronson, though, is a low creature—and now I remember, brother, notwithstanding Bronson always pretended to be pious, there was a great intimacy between them. It was said at the time that Bronson had done him some favour—relieved him from a debt that threatened to deprive him of his farm; that's the only thing he cares for. I have often repented since, that when his niece was growing up, I did not show her some kindness; but I attended Mrs. Elwood's funeral; and, notwithstanding the awful occasion, Elwood remembered the setting-down I gave him, and treated me rudely. This prevented my taking the interest in Miss Sarah that I else would have done."

"Aunt, old Agnes, who lives in the old cabin by the burnt mill, is a very intelligent old woman. I have heard her say she knew all about the Grattan's; she's very old—yes, very; she remembers all about your grandfather, and can tell about the revolutionary war. I don't like her."

"She was Dr. Grattan's mother's housekeeper," said Fanny, "and she is so full of old romantic notions that I like to go and talk with her. Why, aunt, she expresses herself as well as any lady—all the village people pay her a great deal of respect. She tells fortunes, and believes in true love."

"True love," interrupted Miss Rachellina; "Fanny you said that just as I suppose that giddy thing, Peggy Gammon, would have spoken it."

"Well, aunt, over such as Peggy, and over the village girls, she has great influence—it is believed she is a fortune-teller—I like to listen to her; she certainly is interesting."

"It is such fortune-telling old women as she!" exclaimed Miss Rachellina, "who have ruined the happiness of many a poor girl. Such a worthless fellow as this John Gordon, for instance, will pay her well, and then persuade a giddy thing like Peggy Gammon

to go and have her fortune told. The result is, that the worthless hag describes him as her 'true lover,' as you, or she would call it, and when he offers himself she considers it destiny, and takes him."

"It is recorded of Tom Foote, the celebrated wit," said Sidney, "that he, by turning fortune-teller for a friend of his, Lord Debaral—if I remember rightly—got five thousand pounds—at any rate, a very large sum. The lady was superstitious, my lord knew it, and told Foote, who was a great mimic, and could assume any disguise, that if he would play the fortune-teller and describe him exactly to the lady as her future husband, and the stratagem succeeded, he would pay him that sum. Foote agreed. The lady sought to know her fate, and he told it. My lord courted and won her with her fortune, and paid Foote out of it. So, take care Fanny how you consult the oracle; some mercenary gentleman may anticipate your questions, and purchase the response."

"I shall be beforehand with the gentleman, brother; for the first one that I fall in love with I will get you to invite to Holly; then I will apprize Aunt Agnes of the fact, describe him to her, fee her well, tell my gentleman of her skill in palmistry, and when he repairs to the oracle I shall be described to him to a T, as the only one who can make him happy."

"If you have such designs, sis, I advise you by all means to cultivate the good graces of Aunt Agnes."

"I have done so, sir. Almost every fine day when I visit Sarah, we call over by the mill to see her, when I never fail to give her something; besides which, I have despatched Pompey repeatedly to her cabin with flour, butter, eggs, ham, and many other things; for Aunt Agnes, though she be a witch, lives not upon air, and therefore are my purposes in the full promise of accomplishment. You may further know, sir, that I intend to spend to-morrow with Sarah,

and that we will certainly call and see, not the White Lady of Avenel, but the White Lady of the Woods. So, if you promise to come for me in the afternoon, I promise to intercede and make your future fate bright."

"Agreed!" said Sidney, "it is a bargain."

CHAPTER XXII.

The burnt mill of which we have spoken stood at the foot of the hills, at the termination of a road which was called the mill-road, but which, since the fire, had not been used except by Mr. Fitzhurst and Elwood for farming purposes, or by such wayfarers and rovers as Gordon and his companion whom Bobby overheard the night of the husking-match.

The mill was of rude stone construction, and nothing was left but its bare and blackened walls. The scenery about it was picturesque. A stream called the Falls dashed down by it, with its full supply of water, for the mill-dam was broken down and the mill-race choked up by deposits from its sides, made by various rains, and overgrown with reeds.

About twenty feet above the mill, towards what was once the dam, stood an old log-cabin, formerly occupied by an assistant of the miller, who attended to keeping the dam and race in repair. After the fire he left his humble dwelling, and old Agnes took possession of it.

Agnes had been housekeeper to Doctor Grattan's

mother, and her attachment to his daughter was so great, that at Mr. Elwood's request she removed to his house when he took the child home, and nursed her with parental care. Had it not been for her attachment to Sarah, Agnes would not have staid a day at Mr. Elwood's. He treated her, it is true, better than any other person about his farm, but then she was a white woman, and she was very kind to her little charge. This did not, however, prevent Mr. Elwood from using towards her when in his cups the roughest language. His unkindness to Agnes as Sarah grew up, and her nurse became more helpless, increased; and one day, on his telling her that she did nothing, and that she must be off, she removed to the miller's cabin.

The Falls, the descent of which was very rapid opposite the cabin, dashed on wildly over projecting rocks, throwing its silver spray against their faces, and forming in their hollows many fantastic eddies and pools, in which the leaves and pieces of bark and wood floated round and round, ere they were borne onward. Above these rocks the stream lay comparatively quiet and lake-like; and jutting prominences, covered almost entirely by moss and wild vines, gave beauty to the view, which, on the right, as you looked up the stream, stretched out into the valley, and on the left was bounded by a bold chain of hills.

There had been an inclosure around the cabin, but it was broken down before Agnes domesticated herself there; and the wild honeysuckle and wild sweet brier grew almost up to the very door. A single tall oak stretched its branches above and over the cabin, which had the appearance of leaning against it, as if for support: the ruins of the mill below towered over the cabin in aristocratic solemnity; its blackened walls, relieved to the eye here and there by the "parisite" plant, the ivy, which, unlike parisites in general,

was giving beauty to what all the rest of the vegetable kingdom shrink from; but in this it was justifying the simile of the poet, who, in comparing woman to it, said, that—

> "Like ivy, she's known to cling
> Too often round a worthless thing."

A worthless thing to whom she has sacrificed everything, and whose worthlessness and vice, in the abundance of her love, she is endeavouring to hide.

A path from the cabin led to a garden spot by the mill, which had been formerly cultivated by the miller, and which was roughly inclosed by what in that country is called a Virginia fence. It was formed by laying a number of rails in zigzag manner on each other. By the corners of the fence, on the outer side, blackberry bushes and wild roses grew in abundance. Agnes continued with the assistance of some of her neighbours to keep the little inclosure free from weeds, and to raise within vegetables sufficient to supply her frugal wants. She also cultivated a quantity of herbs, which were thought to possess greater medicinal virtues when administered by her than similar simples purchased from the apothecary.

The morning after the badinage between Fanny and her brother, she visited Sarah Grattan according to her promise. Her friend was delighted to see her, and in much better spirits than usual. Though the autumn was now far advanced, the day proved a delightful one—one of those sunny remembrances of summer, and Fanny proposed that they should make a visit to Aunty Agnes.

Sarah readily assented; and, unattended, they proceeded together, following a sheep-path through the woods to the old woman's cabin.

On rapping at the door, the voice of old Agnes bade them enter. They did so; and found the old

woman engaged at her spinning-wheel by the hearth, in which a slight fire, which she fed from a quantity of brushwood that lay in the corner, crackled and sparkled. Agnes was dressed in a homespun frock, with a plain, but clean cotton cap on her head. Though very old, she was hale and hearty. Her countenance expressed cheerfulness, but with an air of character and decision. When young, she must have been handsome, for though her skin was wrinkled, it was evident that it had been fair; her nose was strait, and her eye blue and bright. Her forehead had fewer wrinkles than one might have supposed, and her hair, silvered with years, was gathered neatly under her cap.

The furniture of her humble room—the cabin had but one—consisted of a small table, a pair of old drawers, four old chairs, and a bed. A shelf beside the chimney contained a few plates and tea-cups with an old-fashioned tea-pot which had belonged to Sarah's grandmother. Under the shelf was a tea-kettle, with two or three articles for cooking. Different kinds of herbs, together with strings of dried fruit, were hung by nails to the wall, as were, also, two or three bundles of wool.

"Come in, dears," said Aunt Agnes, with a delighted smile; "it makes my old eyes glad to see you—you look so young and blithesome. Did you see anything of my little dog, Benny, as you came along?"

"No, nurse; has he left you?" said Sarah.

"No, child; but I've missed him all this noon. He followed me out to my garden; my cat seemed ailing, and I went there to get some catnip for her with the dew-freck on it; she did'nt seem to like the dried I gave her; I suspect it had lost its qualities. A merciful man is merciful to his beast, you know, dears, and these dumb things are a great comfort to me. I wonder how Mrs. Gammon's rheumatism is? That

grandchild of her's, Bobby, they tell, is out of his trouble."

"Yes, aunty," replied Fanny, "he is; he was up at the house yesterday."

"To be sure the old woman's health is bad, and when that's bad, nothing appears bright to us; but I think she ought bear it better; I don't think there is any evil in the boy.

"He's a little mischievous," said Fanny, "but we all like him; he is now going to school in the village."

"I hope he'll be a comfort to the old woman yet, if she lives," said Agnes. "Come, dears, it's such a bright day, now I've got your company, I'll walk up the little path, and look at the waters and the woods. They're gladsome to old eyes: the nearer we grow to the time when we must leave nature, the more we like to look upon her face when it is smiling. It gladdens an old heart, and makes it feel young again. This, so far, has been a cheerful autumn; we've not had many dark days yet; I think it will be a mild winter. It will be a blessing for the poor, particularly for those in the cities, if it is; I'm hale and hearty for one of my years, but I can't expect, in the nature of things, to see many more winters."

"Nurse, you walk very firm yet," said Sarah, as she assisted the old woman to make a step from her door, and fixed the hood of an old-fashioned cloak upon her head.

"Oh! yes, dear, I can walk miles yet; but I'm ninety-three, come next spring."

With a very light step for one of her years, Agnes walked between the girls, conversing in a similar strain to that which we have recorded. They proceeded up the Falls to where the waters lay lake-like, as we have described, and seated themselves under an aged elm, near a clump of willows.

"How beautiful this is," said Sarah.

"Yes, dears, I've always liked it. The waters glide along so quietly here, that they remind me of my life. Heaven send that it shall not be so wild and rough in its fall. See the hills there; how bold and proud they look, like a haughty man upon a humble one; but up the valley it appears so quiet and calm, and there's something solemn, solemn,—death-reminding in the turn and fall of the leaf. It comes like a warning to be prepared."

"Aunty, you never go to church now-a-days. If you can't walk I'll send and have you taken," said Sarah.

"Thank you, child; thank you, no; our good minister often comes to see me. And the variety of new faces and the changes of things take my thoughts away—make them wander at church. This is the very spot, as I told you, where a young girl—I knew her well when we were young together,—this is the very spot, they say, where she drowned herself. Lean over, dears, but mind you don't fall," continued Agnes, stretching out her hands as if to hold the girls as they arose and looked over; "see, it's a deep distance down, and the water is so quiet there that you can see your own sweet faces in it. It is said that ever since the poor thing drowned herself, the waves grew calmer and calmer. 'Tis true they used to be rough here, and the old miller, who was a hard-hearted man, used to say it was because there was a rock just above this that made the stream break this way, and that it had been rolled down by the force of the Falls in a terrible storm to the rocks below; but the superstitious old folks about maintain, that the spirit of the poor girl hovered over the place where she leaped in, and made the waters calm."

"Oh! I've heard something about it," said Fanny, musingly, turning to Sarah; "the poor girl who imi-

tated Sappho, without knowing there was such a person, but who felt all that Sappho has expressed."

"A character, Sarah, for whom somehow or other I never could feel much sympathy; I suppose this suicide first started the idea that the mill was haunted."

"No, dear," replied Agnes, "they had not the idea that the mill was haunted then. It was always said that her spirit hovered about this spot; but it was never called an evil spirit. For my part I am over-persuaded, at least I have got the idea, since I have been living so much alone, that there are such things as good spirits and evil spirits; but I believe the worst of them are harmless to good people, though they may tempt them."

"I thought Jane Lovell, as you told me, nurse," said Sarah, "was the daughter of the miller. Was he the hard-hearted man who, you say, asserted that the water became quiet here because the rock was removed?"

"No, child, no; he was the one who took the mill after Mr. Lovell, who built it. You must know, after his only child drowned herself, that he and his wife, as was natural, could'nt bear to stay, so they left. The mill and his house, then, were the only places between this and the village, except, dear, yon place," said Agnes, addressing Fanny. "I think, dear, that the property was leased from yon people, and after the mill was burnt down, it being not worth the rent, it went back to them. It was the old miller, a rank tory, who got the mill from Lovell, that used to have folks to say it was haunted. They do say it was haunted by flesh and blood, by some of the tories that he gave meal to, in the night-time, when they would steal through the hills here from where the British lay at."

"What was this story, aunty, about Jane Lovell? do tell it to me?"

"Did'nt I tell it to you, children, together, one day?"

"No, nurse," replied Sarah, "it was only to me; tell it again, tell it again; I love to hear it, though it always makes me sad."

"That's natural, dear, and bless your heart; I, that have nursed you, know that you feel for such poor things. Then, dears, sit one on each side of me. Mrs. Gammon, you tell me, is better; I am glad to hear it; health is like a quiet conscience; we can't be happy without it, but one we may lose, and it may not be our fault. Yes, I was young as you are, dears, when I first knew Jane Lovell. It was thought that the British would take the city; as they lay just below it, and the country round was full of tories. So, your grandfather, Sarah, who was a good and true soldier in the continental cause, sent your mother to Springdale, which was pretty much such a place then, as it is now, and I attended her. Some of the old villages, dears, wear the same face they used to wear, when everything else is so changed that, when amidst present scenes, you look back and try to recollect former ones, it seems impossible, as scarcely a vestige of them remains to assist your memory. But Springdale is much the same. I was young then, blithe of heart, and blithe of limb, knowing no sorrow or trouble, the world all seemed cheerful to me: but I lost all that was left to me in that war, before it was over—two brothers and a father. It comes like a pride to my old heart, though, that they died in a rightful cause, if ever fight was rightful.

"Your family then, dear, (to Sarah,) were among the richest in the land, and your grandmother did all she could to comfort me; and well she might, for your grandfather was a soldier, and commanded the very company that my father was killed in. It seems strange that the troubles of other people should lessen our own: but so it is; for when I came to think of poor Jane Lovell for some time after, I felt it was

sinful to grieve so much. Poor thing! how she must have grieved; it was a complete heart-break and despair. I am old now, dears, but I have been young; and I can feel for a poor young thing, and I believe that, to forsake one that loves you, and whom you have won to love you, is a sin that's set down among the direst and the deepest. I believe it, and I always have believed it.

"I knew Jane, as I tell you. She was the merriest, truest-hearted girl in the neighbourhood; and she and I grew as intimate as you two; for I spent with your mother nearly a year in the village."

"One day the militia had a skirmage with a number of tories who haunted the hills, and who could prowl about in the night and rob and steal, and be off on the swiftest horses. The tories were led by a British officer, and they got the worst of it, and fled like cowards, as they were, and left him wounded up the Falls, they say, not two miles from here. He was hurt badly; so the militia, by the command of their officer, made a litter out of some poles that they cut in the wood, together with coats enough, which they took off their backs for the purpose, and brought him towards the village. He was so exhausted by the time they got to the mill that it was thought he would die, so they carried him in to Mr. Lovell's, and hastened off for a doctor."

"I remember that very day well; for in the afternoon Jane came to the village and told me about it, and she said what a handsome man the officer was, and that she must hurry home, for he might need a poultice or something else that she might make."

"What kind of a looking girl, aunty, was Jane?" inquired Fanny.

"One that was pleasing to look upon: she was thought as pretty then over all the young girls of the place, as is Peggy Gammon now. That child re-

minds me of her—only Jane was not so lively, and was more diffident; besides, she had a good education. It made me happy to look upon her; nobody envied her, everybody loved her."

Here Fanny drew nearer to Aunt Agnes, and asked her to go on, while Sarah, who had often heard the story, arose from the side of the old woman, and often gazing over the bank for a moment with a kind of mental fascination, resumed her seat with renewed interest.

"Well, it was a long time before the officer, who was named Maynard, Lieutenant Maynard, recovered even so that he could go out; and all the while Jane's visits to the village grew fewer and fewer. When she did come she was always talking of the officer. After he got so as he could go about, he was put upon his parole, but he continued to board at the mill, saying that he liked the situation better than the village. Mr. Lovel and his wife liked him very much, and were glad of his staying: they were unsuspecting people.

"Well, then, he staid; and folks who went to the mill used to observe that Jane cared nothing for company, and that she was always sitting in the room with the officer, who would be found reading or talking to her. On this very spot they would sit together for hours."

"When Lieutenant Maynard recovered, he was still upon his parole, and he frequently came to Springdale. Everybody liked him: there he was thought to be a fine, amiable young man. He used to call and see your grandmother, child, (to Sarah,) and she thought the world of him. Jane, too, whenever she came to Springdale would call and see me, and her perpetual talk was, as I have told you, about Mr. Maynard. Poor thing! I hear her now; with what a fluttering heart she would talk and talk, and of nothing but him."

"Was he handsome?" inquired Fanny.

"Yes, dear, as handsome as you find in a thousand. So, one day I taxed her with being in love with him. She was confused, but she laughed; and asked why not. I spoke my mind to her. I told her that I did not think he was in love with her, and that if he was, did she expect to marry him and to go to England among his high relations. Such a shade came over her face! but she said no more, and I felt for her, and changed the subject. Still Mr. Maynard staid at the mill; but Jane, when I saw her after this, did not speak so much of him, and she was not so lively; or rather sometimes she was more lively, and then she would get sad suddenly, and leave me.

"Unexpectedly one day, the news came that prisoners were to be exchanged. Mr. Maynard walked over from the mill to the village; and, without taking leave of anybody, he left under the escort of the guard who were to see him safe to the British lines. This was about noon. As it grew towards night, Jane came to Springdale to your grandmother's house, and asked to see me. I didn't know her at first, she looked so corpse-like, and her voice sounded as though it came from the grave. She talked upon indifferent things for a while, but it was too plain that something was on her mind. I asked her what was the matter? She affected to be in a joke, and said that Mr. Maynard had bid them good-bye at the mill, but that she wondered if he had gone, and would'nt I just step over to the tavern for her and ask—that her mother wanted to know. I told her that he had gone, for that I myself had seen him depart under the escort. She said no more; for some time she seemed bewildered. Then she asked me if I did not think he would come back. I told her I thought not: when I said this, she got up and said good-bye, and after she had passed out of the door she returned, and said:

'"Come Agnes, let you and I shake hands; for when two part in this world, there's no knowing when they'll meet again.'"

"I shook hands with her, and tried to cheer her, saying, gaily, that I meant to come early in the morning to see her, and that I would catch her before she was up.

"'O! I shall sleep sound,' said she, 'come, mother will be so glad to see you.'

"She left me, and her words sounded so strange to me that I stood in the door gazing after her. She walked on at her usual step, when she stopped as if she had forgot something; I advanced towards her, but she went on, and I entered the house thinking of her.

"The next day early, though there had been a most awful storm that night, and the walking was bad in consequence, I went over to the mill, for I could not banish from my mind the idea that something had happened to Jane. As I drew near the mill I met Mr. Lovell like one distracted; the first word he asked me was, if I had seen Jane. I told him that I had not seen her since the afternoon before, and I repeated all that she had said. He seemed beside himself. He said that she had been at home until nine o'clock in the evening, and that his wife said she then stepped out the door just before the storm came on, but that she thought she had returned and gone to bed. They had not seen her since. He bade me, for God's sake, to go and comfort his wife, and he would go to the village in hopes of hearing something of his daughter there. He started on like one half crazy, and I entered the house. There I saw Mrs. Lovell; Jane, as I have said, was a good scholar for a girl like her, and her mother had been searching the drawers and trunks to see if Jane had left anything that would tell of what had become of her. She

discovered nothing; but in a looking-glass drawer that belonged to the officer she found a lock of her hair. When I opened the door, and I rapped twice before I did so, and there came no answer, there was the mother, standing by the drawer as motionless as though she had been stone, and gazing on the lock of hair which she had just taken out of it. When she saw me, she threw herself in my arms and burst into tears: it saved her heart from breaking on the spot. All that I could get from her was, that Jane had returned home that night, got supper as usual, but did not eat any, though she made the efforts; nor did she name Mr. Maynard once. The mother suspected Jane's feelings, and did what she could to comfort her, but never spoke of the officer. Mr. Lovell, she said, was fatigued from working hard all day, and he lay down on a settee and went to sleep. The mother said, that she herself went into the next room, and in looking through she saw Jane kiss her father on the forehead, and clasp her hands together; that then Jane entered the room where she was, and kissed her and said good night. Mrs. Lovell, who was a simple woman, told her daughter—as she told me—that was right; that she had better go to bed, and she would feel better in the morning. Jane, she said, left the room, and she was certain that she heard her go out; and until the morning she felt as certain that she heard her footsteps as she returned and ascended the stairs. In the morning, surprised that Jane had not arisen, she entered her room to awake her, when there was the bed untumbled, with Jane's bonnet and shawl on it.

"When I entered the house I left the door open after me, and while Mrs. Lovell was telling me about poor Jane, their house dog, which was a great favourite with the daughter, came in, and kept jumping up and wagging his tail around us, as if to draw our

attention, and then he would run out of the door; but finding we did not follow him, he returned and renewed his solicitations. I remarked it to Mrs. Lovell, and proposed that we should follow him, she said:

"'Well do, so; for he has been going on so all the morning; and now I remember he was not in the house last night where he usually stays, for when I opened the door this morning he come in and acted as you have seen him.'

"We followed the dog; he dashed impatiently ahead of us, in this direction, and as we did not walk fast enough to keep close behind him, he came to this very spot, and then returned to us, and came again here. When we reached this place I looked over the bank—it has been washed away below since, and it is steeper now than it was then—I looked over, and the first thing I saw hanging to the end of a stump, that stood near the water—the stream was very high then, remember, for it was swollen by the storm—was a bit of ribbon—pink ribbon. Though it was all draggled in the water, I thought instantly it was the very piece that poor Jane had had round her neck when I saw her in the afternoon. I was young then—I thought nothing of jumping down and getting it; indeed I did'nt think at all but of poor Jane. In an instant I snatched it loose from the stump, when a part of it remained, it had caught so fast, and climbing up the bank, handed it to Mrs. Lovell. Soon as she saw it she exclaimed, 'Tis her's! 'tis my dear daughter's! she's gone—gone!'

"'Twas with great difficulty I could get her to her house. She looked wildly round for the tracks of her daughter to the fatal spot, but the heavy storm had washed them all away. There was no trace of her but the bit of ribbon.

Mr. Lovell returned with several of his neighbours: he had heard nothing of her, except what was in con-

firmation of our fears. One of them stated that he had been up the valley, and was hastening home, by the mill road, late at night to avoid the storm, and about ten steps from this spot he met Jane. He asked her whither she was going so late, and she made him no reply, but passed on. He said the gathering clouds had nearly obscured the little starlight left, so that he could not clearly distinguish the person of Jane, if it was she; that he passed on in doubt, feeling assured that if it was, she would have answered him had she heard him, but his doubts were resolved on hearing her well known voice speak to the dog. This was all that was ever heard of poor Jane. The storm that night was awful. I remember it well; and it was in this storm the old miller who succeeded Mr. Lovell used to say that the rock was rolled to the rocks below, and that, according to him, accounted for the calmness in the waters beside us which always had been rough before, and which, as is the belief of many, has never been rough since, in calm or storm, rain or shine."

"Aunty, what become of the father and mother?" asked Fanny, wiping her eyes.

"They could not stay here after Jane's death. Dears, it was sorrowful to see them. The father neglected his mill, and the mother just did nothing but look over her daughter's things and talk about her. They grew so sad that they resolved to move into another neighbourhood. The day of the removal I came over to bid them good-bye, and when I entered the room there was Mrs. Lovell with the lock of her daughter's hair, which she had found in the drawer of the officer's looking-glass. Poor childless thing! she was folding it up in the bit of Jane's neck-ribbon that I had taken from the stump. A mother's love is next to God's—dear's, it's next to God's."

"Where did the father and mother go, aunty?" inquired Fanny.

"To the city, dear, they became very poor; he hired out as a miller near by the city, and one morning his body was found in the mill-race. It was not known whether he had drowned himself or not—he drank hard after his daughter's death, and he might have fallen into the race in a fit of intoxication."

"And the mother—"

"Poor thing, she went crazy, and was found roving about the streets, and was taken to the poor-house. She kept asking for her husband and her daughter, but, they say, behaved perfectly harmless until the keeper, who was a harsh man, and who, seeing her hand closed upon something that looked like a purse, attempted to take it from her. She then grew frantic, raving mad, but the keeper insisted upon taking it, and at last succeeded in doing so; but she died in the struggle to keep all that was left her of her daughter—the lock of hair with the ribbon round it."

Both the girls wept bitterly; Sarah as much, if not more, than Fanny, although she had heard the sad narrative often before.

"And the officer!" exclaimed Fanny through her tears, "was nothing ever found out? what became of him? maybe Jane left with him."

"No, dear, it was never thought so: an account of his marriage with an earl's daughter, and of his promotion, was republished from a London paper years after the peace. Perhaps he never heard of the miller's daughter again, and never thought of her in this world—but there is another, at whose awful bar he must hear and think of her—another when the retribution must fall on him. Children, God is just; justice is his highest attribute; and if it is, there must be a future state from whose terrible punishment all those broad hills cannot cover him. No; they and this

stream, and these woods, and these lands, and the very ashes of that house that witnessed their meeting—her innocence and his guilt—and her poor father and her frantic mother—will rise up when she rises at the great day, and bear testimony against him. Merciful Father!" exclaimed old Agnes, elevating her face and hands, "I am not certain that he was guilty; let me not judge thy creatures. Be merciful in thy judgment, but O! forget not those who, like this poor girl and her broken-hearted parents, have suffered unto death."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Ever since Fanny had told her brother of the conversation she had held with Sarah with regard to her uncle's wish that she should marry Bronson, Sidney had been a constant visiter at Elwood's. Previously, he had occasionally visited Sarah, for he had always entertained a high esteem for her; but latterly, his feelings had assumed a tenderer cast—that emotion which is said to be akin to love proved its relationship in his bosom, for, imperceptibly to himself, the latter passion was stealing over him. Sidney's was a spirit of high and manly impulses. They were written plainly in his expansive forehead, and in his full, hazel eye. Inheriting a large fortune from his uncle, and expecting one nearly as large from his father, he had received the best education, but had not been brought up to any profession. His father had wished him to travel, but Sidney had the domestic virtues too much

at heart to permit him to wander far from the parental hearth. The gaiety of the city had but little attraction for him; he preferred the freer and franker intercourse of the country. Yet, whenever he sought the society of the former, he never failed to impress those who met him with the gentleness and ease of his bearing. He was not, however, a man to make a display in general society; he cared not enough for its applause; yet no one could be more popular than he was with all who knew him. There was no false pride or presumption in his character; he was happy in seeing others happy; those who did not know him, might take him at first blush to be an easy man, who wanted decision of character; but a short observation, when he was tested, would soon show them their error.

Sidney had been passingly attracted by several fair ones, but before his heart had been the least touched something had disenchanted him, not from any waywardness on his part; but having a quick perception of the ludicrous, and more knowledge of the world than he had credit for, he had discovered, without even mentioning it to his sister, the artifice of more than one manœuvring mother and fashionable daughter, who estimated a lover as a merchant does a customer. Sidney was entirely without vanity; but this, in more than one instance, he could not but see. In truth, the secret admiration which he had always felt for Sarah, without, in fact, knowing it himself, had made him indifferent to much visiting among the fair. When he came to hear the general rumour of the neighbourhood, that Bronson was proffering his suit to Sarah, with the consent of her uncle, he felt somewhat surprised; but he soon discovered that Sarah disliked her suitor, and he thought no more of it but as an idle report. But when Fanny told him what Sarah had said to her of Bronson, his kindest sympathies were awakened for

her, and they soon, as we have said, without his knowledge, kindled deeper feelings. Sidney was not accustomed to self-observation, and he generally gave himself up to his impulses. His attentions, therefore, to Miss Grattan, under these circumstances, were likely deeply to interest her. He had, as yet, never spoken to her of love; for in his own bosom he had not recognised its existence; but his attentions to her became daily more and more subdued and gentle. His eye had learned to follow her's, and after he had met it, the next moment would find him by her side. He got books and music for her; when in roaming through the woods he chanced to meet one of Mr. Elwood's slaves returning home, he was sure to pluck a flower, if but a wild one, or a sprig of ivy, and send it to her. She scarcely ever heard of him, or from him, that something from himself—a word, or a look, or a flower, or a piece of music, did not show her that she had occupied his thoughts: and when they were together, a thousand little circumstances, the more effective, as he thought not of them, produced the fluttering consciousness in her heart. Then the witchery of his quiet, but devoted manner; the natural eloquence of his conversation, and the unstudied grace and beauty of his person, so different from the loathed Bronson, for she could not but loathe him—her very sensibilities, which forbade her to hate, checked the disgust; all these corresponded to make her heart irretrievably Sidney's.

For the last three weeks Bronson had been absent from Springdale. He had gone suddenly to a distant state on urgent business. Almost daily, during that time, Sarah had seen Sidney without the disgusting presence of Bronson, and she looked to his return, as we contemplate a fearful evil awaiting us.

After Pinckney had gone to the city, that he might be under the care of the physician, Sidney, having

his time entirely to himself, visited Sarah much oftener, as did his sister. He roved with her over the farm, and loved to accompany her to the cabin of old Agnes. The mellow influence of the autumn, instead of saddening, gave cheerfulness to her spirit; or perhaps the autumn had nothing to do with it: the absence of Bronson and the presence of Sidney made her happy. Sarah was a girl of genius, of deep and poetic susceptibilities; and often in her conversation and strolls with Sidney, she would lose her shyness and reserve, and betray the deep and impassioned fervor of her character. It was in such a mood as this, the very evening after Aunt Agnes had told the story of Jane Lovell to herself and Fanny, that she and Sidney chanced to wander to the spot, where, seating themselves beneath the old tree, she repeated to him the tale in tones of eloquence and pathos that surprised him. In fact, her feelings were so excited that her utmost efforts could not control them, and they found rent in a flood of tears.

"My dear Sarah," said Sidney, taking her hand; it was the first time he had used the word dear to her, and as he spoke he put back with the other hand her hair from her forehead; for, in giving way to her emotion, a lock had fallen over it; "my dear Sarah, you should not visit this spot if it produces such an effect on you. Aunt Agnes must have told you the tale as eloquently as you have repeated it to me."

Sarah looked up into his face with ineffable sweetness, and said:

"There's a luxury in wo, we are told, Mr. Fitzhurst; sorrow breaks from us like the rain from the cloud, which gathers till it bursts—the bursting of one makes the sky clearer, and the other the heart."

As Sarah spoke Sidney played with the tangles of her hair, and, leaning over her, impressed a kiss upon her forehead. With a blush, that mantled brow and

bosom, she arose from Sidney's side without yielding her hand; he placed her arm in his, and thus together they entered the cabin of Nurse Agnes.

This was all the declaration Sidney had as yet made. But Sarah loved, and with a devotion and constancy which knew no intermission: Sidney's shadow had rested upon her heart longer than she was aware. Perhaps much of the timidity and bashfulness which she had felt in visiting Holly proceeded from the fear that he would contrast her unfavourably with the splendid belles of the city whom he knew. The source of this feeling was in her secret admiration of Sidney; but it lay unobserved by herself or by others, deep in her own heart, like the hidden currents of the fountain, flowing dark and deep, and solitary and sunless, away from the smile of hope and light of heaven, which at last breaks out in some lonely, lovely spot, unobserved by all but one silent watcher. O! how in the bright day it sparkles, how many flowers like young affection spring up around it, how many birds like young hope lap their wings and lave in its pure gushing waters, and circle over it in the warm air, and go caroling up to heaven with their woods not wild, and return to nestle in the trees that shade it—when, under its holy influence, Nature becomes a brighter worshipper of him who made it flow.

Sarah loved: the very association with the unpoetic beings of her uncle's household had made stronger her tendencies to the passion, as the virgin ore ripens deep down in the mine. In her loneliness, her romantic imagination had formed a thousand dreams of the holiness and happiness of throwing a woman's faith and affection upon one worthy of her love. From the presence of Bronson she revolted at times with a revulsion that words cannot express; and it was only in dreaming of the happiness of others

whose affections found something that they could cling to, that she forgot for a moment her own melancholy situation. Alas! the contrast, when truth forced it upon her, came with the more bitter blight. From it she could only turn again to romance, to poetry, to music, to flowers; and from the sense of ill around her, tax hope to the uttermost. Her intercourse with Agnes nursed such thoughts; and in listening to the old woman's tales, she would fain win her heart to the belief, that her life might be like some one of the maidens' whose history her old nurse delighted to tell—a history dark and ominous—of broken-heartedness in its commencement and impervious to love, but which ended at last in a realization of all that makes romance beautiful. Often would poor Sarah dwelt upon her darker stories, with the forboding that such was to be her fate, and as often she would shut them from her mind, and bid Agnes tell some happier tale.

> "It was no marvel—from her very birth
> Her soul was drunk with love, which did pervade
> And mingle with what'er she saw on earth;
> Of objects all inanimate she made
> Idols, and out of wild and lonely flowers,
> And rocks whereby they grew, a paradise,
> When she did lay her down within the shade
> Of waving trees, and dream uncounted hours."

Now, in the birth of love in a bosom so well calculated to be its home, it was beautiful to observe the dreamy and persuading spirit that possessed her. Everything around her took the colour of her hope. The falling of the autumn leaf had no sadness—it will be green again in the spring. The cloud-capt hills that lie so dark beneath the driving mists of the morning, will be gilded with the very earliest beams of the sun, and the birds will ere long haunt them

with a thousand merry notes. The songsters may fly, but to no returnless distance. The gathering leaves and the drifting wood may obscure the sparkling waters—but they rest not forever there; they are like the petty ills of life to one who is sure to be happy—the onward wave will bear them hence, and they shall return no more; and flowers shall spring up on the banks by which they passed, and woods and wilds, and hills and fields, shall rejoice together, like merry hearts at a festival.

How emphatic the words of the Moor to the gentle Desdemona:

"But I *do* love thee,
And when I love thee not, Chaos is come again."

And are there not actions that speak as loud as words? Are there not thoughts that the tongue cannot fashion forth like the heart's speechmaker—the eye? Does not the tone tell more than the tongue? How often a careless word comes from an overflowing heart! a word which, but for the betrayal in its utterance, and the glare that accompanies it, would be as idle as the mocking-bird's notes.

When heart speaks to heart in the silence of two lovers musing side by side, who can give language to their tenderness? Had speech the power, they would not be silent.

"But I *do* love thee."

How many of Sidney's actions had told this to Sarah in his language? and though the mere words had not been uttered, yet through the sunny day, and by the starry night, she believed that they were meant. And the breeze came to her pale cheek with a kiss from the rose, and the starry light of heaven imparted its lustre to her eye, and the arrowy flash of thick-

coming fancies gave their swiftness to her blood; the bird in air its gracefulness to her motions; and the fairy in the dewy morning her lightness to her step—and the merriest thing in mythology, and the holiest thing in revelation, their brightness and purity to her heart. If love could make of the clown Cymon a dignified and noble being, it can realize and personify, in a lovely woman, the angel of our brightest dreams.

And Sarah! how she would sit in loneliness at home,—but now no longer lonely,—and meditate the dreamy hours away. She would pause with the needle half-drawn through the cambric, and watch the butterfly disporting by on gilded wing, and wish that the dark days of winter might be delayed—not for her sake—nature could not, would not darken her joy—but for the giddy insects. Her heart ran over with worship of all created things. The worm to her mind had lost its insignificance—the reptile its venom—the brute its brutality. Poor Sarah! even Bronson was a much better man than she had thought him—the devil is not so black as he is painted.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"And so, Howard," said Langdale, one day after dinner, as he arose from the table, and taking a seat near the window, extended his feet across another chair, while with his finger he struck the ashes from his segar, "and so you believe in love?"

Pinckney, who had almost entirely recovered from the effects of his wound, and who had been out riding before dinner, was reclining on a sofa in the recess by the window, musingly, but with the complacency of one who feels the vigour of returning strength in his veins, was teaching his whiskers, which he had neglected during his confinement, to assume their wanted smoothness. He glanced, with a half-humourous expression, at Langdale, and replied:

"Yes, I believe in love. You, I suppose, think with the rhyme—

> 'Love is like a dizziness
> It winna let a puir body
> Gang about his business.'

I believe in love, and, in spite of some transatlantic experience, in women, also."

"You do, hey?" replied Langdale. "They're jades all, Howard—maybe you may know one exception, but she is like the phœnix, companionless. Therefore you observe this love has no 'dizziness' for me. Ha, ha! I delight in studying the sex. They're thought riddles—I think not. Vanity is their ruling passion, whether they play or pray—whether they

sinner it or saint it. Can an inferior woman bear the pain of a superior, without a *but*, an *if*, or an *and*. And did ever woman yet forgive a slight?"

"Ah, my dear sir," said Pinckney, "it won't do; among older men than I, you must seek for disciples. Love, you know Rochester said, would cause the Deity to be worshipped in a land of atheists."

"Yes; and was there ever a more miserable devil, and a greater satirist of women, than that very Rochester?"

"Then the greater the compliment, as coming from their satirist."

"Think of his life—he was incapable of sentiment; he lived a life that will not bear repeating—all his love was sensuality."

"True; but, Langdale, you've a turn for teazing—I understand you."

"No, no; I have told you that matrimony might make you a happier man, but then that you may be happier I would have you entertain a just notion on the subject. Your poets and imaginative men are scarcely ever happy in marriage. Why? because they have an exaggerated opinion of the excellencies of women, which they never realize. Marriage disenchants such a man; it is your plain, dull fellows who endures matrimony with patience—'tis a chain at best."

"A gilded chain, then"—

"But not a golden one, Howard, and the gilding soon wears off. However, there are exceptions, I admit. Some years ago I was descending the Mississippi, bound on business to New Orleans. We had a host of passengers on board—as motley a set as man ever yet met with—Gamblers, horse-jockeys, preachers, lawyers, speculators, and doctors. Among them I observed a tall, gentlemanly man, whose health appeared delicate. We soon scraped an

acquaintance, and I discovered that he was a Colonel B——, a Virginian gentleman, of an old family, who was travelling for his health. He had a friend with him from the same state. We three smoked our segars together on the guards, and had a merry and intellectual time of it. We talked of the high names of Virginia, with whom the colonel was familiar; and his anecdote and agreeable conversation, with his state of health, interested me in him very much. I more than once discovered him perusing letters in a female hand, and I took him for a bachelor who had caught the fever for matrimony, and of course, as he had become a victim at rather a late period, that he was far gone. Sunday came. Our fellow travellers paid very little respect to the day. Early in the morning some gentleman given to music struck up his violin, while others seated themselves at the card-table. These things have since, as I am told, been reformed. The colonel walked the cabin observing the players, and listening to the music, when all at once a sudden thought seemed to seize him, and he opened his trunk, took from it a book, and taking a seat apart, he was soon lost in attentive perusal of it. I observed on opening the book he read several times an inscription on its title page before he turned to its contents.

"Towards evening his companion came to me, and, smiling, said:—'I have a good joke upon the colonel.' 'What's that?' I asked. 'He replied, that when the colonel left home, his wife, who was a pious woman, had given him a Bible, and that he had promised to read it every Sunday; but he did not know it was Sunday, said he, until I chanced to make the remark, when he stole away from me, and there he is, you see, studying theology.'

"'What kind of a lady is his wife?' I asked. 'The finest woman I ever met with,' was the reply.

"I said nothing, but in walking up and down the cabin, I at last chanced to catch the colonel's eye as he raised it from the book, and advancing towards him, I asked—

"'What book is that which interest you so deeply?'

"He blushed slightly as he put it into my hand—strange that he should blush, hey? and said, 'Read what's on the blank leaf.' I turned to it and read the following simple line:

"'To J. B———, from his devoted wife.
Susan B———.'

You may think it odd, but from that moment I felt the deepest interest in the colonel. We became quite intimate, and when we parted he made me promise that if ever I went to Richmond, where he lived, I would call on him, and we exchanged hands. Last year in going to the Springs I went to Richmond, and doubtful if the colonel was living from the state of his health when we parted, and anxious to renew our acquaintance if he was, I made inquiry for him, and found that he was in town with restored health. I sent my card, and he instantly called, and with true Virginian hospitality, insisted that I should make his house my home while I staid. I could not resist. I found his lady a most fascinating and lovely woman. Pious, without a touch of fanaticism; cheerful, without the least frivolity; intelligent, without the least taint of *blue*—a pattern of all that becomes a woman. I understand, indeed, from his own lips, that she had reclaimed him from a most dissipated life; and his neighbours told me that the change for the better which she had wrought in him was radical and almost miraculous. I have not for my own mother more respect than I have for that fair Virginian. I really

felt a respect approaching awe in her presence—the only woman who ever touched me with a shadow of such a feeling. On leaving them, I could not but tell her that she was more than a Roman matron—she was a Christian one. The fact is, Pinckney, I cannot bear irreligious women: a sense of religion is to them a sheet-anchor amidst the allurements and vices of society—without it they are adrift, and are often taken as a waif."

"I agree with you," replied Pinckney, musing. "How beautifully the poet has spoken of women:

> 'Not she with treacherous kiss her Saviour stung,
> Not she betrayed him with unholy tongue,
> She when Apostles shrunk could danger brave,
> Last at the cross, and earliest at the grave.'"

"Ha, ha! treacherous kiss," repeated Langdale, "do you ever court the muse, Pinckney?"

"I have courted them as I suppose every young man has, but I've a poor knack at rhyme."

"I was given that way when I was at your age. Some lines that I wrote to a fair lady once, in the Tom Moorish style, upon 'blushing' and 'kissing,' involved me in a duel that nearly cost me my life."

"Where are the lines? how was it?"

"Some years since I met a fair lady at the Springs, who was a beauty, a coquette, and all that kind of thing; and once, in a moon-lit ramble, I desecrated her virgin lip—heaven save the mark! she taxed me with being impudent—and asked me if I ever blushed. In reply, I wrote the verses I speak of. Well, we parted, with nothing between us, as I believed, but the harmless kiss, and I thought no more of her. Some two months afterwards I received a tender epistle from

the lady, who lived some three hundred miles off, couched in the kindest terms, and intimating very plainly that she considered herself engaged to me! Well, having no idea of being 'blest upon compulsion,' as Tom Moore says, I replied in as gallant a strain as I possibly could under the circumstances, stating that I had no idea that there was such happiness in store for me, and that if ever the consummation of my bliss occurred, it must be in leap year."

Pinckney laughed heartily. "And what then?" he asked:

"With the return of post came her brother, post haste, with a friend. The friend waited on me; and, presenting the fatal lines, inquired if I was not the author of them; and if I had not addressed them to the lady.

"I confessed that I had addressed the lines to the lady, but I protested that I had not *addressed* her in any other way.

"He assured me it was no jesting matter, and forthwith handed me a challenge; at the same time remarking that he should be happy to accommodate the matter. I expressed my great willingness to have it accommodated, and asked him in what way it should be done. He replied it would give him great pleasure to act as my groomsman. I told him I was obliged to him for such a friendly offer upon so short an acquaintance, but that I had no idea of matrimony. He then peremptorily said there was no backing out; that I must fight. I tried to ridicule him out of the affair. He took it in high dudgeon, and said I would certainly be posted. I prepared pistols and coffee for two, and we accordingly met on the ground. I remonstrated; but the lady's brother and the gentleman who wished to be my groomsman insisted upon the duello. I stood two shots from the furious brother, firing each time myself in the air. His second shot

struck my watch, and, as Judge Parson's said, 'time kept me from eternity.' He insisted upon another fire, and my patience became a martyr for my life and died a violent death. I grew angry, and determined not to waste my saltpetre like the fragrance of Gray's flower on the desert air. I used to be a capital shot, and on the third fire I maimed my brother-in-law that would be, in his right arm, and so the affair ended. The sacred nine were frightened by the report of our pistols, and have never visited me since.

"The lines," said Pinckney, "the lines."

"Here they are," replied Longdale, advancing to the book-case, and taking them from a private drawer. "Here they are, in the identical condition in which I gave them, and in which they were returned to me."

Pinckney opened the gilt-edged note which Longdale handed him, and read as follows:

TO——, WHO, WHEN I KISSED HER, ASKED ME IF I EVER BLUSHED.

"O! yes, I know what 'tis to blush,
I've often felt the feeling,
The sweet confusion of its flush
O'er every feature stealing.

But then, dear maid, I've such a face,
So dark I can't reveal it—
For, though I know I feel the grace,
'Twould seem that I conceal it.

But you are like, with such a hue,
Yon cloud of purest white,
Where heaven's own smile is stealing through
With all its rosy light.

Dearest! I love thy kiss to woo,
And think thee like the flower,
That droops its head, yet yields its dew,
To the warm sunbeams power.

And when I press thy lips to mine,
I love thy censuring themes—
Fairest! from a brow like thine
How sweet forgiveness beams.

Believe me, I thy sweet lips press,
As saints would press a shrine;
I feel thy willing power to bless,
And wish that power were mine.

If yielding 's wrong, thy fairy brow
Can blush away the harm;
We veil the shrine when'er the vow
Would violate its charm.

Nay, dearest, do not be afraid,
And yet *seem* something loath;
And while I'm kissing, gentlest maid,
Be blushing for us both."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Pinckney, "the lady must have thought that there are as many kinds of declarations as there are puffs, according to Sheridan's critic. As this could not have been the declaration direct, it must have been considered the declaration preliminary."

"No, it was considered the declaration direct. The lady's susceptibilities were quick, almost as quick as her's whose hand a gentleman, when assisting her into a carriage, chanced to press with the harmless intention of preventing her from slipping. 'O! la, sir,' said she "if you come to that, you must ask Pa."

"What became of the lady?" inquired Pinckney.

"My volunteer groomsman, no doubt, knew that there was good reasons why she ought to be married, and as he could not get me to take her, he made me happy by proxy, and took her himself; there was a take-in somewhere, you may depend upon it."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE servant here interrupted the conversation between Pinckney and his master, by informing the former that Mr. Fitzhurst's carriage was at the door waiting to convey him to Holly.

"Come, Langdale, will you not accompany me?" said Pinckney, as he arose.

"Thank you; no, not now; but your friend, Sidney, has been pressing me to call out and see him, and while you are there, I shall avail myself of the invitation; make my respects to the ladies, particularly to the fair Fanny; and remember, when you come to town, I shall feel hurt with you if you do not make my house your home, at least while Fitzhurst's town-house is unoccupied. Guard your heart, Howard, if you have any respect for bachelorism."

"I intend to do so," replied Pinckney, in a gay tone. "'My heart's in the Highlands,' as Burns says, "and I am going to take charge of it."

"Keep close watch over it," said Langdale as he followed his friend to the door, "or it will refuse to quit the Highlands with you, though you went wandering in search of the t'other fair one that you wot of."

Pinckney grasped his friend warmly by the hand, and, bidding him adieu, entered the carriage, which soon dashed away under the guidance of Pompey.

Pinckney was alone in the carriage, and reclining back in luxurious ease, he gave himself up to a thousand cheerful imaginings. Just as the very last rays of the sun had hidden themselves behind the

hills, the carriage entered the lane leading to Holly. As the wheels moved almost noiselessly along, Pinckney leaned forward, and asked Pompey if there was any company at the house. Pompey checked his horse to a walk, and replied, "Yes, Master Pinckney, there be one of young master's friends there, that be come from the inferior (interior) of the state; he's been there three days."

"What's his name, Pompey?"

"Mr. Bradley, sir; he be an old friend of young master's."

"I've heard of him," said Pinckney to himself. "He is the one of whom Sidney speaks praisefully; a beau, and a man of intellect, and all that. Go on, Pompey," he said aloud.

Pompey cracked his whip, and in a moment more the carriage whirled around a grass-plat, in the centre of which stood a holly-bush, and Pinckney alighted. He entered the house without rapping, for he was intimate enough with the household to waive all ceremony. He passed along the hall, intending to enter the usual sitting-room of the family. As he did so, he glanced into a large withdrawing room, and there beheld Fanny promenading—leaning on the arm of a very handsome man, whom he had no doubt was Mr. Bradley.

Pinckney started, and the feeling which shot through his heart convinced him that of late he had not practised self-examination. Not thinking exactly what he was doing, he passed on in the direction of the chamber which he formerly occupied, when the voice of Fanny arrested him.

"Mr. Pinckney!" she exclaimed, "did you not see me?"

"See you," said Pinckney, recovering himself, and with an air of gallantry, "to be sure I saw you, Miss Fitzhurst, and should have felt your presence though

you had been surrounded by Egyptian darkness. I passed by that I might make my toilette fit for your presence."

"Still ceremonious; I am glad to see you looking so well. Mr. Pinckney, allow me to introduce you to Mr. Bradley." The young gentlemen saluted each other, and Fanny, still holding Mr. Bradley's arm, asked:

"How is Mr. Langdale?"

"Well; and he loaded me with compliments to present—"

"O! he's completely harmless. I suppose now, that he has had you in care so long, you have returned, if possible, less romantic, and less of a believer in love, than ever?"

"Quite the contrary: I have been vindicating the tender passion so warmly from his assaults and stoicism, and thinking so much of you, that my heart has turned to tinder, and a single flash from a bright eye will set it in a blaze."

"'Tis lucky for you, then, sir," said Mr. Bradley, "that the twilight surrounds us."

"Yes, sir; but you must remember, that in this fair presence the twilight has not always surrounded me; and though it did, that there are some spirits who

'Move in light of their own making.'"

So speaking, Pinckney bowed and repaired to his apartment, where much of his apparel had been left.

"A fair spoken gentleman, Miss Fitzhurst," said Mr. Bradley, in a cold tone, as Pinckney's footsteps died away in the passage.

"And a fascinating one, Mr. Bradley," replied Fanny, in a musing manner.

"Whiskers, and all the et cetera of a travelled gentleman, I discover."

"Yes, sir; every one of them, except their vanity and passion for telling of foreign sights."

"Very much of a man of the world. Is he callous to beauty and to love?"

"He says so," said Fanny, still musing.

"Your brother has spoken much to me of him."

"O! brother thinks him past all parallel."

"What a confiding spirit your brother possesses; he flings his friendship with as much reliance upon a friend, as would a woman upon a lover after long years of trial and observation."

"*Flings!*" exclaimed Fanny, passing from her musing tone, and unconsciously releasing her arm from Bradley's; "upon my word, Mr. Bradley, you pronounced that word 'flings' as though you were about to add, immediately afterwards, 'his friendship away,' and then the tone of sarcasm in which you are pleased to indulge, has not been for the first time erroneously applied, though never more erroneously."

Bradley bit his lip, and asked Fanny to take his arm, which she declined, saying, she must prepare for supper.

"You wish to arrange your toilette for Mr. Pinckney, do you?" he said.

"Certainly, Mr. Bradley; as Mr. Pinckney pays me that compliment I must return it," and she withdrew.

CHAPTER XXVI.

When Pinckney entered his apartment he threw himself into a chair, and soliloquised:

"Well, the state of my heart is like that of a person who inhabits some romantic apartment, and who thinks he knows all its appurtenances—its whole condition—when suddenly a hidden spring is touched in the wall which discloses to him scenes that he dreamed not of—breathing glowing pictures where he dreamed there was nothing but the cold marble. Ha! my heart was stone, thought I—a petrifaction brought about by Miss Clara Atherton's unworthiness, and never to be impressed again—when lo! at the word—no, the look of another—the marble melts, the rock gives forth the waters. Is it smitten but to flow fruitlessly? If I have not lost my sagacity, this Mr. Bradley has designs upon Fanny. But it is all folly; why should I yield to such feelings? I had given them up—I must aim at some object in life; as it is, I am tossed about by every wayward circumstance and impression."

While Pinckney communed with himself, he arranged his toilet with more care than a disregard to the fair presence he was about to enter would warrant. The servant rapped at his door to announce tea before he left his mirror. Tea was scarcely over when a couple of carriages drove up to the door, and a number of Fanny's city acquaintances entered the house. They were her intimates, and had come *sans ceremonie*, as they said, to make a social party. In the withdrawing room they formed a brilliant cir-

cle. In spite of himself, Pinckney was abstracted and silent. Bradley kept close to Fanny, and was evidently exerting all his powers of address to please her. Pinckney could not but confess to himself, as Sir Lucius O'Trigger says, that there was a great probability of success about him. Fanny was in high spirits, and Pinckney attributed it to the presence of Bradley.

Miss Moreland and Colonel Bentley were of the party, and a short time after their arrival, Sarah Grattan, who had been sent for by Fanny, entered the room. Pinckney took a seat beside her, and they entered into conversation, but their thoughts wandered from each other; for Sarah could not but perceive that Sidney was apparently deeply interested in Miss Moreland, with whom he was conversing, while Pinckney had not yet gained his self-possession. With a searching eye he glanced at Bradley, and discovered, as he thought, something in his manner that implied a consciousness of Pinckney's feelings, and of his own powers of pleasing.

In a morbid mood, Pinckney rose and left the room. He passed out of the house, notwithstanding the chilliness of the evening, sauntered forth under the noble oaks that formed an extensive park beside the mansion.

"What a fool am I," said he; "where is my boasted self-control? gone to the winds. Am I really in love with Fanny? This Mr. Bradley thinks so, 'tis evident; and what a conscious air of success he bears about him. I found her hanging on his arm—he is an old acquaintance—has been here for days, and—yes, thinks himself successful. I thought I had created an interest in her feelings, and while I thought so I forgot to examine my own, and deemed them but passingly awakened. My senses are not in the best plight, and this night air won't string them anew. This

Bradley is a man of manner, and, they say, of intellect."

As this last thought passed his mind, Pinckney entered the house, paused at the drawing-room door, and then passed on into the library. He stood leaning against a book-case, in deep abstraction, when the door opened, and Fanny entered.

"Ah, Mr. Pinckney!" she exclaimed, "what makes you such a truant from gay company."

"Listen to me, Miss Fitzhurst, but for one moment," said Pinckney, as he gently closed the door; "but for one moment."

The impassioned tone in which he spoke produced an instantaneous effect upon Fanny; the lively expression of her countenance became subdued, and she looked on him with emotions, in which there was evidently some surprise.

"Miss Fitzhurst, listen to me: I cannot control my feelings, why should I hide them. I have been a wanderer, you know, in other lands, and there for a passing hour I deemed my feelings interested; they were interested in one who soon broke the charm. I left Europe with the conviction that the shadow of the wing of love, not even upon his flight, should ever cross my heart again. I held it a romance which thereafter was to be to me like the bowl that was broken and the wine that was spilt;—a romance that pleased me but for a moment, and left me the next to feel, but more keenly, the dull reality to which sober truth abandoned me. Since then, I have made a jest of love and of myself, for fancying that I was possessed of the emotion—yes, made a jest of it until I saw and knew you; and even then, I struggled with my own heart as man never struggled. I cultivated the stoicism that Langdale inculcates, and tried to hug it to my heart, as a miser would his gold. I struggled in vain: there was a fair image there that

melted the icy philosophy. I saw you to-night; I saw another attentive to you, and the truth—the full conviction of the state of my affections—rushed upon me with a force which I could not resist or conceal. I have been wandering this half hour in the park, trying in vain to school my feelings into something like a fitness for society. I could not—I could not. I repaired hither to look at some old sentence of philosophy, and catch the feeling, when you—the bright creator of all this tumult in a heart I deemed callous to your sex, entered. Forgive me, I know I have been hasty; but as you—but, Miss Fitzhurst, as you value the peace of mind of another, think of what I say when I declare how much I love you."

At this moment the library door opened, and Mr. Bradley appeared.

In the meantime the feelings of Sarah Grattan, who still sat in the withdrawing room, were as disquieted as those of her late companion. Colonel Bentley had taken Pinckney's place when he left the room, and, being fond of teasing, and not indifferent to Sarah himself, and suspecting her interest in Sidney, he said:

"I suppose you have heard the news, Miss Grattan?"

"What news, colonel?" she asked.

"Why, that our friend Sidney is to marry Miss Moreland."

"Ah," said Sarah, faintly; "yes, yes—is it so?"

"A fact I have every reason to believe."

At this moment Miss Rachellina, in all the dignity of antiquated maidenhood, approached them in her way to the other side of the room, and the colonel said to her—"Miss Rachellina, I am just telling Miss Sarah of the news; I am surprised she has not heard it, and she seems surprised at hearing it."

"What is it?" Colonel Bentley.

"That my friend Sid is to change the name of Miss Moreland."

"I don't see why Miss Grattan should be surprised," said Miss Rachellina, sharply, for at the moment Fanny's jests with her brother with regard to Sarah arose in her memory; "I don't see why Miss Grattan should be surprised, I am sure it is a most desirable match in every respect. Miss Moreland's family is highly respectable in every way; her connections are all among our first people; she has been brought up in the very best of society, and is an accomplished, fashionable, and beautiful woman."

So speaking, with a stern glance at Sarah, Miss Rachellina passed on. A few moments afterwards Sidney went up to Sarah, and said to her that arrangements which he had been making with Miss Moreland to pay a visit to some of her acquaintance with her for a few days, had prevented him from taking a seat by her sooner, when Miss Rachellina called him to her, and gave him some commission to execute in another room. Sarah's heart sunk within her. Colonel Bentley, not suspecting the depth of her emotions, but observing her ashy paleness, supposed she was seized with sudden indisposition, and exclaimed:

"Bless me, Miss Grattan! you are ill."

"Yes, sir; yes—rather so. May I take your arm, and will you walk with me into the open air for a moment? the room is close—I shall recover myself in a moment."

"Certainly, certainly;" and the colonel assisted her out of the room. Arrived in the entry, she begged him to wait for a moment; and hurrying to the chamber where she had deposited her bonnet and cloak, she returned, and, taking his arm, went out into the air.

"I really wish that I were at home," said she. "I feel, indeed, ill."

"You had better enter the house, Miss Grattan, and go to a chamber, and lie down."

"No, no; I thank you—no. Colonel, is not that carriage there, with the lamp burning, the one in which you came out?"

"It is," Miss Grattan.

"Do—do, then, in pity's sake, let your driver take me home."

"Certainly; if you wish it I will accompany you, but had you not better remain here?"

"Indeed I must not; my uncle will expect me. You need not accompany me."

"It gives me pleasure, if you will go," said the colonel, and he handed her into the carriage, and gave the driver directions.

Before they arrived at Mr. Elwood's, Sarah, by a powerful effort, had somewhat rallied her spirits. She contrived to say, in a tone of cheerfulness, that she was much better as they drove to the door, and the colonel, after handing her in, and lingering for a few minutes, bid her adieu.

Sarah followed him to the door, and requested him to make apologies for her to Fanny. He promised to do so, and the coach drove off. Sarah stood unconsciously gazing after it, when her uncle came up to her, and said:—

"Sarah, you're soon home; suppose you got tired of the flummery there, child. I got a letter from Bronson to-day; he expressed bushels of love for you. He pressed me very much upon your marrying him. Come, girl; come, now; don't dilly-dally so; say when."

"Uncle, in mercy spare me upon that subject."

"Spare the devil, Sarah; I tell you it must be. Now, that's a good girl; say when."

"Spare me now a little while, and you may dispose of me as you choose," said Sarah, in an agonised tone,

and she passed into the house, and, lifting a light, repaired to her chamber.

Poor Juliet in her agony was not sadder than Sarah that night. She took her needle-work, and tried, by a strong effort, to compose her mind; but, alas! the mournful tales of blighted love that Nurse Agnes was so fond of telling her, rose so vividly to her memory, that they seemed to pass between her and the wall, as though she were sitting at a play—more as though she witnessed the reality. Her mind particularly dwelt upon the story of Jane Lovel—her fearful end, and the desolation that fell upon her parents, and their deaths seemed to press like a weight at her heart. Sarah often attempted poetry, though she was too modest to show any of her attempts to even her nearest friends. The following fragment which she blotted with many tears as she wrote it, and thus found in weeping some relief, may, perhaps, dimly shadow forth to the reader her emotions. They were written some days after this event:

He never said he loved me,*
Or vowed to me a vow;
Yet, when I recollect his smile,
Methinks I hear him now.
For he would tell of those who loved,
And tell their tale so true,
And gaze upon me when he told,
As if he meant to woo;
And if he wished that I should love,
Would he not love me, too?

For he would ever talk of love,
And say true hearts should be
An echo of each other's thoughts—
A ceaseless constancy.

* The author deems it but justice to himself to say, that this fragment was written several years ago, and before he had seen the beautiful song entitled "He never said he loved."

And he would take my hand and smile,
  And say 'twas passing fair;
And when I bowed my head to blush,
  He'd part my braided hair,
And whisper burning words to me
  As fervent as a prayer.

He'd tell me of the poet's tale,
  Which is but told to prove,
Why the maid should love forever,
  And marry with her love.
Thus, when he told what happy thoughts
  Into my heart would steal,
Methought, too, that his very look
  Did happy thoughts reveal;
But maybe love's a phantasy
  That only maidens feel.

* * * * *

* * * * *

I recollect the evening well,
  The moon was bright above,
And heav'n, and earth, and all around,
  Seemed telling of their love.
He told me of two parting lovers
  Allotting such an hour
To bless the light of yon far star—
  And by its loneful power
To vow their hearts in every fate,
  Whatever storms might lower.

We roved along the clear stream's side,
  Down by the aged tree—
The moonbeams o'er the rustling leaves
  Seemed to flit and flee.
And thus, all tremulous the wave
  Mirrored the light above,
Like one who feels, yet fears to tell,
  Her early hope of love;
Yet wildly will her young heart beat,
  As the trembling ripples rove.

And further down, the shadeless wave
  Received within its breast
Heaven, and all its hosts of stars,
  Like love when all confessed.
Thus is it that our wayward life
  Is like a wayward stream—
There, and not a ray can pierce,
  And here, there's but a gleam;
While further down, the cloudless wave
  Reflects a cloudless beam.

Here and there a meteor star
  Fell from the holy sky,
As hope that is not fixed in heaven
  Is always sure to die.
I've thought since, in a musing mood,
  Of treacherous memory,
The lover's star it was that fell,
  And love no more should be.
Many a night I'll see it yet,
  But there's a cloud on me.

The merry stream was rippling on,
  It seemed a living being,
Glorifying Him above—
  All-knowing, and all-seeing.
It stole along, in waveless haste,
  Over the maiden's sleep,
Under the rock, and by the willow,
  Rolling dark and deep.
'Tis said, her spirit rests at last,
  And has forgot to weep.

I, weeping, told the maiden's tale,
  And pointed out the willow
That weeps forever o'er the fate
  Of the love forsaken's pillow.
In tenderest tone he told me
  I should not seek the spot,
That my heart would be too mournful
  If thus I mourned her lot.
But now I'm there the live-long day,
  Remembering—but forgot.

Oh, God! and when I view the stream
A rolling on in peace,
Methinks that if I slept with her,
My troubled thoughts would cease;
For it ever seems to woo me—
That quiet, holy stream,
And for me it has no false smile,
And there I could not dream.
I am not what I used to be,
Alas! I cannot seem.

'Tis said, that she he seeks to woo
Is fairest of the throng,
And gayest in the laughing bowers
Of revelry and song.
He used to braid wild flowers for me,
But now, with altered tone,
He tells how soon the flowers will fade,
And what a splendid zone—
And vows he never loved but her,
And loves but her alone.

My hope has been a late-born flower
Nipt by an early frost,
When the flower was blooming brightest
All its bloom was lost.
The maid who builds the airy dream,
Forgets it must depart—
The bird will fly the drooping flower,
And hope the broken heart.

* * * * *

I feel I am an orphan now,
With the abiding sorrow,
That I am all forlorn to-day,
And must be so to-morrow.

* * * * *

* * * * *

'Tis said, that hope is everywhere,
Even with the broken-hearted—
It smiled upon me when we met,
Where was it when we parted?
The fairest flowers we know must blight,
The earth is tempest riven,
The maiden gives her heart in love—
When given, all is given;
Though earth forsakes the broken heart,
There's always hope in heaven

CHAPTER XXVII.

As twilight gathered in on the evening of Sarah's sad return home, a humbler personage of our tale, Peggy Blossom, might have been seen emerging from the cabin of Aunt Agnes. Her face wore a melancholy expression, and she looked round as if she were surprised it was so near night. Her grandmother was ill, and had frequently expressed a strong desire to see Agnes, saying, that the cheerful voice and conversation of the old woman would comfort her. Aunt Agnes had promised to visit Granny Gammon the next day. With a quick, but not as cheerful a step as was usual with her, Peggy trod along the old road by the mill. To beguile the loneliness of the way, she carolled forth, as if with a light heart, the following song, which was known in Springdale as the composition of a drunken shoemaker, just such a "Souter Johnny," as Burns has described in his Tam O'Shanter.

THE MERRY MILLER.

"O! my mother's always scolding
At the miller in the glen;
And my father, he just calls him,
The very worst of men.

But I've seen the merry miller,
And the miller has seen me;
But not through father's specs, my Joe,
Did I the miller see.

O! I've seen the merry miller,
I met him in the glen;
And the stars that shone so brightly,
They only know the when.

And the stars that shone so brightly,
They will not tell the tale;
But I've seen the merry miller,
And true love shall prevail.

The leafy tree was o'er my head,
And I was in my pride;
The stream was smiling at my feet;
The miller by my side.

But one short day the mill shall stop,
While off to church we steal;
And leave my mother scolding there—
A scolding for her meal.

But one short day the mill shall stop,
And then my merry mill,
Click, clack, the busy wheel shall go,
And tick shall go the till.

O! merry is the mill, my Joe,
And merry rings the siller,
And merry is the miller's wife,
And merry is the miller."

As Peggy was humming over for the third time the last verse of the song, she heard footsteps behind her, and, on turning round, Jack Gordon stepped up to her, and said:

"The merry miller, and the merry miller's wife; I suppose that's Hardy and yourself, Peggy?"

"And suppose it was," replied Peggy, in a careless tone.

"But by ——; I won't suppose it was," said Gordon, angrily; "Hardy would do like Joe Hitt, all he

could to injure Bob; and I did all I could to save him, and I expect other returns for it."

"You must go to Bobby for returns, Mr. Gordon; I have none to make."

"None to make! I have, then. You must marry me, Peggy,—yes, must, or you, and your granny, and your Bobby, your Cousin Bobby, will rue the day you ever saw John Gordon."

"I rue it now," said Peggy.

"You do, hey? you shall rue it worse than this; for what do you rue it? tell me what harm have I done to you—and have you not made a fool of me?"

"Mr. Gordon, I want to have no quarrel with you—why can't you let me alone; why do you beset my path in this way?"

"Your path—beset your path; didn't you show me all sorts of favours over the other chaps when I first saw you. Did you not, I ask you?" said Gordon, in a stern tone.

"My favours, as you call them, are my own, Mr. Gordon, and I can give them as I please—it's enough for you. I don't see, if you have the spirit of a man in you, how you can beset me in this way: it's enough for you to know that I have no favours for you."

"Yes, but I have favours for you!" exclaimed Gordon; "an' death and destruction shall come of this, before I'm jilted in this fashion. Do you think I'll be made a fool and lick-spittle of by a girl, and come and go at her beck and call? No! once when I talked to you about having me, you didn't refuse; you said nothing; you as much as gave consent. You took presents from me; you knew that the looking-glass was meant for you—you had it hanging up in your house—and you must take a miff all at once, and send it to the village, and get it broke by the way, and I must have the clowns and fools laughing

at me. No! by hell, I won't stand it! you must have me, Peggy. You listened to me once, why not listen to me again."

"Listening is not consenting, Mr. Gordon. To tell you the plain truth, I don't like you, I can't like you, and I won't like you."

"Peggy, don't drive me desperate," said Gordon, laying his hand with some violence on her shoulder. "You must have me; I've sworn it; and through death and destruction I'll wade before I let you off."

Peggy was frightened at the deep vindictive tone of Gordon, and walked on, rapidly, without saying a word. He kept up with her, however, and seemed to be aware of the effect which he had produced, and by such means he hoped to control her, for he said:

"I'll see you dead before I'll suffer you to jilt me in this way. Do you think I'll have the whole village laughing at me. What I offer you is fair—honourable—what you listened to: and because folks don't choose to like me, and that infernal old buck-roe hussey (alluding to Miss Rachellina) don't approve of my conduct, do you think I am going to give up for them. Blast them, I'll burn them out first. If you make me desperate, Peggy, you must take what it brings."

"Do you make such threats in the face of the law," said Peggy, endeavouring to rally her spirit, which was not a tame one.

"Yes!" exclaimed Gordon, furiously, "in the face of heaven and earth. Your treatment is such lately that my mind's made up. You wouldn't even speak to me in the village the other day—my mind's made up. You must stop here on this very spot, and give me your promise, or worse will come of it;" and as Gordon spoke, he stopped and seized her hand, but in an instant he released his grasp on hearing the voices of persons who were evidently advancing towards them.

On hearing them, Peggy darted away from Gordon, and hastened on to meet them. Gordon sprang after, and seizing her, bid her stop and listen to him. "At least promise to say nothing about this," he said; "I'll come and see you to morrow—don't make me desperate."

This fear of exposure on the part of Gordon gave courage to Peggy, and she broke from him and advanced. Gordon turned for a moment as if with the intention of passing towards the hills, and then, with a careless air, followed Peggy, who soon met those whose voices they had heard. They proved to be her Cousin Bobby, and Hardy, the miller. Hardy was a blunt, honest fellow, and one of Peggy's admirers. He glanced at Gordon, and said:

"Good evening, Miss Peggy. How are you, Gordon? Miss Peggy, I reckon you and Gordon have been sparking it, as you are together here."

"Sparking it," said Peggy, with a toss of her head, "together here; I hope this is the last time Mr. Gordon and I will ever be together—with my free will we shall never meet again."

"There, Jack Gordon!" exclaimed Bobby, "I hope you'll mind that."

"Mind! O, certainly!" replied Gordon; "I'll mind whatever a woman says to me, or such a mighty man as yourself, Mr. Robert Gammon."

"I'm man enough for you, Jack Gordon!" said Bobby, poising himself upon his longest leg, and supporting his equilibrium with the point of his lame one.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Gordon, in bitter derision.

"John Gordon," said Peggy, with firmness and even with dignity, "there's been enough of this; go your way. Never come to my Granny's again—never speak to me again. I tell you here, before Robert Gammon and Mr. Hardy, that I despise and hate you; that you have been a pest to me, and I'm

thankful that this has happened, for I shan't be tormented by you any more."

"You don't know that, Peggy, my girl," said Gordon, affecting to laugh. "I'll call and see you when you're in a better humour; but I won't tell tales out of school. Good-bye, Cousin Bobby; I reckon you think yourself man enough for Cousin Peggy, too; don't you? ha, ha!" So speaking, Gordon walked off in the direction of the hills.

END OF VOL. I.