STANLEY;

OR THE

RECOLLECTIONS OF A MAN OF THE WORLD.

Nathan. Allow me to relate a tale.
Saladin. Why not?
I always was a friend of tales well told.
Nathan. "Well told"—that's not precisely my affair.
Lessing.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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STANLEY.

CHAPTER I.

My heart can multiply thy image still;
Successful love may sate itself away,
The wretched are the faithful; 'tis their fate
To have all feeling save the one decay,
And every passion into one dilate,
As rapid rivers into ocean pour;
But ours is fathomless, and hath no shore.

LAMENT OF TASSO.

I KNOW not whether it was, that my mind, fatigued and fretted by the rude and harsh thoughts and schemes by which it had been occupied, relieved itself by an instinctive return to hopes of softer texture, or whether some rosy-breathed, love-scarfed dream had lain beside me through the night and folded my spirit in its dewy airs; but when I awoke the only thought that occupied my mind was Emily Wilson. Her image seemed to invest my nature. My swerving temper had slid from beneath the weight of all other interests, and my disposition had no hue but that which it took from her bright presence. My memory, my consciousness, my fancy, all that makes the spiritual being, was saturated with her influence. As one that reclining supine on some high peak looks up toward the sky, and sees, above him and beside him, no form nor colour save the casing canopy of air, so was I shrouded in the dream of her loveliness.

The gray and mist-robed morning was shedding its still and pensive light through the untroubled air, as

reposing in bed near a broad window, whose glare was softened into a mellow lustre by a natural screen of boughs and branches without, I bade the unshackled stream of idle thoughts to "wander at his own sweet will." The intercourse between Emily and myself had, indeed, been rudely broken; but I could not deem that this estrangement would be permanent, founded as it assuredly was on an error that must some day be revealed. Conscious of the groundlessness of the offence which had been taken, and cherishing the prospect of a speedy revival of intimacy, my heart refused to recognize the error by admitting one harsh thought towards her. It seemed eager to forget the bareness of fact in the fulness of faith—to bid all uneasy apprehensions float away on the illimitable current of imaginative sentiment. There remained in my bosom no irritation at her conduct, and even if the restitution of our former confidence no longer existed among the probabilities of life, at least the unalienated breast was still fragrant with its recollection. In truth, the most real love is but the feeding of the mind with the pleasant food of fancy, and if the departure of hope has not left a sting behind it, the same banquet of joy may be furnished by mere imagination. Whatever of actual there may be in the delight which nature spreads before the lover, it can only address his spirit through the atmosphere of imagination: and the shapes which the floating forms that paint this air, themselves, can ray upon the heart, are as bright and as substantial as those which it thus refracts from the truth.

It is observed by that poet who, to the enjoyment of the good that there is in life has brought a spirit laboriously passive to the mereness of impression, and who has reasoned upon evil with that resoluteness of faith that, destroying the conclusions of perception by the suggestions of far-reaching wisdom, compels the intellect

> To see a good in evil, and a hope
> In ill-success,

that love has been driven to excess in our being,

That self might be annulled; her bondage prove
The fetters of a dream, opposed to love.

Doubtless there is a passion which begins in disinterestedness, and ends in self-sacrifice: but (I suspect that it is only in the ruin of enjoyment and in the darkness of trial, that this elevating tendency attaches to,) there is also an affection which in the morning gladness of its fresh vigour is so exquisitely delicious that it might be deemed an ecstasy of selfishness. It is only for its sweetness that such passion is cherished; and although in the hour of suffering it shall often drop its luxury of indulgence and rise in an energy

Mightier far
Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the sway
Of magic potent over sun and star:

Yet often shall its softness have so enervated the heart by changelessness of joy, that it will not endure reverse, and to shun distress will renounce its tenderness. Even those who in their natural healthfulness of spirit were not disobedient to the calls of duty, may from the rare delight they extract from love have taught themselves to expect nothing but refined and high-wrought bliss in that condition, and when rapture declines by repletion to a soberer gladness, or is transmuted by misfortune to disturbance and pain, they will fling down the unnectared cup in disappointment and disgust. With poets, and those whose high susceptibility to enjoyment has made the first moments of attachment an agony of pleasure, affection has rarely survived from the roseate dawn-dream of transport into the calmer daylight of domestic life. They had apprehended love as a delight and not a duty. Through the odorous vale of deep felicity, the graver features of obligation have not been visible.

How selfish is much of the character of love, may be seen in the pleasure which we take in mere imaginations of its existence. In the visionary musings of the mind we of course consult only our own pleasure, and it is for that end only that we create before our eye the unreal scenes of dalliance. From the struggles of pas-

sion and the wrestlings of contest it was like the refreshment of sleep to turn to the mild and soft and gentle images that floated before my eyes. A dim haze of impressions like pictures, and thoughts like forms, encircled my heart, and while love was their substance, joy was their colouring, and peace their consequence.

In maintaining that love is usually cherished not because of the disinterested devotion which it implies, but because of the inward pleasure it produces—not for the benefits which the heart's assiduity may give to another but for the protection which its servitude may gain for itself—I am far from holding the system of those who refer all the instincts of our nature to impulses of self. In the moral world, as our position exhibits it—truth lies so fragmentary, complex, and interrupted, that the moment a principle is expanded into a system it becomes necessarily false. It is only in partial guesses and inconsistent observations that unalloyed truth can be found. But it is not in those excitements of feeling which are denominated the generous sentiments of the mind that we are to look for forgetfulness of self. The passions are all selfish; and wherever they control our conduct, that conduct may be magnanimous in seeming, but will be mean in reality. If the nature of any liberal sentiment be closely studied, it will be seen that whatever may be its relation to self, self is for some purpose or other always protruded in its operation. The delicious impression of gratified tenderness is the object of our domestic kindness, and vanity and restlessness the motive of our more laborious philanthropy. "He that relieves another upon the bare suggestion and bowels of Pity," says Sir Thomas Browne, "doth not this so much for his sake as for his own; for by compassion we make other's misery our own: and so by relieving them we relieve ourselves also." Gilbert Wakefield, who was personally acquainted with Howard, gives a character of him, which he says was approved by his friends. He represents him as "stern, self-sufficient, arbitrary, and assuming, inattentive to the conversation of others, and impatient in company when not occupied in the recital of his own adven-

tures." It is only in the calmer hours of the spirit, when passion is exhausted and personal feeling is forgotten in the contemplation of high and elevating duties, and a love for principle supplants the force of sentiment, that we should look for pure and disinterested action. It is to be observed that the Scriptures attach merit only to that bounty which proceeds from a sense of duty—a distinction indicated by that judicious poet who has said

"That pity gave ere charity began."

I remembered the business which was that day before me, and rose and set out in search of the building which I had heard designated as the place in which this company were to meet that very evening. I easily found the house, being one of considerable distinction on account of its size. It had formerly served as the resort of some numerous society who had found it convenient to have several rooms together; but it was now used for a variety of miscellaneous purposes. I found in a small room at the foot of the stairs, the porter who had the charge of the building, and I inquired from him who were the occupants of the various chambers. He described several persons who had rooms there, and mentioned what parts were vacant. He finally pointed out one room in the back part of the highest story, which, from his account, I easily inferred was the place where the persons in whom I was so much interested occasionally assembled, and were intending to do so on this occasion. The apartment in front of it, he said, was vacant, but was hired by these persons, though not used. It immediately occurred to me, that if I could station myself in this room I might gain that supervision of the proceedings by the party in the rear, which I wished.

Upon canvassing rapidly in my mind the best mode of prevailing on the porter to permit me to take possession of this chamber, I decided to admit him to a partial acquaintance with my design, and to trust to the influence of gold to secure his silence. I, therefore, placed

in his hand a large sum of money, and explained my wishes to him. He made little difficulty in consenting to my proposal, and placing the key in my hand. I promised him a farther sum if I was not detected by any of the company; and then ascended the steps to the place which he indicated as the chamber in question. I entered it, and found it entirely unfurnished, save with the convenience of a single chair and table. To my great delight I discovered that there was a door communicating with the room behind, which was now locked, and above which was a glazed frame or casement, of a single row of panes, covered by a little green curtain on this side. I drew the table close to the door, and mounting upon it, found that I could see distinctly through the glass all that occurred beyond, and that by placing myself in that position in the evening I should be able to gain a view of all that was done within, and to hear all that was said. This answered all my wishes very fully. I descended from the table, locked the door, and putting the key in my pocket, left the house.

As I was returning home, my course happened to bring me in the neighbourhood of a person whom I had known some years before, and whom I had often thought of calling upon, without ever accomplishing my purpose. I determined to take advantage of the opportunity, and look in upon him. He was one of that old race of scholars, whose numbers, time is daily lessening, without the prospect of a future crop. The tendency of mind in the present day is, from thought to action. From various causes, among which, the rapid extension of popular privilege, and the increasing excitement of the daily press may be prominently named, the whole system of life in all its departments is in a hurried and agitated state. In times not remotely past, a literary man in his country residence was completely separated from all disturbance, and dwelt calmly circled with the quiet of his books: now, the gazettes bring before his view scenes of perpetual movement on the political world, and a host of magazines present a pros-

pect of still more stirring action in the literary community; and with his interests thus quickened, and his passions thus roused, he will not be able to return to the gentle studies and passive contemplation which once beguiled his peaceful hours. When, with the welfare of humanity clinging strongly about him, and the concerns of truth alive within his bosom, he sees the pennon of the cause he loves, now rising, now bending, in the turmoil of the conflict, he will pant to join the struggle, and aid the interests he so warmly cherishes.

Mr. Woodward was far from being one of the race of mere bookworms, an unprofitable company of perverse idlers. Still, mere acquisition of learning had been his profession. He was a thoughtful and accomplished man, of ingenious rather than forcible talents, of more sentiment than vigour of reason, and of a finer delicacy in perception than power of invention. He was now considerably past the noon of life, and his feelings had become regulated by the discipline of philosophy, and his opinions mellowed by meditation and experience. He had from boyhood been a student; consecrating to learning the passion of his youth, the power of his manhood, the leisure of his age. He had been, during some part of his life, a traveller; but travel to a man like him, far from a relaxation or a loss, was but a period of more diligent application. I found him "the mild, the learned, and the good;" arrived at

> That better stage of human life,
> When vain imaginations, troublous thoughts,
> And Hopes and Fears have had their course, and left
> The intellect composed, the heart at rest,
> Nor yet decay hath touched our mortal frame.

When I entered his library, he was reclining on a sofa, and musing, with half closed eyes, over a volume of the Greek Anthology. He received me with polished courtesy, for he belonged to a family of honourable rank, and had in former years, mingled a good deal in society, and I began the conversation with a remark on the work which he held in his hand.

"Of all the soothing words of the wise," said he, "which have come down to us from the ancient world, there is no volume more a favourite with me than this of the Anthology. I look upon it as the minute-book of antiquity's confessional. The poems here collected were not intended for the strenuous world, nor were fitted to mingle among the household literature of Athenian gayety; but they are the wild, and hurried, and abrupt soliloquies of deep and mighty spirits, who mutter the inward revealings of consciousness in some moment when the under eddy of feeling, setting in with the upper current of habit, throws up the sentiments that had lurked unseen beneath the surface; soliloquies, which, like the story of the Ancient Mariner, seem uttered almost in despite of self. Through all of them there runs that tender sadness, which always marks a deep thinker upon man's condition. In their exoteric pleas, the voice of the ancients is a voice of joy and eager invitation to the feast of life; here you have collected in golden vessels the waters of that bitterness which ever wells from the fullest fountains of earth's purest joys. The ancients, compared with the moderns, seem like the actors on a lofty stage, compared with the homely spectators in the pit. In their histories, their epics, and their tragedies you perceive a buskined dignity of sentiment, a heroic elevation in every rank of life, above the every-day familiarity of our times, the loftiness of people declaiming in blank verse. You find in their greater writings none of the humbling confessions of later days, none of the used appearance of modern literature, as of the gloss worn off, the dew dried up; the reserved muse emits never the moan of sympathy, or the winning plaint of personal emotions, but speaks always in the tone of distant command, or dignified instruction. But in this volume the secret all comes out. Here we have their real and naked sentiments of their own state, the desponding prospect, the regretful retrospect, the signs of a laden and troubled heart, the evidence 'in spite of pride' that

'Life to every one that breathes is full of care.'

Here we meet the feeling confutation of the 'bold denial hourly urged amid the wrangling schools,' the vague and unsatisfied aspiration, the indefinite doubt, the startled and confused suspicion, arising when the real and ideal clash, when conscience jarringly conflicts with belief, that all is not right in the common creed, that there is some inexplicable blunder in the established system. Many of these epigrams I passed by in my youth, concluding them destitute of meaning; but now in the sober twilight of declining life, I find in them a deep and supernal meaning, like the wild words of one who has spoken with a spirit. And thus have I often found it, that the discoveries of the intellect are comprehended by the reason, the creations of feeling only by the heart; and that the understanding is independent on circumstance; sensation its slave. Aristotle is penetrated by the thinker in the field and in the closet; Plato's reasoning of the heart, logic of the fancy, woven in the mystic hour of nature's ecstasy, must be viewed from the same moral point where its frame stood. Place yourself on the lonely promontory of Sunium when the last rays of the sun are gilding with a melancholy lustre the few faint clouds which survive his race, and the stillness of earth is like the silence of Heaven, and gaze upon the fathomless sky veiled in a faint mist of light. Then will thy spirit float upward to the highest heaven, and converse face to face with his; and thy soul shall breathe the thoughts which are as pure, as subtle, and as lofty 'as the ether which floats around the throne of the Almighty.'"

"The style of composition in these epigrams," said I, "seems to be altogether peculiar, and has never been imitated, perhaps could not be, successfully, in any modern tongue. They are the most finished, the most nicely wrought, the most strictly classical of all the classics."

"They have a simplicity and a sincerity," replied Mr. Woodward, "which no later writer has attempted to

reproduce. They are impressive from their composure; their weight arises from their reserve. The gayer of them have something in them extremely unmodern. The sensation of *humour* appears to have been unknown to the Greeks; their perceptions and tastes were too refined for so gross a feeling, for a gross and unworthy one I think it commonly is. These compositions are purely free from it, and yet there is in their cautious avoidance of force, their *naïve* shrinking from effect, something more diverting than real humour. In modern epigrams, the last line is the one on which the poet toils; all the others are prepared for it, and it is the most vigorous and highly wrought. It is otherwise here; the earlier lines are melodious and spirited, the last, generally, prosaic, pedestrian and tame. And here lies the humour, that when something sonorous and decisive is expected, the matter is thrown off with something familiar and almost undignified; the effect resembling that produced when a fool in the old English drama having fixed attention, and raised expectation by promise of important disclosures, suddenly blurts out some droll truism in homely prose; or when a clown, having undertaken to jump over a barrier, gains the goal by quietly walking under it."

"It is a mournful consideration," said I, "for them that wish well to mankind, to reflect how much of the wisdom of the world lies unemployed, how much of the bullion of truth, which the sages have mined from knowledge, and stored in books lies uncoined to use, how rarely from the conquered provinces of intellect, captives have been brought home to men. That ancient fund of cumulative truth, which we call 'the wisdom of ages,' whereof the materials are experience, the refiner is sagacity, and the result is gnomic wisdom, is the younger world's birth-right, and it has been voluntarily renounced. These gems have been dug from the mine to be buried in the grave; they have been drawn from ignorance to be entombed in forgetfulness. The charts are all before his eyes, but the pilot, though inexperienced, never consults them. And the philosophers

in this matter, are as blameworthy as the mob at large; for if the latter have disregarded many of the results of opinion, the former have neglected more of its materials. Multa ignoramus, quæ non laterent, si veterum lectio nobis esset familiares (macior.) For in dust-covered volumes of the old speculative, and the modern sceptical writers, there lies much debased wisdom which might be profitably purified, many suggestive glimpses which might be advantageously pursued, much broken and imperfect truth which might be usefully combined and completed. For these men standing by the circumference, though the position were a false one, saw and guessed at many important things which we at the centre, though it be the vantage-ground, might never think of. But the world is both an unskilful and an ungenerous combatant; for, not content with fairly vanquishing the foe in the field, it exterminates after it has overthrown. When Christianity had triumphed in argument and in fact over the ancient pagans, and the later infidels, and the enemy were become as dead men, arms were not laid down, and the war did not cease: and none, whether from fear or hatred, visited the hostile camp to see what treasures might be found there. We should at least have the Hebrew sense to despoil the vanquished, if we cannot rise to the Alexandrian wisdom of enlisting them. We hew, however, the unburied carcass into food for hounds, and break the tombs of the erring prophets."

"The course you hint at," replied Mr. Woodward, "would be wise enough for philosophers, but 'non cuivis contigit adire *Athenas*.' The world is, for itself, perhaps, not foolishly prudent; for it is the nature of error never to be extinguished, but only to be smothered; and if the damper is not kept closely down the flames may again burst forth, or at least the ignorant meddler may get his fingers burnt among the 'suppositos cineres.' Beneficial as is the study of mere morality, I think it had better not be pursued among the mere moralists of anno Christi times. But no such objection lies to Greek and Roman ethicists, and amongst them the guides in

this important path would be more safely sought. For morality, as distinguished from religion, may be defined a system of rules for the conduct of men, deduced by human wisdom from human experience, and having for their object and sanction the well-being of men in the present world. Of systems of morality thus founded only on human reason, it might at once be anticipated that those constructed before the revelation of Christianity would be purer, more consistent and entire than any whose growth is from modern wisdom,—distinguished from religion, as these last always must be, and opposed to it, as they too often are. You will understand me when I allude to Paley on the one hand, and Helvetius and Hume on the other. The former took his conclusions from Scripture, and tied, not grafted, them on philosophy; and in many instances,—as, for example, his chapter on the sabbath,—his results, though perhaps just, cannot possibly be deduced from his premises. The latter fare still more unfortunately; for in their anxiety to avoid the appearance of borrowing any thing from Christianity, they have often plucked from their systems what was the legitimate growth of the 'human *mind* divine.' In resiling from the temple of revelation, they have often stumbled by the pit of error. Many a fair growth of the soil of reason is torn up because its branches, extending into the territory of divinity, it might be supposed that its roots had derived sustenance therefrom. Reason thus opposed to Christianity is maimed of its finest limbs. Such was not the position of the ancients; their morality was purer *morality* as it approached the doctrines of the Saviour. Christianity, like a vast edifice, has covered the whole ground, and the earth-born plant beneath it that would seek the light, must twist itself into unnatural deformity; the old systems grew up freely and unshadowed, and often instinctively tended toward revelation, as certain plants by nature regard the sun. The judgment, too, of the ancients in these matters was the clearer from their not being disturbed by contention, nor paralysed by doubt. Never checked by fear, and never stung

by conscience,—serene and passionless,—the mind of Cicero was consistent and wise; but infidelity had wrought in the breast of Bolingbroke a storm, an anarchy of contending emotions. His understanding is always turbulent and unsteady,—sometimes paralysed by instinctive doubt, and sometimes maddened by its unavailing opposition. He has granted every thing; he has denied every thing: one while mocking in demoniac defiance, and anon trembling in an agony of fear. The burning light of his powers, unconcentrated and ineffectual, was scattered by the gusts of passion; the fire of Cicero's genius was a calm flame, that reveals little, but its aspiration is to heavenward."

"Even if the position of the two classes," said I, "in regard of opinion is the same, their relation in respect of feeling is different: like that of the ascending and descending traveller who meet at the middle of Mount Blanc. Hume distinguished against Christianity, and Plato built towards it: their station is the same, their view opposite. When Bolingbroke and Atterbury met at Calais, the one blessed and the other cursed his country."

"On another account," continued Mr. Woodward, "the perusal of the heathen writers on ethics is more beneficial than the study of contemporary moralists. I mean the priority of the former in point of time to the promulgation of revealed truth. The imperfect revelations of St. John the Baptist were fit preparations for the teachings of Christ; had he preached the same defective doctrines after the ascension, they had been mischievous, as calculated to displace the other. When we take up a book of recent ethics, we expect something distinct from Christianity and but dubiously consistent with it, and its perusal detaches us, and perhaps aliens us, from the authority of Scripture: but we lay down our Cicero to take up our Bible, and pass from the right-minded inquirer to the divine demonstrator."

"I fully agree with you," said I, "on the value of moral science as a distinct system, and in the preference which you assign to the ancients. I neither dis-

cern the wisdom nor respect the prejudice of those who, like the monks of old, would erase the memory of the Latin bards, and write in its stead the knowledge of its own more sacred dogmas. To imagine that any sane man will rest in these and reject Christianity for them, were as vain as to suppose that any one would be willing to exclude the light that now illuminates the world, and guide his steps by the rays of the sun of some other system. We legislate not for Bedlam or for Norwich."

"One of the objections," said he, "to the value of moral rules is, that religion is a *principle* of conduct, that precepts have lost authority, and that obedience to them may even be injurious as dethroning the principle. How this argument can be admitted while the ten commandments are still read in the churches, I am at a loss to discover. I would answer it by saying that if the precepts raise the right acts, the acts will draw the right principle after them. Good actions create good principles, far more certainly than good principles occasion good actions. When the heart is won to virtue, and seeks to perform the requisitions of morality, it seeks to perform them on Christian grounds and for Christian rewards. He that is pure is ready to be pious."

"Another answer to the objection," said I, "would be that precept may be subsidiary and assistant to the principle, and even in many parts illustrative of it."

"In all parts suggestive of it. 'We frequently fall into error and folly,' says Johnson, 'not because the true principles of action are not known, but because for a time they are not remembered; and he may therefore be justly numbered among the benefactors of mankind, who contracts the great rules of life into short sentences that may be easily impressed on the memory, and taught by frequent recollection to recur habitually to the mind.' Under this view, I would be glad that for the attainment of that sort of conduct which lies between virtuous and prudential, and is at once a duty and an advantage, the classical poets were more carefully studied in youth on account of the sententious

wisdom they contain, and not merely as grammatical exercises, and for the gratification of lettered ostentation. In exquisite common sense, and elegant condensation of thought the Roman poets have found, save in Pope, no imitator among us. The light that irradiates this path must of course be drawn from human sources, for its object is to encounter vice and folly with their own earth-weapons,—to reason down the sophistry of vice, to ridicule to silence the giddy mirth of folly. Here antiquity possessed a superiority over us. For this knowledge is to be drawn from what Sir Thomas Browne has called 'that universal and public manuscript that lies open to the eyes of all,'—the manuscript-book of nature and of man; 'and surely,' he continues, 'the heathens knew better how to join and read these letters than we Christians, who cast a more careless eye on these common hieroglyphics, and disdain to suck divinity from the flowers of nature,' or read it in the workings of the heart of man. Those instruments of worldly sagacity and natural penetration which they polished till they became at once beautiful and piercing, are laid by in our temples to rust and grow dull by disuse. Certain minor virtues there are which Scripture has not descended to inculcate, and which human reason must be called in to teach, as Diogenes lighted a candle at midday to discover manliness. It is true that patriotism may be learned from Christ's weeping over Jerusalem, and friendship inferred from the Saviour's preference for St. John. But to feel these in their strength and in their loveliness,—in their beauty as affections, and their power as duties,—we must listen to the song of the ancient minstrels. A single line from Horace will urge millions to die for their country, and another of Virgil will bring a tear to the eye of the far-wandering patriot, and teach him even in death to think on his delightful native land."

"The objection," said I, "which has been made to the poets of a lighter cast—ministers of pleasure—is more futile than all. Little effect can they have upon our minds; the joyousness of their joy has long been

turned to sadness, and the wild laugh of gayety comes to our ears like an echo hurled back in mockery. Christianity if it has not altered men's minds has changed the whole chord of men's feelings; the commotions of nature which attended the crucifixion were but a type of the revulsions that were wrought in the breast of universal man. The motives to enjoyment adduced by all their poets frighten us from the banquet. Drink to-day—it is the burden of all their festive poetry; drink to-day, for to-morrow we are not. The Christian, like the Pagan, may despise death; but this boldness belongs to different occasions. Their genealogy will point out the distinction. The Pagan indifference is the offspring of ignorance and the sister of apathy. The Christian fearlessness is the daughter of Faith."

"Besides the loss of wisdom and knowledge," said Mr. Woodward, "which you have observed that we incur by limiting ourselves to the literature of our own religion, the injury to true feeling, to all that concerns the heart—is vastly greater. Man, historically, lives in fragments. His present being is detached from all that has gone before, and he loses the experience which centuries of curious and opposite circumstance might give him. As Wordsworth has gone back to the darkling aspiration and boundless conceptions of childhood, and found therein a proof of immortality, so would I go back to the infancy of man, and trace in the changes thence to manhood the wideness of his spirit from the many phases it has shown. I would regard the mythology of those times as past away, but not the men nor their relation to that mythology. I look on myself as a moment in the existence of MAN, and regard Paganism as one of the views which in my youth *I* took of nature. And the rather because Heathenism and Catholicism, each after its sort, are more favourable in the view they take, to the cherishment and growth of religious *feeling* than Protestantism and our times; and I am unwilling to lose the benefit of that view, but would revive those times within me, renew the old mythology, and be for the purpose and the nonce, a Heathen and a Catholic.

By every class of the writings of the Greeks and Romans we may be led to intimate knowledge and constant acknowledgment of the creator of the earth—to bow to God manifest in the world. In the mistaken view of the Protestant Christian, God is a being to be dreaded, and to be worshipped from a distance. We do not as of old see about us a thousand tokens of his power and goodness. Herein may we be well taught by even the gayest of the bards of Latium and Cecropia, to feel what the *incarnation* of the Saviour must assuredly have been intended to bring about—a communion and a fellowship with the God of the earth which we inhabit. The period of their existence was more favourable to be sure, to such feeling. The glimmering starlight of antique knowledge shed over the whole face of nature a charm and a significance which the penetrating ray of meridian light has dazzled away for ever—a rich effulgence on the foliage, and a silver veil about the mountain's brow—a faint twinkling on every brook, and over every valley a mysterious shadow—'the glory and the freshness of a dream.' That has become science which was once devotion. They enshrined gods for every function and every attribute of deity. Their mythology was the outpouring of the piety of the national mind. Their Laws and Penates were so many mementos of a protecting providence. Their Jupiter, their Minerva, and their Venus, were but avatars of the power, the wisdom and the love of the one, felt, but unseen, God. There was in every heart an altar to the unknown God, but they externally repressed this by these various representative deities.

> 'Triumphant o'er the pompous show
> Of art, the palpable array of sense
> On every side encountered; in contempt
> Of the gross fictions chanted in the streets
> By wandering Rhapsodists—a SPIRIT hung.
> Beautiful region! o'er thy towns and farms,
> Statues, and temples, and memorial tombs,
> And emanations were perceived.'

To reproduce this healthy tone of feeling among the

nation is impossible; but for the individual the effect may be accomplished by contemplating in a right spirit the effusions of the ancient muse. Often have I in the still solitude of my nightly musings gone back in imagination—and never without benefit—to these long-distant times, and felt through the feeling of another. I extend the same exercise to the Catholic religion; for it was admirably adapted to nurse and to promote the warm, the tender, the delicious feelings of the soul. It encouraged worship to beings less awful, less unapproachable than the infinite and eternal mystery of ages. The men associated kindness and commiseration with the mother of Christ. Females hoped for sympathy from one of their own sex, and felt a calm reliance upon her who had felt the storms of temptation, and knew when and how best to administer aid. The circumstances which detach *us* from our connexion with the deity, linked them the more closely. The Protestant, when he is tossed on the ocean of storms, and every rising wave presses danger on his life, trembles at the presence of the God of the whole earth: the Catholic felt the arm of his patron Saint upholding him, and dreaded no ill. When the face of nature is changed and all is hushed and quiet in the undisturbing breath of celestial harmony; when the bright moon is gilding the vault of heaven, and enlightening, calming and etherializing the earth, the pietist now is mute in wonder at the awful stillness of Almighty power; and the fair land, encircled by the arms, and reposing in the bosom, of the sea—bright but inanimate—the heavens and the waters holding communion in the mystic language of light, all seem to tell him that he is deserted, and alone. In times more distant, the mariner was charmed by such a scene; and as he reclined in his little bark—extending with one hand his spotless canvas, his other upon the rudder—he gazed upon the silent moon, in her mild majesty presiding, and breathed out in accents of fervent devotion,

O Sanctissima! O purissima!
Dulcis virgo Maria!

These may have been fancies, but they were not 'fancies that our reason scorns;' for whatever tends to keep alive holy and elevated love, to raise the affections and build attachments in the heavens, and to keep the heart open amidst the contracting cares of life—be it fact or fiction—should ever be welcome to the philosophic mind. All feeling is founded on fancy, and most fancy on falsehood."

"Such a practice," said I, "as you allude to would require to be undertaken with great caution, and pursued with great moderation. Sharon Turner has spoken of 'the multiplicity of error which generally follows the desertion of the simple truth;' and for the million that result is certain."

"Many evils arise," said Mr. Woodward, "from applying to general judgments derived from particulars; but the converse process occasions more. Studious and original men forfeit many advantages they might safely enjoy, by making universal fitness the test of the measures they devise for themselves, and by not limiting their theoretical schemes by 'the constant reference to convenience and practice.' What I have alluded to is certainly dangerous, and might be fatal, to the rectitude of a community; but that is no reason why you and I may not amuse our intellects and train our feelings in the fields of fancy. The world and I have long since dropped the slight acquaintance which we ever had together. The more I look within, the more I am convinced that I am unfit for it; the more I look without, the more fervently do I say within myself, '*Sit mea anima cum philosophis!*'"

"You are not one of those, then, who look with favour on the direction which mind and mental culture are taking in our days?"

"The modern system of things," he replied, "neither commands my respect nor wins my sympathy. This insane craving after 'knowledge,' this diseased exaggeration of the value of facts, and this ruinous mistake of believing information to be education, and of scrupulously separating from public instruction the only essen-

tial things, the principles of religion and the rules of duty; this disgusting flattery and stimulation of the mob; this admission of the worthless and scorn-compelling rabble to the decision of questions which they can never comprehend; this breaking of principles over the back of majorities; this utter neglect of all that improves and elevates man, of all that is honourable in conduct, ennobling in wisdom, important in politics, and indispensable in religion—offend alike my reason and my taste, and move me, I confess, to a warmer contempt than wholly consists with the coolness of contemplation. 'Quod magis ad nos pertinet, et nescire malum est agitamus,' should be the motto of popular educationists. I concede fully the importance of scientific and mechanical knowledge in their own place and degree; but to feed with such husks a country demanding sound food, is fatal in its folly, and outrageous in its absurdity. It is not thus that nations are generated. There goes more than this to the making of a virtuous people and a wise community. A people rising to a sense of their responsibilities ask for light on the vital subjects of truth and action, and are furnished with treatises on galvanism and hydro-dynamics! They ask for counsel in the distractions and doubts of political commotion, and are furnished with 'patriotic' lives of the hireling traitor Sydney and the selfish conspirator Hampden. They are laboriously inducted into the regions of 'pure mathematics!' and gratefully entertained with 'familiar accounts of Newton's Principia!' Every man is made capable of dyeing his own coat and assaying his pocket-pieces, but not a solitary step is made towards the completion of that line whereby Plato has traced with golden pencil the image of a perfect man, 'to know what should be done and said to God and man.' For my part I admit the test of utility in every consideration; I ask of every thing, *cui bono?* And I ask it of Lord Brougham's efforts and publications. Do they tend to make us better, wiser, happier? If they do none of these, let us at once tear from them the lying title of 'useful knowledge,' and no longer

deem those benefactors of their race who amuse themselves by angling for popularity with saw-dust bread."

"Nec me solum ratio et disputatio impulit ut ita crederem; sed nobilitas etiam summorum philosophorum et auctoritas.' The straightest thinker among the Latin fathers has written wisely upon this point: 'nec tam de rebus humanis,' says Lactantius, 'bene meretur, qui scientiam bene dicendi affert; quam qui piè, atque innocenter docet vivere: idcirco majore in gloria philosophi quam oratores fuerunt apud Græcos. Illi enim recte vivendi doctores sunt existimati, quod est longe præstabilius: *quoniam bene dicere ad paucos pertinet, bene autem vivere, ad omnes*;—a sentiment of memorable truth, which Johnson has closely copied where he says, 'Prudence and Justice are virtues and excellences of all times and of all places: we are perpetually moralists, but we are geometricians only by chance;' and which he may have had in his mind when he elsewhere wrote: 'if, instead of wandering after the meteors of philosophy, which fill the world with splendour for a while, and then sink and are forgotten, the candidates of learning fixed their eyes upon the permanent lustre of moral and religious truth, they would find a more certain direction to happiness. *A little plausibility of discourse, and acquaintance with unnecessary speculations, is dearly purchased, when it excludes those instructions which fortify the heart with resolution and exalt the spirit to independence.*' What shall I say more, or what can I say better? But besides objecting to the sort of knowledge which they are now disseminating, I have little relish for the object itself under its best form. You and I, Mr. Stanley, have 'like all men of sense,' as Dr. Parr would say, our own notions of all this 'new conquering empire of light and reason,' and of this whole affair of popular instruction, and national regeneration, however, we may deem it prudent to mask our private sentiments; for we know well enough that he who spits against the wind spits in his own face. I remember, however, a notion of Taylor, the Platonist, upon this point, which has often diverted me by its violence, while

it has gratified me by its justness. 'In every class of beings in the universe,' says that eccentric *frater Platonicæ familiæ*, 'there is a first, a middle, and a last, in order that the progression of things may form one unbroken chain, originating from deity, and terminating in matter. In consequence of this connexion, one part of the human species naturally coalesces, through transcendency, with beings of an order superior to man; another part, through diminution, unites with the brutal species; and a third part, which subsists as the connecting medium between the other two, possesses those properties which characterize human nature in a manner not exceeding but exactly commensurate to the condition of humanity. The first of these parts, from its surpassing excellence, consists of a small number of mankind. That which subsists as the middle is numerous—but that which ranks as the last ingradation, is composed of a countless multitude,

> Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
> In Vallombrosa.

In consequence of this beautiful gradation, the most subordinate part of mankind are only to be benefited by good rulers, laws, and customs, through which they become peaceable members of the communities in which they live, and make a proficiency, as Maximus Tyrius well observes, not by any accession of good, but by a diminution of evil. Hence, the present efforts to enlighten by education the lowest class of mankind, is an attempt to break the golden chain of beings, to disorganise society, and to render the vulgar dissatisfied with the servile situation in which God and nature intended them to be placed. In short, it is an attempt calculated to render life intolerable, and knowledge contemptible, to subvert all order, introduce anarchy, render superstition triumphant, and restore, in the language of Pope, the throne of

> ——night primeval and of Chaos old.

Taylor was a man too thoughtful to be disturbed by passion, and too independent to be warped by interest. Such a strong expression of opinion, though the thought be woven in the loom of a false philosophy, coming deliberately from such a man, would at least make me suspect that the inevitable benefit of such institutions was, after all, not quite so clear."

"How do you account," said I, "for the fact, which seems to be undeniable, for it is the matter of statistical evidence, that an increase of crime has attended the increase of knowledge? I admit, to be sure, that Bacon's maxim is both morally and physically true, but true on the one part with entire distinction from the other; and I am at a loss to conceive how physical knowledge should be an engine of moral power. I can well understand that a knowledge of the comparative merits of the two theories of electricity is utterly valueless to the peasant at his plough-tail, but am unable to apprehend how it should do him any harm. It is at the worst merely useless."

"I can very easily comprehend," replied Mr. Woodward, "how the study of such things should work all the evil which it has done. Before the dissemination of cheap magazines and cyclopedias, the peasant, when his work was done, drew his chair into the chimney-corner at evening, and sat down to muse in quiet. In those moments of natural meditation, the drama of his days past slowly through his mind, and conscience gave her involuntary judgment. The acts of the concluded day, the enterprises of the coming morrow, were instinctively marshalled in review, and their true worth and character were tried by the wisdom of calmness. In the interval memory suggested the wholesome cautions of the parish preacher, the long-neglected counsels of the anxious mother, the good resolutions which suffering had made and safety had recanted; fancy, at her ease, revived the scenes of boyhood's reproving purity and envied peace, and the instructive incidents of another's fate and of his own escapes, or, wandering to a wider verge, painted in homely but impressive tints the sad

but salutary picture of 'the hour of death, and the day of judgment.' Silence made gently audible that whispering oracle, the human heart. Ignorance left him 'leisure to be good.' The guide and witness were kept alike within his breast. But now, when the fresh number of the attractive weekly presents its fascinating pages, endorsed by high and stimulating names, every fragment of unoccupied time is given to the high-wrought description and the animated criticism; not a moment is left for self-communion and inward examination. His quiet hours are gone from him. The inobtrusive visits of reflection are shut out, and scared away: he is too busy to think, too excited to feel. In this single result of the absorption of leisure, and the consequent removal of one great barrier to sin,—himself—I find an ample resolution of the difficulty. You may add to it, however, the restless and discontented humour which imperfect knowledge occasions; the rivalry of contempt or envy which it gives rise to; the shade and inferiority which it casts on the tame and unambitious scheme of duty; and, above all, the brilliant objects with which it fills the fancy, as food for meditation, to the exclusion of the events and interests of domestic life, and the general predominance which it gives in the thoughts to the public distant over the private past."

"It would be an interesting exercise," said I "to estimate accurately the comparative benefits and evils which learning has produced in all the stages of its history. The result to nations seems always to have been good, but the effect on individuals has sometimes been wofully different. Among the heroes of letters are to be found some of the vilest monsters of degraded vice."

"That has always struck me as a most curious circumstance. It is certainly true that both students and authors have, in numerous cases, exhibited an enormity of private flagitiousness to which the vulgar have been incapable of rising; and, as respects the former, I can but imperfectly account for the fact. I can only explain the measureless depravity of such a man as Cardan by supposing that he was naturally a man of strong pas-

sions, and that his earnest and absorbing devotion to mathematical and other studies led him to deem the external objects of acquisition and reputation the only important concerns, to the neglect of the culture of his moral nature; that while he thus looked abroad, and forgot that watchful training of the feelings which common men almost instinctively keep up, and even that knowledge of the insidiousness of the ways of temptation, which is their best opposer, his passions grew up to fiend-like magnitude and violence ere their master was aware of the danger. Ambitious men soon learn to sacrifice every thing, even soul and body, to the gain of a favourite end; but ambitious men of action have a constant check upon their savage humours in that practised coolness which their schemes demand; the poor student is left the defenceless quarry of the vulture-beaks of passion. That creative authors should be,—as they almost always have been,—men of bad dispositions, and uninfluenced by the touching sentiments of which they have been the unabsorbing reflectors, I can more readily account for. An ordinary man notes his impressions to enlighten his experience; and makes remorse and self-satisfaction the beacon and guide of his conduct. A poet observes his feelings only to portray them; treasures up every twinge of conscience, not to reform his conduct or rectify his principles, but to point a couplet for the illustration of a Giaour; he meditates on the twilight religion of nature's most religious hour, only to weave from it a white square in the chequered tissue of a Don Juan. A poet soon unappropriates and unrealizes his griefs and his joys, transporting them to that ideal region where fancy decks them with foreign beauty. He studies vice and virtue for their fine contrasts, a death-bed scene for its grouping, and a startling warning or an awful denunciation for its effect. Others contemplate the gladness of the morning sun, or the unworthiness of late repose, to emulate or avoid; Thomson studied them that he might describe them. I was not surprised therefore to find Wordsworth, when I met him, cold, contemptuous, and self-esteeming; nor to find

Southey and Landor a couple of ferocious egotists. In the channel of the stream there blooms no verdure; it is the incumbent bank only that is vivified and refreshed. The sexton goes into the church only to arrange it for others."

"The position of susceptible authors is a most unfortunate one;" said I, "for unless they are dowered by nature with unusual generosity of temper and a fund of great good sense, like Walter Scott, their feelings will make them unhappy, and the struggles of their unhappiness will make them vicious."

"You say true," replied Mr. Woodward; "authorship is the most hapless trade that has yet been invented. Doubtless it is a noble thing when the poet's soul, expanding through futurity, is conscious of immortality, and can exclaim 'Nomen erit indelibile nostrum.' (Ovid.) But there is no sort of venture in which the unavoidable risk is so great and the possible gain is so little; even in the highest success the loss is greater than the acquisition, and in ordinary cases the contest is against fearful odds. To write for one's livelihood,—to stimulate the weary and overtasked mind at the harsh call of necessity—to execute from dull compulsion the treasured dreams and hoarded schemes of a literary youth,—to be obliged to think, and necessitated to imagine,—is a misery which, perhaps more strongly than any other, deserves the name of agony. And when we look at the career of the most fortunate writer, and consider the dark trials and the painful doubts and the ceaseless strivings which harassed his existence, and then remember how little of the final admiration reached him personally,—as in a triumph the hero who rode in the van saw but a small part of the crowd which followed,—we may well conclude with the reflection of La Beaumelle in a letter to Voltaire, 'La plus brillante reputation ne vaut jamais ce qu' elle coûte.' In the case of a great poet, the sensibility which he pictures excites and wears his own; and while physically he is surrounded with enjoyments, his consciousness is with his imagination, and that is in the scenes of suffering. When

Byron threw himself into the situation of his Giaour, he created in himself all the miserable passions which he described. As a writer his success was great;

> 'And yet he nothing reaped for all his pain,
> But care and sorrow was his only gain.'

That man's sacrifice to fame was the most awful that ever was made—his own heart."

"But do you not think," said I, "that many of the evils of which you have spoken are shared proportionately by all men of letters—by the student, I mean, as well as by the author—and that more happiness is to be found in energy and enterprise?"

"In spite of the *dictum* of Jean Jacques, 'L'homme n'est point fait pour méditer mais pour agir,' I think," said Mr. Woodward, "that the miseries of a life of action are far greater than those of a life of reflection; observe, I do not say authorship, for that has the toil of action without its rewards, and the gloom of meditation without its repose. Notwithstanding the extraordinary honours which fell upon Demosthenes and Cicero—honours, prompt, palpable, and abiding—both of them in the zenith of their glories recorded their deliberate regret that they had ever entered on the field of ambition. We are told by Mr. Bushell, one of Lord Bacon's servants, that when the king had dissolved Parliament without restoring 'that matchless lord' to his place, this made him then to wish that the many years which he had spent in state-policy and law-study, had been wholly devoted to true philosophy, 'for the one, said he, at best doth both comprehend man's frailty in its greatest splendour, but the other embraceth the mysterious knowledge of all things created in the six day's work.' Many a monarch, I suspect, has felt as Cromwell expressed himself in one of his speeches, with tears too deep for insincerity; 'I can say in the presence of God, in comparison of whom we are but like poor creeping ants upon the earth, I would have been glad to have lived under my wood-side, to have kept a flock of sheep, rather than have undertook such a go-

vernment as this.' And many an ambitious statesman has exclaimed on his death-bed, like Amboise the Cardinal-minister of Louis the Twelfth, 'Ah! Friar John, Friar John! Why was I not always Friar John?' Let the triumph be as boundless as it may, it shall never fill the meanest craving of the aspiring heart."

"But we must not," said I, "in viewing one side of the comparison forget the darkness of the other. Solitude and meditation encourage vast longings and bring nothing to satisfy them. You remember the remark of Ximenes to Ferdinand when a riot occurred during the king's visit to his college, 'that study and studious discipline were as little exempt as ambition and worldly affairs, from the influence of passion.'"

"Doubtless an unhappy temper will find 'some grudging, some complaint,' in the calmest joy and the serenest pleasure. And doubtless there is many a cloud overcasts the contentment of the scholar; yet in all the chances of fortune and the changes of mood he still has ever near him the pearl of quiet—a treasure which Newton truly estimated when he spoke of it as 'rem prorsus substantialem,' and to which I would apply what Cicero has said of Philosophy, 'qua nihil *à* Dis immortalibus uberius, nihil florentius, nihil prastabilius hominum vitæ datum est.' When the fancy weary of building gilded domes of mortal clay, and of picturing brightened tarrying-places and inns of Mortality, floats away upon freshening pinions to the soul's future home, and calls before 'the inward eye,' that blessed spot which we term heaven, the element which casts enchantment over the longed for resting-place is—Peace. That is a possession so estimable that I can forgive the sentiment of Erasmus, in that letter wherein he so triumphantly vindicates his own career, that quiet error is better than tempestuous truth, while I cordially adopt the exclamation of the noble-hearted Barneveldt to Gomar, 'Truth above all things! but Peace next.' The scholar, and only he, enjoys this boon on earth. To him only is given the precious offspring of silent thought —self-knowledge; for the man of action, whose spirit

is absorbed by that which is without, has never an opportunity to look within, and when thrown upon himself in the latest hour of human weakness, converses darkly with a strange and frowning fellow;

> Illi mors gravis incubat
> Qui, notus nimis omnibus,
> Ignotus moritur sibi.

Such men make acquaintance with all things save that which alone shall be their companion through eternity. But to the man of reflection it is given to ponder calmly the sky and the earth and the nature of all things, and to unsphere the soul which abides in the universe and to commune with it, and to know whence and why the world arose, and whither and how it will pass away, and to apprehend what in it is mortal and transitory, what divine and eternal, and to feel himself a member of the universe as if it were a city; 'in hac ille magnificentia rerum, atque in hoc conspectu et cognitione naturæ, Di immortales! quam ipse se noscet! quam contemnet, quam despiciet, quam pro nihilo putabit ea, quæ volgo ducuntur amplissima!' It was in view of an elevation of heart like this, that the Italian had graved upon his tomb, as a legacy of admonition to mankind,

> Scis quis sim, aut potius quis fuerim,
> Ego vero te, hospes! noscere in tenebris nequeo;
> Sed teipsum ut noscas, rogo. Vale."

"But is it not," said I, "both incumbent as a duty, and wise as an advantage, that those who have light should show it to the world? Is it not a useful and a holy work to instruct and reform mankind by argument and exhortation?"

"Sir," replied my companion, with a melancholy smile, "to improve mankind is hopeless. I had thought once that I might be a benefactor of my race in some degree and kind however small; but failure brought a juster knowledge. I looked for the results of my efforts and lo! there were none, save other than I wished upon the actor; for while men grew no better for my toils,

I grew worse from their unsuccess, till fretted by failure and contaminated by admixture, I retired from the contest to repair what I had lost. When with a polished blade you would shape blocks, the blade it is which suffers. No, man is incapable of improvement: or, if capable, to how small a degree compared with perfection! Refine the understanding and improve the heart to their highest elevation of strength and purity, how infinitely yet does it fall short of what man must be to make the labour useful! I therefore draw apart, and wait the issue of Almighty wisdom. When He chooses, his is the hand and his alone that can erect mortality.

> In the unreasoning progress of the world
> A wiser spirit is at work for us,
> A better eye than ours.

Labour is not always blessed, nor is idleness always unprofitable.

> God doth not need
> Either man's work, or his own gifts; who best
> Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
> Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,
> And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
> They also serve, who only stand and wait.

Knowing then how little I can do for others, and how much I must do for myself, I say in the beautiful words of Amalthæus,

> Percurrant alii sinuosis æquora velis,
> Eoöque legant ardentes littore gemmas;
> Ipse, nisi attonitæ mihi sit mens conscia dellæ,
> Intra naturæ fines regnare beatus
> Dicar, et insanis animum subducere curis;

and inscribe, with Bolingbroke, over my door, 'Hic, alienos casus et fortunæ ludum insolentem cernere suave est. Hic, mortem nec appetens nec timens, innocuis deliciis, doctâ quiete, et felicis animi immotâ tranquillitate fruiscar. Hic, mihi vivam, quod superest, aut ævi aut exilii.'"

"And you are happy in your philosophic solitude?" said I, rising to leave him.

"I may say with Burke that 'I would not exchange it for what kings in their profusion can bestow.'"

"I will leave you then in the company you love. Good morning."

"Good morning," said Mr. Woodward. "Pray, Mr. Stanley, *come and see me soon again.*"

CHAPTER II.

To govern others by an influence strong,
As that high law which moves the murmuring main,
Raising and carrying all its waves along,
Beneath the full orbed moon's meridian ray.

SIR H. DAVY.

He must soothe and sue—
And watch all time, and pry into all place—
And be a living lie—who would become
A mighty thing amongst the mean, and such
The mass are.

BYRON.

Helpless, friendless, very proud and poor.

OTWAY.

IT was about four o'clock in the afternoon when I began to make my preparations for visiting the house which had been appointed for the meeting which was to occur that evening. My object in going so early, was to avoid the danger of encountering any of the party on my way, which I thought I should be liable to do at any time after the evening had set in. As it was possible that the entrance and approaches to the building were watched, I put on such a disguise as would have concealed me effectually, even from the recognition of one very familiar with my person. I then loaded my pistols, and put them in the pocket of my great coat; and, so accoutred, set forth upon my expedition. I reached the place, and ascended with as little noise as possible to the upper chamber, which I had hired in the morning, without meeting any one. I unlocked the door, and every thing within appeared to be in precisely the

same situation in which I had left it. I secured the entrance behind me very firmly by means of several bolts which defended it, and then deposited my weapons quietly upon the table. As I deemed it prudent to make as little disturbance or motion as possible, I walked silently towards the window, of which the Venitian shutters were partially closed, and sat down before it to amuse the time by watching the passengers in the street below. Gradually the shades of evening fell upon the view, and I was no longer able to distinguish objects. I waited without moving from my position for several hours longer, until I heard the noise of some one ascending the stairs, and approaching the door of the room in which I was. He turned the knob sharply, with a sound which made the blood thrill in my veins, and then finding that it was fast, he walked back along the entry to the apartment in the rear, and went into it. In a few moments others entered the same room; some of them by the same way, others through a door on the opposite side, which connected with another part of the building.

Presuming that the hour of their assembly had arrived, for the darkness of my chamber forbade my ascertaining from my watch, whether the appointed time had elapsed, I cautiously approached the table, which I had placed near the wall in the morning, and mounting upon it, looked through the aperture which I had ascertained would give me a view of the apartment adjoining. I had not been mistaken in the command which I supposed that I should have of the proceedings and arrangements in the room; every part was within convenient range of my eye. The company consisted of about twenty persons, who, when I first reached my position, were standing in different parts of the room. Three or four who entered at the same moment, through the opposite door, seemed to complete the number: the doors were locked by means of the dead latches upon them, and each individual took his seat at the table, laying down a pistol on the board before him. All of them had a refinement of air beyond their profession of

violence; and some of them bore the distinct and ineffaceable impress of gentlemen. Every chair was occupied, except the large stuffed arm-chair at the head. Nothing had yet been spoken by any member of the party, and after they had occupied their seats, a profound silence ensued for some moments.

This stillness was presently interrupted by a key being suddenly thrust, from without, into the dead-latch of the door which was nearest to the place where I stood, and the latch raised. Several persons started to their feet immediately, and looking at one another with alarm, exclaimed "It is Harford."

The door opened, and a man enveloped in a long cloak, and completely concealed by it, entered, and closed the door behind him. I suspected at once that it was the same individual whom I had seen on the night before, entering the secret chamber in the wall of the entry of the club-house. Without raising his countenance from the folds of the cloak by which it was hidden, or regarding the persons who stood gazing at him with surprise and embarrassment, he walked deliberately forward towards the head of the table. When he had reached that situation, he threw off his cloak and hat, and seating himself in the chair which had before been vacant, revealed the form and features of Arthur Tyler.

The shiver of astonishment and excitement which ran through my frame at this discovery, was not greater than the disturbance which agitated the company around the table, all of whom were upon their feet. The spectacle was one of profound and extraordinary interest. On the one hand, there stood together an united party of thirty individuals, strongly excited and deeply enraged. Their countenances, some of which were stamped with the deep lines of habitual ferocity, gleamed with the deadly passions which disturbed their bosoms. Some of them were of large and athletic make, and the salient energy of their attitude indicated characters to whose violence of temperament strife was a sport, and contest a delight. All of them had their

weapons in their hands, and three of them had them raised and directed towards the intruder. For a few moments they stood looking at the object of their fury, like statues suddenly arrested in the various postures into which passion had thrown them; and no one spoke. The doubt which thus gave them pause in the tempest of their deep excitement, seemed to be the inquiry of Othello, "*How* shall I murder him, Iago?"

On the other hand, there sat a single person alone and unarmed, the memorable man at whose character I had so often marvelled,—Arthur Tyler. He was leaning back in the deep chair in which he had seated himself, his head bent a little forward, his arms drawn slightly back, and his hands clasping the sides of the chair, but not nervously or with unusual tightness, and one of his feet drawn somewhat under his seat, the other being more extended—presenting an air of vigour, but an attitude of perfect ease and repose. His face was composed, and bore its ordinary coldness, but not more than its usual pallor. His lips were slightly compressed, but the protrusion of his chin, and the expansion of his temples showed that his teeth were firmly set. His iron eye glared with a kingly sternness upon the hostile band before him, but was as cold, and calm, and still, as if it regarded a distant foe from the barrier of an inaccessible mountain rock. The partial grayness of his hair and brows, united with the stone-like hueleesness of his complexion to give to his face a resemblance to the energy of a tiger, without any of its ferocity.

Silently and unmoved the parties stood gazing upon one another, as if in the majesty of that icy eye, and marble lip there had been a magic to arrest the storm of passion, as if the rays of that luminous face had been reins to curb the whirlwind of anger. The charm at length was broken. A person of bold and commanding aspect, who was standing at the end of the table the most remote from Tyler, turned towards his fellows.

"Comrades," said he, "this meeting was appointed for purposes private among ourselves. Nothing but

the basest treachery could have informed this man of the circumstance of this assembly, and nothing but the most insulting presumption could have prompted the intrusion which brings him among us. If we are not to be the slaves of his cold arrogance, and the mute victims of his assumed authority, we must punish this scornful audacity. I move that he be put to instant death."

Several of the company indicated by their gestures their acquiescence in this proposal, and were about to second it with their voices, when another caught up their reply by the quickness and loudness of his interruption.

"I agree fully in the propriety of this suggestion, but I would choose another cause and time of punishment. He has knowledge which must not yet perish; and if the imputations upon his recent conduct are true, let him die for his crimes. We came here to discuss his behaviour about Stanley: his presence need not prevent our discussion, and if his guilt appear, our vengeance will only be speedier than we had hoped."

"His knowledge," cried the other, "is of little importance to us, and no efforts of ours can extort it. His treachery in the case of Stanley is apparent, and only his blood can redeem his fault. Let him be slain in his seat."

"Agreed! agreed!" cried several voices, and they pushed forward in the direction of Tyler. To cross his legs, to fold his hands deliberately in his bosom, and to settle himself in his chair in a posture of greater ease than before, while an expression of calm contempt slightly curled his lip, was the only change of manner by which that individual indicated his understanding of the remarks which had been made. Several pistols were cocked and directed towards him, and I felt certain that his life was lost.

Tyler slowly raised his hand and extended it towards the group, "One moment!" speaking very deliberately and emphatically, "as I am wholly in your power, it

cannot possibly defeat your wishes, and it may materially benefit your interests to hear me speak."

Impressed, apparently, by the justice of the observation and awed by the commanding confidence of the tone in which it was uttered, the weapons were lowered and the crowd drew back.

"I *think*," continued Mr. Tyler, glancing his keen eye around the circle, while a faint smile rested upon his mouth, "I think that you are well enough acquainted with my character and habits to be certain that I have not trusted myself here to-night, well-knowing as I have all along done, the motives which occasioned this meeting and the feelings which would preside over it, without taking effectual measures to secure my safe return. The lives of every one of you have been in my power from the first moment of our intercourse; and I must change my discretion with a lunatic ere the occasion will arise in which I will permit any man to possess the knowledge which will give him a mastery over me, until I have made that man my slave and puppet. The detailed evidences of the myriad crimes of each of you have been placed by me in the hands of persons who know how to use them; and unless I am at my dwelling in twenty minutes' time to redeem them," and he drew out his watch and put his finger upon the dial as he laid it on the table, "there is not a life among you that is worth an hour's purchase. Now, vent your passion as you please!"

The turbulent crowd stood checked and abashed. The fire of resentment had faded from their countenances, and the deadness of fear was upon every face. Some of them looked upon the ground irresolute and while others gazed upon him with a reverence of regard that resembled the terror which a god might strike.

"But what madness," resumed Tyler, leaning forward in his chair, and stamping violently on the ground, while his eye flashed with the vividness of lightning, and his features lighted up with fury, "what madness bade you array such force as this against me? Am I a

man to be destroyed or bullied by sword or pistol? There treads not this earth the man inclined to injure me, over whom the resources of my intellect have not given me the sway of mastership. Away with this foolery of force! The cold calculations of interest brought us together and have bound us together; they only can dissolve our union. Defend yourselves from others with arms if you will; but prudence, and policy, and profit, regulate our dealings, and what have they to do with the sword? Sit down!" he cried, with a grave sternness of voice, extending his hand magisterially towards the party.

The order was, almost mechanically, obeyed; and the company resumed their seats in silence. Tyler drew his chair close to the table, and leaning over upon it, gazed with a serious earnestness upon the persons who sat below him.

"This is the last occasion," said he, relapsing into the cold and reserved and haughty tone of voice with which he had first spoken, "on which we shall ever meet. The union which has subsisted between us, is ended. Do not imagine that I am so weak as to be urged to this resolution by resentment or anger: those are emotions which have no influence upon my bosom. The time has long been passed in which feeling has entered into the counsels of my judgment, or in which when I have deliberated upon conduct I have remembered inclination. Other considerations have wrought this conclusion. My object—the acquisition of wealth—has been accomplished: your purposes I know nothing of. I foresaw from the beginning, that when riches had produced in you that independence which they produce in all, you would no longer serve my designs. I neither expected nor wished that this society should continue longer than it has done. I resolved from the outset that whenever the time should come in which implicit confidence in me was supplanted by either jealousy or distrust, that that moment should be the last of our league: that hour has arrived. Of the individual and the motives which have prompted this movement," he

continued, fixing his eye upon the person at the opposite end of the table who had insisted upon his murder so violently, and whom I had previously recognised as the same man whom I had seen in the entry of the club-house on the evening of my first visit to it, being the one who had undertaken the expedition to my father's house to obtain those papers which he had sent to me, "I am abundantly informed. But I would recommend to that person, that when he again employs my name in his transactions for the purpose of injuriously involving me, he should not commit the clumsy blunder of assuming it where his person can be recognised. I will also suggest to him that when he again selects an open entry as a place in which to declare his plans in so loud a tone, he should choose a time when the person whom he threatens is *not* concealed behind the door."

I started involuntarily in the fancied security in which I had hidden myself, as I heard this new instance of this man's miraculous watchfulness and sagacity. Such unfailing discovery of that which seemed least obvious to scrutiny, as I had repeatedly witnessed in him, almost approached the attribute of omniscience. Might he not be aware of my presence now? No knowledge seemed too wonderful to be attributed to him; and if he had been concealed in any part of the building during some time previous to this meeting, which his opportune apparition in the room rendered very probable, he could scarcely have failed to be aware of my arrival. But if he knew of my being there, why had he not sooner availed himself of that information, and prevented my ascertaining his real character? That consideration in some measure relieved my fears, but when I remembered his extraordinary powers, and reflected that some reason unknown to me might have induced him to permit my gaining the knowledge which I had done, I felt much anxiety about the result. His ruthlessness would little regard the seeming friendship which had sprung up between us; and if either his interest, his irritation or his caprice prompted him to hand me over

to the vengeance of the murderous band who were before me, I could have little to hope from a power and a remorselessness like theirs.

"Of the matter of Stanley," continued Mr. Tyler, "which has occasioned so much angry feeling, I will say one word, although the judgments which are formed upon it concern me not. When I insisted before your council that Mr. Stanley could not have the papers which you sought, and thus brought upon myself the charge of treachery and collusion, my opinion was founded upon the circumstance that I then had those very papers in my pocket; and I insisted upon his non-detention because I was aware that his servants knew where he had gone, and if he did not return a sharper inquisition than might be agreeable would be made for him. When I found that these letters were in the possession of young Stanley, I did immediately what those who were bandying accusations of deceit and timidity, dared not do; I entered his house and took them from beneath his pillow as he slept. You will have little to fear in that affair;" and he held the papers towards the candle, and burnt them. "Thompson, the only witness of the transaction, is dead, and he has left no other documents behind him. Not a trace of evidence to touch any man, remains. I have done."

He rose from his seat immediately, and wrapping his cloak about him left the room hurriedly, without again regarding the company from which he separated. They sat gazing upon him, mute and unmoved; none ventured to interrupt his speaking or to solicit his return. When he had closed the door behind him, their countenances exhibited a mingled expression of fear and regret. It was plain that the strength of that party's confidence was gone, and the central power of their support had departed.

I had been so much interested by the unexpected appearance of Mr. Tyler, and by the exciting incidents which had followed it, that I had almost forgotten the object which had brought me there, and neglected to remark what influence upon the success of my endea-

vours, the startling discovery of the true character of the singular individual with whom till then I had never coupled a thought of suspicion, might have. That circumstance and the subsequent rupture between him and his former associates materially changed the aspect of the affair.

It was apparently the object and intention of Mr. Tyler to renounce the life which he had hitherto been leading, and probably to leave the scene in which it had been cast. Upon him alone rested the hope of any revelation of those transactions that concerned my father's property, that might lead to profitable consequences, and if I now lost sight of him, I lost the clue of that dark labyrinth. I determined at once to follow him. Whether by so doing I could obtain any immediate advantage, or possess myself of a knowledge of his future destination, was very doubtful; but by permitting his escape, I gave up even the possibility of gain.

I stepped down as noiselessly as possible from the table on which I had been standing, and crept towards the window which looked out upon the street, in the hope of ascertaining the course which Mr. Tyler would take when he left the house. Looking down through the narrow aperture which was left by the half-closed shutters, I presently saw him issue from the door, and cross over the street and enter the opposite house. I withdrew the bolts that closed my apartment, as hastily as the necessity of profound silence would admit, and passed into the entry beyond. I paused for a moment at the head of the stairs to ascertain whether my movements had alarmed those who were in the back room; but finding that all remained quiet as before, I descended the steps rapidly and gained the street. I walked over towards the building into which Mr. Tyler had gone, and stood near enough to the door to see the figure of any one coming out. In a little while two persons came out together and turned up the street in the opposite direction to that in which I was standing. Neither of the individuals resembled in dress the person whom I expected; but a single remark addressed to his companion by one

of the men, who was habited in a great-coat, convinced me that the speaker was no other than Tyler. In the brief interval during which he had been in the house he had changed his costume by an effectual disguise, and but for the accident of hearing his voice, I should never have suspected who he was. They did not appear to have seen me, for in fact my person was partially concealed by a tree; and when they had got to a convenient distance, I crossed to the other side of the street, for the purpose of following them without being discovered.

My strong suspicion as to the individual opposite,—for indeed I had not been absolutely certain of his identity,—was fully confirmed by their entering the house of Mr. Tyler, which they did as soon as their walk had brought them to it. To attempt to insinuate myself into any of the rooms of this person with the same object which had enabled me to be a successful spy upon two former instances, would have been madness. Even if I were to succeed in effecting an unnoticed entrance,—a thing of itself scarcely possible,—I could entertain no hope of safely gaining any position which would give me information of the plans of Mr. Tyler. To cheat the vivid sleeplessness of an intellect like his, would be a vain attempt: and in truth, his extraordinary power, of which I had more than once been witness, impressed me with a dread of encountering his resentment. One so practised in the inventions of deceit, was likely to prove the ablest defence against them.

In this difficulty of doubt there presented itself but one plan of proceeding which promised any success; and that was to win to my interest some of the accomplices of this ingenious man. How far he permitted any one to possess his confidence or be partaker of his intentions, I could not tell; but as no man can personally execute all the schemes which he contrives, especially when they are of a character so extensive and various as those with which he usually dealt, there must be agents and subalterns who are privy to important knowledge. The individual with whom Tyler had just now gone into his house seemed the one most likely to be

possessed of the information which I was wishing to gain respecting his recent and his future action, and to him I determined to address myself. It was a shrewd observation of Tyler in speaking to the party whom he had just left, that only the poor can be depended upon as faithful and unscrupulous agents; and *that* policy rendered it probable that the person now connected with him was one who would be open to an argument directed to his interest. If he was bound to the service of my antagonist by pecuniary profit, a larger recompense would attach him to mine. At all events, the trial was safe, and the prospect more plausible than any other which offered.

I stationed myself opposite to the door of Mr. Tyler, at such a distance as to give me a full view of all who went in or came out of the house without exposing myself to the risk of being seen. About ten minutes had elapsed when a person issued from the dwelling, whom I supposed to be the same who had gone in with the owner. He walked forward for some distance, and then turned into a cross-street. I waited a few moments in my original station, to be certain that no one was following from the house which he had left, for so keenly watchful was the temper I dealt with, that suspicion might even track the steps of its own private agents, and I then hastened along and overtook the man. When I came up with him, and caught a glance at his apparel by the light of the street-lamps, I found that his appearance was meaner than I had supposed to belong to the person whom I had seen some moments before in company with Mr. Tyler, and gave evidence of a lowlier and poorer condition than I thought likely to be the station of any of those who were mingled with the purposes and plans of that remarkable individual. The intermitted darkness of the street did not conceal the thread-bare coat, the shabby hat, or gloveless hand, which gave token of poverty and depression. Such indeed were likely enough to be the characteristics of a ruffian and an assassin—a profession with which Mr. Tyler might be presumed to have occasional dealings;

but in fact the figure and carriage of the man had nothing to countenance such a suggestion. Instead of the resolute, energetic and violent demeanour and bearing which are always associated with stern and defiant passions, being probably their consequence, this person, whose frame was slight and unrobust, moved with a gentle and subdued air, and occasionally an unsteady step, indicated that he laboured under weakness or ill-health. I began to fancy that I was mistaken in thinking that this was the same man who had gone into the house with Tyler; and I determined not to address him until I had seen whether he returned to the place from which he had originally issued. As he was at all events an acquaintance, and probably a confidant of the person whose movements now engrossed my thoughts, I could lose nothing by following him at the risk of not finding the very one whom I chiefly sought. The time and place at which Mr. Tyler had been joined by his companion, led me to think that he was probably associated more immediately with the affairs which chiefly interested me; but still any other, familiar as the man before seemed likely to be with the doings originating in that house, would doubtless serve my purpose in some degree.

My original conjecture had been right, and the place which the stranger entered was that opposite to the building in which had occurred the scene between Tyler and his friends. I followed at such a distance as to observe that he ascended to the highest story of the house, and to mark the door which received him. I then made my way along the dark passages and staircases to the room into which he had gone. I knocked lightly, and after a brief pause, a voice which sounded hollow from disease or want desired me to come in.

The apartment was extremely small, and had an air of cheerless and wretched discomfort. The bare walls were dirty and damp. There was not a fragment of carpet upon the floor, and no other furniture than a low bed, one chair, and a high table standing against the wall, on which were ranged a few well-thumbed books

and some materials for writing. There was a small stove in front of the fire-place, and the tenant of this miserable abode had raked out the few coals which it contained upon the hearth, and was sitting before it, endeavouring by the feeble light to decipher a letter which he held in his hand. A more desolate picture of want and destitution I never saw. It was but a single scene that was before me, and a single glance which I cast upon it; but that look, hurried as it was, brought before me a history and a condition which made my spirit sink within me,—a life of sad, heart-sickening disappointment, and a state of dull and hopeless suffering.

He rose up as I walked towards him, and fixed upon me an eye, naturally brilliant, but to which a weary load of uneasy thoughts and fears had lent the heaviness of pain, and a countenance upon which abiding grief had featured for ever the most flitting phases of its harsh expression. I easily conjectured by what mastery Tyler had compelled him to his service, and was glad that our meeting, while it benefited myself, would also procure him substantial advantage.

The circumstance which alienates from confidence the hearts of the poor and lowly, and turns their feelings to misanthropy and hate, is the thought that the sympathy of men has left them, and that the rich and the happy no longer regard them. That gayety which another enjoys without presumption, and perhaps, with kindness, seems to the solitary and the miserable an earnest mockery, and personal insult of their sadness. He whose efforts free the wretched from "the dark chambers of dejection" excites a fuller gratitude than all the prodigality of charity can rouse. Well knowing how "long-lived pressure of obscure distress" deadens all that interest in the concerns of others which it was my wish to create, I advanced cordially towards the man upon whose privacy I was intruding, and shook him kindly and heartily by the hand. He offered me the chair upon which he had been sitting, and I took it that I might not appear to notice the scantiness of ac-

commodation which his room afforded, and he seated himself upon the bed.

"I owe you an apology," said I, "for intruding myself into your society; but I hope that a wish to receive a favour from you, as well as a probable ability upon my part to be of some benefit to you will be a sufficient apology. It is not expected in this world that one man should be of service to another without adequate remuneration; and if you can procure certain information for me, you may name your own reward. You are acquainted, I believe, with Mr. Harold?"

"I am."

"My name," said I, "is Stanley. You may, perhaps, be aware of the opposition which exists between Mr. Harold and myself. If you are willing to give me the assistance of your knowledge and advice, you may claim whatever remuneration you please."

"Mr. Stanley," replied the other, in bitter and almost convulsive accents, "I am a poor man, and have had little encouragement or motive to exert myself for the benefit of others; but before you entered that door, I had resolved that, cost what it might, I would seek you out, and do my utmost to overcome the injustice by which you have been deeply wronged, and to prevent the villany by which it is sought to injure you still further. If it is in the power of man to crush and punish that cold-blooded Harold, my efforts shall not be wanting to the undertaking."

The animation of enmity which the speaker exhibited, surprised as much as it delighted me. I put some further questions to him to test the sincerity of his avowed feeling, but detected nothing to make me suspect the genuineness of his sentiments. Being satisfied of his willingness to embrace the proposal which I made, I hastened to state to him as briefly as possible, the circumstances which concerned my relations with Tyler. I went through a rapid narration of the receipt of Thompson's letter by my father, and its transmission to me,—its subsequent disappearance, and its destruction in the fire by Tyler, and Tyler's declaration that

the writer of it was dead without having left any evidence which bore upon the subject. I mentioned the probability of Mr. Tyler's very soon disappearing, and concluded by asking him what it were best to do.

He fixed his eyes attentively upon me, and with an air of some surprise, and when I had ended he paused for a little while before he replied.

"Sir," said he, at length, in an emphatic and somewhat excited tone, "Mr. Thompson is not dead. And that circumstance will probably prove the ruin of Harold, and will lead to the establishment of your rights. I will tell you concisely something of the history and position of that individual. He is my brother. We were early left destitute and friendless, and the variant dispositions and views which advancing years developed in our natures soon carried us asunder. My own dark fortunes it is needless now to trace, but my life lay enough among the haunts of men to enable me to gather from report and from occasional interviews the outline of my brother's career. A close connexion, founded, I presume, upon little but mutual advantage and similarity of desire, and regulated, I fear, by little else than the suggestions of profit, was early formed between himself and Mr. Harold, by which I have reason to suppose a large amount of property was acquired. Eventually the union, as might have been expected from the character of his confederate, proved, I suspect, a 'leonina societas,' and while Harold reaped a rich harvest of gain, my brother at the end is penniless and deserted. A few days ago I received from him a letter, in which he describes himself as destitute of money and very rapidly declining in health, and expresses an earnest wish to see me as soon as possible. My narrow means rendered it impossible for me to do so, and I have been obliged to remain without hearing any thing farther from him. This evening, about an hour ago, Mr. Harold came into my room. How he had discovered my residence, or even knew of my existence is more than I can tell, for I never was acquainted with him, and had seen him so seldom, that I barely

recognised his person when he presented himself. He stated that he had formerly been intimate with my brother and much attached to him, and that he had recently heard with regret that he had fallen into misfortune; he said that he could not suffer one for whom he had so much regard, to suffer any privation while he had the power of assisting him, and asked if I could furnish him with such a direction to his present residence, as would enable him to send to him or to visit him. I replied very frankly that I knew where my brother was living, and could readily find the house, but that I could not give to another such a description of its position as would certainly enable him to find him. All this was perfectly true; but a moment's consideration made me resolve that I would not give the querist any clue by which he could ascertain the dwelling of the person for whom he expressed so great a consideration. I have long had my private reasons for thinking that the real character of Mr. Harold was different from that which he has always borne in society. So far as I am informed, and some expressions in the letter of which I have spoken, lead me to believe that the feelings existing between the parties in the present case were very opposite to those which he affected to hold, and that their interests were as hostile as their circumstances are different."

"By-the-by, have you got that letter still with you?" I inquired.

"I have not. Unfortunately I threw it in the fire as soon as I had read it, and there is no means of referring more accurately to those expressions. To continue my narrative,—after some further inquiries, the pertinacity of which strengthened my suspicions of the speaker's motive, for I have rarely found that the friendships of worldly men are marked by such anxiety of faithfulness, Mr. Harold asked whether I would be willing to accompany another person, and point out to him the road to my brother's present residence, and added that the person would take immediate measures for his relief. It struck me indeed, that a more facile as well as

a more delicate mode of effecting his generous intentions would be to place in my hands the means which he wished conveyed to the other, instead of calling upon me to be the guide to another agent; but I dismissed the thought when I reflected that he probably had some doubts of the safe transmission of his bounty by me,—doubts which my situation and the circumstances around me would not, I must grant, vehemently contradict. Such an impression his subsequent remarks, in fact, took no pains to conceal. This offer I at once very willingly accepted, for the matter was thrown in such a form as could not apparently be injurious to the individual it regarded, and the arrangement might in fact, be intended wholly and purely for his advantage, of which I should not be justified in interrupting or preventing any part. Mr. Harold then said, that if I would accompany him to his dwelling-house, he would give me a letter to the gentleman he had referred to, who resided in a neighbouring city which lay in the way to that quarter of the country which I had described as the vicinity of my brother's lodgings. I accordingly went with him, and he gave me the letter with directions to deliver it as soon as I pleased, and to enable the person to whom it was addressed, to find the object of his interest either by my going with him, or by giving satisfactory descriptions. He also handed me a sum of money for the discharge of my own travelling expenses. As I returned home there hung upon my mind, all the way, a dogged scepticism of the reality of the professions which Mr. Harold had made, and of the benefit which the present mission would accomplish. So strong was this involuntary feeling, that some instinct as it might seem, urged me to open the letter which had been given me, and ascertain whether its contents corresponded with the declarations of its writer. A suggestion so little in keeping with what I need scarcely declare to be my habitual feelings and habits, which indeed, are only those of all but the habitually depraved and fraudulent, seemed strange at the time, and I cannot now account for the force with which it pressed

upon me the more cogently, the more I considered the subject. I obeyed the inclination, and read the letter as soon as I reached my apartment. You will judge whether any other than human agency wrought that resolution in my mind."

He placed in my hands the letter which he had spoken of. It was directed to Henry Boteler. I opened it and read as follows:

"This note will be given to you by a brother of Richard Thompson, who will conduct you to where the latter resides. I have told him that you will convey assistance to his brother, and this is the rôle which you are to sustain. You must fulfil this charitable duty by seizing the earliest opportunity of putting him beyond the want of assistance. Not a moment is to be lost. Let there be no communication whatever between the bearer and Thompson; but silence the latter immediately, to prevent the necessity of silencing both. Our error has consisted in suffering the knave to become too necessitous. Confident that he would never rise above the callousness of his well-hardened nature and the obligation of his potent oaths, we forgot that he might fall beneath them. However, I have possessed and destroyed all that he has yet written, and if your touch upon his throat is not too gentle, all will be safe."

This was signed in a cipher. I read it in silence, and returned it to the person who had been charged with its delivery. He remarked significantly, "you will not be surprised at the readiness which I at first exhibited to co-operate with you in your exertions."

"Our interests, it seems, lie closely together," said I. "We will set off for your brother's without loss of time; and perhaps another neck may yet feel the pressure of a thumb and finger. We will set off, if you please, to-morrow at sunrise. As I have particular reasons for not wishing to appear in the neighbourhood of this house, I shall be glad if you will take the trouble to walk to the head of the street where I shall be waiting for you with a horse for your use. As I have no

right to employ your time gratuitously, be good enough to put that trifle in your pocket;" and I placed my pocket-book in his hands and left the room.

I reached the street and walked along for a considerable distance, reviewing the incidents which had befallen me and the circumstances which had been disclosed within the few hours which had elapsed since the close of that day. The events of that period had followed one another so rapidly and so startlingly that I had not fully estimated their character and importance.

The fact which occupied my mind with the fullest interest and surprise, was the discovery which I had made of the character of Mr. Tyler. That extraordinary person, at the depth of whose learned thoughts and the keenness of whose fine philosophical perceptions I had been so often impressed and delighted—the patient thinker, the laborious scholar, the brilliant wit—had been and was a bold, daring, systematic and successful actor in the darkest scenes of daring and was habitually occupied with the rude and stern strivings of worldliness and crime. His life whose rich meditations were redolent of the unobtruded silence of the cloister, was hourly girt with the din and tumult of steel-breasted enterprise. The sentiments of defiant confidence which he sometimes exhibited and the principles of desperate unrestraint which his conversation had not shunned to avow, were exemplified deeply and to their full extent in his conduct: and the calm discourser upon morals and the thoughtful reasoner upon taste was the fierce and fearful creator and master of a power that had trampled upon the strongest defences of society, and laughed the forces of the law to scorn. When I called to mind his appearance as it had that evening come before me—the controlling energy of his commanding countenance—the mighty presence of his eye, which now scowled with the darkening glare of a demon whose unfathomable hate was wrestling with exhaustless scorn, and now lanced forth its passion with the flashing keenness of the leaping lightning—

then rose an instinctive dread within my mind. The little which I had already seen of his strength of spirit and unresting vigilance of effort which hounded its daring purposes with the impetuous eagerness of the blood-scenting beagle forbade my encouraging any hopes of overcoming his vigour and visiting upon him the retribution of defeat. The utmost that I could expect that any exertions of mine would effect would be the safety of myself and the prevention of the injustice which he had planned in respect to my family. A means of accomplishing this seemed to be opened by the fortunate incident that had led to my acquaintance with the brother of Thompson, and to prosecute that successfully was the labour which was now before me.

The arrangement which I had already made of seeking out Thompson at once, appeared to be the most prudent which the case presented. Still, I was so little informed of the circumstances which were connected with the subject that I felt much hesitation in so proceeding. I felt the want of the advice of one more conversant with general affairs as well as of the information of one more familiar with this matter, and to that end, a consultation with my father seemed very necessary. Ignorance, moreover, of the views which he had taken as well as of the steps which he had adopted, rendered it unsafe for me to assume any decided course of action. For successful conduct in a common cause it was especially necessary that there should be a unity of purpose, and if possible an union of counsel; for while separate action was certain to be defective it might even be repugnant. In view of these advantages I resolved to lose no time in visiting my father, to inform him of what happened under my observation and to consult with him on the course which it was most expedient to follow. And to that end, I abandoned the resolution of accompanying the brother of Mr. Thompson, as the residence of the former was considerably further to the south than the latter. By sending in my place an intelligent friend in whom I could confide,

every valuable purpose of the expedition might be accomplished, while I was left free to join my father in any transactions which he might be inclined to undertake.

Having taken this determination I hastened to apply to Seward to assume the service of finding Mr. Thompson and gaining from him that evidence which Mr. Tyler was so anxious to extinguish and which was as important to us as it would be fatal to him. Seward was a person upon whom I could thoroughly depend as well for ability as disposition: he was a man of excellent judgment, and in spite of his usual gayety, which, however, was more the effect of effort than the result of feeling, he possessed an unusual strength and firmness of purpose. Our intimacy was one of long standing, and various benefits which I had had it in my power to confer on him warranted my calling upon him for a favour of this sort; I believed besides, that he had a sincerity of regard for me, as I certainly had for him, which would lead him to take pleasure in doing me a kindness. I was at this time not far from his residence, and although it was so late that I almost despaired of finding him up, I hastened on in the hope that I might possibly gain admission in spite of the advanced hour of the night. My ring at the bell was answered very soon, and I learned with pleasure from the servant that Seward was not yet retired. He had been out to a dance, and had just returned home a few minutes before my arrival.

I stated my request to him, and he very promptly and cordially acceded to it. I then explained, at length, all the circumstances that were connected with the duty which I wished him to undertake, and laid before him the whole of my observation and experience respecting Mr. Tyler. He listened to what I said with much attention and an air of astonishment, and mused silently for some time before he answered.

"It is marvellous, Stanley! it is marvellous!" said he, after a pause. "He is a wonderful and inexplicable creature this Mr. Tyler. There have been a number of

singular incidents connected with my intercourse with him, which arrested my attention at the time and gave rise to a faint doubt too indistinct to be called suspicion, which, what you have said, clears up astonishingly. We are rarely overcome, but we suspect a wrong; and connected with that affair at the shore which I mentioned to you at the time, by which I was robbed of my cash, there were some circumstances of which perhaps this disposition led me to entertain some mistrust which I have now no doubt was perfectly well founded. It is easy to see that Tyler was playing his rogueries in that scene, and doubtless the landlord to whom you committed the note which you had written to me, was of the party. The same influence, I strongly suspect, has been at work in my affairs, since I came to town, though it never, till now, occurred to me. There is an aged relative of mine in the neighbourhood with whom I had agreed to spend every evening on which I was not particularly engaged at some party. Very early in the winter Tyler introduced me at his club, but I did not go to its meetings more than once or twice, as I preferred the society of the old gentleman I have mentioned. Three or four weeks ago I began to observe a decided declension in the cordiality of my reception at this house, which before had been kind and affectionate in the extreme. Sundry hints were thrown out about hypocrisy, double-dealing in speech, and legacy-hunting, from all which I gathered that my kinsman was under the impression that I spoke of him in public in a manner very different from that in which I spoke to him in private—an imputation for which I knew very well there was no foundation in truth, and which I attributed at the time, to sensitiveness and caprice of age. I found that he had changed his opinion of my character and that my society was no longer agreeable; I accordingly withdrew it, and became in consequence a very frequent visiter at the club-house. I now think I can trace the agency of Tyler in insinuating these notions into the mind of the old man, and I have no doubt that his object was to produce the very effect

which followed. To be sure, he might have known that I would furnish little for the supply of his coffers, but to get me in his power would have been a sufficient inducement to use some endeavours to bring me again to the card-table."

As he spoke there flashed upon my mind a resolution of the mystery that had so amazed me in the change of Emily's demeanour towards me. To prevent, in my case, a similar engrossment of time to that which interfered with success in the case of Seward, had doubtless prompted those suggestions of an evil tongue, which I not too confidently guessed at when their influence first became apparent in the conduct of her whose unsuspecting gentleness had been thus abused. There was a brightness in the hope which thus flashed upon me in the darkness of doubtful schemes and intricate perplexity of embarrassing resolutions, which cheered and gladdened my spirits, and made me feel in the privacy of my heart that if failure dashed in pieces the plans which were before me, there remained apart from all an abiding comfort which their confusion could not cloud or disturb.

"Depend upon it," said Seward, "we have an extraordinary person to deal with, and I am by no means sanguine of success. Mr. Tyler is not a merely plausible knave, whose readiness of talent enables him to exhibit in talk a superficial familiarity with literary topics, and who has just ingenuity enough to gain the reputation of possessing genius. He is a man of rare and transcendent genius; I have probed him deeply and thoroughly in conversation, and I have satisfied myself that he possesses a strength of understanding and a penetration of intellect which place him in the first rank of minds. His is a spirit whose worthy employment were the concerns of empire. It is by accident, or a purpose which we do not see, that he now appears upon so petty a stage. And if I am not deceived by some indications which his manner and opinions furnish, he has once been an actor upon a loftier and more important scene. There are evidences in his daily speech that energies

have been developed in him which ordinary life has no voice to summon forth. Upon the surface of his character there are qualities which nothing but experience in some of the loftiest and most stirring scenes of existence can draw out from the depths of our nature. There is about him an aspiration and a consciousness with which nothing can imbue the mind but familiarity with all that is grand and gigantic in human conduct. But," said he, rising from his chair, "we will have more time to discuss these matters in the morning. You will excuse me, in prospect of our early journey, for begging permission to retire. By-the-by, you had better take a bed with me; I have a room entirely at your service."

"Thank you; I must go home. As my route lies for some distance in the same direction with yours, it is my purpose to ride with you for a portion at least of the day, and perhaps the whole of it. I will, therefore, call for you to-morrow a little before sunrise, and we will join Thompson and set off together. Good night."

I left him and hastened home. I completed a few arrangements which my expected absence required me to settle, and then having given the directions for horses to be at the door by daybreak, and other necessary orders for the journey, I threw myself on the bed to enjoy the repose which the few hours that remained might permit me to receive. For some time the excitement of my mind would not allow me to sleep. My unsatisfied curiosity and surprise recurred again and again to the scenes which I had just passed through, and I asked myself with renewed scepticism whether the incidents which occupied my memory, were the shapes of reality or the visions of a dream. The discovery of some one event which, relating back through the occurrences of previous times, gives a new character to what had been fixed in the thoughts as the certainty of experience, and transforms our view of familiar scenes, and changes our opinions of men and our notions of things, so startles our conclusions and unsettles the mind's familiarity with its own offspring, its thoughts and judgments, that we lose the composure and tranquillity of

spirits. A single event may thus for a time almost settle the foundations of our consciousness; and may m to thrust into our being a portion of existence t is foreign and unknown. When the assured de-tions of the intellect are shattered by unexpected rthrow, our very confidence in the power which ited them is tainted with distrust. We seem for a ment to feel our sense and reason failing from be-th us. Such was the state of sensation which the elations of that evening left behind them. Gradually, vever, I fell into a slumber which lasted till I was sed by my servant knocking at the door with intel-nce that the horses were ready.

CHAPTER III.

Each with the other pleased, we now pursued
Our journey—beneath favourable skies.
Up through an ample vale, with higher hills
Before us, mountains stern and desolate;
But in the majesty of distance, now
Set off, and to our ken appearing fair
Of aspect, with aerial softness clad,
And beautified with morning's purple rays.
WORDSWORTH.

THE gladness of the vigorous morning was upon us as we mounted our horses after breakfasting at a small inn about ten miles from the city. We had ridden thus far while the earliest rays of the sun were struggling with the mists of the valleys; and when we resumed our journey, the broad march of the majestic day had begun its full and triumphant course. It was one of the delicate and delightful days of the early spring, when the common air seems charged with the life and inspiration of eternity.

That disposition to confound change of circumstance with succession of time which the nature of our existence gives us, has led to the error of limiting the act of creation to an epoch and an instant:—to the eye of true philosophy that mighty miracle is hourly repeated. If we apprehend truly the necessary boundlessness of the wealth of Infinity, it will be found that every possible system and sphere that now has a being must have existed before, else that anterior condition had not been infinite. Creation, therefore, is but revelation; and daily, as the revolving sun gives glory to the shapes of

earth, and form to the masses of the sky, the wonder at which the stars of the morning sang together for joy, is performed anew. Upon the rising face of the ancient sky, which is downed by the eider featherings of the fleecy light, the softness of infancy ever is abiding. Forth, from the bottomless abyss of darkness, day after day surges up, like the regular and resistless heaving of the sea, whose swell never hurries, and whose lapse never pauses. Thus, bathing in the oblivious tide of night, is the youth of the hours everlastingly renewed; and nothing in nature, save the heart of man, grows old. The blue of the heavens pales not with age, and on the odour-plumed wings of the wooing breeze Time can moult no quill.

Upon the first aspect of the awakened sky there is a tenderness and a charm which the advancing moments soon efface. When the pioneer rays of the sultan sun fling off the veil of night from the virgin bosom of the azure heavens, there is a quivering upon it like the fresh trembling of the creeping mould; a mossy frost-work of light interfuses itself among the unshaded colour, and dapples it, like the decay of the all-vital: a faint fluctuation, like the throbbings of a lake slightly disturbed. But use, whose dull heavy hand soon rubs from all things that glow which is enchantment, quickly converts the sensitive softness of that medium against which the snowy light had tingled and trembled, into a mirror as smooth and vacant as the polished ivory. That which seemed like a living turf, whose many-fountained freshness undulated beneath the startling glory of the instant day, dims into a silent icy plain, to which belong epithets of love but not of life. The varied countenance of the landscape of the skies presents to us at a later period characters of majesty unsurpassed, and serenity undisturbed; there is always above us that which delights the fancy, expands the thoughts, and calms the passions,—whether floating before the western breeze, there sail beneath the sun vast ships of cloud, freighted with glory,—or whether along the silence of the southern horizon there glow

in dreamy splendour long crimson branches silver-sprinkled with soft spots of pearl, like a child's dream of Araby the Blest: yet no variety of the ever-varying scene touches the heart with half the sympathy of joy, or excites the spirit with that rush of inspiration with which the maiden fluttering of the primal sky kindles and melts the gazer's soul. Like the first glow of passion upon the face of beauty, it has a magic of impression which can never be renewed as it can never be forgotten.

"There is a consideration," said Seward, when we had mounted our horses and issued from the little inn-yard into the broad road surrounded on all sides by a gay and glittering landscape, "which a divine of the George Herbert school might wisely moralize into a thousand similes; I mean the extent to which the earth must borrow from the sky to have its own earthly beauties fully enjoyed. When you shut out the clear smile of the blue heavens, you seem to exclude nothing upon which man is greatly dependent; his position and his powers, the scene around him and the soul within him, remain the same; yet, though the privation may not at once be felt, time will soon show that you have cast a blight upon his enjoyment which no form can resist and no philosophy compensate; an influence which deadens the affections, dims the brightness of the virtues and even taints the vigour of the intellect; converting all desires and thoughts into a single want. The iris hues of the flower-wreathed summer—the meltingness of music—the grace of marbles—the grandness of tower and temple—the age of mountains and the strength of ocean—and all the moral luxuries of kindling thought and glowing speech, and love and lofty rank—lose all their might, so long as his eye cannot hail some portion of that living colour which is to him a glory and a soul. Where the glad and glancing sun-rays cannot pierce, the securest beauty droops; and that impression which possessed its cause as with a presence and a spirit, dies from its splendid magic and goes out. So are those thoughts which give respect to man and dignity

to conduct, the airs and odours of an immortal world. The strong and high existence of men is not shut up within their mortal frames; the bending sky is a portion of our life and the apprehension of deity is a part of our mind; for what is the mind but a mass of thoughts? The very form and frame-work of the intellect consists of thought; principles perceived make up the intelligence and feelings analyzed constitute genius. This truth should be the guide of our schemes of education, which would then be modes of forming the mind as well as furnishing it. It suggests a notion which may be deemed fancy or prophecy, according to the temper of our mental disposition. If every truth which the mind discovers, becomes a new centre of observation from which it goes on to make new discoveries—a new instrument of conquest—a new ward in the intellectual key, which was wanted to unlock some old difficulty—*then*, the mind extends by these adjunctions; it goes on transforming things which are without it to thoughts which are within it, and of it, and it. Thus, by degrees, all the external world shall be transformed into internal convictions, and the universe of matter be wrought into the unit of mind, and all material existence be *thought* into God. I confess when I regard the proof the physical world gives that a God once existed, and the evidence the moral world shows that none exists now, I am indeed tempted to think that deity is in abeyance in his creation; and that as the cumbrous body thus expires in detail, the divine spirit will revive in its completeness, as in the dry seed lies hid the germ which holds in narrow bands the perfect flower which shall glad the air, and in its paleness may be read by hope's prophetic eye, the soft spreading of the roseate flush that shall make faint the heart with ecstasy, even so in the rude denseness of the formless globe is involved the life of the ever-living. Do I err in thinking that mind is in its essence cognate with God? have they not the same offspring? Are not thoughts, angels? The ideas which visit and persuade the soul are they not ministers of power and life? There are thoughts which have

tyrannized over men with a sway that no god nor demon can exceed. The thought of immortality, for example, has crazed and enslaved the world; and truly is variety of influence stamped with the seal of somewhat more than human: in times of patient anguish it is a smooth river sliding softly through a forest—bright amid the darkness—that bears the soul gently from horrid tangles into quiet meadows and smooth fields of joy; in the trying hour it is a dreadful poison-blast, that rides by in awful majesty, and while the upper sails which are yet exposed are creaking and trembling, the havened spirit clings nestling closely to the bosom of its God: sometimes it is a blind, wild terror that at noonday when no foe is near makes the wicked start to flee impending terror, or almost compels the mind to totter beneath its pressure; and sometimes it is a whirling, flame-eyed fury, that cracks its whip of fire and rolls its rattling wheels of iron."

"Every language," said Mr. Thompson, "has marked a difference between the mind and the soul; and 'the universal language of mankind,' says a clear, close and strong thinker, 'is no fallacious evidence of truths that are founded in the reason and nature of things.' This difference, philosophy has not improved; for while metaphysics has grown into a great and cumbrous science, none have explored the spiritual life of men or questioned of its origin or nature, that immortal essence which was before and will be after us. He who has possessed his soul in peace well knows that there is sphere within sphere of inward being, whose depths our mortal consciousness does never wholly apprehend or fathom; a being, to the sense of comprehension, glimmering and dim, but to the faculties of instinct, strenuous and immortal; seen as through the thin and saffron-misted dawn, but known as with the fulness of the pulse of noon. Viewed by none is the form of its nature; felt by all is the fact of its being. An apostle has suggested that by comparing the visible with the invisible or spiritual world, important truths might be discovered. And certainly if an organization so distinct as it is from

both the mental and material frame of things be found to suggest a deity, the argument of his existence is indefinitely strengthened. And nothing so strongly avows divinity; it is indeed the type of the universe and the antitype of God. Of this system, he is the centre and the canopy—the spring and the spreading-forth; what it has of infinite is his, what it tells of eternal, comes from him. And it is this faculty alone in man which is capable of perceiving God; hence when the passions of lust or vanity swell and discolour the soul, it no longer feels his presence, and prayer becomes a senseless thing. God is, indeed, the life and guardian of our hearts, 'the elder brother of our spirits;' and they who banish him from their hearts, must toughen and petrify all the sensibilities of their nature. For the tender soul, exposed to struggle with the naked, atheistic world, quivers shrinkingly, as would the uncovered, living flesh, blown on by chilling blasts, when every particle of air becomes a steel point of keen torture; then, aching with distress, it draws in its world-tortured form within the thought of God, and that thought is as the calm atmosphere of a rock-covered retreat when the storm is roaring harmlessly above; it is the balm of peace and gladness of repose. In like manner when intercourse with worldlings has fouled and made turbulent that atmosphere of the soul, by which its breath is healthful and its vision clear, and made its respirations convulsed and difficult, sympathy with heaven is the pure western wind that blows off the vapours that have clogged the scene. Truly may we say with the prophet in the hour of our inward trial, 'In the secret place of thy dwelling shalt thou hide me,' and with the apostle, 'To whom should we go, Lord, but to thee?' Deus nobis hæc otia fecit."

"The truths which the mind produces seem to be wrought out into existence by the enginery of effort; those exhibitions of mysterious knowledge which the soul puts forth seem to be involuntary, and almost accidental. It takes no cognizance of the interests of the passing world, and the wisdom that springs from our

human condition and dies with mortality, is no portion of its lore. But oracles of the knowledge of the anterior life and experience of our spirits, and of the relations which, in 'the being of the eternal silence,' it bears to the unseen powers of the universe, are wrapt within it, as phosphoric light is folded in the bosom of the wave, and casual agitation shakes them out. When a soul has for a season entertained one peculiar course of thought and feeling, and chance or change of humour sends in another, and the two currents meet—it is in that moment that great truths respecting our nature are discovered. By removing the barrier of worldly care and callousness which shuts off from our consciousness the divinest portion of our being, our life may always sit in the unclouded brightness of celestial light, and memories of past eternity will be exhaled into its contemplations, while 'winged thoughts, of the "sursum corda" kind,' connect it with the everlasting future which awaits us."

"The man," said Thompson, "best fitted to investigate these strange powers of our nature was Coleridge. He has, indeed, done something to estimate their character and value, and so has Davy; but a systematic display of the subject is yet wanting. Coleridge was, by his moral qualities, fearfully well fitted for the task. Owing to his long and dubious struggle with a habit which became a vice by the disingenuousness of his conduct in the matter, he lived for years in what Greville has called the 'twilight between vice and virtue;' and the dark contests and fluctuating emotions of his spirit amid these alternations gave him capacity to behold the tints of sin and purity in their broadest and deepest contrast; he bathed in degradation to renew the Houri delicacy of his appreciation of holiness, and when he relapsed to self-indulgence the stain stung deeper into his soul for the tenderness which recent absolution had produced.* His spirit writhed under the

* See Recollections of Coleridge, by Cottle—the most valuable book which has hitherto appeared upon that subject. It is a skilful developement of one of the most extraordinary and instructive histo-

galling inconsistency of the lectures of an apostle combined with the life of an apostate, and flashed forth in its agony gleams of portentous light that are garnered into stars among his poems, and which give the reader pause, like the signs of a magician which we know to be spells though we cannot conjure with them. Davy, too, I fear, sometimes violated the majesty of his self-respect, and that may have given morbidness to a faculty which in most men is unfeeling."

"A pregnant caution, by-the-by," said Seward, "against giving credit to facts and anecdotes gathered from report, is furnished by the host of errata which the more recent biography of that distinguished philosopher has detected in the early and more popular one. A few more such expositions might profitably teach the reading many what the thinking few are well convinced of, that the current class of memoirs and reminiscences, whether still ductile to the imagination of narrators, or gathered with all their improvements into books, have in no case that degree of accuracy, not to say exactness, on which one who seeks the truth may certainly depend. In a few instances in which I have been able to compare versions adopted by society of some given incident with the literal facts, I have found that the statements of the nearest and most authentic parties gambolled absurdly from the truth. The most tenacious memories have a trick of substituting one circumstance for another in the histories confided to them, in a manner which leaves the individual wholly unconscious of the change. When a narrative has passed through two or three lips it is generally as much modified by the process as the sounds which conveyed it. It is a rare accomplishment to hear a story as it is told; still rarer, to remember it as it is heard; and rarest of all, to tell it as it is remembered."

ries ever exposed; and it is done kindly though firmly. Much of the tale is purely humiliating, yet is its conclusion proud, and touching even unto tears; when we behold him freed from the demon which had convulsed his days and at the close of life "sitting clothed and in his right mind."

"In the disputes which animate and exercise the world," said Thompson, "pure truth upon one side is perhaps never brought to oppose pure truth upon the other, but all the arguments are to a certain degree diluted with error. Fortunately the debasement is equal on both sides; we fight in a cloud that dims alike the adversary's eye, and the muffled weapon which we bear is compensated by the dulness of his."

"One circumstance," said Seward, "in the characters of the men you have spoken of, gives me a higher opinion of the mind of Davy than of Coleridge's; I allude to the fondness which Coleridge had for theory, and the contempt and dislike with which, especially in his later days, Davy regarded it. Theory is essentially unphilosophical: it fetters the mind and makes the errors of the past tyrannise over the inquiries of the future. It is of no service in the investigation of subjects and the progress of knowledge; it belongs to the stationary periods or those of decline. Youth is captivated by brilliant generalisation; age values truth more highly, and cares less for the management of them. If the principles of our classification be erroneous or narrow, we shall certainly be led into error, that will be serious where the matter is still in the progress of developement. A theory based on the qualities of an object will prevent its being unfolded according to its objects; and he who arranges topics in reference to their causes will cease to value them according to their results. Thus the jurisprudence of every nation will show, that when law becomes a science and a system it ceases to be justice. The errors into which a blind devotion to arbitrary and theoretical principles of classification has led the common law, will be seen by observing how often the legislature has been obliged to come forward to restore the equity which its scheme had lost."

"The English law is at present one of the most curious monuments in existence—an antique bulk, hewed and plastered and puttied into a modern shape—a fiction, retained long after the object of it has passed away. Yet it strikes me as a sublime proof of the

wisdom and caution of the nation which has modified what was defective from the beginning, and has resorted even to the silliest appendages of fictions, rather than make a radical change."

"The only portion of the constitution which Southey cannot muster toryism enough to admire is the law. In that matter, he prays for reform."

"He is a wise man, is Southey," said Thompson; "and a good man; in fact, the greatest man of the times, though not enough of a quack to be popular. He and Coleridge are men of equal strength, and the only superiority of the latter lay in his charlatanry. A clamour has been raised against him for the errors of his youth; as Bembus says, 'quod puer peccavit, accusant senem.' But Southey changed only as circumstances changed, perceiving that uniformity is not consistency. Erasmus in one of his epistles complains of a fate very similar to the Laureate's; 'rapiuntur in diversum omnia, etiam quæ optimo scribuntur animo; ne tempus quidem perpenditur, quo scripsit aliquis, sed quod suo tempore recte scribebatur, transferent in tempus incommodissimum.' The defamers of both of those great men should have remembered, that however they might have seemed to vary in position they were always true to the faith of their principles and always obedient to the law of their natures. And

> Self-contradiction is the only wrong;
> For by the rules of spirit, in the right
> Is every individual character
> That acts in strict accordance with itself.

In the feelings, the hopes and purposes which have presided over his life, there has been no turning; though he may have seen, as he advanced, a better mode of accomplishing what he desired, than when he set out. It is to his praise, that from his earliest youth, he has been the friend and defender of virtue. The advancement which Southey has given to literature has been mediate rather than direct; it lies in what he has directed and encouraged others to do more than in what

he has done himself. 'Thalaba' was a bold and defiant 'declaration of independence' on all the critical principles, models, and canons, whose authority till then, had enslaved taste; it was an act like that flinging of the spear by the converted Saxon king into the sacred enclosures of Druidical superstition, which desecrated for ever the imputed holiness which was itself the false god that had enfettered men's minds. The dull deity of classical correctness was thenceforth unsceptred, and all were at liberty to adopt what license they pleased. Accordingly, it became the shield of Ajax, under cover of which Byron and Moore came upon the field."

"The author, whose true character in these times it seems most difficult to settle," said Seward, "is Shelley. His imagination was inexhaustible, and his creative faculties boundlessly rich; but there was in him a total want of judgment. His works are, therefore, not so much poems as splendid storehouses of poetical materials; and to estimate the exact worth of such disordered wealth, has not been an easy task. Unfortunately for the speedy determination of his merits, his works are of a kind

> Quo neque procax vulgi penetrabit, atque longa
> Turba legentium prava facesset.

What the mob canvass, they soon conclude; but that which is debated only by the learned, will long be doubtful. 'Citius inter horologia quam authores conveniet.' On the whole, I think that the reputation of Shelley has risen with time, and that Byron's has declined."

"Of the latter point, in the sense in which you mean it, I am not so sure," said L. "The intense personal interest which the peer, his position and history excited, and which at first might not be easily distinguished from the admiration of the poet, has indeed subsided: but if his name is less often in the newspapers, his merits are more freely acknowledged by the critical. He now stands where nobility is no recommendation. 'A dead lord,' says Gray, 'ranks with a commoner.'

In the literature of the past, as in the ninth place at whist, the honours are not courted. Byron's European fame is the best earnest of his immortality, for a foreign nation is a kind of contemporaneous posterity."

"There is a cant," said Seward, "of extolling Byron for his deep acquaintance with life and his extensive experience of society. To my thinking, his misanthropy and anger against men denoted a want of thorough knowledge of the world and a partial and defective reasoning. There is a fine anecdote related by Goldsmith of Alexander VI., who on entering a town which he had captured, beheld a portion of the townsmen engaged in pulling down from a gibbet, a figure designed to represent himself, while another part were knocking down a neighbouring statue of one of the Orsini family with whom he was at war, in order to put his effigy, when taken down, in its place: Alexander, 'far from condemning the adulation of these barefaced flatterers, seemed pleased at their zeal,' and turning to Borgia, his son, only said with a smile, 'you see, my son, how small is the difference between a gibbet and a statue.' Scorn is the most ignorant and thoughtless form of disesteem; there is a patient tolerance that lies beyond contempt, and a placid love, born of pity, is a yet profounder phase of unregard. Shelley's apathetic carelessness of men showed that he despised them from his heart; and Wordsworth's diligent cheerfulness and systematic content, indicate a more thorough appreciation of the worthlessness of life than either of the others attained."

"Byron and Shelley," said Mr. Thompson, "were friends in life, and have often been classed together in literature; but they were in truth intellectual antipodes. The feeling on Byron's pages is all personal feeling; it is actual emotion, elevated and refined into the ideal. His sufferings suggested all his sentiments; and Experience was the parent of all his thoughts. Shelley's feelings were in his imagination, and he had no personality. It is the business of poetry to present to us the generalisations of ideal passions, and these are usually at-

tained by forgetting or merging the individual and the real, and sending the mind to wander through the fabrics of fancy; in this sense, it is justly affirmed, that Byron succeeded by the magnitude of his failure. He wrote true poetry without being a poet, he shaped into poetry its antagonism. The other was born a bard. Hence, if in respect of the mental qualities of the two men as geniuses, the question of greatness be made, we give the palm to Shelley; if in reference to their moral abilities as performers, we name Byron. In the first view, Shelley possessed more of the poetical faculty; in the second, it is Byron's praise, that in despite of the defect of those qualities, he wrote yet more splendid verses than the other. The first was an intellectual superiority, the last was a personal triumph; in the one you praise the mind, in the other, you applaud the man; in that you extol the gorgeous fancy, in this you reward the victorious will."

"Shelley's mind," said Seward, "seemed to be no portion of himself; his consciousness was apart from his conceptions. It is this which makes him often difficult to be understood, for usually it is through sympathy of temper that men attain to unity of thought. A flash of mutual feeling brightens a chain of notions otherwise dark and perplexing. The poet, lifted by passion to some airy seat, babbles of the golden forms pictured on the glassy bubbles which his fancy floats before him, and his words will be Pindaric to our sense unless we are placed in the same position by similarity of mood. Notions are but the expanded flower and foliage from the germ of feeling, and we must plant the latter in our heart, ere the atmosphere of our intelligence will be gladdened by the former. In truth, we never fully comprehend a poet's lines, unless we are beforehand in possession of the poet's meaning, and his words but remember us of our own images; in that case, he is explaining our own affections to us, and giving us in ideas what we previously possessed in impressions. It is the business, therefore, of the judicious poet, by addressing the heart to fling his feelings upon

us before he expands his meaning, and thus to aqueduct the chasm between our consciousness and his thoughts. There is no trace of personal feeling from one end of Shelley's writings to the other. Compare, for illustration, his ode to the sky-lark with Wordsworth's on the same subject; the one is a record of individual emotions and a retrospect of spiritual experience, and breathes, throughout, the sadness of a pensive soul; the other displays an artificial and mechanical ingenuity, and, as exquisite as a Greek chorus, is as cold as a Greek statue. It is this same absence of conscience and want of moral impressibility which makes the atheism of Shelley so thorough and undoubting. Byron suffered so intensely from the stings of mental remorse, and laboured with such agony of effort to brighten the blackness of vice into that image of light and beauty for which his spirit was self-stung to struggle, that when he most earnestly chants the glories of sin, he is unwittingly offering his tribute to virtue. The convulsion of passion under which he laboured was wrought by his striving to maintain the erectness of his spirit amid the tyrannizing encroachments of the devastations of wickedness."

"On the whole," said Mr. Thompson, "Byron has done great service to virtue, and will be regarded through all time as having made in that matter a great and conclusive experiment. Before his time, men, dwelling in the region of moderate decency, have handled and smelt and tasted the forms of seductive vice, and have asserted that there was much excellence in them, and that it might be a question whether it were not a safe game wholly to relinquish truth and its restraints, and to take up with vice for vice's sake. But Byron is the first man who has devoted his life and powers to the cultivation of flagitiousness, and has been determined to find and fix in depravity all his hopes and wishes and rewards. To this new scheme of happiness he dedicated himself wholly, and with all the ardour of desperation; he sounded passion to its depths, and raked the bottom of the gulf of sin; he explored, with the in-

domitable spirit of Carathis, every chamber and cavern of the earthly hell of bad delights; and the result was barrenness and exhaustion; the conclusion was, that when the inspiring immortality of celestial hope was resigned, there was an end to the interest which had once been attractive;—that in Atheism there was no principle of progression,—no source of vitality,—no impulse to exertion;—that virtue is, in its views, its thoughts and its hopes, prolonged, complete, and permanent,—that vice is deciduous, crumbling, fragmentary; that the one addresses itself to that within us which is deep and everlasting, while the other engages only those faculties which are mortal and transitory, and leaves the eternal soul to 'the self-torture of irremediable vacuity.' "

"When we observe the extraordinary difference in the whole system of principles, purposes and impressions between Lord Byron and all who have gone before him, and remember that every great era whether progressive or revolutionary, has been preceded by some great author who, in the fulness of prophetic feeling has embodied all the sentiments and sources of power which lay at the bottom of that general effort, are we not entitled to conclude, that this poet is the forerunner and herald of the advent of some new, deep, fervid epoch which shall develope in action that struggling energy which his verses show, and be as violent, as free, and as selfish as he was? or, if you deny the accidental connexion in time which this supposes, is it not probable that he will create such an age? 'Poets and philosophers are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.' At all events, whether or not we admit either a causative or a coincidental connexion between poetry and politics, the sure and deep progress of democracy in every portion of the world seems likely to evolve in history a condition of which the bard's bold fire shall be the antitype. The radical quality which gives character to both is the same,—a passionate selfishness,—a sullen savageness, assumed by men to make their mood the master of their life. This antici-

pated similarity would only be giving to the age a resemblance which one of its acts already exhibits. Against the broad centuries-woven frame of fetters, the deep tide of revolution heaved up its resistless fulness as the last race were passing from the earth, and Napoleon embodied this spirit in politics and Byron in literature. In him were gathered all the dim and vague half thoughts of liberty and strength, and madness which ages of every kind of oppression had created. His genius was the feathered mounting of the waters where the recurring stream conflicted with the flow. That agitation has subsided, but I think that another, slower, calmer, more general, and stronger swell is setting in, which as it grows mightier in its pacific fulness will dissolve and absorb what that other more impetuous surge shocked but could not shake. I am not one of those who can see the dawn of a new era already streaking the eastern sky; I do not believe this broad rebellion will come 'to-day, nor yet to-morrow;' but sooner or later it must. The democratic sentiment is one which *will* prevail wherever it is promulgated; it has, in itself, a silent power to sap away society, as the unseen weather saps tower and castle. It addresses itself to the worst passions of our nature, and rouses all the sceptred strength that dwells in evil, while it is in these days sanctified by an imputed name of virtue, and thus unites

> In friendly league
> Ethereal natures, and the worst of slaves;
> Is served by rival advocates that come
> From regions opposite as Heaven and Hell."

"I question," said Seward, "the permanent establishment of any thing like a democratic system. Antagonism is the essential soul of democratic strength; opposition is the source of its might: when, therefore, it has conquered enmity, and that which it attacked has been dissolved to its separate elements, its virtue is departed; its triumph is its traitor. As soon as it has destroyed control, and all is free and open, enterprise which is the

daughter of liberty, creates wealth and gives employment to all, and a conservative disposition is generated among the people. Thus does the condition of a state swing round through anarchy to peace and power. I will venture to aver, that in no republic will politics ever darken to democracy where the destructive spirit is not kept up by infusions from the dregs of those countries where there is something to generate it."

"Upon that view," said Thompson, "we need not hope for either permanent establishments or prolonged, but a succession of political systems containing in themselves the seeds of their own destruction and re-institution; and that, in truth, seems to be the destiny of the world."

"To rise, to shine, and to set, is the fate of every power and wisdom that man displays. Humanity occasionally puts forth extraordinary strength, illustrates great principles of action, or lights up great stars of knowledge, which fade and are forgotten with the age which they distinguish. Few temporary improvements enter into the general civility of the world; in still fewer cases, are faculties advanced in one epoch, kept up in the next. I mean that there is no progression in the abilities of the general race. Perhaps, some scientific facts, and, it may be, some scientific powers, may be inoculated on the universal human mind, so that one age shall be in its fundamental character, and in the ground-work and starting-point of its capacity, placed before its predecessor; but it is otherwise with physical skill, and with moral wisdom. Men are as little able to govern themselves now as they were in those times of deep learning, ardent piety, correct principle and strong sense, commonly called the dark ages. If we admit that one century avails itself of the wisdom of past years, and is instructed by the accumulated knowledge of many eras, this age can have no pretension to that sort of superiority; for it scorns, not studies the past,—it breaks, not builds on its foundation,—it opposes, not amends its conclusions. It has assumed such a position that it renounces all the advantage of

experience, and its maxims are as crude and raw as those of the first barbarians could have been. Pulling down a house is an odd way of improving it. I am the hearty advocate of reform; I repeat with the earnestness of a prayer the aphorism of that great lawyer and sage of the law, Edmund Plowden, 'blessed be the amending hand:' but because I wish amendment, I do not wish destruction."

"Revolution is the greatest enemy of reform," said Seward, "and reform is the best protection against revolution. To anticipate hostility by yielding voluntarily what will soon be exacted, is the best mode of maintaining influence. It should be the politician's wisdom to escape the tempest by outrunning the wind."

"The cabinets of Europe," said Thompson, "are now vitiated by a circumstance which weakens the politics of all refined ages; the manners of the time and the taste of courts give pre-eminence to the subtle head rather than the strong hand, and the class who are thus called out are necessarily inferior in vigour to the more sincere and hearty races that once ruled. The artificial villains of this age who elaborately form their character upon those of the unscrupulous diplomatists of former times, though they acquire a set of principles nearly resembling those of their prototypes, yet owing to the process by which they reach the same point, they miss what is the very secret of the strength of the others; their principles not being the result of their passions, but the debased creation of their evil wishes, they knowingly offend the better law which is within them, and so lose their self-respect, which saps the power of gaining respect from others. The great spirits whom they attempt to copy, while they only reproduce the empty, maggot-rotted shell of the character they emulate, were so absorbed in the sternness of their conflicts with the world, that they never turned their eyes in upon themselves, and were not wasted by the weakness of conscious villany."

"Strength will go farther in ruling mankind than

skill. There is a charm in the display of power, wherever it appears, that makes men thankful thralls. It is this which gives such fascination to Byron, and will always make him, in spite of criticism and morality, the idol of the many. Nothing in literature equals the furious power with which he tore thoughts from things, and wrung ideas from the inward whirlwind of emotion, as the chorded viol wrings melody from the tortured air."

"Yet to the eye that judges of effects from causes, there is less power and far less courage in the strife of Byron than in the serenity of Wordsworth. Byron could not rise as he did to the dignity of mental calmness and the majesty of mental contentment. There is in Wordsworth none of the narrow sympathy and bigoted enthusiasm of the school of passionists. He can love his own thoughts without hating those of others. He indulges in no straining after the impossible,—no reaching after the unattainable. When he has created a sentiment with the ardour of a poet, he determines its value with the judgment of a philosopher. The temper which recognises the good that is in the world, is more maturely wise than that which searches for the evil. Compare the impressions with which Wordsworth and Southey have contemplated that class of persons who are 'content to dwell in decencies for ever,' and who perform all the outward and visible duties appointed by religion, but without any of the kind gushings of a human heart. You may compare the two. Southey's dialogue is thus.

STRANGER.

Was his wealth
Stored fraudulently,—the spoil of orphans wrong'd,
And widows who had none to plead their right?

TOWNSMAN.

All honest, open, honourable gains,
Fair legal interest, bonds and mortgages,
Ships to the East and West.

STRANGER.

Why judge you then
So hardly of the dead?

TOWNSMAN.

For what he left
Undone,—for sins not one of which is written
In the Decalogue—

STRANGER.

Yet these
Are reservoirs whence public charity
Still keeps her channels full.

TOWNSMAN.

Now, Sir, you touch
Upon the point. This man of half a million
Had all these public virtues which you praise:
But the poor man rang never at his door,
And the old beggar at the public gate,
Who, all the summer long, stands hat in hand,
He knew how vain it was to lift an eye
To that hard face. Yet he was always found
Among your ten and twenty pound subscribers,
Your benefactors in the newspapers.
His alms were money put to interest
In the other world,—donations to keep open
A running charity account with heaven,—
Retaining fees against the last assizes,
When, for the trusted talents, strict account
Shall be required from all, and the old Archlawyer
Plead his own cause as plaintiff.

The traits of Wordsworth's description are not more similar than the tone of his feeling is different.

Many, I believe, there are
Who live a life of virtuous decency,
Men who can hear the Decalogue and feel
No self-reproach; who of the moral law
Established in the land where they abide
Are strict observers: and not negligent
In acts of love to those with whom they dwell,
Their kindred, and the children of their blood.

Have we now any indignant denunciation of these as not fulfilling the whole measure of Christian charity? No such thing!—That one blames the rich for what they do not: this considers how much they do. 'Praise be to such, and to their slumbers peace!' is the wiser ejaculation of his comprehensive mind: and he goes on to tell us that the poor man, the abject poor, does not find

> In this cold abstinence from evil deeds,
> And these inevitable charities,
> Wherewith to satisfy the human soul?"

"No doubt," said Seward, "the Laureate's is a younger wisdom than his friend's. He writes like one in whom nature has not done with her resentments. The other might usually take for his motto the lines of the kindly-souled *chansonnier*,

> De l'univers observant la machine,
> J'y vois du mal, et n'aime que le bien."

"It is in the same spirit of catholic sympathy," said Mr. Thompson, "that in a matter of taste between the two conditions, he observes a difference without disgust, and blames a fault without bitterness.

> The wealthy, the luxurious, by the stress
> Of business roused, or pleasure, ere their time,
> May roll in chariots, or provoke the hoofs
> Of the fleet coursers they bestride, to raise
> From earth the dust of morning, slow to rise;
> *And they, if blest with health and hearts to care,*
> *Shall lack not their enjoyment*:—but how faint
> Compared with ours! who, pacing side by side,
> Could, with an eye of leisure, look on all
> That we behold; and lend the listening sense
> To every grateful sound of earth and air;
> Pausing at will—our spirits braced, our thoughts
> Pleasant as roses in the thickets blown,
> And pure as dew bathing their crimson leaves."

"The feature of mind which you have noticed," said

I, "is certainly a quality of the highest character. In the proportion of the largeness of the mind is the variety of the sympathy: it was great in Scott, complete in Shakspeare. Few poets of this day may claim this praise. There is much mental intolerance and exclusiveness of feeling in Southey, and still more in Coleridge, while it overruns the writings of Shelley and Mrs. Hemans, and becomes disgusting in the pages of their followers. Wherever it exists, it indicates one who, whatever may be his faculties of intellect, is the subject of his feelings,—one who has not risen from the thraldom of his emotion, nor surveyed with discourse of reason the mood which he has left. In Wordsworth's treatment of the most disturbing passions of the soul, there is no touch of discomposure. Of the most earnest wants of sensibility, and of the most mysterious experience of the heart, he writes as one

> From such disorder free,
> Nor rapt, nor craving, but in settled peace.

'It is the privilege of the ancients,' says Lessing, 'whatever be the subject which they treat, to enter upon it with that spirit of calm inquiry which preserves them steadily in the middle line between the vice of exaggeration on the one hand, and the fault of coldness on the other.' No modern has attained so much of this moderation; none has so much mental candour, so much intellectual impartiality."

"The pervading purpose of Wordsworth," said Mr. Thompson, "is to assert the sufficientness of the world as it is, to satisfy all the honest wants of a heart which acquiesces in the wise and the good,—to declare that the scheme of Providence is equally kind when it takes away as when it gives. Therefore the sigh of regret or the groan of despair never mingles in his music; his high moral still being,

> We will grieve not, rather find
> Strength in what remains behind.

Coleridge and Hemans delight to bring us by successive descents of pictured misery down the road of discontent, till at the last they flash upon us the precipice of despair, and vanish; they fling us out of their control into the abyss of gloom. They furnish, as it were, the *reductio ad absurdum* of repining and despondency. But in the restorative suggestions of Wordsworth, you see the power which curbs and brings back to its anterior peacefulness the tempests which its might had raised. The master is never carried off his feet; but when he has displayed his magic ends in the same self-possession he began in. The one party resembles life's mock creator, the dramatist, who, when he has brought things to the last acme of despair and misery, lets the curtain fall, confessing his inability to re-arrange the fragments which he has jumbled in most admired disorder. The other resembles the true creator, who can reduce men to the last depth of ruin, and bring them back again to peace and power, without marring the interest of the scene, and displays more strength in calming the agitation of excitement than he does in raising it. He contemplates the losses of life without being deprived of the wisdom of hope, and nothing that he can feel of loneliness or want can

> Disturb
> His cheerful faith, that all which he beholds
> Is full of blessings.

When Coleridge compares his youth with his age, the breath of unchecked melancholy simply passes over his lyre, like the melodious sigh of a Greek anthologist, which returns into itself, and is as hopeless after the utterance as before it.

> *When* I was young!—ah! woful *when*,
> Ah for the change 'twixt now and then!
> This breathing house not made with hands,
> This body that does me grievous wrong,
> O'er airy cliffs and glittering sands
> How lightly *then* it flashed along!

Wordsworth in like manner speaks of the change that has come upon him—

> From what he was when first
> He came among the hills; when like a roe
> He bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
> Of the deep rivers and the lonely streams,
> Wherever nature led.

He tells us of the days in which the sounding cataract,

> The tall rock,
> The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
> Their colours and their forms, were then to him
> An appetite,—a feeling and a love,
> That had no need of a remoter charm
> By thought supplied, or any interest
> Unborrowed from the eye.

As he reviews the scene, he says,

> That time is past,
> And all its aching joys are now no more,
> And all its dizzy raptures.

Yet mark the manly judgment with which he puts by the unphilosophic weakness of regret, and the ingenuity of hopefulness with which he finds a compensation for 'what age takes away.'

> Not for this
> Faint I, nor mourn, nor murmur; other gifts
> Have followed, for such loss, I would believe,
> Abundant recompense:

and he goes on to recount the graver instruction which the landscape gives since he can hear

> The still, sad music of humanity,
> Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
> To chasten and subdue;

and can recognize

> In nature and the language of the sense,

> The anchor of his purest thoughts, the nurse,
> The guide, the guardian of his heart, and soul
> Of all his moral being.

And his resolution 'never to submit' to vain repining, is finely seen in the lines which follow these—

> Nor perchance
> If I were not thus taught, should I the more
> Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
> For thou art with me, here upon the banks
> Of this fair river; thou, my dearest friend,
> And in thy voice I catch
> The language of my former heart, and read
> My former pleasures in the shooting lights
> Of thy wild eyes.

In another of his poems, the fourth book of The Excursion, he declares that

> If the time must come, in which his feet
> No more shall stray where meditation leads,
> By flowing stream, through wood, or craggy wild,
> . . . . . the unprison'd *mind*
> May yet have scope to range among her own,
> Her thoughts, her images, her high desires:

and if 'the dear faculty of sight should fail,' he consoles himself by observing that he will still be able

> *To remember*,
> What visionary powers of eye and soul
> In youth were his; when stationed on the top
> Of some huge hill—expectant, he beheld
> The sun rise up, from distant climes return'd
> Darkness to chase, and sleep, and bring the day,
> His bounteous gift! or saw him toward the deep
> Sink—with a retinue of flaming clouds
> Attended.

And although the 'fervent raptures' of those young days of sensibility 'are for ever flown,' 'and,' he continues,

> Since their date my soul hath undergone

Change manifold, for better or for worse:
Yet cease I not to struggle and aspire
Heavenward; and chide the part of me that flags,
Through sinful choice, or dread necessity.

Since those 'soul-animating strains' were hushed, in which Milton bade us ''bate not a jot of heart or hope, but move right onward,' never has the moral or courageous cheerfulness been so nobly inculcated. Moreover, in that sublime Ode in which he teaches us that though our bodies live in time, our souls dwell ever in eternity, whose attribute for all that it contains is immortality, he indulges for a moment in a passionate regret for the departed light that lay 'about us in our infancy,' and then rises to his wonted strength of thankful satisfaction—

O joy! that in our *embers*
Is something yet doth live,
That nature still *remembers*
What was so fugitive!

And having lodged among the eternal truths of his life the knowledge which these 'high instincts' bore about them, he exclaims,

What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight;
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass or glory in the flower,

He can still find abundant blessing in what is left;

In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,—
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

The appreciant patience of his thoughtful heart discerning, that if the 'vision splendid' of heaven-remembered glory has faded into common light, '*Earth* fills her

lap' with instructions as well as 'pleasures of her own,' and that

> Another race hath been and other palms are won.

If you will compare the last stanza of an ode of Wordsworth having for its motto an extract from the ballad of Sir Patrick Spence, with the sixth paragraph of an ode of Coleridge, bearing the same motto, you will see how much more dignified and just and valuable than the unprofitable and false dejection of the more metaphysical bard is the temper in which the other, while he sees that time has 'suspended what nature gave him at his birth,' evokes as ministers of comfort those other faculties which life and the world evolve, and which are the offspring of the '*human* heart by which we live,'—

> Reason . . . . . which can bring
> The timely insight that can temper fears,
> And from vicissitude remove its sting;
> And Faith . . . aspiring to that domain
> Where joys are perfect, neither wax nor wane.

The same loftiness of spirit which will not be fretted and cannot be *ennuyé*, but 'makes the happiness it does not find,' is visible in the dignity which he gives to common things. Byron delights in nothing but the exquisite and faultless; but surely it is a coarser sensibility which is only moved by some image of perfection than that which can be satisfied with the small degree of beauty which the actual and the ordinary presents. And in this we gain a view of that disposition and faculty which give to Wordsworth a loftier rank as man and moralist than any praise of poetry implies. Knowing that the world around us and all that it contains is the highest work of heaven's great King, and is declared by him to be good and perfect, he has seen that the truest excellence of grace and loveliness must be found in the daily realities that encompass us, and we may conceive that he has aimed to find in nature and in life that same satisfaction and approval which the incarnate eye of the Mightiest and Most Pure beheld in what he

saw. The marks of deep and comprehensive thought that in Mr. Wordsworth's higher poems declare him to be a philosophic reasoner of the highest order, declare that in those smaller pieces which have been called puerile or infantile we must search for some profounder purpose than has yet appeared. Accordingly, it has appeared to me that proceeding on the notion I have indicated, his object in that class of his poems has been to show what man might feel, or ought to feel, or what Deity intended that he should feel, rather than to declare that such feelings are the self-selected emotions of his own natural temper,—to show that in the flight of butterflies, the opening of a celandine, the trials of a shepherd and the walk of a beggar, there is enough to gratify a healthy sense of the beautiful, to fill the demands of a proper interest, and to move the sensibilities of a correct heart; and who that remembers that these are the scenes which the Infinite created for perfect and contemplates for pleasing, and of these was the discourse of Christ, will deny that his is the true system of taste? —Those poets who only 'speak of Africa and golden joys,' and those moralists who feed the expectant hopes of struggling goodness with pictures of gorgeous splendour and exciting incidents in Paradise, err alike in truth of perception and in wisdom of policy, and encourage views that are both devious and discontented. As the faculties of man grow more exalted and purified, he finds higher gladness in tamer things; and it is plain that the promised joy which the righteous will attain will be accomplished not by elevating in degree the objects of pleasure, but by refining in kind the sensibilities of the observer. The punishment of Adam lay less in any actual change of the home of his days than in that blunting of his susceptibilities by sin, which made what once seemed paradise appear a sterile world; and conscience is the sworded cherub which keeps him from the joy he once tasted. Thus it seems that Mr. Wordsworth's theories are supported by his theology, and that we must accept his æsthetics until we can confute his creed."

CHAPTER IV.

While Fancy, like the finger of a clock,
Runs the great circle, and is still at home.
COWPER.

Here will I lie in this green, silent spot,
Tiara'd by these lone and lofty hills,
And draw from nothingness the myriad shapes
It holds in unseen bands,—like wreaths of clouds
Slowly unbosom'd from the viewless air.
I will make golden shapes of shadows,—tower
And temple turreted in air,—and men
In myriads,—sights firm in their fleetingness,—
Firm to the feeling, fleeting to the eye.
BAILLIE.

When we reached the village of M——, my companions left me, to pursue the route which led to their destination, and which was more westerly than my own. I had possessed Seward of all the information which related to the business I was wishing to have investigated, and I entertained very sanguine expectations of the successful result of his undertaking. The interest which he manifested in the affair, and the earnestness which he brought to bear upon the enterprise convinced me that I had not misplaced the confidence which I had reposed in his friendship, nor mistaken the vigour of the character I had trusted to. The world is apt to err in the notion which it forms of the energy and depth of nature of those whose social profession is levity and jest. Versatility of attention and caprice of power lead to the impression that the same qualities characterise the feelings and the will; whereas

the sustaining of any consistent *rôle* in life, especially that of gayety, to which no one's natural spirits can be sufficient, and which calls for an equal effort from the mental and from the moral faculties, necessarily implies unusual strength and breadth of purpose. For my own part, I have commonly found that more vigour of counsel and firmness of resolution is displayed, when serious occasion demands the exhibition, by the jester than by the dull,—by the gaily-tempered humorist than by the moody man to whom the world would impute no shadow of variableness.

It was late in the afternoon, as I was following my solitary way, that I came within sight of the residence of Mr. Thirlwall. He was a person whom I had known very intimately some years before, and with whom I still kept up an intercourse which, although it was occasional, was yet very cordial. He had often urged me to pay a visit to him on his estate, and to receive some portion of that hospitable attention which had often been paid to him by my father as well as by myself, and as the inns in that part of the country were wretched, I determined to stop and pass the evening at his house. His residence was one of uncommon natural beauty, and every thing seemed to have been done by taste and skill to improve to the utmost the natural advantages of the spot. The situation was extremely secluded; perhaps there was not within several miles a single dwelling-house with whose owner Mr. Thirlwall could have any intercourse. And it seemed to have been the effort of the proprietor in the selection and disposition of his grounds to "impress upon a wild and lonely scene, thoughts of more deep seclusion;" for his property was bounded upon two sides by a low range of hills, which curved in such a way as to enclose the plain which lay within, like an artificial embankment; and the remaining limits of the land were marked out by a high wall which completely shut out all inspection from without, and admitted of no entrance except through the single gate in front of the house. A Spenser determined to say "Avaunt" to all the troubles of the world, or a

Timon resolved from other reasons to renounce all intercourse with its inhabitants, would not easily have constructed a residence which would more effectually have insured a complete separation from all the annoyance which the society of man, of itself, obtruded upon their spirits. Though the possessor of these domains could not lay claim to the character of either of these in its completeness, yet his disposition had certainly much of the eccentricity of the one, and perhaps all the imaginativeness of the other; and as the eye of one acquainted with the qualities which distinguished the owner of this place, passed over the peculiarities of the scene, one could not fail to trace in the security of its solitude and in the richness of its beauty, the influence of those tastes and mental qualities which rendered the nature which they attached to, a subject of surprise, interest and regret. It is not often that any single quality or passion so completely absorbs all the feelings and desires of the mind that a man shall be willing to sacrifice every other employment and gratification to the exercise or indulgence of that alone; it is, indeed, a rare thing for the course of life to set through such a channel that the general tenor of our condition shall lead to the habitual satisfaction of the prominent aim or instinct of our nature: but the case of Mr. Thirlwall presented an instance of a person resigning all his existence to one of his pleasures, and making the lightest of amusements the laborious business of his being; disposing all the circumstances around him with reference to one object and contemplating the years which lay before him as the unending playtime of a single sport.

A broad, green avenue led from the gateway to the mansion-house, and was edged on both sides by rich clusters of trees whose monotony of colour was agreeably relieved by a profusion of fine flowers which extended on every quarter, cresting the hillocks and flowing wide through the undulations of the soil, with the living luxury of bright and bubbling fountains. Through the infrequent openings in the massive folds of the foliage that curtained the path, might be seen the expanse

of the velvet landscape beyond, the shrubbery of which was occasionally serving for the niche of some marble statue whose silent whiteness of repose spread over the scene the classical dignity and calm elevation of a Tiburtine villa. Towards the limits of this small kingdom of variegated beauty, the soil rose by a very gradual elevation, which brought nearly the whole breadth of the lawn into sight and gave an open and free aspect to the whole picture. The remoter parts of the scene were piled with bowers of vines, whose prodigality art had tempered into elegance.

At the termination of the avenue there stretched from each side of it towards the centre, a double row of noble elm trees, which paused when they had reached to half the distance and disclosed, through the natural portal which was thus formed, the large Gothic mansion of the owner, which upon the other quarters they surrounded by a perfect circle occasionally broken to give a view and passage from the house towards the lateral grounds. The building was a handsome one, in the picturesque style of Tudor architecture, and very suitably placed with respect of the interesting points of the scenery around it. Close to the house were several lofty and widely-branching oaks which flung their deep, brown shade upon the arched windows and gave an air of seclusion and security to the whole of the establishment. Several of the walls were closely mossed over with the dark-leaved ivy, whose impenetrable thickness of protection produced an impression of delightful warmth and comfort. The whole aspect of the place as you came within its rampart of elms struck you with a glad surprise of pleasantness.

Mr. Thirlwall received me with kindness, and we sat down to tea. When we had done, he invited me to walk over the grounds with him, and we accordingly surveyed a considerable part of the estate, and then, as it was growing late, returned to the house. We talked about a variety of things, and my companion entered into the conversation with ease and cheerfulness, yet manifestly with a very faint interest. He seemed to

bring to every topic a mind preoccupied by some inward concernment which prevented his being much or long engaged with any passing and external affairs. The same singularity marked his manner. It was nervous, hasty, impatient,—sometimes rapid and uneasy, as if he were troubled by the consciousness of something which it did not give him pleasure to reflect on. Occasionally, however, it would relapse into entire calmness and serenity, and he would fall into a mood of dreaminess which appeared to carry him away from the perception of every thing around him; and film would gather over his eye, and his remarks become rambling and careless, or his share in the conversation would entirely cease. His expressions to me were obliging and attentive, yet his tones were distant and indifferent, as if he were addressing a person with whom he had no sympathy, and towards whom regard was impossible, though enmity was out of the question. I was struck with the change which had taken place in his manner since I had last seen him; there seemed, indeed, to have been no decline in the friendliness of his feelings to me, for there was the same apathy exhibited by him in relation to every thing which came before him; it was a general cessation of interest in all the occurrences and objects of life. A secret subject of feeling apparently wrapped up within itself all his thoughts, and left him no animation of fellowship with the rest of the world. If it had not been for the placidness of his temper, and the pleasant, though negligent good humour of his observations, which are qualities that never belong to madness, I should have been tempted to believe that the solitude of his life, and the nature of his ordinary occupation had disturbed the balance of his reason, and clouded with the vapours of hallucination the clearness of a mind naturally the strongest and most distinct. His brow was furrowed with premature wrinkles, and his countenance looked care-worn and jaded.

When we had returned from our ramble, we seated ourselves in a couple of capacious Gothic chairs which

stood within one of the rooms near to a broad casement that led to the garden, and looking out upon the moonlighted sky through the pierced foliage that fell above us, continued our conversation. The apartment was furnished with unusual elegance and expense, and in a style which seemed foreign and fanciful. A number of handsome pictures, in costly frames, hung around the walls; and in each corner was a statue of some distinguished hero, elevated on a bracket which raised it very far above the head of the spectator. A very broad ottoman, or low couch, richly covered with crimson velvet, stood near one side of the room, and several smaller seats of the same description were standing on other parts of the floor. Two other apartments, connected with this, the one in the rear and the other at the side of it, were arranged in the same style of striking and poetical ornament.

I felt a good deal of curiosity to know something about Mr. Thirlwall's manner of life in this strange habitation which he had created for himself in the midst of an unrefined community and an uncultivated portion of the country, and to learn by what process of experience and feeling he had been led to adopt it, and what had been the results of it to his happiness and his hopes. He did not at first seem inclined to encourage the subject, but as I renewed the conversation several times upon the same point with as much tact and delicacy as I could, his repugnance gradually gave way, and as the familiarity and confidence of our former intercourse slowly returned, he began to speak with freedom and unreserve about himself and his peculiar mode of passing his time. The flighty unconcern, and frigid thoughtlessness of his manner presently disappeared almost wholly; he became cordial and earnest—warm in his sympathies and hearty in his expression of them. As I found that he grew disposed to be communicative, and he had already spoken repeatedly of his past and present situation, I at length prevailed upon him to give me a complete and detailed sketch of the course of circumstances which had brought him to the eccentric con-

dition and character in which I then beheld him. He began as follows:—

"I need not tell you any thing of the situation and circumstances of my family. You are sufficiently well acquainted with them already, and they are of no importance to a story which relates only to the private feelings and tastes of an individual. From my birth, my nature was characterised by an uncommon delicacy of susceptibility—a quality of being which sometimes creates uncommon mental excellence, but oftener generates more extraordinary moral depravity. But while I was thus dowered with a disposition which inclined me to shrink from struggling with the world, I possessed a strongly ambitious spirit which made enterprise and distinction the earliest dreams of my life. Such an antagonism between the wish and the will, which is often found in man, and never without producing distress and pain.

For the ordinary active sports on which my companions expended their superfluous health and spirits I had no fondness; that sensitiveness which haunted every act and observation with a maddening criticism of shame or ridicule made me shun society, and find no pleasure except in the unfettered freedom of solitude. Books furnished me at once with relief from the annoying workings of an unoccupied attention, and with that interest and excitement with which I loved to feed my fancy. I read incessantly, biography and history being my principal delights. I assumed the consciousness and partook the nature, rather than followed the career of those who had won the loftiest eminences in art and arms. When my thoughts were thus elevated by an imagined kindred with the great, and my feelings overshone with a borrowed lustre of unreal importance, it was a dreary dissipation of the vivid, albeit visionary joy that filmed my mental sight, and a stripping off of the airy but delightful robes in which my musings had invested me so royally, to descend into the actual world and assume among my fellows the place which my unpractised abilities could acquire for me. Defeat and

bitter failure of course attended the attempt to maintain in truth, what fancy had assumed—to transfer to the stage of reality that character which the green-room of meditation had rehearsed. I found myself flung down from that fellowship with greatness and distinction to which the repeated contemplation of those conditions had insensibly raised me, and it is not wonderful that from every experience of the unwelcome difference of dreams and deeds I retreated within the shadow of past times, and in the loneliness of the library again invested myself with the forms and fictions of ideal action. When I was visited by reflections of the unworthiness of this slothful pleasure, and the fact pressed itself upon me that I was actually inferior to all about me in those trials which belonged to our age, I summoned contempt to my protection, and persuaded myself that I failed in the sports and labours which others delighted in, only because they were too trifling for my attention, and that I was reserving my powers for more fitting effort in the great scenes of maturer life. When I called up pictures of the stirring enterprise of the world before a mind bold in speculation and daring in idea, there seemed no labour to which I was unequal; and I thus comforted the failure of the present with the triumphs of the future—still putting off to coming days the exertion of powers which every day was enfeebling and unstringing, and not perceiving that constantly as time passed on the work grew more difficult, and the ability grew weaker. My friends observed my devotion to books and commended the diligence of my knowledge-loving habits, and that was applauded as a studious disposition which ought to have been condemned as sloth and timidness. The information which I acquired, not being treasured and arranged with reference to future use, only coloured the romance of my spirit and gave a ground and a material for the architecture of the unshaped schemes which filled my whole consideration. I read, to find in that employment, escape from pain and waste of feeling, rather than to school my intellect or furnish my memory; and while the lettered page

was still before my eyes there almost always floated between, some of 'the visions that arise without a sleep.' Where the understanding is robust and the passions not undisciplined, miscellaneous reading is perhaps not injudiciously recommended; still it will be generally found that in professions or stations which imply action and require energy, those who have reached the highest eminence have usually not been bred in habits of acquisitive study. The uncertain resolution and vacillating purpose of those who have drawn their education from books are very opposite to the prompt decision and fixed design demanded by business. Morals and philosophy deal not with conclusions; their course is everlastingly progressive—their works continuously cumulative. Even where the later life is likely to have a literary cast, and will certainly be benefited by a youth of reading, I think that there is one species of study often enjoined and readily embraced which is likely to produce more injury than good—I mean biographies and memoirs. For the lives of distinguished persons present to us the performance of the man, but not the preparation of the [illegible]; we see how successfully skill was exerted, but not how laboriously it was acquired; we behold the efforts but not the elements of power; we look upon a picture of obedient energies and willing vigour, and overlook the years of training and breaking which subdued the nature to this necessary law. And the contemplation of finished results in character tends, I suspect, to seduce the toils of the young student, and will certainly dash the important hopefulness of his labours by suggesting that the pains and assiduity which he must put forth were not requisite in their case, and will disgust him with that wild crudeness in himself which he supposes was never shared by the models which he emulates.

"I passed through college with a kind of factitious reputation which was based upon some vague opinion of ability which went abroad, but would have been completely destroyed in the first moment that it was fully tested—a doubtful distinction which was founded on no

one positive act or specific talent, but gained by exhibiting irregular glimpses of power in small matters, which the vulgar magnified into an indefinite possibility of success in every thing I might choose to undertake. An extensive acquaintance with literary history, which is the gossipry of learning, enabled me to affect a plausible familiarity with sciences, of whose precise and serious details I really knew nothing; and by talking over the heads of people upon a number of subjects of which it is creditable to young students to be ignorant, I gained a character for knowledge, which made the unthinking envious, but would have been deemed wholly worthless by the judicious and discerning. I lived almost wholly alone, and mingled rarely, and then distantly, with even those of my own class and standing; and this seclusion, joined with expressions of contemptuous sentiment which I took care to have handed about, gained me at once respect and dislike. There were several literary societies in the college, and I became a member of one of them. It was my earnest ambition to be distinguished in the debates which took place in this body, and if I could have divested myself of the diseased and absurd feelings into which I had cradled myself, and thrown my mind resolutely into the task, I think that I had knowledge and talent enough to have succeeded reasonably well. But it was pretty certain that my first efforts would be failures, and I feared to peril upon this trial the reputation which I already possessed. My pride conspired with my diffidence to keep me silent. I had so familiarized my thoughts with the brightness of mature success that I could not think of descending to pick my way through the dark and broken road of practice and toil which led to it, and I accordingly maintained a sullen silence of ill-affected contempt while I sat by and saw others passing through the ordeal of repeated defeat to that certainty of triumph which I longed to seize. With a curling lip and a sneering eye I regarded the contest, and laughed at performances which I secretly envied. The mob imagined that I might have excelled if I had

chosen, and that nothing but indolence or indifference kept me silent; I knew in my heart the falsehood of the defence, and that knowledge stung me with mortification. From the distress of regret and self-condemnation with which I was thus ceaselessly harassed, my only refuge was in those opiate consolations of the fancy with which the tedious hours of my youth had been so often soothed. In the hours not occupied by lectures and recitations, I shut myself up in my room, and dismissed all my thoughts and feelings into the world of dreams. The ambition which was balked and baffled in the daily experience, there triumphed with boundless power; the longings of the sensitive heart, which found no aliment in the dull callousness of the exterior scene, made for themselves a rich satisfaction in the realms of fiction. The glory which I hourly sighed for was at my feet; the romance of greatness which flitted before the eye of hope was spread before me in all its pomp and vastness of delight. Those qualities of appetence and acquisition whose disproportion in the actual view produced the misery which vexed my nature, changed their functions in the ideal sphere; the wish became the prodigal purveyor to the mind, and fancy wrought out the bright condition which made the reason gaze with wonder. The honour which most I coveted was distinction in literature, and it was the supposed possession of this reward with which I pleased my senses in these reveries of the day. I read the most finished and brilliant productions of the most famous poets before an ideal audience, and felt the pleasure which the rarest success of authorship bestows. The amaranth of unfading glory shaded my brows, and the plaudits of eager admiration were ever ringing in my ears. Gradually the persuasion of this baseless situation ate away the consciousness of my true position, and I lived, and moved, and went through all the affairs of life, girt with the abiding splendour of a dream.

"I left college, and entered into the amusements of society. For two or three years the novelty of min-

gling with the world diverted and interested me. Occasionally I beguiled the time with a recurrence to my old pastime of seeing beauties and greatness that did not exist: but the frequent interruptions of social engagements prevented the habit from tyrannizing over and possessing my mind as it once had done. At length the charms of society were exhausted by repetition, and the tide of things had borne me into the more solid concerns of serious business. I had passed through the portals of professional preparation, and presented myself to the world as a candidate for the patronage of employment. But the marks of feebleness and confinement which the swathing bands of long seclusion and morbid meditations had left upon my character, rendered me unfit for the rude and stern bustling of the world. It was a pain to me to give my attention to the prosaic common-places of daily occupation, and the unlustrous dulness of quiet duty. An insane imagination, like a slavish parasite, had flattered me into a vastness of expectation which the moderation of the tribute that the selfish world afforded, mocked with disappointment, and filled me with disgust and despair. When others were not eager to load me with praises, their abstinence from incense seemed contempt and insult. The wide intensity of all my apprehensions and impressions, had accustomed me to regard every thing with a primary and peculiar reference to myself, and when the herd of men went each on his own way and only regarded me as a subordinate and unimportant point in his system of life, this necessary insignificance on my part irritated me with bitter mortification. I slowly awoke to the consciousness that I was but a common man—that, 'the doom of mortality,' was not to be 'reversed for me'—that the splendid impossibilities of hope with which I had imped my powers, were but painted wings upon a form of clay. Yet when I turned from this discouragement to look within, I found no comfort there; I had no relish for the calmness of thought, and memory presented only a scene of regret and self-reproach. My thoughts, long accustomed to excitement and event,

were vehemently impelled towards the external, and I felt urged to pour my spirit forth upon the fields of action and incident. But in me, 'the strong desire eclipsed the aim;' I wished the prize too madly to contend for it. The long interval which lies between the effort and the end, in life, wearied my longings; for I knew not how meanwhile to still the beatings of my heart. The necessary patience of ambition was not mine. If one great momentary struggle could have won me the reward I coveted, I might have put forth gigantic strength; but the slow cold touches of continued toil—what were they at the best but failure, in themselves, where the instant constantness of everlasting victory was demanded. I could not endure to plant the tardy seed, and lie down and rise up, and see no fruit, but teach myself to wait. The ardour of desire strangled its own promptings; the full anticipation of enjoyment debauched the senses from that healthy hardihood of strength which the acquisition of the boon required. In truth, those who have ever attained greatness have never contemplated that result when they began; they have applied themselves with hopefulness and content to the successive labours which their progress brought up to them, and have always made the immediate end that lay before them, the sole task which absorbed their consideration.

"It will not be deemed surprising that from the discomfort of these painful realities, I fled to my former visionary occupation. No food, less stimulating than the banquet of passionate dreams, could satisfy a taste long corrupted by familiarity with the wonderful and the exaggerated. I counted my years, and found that I was still much younger than those whom I saw successful around me; and I saw no reason why I might not yet trifle away some months in the enervating idleness of revery, and defer to a period yet distant the full and earnest exertions of those energies which I still intended to exert. With a rapture that was undisturbed by a single fear or doubt, I flung myself into the elysian fields of fancy, and tasted all the joy which flowered

there so freely. I was one day engaged in this fascinating employment when the thought came suddenly upon me—why may I not pass all my life in this condition, and never wake from the dream which thus delights me? The pleasure which I derived from imagination was equally strong with that which reality presented; perhaps it was even greater, for it caught only the gratifications of the circumstances which it painted, and showed none of the abatements and detractions which the actual situation would have experienced. In truth, the joy in no wise differed in kind; for in life, it is not the thing, but the notion of the thing, which touches the mind. Moreover, from the most pleasing incidents is not the chief pleasure extracted by imagining the event which is at hand? If it be well pondered, there is no element of sweetness in the occurrences of truth which is not an ingredient in the cup of fancy. This suggestion spread a glow of delight through my mind, and swept away all the annoyances and anxieties which had so much harassed me. There was no obstacle to its fulfilment; my father had recently died and left me the heir of an extensive fortune, and I had not a relative in the world. In society, such a scheme would not be practicable, for a thousand necessities force one into fellowship with men; but I might retire from the world, and in the solitude of a life-long singleness gild my being with the richest hues of conceivable ecstasy. What if such a course were weak and unworthy—fit rather for the foolish girl than the full-grown man? If it increased my happiness that was all I regarded. I might defy opinion, and never come to a reckoning with prudence. I bore this joy within myself, and character, and esteem, and worldly consideration were nothing to me.

"In fulfilment of this scheme I fixed myself in this place, and in it my only occupation has been—to dream. My days are one continued exercise of fancy. The morning wakes me to no other task than that of building airy domes of pleasure, and at night the curtain falls upon a life whose substance is a shadow. I

recline upon yonder sofa and the air above me is peopled with the phantoms of royal pomp: the atmosphere of oriental magnificence is roseate around me, and the hum of admiring multitudes rises beneath. I have rehearsed the tales of the poet and the harangues of the orator under such strong deception of idea, that if I were to speak thoughtlessly of certain of the more distinguished productions of genius, I should probably allude to them as my own. Again and again have I enacted on a shadowy theatre the majestic melancholy of Hamlet, the furrowed agonies of Lear, the more domestic anguish of Othello; until beneath the strong delusion of imagined greatness, I have felt my own name brightened with all the rays of glory which the gratitude of ages and of nations has reflected on the name of Shakspeare. I walk beside the murmuring brook and say to myself that Virgil treads the sod. I recline beneath the shadow of the elm and think that Horace is musing by his lyre. Within the covering of this window-seat I have repeated all the battles of Alexander, and strode along the portico beneath with all the stateliness of another Napoleon. So habitual have these things become to me that I never for a moment realize my true condition and character. Through long repetition of the exertion, invention has ceased to be an effort, and fancy seems now to work of its own free accord. I have also wrought out an interior and secondary degree of imaginary existence, which is subtler than the ordinary medium of visions, in the same proportion that that is finer than the substance of a solid. My nightly dreams always present to me this rarefied and transcendental species of ideas; though during many months after I had begun this profession of day-dreaming, I never dreamt in sleep. This sublimated delicacy of visions to which I have attained, is inexpressibly delightful. Thus do I pass my time. No trouble comes near me; no fear can rise up to vex me. I have wealth enough to secure me from any apprehension of physical discomfort; I have every thing around me to make my days flow on in unrippled peace. I look upon myself as

having discovered the art of life. I sow no seed, yet reap the richest fruit. I plant no vines, but quaff the rarest wine. All past and all possible existence is tributary to my pleasure. For my honour the bard has sung; for my glory has the warrior striven. By me, no toil is borne; on me, is showered the selectest essence of all the joy the great of other times have *seemed* to feel."

When Mr. Thirlwall had finished his narrative, our conversation ended, and I retired to my room. I have seen many persons whom I might venture to call happy; I have known but one whose life I thought delicious.

CHAPTER V.

He who hath trod the paths of life,
And marked of vice and truth the strife,
Hath seen the deathless strength of ill,
Which, baffled often, struggles still.
There is in thoughts of sin, a spirit,
A life, a power, unknown to merit;
A might that triumphs e'en in failing,
And whose despair ends with prevailing;
A force, nor fears nor flames can quell,
Charged, as they are, with breath from Hell.
W. S. LANDOR.

I RESUMED my journey on the following morning and reached my father's house about noon. I found him just preparing to set off for Mr. Thompson's. He was highly pleased to see me, for he was wishing to know what had taken place on my part, and from want of that knowledge had been a good deal embarrassed in his plans of proceeding. I briefly recounted what had occurred, and the statement confirmed him in his opinion of the propriety of seeing Thompson in person as soon as possible, and proposed to me to join him in his journey for that purpose, and discuss matters more at length on our way. I assented very readily to this, and we set off together without delay.

"The moment that I received from you," said my father, as we cantered briskly along the road, "the narrative of the disappearance of that letter of Thompson's which I sent to you, I determined to lose no time in supplying its place by another document from the same quarter. Circumstances, which I could not put aside, prevented my visiting the writer myself which I should

otherwise have done; but I at once despatched a dependible servant with orders to obtain from him a detailed statement in writing of the whole of his connexion with Torrens so far as it affected me, and to have it duly and formally authenticated. This paper was accordingly procured from him by my messenger, but owing to some mistake or negligence—which might indeed have been expected from employing the agency of another in an affair so delicate and important—is very unprecise in its language, and has no authority of witnesses or acknowledgment. It is, in fact, a loose and rambling declaration of facts, with the signature of a man whose handwriting cannot possibly be proved. I received it about an hour ago, and resolved to lose no time in correcting the omission and securing, beyond accident of failure, all the evidence which this individual has to impart. It was for this object that you found my horse at the door. You acted with entire discretion in sending those whom you did, upon the same errand; but that by no means dispenses with the propriety of our undertaking the same mission. No one can do this business so thoroughly and securely as ourselves, and I can elicit much valuable information from Thompson which another would never think of inquiring for."

"In mentioning to you," said I, "the proceedings of his former accomplice which I witnessed, I forgot to tell you, that I have long known this person whom you call Torrens, by the name of Tyler. I met him in company as a conspicuous member of the society which I frequented, and was delighted and surprised by his talent and accomplishment. In truth, I have never seen any man for whose mental powers I have conceived a higher estimation, nor one more distinguished for intellectual dignity and moral elevation."

"I formed the same opinion of him," said my father, "when I met him on several occasions on which our mutual relations to Mr. Thompson brought us together. He then appeared, as I have told you, in the character of a large creditor of that person whose surety I was.

He impressed me, at that time, with a strong conviction of his entire honesty, and eminent respectability. He had none of the plausibility of manner by which an ordinary rogue would have sought to recommend himself. He was reserved, and somewhat stately in his demeanour, and rather seemed to disregard the notion which might be formed of him; he inclined you to respect rather than esteem him, and to admire him more than like him. He had none of the vulgar rapacity of a man who exulted in seizing the spoil he had been struggling for; but, on the contrary, all the gentlemanlike delicacy and consideration of a man accustomed to refined and pure associations of thought and conversation, and who comprehended and consulted my feelings by the sympathy of a similar character. He left with me a most favourable recollection, not unmingled with the gratitude which is felt for the display of that honourable courtesy in periods of distress, which we think can only be prompted by sentiments of genuine exaltedness."

"The ability," said I, "which he has displayed with such signal results, to my experience, makes me extremely doubtful of our final success in what we have undertaken. Still, to mortal power there must be a limit, and I think that in this case, his has been passed. He seems to have entrusted the whole care of Thompson to his brother and the man to whom he was sent; and if he has taken no other means to put him out of the way, I believe we shall baffle him. Our greatest protection lies in the circumstance, that he is ignorant of Thompson's residence; and unless the latter has written to some one beside yourself, none but you and his brother are acquainted with it. If we are not disappointed in getting such papers as we hope for, I think that Mr. Tyler must have both the inspired knowledge of the cloven-tongue, and the inspired power of the cloven-foot if he filches them from us again. He has violated the wisdom of the Spartan maxim, and if he has not taught us how to conquer him, has at least given

us such practical knowledge, as will prevent our being a second time conquered."

The road which we were now upon, struck into that which Seward and his companion were following, about the distance of a day's journey from the place where Thompson was lying. Owing to the crookedness of the way by which they were going, the circuitous course which I had taken was, in fact, not longer than theirs, and the soil vastly better. There was a reasonable hope, that by rapid riding, we should be able to reach the road which they were travelling, before they had passed the spot where we should in this way join them. It was near the close of the following day that we arrived at the junction of the two directions, and we rode along for some time before we could ascertain whether the party which we were in quest of had gone by. We at length came upon a toll-gate, from the keeper of which, we learned that no persons answering the description which we gave had ridden through within that or the preceding day. We, therefore, waited at the next inn for their approach, and in the course of two or three hours they came up. It was quite dark by the time they overtook us, and as there was no good inn farther on, which could be reached that night, and the road was bad and not very safe, we decided to remain where we were that evening and push forward on the following morning. The next day, it was thought, would bring us to the end of our journey.

My companions, being fatigued with their ride, had retired to bed about nine o'clock. For my own part, not being inclined to sleep, I remained sitting upon a small portico which ran along the back of the inn, enjoying the freshness of the evening air and meditating upon the affairs which now engrossed all my consideration. I had been musing silently in this way for half an hour, when a horseman rode rapidly into the yard and dismounted at a little distance from me. I was hidden in the shadow of the porch and he did not see me. The landlord came out to receive him, and after

some salutations had passed between them, the stranger said in a low, but somewhat anxious voice,

"What company have you here?"

"There are four gentlemen," replied the landlord, "who came from the north this evening; and there is a man from the country, and that is all."

"Did the four persons you speak of, all come together? Are they of the same party?"

"Ay, they are all of one company."

"Did you hear the names of any of them?" pursued the stranger, in the same smothered tone.

"Why, I heard one of them called Stanley, and another called Thompson; but I do not rightly know who they are, nor where they come from."

"Stanley, did you say?" inquired the traveller, with a tone of some surprise; "a young man, I suppose?"

"No," said the landlord, "the gentleman they called by that name is an oldish man—a kind of pretty old man."

"Humph! And they go to-morrow?"

"Their horses are ordered at sunrise: but one of the gentlemen is here in the room, and you can see him if you want. You seem so particular, perhaps you know them. But—here, John, take the gentleman's horse."

"No, I am going on; I am very sorry I can't stop. I have business ahead."

"Why, you can't get to the Stony Run *this* night, any how, with them bad roads and no moon, neither."

"O yes!" replied the other, getting into his saddle, "the moon is just rising and I shall have an easy ride. Hark ye! landlord," putting something into his hand, "you need not mention that any body passed; I am looking after a gang of counterfeiters that came along this road, and I do not want it known that I am after them."

"Do you think these be them?" said the host, in an eager whisper.

"No, they are not; it is a different party, that, I suspect, has gone forward. Good night;" and he dashed

his spurs into his horse and rode off on a gallop. As he passed under a lamp which stood in the inn-yard, I caught a distinct impression of his features, which were not those of any person whom I had ever seen before. After sitting a little longer I rose and retired to bed.

The next day we stopped to dine at a house about two hours' ride distant from the place where we expected to find the person whose discovery was the object of our expedition. While we were sitting at the table and my companions were engaged in the duties of the hour, my eye happened to be directed to a window which was opposite to the seat which I was occupying. I saw the face of a man, on the outside of the sash, rising very slowly above the base of the window, until his eye commanded the position in which we were sitting. The moment that his dark and bushy eyebrows, shrouding a glance of singular keenness encountered my sight, I was certain that this was the same person whom I had seen in the inn-yard the evening before. To be sure, I had seen the countenance of that man very distantly and very hurriedly, and at this time I saw no more than the upper part of the intruder's face; and I know not why the conviction seized me so strongly that the individuals were the same. However, the impression of the instant was so strong, that I did not think of questioning it. A certain sentiment of distrust had been lurking in my mind as to the character and purpose of the stranger whose inquiries of the landlord I had overheard on the night previous, which prepared me to expect another meeting with him, and when I observed a person assuming the suspicious attitude of a spy, a persuasion of the identity of the two men very naturally flashed upon my mind. The account which the traveller had given of his being in pursuit of fugitive criminals struck me at the time as a mere subterfuge to explain the solicitude which he had exhibited to know who were at that time the occupants of the inn. For if his object had really been what he had stated, why had he manifested surprise when the

landlord informed him that the name of one of his guests was Stanley!

The stranger cast a rapid glance over the company, as if he were numbering the persons who composed it and marking their character, and then disappeared. I rose immediately, threw up the window and looked out; but no one was to be seen. I ran into the yard and surveyed the avenues in which he might be supposed to have concealed himself, but with no better success. I returned to the dining-room, but found that my companions had risen from their meal and were settling the bill with the landlord, and I, therefore, did not mention to them the circumstance which had occurred or the suspicions which it excited in my mind. The incident, however, rested in my thoughts with a good deal of uneasiness, and as we rode along, I pondered the conversation which I have alluded to, with more earnestness of consideration than it had hitherto occasioned me. My own conjecture from the beginning had been, that the questions and remarks of this man had reference solely to our party, and that it was their amount and destination which he was wishing to ascertain. It was probable that he observed the company on previous days and had followed it perhaps for purposes of plunder. If he saw that I parted from those with whom I had been riding on the first, he might be surprised on being told that there were now four who were travelling together; and when informed that one of the number was named Stanley he might reasonably conjecture that I had rejoined my comrades, and thus conclude that the bearer of that name was a young man. When he had resumed his journey, some doubt might have been suggested to his mind—I went on to imagine—whether this party was, in fact, the one whose movements he was observing; or he might have been anxious to discover who constituted its fourth member, even if he had been certain as to the rest: and he might have wished, for this purpose, to cast his eye upon the persons, for a moment, to be entirely assured who and how many they were. I did not much apprehend his intentions,

even if he had accomplices, for we were all armed, and were strong enough in amount to resist a force as considerable as he was likely to bring against us; nevertheless, I determined to mention the matter to the others before the evening arrived, and thus to prepare them for any difficulty that might arise.

We rode along in silence for several miles, until we had nearly reached the spot of our destination. Each, I presume, was occupied like myself in contemplating the scene which was before us, and the steps which it was most expedient to pursue. The presence of the brother of the man that had so deeply wronged my father, who was necessarily deeply pained by that circumstance, and who on other accounts must have felt much at the prospect of meeting, in a last illness,—now doubtless near its close,—one to whom he stood in so tender a relation, made the moment an impressive one. The countenance of my father was grave and thoughtful; he seemed to be revolving the occasion in his mind with great interest. Hitherto nothing had been said during the whole of our journey respecting the object of it; and my father had been restrained by delicacy of feeling from even mentioning to Mr. Thompson the name of his brother. He now rode up and entered into conversation with him.

"I think," said he, in a kind tone, breaking the stillness which had long been uninterrupted, "that your brother supposes his sickness to be a dangerous one; and so far as I can gather from the letters which he has written to me, I fear that he is not in possession of those comforts of attendance and provision which every one requires in a situation like that. My own engagements will oblige me to return home as soon as I have got through a little business with him to which he has himself solicited my attention. You, I presume, will wish to remain with him: and I beg that you will consider my purse as entirely at your disposal for any expenses that his necessities and your own convenience in the matter may occasion. You have no need to consider yourself under obligation to me for this offer; I

am only obeying the dictate of feeling and duty in being kind to one with whom I held so long a friendship, and for whom I had so sincere a regard. If he erred for a time, he was in that regard only the victim in conduct of that man of whom I and others were the victims in fortune."

A tear gathered in the eye of Thompson, and for a moment he did not reply.

"Sir," he said, at length, with much emotion, "I appreciate your kindness most sensibly; and it is the more striking as I am afraid it is wholly unmerited. Your supposition as to the unfortunate situation of my poor brother is I believe but too true. He has written to me more than once lately for pecuniary aid, and it has occasioned me the regret of anguish that it was wholly beyond my power to assist in the hour of his latest want one to whom I was bound by such strong recollections of early affection, and who, in despite of those errors for which you offer so kind an apology, always entertained for me, I am sure, a tender and abiding regard. It is an inexpressible satisfaction to me, for I know that it will be such to him, that he will be permitted to see you before he dies, and that he will be able to reverse in some degree at least, the injury which he has done you, and to express the sincerity of repentance with which he regards the treatment that you have received at his hands. But the reparation of wrong must precede the utterance of feelings; and I think on that account that you had better go first in the room with these gentlemen, and transact the business which is necessary, before he is informed that I am here. I will remain below and see him afterwards. I think that it would agitate him too much,—it may indeed agitate him fatally,—to see me. Health and spirits and the engrossments of care smother in the depths of the bosom the sentiments of former years; but sickness makes us children again, and the close of life is revisited by emotions which stronger days staved off; and you may be sure that a meeting under circumstances which will call up the vivid memory of unsaddened and bright-

ly-hoping childhood, and of the glistening glance and bodeless smile of parents, will be full of the heart's disturbance. The power of deep feelings has been rising in my bosom, and will rise yet more fully in his who was always the weaker and more passionate of the two. The white affection and unloaded laughter of boyhood are renewed before the senses; and to us, is not the renewal charged with discomposure? I beg pardon for the egotism of these remarks; they were the involuntary expression of what I felt."

"And are as honourable as natural," said my father; "and the suggestion which you make is just and important."

I was much interested and touched by what had fallen from Mr. Thompson, for in every condition, truth and feeling reaches our sympathy. There was something in the character of the speaker had awakened in me a very strong regard and compassion for him. He was a man of intellect, learning and virtue, who had passed a life of dreary suffering amid scenes of whose distressful deprivations the qualities which adorned his nature only made him more acutely sensible. A good man, he had spent his days in the twilight haunts of vice; a thoughtful man, he had dwelt in the society of those whose moral and whose mental powers the parching influence of want and labour had dried to dust; a long-enduring man, he had come forth from the ordeal of unmerited suffering, with all the sensibilities of his heart as rightly directed as they were soundly maintained. "Long years" of penury and wrong had neither stung the susceptibilities of his nature to the callous madness of crime, nor festered them to the smothered rage of misanthropy; but the conflict had left him in the clear and integral manhood of an untainted nature.

We presently reached the inn which belonged to the village,—if the two or three scattered houses which met the eye, deserved such a name,—in which Mr. Thompson was living. We alighted and ordered our horses to be stabled, and then set out to walk to the dwelling of the invalid which was on the opposite side of a com-

mon, at the distance of less than a quarter of a mile. It was arranged in accordance with the suggestion which had been made, that my father, Seward and myself should go into the chamber of the sick man immediately, and finish the business which had brought us there without any delay; and for this purpose we procured at the inn implements for writing whatever might be required, and carried them over with us.

When we had gone about a quarter of the distance, a man came running from the inn to say that a person within was anxious to see me for a moment upon a matter of immediate importance, and begged that I would return that he might say a word to me. The message left me at a loss to conjecture who, in a place of that kind, could have any business with me; but as the bearer of it assured me there could be no mistake, and as there was a possibility of its being something which it might be as well to know, I told my companions to walk on, and I would join them before they had reached the end of their walk, and I accordingly turned back with the messenger who had come after me. When I reached the house, he desired me to walk into a back room, and the person who wished to see me would wait upon me in an instant. Somewhat struck by the circumstance of any one in a place like that, employing another to invite a stranger to a colloquy with him when he might have addressed the person directly, and surprised at the formality of the matter, I nevertheless entered the room which he designated, and he closed the door and left me alone. I paced the apartment for a few minutes, but nobody appeared. I began to grow somewhat uneasy, and suspicious that a design of an unfair character was on foot, and that an unfriendly intention was designed to be reached by thus separating me from the rest of my party. Was it possible that this manœuvre had any thing to do with the movements and purposes of the man whom I had previously observed in positions to excite no small apprehension? I halted before the window, as one naturally

does when perplexed, and there beheld something which gave a different turn to my thoughts.

The side of the house by which I was standing was placed obliquely towards the common over which my companions were crossing. Mr. Thompson's house was visible at the edge of the scene which the window brought before me, and as I looked out they came in sight close to it. When they had nearly reached it, being within a few steps of the porch, a man appeared running after them apparently from the direction of the house where I was. It was the same person that I had seen the night before in the inn-yard, and a few hours before at the place where we had dined. He said something to my father, and motioned earnestly towards the quarter from which they had come, and the whole party turned round immediately and walked hastily back. He then ran forward, entered the door of Thompson's house, and closed it behind him. In a moment the comprehension of his object rushed upon me, and I understood in an instant the whole of the mysterious conduct which had puzzled me. Half-maddened by the fiendish extinction of our hopes which I saw was almost inevitable, I flew to the door that I might reach the spot before interference would be too late. It was locked, but the excitement of desperation nerved my arm with the strength of a giant, and by a single effort I tore it open and gained the outer entry. With the speed of the wind I ran out in the direction in which my friends were hastening rapidly towards me, motioning to them with my arms to return back. They did not comprehend my meaning, but ran the more quickly from the place which I wished them to reach.

"What is the matter?" cried my father, when I came up.

"Turn back, for God's sake, and come with me," cried I, without stopping; and they all hurried along at the pace at which I was going. "It is one of Tyler's emissaries; he has not known where Thompson lived, but has followed us that our course might direct him;

and now by this accursed trick he will defeat our labour."

My words added wings to my companions, and in the next minute we were upon the steps of the house. The door,—a large and heavy one, was fastened, and I turned the handle and pushed in vain. There was a moment's pause while we glanced at one another in dismay. A heavy tread was heard across the floor of the upper room, and then a short but feeble cry. There was one, and no more; it thrilled like a dagger to my heart. A momentary confusion ensued, and all was still.

"My God! my God!" cried I, "he is murdering him. Help me to break down the door, or he will perish while we pause."

Our united strength was immediately applied to the panels, and they soon gave way before us. I sprang forward before my companions, and rushed up the stairs into the room from which the sounds had proceeded. It was an apartment miserably dirty and neglected; the hot sun of the afternoon was streaming through the yellow paper curtains, and flinging a sickly light through the place. In the opposite corner was a low, red bedstead, upon which a few wretched bedclothes were lying torn and disordered. Beneath the pile was visible the stiff outline of a tall human form, and a pale hand extending under the pillow, hung over the side. The figure and the limb were motionless. I paused involuntarily when I had reached the centre of the room, and looked back. My father and Seward had entered the chamber and gazed upon the scene, and paused like myself, and turned towards the door. The other member of the party was heard slowly coming up the stairs. When he reached the apartment he stopped at the entrance for a moment, and he glanced with an uneasy rapidity from one of us to another. His countenance was stamped with an intensity of emotion, and his eye glowed with anxiety. He came forward, still looking intently on our faces, with much of hope in his, and said, "How is he?" Not a word was uttered in

reply, and he walked up to the bed. He raised the rumpled and discoloured sheet which was lying over the bolster, and disclosed the white and lifeless countenance of Thompson. He gazed for a few moments in silence, and sat down upon the edge of the bedstead. He then heaved a long sigh, clasped his hands, and cried "My brother! my brother!" He looked again with scrutiny upon the features of the dead, and then leaned his forehead upon the pillow and wept.

When I had recovered from the shock of surprise and abhorrence which this fiendish catastrophe occasioned me, my first impulse was to seek for the author of it. I left the room and hurried down stairs to see if any one attached to the house had seen how he had escaped. Nobody answered my call, and the deserted air of the lower apartments indicated that there was no other inmate of the building beside him whose career had been so darkly terminated. I hastened to the back part of the dwelling, and to the garden through which the murderer must necessarily have taken his flight. No person was to be seen in the neighbourhood, or on any of the roads which were commanded by the place where I stood, at all resembling the remarkable figure of the man whose daring ingenuity of wickedness had perpetrated this act. I subsequently ascertained that two men had been seen, about that time, riding very rapidly in a southerly direction; and one of the persons was remarked as wearing a red neckcloth,—a peculiarity of dress by which I had immediately identified the man whom I had seen upon the common with the one whose countenance and dress the light of the lamp on the previous evening had revealed to me.

I returned to the chamber in which the remains of the unfortunate victim of selfish cruelty were lying. No one was in the room. I approached the bed to inspect more narrowly the evidence which the condition of the body furnished of the means by which the deed of death had been accomplished. The marks of violence were very plainly visible upon the neck and chest, and the outline of a hand was distinctly imprinted upon

the throat in a purple colour. The features were much convulsed, but the position of the form was natural. I thought it probable from the latter circumstance, that the destroyer had found his victim sleeping, and that the unhappy man had passed from insensibility to death without more than a momentary consciousness of the fate which was overwhelming him, or the relentless agency by which it was accomplished.

I could not help pausing for a time to ponder upon the character of him of whose unseen, but fearful presence this incident gave another evidence. It could not be doubted that Tyler was the author and mover of the efforts by which we had thus in an instant been defeated, and himself preserved from danger. Neither remorse, nor shame, nor pity could interpose to stay his hand, where benefit accrued from crime. Such conduct, indeed, was but the principles of many a public hero applied to private life; it was the morality of states exhibited between individuals. And that a man should be found whose recklessness of passion, instead of dignifying the records of empire, should desolate the walks of society, was an event which well might happen. But while we credit the tales of wonder whose seat is distant, we are surprised and unbelieving when proximity of place forces the reality of the events more fully upon our thoughts. The remote in period or position is faint in its impression; it fills the fancy with the amazement of its detail, or engrosses the reason with the strangeness of its events, but it is separated from our sympathies by a haze of romance, and never comes before us as a history of our own race and condition; it is alien to our apprehension; it is apart from what we feel. But when experience stamps a knowledge into our very nature and consciousness, and we see through no mirage of doubt or indistinctness, and learn by no airy reflections from the glass of narrative, but behold with our own members, beneath our own feet, the facts of wonder and the truths of marvel, we start with incredulity and amazement, as if the scene were unparalleled in the register of memory. The cold and cruel

system of which an illustration was before me, was only an embodiment in action of principles and wishes which many cherish; and it was obvious to view, that if the sentiments which Tyler had often expressed to me were united to the callous daring necessary to enforce them, and were adopted as rules of life by one whose energy was fitted to multiply examples of their sternness, a career like that which had come before me would be the necessary result. Certainly it was no common man who had thus combined the high-souled ardour of a reasoning intellect with the remorseless baseness of rapacious passion, and whose thoughtful eye of mind had rested alike upon the pure and light-encompassed forms of truth, and the dark and frightful face of treacherous violence. He had *used* the contempt with which the unattended flight of genius inspires the heart, but which is usually the queller of the ambition whose facility it asserts: he had wrought into his restless life that pride of power which in most great spirits turns into pity or cold arrogance. In him, might had flamed into malignity, and scorn had kindled into hate. The person before me he had employed when he needed him, and crushed when he was useless. It was, perhaps, only a just retribution that this feebler instrument of sin should perish by the hand to whose purposes it had lent itself; but there might be a safe regret that after years of permitted fault he had been struck down to darkness when he had first begun to retrace his errors.

I turned from the melancholy picture, which was a monument equally of the triumph and the punishment of guilt, and turned my steps towards the door to join the party below, when my attention was caught by an open secretary, standing in one of the corners of the room, with a few papers lying confusedly within it and under it. I walked towards it and found that the lock had been forced and broken, and the contents, as it seemed, except the few blank fragments which had met my eye, had been rifled. The murderer, I presumed, had been determined to quench the witness of the mute

as well as of the living, and when he had silenced for ever the voice which might betray, had endeavoured to possess himself of what secrets might have been committed to the custody of written words, and had accordingly seized all the papers which the desk contained but those which a glance informed him were valueless. Availing myself of the suggestion which was thus brought before me that important information might be looked for in this channel of evidence. I examined with a careful scrutiny all the parts of the secretary with the hope that some receptacle might remain which had not been despoiled, and in which might be yet found notes or statements which might throw light upon transactions which, otherwise, so far as we were concerned, seemed now to be veiled in hopeless darkness. To my great delight, I presently detected a private drawer, very skilfully concealed in the lower part of the frame, and in it was an open and unfinished letter addressed to my father. I immediately carried it to him in the room below, where he was sitting, and he read it aloud. It was directed at the top of the sheet to him, but what followed had the form of a memorandum, as follows. It appeared to have been written shortly after the last communication to my father had been sent off.

"In view of the possibility that the papers which I have, at two different times, sent to Mr. Stanley may not have reached him entire, may be lost by him, or may finally prove insufficient to accomplish the purpose for which they were designed, and that my death may seal the only source of knowledge to which he has access upon the points which interest me as deeply as they concern him, I now record two facts which may prove useful in guiding his inquiries and operations when I can no longer direct him.

"The first of these, respects the place of concealment to which (Mr. Harold, or as Mr. Stanley will be more likely to recognize him by another name,) Mr. Torrens will probably resort, when, upon any serious alarm of danger he disappears from the world and all efforts to trace his retreat prove unavailing. On many occasions,

on which I have observed his career when he has thought me absent or unconcerned, I have known him to vanish from amidst his comrades and remain for days or weeks in some spot to which a thousand eager eyes of fear or hate could find no trace. At such times, when the burning anxiety of numbers upon whom the fetters of dependent friendship had been so tightly riveted that their love might not know itself from loathing, had left no means untried to ascertain his residence, every room throughout the whole extent of a vast city has been visited—the roads through every quarter of the neighbourhood have been watched—and eager spies have been sent through every region that suggested a hope of detection—but neither his going, nor his resting, nor his return has been seen. Determined not to be fooled by a mystery like this, and wishing to obtain such a power over Torrens as an acquaintance with his hiding-place would necessarily give me, I bent all my exertions to the discovery of the secret he had been so successful in shrouding from exposure, and I finally prevailed. I have marked the locality of his hidden residence upon the chart which will be found in my bookcase, and have traced upon the same the course by which it is reached. The details of the manner by which a region, all but inaccessible, is traversed, it is beyond my power to explain upon paper; it is enough to say that they are full of difficulties. I have thought that the place and direction would be important to be known—the adventurer who would explore them has need as well of courage as of conduct.

"The other circumstance which it may serve Mr. Stanley to be aware of, is that there is one man who, if he yet live, is capable of prevailing against Harold, if he brings the strength he possesses to bear determinedly against him; and but one. If, therefore, what I have done prove ineffectual, it is of the utmost moment that he should be found: on him will rest the only hope of conquering that power which now oppresses right. His name is Maxwell. I earnestly exhort Mr. Stanley to

spare no time nor trouble in his endeavours to find him. He is—"

Here the writing terminated abruptly. If it had been the author's intention to communicate a knowledge of the means by which this person might be discovered, something had occurred to frustrate it fatally; and no clue remained to guide a search whose importance was so strongly asserted. When we had read this letter and pondered its statements, it remained to settle what it would be most expedient to do. My father's affairs rendered it necessary for him to return home without delay, and if he had had leisure, the enterprises suggested in this testamentary statement, were not such as it became him to engage in. He had been a good deal touched by the misfortunes and sufferings of Mr. Thompson, and as the secretary whom his business obliged him to employ, had recently left him, he offered that office to him and it was very gratefully accepted. I had determined to return at once to town, as the most likely place in which to hear of Maxwell, and we set off the next morning to accomplish together that portion of our journey which followed the same road. Seward wished him to visit one of his friends whose residence was in the neighbourhood, and after offering his services for any farther matter which I might be inclined to undertake, which I had neither occasion nor right farther to employ, he left us to go in the opposite direction.

CHAPTER VI.

He alone determines for himself
What he himself alone doth understand,
Heaven meant him for that passive thing
That can be struck and hammered out to suit
Another's taste and fancy. Such he is not.
He is possessed by a commanding spirit,
And his too is a station of command.
There exist in the wide throng of men
Few fit to rule themselves, but few that use
Their intellects intelligently.

COLERIDGE.

As I continued my solitary ride, after my father and Mr. Thompson had parted from me at the point where their road turned off, I revolved in my mind the various incidents connected with Tyler, of which I had been a witness or a victim, and I endeavoured to anticipate what result awaited the scenes which I had yet to pass through. I reviewed the whole experience which had befallen me since I first met him upon my entrance into the world, that I might derive for the enlightenment of the future whatever counsel the past afforded. The acquaintance which of late I had obtained with his means and mode of conduct enabled me to trace the outline and object of that previous series of procedure, whose separate consequences I had felt, but whose continuous progress I had not seen, and thus to understand in some degree the character and course of action to which I must fit my efforts.

It was obvious that Tyler was at the head of a company which himself had organized, consisting of men of desperate purposes and lawless principles who, what-

ever might have been their other darker and more daring acts, sought, among their employments, to enrich themselves by a great and extended system of gambling. Carrying my thoughts back to the period in which I had first met at the sea-shore, the creator and controller of this extraordinary scheme of power, all the occurrences which had then puzzled me so much were at once explained. The person whom I had seen in my ramble at night along the beach, conversing with another about the plans which were on foot, was doubtless the same whose conversation I had admired a few hours before on the same evening: and the hoarseness of voice which he had instantly assumed when he met me a short time after in the same spot was meant to dispel the suspicions which he knew I might have formed if I had chanced to overhear him on that first occasion. It must have been Tyler, also, whom I had seen coming from the house enveloped in a cloak a few minutes after, and whom I again encountered at the gambling-room. His proceeding there had been marked by his accustomed ingenuity and promptness, and I now saw the means by which I had been so completely deceived. The moment he met me, he turned into an adjoining apartment and directed another person resembling him in figure to put on his disguised dress and come out and show himself to me, while he had hastened home and was prepared to be found by me engaged in reading in his bed-room.

The circumstance which most excited my admiration at his penetrating knowledge of the operations of the mind as well as my surprise at his boldness, was one which had been the least likely to occur to any man as a method of concealment, yet which had, in fact, been the one great cause which had at all times beaten away suspicion from my thoughts; I allude to the extraordinary defiantness of the sentiments which he had exhibited and the unchecked daringness of the opinions which he had maintained in conversation with me. If Tyler, at the moment when I had met him on the beach, after having had a faint notion that one of the speakers

in the dialogue which had lately reached my ears, was himself, had shown any disposition to impress me with a favourable estimate of his moral character—had attempted the faintest approach to cant—I should at once have been convinced that he was a crafty villain. But when he flung forth the tokens of lawless principle and bold aspiration with the well-assumed carelessness of a lofty spirit that defied opinion, not a thought of connecting this wildness of theory and courage of fancy with any actual display of heartless intrigue, ever crossed my mind. What designing plotter of crime would thus publish a manifesto of his system, I reasoned with myself, in the eyes of the man against whom his plans were directed? To impute deceit of fraud when all was the frankest openness, was not to be thought of for a moment. I set the speaker down immediately as one of a number of thoughtful men whom I have met with, who, in the solitude of study, and the guiltlessness of the most retired occupation, gratify their imagination by building schemes of exciting action and divert the dulness of lonely meditation by lending to their lives the interest of contemplated ambition, and giving to their characters the importance of intended violence. An ideal enterprise of personal and selfish eminence may well co-exist with perfect real integrity; and indeed the cultivation of such baseless purposes of bad advancement may even be propitious to the domestic virtues of the heart by carrying off through a distant and absorbing channel the passions that might otherwise mingle with, and pollute the more familiar wishes that emanate daily from the bosom. Such men will be slow to commit any act which looks like a result of the sentiments which they have cradled in their musings, lest they may break down the barrier which has kept them secluded and safe, and will abstain from the slightest adoption in conduct of those principles for whose realization in their completeness they are not yet prepared.

Such was the notion which I at once conceived of Tyler, and various little circumstances, especially Seward's account of their mutual unsuccess in their game

of cards, served to give it confirmation. His remarks in all the conversations which had taken place between us, had been dictated by consummate skill and delicacy for the sustaining and increasing of that first impression. He had gone even into a pedantry of mental originality upon a variety of subjects, as if to cause a belief in me that the boldness and violence which his first avowal might have led me to impute to his character, belonged only to his mind, and that it was but the working upon abstract questions of policy of the same vigorous ardour of intellect that broached continual new suggestions in morals and literature, that led to the conclusions which he had so freely stated, and that those declarations were thus the assertions rather of what ought to be done in life in order to command success, than what he intended or advised to be done. When I saw him warring against belief in Deity, and summoning his courageous strength for that high strife, I deemed that the stirrings of his temper fed their stern eagerness upon novelties of thought, and that the combativeness of his spirit was spent in giving energy to argumentation. Furthermore, the evidence which he usually gave of a reason occupied in inventing and analyzing served to banish apprehension of his purposes being strung to action; for action is more conversant with the comprehension of results than with the detail of causes, and in the breast that is bent to great performance the height of a solid will commonly drags down the fancy from the discursive nimbleness of high and curious thought, and bids it be devoted to the actual and the present. It was the apparent inconsistency, or contradiction to general rules, that Tyler had established in his character, which had so much deceived me. Such an opposition of qualities might very well exist naturally, or might very easily be created by effort, and it would constitute no greater incongruity than is visible in the nature of every man who rises far above the vulgar. Assuredly there is some gross blunder in the popular metaphysics of the world, when in the characters of all great men we find qualities which till then we had pro-

nounced wholly incompatible. Yet in spite of the unnumbered instances which come before our eyes of the falsity of the rules which general reason has laid down as regulating the union of moral properties, or at least of the endless exceptions to them, if they be theoretically true, we still continue to take conclusive judgments upon character from partial data; we guide ourselves by certain assumed principles of combination, although the deductions which they give us are hourly stultified by experience, and although we perceive that the histories of those men who have reached a rank of power that calls forth to view the whole of their abilities and nature, are nothing else than a series of impossibilities.

I reviewed the various recent circumstances which had touched my relations to Tyler, with a divided feeling of despondency and hope. On the one part, the untoward incident described in the last chapter had struck dead all the plans which had hitherto given us confidence of unravelling the results of Tyler's plots; it had thrown us back to the same barren position which we had occupied before an expectation was conceived of undoing the injustice which he had so thoroughly and securely accomplished; it had simply left us information of the wrong without any reasonable means of setting it aside. It evinced, moreover, that the chief actor in this dark drama was fully aware of all our efforts to prevail against him, and was prepared to sustain his ground with the same energy with which he had occupied it. On the other part, I had gained a very complete knowledge of the character of Tyler, and that might be of no small value in the operations which the future might call forth. I knew what species of conduct might be expected from him, and was qualified to guess with considerable accuracy what kind of opposition any given proceeding on my part would probably meet with. The facts stated in the posthumous letter of Thompson promised to be of value, especially as they concerned an acquaintance with the place in which his enemy and mine would probably be found, if

all attempts to detect him in his usual haunts should fail. This information would enable me to command to some extent the service of those who felt the same resentment that I did, but might, on grounds of opposition to me, be unwilling to co-operate with me, or lend any portion of their skill or knowledge to the attainment of an end that I desired. The breach between the master-plotter and his subordinates might be turned to good account. The rupture that is caused by detected jealousy, leaves wounds that rankle; and the enmity that occupies the seat of departed confidence is as bitter as it is unfamiliar. One of the parties in that fellowship, whose severance I had witnessed, might be played off with advantage against the other, and the hatred which might be easily fomented into deadly intolerance might be made to work out its safe results for the benefit of third persons. If all of those with whom I had to do possessed feelings so disciplined to policy and purged of all unprofitable passion, as were those of one individual of the number, I should not have much ground for encouragement in the hostility which now promised profit: for so useless a thing as mere revenge, or so vain a thing as empty pride would never occasion an opponence which interest condemned, or prevent a partial union for a common good. And although, in all likelihood, many were not of this temper, and in particular the man who seemed to head the resistance against Tyler might be swayed by animosity or pique, yet that contrariety was not in the present instance to be counted on with certainty. For it will often happen that those who come in contact with a person of strong principles of character and decided principles of conduct will for the time be imbued with like sentiments by the contagion that there is in a mighty spirit: they will be partakers of the majesty of his design; he will project his depth of energy into their bosom, and they who act with him will act like him. Thus Napoleon "multiplied himself" throughout his officers, and transmitting the blaze of his genius through the shape of a distinctive and sharply-marked character, lighted up the nature

of all beneath him into the form of his own greatness. There was danger, therefore, that the same magnanimity of selfishness and energetic good sense of interest, which Tyler was certain to display in coming at once to an understanding with those between himself and whom quarrel were an expensive folly, would mould for the nonce, the natural characters of the rest into similarity of feeling. At the best, indeed, the game of benefiting by the mutual animosity of those who stand equally adverse to the external party, is one that requires extreme caution and management; for, as the history of many states exhibits, unity of enmity is a bond of friendship. It would be a matter of primary necessity that in whatever movements I might institute to kindle the dislike of one party against the other, my agency should not appear: for as I could easily gather from the rage which a mere suspicion of protecting me had roused against Tyler, my interests were as incompatible with those of his enemies as with his own.

My own excitement of anger was directed almost exclusively against him whom I well knew to be the designer and director of all that my father and myself had suffered. The whole structure of villany which others had aided to elaborate, bore upon its front the marks of his mind and morals: and it roused me to bitter and abiding indignation to behold him in the centre of his schemes sitting in the calmness of his scorn, throned above the influence of either affection or hatred for men, coldly distributing the world around him into the classes of his tools and his tributaries. He had met me neither with the reserve and distrust of conscious guilt, nor with the uneasy courtesy of concealed hatred, but with the independence and indifference of one who had never allowed himself for a moment to take home to his thoughts the recognition of an equal enmity or the reflection that resentment or resistance might be a thing to be thought of, but had deemed the hostility of his victim too vain to provoke even a passing dislike. Another circumstance which gave peculiar determination to my purpose of revenge was the part which I supposed him

to have sustained affecting the relation between Emily and myself. What object he had in view in that interference, assuming it to have proceeded from him—whether he merely designed to detach me from a connexion which would separate me necessarily in a good measure from his influence, and engage my time more than would admit of that disposition of it which he was aiming to effect, or whether by some irresistible deviation from his usual system he had in fact been himself interested in her in whose regard I was his chief or only rival,—I had no means of guessing; but I had little cause in either view to love a man who had either sacrificed my happiness to a cold accomplishment of no very important plan of his own, or had resorted to unfounded calumny to supplant me in the hopes which I most dearly cherished. There are some suggestions which to hear is to adopt,—to know is to be persuaded of; and this of Tyler's having been the author of what reports had reached the ears of Emily and wrought so strange a transformation in her manner, was one which struck me from the moment that it occurred to me with this kind of convincing force. And in that duty of strife which was before me, it gave courage to my spirit and confidence to my resolution that I should thus be vindicating myself from imputations which had injured me, and restoring the esteem and peace which had been alike disturbed. In the darkness of our lonely struggles against defeat, or cheerless contests for gain, a ray of expected sympathy in a moment flashes our strivings into strength, and thrills our frame with a pleasure which is power. Those outward difficulties of execution which had seated themselves in our minds as inward doubts, and had perplexed the plainness of our mental sight, are in an instant thrown down from the equality with which they had seemed to cope our powers, and become again the passive path through which a sober eye can find an easy way. In the solitude of an uncompanioned heart, our thoughts turn to insects which annoy, and our fears to worms which prey upon, our being; and we become the living victim of a living foe. When,

then, our loneliness is changed to glad society of soul, and in the healthy daylight of fellowship we escape from the dusky cloud of petty troubles which had shaded our composure, we feel a vigour of purpose and a renewed vividness of hope which is the advanced refraction of success. The thought that the full enjoyment, of whose broad depth I had gained a glimpse in those hours in which I had indulged in visions of a life of love, might yet be mine, and that the rich peace of satisfied desire, for which the sufferings of a solitary life had wrought my wishes into one longing sigh, was a shaded island in a sunny sea, whose shelter might be won, made my breast bound with a throb of gladness, and my bosom heave with the might of joy.

It was late on the evening of the second day of my journey that I reached the city. Wishing to avoid any possibility of my return being discovered by those who were doubtless on the alert for the observation of my movements, I dismissed my horse at the edge of the town and entered a hackney-coach which was standing unemployed in the street. I ordered the coachman to drive me into the street adjoining the one in which I lived, and I got out there and walked on to my own door with as much secrecy as possible.

CHAPTER VII.

Struggling and strife—these are the doom of man;
Who e'er on earth hath borne the name of man,
From him whose tender breast first beat above
A human breast, to the last sufferer from
The whip of Time, can ne'er recal the day
When dwelling on the care-washed isles of life,
He bore the name of man, nor yet endured
Struggling and strife—which are the doom of man.

MARLOWE.

THE almost entire ignorance under which I laboured of the character, of those in reference to whom I was called upon to take some speedy action, placed a stumbling-block in the very commencement of my progress and rendered me unable to decide with certainty what first step it were most expedient to adopt. I was not sure of even the persons and identity of more than one or two who constituted the party. I had indeed taken notice of many individuals at the supper-table of the self-styled club, whom I would again be able to recognize at any time, and perhaps to trace; but I could not be certain that any given one of the whole number was actually a confidant with those who had established the society and was not, like myself and Seward, either an accidental visiter or an intended dupe. Several of the party who were assembled around the table on the evening which I have already described were persons whom I had met familiarly in society, and although I could not recal any instance in which they were men whose family I knew, or whose history I could tell any

thing about, yet the presumption in every case was very strongly against their being actors of a double part. The majority, too, of the others who surrounded the board, were men who, both in accomplishment of mind and refinement of manner, bore far too gentlemanly a seeming to permit me to decide with any confidence in favour of their titles, to be classed with that company whose habitual system I suspected had in it as much of rudeness and violence as it had of craftiness and guile. Yet if they were in fact, or if any of them were possessed of that depth of dissimulation which I thus hesitated to impute, there would be nothing which any one familiar with the characters of men could deem impossible, and nothing which I, after the unexpected and extraordinary discoveries which had recently come before me, was at all inclined to consider improbable. They might all very easily have been whatever the worst and most hidden member of the set could be; for we can be as little certain of any other man in the present as we can be of ourselves in the future.

The doubt which was thus presented to my mind was more perplexing than the least satisfactory assurance would have been; for while this would have left me safe upon one side or the other, and would have made my future plans clear, if narrow, the suspense of suspicion in which I was now detained, forbade my proceeding upon any alternative, and perplexed my deliberations with a double contingency. If I could ascertain the residence, or even was confident of identifying the figure of any one who unquestionably belonged to this secret association, I felt no distrust of my ability to address him in such a way as to win what aid of knowledge I might wish; for if interest can unite men for the establishment of a system it may divide them for its destruction. The acquisition of a few precise particulars, upon points which I was now compelled to guess at darkly, would have thrown a world of light and of encouragement upon, was now profoundly dark and intricate. As matters stood I could be certain of the honesty and safeness of no one around me. My own

servants might be spies upon my conduct, and the first man whom I might select as the instrument of any intended action might be some one whose acquaintance with my plans would prove their ruin.

My chief object at present was to discover Maxwell, for Thompson, whose sincerity could not be impeached, and whose language in this matter had a decision and confidence which gave it weight, spoke of him as the only person whose knowledge or whose talents would enable him to triumph over Tyler if a direct opposition took place between them. These expressions indicated the practicability of effecting that hostility whose result was thus anticipated, and held forth a stronger promise of prevailing in my wishes than I was presented with from any other quarter. To discover him, however, might prove as difficult an enterprise as to attempt a more direct success without him, for I did not know to whom to apply for information, and the multiplicity of names which, like Tyler, he had probably employed to veil his proceedings, if I was right in conjecturing that he had once been in some way a partner of that person's conduct, would be likely to baffle any endeavour to spell out from casual or fragmentary information such evidence as would enable me to trace his present dwelling, and enough of his past history to warrant my confiding in him to so great an extent. It did not appear whether the party who assembled at the club-house had ever had any connexion with this person; for Tyler, in the copious invention of his comprehensive villany was doubtless leagued with other individuals, either separately or in numbers, who had no acquaintance with the larger company upon whom he mainly depended. However, I saw no better course than to apply to them in some way to see if I could procure any clue which would lead me to an acquaintance with Maxwell's residence and character; and this I thought I might effect by insinuating myself in disguise among some of that set, and eliciting whatever amount of knowledge the course of things would permit. I knew enough of the localities of that building to make another

visit to it more safe than the last had been which had resulted advantageously, and the apprehension of unknown danger which that had removed was replaced by a feeling of familiarity with the spot which took away that aversion which on the first occasion I had felt. If there was hazard in this exposure to a risk which if it turned against me would be fatal, greater hazard had been encountered in effecting the evil which I strove to reverse than could possibly attend my attempts to overthrow it. Danger of that kind, which a prompt sense could shun and a bold arm shake off, gave me less uneasiness than incitement. I had to deal with men whose path was peril and whose atmosphere was jeopardy, and unless their mere position was to be protection, hazard must be accepted as the condition of the struggle. I felt prepared and equal to any effort which this undertaking might require; the only person whose depth of sagacity I knew to be beyond my skill to meet with, and with whose deep and decisive violence of means, I had no disposition for any purpose to enter into competition, was now separated from the party whom his counsels and perhaps personal exertion had hitherto chiefly rendered formidable, and the remaining number who had been one man's slaves might be another man's assistants. If I could learn by any casual good fortune where Maxwell was to be found, it would be of infinite service to me.

It was within an hour of midnight when I reached my own house upon returning from the journey which is described in the last chapter. I had been considering the matter and arranging my plans during my solitary ride, and when I had gained the city I resolved to lose no time in putting in execution the scheme which I had

formed. I hastily but carefully dressed myself in a complete disguise which I had ordered before leaving town, and which had come home during my absence; it consisted of nothing more than the ordinary dress of a man about town, but it effected so entire a concealment of the natural shape and cast of my figure and of its height, that when I had finished my preparations entirely, and had added the indispensable particulars of false hair and false whiskers, and then inspected myself in the glass, I felt thoroughly confident that so total a transformation had been wrought in my appearance as to banish all possible risk of discovery, while I flattered myself that my new person and its apparel were sufficiently natural to remove all fear of suspicion and scrutiny of any kind being excited by my appearance. When these arrangements were completed, I sallied out on foot in the direction of the club-house.

The reader will by this time be aware that this establishment, to whatever purposes of festivity or enjoyment it might be incidentally and occasionally devoted, was in its main purpose and employment nothing else than an extensive gaming-house. There were, I supposed, numerous private apartments devoted to this business, which were probably reserved for those times in which the players might be more refined or the game might be deeper than were altogether suited to the miscellaneous company, and disturbing bustle of a public place; but there was also one general and common room, of which I had heard something in the course of the intercourse with the various frequenters of the house, and which Seward had told me that he had visited, and it was this spot that I was anxious to reach. In what part of the pile it lay, and how it was ap-

proached I did not know, but I was in hopes that accident or the arrival of some one who was going to that quarter would direct me. I walked on till I arrived at the street which ran in front of the building, and under cover of a narrow shadow flung by the tall houses across a portion of the way, passed down it silently, and as I hoped unseen. The front door was closed and bolted, and upon applying at the little gate, which had on a former occasion given me admission at the side, it was also fastened. The whole place appeared to be quiet, nor was there any appearance of either motion or light within or around the walls. I retraced my steps along the small street which I had just come through, and went round to make trial at the gate leading to the lane in the rear through which I had found a passage on the night that I had penetrated to the interior and heard those conversations which had proved so valuable. That entrance was also fastened, and upon looking through the cracks by the light of the moon I saw that the small door opposite to it in the back of the house was also shut. No other means of gaining access to the building were known to me, and when this last effort had resulted unsuccessfully I turned away in disappointment, concluding that there remained no farther hope for that night. Apprehending the possibility of my course having been observed and of there being danger that my return might be molested, I did not go back by the way that I had come, but walked to the end of the alley and then turned homewards along the street that ran parallel to the one by which I had come from the more frequented parts of the city. There were no houses whatever on the opposite side of the way,

and only a few scanty sheds on the side on which I was walking.

I went slowly along listening for any sound of footsteps which might be audible in the neighbourhood, and observing narrowly the aspect of the houses which skirted the pavement in mean and irregular variety. The whole region was profoundly still, and as I paused for a few moments and looked up at the cold, gray moon, which streamed far and wide over the lonely scene, no noise whatever was to be heard, either human or inanimate. The wretched inhabitants of the miserable huts which were ranged along the way had sunk to a profound repose, which neither to the eye nor ear gave any evidence of the buildings being in the occupancy of man. I had not gone very far along the street when I observed a low building standing somewhat detached from the rest, which, however, it closely resembled in its general appearance, and having its door wide open. I arrested my steps, and remained profoundly quiet under the shade of a small, stunted tree, to see if any one was about to issue from the house. No one, however, appeared, or gave token of his presence by sound or motion, and I walked as gently as possible to the door. I saw that it did not lead directly into any room as is usual in dwellings of that humble description, but into an entry which extended some distance back, but how far, the quenched lustre of the moon-rays would not permit me to see. I hesitated to enter at the moment, but the circumstance of the building lying directly towards the quarter in which the club-house stood, and at a distance not too great to admit of an easy connexion between the two, and of its door communicating

with an entry and being open at so late an hour, suggested to my mind an involuntary though strong suspicion of this entrance being an avenue by which the larger house was secretly approached. I crossed the way for the purpose of seeing if the eye could trace any junction between the two which should be indicated by roof or wall. The space on the opposite side was open for a considerable distance back from the road, and on turning round after I had reached a moderate distance, I saw that that particular house was the only one whose roof extended to any great depth in the rear; and on following its direction with my eye through the opening which its separation from the adjoining walls produced, I detected very plainly a junction between it and one of the wings of the extensive pile which was visible in the rear. That this passage led to the gaming-room, and was for that reason left open at all hours, was a conjecture which I readily accepted as nearly equivalent to a certainty. I recrossed to the door which thus invited entry, and waited a little while before it in the hope that some one would appear either from the town or from within. After no great interval I caught the outline of a figure moving along the upper part of the street toward the place where I was, although no sound of footfall was to be heard. Bright as was the light of the moon, and distant as was the position of the person thus descried, I knew that under the circumstances of the case—midnight quiet and moonlight dimness—I ought to have detected motion by the ear sooner than by the sight, and I at once inferred that the man who was approaching was walking either with such muffled shoes or such a cautious tread as indicated a purpose which sought concealment for its progress.

The particular which thus struck me might seem a trifling one, but coupled with the entire solitude, with a single exception, of the region toward which he was going, it occurred to me as a presumption that this person was one of the party for whom I was in search, and that his destination was the very spot beside which I was standing. I determined to act upon this supposition, and for the purpose of informing myself by his movements of the precise course by which the room which I sought might be found, I resolved to make my way along the entry as far as the path was direct, and then conceal myself till I should discover where he went. I accordingly stepped within the door and groped my way along the dark and narrow passage for a considerable distance until I reached a point at which there were two open doors near to one another but leading off into divergent directions. The entry into which one of them opened turned a little to the left though it did not deviate much from the course which I had been following, the other started off on the other side nearly at right angles. I was at a loss which to pursue, and fearful of erring if I followed either I drew myself in behind the door which connected with the passage that turned most aside as being the one which I judged least likely to lead to the main building, and waited there for the arrival of the person who could not now be very distant.

I stood for a few minutes immovable and in silence, and then was startled by the sound of the adjacent door which had been half shut being pushed very gently, yet audibly, back against the wall; and so quiet had been the step of the person for whom I was waiting, that the first intimation which I had of his reaching the

house was the sound which proved that he stood beside me. Almost at the same moment there was heard, far down the passage in which he was standing, the noise of a door opened and closed carelessly and loudly, and he instantly drew aside within the entry in which I was sheltered, and there stood still. Along the direction whence these sounds had proceeded a man appeared to be coming, whose echoing incautiousness of step bore a very great contrast to the time-like stealth with which the other advanced as rapidly as undetected. When the former came up to the place where I stood in breathless nearness beside the unknown stranger, the latter appeared to recognize him instantly, although the place was so obscure that I could with difficulty trace even dimly the outline of the door behind which I was hidden. He said, in a suppressed tone of voice, "Firm in friendship."

"And fearful in enmity," was the reply, immediately rendered by the other, who continued, "It is Morton, I think."

"Yes," said the first speaker. "Has Green returned?"

"Not yet; he will probably be back in the morning. There is no hope of his succeeding. Harold has not left town, and of course, Green will not find him."

"I am not so sure of that," said Morton; "at least of the first part, though I willingly believe the second. You may plant guards at every avenue, but who will watch the warder? A man possessed of the ready talent and long-established influence of Harold, would laugh at the incorruptibility of any one of so large a set as we have relied on in this matter. None but the picked spirits and most trusty chiefs of our party can be de-

pended on in any operations of this kind. It was idle to dream of prevailing by such means as have been used. We have been too careless and confident, and have not fully estimated the necessity of crushing a man who holds our lives in his hand. I think that until his destruction is accomplished, it is vain to carry on other schemes which never can be safe while he is breathing. We had better suspend all this business in which we now reap an uncertain profit, and devote ourselves solely to the task of blotting from the scene that influence which still and unmoving holds in its hand the thread of our lives, and glances mockery and derision on all the triumphs which we gather. I shall propose a general meeting of all who are intrusted in this matter, and shall suggest that this hall be closed, and all other concerns postponed, and that we dedicate ourselves to the single purpose of discovering and destroying Harold,—neither pausing nor reposing till that is accomplished."

"If it were practicable it would not be profitable. We must submit,—we must stand still. I have thought much of it; for I believe we cannot live without him. It must be admitted that his honour is the thread which holds back the sword over our head; but we know him well, and are assured that he will exert this power only for his benefit and not for our injury. What motive will he have to hurt us? what advantage? and when did he ever act without a motive, or strive but for advantage? On the other hand, his services to us are all-important; for how can we stand against hundreds of the foes which our united strength has raised, and only his prudence has secured the means of foiling in their vengeance? He has made himself indispensable to us,

and though we must hate, we may not harm him. Our safety stands with his; our support perishes with him. We perish when he dies. If I did not believe that for all purposes of external defence and protection he was still as much our ally as he ever was,—since no danger of that sort would light on us without touching him, I would instantly insist on the dissolution of our company and the dispersion of its members; for the only shield of our defence would be shattered. Let us not mistake the suggestions of passion for the counsels of prudence, nor think that we are just when we are only jealous. Of the thousands of men whose daily prayer for Harold is that he may taste the bitterness of retribution, I do not believe that there is one who, while he yet dwells in the light of life, and is the subject of human passions, nor has yet reached that shadowed valley whose duskiness causes all worldly feelings to fade into dimness and obscurity, will ever dare to raise against his enemy the avenging hand. We must acquiesce in the necessity of being the creatures of his will, for it is the penalty we pay for those facilities for evil which such an union gave."

"I am not certain of it; I am not aware of such complete dependence as you speak of, and if it is, we had better end it by separating at once and for ever,—first securing that punishment to treachery which now it seems our hands are tied from gaining. We might lose something, perhaps a great deal; but we have acquired much; and the danger of continuing our system is increased from increasing time. We are men, and we have the impulses of men; and in view of the uncertainty of Harold's policy, and the possibility of his abandoning us to our fate from want of motive to pro-

tect us, I prefer to renounce the benefit with the bondage, and at once crush the galling superiority of safe contempt, and gratify those passions of hatred which, though they may be suppressed in his bosom, are not extinct in mine."

"Bah! curse him if you please in every fibre of his moral anatomy, and through every station of the universe; but have a care how you put in action that petulance which will surely bring swift repentance. Such hot steam is rarely blown off without scalding the fingers of the operator. Anger is a good overseer, but a bad pay-master. Injuries and insults are like pills, which must be swallowed without chewing, in order to avoid the taste of the bitter. It is easier to quell resentment than to stifle regret. Piety forgives, policy forgets. Your plan is wrong, and would subvert us if followed."

"Well; it may be so. We will talk more fully of the matter hereafter. I have more to say about it. Is Williams in the play-room? I want to see him."

"Yes," said the other, moving on to the door, and turning round his head with a laugh as he spoke; "he has just given Royer a thorough plucking, and I suspect is counting his gains at the little round table."

The parties here separated, and the one who had come in from the street, and who answered to the name of Morton, went on in the direction from which his acquaintance had come. I stepped from behind my place of refuge, and taking advantage of the racket which was caused by the careless and resounding tread of the man who was going out, I followed the other as quietly as was possible, and succeeded in traversing the whole of the passage a little behind him without his being aware of my proximity. When he reached the

extremity of the entry, he opened a double door through which a loud and confused noise of many voices fell upon my ear, and went in and closed it behind him. I waited for a moment, and then followed him into the room. The place was full of persons engaged in various kinds of gambling, from the dizzying fascination of *roulette* to the more refined dissipation of écarté; and my entrance was apparently not perceived by any one. I passed hastily from the vicinity of the door, and placed myself behind one of the tables, pretending to inspect the game, but in reality surveying the different persons in the apartment with a keen and rapid glance.

Near the centre of one of the lateral ranges of tables sat a person tying up a pocket-book, with a countenance expressive of great equanimity and satisfaction, and listening to a man who leaned over the board was speaking in his ear with earnestness and caution. I easily guessed that the whisperer was the man who had preceded me through the entry, and that his listener was the one whom he had inquired for by the name of Williams. I remained motionless in the place where I stood, with my eye upon them, waiting to see whether they would separate and give me that opportunity which I wished for of addressing myself to one of them. My resolution was a simple one, and had been hurriedly taken while the talkers in the entry had been discussing the subject of Harold. I had possessed myself of the watchword by which it seemed that the members of this infernal company were in the habit of making themselves known to one another. I had gained also as much information respecting the person who was styled Green as I thought would enable me to pass myself off as being that man in disguise, and thus to

draw on a conversation with one or other of these individuals which would aid the acquisition of such knowledge respecting Maxwell, and other things connected with the operations of this club as I should find it important to be master of. In a little while Morton had concluded what he was saying, and rose from his incumbent position; the other seemed to be pondering his remarks for a few moments, and then looked at him and nodded repeatedly with a grave assurance, on which the former walked away and entered a small door, of which there were several in the wall, communicating as I conjectured with little chambers for conference or privacy. I walked directly towards the Williams who remained in his seat, and bowing to him with familiarity, called him by his name, and repeated the word with which Morton had saluted his friend. He immediately responded, and, looking a little at a loss, said "Who is it?"

"Green," said I; "I suppose you scarcely know me in this costume. I want to say something to you, alone: are any of these rooms vacant?"

"Yes," said he, rising, and moving towards one of them; "here is one which has nobody in it." Then looking back, he pointed towards a candle which stood upon the table, and said "Bring it with you."

I took it in my hand and followed him into the apartment, of which he closed and locked the door. It was a small place having a few chairs around the walls, and a table in the centre. I stepped towards the latter, and in setting down the candle upon it, contrived to let it fall upon the end, and be completely extinguished. I was afraid that a prolonged interview in the full glare of the light, would lead to a discovery of my not being in fact

the person whose name I had assumed. I knew also what a remarkable power the darkness possesses of altering to the fancy the tones of the voice, as well as the apparent directions of sounds. I was afraid, however, that my companion either from suspicion or for convenience might choose to have the candle re-lighted; but he merely remarked that we could talk as well in the dark, and reached himself a chair from the wall and sat down. Good fortune is a capital smotherer of the temper, and most efficacious preacher of contentment. I felt about for a seat, and placed myself opposite to him.

"Well," said he, "what success have you met with?"

"None whatever," I replied, "though I have left nothing untried. I am confident that Harold has not left town."

"And I am confident he is not in it. Where should he be if not in his own house?—and I am certain he is not there."

"How do you know it?"

"I have been in it, myself, and searched it from top to bottom, and there is not a soul in any part of it."

"Did you find no difficulty in getting in?"

"Not the least; I went in by that secret panel in the side through which you and I entered together not long since. The door is still there."

"Ah!" said I, fearful of getting into a difficulty, yet wishing to know more of this private passage, "I was not sure but what that place had been closed up; for I was looking for it the other day and could not find it. Do you remember what was the exact distance at which it stood from the front wall?"

"The spring is upon the top of the highest stone casing, exactly twenty feet from the termination of the side wall."

"Ay! ay! so it is. I had forgotten, and thought it was thirty, and was fumbling for it some time ago for an hour, without discovering the blunder. And you think that Harold is not now in his own house?"

"I am sure of it."

"He undoubtedly has not been through any part of the ground which I have traversed; and I cannot resist the impression that he is still within the city."

"How far did you go?"

"To the full extent of the distance to which any one has conjectured that he could have retired."

"Well," said he, "it is the old game. He has put on an invisible coat, and the Devil could not detect him. You remember how he juggled us in this style once before, after that Stevenson business."

"I think it is of the utmost importance that he should be found; and Morton thinks so too."

"So do I; but I do not know how to do it."

"You know Maxwell," said I, presently, in a tone of half inquiry, which would have been equally appropriate whether Maxwell was well known to both of us, or was a stranger to the person I addressed.

"Yes."

"Where is he? do you know?"

"No I do not, nor any body else, I fancy."

"Why not?"

"Green, do you know that I have long entertained suspicions that Harold has made away with that fellow?"

"Is it possible! Do you really think it?" said I.

"I am fully persuaded of it; and will tell you why. A week ago I had an appointment with Maxwell at his house, at a certain hour in the morning. I waited upon him at the stipulated time, and his servant told me he had just stepped out with a stranger, and was even yet in sight. I followed, for I had only a word to say to him, and it was important that he should hear it at that moment. I saw him enter Harold's house, which is not far from his own, in company with a person whose figure I was not acquainted with. He never came out. And from that hour to this he has not been heard of."

For my own part I was not altogether inclined to come to so decided a conclusion respecting Maxwell's fate, as my companion suggested. I thought it more likely on several accounts, that that individual had been merely imprisoned within some apartment in Tyler's house, for the purpose of being prevented from action, than that he had been killed, as Williams seemed to imagine. He might easily have been secreted, either in that building or some other with which it was connected, without being discovered in the survey which my associate declared that he had made. My own opinion, however, was that Tyler had conciliated Maxwell, and had invited him to his house on a plea of friendship, and that both of them had escaped unseen to that concealed residence of Tyler's which Thompson had spoken of, and to which he had given me a direction. This, indeed, I had no motive for saying any thing to Williams about; I wished to learn what he knew, without any intention of co-operating in any movements with him or his party,—a course which I could not pretend to adopt without certainty of

exposure. Willing, nevertheless, to discover the extent of his knowledge in the matter, I put one more question to him upon that subject.

"It is very amazing! Have you ever heard of any transactions by or between these persons which would render it a desirable thing for Harold to despatch Maxwell?"

"None whatever: I know that they were once much concerned together, but what was the nature of that business or how it terminated, I know not. They have generally stood, so far as I have observed, upon terms of apparent cordiality; yet I have taken notice that Maxwell was more independent and indifferent in his bearing towards Harold than any other person that I have seen approach him, and Harold showed more attention and deference to him and courted him more than he did any one else. If Harold has really put him out of the way, I suspect he must be intending to wind up his affairs and leave the country; for Maxwell was far too prudent a man and was too well acquainted with the tactics of his friend, to suffer him to have an opportunity of getting rid of him without the certainty of some kind of revenge. If it be so, I shall advise that our company be dissolved. That business of Stanley was alone sufficient to ruin us."

"I do not think that there is much to be apprehended from him."

"Why! you expressed a different opinion the other day, and recommended a very decided course."

"I know it; but I have changed my sentiments about him. He is not a person to be afraid of: he has gone out of town upon some trifling errand to amuse himself in the country, and has manifestly no idea of

proceeding violently—glad, I suspect, to escape the necessity of having any thing more to do with us."

"I am not certain that his purpose in leaving the city was altogether so light a one. I should not be surprised if he went to consult his father. If he is intending any thing, they together, can do a great deal of mischief. I do not feel easy about the matter. We committed an enormous blunder, and it arose from having forgotten in the conclusion the system with which we had set out, and adopted another of contrariant policy. The fact of his being summoned before the council implied the absolute necessity of his death. Tyler's interference prevented that, and he was discharged upon new grounds without our remembering that we violated the constant rule which forbids any one to live who possesses a dangerous knowledge. If Stanley does not intend to employ it, he may at least communicate it; and I should decidedly recommend that we retrace our steps, and yet provide the remedy which was originally contemplated. Green," continued the speaker, in a strong and earnest tone of voice, drawing his chair towards me, "our society cannot last long. I foresee its destruction. We might re-establish ourselves in safety if we could seize Harold and compel him to put us in possession of those means which would secure our protection from attack. But that is impossible; and I know but one alternative which remains, and that is to destroy at once, all those who may have the power to molest us and then to cease for ever the operations which we have been conducting. I am inclined to suspect, that Harold's motive in delivering Stanley was to increase our peril, and compel us to sue him to defend us. If you are willing,

I will ascertain where he has gone and how and when he returns, and we two will meet him; and if his father is, as I suspect, in his company, we will at a blow deliver ourselves from the double difficulty."

"Depend upon it," said I, assured that the selfish rapacity of Tyler would alone have warranted the confidence which I used, even if my acquaintance with the prominent part which he had borne had not existed to guide me, "depend upon it that Stanley lives a greater foe to our enemy than to us. In destroying him, we would benefit Harold rather than ourselves."

"Yes," said he, confirming the opinion which I had formed, and on a subject upon which I was anxious to be certain, "it is true, Harold has all his property, and very naturally his operations would have exclusive reference to him, if he were aware of the separation between us. But of that he knows nothing. He is informed by Thompson that a party has been leagued to do him the wrong which he has suffered; and he will not hesitate to identify that company with the one which has its centre here. He has doubtless known Harold by some other name, and it may be doubted whether after all that has transpired, he even now is conscious that the individual who has wronged him, is the man whom he has known so familiarly. His proceedings would be against the company; at least the information which he possesses will enable him to reach our residence and to direct others to it."

"Williams," said I, "I do not wholly agree with you in the measures which you suggest. I have changed my opinion upon those subjects, because I no longer think as I did, upon the possibility of sustaining ourselves. The hostility of Harold is the master evil; if the effects

of that can be compulsorily overcome, the minor and detached dangers may be advantageously taken up. If that continues, I consider that it will be so fatal to our safety that other hazards will be obviated in vain. Let nothing, therefore, be thought of, till the lurking-place of Harold has been discovered, and the selfish traitor has been drawn to day. Let all operations be suspended which have not that for their object, and let the whole united energies of our party be directed to that purpose."

"I am willing," replied my companion: "we may differ as to the course which it is best to pursue if we fail in bringing him to light, but we fully agree on the importance of accomplishing that end before every other. To-morrow morning there will be a meeting here, and we will lay this matter before the whole party and proceed at once to fulfil the design you propose. It will be strange if the exertions of a band like ours cannot trace the course of a single person. Mere human sagacity is the protection on which he leans; and have we not access to the same source of strength? He is a marvellous being, and in the experience of a long course of years I have never found him overcome by difficulty and have never known him surprised by accident. His apprehension is as broad as the sun, and his foresight as far-darting as the sunlight. But there is a limit to all wisdom and a bound to all power: and Harold I think has reached it. It has been said that there is always given to the life of the least lucky, one chance which may lead to success; it is equally true, that with very rare exceptions, there is some moment in the existence of the most fortunate in which ruin cannot be avoided. Where this extraordinary man can have gone

I know not, but if he is a man and not a demon—if his habitation is the earth and not the air—he cannot and he shall not escape us. It is not to be thought of, that a man shall thus beard and bully a host, his equals, and that they shall submit in sullenness and fear. It were better that we should 'all studies solemnly defy,' save how to reach and wreak our vengeance on this cold scorner, than that we should endure this repulse and separation, as dangerous as disdainful. Will you not join in requiring that Harold be brought before the council, before any other business is entered upon?"

"Certainly, I will; and give my best efforts to enforce the resolution after it is adopted. I must leave you now," I continued, rising from my seat. "By-the-by, I have a delicate affair upon my hands to-night, and I do not care to have it known that I am in town. You need not, therefore, mention to any one that you have seen me; and I will announce myself in the morning as having just arrived. Good night."

This conversation had been carried on upon my part in a whisper, which, though as audible as the natural voice, was more secure from detection; for not only is there less character in a tone of whisper, but also few are accustomed to hear that sound from another's lips and are not capable of recognizing it accurately when it is heard. The person with whom I conversed, had, I believe, no suspicion whatever that he was sitting beside the man, whom of all but one he most detested, and was displaying the most hidden secrets of his counsel to the very man whose destruction he was meditating. But I felt somewhat afraid that our colloquy, if farther prolonged, might be interrupted either by the entrance of some one who would force me to a part which I could

not sustain, or by the individual himself whose title I had assumed. I had gained all the information which I was most anxious to possess, and had no motive to continue the conversation. I, therefore, left the apartment, and taking my way back through the gambling-room, which was still crowded, regained the narrow entry and thence issued into the street. No one was visible, and the scene was as quiet as I had left it. I walked rapidly on without pausing, until I had passed several streets and got entirely out of the region of the club-house. I then turned my steps homeward, revolving in my mind the conversations to which I had been listening, and considering the facts which they placed before me.

CHAPTER VIII.

The time is o'er of brooding and contrivance,
For Jupiter, the lustrous, lordeth now,
And the dark work complete, of preparation,
He draws by force into the realm of light.
Now we must hasten on to action, ere
The scheme, and most auspicious positure
Parts o'er my head, and takes once more its flight.

THE PICCOLIMINI.

THE knowledge which I had acquired respecting the position and intentions of the party whose relations in respect to myself and Tyler were of the utmost concern to me, was highly important, and reasonably favourable. The attitude of the detached portions of a party which had once, like the eye and arm, been formidable because of their union, seemed now to be one of fixed hostility. The language by which Tyler had, on the night of his separation from his former friends, defied and spurned the associates of his schemes, seemed to indicate an assurance on my part that no future or possible contingencies could even render it desirable for him to reunite himself for any purpose with those whom he now flung off with reckless contempt. His words had the effect of declaring that having used the labours

of his fellows while he needed them, he had now looked through the events which were in advance, and that thenceforth their course must be apart. On the other hand, the spirit prevailing among those who found in anger that argument of independence which the other discovered in interest, was equally opposite to coalition and a restoration of confidence;—there was a possibility, however, that the calmer but not less imperious voice of policy might arrest what passion had resolved, and preserve at least a condition of indifference and inaction between the parties, if it did not avail to bring friendship back. But this, my observation of the motives and feelings which were likely to influence action in this case, did not much incline me to apprehend. The person bearing the name of Morton, whose conversation I had overheard in the entry, had indeed urged the destruction of Tyler upon considerations of injury and revenge, a suggestion the less excited sagacity of him whom he addressed had effectually put to flight;—and indeed so undigested a scheme of blind irritation was in no event likely to be adopted by men case-hardened against emotions so natural and so barren. The view taken by Williams—which I endeavoured to strengthen and enforce,—although he spoke with feelings of ardour which in some sort resembled the tone of the others, was yet in its object and consequences essentially different. It proposed to pursue and bring to light the individual who had thus entrenched himself in the impregnable solitude of intolerant selfishness, and to compel him to render service to the necessities of those whose powers he had employed and whose peril he had scoffed at. This was precisely the purpose I was wishing to accomplish, and if I could inform myself of

their success, and learn what proceedings resulted from it, I should be compelling those who hated me to work out the ends I sought. So far, therefore, as the main object of my hopes—the discovery and display of Tyler—was concerned, I had no occasion to perplex myself with personal exertions, which at the best could not but be hopeless and hazardous, but might rest while others contended,—careful only at once to perceive and profit by the progress which their labours effected. When, however, I recalled the ominous counsel of Thompson not to apply to the police, and called to mind the suspicion which some remarks already alluded to had excited in my mind, that such a connexion was existing between that body and those who were its most appropriate subjects, as would render abortive any attempt to array one against the other, I almost doubted of the possibility of making a valuable use of the circumstances which seemed to be so opportunely wrought. It would be necessary to organize by my own private efforts a sufficient force to secure the benefits which were thus prepared. And this I determined to collect, and to be dependent only on my own resources, and not upon powers, whose relations being unknown, could not be relied on, and in whom confidence would always be tainted and disturbed by suspicion. A strength that would renounce the mutual dependence and irresolution of ordinary associated action, and incorporate the errant purposes of many into the unity of its own earnest resolution, was the only power that was fitted to cope these bold and eager adventurers. And such I was prepared to summon. I would devote the whole energies of my being to the triumphant termination of the contest in which I was enlisted. I would expel timidity

from my bosom, and fling away uncertainty and indecision, and grapple unreservedly and impetuously with the enemy which I could now face plainly and directly.

The proposal which Williams seemed to entertain and was disposed to enforce, of summarily cutting off all danger of unfriendly interference on my part by destroying me and those with whom I was likely to be joined in any such measures, gave me but little concern. Men who had lived for years in the centre of unceasing peril, and had nightly gone to rest in the confidence, not of security from every attack, but of success in every contest, were little likely to be forced to a difficult and very hazardous act by an uneasiness arising from a possible hostility from one of the many of whose enmity they were doubtless abundantly certain. At all events, the date of such a proceeding would necessarily be posterior to the period of their operations in respect of Tyler, and when their result was known it would be time to estimate the risk to which I should be exposed. In the event of that result being favourable I was wholly relieved from apprehension of harm, for such arrangements would be effected as would supersede the necessity of destroying danger and myself at once. If those matters had an unsatisfactory issue, other counsels might be taken, or other obstacles arise to the fulfilment of so bloody a scheme.

The subject which gave me most uneasiness and left me most at a loss how to proceed, was that of Maxwell's fate. The incidents related by Williams, if they might be depended on, were certainly most extraordinary. That he should have entered the house of Tyler and never have come out, gave grounds for entertaining the darkest apprehension as to the termination of his

life; but any conclusion of that complexion was resisted by the statement of the same speaker that he had visited the mansion which must have given evidence either of imprisonment or death, had either been the remedy to which resort had been had. That Tyler had escaped unseen from his own dwelling, whether or not he had gone from the city, that narration rendered certain; and the observations of Williams regarding the terms on which the parties stood, (which, though not contradicted by Thompson's letter, had not been suggested to me by that as the footing which they held in relation to one another,) as well as the account of the manner in which Maxwell had gone to Tyler's house on the day of his disappearance, rendered it probable that by an exercise of talent not difficult to be believed in, one whose enmity would be likely to be a serious inconvenience, had been converted to a friend, and that both had fled together. The prospect of benefit which had been held out on this quarter was thus dashed to the earth.

From this perplexed and fretting scene of doubts and tortuous plans I turned my eyes to the high and expanded scene of light and freedom which extended above me in the balmy silence of purity and peace. The moon, whom I had last seen lofty and alone, like the high-hearted, solitary confessor of principle, who looks out upon a passionate and erring world from the castle of his strong but pensive thoughts, serene in the stillness of eternal sympathy with Truth and Duty, was now girt and garlanded by a thousand thin and pearly clouds, like the state of progressive girlhood whose baser being as it nears to womanhood, like a sea-bird sailing through a mist, seems gradually winged with a most soft and delicate accompaniment of feelings, fan-

cies, hopes and dreams which are now a portion of her loveliness. Night after night, the queen of the sky spreads forth her calm magnificence of glory to show to men that the joys of celestial quiet, though they may seem to be insecure and interrupted, yet are abiding, and unchanged; and to give us a glimpse of that deep and undying peace which lies beyond the clouds and tempest of the earth, in whose region alone dwell instability and variableness: and we may bless the benignant power which thus bids the elements minister unto the improvement of our moral life, and the phases of nature be the support of our spirits in the darkling struggles of our life's endurance. It has been said by an ingenious and philosophical thinker, who if he had written books instead of letters, would have stood at the summit of contemporary literature that "the laws of physical nature were originally constructed, on the principle of future applicability, to the illustrations of moral and religious truth:" and though the observation in this particular shape may seem to be too bold and unscrupulous, seeing that errors may be equally and similarly illustrated from nature, in which there is no error, yet it is certain the resemblance or at least the homogeneity between ideas and things, and between moral operations and material processes very clearly indicate that no blind chance has struck them out, but that both are the result of the action of a being whose object is one and whose attributes are uniform. And if for the mind of man this provision is made in the harmony of the actual with the conceivable, the same sympathy exists between the passions of the heart and the conditions of the world. The midnight tempest, with its wild carnival of thunder, expresses the deep and de-

fiant humour of the soul, which sometimes frets itself to frenzy: the clearing of the storm, when the gleams of the setting sun are flung over the scene, and the fresh western wind goes forth in its glad brightness, is an emblem of the happy sighs of the overcharged heart, when man long battling against remorse returns to his father and is forgiven:

> The morn has enterprise—deep quiet droops
> With evening—triumph when the sun takes rest—
> Voluptuous transports when the corn-fields ripen
> Beneath a warm moon like a happy face.

Thus are the shades that mark the countenance of man imaged like gigantic shadows on the shows of nature, and the external sphere is a storying mirror of the inward spirit. These visible scenes which pass before the eye like moral lessons are the appointed medicine of the heart by which its life is strengthened, purified and expanded: and those narrow and erring religionists who would exclude all communion with what surrounds them to gaze upon one abstract idea, cut themselves off from the richest means of abiding grace; they shade off from the parched soil of their sandy thoughts, the fertilizing showers of the fruitful rain, and hope to reap from the exhausted mould a yet plentier harvest of good feelings. Such systems provide for only half of our nature. If we adopt them we must believe that God did not create the other half. Of the thousand versions of Christianity, there is only one that answers the test of satisfying the whole of our being, and leaves nothing dark or distressful in the moral conditions around us, but "*rests* in truth, and joy and recompense."

CHAPTER IX.

Around me
All seems like the darkly-mingled mimicry
Of feverish sleep, in which the half-doubting mind
'Wildered and weary, with a deep-drawn breath
Says to itself, "shall I not wake?"

BAILLIE.

Life may change, but it may fly not;
Hope may vanish, but can die not;
Truth be veiled, but still it burneth;
Love repulsed, but it returneth.

SHELLEY.

I SAT by my solitary fire on the following evening reviewing the circumstances in which I was placed, and meditating by what plan I could best direct them to advantage. My own sole concern was with Tyler; the conduct or the fate of those who had once been his allies, but had now ceased to be connected with him in those matters which alone interested me, engaged my consideration no farther than as their movements might relate to my safety: offensively, I had nothing to do with them. All efforts on my part to follow the flight of Tyler would be vain, and I felt little doubt that they would be unsuccessful in the hands of those who had now undertaken the search. He who had reigned with an unbending sceptre over turbulence such as that man

had controlled, and at the waving of whose hand the eagle course of triumph had turned obediently and stood still, as if her impetuous rush of wing had been a tamed falcon's movement, was not likely in the severest period of his toils to frame his counsels so unskilfully that his wisdom should be found wanting in the very crisis of his life's designs. If the statement of Thompson were to be relied on, and men in his condition are not gratuitously false, he might probably be looked for in that place of retreat in which, on former occasions, he had concealed himself. There was little likelihood, that those now engaged in the task, would penetrate the obscurity and surmount the difficulties which surrounded that spot. An examination of the chart on which Thompson had traced the course by which it was reached, and of the directions and statements by which he had accompanied it, showed that it was situated in the centre of a wild, mountainous, uninhabited and almost inaccessible region, and demonstrated very clearly that he who would merely follow the labyrinth, whose outline was in his hand, and overcome the difficulties which were noted and described, would be performing no common toil. If the present effort to unveil the secrecy in which this remarkable person had enveloped himself failed of its object, that labour was before me; and difficult as it would doubtless be, and dangerous as it might easily become, I should not shrink from entering earnestly upon it. With so much at stake as I had depending in this case, I should be careful to make such appointments and preparations as would not under ordinary circumstances miss their intended result. Meanwhile, I was contented to sit by and see what would be the termination of the enter-

prise which my involuntary partners in enmity had assumed—profiting by their labours if they ended hopefully—untouched by their loss if defeat awaited them. At present, therefore, no exertion on my part having for its object the personal pursuit of Tyler, seemed either necessary or expedient.

There was, however, one step which might be advantageously taken by me, which had relation less to revenge against the individual than to an influence on my own interests. If Tyler had left his house, as the statement of Williams rendered certain, especially if, as I conjectured, he had left town in company with Maxwell, he could in any event, have removed or taken with him few or none of those documents which he must be considered as possessing, which had relation to the transactions by which I and my father had been deprived of the property of which he was now the holder. These, in all probability, were left behind him in his dwelling-house, and the possession of them could not fail to be of distinguished importance in the design I was wishing to effect. To obtain them might not be impossible, if an entrance by the mode disclosed by Williams could be made, and sufficient time were dedicated to the work to accomplish a deliberate and thorough examination of every part of the house. This suggestion had presented itself to me in the first moment that I had heard the performer of the undertaking speak of this as a thing neither unsafe nor difficult, and with a view to a trial of it by myself I had elicited from him such statements as to the manner of proceeding, as would enable me to repeat the work whenever I pleased. Dangerous it certainly could not be, nor could it present any trouble in the execution that was worth the delay

of a moment's consideration. Remembering how Tyler had in this way obtained from me what was of the utmost consequence, by plundering the letter of Thompson from beneath my pillow, I felt a strong desire to make trial, whether this construction might not be applied to "plague the inventor." It was possible, that trusting to the security of bolts and bars, and ignorant as he must be presumed to be of the private passage which Williams had spoken of, the constructor of which it was not easy to guess at, he might have left his papers in such usual and exposed situation, that a very slight inquiry among his apartments would lead to their discovery; and upon the chance of easy benefit which this held out, I determined to penetrate that very evening to the interior of his house, to seize these writings if they might readily be found, and to make provision for more searching investigation, if examination rendered it probable that greater diligence would accomplish what was desired. It was as yet too early in the evening to attempt a scheme of this kind, and I looked about for some mode of amusing myself until a proper hour should arrive for setting out. A pile of notes and cards was lying upon the centre-table, and turning them over I found among them an invitation for that evening to a dance at Mrs. Beauchamp's. I dressed myself, therefore, and went out, intending to remain there until it should be time to begin the intended enterprise.

I had little interest, in the mood in which I was, in mingling in pleasures which are pleasing only to the gay and unexperienced, and after I had addressed a few of the company I wandered away mechanically to the end of one of the rooms which was nearly empty, and leaning upon a table in the pier amused myself with

turning over a volume of engraved sketches which was lying on it. While I was vacantly engaged in this task, I heard, some distance behind me, a low and faltering voice that sounded like a tone of broken music. It thrilled to my inmost heart, and I knew at once, what a rapid glance confirmed, that Emily was conversing with some one in the adjoining corner. She had manifestly seen me, and the emotion which my presence produced could not be concealed. Her eyes were cast upon the ground, her cheek suffused, and her whole manner agitated. She was speaking at the time, and continued her remark in despite of the embarrassment under which she laboured. I could observe from her behaviour as well as from the look of her companion, that she was scarcely conscious of what she was saying. For my own part, her aspect had smitten to the depths of my feelings with a force and influence which it was impossible to resist. It was in vain that I attempted to call to mind that she was alienated from me in affection, and that I had nothing to permit my hoping that that which once had been might ever be renewed. The mere imagination of her presence in the robes of that subduing glory from which my thoughts could not divest her, drove away all reflection from my mind, and kindled my being into one wild flame of love. My blood pulsed as with the madness of fever, and consciousness, which had so long been the familiar of far other hopes and scenes and memories than now assaulted it, was overswept by the absorbing ocean of deep impression. Charged by a passion which possessed me beyond control of reason, and unruddered by the control of intelligent recollection, my spirit flashed back to sympathy with what had been its momentary condition

in those brief bright hours in which the gladness of undoubting anticipation had filled my mind with prospects of splendour and emotions of delight. Intellect and resolution had no power to countervail what instinct wrought. As he that might bow before the avatar of the deity he worshipped, and give no reason for his act, —so did my nature unconsciously confess the goddess whom my thoughts had in vain dethroned.

While these emotions were disturbing my bosom, my eye rested intently upon an open page of the book before me, taking, however, no heed of what it saw. I presently perceived with extreme surprise, that Emily was advancing towards me. A momentary, inexplicable pique took possession of my feelings, and turning my back more fully upon her, I affected to be absorbed in the work which I had, and not to be aware of her nearness. The silver tones of a voice which shook my manhood to the centre of its strength, drove off the unworthy passion in a moment, and turned the disorder of doubt and dark excitement to the gushing fulness of the intensest joy.

"I have something to say to you," said she. "Will you follow me to the conservatory?"

"I bowed assent, and she turned towards the neighbouring door which conducted to the spot which she spoke of, and I followed her. When we had passed beyond the danger of being observed or heard, and reached a little avenue where the foliage of the flowers dimmed the light which shone through from the drawing-room, she paused.

"Mr. Stanley!" she said, in a voice that laboured to be calm, "when we last met, I did you wrong. Will

you forget it?" and she placed within mine, her soft and tender hand.

I pressed it earnestly to my lips, and in the glad astonishment of words so delightful, was silent for a moment.

"Can I choose but banish from my thoughts the memory of what has been so painful," said I, at length. "But do not speak of wrong towards one whose faults demand a far larger pardon."

"Nay, nay, it is a thing to be forgiven. I was abused by falsehoods, and the show of proofs which I could not gainsay, compelled my reason to believe what my heart disowned. Had I followed that better instinct, I should not have erred. Believe me, Henry, I have made some atonement for the wrong; for I have been as much unhappy as I have been unjust. And when I learned the error which I had made, I feared that I had offended you for ever."

"My life! my love! you distress me with such thoughts. Nothing could make me cease to love you. I never loved you so much as now. I am grieved that such causeless pain should ever have been yours. I feared, indeed, that I had forfeited your regard, and it saddened all my hopes; but I never ceased to worship her whose excellence, and truth, and purity, were not less admirable because they disowned me. If I could believe that fate had meant this to be an expiation of the more grievous sin which I committed against you, I should only think the punishment too light. They both sprang from misapprehension. Henceforth we will never doubt."

"The matters to which I gave so wrong a credence, came strangely before me with a weight and clearness

which I saw no way to resist. The delusion was removed as singularly as it came. The same person who persuaded me of the statement confessed to me its falsity. But I will tell you of it more fully hereafter."

"Suffer me to ask you if Mr. Tyler had any agency in the subjects you allude to?"

"The whole."

"Then say no more of it until we are alone."

We sat on a retired seat in a part of the extensive conservatory, into which the moon poured through the boughs its chancelled shade, and in the pleasantness of that delightful scene, we spoke of all that was happiest and most delicious. As one to whom a great debt, with whose weight his being hourly struggled, has been forgiven, I felt relieved and lightened,—free from the load which had oppressed my heart, and gladdened by the possession of all that I valued. We continued our conversation until the company began to separate. I then remembered the duty which awaited me that night, and I arose to enter on its performance with a firm resolution and a willing heart.

It was somewhat after midnight that I left Mrs. Beauchamp's and sallied out towards the house of Tyler to accomplish the design upon which I had determined. A few minutes' walk brought me in front of the building to which my scheme had reference. It, with all others in the neighbourhood, seemed to be profoundly quiet, and foreboded little danger from any detection to which the undertaking exposed me. The street through which I had passed was deserted and silent, and the watch—those "harsh, unfeathered nightingales of time"—had too much regard for the comfortable slumbers of their

subjects, to disturb them with the noise of either voice or foot.

Tyler's house adjoined on one side an extensive block of buildings, but upon the other was separated from the adjacent structures by a garden of some extent, surrounded by a high wall and planted with trees. The directions of Williams had reference of course to this face of the house, for it was the only one exposed to approach; and it was fortunate for the success of my enterprise that the spot was so well covered from observation, for the air was so still and the light of the moon so bright, that but for such a defence, any eye which might chance to be cast in that quarter could not fail to discover my operations. I placed my foot upon the ledge of the garden-wall, and looking over into the space within, paused for a moment to try if the ear could detect any thing which threatened interruption. Nothing, however, startled the silence which became the hour, nor stained by the motion of a shadow the whiteness in which the moon had invested the scene. I threw myself over the fence as noiselessly as possible, and alighting upon a little path which led through a bower of trees to the house, I moved rapidly along under veil of the shade and reached the building. I found that the stone ledge or casing of which Williams had spoken, was divided into panellings of carved work, any one of which was sufficiently large to constitute a door that would give convenient entrance to the figure of a man. I measured the distance of twenty feet from the front, by means of an instrument for that purpose with which I had provided myself, and found that the length terminated exactly at a little screw of iron which was fixed in the stone, but of so small a size and so similar in

colour to that which surrounded it, that the eye would not without some guide or reference have detected it even after a close examination. I pressed my nail upon the screw and turned it round, and the panel flew open and disclosed a passage of considerable size which, the entering moonlight enabled me to see, gave into the hall which ran along the side of the house. I leaned upon the frame with my head within the aperture, and listened for some moments to ascertain if any one was stirring in the interior: but all was profoundly silent. I then slowly and quietly raised myself up and pushed myself within the passage the covering of which I drew in, without entirely closing it. The place in which I now found myself was impenetrably dark, but my acquaintance with the exterior of the building enabled me to be tolerably certain that I was standing in the entry. I extended my hand until it touched the opposite wall, and holding it against it I walked forward in that position until it touched the frame of a door. This I found was ajar, and pushing it open, found that the apartment into which it led was equally dark with the hall. I had no resource but to draw from my pocket a match which I had brought with me, and strike a light that I might be enabled to see in what posttion I stood, and to find my way to a lamp or candle which I might kindle for a more permanent guide. The moment that my efforts took effect I perceived that I was in a very large room, in the centre of which was a pair of large chandeliers hanging low enough to permit me to reach them with my hand. I stepped across the floor and took out one of the holders which I lighted, and then seated myself on an ottoman which stood by the wall to survey

at leisure the character of a room which I saw was peculiar in its fashion.

The apartment, measured from the side door by which I had entered, to the opposite wall, was extremely deep, and a glance showed me that the distance was much greater than the breadth of the house in front. It did not contain a single window, either above or on any side, and no other door than that by which I had come in. A row of fine Ionian columns flanked either wall through the whole depth, and gave the place an aspect of singular state and richness. The furniture and disposition of every thing around indicated unusual luxury and taste. In every interval between a pair of columns, and between them and the wall behind, stood a very rich ottoman and in front of each a rug bright with the most gorgeous colours that Turkey could exhibit. Save a few light Indian chairs of straw which stood about in various places there were no other seats than these. The walls, which together with the ceiling were very richly panelled, were hung at moderate distances with exquisite pictures suspended by silken cords from a gilded rod which ran above the upper border; and between each frame was a small and highly carved and ornamented book case of which the shelves were not higher than the hand might conveniently reach. The cases were filled with volumes in the most splendid bindings, and their presence was the only thing which took from the apartment the character of an ordinary luxurious drawing-room, and gave it with fine effect the aspect of the abode of a refined and high-born scholar and wealthy man of letters. Above them were brackets surmounted by bronzes and antique marbles. A large mirror of unusual clearness and brilliance hung

at each end of the room and gave to the eye an endless gallery, bounded by interminable ranges of pillars and divided by a forest of candelabra. In one of the corners was a circular table with a few books upon it, and a couple of deep arm-chairs beside it, covered with variegated velvet, and exhibiting a capacity and comfort that spake honourable terms of him who had contrived them. The books were some of them open, and the manner in which they were lying, together with the careless and natural position of the chairs indicated that no arrangement had taken place in that part of the room since the owner had sat there making use of the volumes. One or two other trifling circumstances of the same description in other parts of the room—the tumbled condition of the cushions—the appearance of a scent-bottle upon one of the lounges—a disorder in the position of one of the rugs—and a few similar matters which met my eye, made it apparent that at whatever time and for whatever purpose the occupant of the house to which this apartment belonged had left its walls, he had previously dismissed his servants, and broken up his establishment as if he contemplated a permanent or at least a prolonged absence. This, though in itself an inconsiderable affair, seemed to give a certain confirmation to the opinion that Tyler was not in any other part of the city with the intention of returning, but that he had left town probably with the intention of no very speedy return.

There was something in the character of this remarkable man, which, the more I became acquainted with those particulars which farther illustrated it, and the more I contemplated the strange and contradictory traits by which it was distinguished, the more it engaged my curiosity and excited my surprise. There was

in him so much to respect and so much to abhor—so much that was lofty and so much that was inexpressibly low—so large a portion of the onward and upward force of generous intellect with so deep an admixture of the festering baseness of selfish passion—so strange an union of what was most majestic in the pride of power with what was most grovelling in the meanness of purpose—that his nature seemed constructed to display in the plainness of its daily occupation all that satirist or sage has said of the inexplicable inconsistency of man as he appears. It was with deep and peculiar interest that I found myself present for the first time in the spot which was doubtless the scene of his daily meditations, and which bore such striking evidence of the tastes and habits which belonged to him. Tyler, for what reason, I know not, or whether it was but an accident that had occasioned the omission, had never in any way invited me to visit him at his own house, although he had more than once both dined and spent the evening with me; nor had I ever happened to receive from any one more intimate with him, any account of the manner in which he lived. In truth, it was a circumstance which had at various times struck me as not a little extraordinary that no one whom I had ever met in society seemed to be familiar or even well acquainted with Tyler. No man was ever seen lounging on his arm or strolling by his side in the street: none, in fact, seemed to talk to him with the unreserve and easiness of friendship, but without apparent effort or intention, though doubtless by the exercise of very steadfast caution, he maintained, partly by the severity of his topics, and partly by the ceremoniousness of an address always dignified though never cold, he kept up in his dealing with all a distance

and a gravity which did not appear to repel you so much as not to approach you. It was, therefore, not unlikely that no one had ever been introduced to these scenes of solitary luxury; for the isolation and independence which this freedom from intrusion would produce would undoubtedly be of the highest advantage to one whose habits and practices were like his.

The absence of windows, which might be the means of exposing his privacy to observation, was highly characteristic of his cautiousness. Here he could repose in the consciousness, that neither mortal eye could take note of his lonely struggle, nor human figure interrupt his stern and deep contemplations. Upon these cushions he had doubtless leaned in hours of wasted strength and outworn spirits, and in silence and seclusion had won back from despoiling time the vigour and the hope which were the air and aliment of his moral nature. Here, in the distracting periods of peril and uncertainty, he had summoned from the profound recesses of a character whose resources it was no short plummet that would sound, those "spirits" of desperate counsel and demoniac daring "that tend on mortal bidding," and evoked in the hot rush of their electric fervour the ever salient and impetuous energies of a heart whose leaping fire of might no toils or terrors that the world could show, might ever avail to extinguish or exhaust. The classic fruits of inspired art that were spread around, indicated the place and manner in which he renewed the clearness of a mind which degraded schemes had sullied, and washed his thoughts of those impurities which the contact of vice and coarseness had left upon them. And here, by that medicine of the mind and those baths of the soul, which in learned regularity

extended on every side, he had cleansed and invigorated the frame of an intellect which found a task equally suited to his powers and adapted to its inclination, when it contended with philosophers in the regions of speculation, as when it strove with the sordid in the realms of the actual. He had found a means by which the mind might descend to the pit of infamy, and clasp and clench the forms and forces of treachery and crime, and be steeped in the rotting dampness of deceit; yet rise when occasion called to the brightest region of moral investigation, and as it soared serenely in the blaze of thought with its proud and pearly plumage, feel that no force of its crest was marred, no feather of its wing was moulted. He had learned a method by which the intellect might gaze in wonder upon the thunder-pillared throne of eternal lustre and grow mute with awe before the shrine of the divinest mysteries, yet turn in the strenuousness of its high human strength and concentrate its microscopic scrutiny upon the motives of a fool and find no disrelish for the meanest details of systematic rapacity. He could ascend to purity without difficulty and return to vice without disgust. In conversation he had the mental fearlessness of a soul conscious of no vile conception; in action he had the moral shamelessness of a heart that had renounced even the hope of virtue. Yet strange as was the variety of quality that thus divided his being, the effect was to produce uniformity and not difference; for what he was in conflict, *that* he was in conference; ardent, yet cold—various in invention, yet unwavering in decision—in enterprise, touching the remotest measures, in execution, treating them with the readiest means;—such he was in action—such and the same in colloquy.

Perceiving that there was no connexion between this apartment and any beyond or beside, I rose and walked back to the entry which I had crossed to reach it, to see if by that course I could find a passage to any other part of the house where I might gain admission to that office or repository of papers which a person of his employment must be supposed to possess. When I had arrived at the door, I beheld to my surprise that the place which I had imagined to be a hall extending from the street door to the rear of the building was, in fact, a small room bounded by a continuation of the walls which limited the larger one in which I had been, and that from this outer chamber there was no egress save by the way in which I had gone through. My first conjecture was that a door of communication with the front part of the house would be found in some part of the panelled wall of the saloon; but observing, as I cast my eye along, that there did not seem to be any uncovered space sufficiently large for this purpose, I thought it more probable that a door which had existed in the ante-room had been bricked up when the owner had left his residence, the more effectually to prevent any entrance into the apartments of his house. I thought I could discern in the channelled figures on the wainscot, the outline of what had once been a door, although I detected nothing in the colour or feeling of the plaster which encouraged the opinion that the work had recently been done.

I returned to the drawing-room, considerably disappointed by this discovery, and at a loss what it were best to do in this position of things to accomplish the purpose on which I was embarked. I seated myself upon one of the ottomans near the door and thought by

what means I could gain access to the upper parts of the building in which there was a better prospect of prosecuting the search which it seemed needless to institute in the spot where I was. Williams, I recollected, had spoken of his having traversed the house, as if the undertaking had not been one of serious difficulty or delay; and the confidence with which he alluded to the subject before one whom he supposed to be the person in whose company he had once, as it appeared, entered if not gone over the house, gave an air of entire credibility to his statement. In explanation of the perplexity in which I was placed, it might be conjectured that the individual who penetrated that by which I was arrested, was possessed of some secret knowledge by which the labyrinth of this singular building was followed; but it seemed more probable, that a change had been effected in the communications between the rooms since he had entered them, and that the walls which were now sealed had then been open. The work which I had undertaken, I now perceived would be less easy than I had imagined; for it was pretty clear that the owner of this mansion had thrown around his dwelling the same mystery and concealment as he employed to envelope his character and his actions. That the arrangement of the rooms differed wholly from what the exterior of the house had led me to expect was plain from the single circumstance that the apartment in which I was, extended through a length at least equal to double the breadth of the apparent front. It must have occupied the entire side of the adjoining building; and probably that house, and the same might be true of others adjacent, was in the occupancy of Tyler. How far the field, through which my investigations, to be profitable,

must be made, seemed vain to one familiar with the boundless operations of this man, to conjecture.

While I was pondering upon the course which I should pursue, and gazing vacantly upon a distant part of the floor, in the profound silence of a scene undisturbed but by a single breath, I saw a portion of the carpet a little beyond the centre of the room, rise once or twice to the height of half an inch above the level of the adjoining parts, and fall as often. Motionless, my eyes were riveted upon the spot in amazement and consternation. A moment after a trap-door, which had been hidden in the floor, was thrust up, and the hand of a man held it in that position for a brief space. The figure of a person, bearing in his other hand a small lamp, gradually ascended through the opening by a flight of steps immediately beneath. His back was towards me and I could form no supposition who it was, until when he reached the upper floor he turned his face towards me. I then beheld the pale, rigid, frowning countenance of Tyler.

Fortunately for me, my situation at the instant was such that the broad column near to which I was sitting was so directly between myself and him, that my figure was entirely concealed in its shadow. I had happened to be reclining forward with my arm upon my knee, and my eye was advanced just enough to enable me to catch a glimpse of the objects which I have described. The moment the features of Tyler flashed upon me I drew back with the quickness of thought, extinguished my candle, and making a single step, leaned closely against the pillar and maintained a death-like stillness. The silence of his movements was scarcely less than my own: during the whole time I heard not even the slightest sound. So

far as I could judge from the shadow which was cast by his lamp, he paused for a few seconds in the spot where he rose, and then moved forward towards the opposite quarter of the room. I looked out from behind the barrier which concealed me, and saw that he was going towards the remotest part of the wall, which was included between the other row of columns and the wall behind them. When he reached it, he raised his hand and touched the centre of a figure in the panelling. A large and lofty door immediately flew open, and he went through, leaving it as it stood. I followed, and saw that he had entered a high and extensive hall which was intersected by another of similar dimensions. Stationing myself so as to be concealed by the open door, I looked through the crack and saw that he went through the latter till he arrived at the wall by which it was terminated. In this a door disclosed itself before his touch and he went through. At a safe distance and with extreme caution I advanced, and observed his erect and well-knit figure moving on through another apartment and yet another, until he arrived at a small square room with a lantern-shaped top, from the centre of which hung a lighted lamp. On one side was an enormous, riveted iron door, and on another a smaller one, which Tyler opened, and went into the closet which it disclosed. He took from a shelf a stone jug into which he emptied the contents of a pitcher of water which stood by, and then poured a dark-coloured liquid from a vial, and added a small quantity of white powder; he then inserted the stopper, and shook the vessel with considerable violence. When he had completed this operation, I heard him mutter between his teeth, "Such is the fate of curious folly! He

shall find that the fruit of knowledge is the seed of death." He then took up a broad and richly-chased dagger which he placed in his bosom, and thrust a double-barrelled pistol under his arm and reached down from a nail a ring of huge keys. The dark and dreadful purpose which he was about to execute flashed upon my mind, and I remembered with anguish that I was wholly unarmed.

The countenance of Tyler, as he crossed the small chamber towards the iron door which fronted, and his position brought his face before my view under the full clear light of the lamp above, was grave and cold, but as serene and placid as I ever beheld it;—neither hued with triumph, nor black with hatred. He deposited the jar upon the floor, and taking from the bunch the largest of the keys, unlocked the creaking bolt, and drew back several large bars which farther defended the door, and then thrust it open with all his strength. It grated harshly on its hinges, and gave a sharp sullen roar as it struck against the wall behind. A large vaulted space was brought to view as the light dimly penetrated among the gray and sleepy cobwebs, and was quenched as it struggled vainly with the impenetrable darkness of the remoter parts. A broad and lengthened flight of stone steps led down to a platform, from which on each side of the larger one, two narrow frames of steps conducted to a depth yet more profound. Bearing with him the articles of death and of defence which I have described, Tyler descended to the lowest of these floors, which consisted of a hard and flinty clay. I cast my eye rapidly around the closet from which he had provided himself with these weapons, in the hope of finding something which would enable me to confront

him with some chance of succeeding ere the consummation which I foresaw with dread was effected, and that prospect of vital profit which was held out to me for the last time was blotted out for ever. Nothing of the sort, however, was to be found; and with a breast on fire with baffled wishes, and a brain half-maddened with aimless desperation, I strode down the steps after the callous murderer, tortured with the regretful rage that flames in vain. That Maxwell was the inmate of one of the dungeons, which reached from the foundation walls, like low arched tombs for the living, towards the intersecting path which Tyler was traversing, was abundantly manifest, and that he was speedily to be the victim of one of the several forms of death which this bottomless traitor was bearing with him, was equally apparent. That I, who had supposed that all possibility of this man's being discovered or brought in opposition to Tyler was past by, should arrive at a moment in which a single act of mine might at once deliver a man from horrible destruction, and produce most signal benefits to myself both of reward and of revenge, yet with a free arm and an eager soul be morally paralysed and powerless, seemed the archmock of human hopes and strength. Had a being skilful to torment the mind contrived a position in which surrounding circumstances should, without the touch of force or the display of terror, be made, by their silent action on the passions of the heart, to agonize feeling by the objectless waste of wild excitement, no situation more adapted to that end could have been fabricated. As I stood upon the platform which received the first flight of steps, and beheld this person on whom was now concentrated all the unendurable abhorrence with which my soul was swelling, and beheld him measuring with his stately pace the lessening distance which divided the present moment of hope from the advancing instant in which the issue of our contest would be sealed for ever for victory or despair, and the reproachful minutes, as they wrung my conscience in their accusing flight, told me that no fancy could have framed a more advantageous scene for interference, and that the crime of the loathed conclusion,

which pressed on to fulfilment would rest on me, I clenched my hands together in the sufferings of a pang too bitter to be borne. I thought of my father's cares and sorrows, and the blessing of restored wealth which it should be mine to heap upon his failing years; I thought of my own wrongs and injuries, endured in many things performed and purposed, and there in chief where every grief is keenest to be borne; I thought of the miserable scene of Thompson's death, and the unuttered vow of vengeance which the struggle of my indignant spirit had struck forth as I gazed upon the wretched deed; and I felt urged by an almost irresistible impulse to spring forward and crush the man whose presence roused these stinging thoughts. But that the attempt would be madness, for he might have despatched me by a triple death ere I could approach to touch his form. I gnashed my teeth in all the fury of insane remorse when I thought of the accursed folly which had brought me on such an enterprise without a weapon even of the weakest kind. I grasped the corner of the staircase with a nervous gripe, as if that force were necessary to prevent my rushing out upon the certainty of death. And full of wormwood was it that just when assisting Fate had disposed every thing with such rare advantage,—had bound, as it were, the victim before me on the block, and given me the word to strike the blow, so vile an error as this should make me see the rich permission rot away untouched before my eyes. The wave that had turned in a thousand unstable ways was now in the unexpected power of its fullest strength surging towards the barrier which the ship upon its crest had laboured to overleap, and on the event of the next moment depended whether it burst the bound on which it pressed, or whirled back and left the strand for ever dry. Maxwell, while he breathed, yet bore the knowledge which gave wealth to me and wo to Tyler; in another moment that fate would be turned: he would cease to live, and with him would be expunged what might transform the condition of thousands. Myself and Tyler,—the victim and the villain,—stood beside a balance whose descending scale would, after years of proud injustice, give restoration to the wronged, and

retribution to the wronger, or stamp with the seal of firm success the sins of triumphant crime; and seemed almost treason against virtue to permit the event to be against the right.

While a thousand wild thoughts of this kind rushed past my mind, and the heaviness of days was concentered in instants, Tyler had continued his march until he reached one of the smallest of the cells, before which he stopped. Each of the vaults had near the base a rough, spiked door, which served for the entrance of its inmate, and above, an iron gate or shutter which appeared intended to serve for the introduction of food, and for other purposes of communication, as it was not large enough to give passage to a human figure. The lower of these was padlocked; the upper one was secured only by a bolt. Tyler placed his hand upon it and drew it with some difficulty, for it was heavy and rusty. The moment that the unhappy prisoner heard the sound of some one on the outside of his dungeon, he cried out in a sharp and shrieking tone, the loudness of which was dimmed by the thick wall, but its mournfulness not hidden, "Water! water!—For God's sake a drop of water! a drop!"

Tyler paused and listened intensely till he became silent, and then opened the small door which he had been engaged in unbarring.

"I have brought you water, Maxwell!" said he; "Drink of it as freely as you will!"

He lifted the jar up to the small door which he had thrown open, and placed it in the extended hands of the miserable victim. The latter clasped it convulsively, and rapidly swallowed a few draughts. He then placed it upon the floor of his cell, as if the craving of thirst that tortured his frame were less imperious in exaction than the anxiety that stung his mind, and addressed his enemy in tones of intense and breathless energy.

"Harold! I have one word to say. I do not ask for my life, nor for my liberty. But I have a family—numerous and helpless. I have information which will be to them of infinite benefit. If it is sent to them, they are well: if it is not, they are beggars. The only earthly wish that possesses me, is to have that intelli-

gence conveyed. All I ask you for, is to give me the means of doing so. I implore you to grant me that request. It can do you no harm. And I will render you in return any service, you may demand. Any thing, any thing you require, shall be done. Name your demand."

Tyler listened to the appeal, unmoved in countenance or attitude. "All that you can do," said he, with his usual coldness, "will be valueless to me."

"Is there nothing, *nothing*, will prevail with you? What objection can there be to the only request I make? It cannot possibly injure you."

"It will do me no good."

"You refuse me then.—God!" exclaimed the unhappy victim, after a little pause, as if unutterable emotions were struggling within him—and as he pronounced the word with the lingering vehemence of one who sought in a cry, relief from the passion that convulsed him, his voice swelled into a shout that rose with thrilling violence through the vaults and chambers of the place, like the gnashing shriek of a *demon*—"May the deepest curse of Hell light upon you!"

With the calm deliberation of profound indifference, Tyler slowly closed the little gate through which his communications with his prisoner had been held, and bolted it. He then turned away and walked on in the opposite direction to that in which I stood. He stopped before an arched door in the transverse wall, and taking a key from the bunch that hung upon his arm, he unlocked and opened it, and passed through. He locked it behind him, and I saw him no more. The light still shone through the aperture of the wall, and fearful of being heard, I remained silent. In a few instants, I heard another more distant door unlocked, and re-fastened; and all likelihood of detection being removed, I groped my way forward as fast as possible towards the cell of the prisoner.

For some time I felt with nervous eagerness along the wall to find the bolt, but ineffectually. Fearing the unfortunate man might renew his draught of the deadly liquid that had been given him, before I could inform him of the danger, I cried out at the top of my voice,

"Maxwell! do not drink that water as you value your life; it is poisoned—it is poisoned."

In a little while I succeeded in laying my hand upon the fastening, and throwing open the door I earnestly repeated my exhortation to him to refrain from drinking. Judging by the sounds which reached my ear, for it was intensely dark, the pitcher was still lying on the floor and he did not appear to have taken it up since Tyler had left him. As I spoke, however, he raised it from the ground, as if I had reminded him of what he had forgotten.

"Who are you?" said he.

"I will release you from your confinement. Tyler has gone. But do not touch that water, for it is poisoned. I will bring you some fresh in a moment."

He raised the jar to his lips. "It may be poisoned," said he, gasping as he spoke, "but it is water—water!" and he swallowed copious and repeated draughts. I endeavoured to strike the vessel from his hand; but he had clenched it too firmly. And he frustrated my efforts by retreating to the opposite part of the cell. He then continued drinking eagerly, exclaiming, "Water! water!" in the intervals in which he stopped to breathe.

The pitcher presently fell from his hands, and after reeling a few times from one part of his dungeon to the other, and uttering a few broken and unconnected words, he leaned against the wall, and gradually slid down until he rolled upon the ground. I paused for a little while, but he remained silent. I called to him, but received no answer.

CHAPTER X.

O! day thrice lovely! when at length the soldier
Returns home into life; When he becomes
A fellow-man among his fellow-men.
In life's rude joys of outward things, there's nought
To satisfy the heart, the gasping heart. COLERIDGE.

Læto cursu properamus,
Et amamur et amamus. BRATHWAITE.

It was with considerable difficulty and not till after a

lapse of some time, that I made my way back from the vaulted depths of this chamber of dungeons, to the light of the upper apartments. When I had gained the drawing-room from which I had first followed Tyler to the subterranean privacy of his extraordinary prison, I made no delay in retracing my steps through the passage by which I had entered. I accomplished this unobserved, and reached my own house in safety.

Upon reviewing the consequences resulting from the scene of which I had just been a witness, it appeared to me that the failure which it had brought to the hope upon which I chiefly relied was in itself conclusive upon the subject of my efforts in relation to Tyler. Thompson had pointed to Maxwell as the only person who, either from his talents or knowledge, or his position in reference to that extraordinary man, could be relied on as possessing ability to prevail against him in any contest. The fact of Tyler scorning all his other enemies and turning them aside with indifference, and exerting himself to destroy this one only, indicated a similar opinion on his own part. There could be no doubt that the intention of Tyler had been to close his connexion with all those with whom he had been engaged, and to remove all danger from behind him, and then to retire for ever from the scene—either to another country, or to some concealment in this. I called to mind what Thompson had remarked, in the paper which I have before alluded to, about a place of retreat to which he was in the habit of resorting, and wherein he would probably be found if at any period of danger or excitement, he should disappear from the light. I took from my drawer the paper upon which Thompson had marked the situation of that spot, and traced the course by which it was reached. It was there designated as a place among the mountains, approached only by a long defile, narrow, rocky, and hazardous progress, and the course by which this defile was reached from the city, was through a confined and intricate passage, partly subterranean, and partly proceeding through a series of structures which were ostensibly devoted to purposes of business, and bore no indication of the more secret use to which they were applied. Upon comparing

the path thus traced out with the direction taken by Tyler, I felt no hesitation in deciding that when he had parted from Maxwell and myself in the vault of his own house, he had set out through this way to reach this concealment where he probably proposed to dwell in retirement and secrecy. The directions and courses marked by Thompson were far too vague and indefinite to enable one so little acquainted as myself with the localities of the adjoining country, to follow his indications with any chance of succeeding to find the object to which they led; for when I recalled the efforts reported to have been made by so many, so long, and so eagerly, without avail, I could not but conclude that great and uncommon difficulties and concealments interfered both to hide these routes from view, and to impede the efforts which could be made to traverse them. Such seemed to be the position to which matters were now reduced, and in view of the particular obstacles which I could observe existing to render the attempt to follow Tyler almost impossible, as well as the general hindrances and dangers, which from my knowledge of his character I might certainly presume upon being superadded by himself, and decided to relinquish all farther efforts to pursue what seemed to be proved hopeless, and to consider the expectations which I had entertained, as extinguished, and the settlement of the struggle final and complete.

On the following morning I called upon Emily. The relation upon which we now met was charged with all that was delightful and satisfactory in human intercourse. There was neither the doubt of untried affection, nor the undeveloped imperfectness of a feeling that has undergone no shock or injury, but the fulness of a love that was based on experience of a fault forgiven, and on the reality of characters whose error had been renounced;

> For both were frail, and both beloved for all their frailty.

It was to me a delicious joy to turn from the barrenness of my former unshared thoughts, to the soft richness of a state of fellowship where every hope was answered and returned. All the dreams which had made

the opening days of youth brilliant with the lustre of a better clime, and which for a time had been severed from my actual state, were again interlaced with life, and flinging their light over the scene which surrounded me. I returned to a reunion with the spirit of that better self which I had left behind me in the vale of childhood, and no longer existing in a state of militancy with my former life, I rested and reposed in the well-balanced peace of a heart whose "days were bound each to each" by the piety of a natural and fit relation. I felt anxious to retire from the tedious bustle of the condition in which I had been so long living, and to dwell in the secure possession of the quiet love which henceforth would shed the rays of its gladness around me.

Considering my connexion with Tyler as at an end, there remained nothing to give me any farther solicitude or detain me from retiring in safety to the tranquillity which I was disposed to seek, except the danger in which I might be from the former associates of Tyler thinking me too important an enemy to them to be suffered to live. This was a hazard which I had no notion of continuing subject to. I felt some hesitation in applying to the head of the police, for I thought it not improbable that there might be such an understanding between that body and those whom I was concerned with, as to render such a step ineffective; and I thought it safer to buy over some inferior officer of the police who might keep me informed of the proceedings of this party, and might be my agent in any steps I might choose to take in organizing a private force to marshal against these persons. I quickly found a man of this description willing to serve me to any extent. From his expressions, though veiled and guarded, I inferred that the sort of connexion which I had conjectured to exist between the two bodies was in some measure, at least, a reality. I communicated to him all the knowledge I possessed of the haunts of the nominal club, and desired him to keep a strict watch on their acts, and punctually to report to me what was done. To my very great satisfaction, he in a few days brought me intelligence that the company was wholly and permanently dissolved, and that nearly all the members had left the city.

Thus the embarrassments which had encompassed me were at length put to flight, and the long parenthesis of uneasiness and pain which accident and design had united to interject between the conception and the fulfilment of my hopes, was ended. I, impelled by the selfishness of an absurd and insane expectation, had in the beginning broken faith with her, who did not fulfil an idea which none but a madman in affection could have cherished, and I had been punished by being the victim of injurious arts in the very hour when I thought to take up at pleasure what I had renounced through caprice. Emily explained to me that on the very evening that I had met her and renewed the intimacy which had been broken, Mr. Tyler had approached with statements so contrived and fortified that it was impossible, observing their evidence, to doubt of their truth, or accepting their truth, to believe in my honour. His whole purpose, as I felt no hesitation in deciding, had been to detach me from a connexion which would be likely to engross my time, and which would prevent his having me enough under his control to put in action the scheme of plunder which his conversation that I had overheard at the shore informed me he entertained. And perhaps nothing had come before me more strikingly illustrative of the callous and ruthless selfishness of his policy than this unhesitating destruction of the happiness of two persons for the mere possibility of reaping a trifling gain. The only redeeming feature in the transaction was, that when he had determined to relinquish the attempt to practise further upon me, and was about to retire from his former pursuits, he had taken the pains to correct the impression he had produced, and to restore the confidence which he had before destroyed. But in that act the passionless insensibility of his temper was strongly displayed; for, being inclined to restore to their truth feelings which it had ceased to be his interest to prevent, he had not been tempted to change his intention by any resentment which my hostility and pursuit of him would have excited in a bosom swayed by ordinary emotions.

It was in the fulness of a delight which no wish disturbed, and no fear diminished, that, ere the lapse of many weeks I reached the village of my youthful rest-

dence, in company with my gentle bride. When I found myself wandering amid the shaded walks which in former years we had been wont to tread together, it seemed to me that all the elements of happiness that had ever presented themselves to my sight in detached fragments through the course of my life, were here united in one perfect scene. The person and the place, whose pleasantnesses I had learned to value deeply and intelligently by that deprivation which is the best portrayer of beauties, were again in my possession and were together. And when I strolled through those embowered walks, and related to Emily all the labours and struggles which I had so long sustained, to gain that prize of reputation which I hoped would make me worthy of her love, and then remembered that all that I strived for was won in its deep completeness, and there was nothing to shade or soil the substance of reality from that image of brightness which Hope, in its mirror, had prefigured years before, I rightly deemed that to few careers on earth was there allotted a condition which had more of satisfaction and less of repining.

In the delightful retreat of this village residence, our days passed on in unebbing gladness. All that annoyed my life, in actual or anticipated, had passed by, and I had only to be calmly susceptible to the influences of the scenes and circumstances which were around me, to be affected with the strongest impressions of delight which the best gratifications of the world could bestow. There was but one recollection which was of a nature to disturb the entire serenity of contentment with which what was possible, and what was real in my life, could be compared, and that was the abiding and unreversed injury which Tyler had wrought to the fortune of my father and myself, by his operations in connexion with Thompson. Had I been successful in my endeavours to restore justice in those transactions, I should have taken much from the cares that weighed upon my father, and I might have added something to the enjoyments which surrounded myself. Nevertheless, whenever I recurred to these considerations, I rather used the defect to make matter for a hope than to furnish substance for a regret.

Several months had passed by, when I was one day summoned from the parlour with the information that a

horseman had ridden up to the door, and announced himself as the bearer of a letter, which he must deliver into no hands but mine. I stepped into the hall and the following communication was placed in my hands:

"SIR,

"The period of my death is near, and I have documents to deliver to you as well as explanations to make which concern you deeply. The magnitude of the interest involved in our meeting may be considered as putting out of sight those personal feelings which might otherwise be concerned in that event; and I, therefore, take the liberty of requesting your presence at my residence at as early a time as may be convenient to you. Your recovery of property, now augmented to an extremely great value, depends upon my seeing you. The bearer of this note will accompany you and point out the way. It is the condition of his guidance, that you ride unaccompanied and unattended.

"ARTHUR TYLER."

The receipt of this letter gave me much surprise, but left me in no doubt as to the course to be followed. I disclosed the circumstance to Emily, and the necessity of my absence for some days, and on the following morning I set off in company with the messenger to comply with Mr. Tyler's request.

CHAPTER XI.

Nolite putare, Patres Conscripti, quem admodum in fabulis sæpenumero videtur, eos qui aliquid impie sceleratèque commiserint, impulsu Deorum, agitari et perterreri furiarum tædis ardentibus: sua quemque fraus, et suus terror vexat: suum quemque scelus; agitat, amentiaque afficit: suæ malæ cogitationes conscientiæque animi terrent, [PRO ROS.]: suum facinus, sua audacia de sanitate ac mente deturbat: hæ sunt impiorum Furiæ, hæ flammæ, hæ faces. CICERO IN PISONEM.

——— Se
Judice nemo nocens absolvitur improba quamvis
Gratia prætoris mendacis vicerit urnam. JUVENAL.

ON the day after that on which we began our journey, after having traversed a distance of between fifty and

sixty miles and passed a portion of country extremely wild and uncultivated, we reached the skirts of a very thick forest, which did not seem even to have been penetrated by the feet of man. Turning from the road which we had hitherto followed, we struck into this wood, and continued to thread it for several hours until we reached a small stream which was skirted on the opposite side by the same depth of foliage as that which darkened our recent passage. My guide went up along the banks of this stream, and in a short time the thickly wooded landscape which had previously been seen changed to a more rugged and elevated scenery. Rocky and precipitous hills rose almost directly from the water's edge to a considerable height on either side, and rendered the passage, at some points, nearly impracticable. It was quite late in the evening when we reached a small hut almost surrounded with woods, in which we slept. The next day our journey was resumed through scenes of a similar character, until about noonday, we turned off from the river which we had hitherto followed, and I found myself led into grounds exhibiting a high degree of cultivation and taste. A few minutes' ride through a lawn that might have rivalled the best-appointed park in Europe, brought us to a noble mansion, into which I was ushered. Preceded by a servant, who received me at the door, I was led to an upper room. It was of considerable length, and as I entered it, I perceived the figure of Tyler seated on a large chair at the opposite end.

His appearance was much altered since I had seen him last. He was now looking thin, pale, and unhappy. An air of anxiety and distress was stamped upon his features, and his eye had lost the calmness of the iron glance that had once made it so peculiar and so powerful, and had become unsettled, roving and excited. He bore the aspect of a man who no longer controlled to peace the inward agitation of a guilty bosom, but was disturbed and tortured by terrors that might not be resisted. Deep furrows were marked along his forehead, which had not existed when we met before. There was an air of ferocity in the resoluteness of his frown, which in former days had never been more

severe. He seemed like one, who was overwhelmed by a suffering, which he yet resisted and endured, because resistance and endurance were inborn qualities of his being.

I saluted him respectfully, and he returned my address with a grave courtesy that indicated a spirit too much engrossed with hidden emotions to be alive to those less earnest agitations which were likely to have been roused on such an occasion. I took care to display, neither in manner nor remark, any token of the feeling which our intercourse had left upon my mind. The haggard horror that was written upon his countenance left me no disposition to contemplate his history or character with any thing else than profound regret and intense apprehension. He desired me to be seated, and then said, that a wish to explain some of his former conduct to me, for the ease which it would give himself, had induced him to trouble me with the application which he felt grateful to me for yielding to. I found from his manner, that he was labouring under an excitement, which felt itself relieved by occupying itself with conversation and thought, and knowing well that by the laws of natural sensation, communication is an alleviation of mental pain, I urged him to favour me with an account of such portions of his history as he might find himself entirely inclined to make known, assuring him of the interest with which any information of his personal career or characteristics would be listened to on my part. The request seemed to present itself to him as agreeable, and premising that he would at least give me a general sketch of his course and some notion of his principles of action, he began in the following terms:

"The residence of my father was on the most northern portion of the western coast of England; and in that wild and impressive region of solitude and beauty, I was born. The place of one's nativity, or at least the residence of one's early childhood, exerts a greater sway upon one's character and history than the world commonly imagines; and I have always considered it important in studying the life and exploring the mental

qualities of distinguished men to possess myself of some knowledge of the natural influences under which their infancy and youth were passed. Alike in the statesman, who amid the storms of popular rage, and upon the morasses of personal intrigue stands in the gloom of his passionate thoughts and dark severity of his stern emotions, and pours the electric ardours of his spirit over the wrongs of his country and the sufferings of principle, and in the deep-souled bard, whose impetuous rush of passion, shocking the bar of custom, foams into poetry, you detect the generous swelling of a heart whose sighs have been timed by the lashings of the deep, and whose breast is ever haunted by the vastness of the sea. The epistles of Pope tell as distinctly of the lawns of Windsor as the odes of Wordsworth proclaim the majesty and barrenness of the hills that surround him; and the disparity between the characters of Lamb and Scott was not greater than the difference between the homes of their boyhood. To look, alone, upon splendid and impressive sights, or to mingle in distant scenes of high and memorable interest, renders us indifferent to the opinions of those who have not shared what engrosses us; and thus the knowledge which lone musing hours have brought home to my soul of what a world to the heart is nature, and what a 'wide realm of wild reality,' are its thoughts and pleasures, has served, I think, to exalt me above dependence on the words of the world, and to teach me the great lesson of high action, to estimate my fellows lightly and never to feel respect. And by another and a nobler exercise of rivalry did the reveries of childhood on the solitary beach, strengthen and elevate my nature. There is a voice of power in the thunderings of the sea, which insults the soul of man with its inferior fervour to the vigour of the material, and rouses all our energies to war against the slavery of surpassing grandness. In the silence of indomitable resolution I was wont to fight madly in my youth against this tyranny of overwhelming greatness, and to dash beneath my feet the sovereignty its roar asserts, until my soul as it soared in its immortality of effort could say to the struggling waves, 'With all the vastness of thy sway, thou, O Sea, art not my fellow!'

"There was around me in the hour of my nativity almost every thing that might ensure to me a happy life. My parents were rich and well-born, and I thus inherited from them the greatest blessings of the earth. But I brought with me into the world a dark antidote to all enjoyment and bane of every virtue. Deep and ineradicably fixed in my inmost nature was the sting of morbid sensibility, which is the fellest curse with which malignant Destiny can dower our days. The dark passions and blind sufferings of my early youth cast a cloud of bitter recollection over those years, and as I look back, the period of my boyhood spreads before me as a dark and confused memory of pain. It is thus with all whose susceptibilities overpower their mind. Ere the emotions of the heart and the longing dreams of the fancy have been mastered by the will, or have found an object on which to fix, they disturb the being they inhabit, as does the presence of a divine one in a tenement of mortality. The condition and the calamity of such persons is told when we say that in them, at their birth, feeling is in the flower, while reason, which should foliage it from the blasts, is yet in the bud. Until judgment overtakes impression, and controls by the rigour of its calmness, the scale of life is unpoised, and trial and torture attend existence. Indeed, it is only where the intellect is unusually rich and copious, that the balance is restored; and the unhappy possessor of one of the most abundant elements of bliss goes through life a genius and a wretch.

"If the circumstances in which I was placed had been different, the strong qualities of my character might have been improved to blessings, and the complexion of my life been turned to virtue. A parent whom personal experience would have taught to comprehend the wants of my nature, and whom affection would have prompted to soothe and direct them, might have made me far other than time proved. But such a guardian was denied me. My father was a man of that thoroughness of art and breeding that you might have doubted whether he had ever been a boy. My mother was a person of rare and powerful intellect; I do not know that I have ever seen any one who possessed a mind

at once so strong and so ingenious. But she had no feeling, and she laughed at those who had it; indeed, her contempt for all softness of heart often coarsened a conversation otherwise refined and rich to the last degree of delightfulness. Had she been born in an age or a position to illustrate her genius in a fitting sphere, she had shone as an Elizabeth or a Catharine de Medicis. From such a woman, be sure that I received but little of that sympathy whose want made up the madness of my life. From her I met with only taunts which my tenderness quick turned to torture, and cold repulses which outraged all my power of endurance. Often, as her words have stung me with a lash of anguish, the revulsion of feeling has rolled through my soul and swept all restraint of virtue with it. Often have I retired from her presence, maddened into fury, and in the blasphemy of my rage, have I cursed together my life and her who gave it.

"But it is needless to linger on the sufferings of childhood. I pass to that period of boyhood which the ancient Egyptians deemed so peculiarly felicitous that they expressed the abstract idea of happiness by the number sixteen. Far different from the condition which the poetical fancy of the children of the South had assigned to that æra, was my experience. Yet I mark it as the epoch in which my nature first found an outlet for the tumultuous passions that boiled up within it, and in which I began to master the emotions which till then enslaved me. I then first learned what a friend to man in all conditions of his life is Nature, and then first and then only I poured out the gushing fulness of my heart towards one that was rich to satisfy the depth of all my longings.

"My father's house was distant about a mile from the sea, and between it and the rocky and indented beach, there was an irregular succession of wild and rough mountains, but no dwelling. In the leisure of the long summer days it became my delight to wander along the channelled solitude of the sequestered beach, while the dark waves of unpurposed passion swelled through my soul with the might and the energy with which the

all-kingly waters smote the shelving sands, or to repose within some rock-sheltered natural chamber, and bid my mind inhale the sentiments of force and majesty, that thickened the light of heaven and misted all the air that canopied the sea.

"When I escaped from the feverish dissatisfaction which fretted me at home to the peace of the joy that reigned through this expansive scene, and gazed upon the beauty of the sea and brightness of the sky, whose light was a smile of gladness and whose twinkling motion was a thrill of pleasure, I said in the bitter grief of my heart, 'Why am I alone unhappy?' In the morning I beheld the awakened waves far shake their yellow tresses in the consciousness of coming joy, and the grave mists roll aside their curtains from the sky, and the scene of splendour open which was to prove a festive holyday of rich contentment to all inanimate nature; and in the bannered glory of the wide exulting noon, I saw the waters answer to the welkin in a thousand signals of form and colour, returned as soon as made, and the world lying expanded in satiety of bliss; and when the sun recalled his rays in the decline of day, and the pomp of the show was over, and the banished breezes came home over the billows, like children, led away in the stately hours of exhibition, returning to their hall and play-ground when the domestic twilight had robed the garish scene in its familiar quiet, I recognized a yet intenser 'sense of the sufficingness,' of nature to itself, wherein abundantness of love was placed through its perfectness; and when, like an Ethiop Queen, night raised her jewelled head, to watch in the silence of her pale desertion, I knew that the sea sank to its gentle rest with the memory of not one vacant wish, and that the sky smiled in its still repose as it dreamed of the rapture which the morrow would renew. But neither in the shade of midnight nor in the glare of noon was there aught that soothed or satisfied my soul; nor to me was the evening placid or the morning glad; and in this prodigality of bliss there was the anomaly of a 'creature framed hungry for joy,' yet with no 'fit delights to stay its longings vast.' Neither before me nor behind was there a view that

gratified. The volcanic elements of passion disturbed my bosom; I was restless everlastingly by the compulsion of my nature; my feelings unstable, of necessity, like a frame falsely poised. Within, there was an instinct that urged my soul to search for some object, on which to spend its energies with the force and fulness of physical strength: and in those hours in which the softness of the scene subdued my spirit to a gentler mood, there arose

> —Feelings of strange tumult, and soft pain;
> And the whole heart exhaled into one want,
> But undefined and wandering.—

"One morning,—and that time comes back upon me like a green vista opening through a mist,—I marched down to my accustomed retreat beside the waves, in a serene and more buoyant mood than was my wont. I reclined behind a low rock which hid me from the land, and gazed out upon the bright waters that were sparkling in the splendour of the laughing day. The fresh strength of the clear north wind had opened the depths of the sky, spiritual and unsullied, save where an occasional foamy patch of cloud still shivered in the trembling breeze. The strenuous joyousness that pervaded all the scene won me to a healthier tenderness of heart than I had long experienced. A thoughtful sigh rose through my frame, which was melancholy but not bitter. My fancy brought to me the hour in which as rich a banquet might be spread for me as now made up the gladness of Nature. While I was reclining in this temper, and feelings were flitting through my blood with the intelligent distinctness of angel-eyed thoughts, I heard a slight noise above me, and starting from my seat, I beheld standing on the other side of the rock a young girl, whose sweetness of beauty may not be uttered. Her form was slight, and as it was revealed by the simplicity of a girlish dress, which was neat though plain, seemed exquisitely delicate. Her face was bright with the tenderness of fairness which melted the beholder's heart. Her eye, which was of a faint blue, and whose watery glance was as mild as the trembling moonbeams on the waves, and whose orb was too soft to gaze upon,

was fixed on me as I appeared, with an inquiring pleasantness; and her lip, which was arched like a bow, bore a gentle smile of wonder, which was too innocent to be turned to fear. Her hair, parted through the centre by a snow-white line, was drawn back in irregular and graceful curls; and her small hand, as white as the foam behind me, had been raised to her brow to shield her sight as she looked upon the sea, and was still held aloft, as the surprise of my rising fixed her like a little statue. Her countenance seemed to breathe the softness of a seraph's lineaments, and wore

> 'A quiet and peculiar light,
> Like the dim circlet floating round a pearl.'

But it is vain to analyse that charm whose speed of influence is its best spell; and to me distance and difference make the task doubly difficult. You will forgive me that a heart which so long has beaten obedient to far other impulses, finds it impossible to evoke from the deep caves of memory the impression of that countenance which then stood lustrous with a halo of loveliness. I will borrow the words of the strongly-souled Dryden, the king of classic English verse, to convey a portion of the excellent mystery that dwelt in the aspect of this gentle girl—

> 'As in perfumes,
> 'Tis hard to say what scent is uppermost;
> Nor this part musk nor civet can we call,
> Nor amber, but a rich result of all:
> So she was all a sweet.'

"As I looked upon her with a fluttered breast, the subduing softness of her glance sank into my spirit with an overpowering might, and my bosom throbbed so wildly that my senses almost failed, and agitation conquered thought. I stepped near to her, and my eye shrank from hers, as if a feminine archangel smiled towards me. I had no strength to gaze upon her sunny features; but with a wandering and uncertain eye I faltered forth my feelings in some broken words of breathless discomposure. 'Oh!' I exclaimed, 'you are very beautiful!—Oh! you are very beautiful! May I not love you?' There grew a dim smile of sweet surprise upon her lip, and a mild pleasure of no unwelcome

astonishment fixed the bright beaming of her dream-like eye. I raised to my lips her little snowy hand, and exclaimed, with an ardour that was its own voucher of its truth,—'My darling! I love you with all my soul!—Will you not love me?'

"There was neither the reserve of suspicion, nor the retiringness of craft, to cause this timid maiden to follow any law but that of natural confidence and sinless inclination, and the affection which I offered was returned as freely as it was uttered. Neither before nor since has such gushing gladness oppressed my heart as when I then folded her to my bosom, for when my trembling lip met her flushed cheek I seemed to stand upon the threshold of exhaustless worlds of bliss.

"By the satisfying object now presented to the aspiration of my spirit, I was at once relieved of a load of inward, obscure and nameless suffering, and at the same time presented with the brightest and most real joy that man can feel. To possess emotions which lie within the bosom, all-vital but unoccupied, is a goading grief, under which the heart never rests but in anxious weariness, and never acts but under a bitter sense of the vanity of its excitement. To find a full and comprehensive hope on which the idleness of interest may fix and brace itself, spreads through the veins a glad sense of keen and earnest health, which in itself is ecstacy. To unveil the thick covering of lonely reserve which has bound in the utterance of the soul's deep longings, and to receive the reflected day of reciprocated passions, is like

> Morning to the mind;
> Which spreads the beauteous *sentiments* abroad,
> Which else lie furled and clouded in the soul.*

"Not by bread alone does man live, neither upon the food of the substantial and the sensible, or the real and the actual, or the definite and the true, can he sustain his being; but of the infinite and the impalpable, the unseen, the visionary and the impossible, he must taste or die. To bask in the sunlight of a dream which shall never be fulfilled,—to be enraptured by a prospect which he never can approach,—to be ravished by the com-

* Nat. Lee.

panionship of joys that have no form nor place,—is the fate and the felicity of man; and in this behalf, the destiny and delight of his soul are filled by love. For the young mind to discover that the wishes which he deemed were weaknesses, and that the agitations which the conduct of his fellows and the language of the world had caused him to feel ashamed of and to be abased by, have become ennobled and dignified by the participation of another, and that is majestic which till then seemed morbid, and that an immortal fountain of happiness which he had thought an undying source of misery, is as sudden a transformation as the alchemy of fortune can furnish. Whatever may be implied in the change from a slave to a sovereign, is performed in this case; for to suffer by an inward sting when those around seem happy, is a degrading thraldom, and to be contented by an inward joy which others cannot partake, is a lordly exaltation. Whatever of gay surprise is felt by him who reclines a poor man and rises rich, is felt in this; for there is no poverty like that of spirit, and no wealth so exhaustless as that of a serene soul. Whatever difference may exist between the helpless and the powerful, is shown in this; for what feebleness is so dire as that of defective self-confidence, and what strength so great as that which finds the spur and solace of its life in the condition of its own bosom?

"Why should I repeat to you the long detail of a heart passing by rapid but endless progress from a frigid solitude of being to the glowing warmth of fellowship of mind?—It is needless to dwell upon the gushing words of earnest sympathy which were poured from bosoms whose emotions were winged with the eagerness of opening youth, and in whose natures the glow of sympathy spread abroad the gladness of a new creation. Of her family and condition I cared to know nothing. Blindly and impetuously my fretted spirit plunged into a sensuous dream of feeling, and intolerant of the past and contemptuous of the future, I drank from the tide of passion, and was happy. Love was to me as the copious, rich air, which my soul long gasping breathless breathed at last. It was not as a hue, tinting with delight what had once been dark, nor was it as an odour,

that floating amidst familiar scenes, pleased the sense in spots where it once had pined; but it was in itself substantial essence;—a form to touch, a shape to handle and embrace. To walk amid the stainless whiteness of the unvestured cliffs, in worded worship of this splendid being,—to sit beside her sweetness in some little cove of tender turf and daisied softness, and be silent—was the brightness of gladness to me. That battlingness of mood—that impatient antagonism of temper, in which I had till then regarded all that was around me, had changed at once into a content born of peace, and ripened rapidly into a sympathy produced by joy. The "unassisted heart' which in its solitary inanimation had been as 'barren clay' which 'of its native self could nothing feed' or find, was now 'softened into feeling, soothed and tamed' by the transforming influence of a warm bosom near it; and thus the mind, united in society of ease, rose into brotherhood with the majestic forms of earth and heaven, above me and around. I flung myself into this enjoyment, as one would dive beneath the wave to cool the force of his persecuted frame, and hide from bitter foes. The whole aspect of nature beamed with an intelligence which it had never before borne to my eye. The light in which a gentler and a happier spirit dwelt, and which its presence shed around, became the imparted medium of my own perceptions, and like the lamp of Firdousi, it revealed the mystic sense of what before had been blank. The brightness of her nature illuminated what was dark in mine, and gave the health of companionship to feelings which had been wont to repine in fretful solitude. As I sat beside this lovely person, and every word she uttered accorded with my own emotions, it seemed to me as if I had been familiar with her spirit through endless ages,—almost, indeed, as if she had my own spirit elevated and beautified.

"Over a life thus wildly happy, many days passed by. My being was shrouded in these thoughts as in a vision. Beyond that world which tumultuous affection created around me, I had no consciousness; of the actual earth I noticed nothing and I thought nothing. When separated from her, I went through the business

of my station with a vacant eye and an absent spirit, and my imagination still lingered amid the scenes which I had left. The golden light of that radiant sphere in which these chosen hours were bathed, clung ever about the daily path of my common duties. Other joys seemed to present but a dark, and dim, and divided being, and from the coldness of the half-insensible condition they produced I rushed back to sympathy and union with that which seemed the better portion of a severed soul. As one who has accustomed his system to the excitement of stimulating drugs until that exaltation of feeling has become the natural and necessary condition of his common life, and ordinary feelings have become wearisome, so I having feasted my spirit on the rich food of intense and elevated sympathy, found the moderate pleasures of the world tedious and unprofitable.

"One evening when I had parted from this delightful person, and was making my way home in the close of the afternoon, I observed the figure of a person whom I recognized as being a confidential attendant of my father, concealing himself behind an irregular portion of the cliffs where he appeared to have placed himself for the purpose of observing my movements. Before I had reached home he overtook and joined me, and the tone of his manner which was tinged with some of the 'insolence of office' confirmed my impression that he had been employed to watch and report what business carried me to that part of the coast. He intimated nothing of the kind, however, and no impression or behaviour on the part of my father, or any of the family, led me to suppose that any notice was taken or disapproval felt of the connexion which I had thus formed with one wholly unknown to all of them.

"A few evenings after this my father sent for me to his study, and informed me that he was about to set out on the following morning on a tour to the south of England, to visit some of his friends at their country seats, and that he would feel himself very happy and very honoured in being favoured with the company of his son. The manly suavity of courtesy with which my father addressed me, placing me at once upon a

footing with himself, rendered me incapable of declining his generous offer, and when he went on to hint very delicately that he had planned this tour chiefly for the sake of introducing his son to the acquaintance of some of his noble friends whose countenance in after life might be of service to him, and added that he anticipated great pleasure in cultivating during the leisure of a journey a greater intimacy with me than the nature of his occupations at home permitted. I was too much flattered and delighted with the prospect thus held out, to do any thing but express my sincere gratitude for his offer, and a hearty acceptance of his kindness. I felt, indeed, as much exhilarated and gladdened by the familiar and confidential manner exhibited by my father, who had previously withheld all expression of sympathy or regard, as by the promise of enjoyment which his design presented. I retired to my chamber in a more airy temper than was usual with me, and with gay and golden visions floating through my fancy; and it was not till I had become thoroughly occupied with the gay scenes which I pictured in advance, that I remembered that this expedition would separate me from the being who had so long been the only pleasure of my days. I might be compelled, too, to part from her without an opportunity to explain the cause of my absence and assure her of the fidelity which I bore to her and which my speedy return would assert. However, I reflected that my father would not begin his journey at a very early hour of the day, and that I should in all probability have time to run to the sea-side, where I hoped to meet her, before we set out. Calming my mind with this resolution, I reverted to the gratifications which were in store for me on the tour, and spent the night in imagining the objects I should see, until sleep closed my eyes. When I awoke on the following morning, the sun was shining in at me, and instead of the early start which I had intended, I found that I had slept considerably past my usual hour of rising. When I descended to the breakfast-room, I perceived that the travelling chaise was at the door; and my father, who was just rising from the table, desired me to drink my coffee as quickly as possible, as we should set off in

five minutes. In the confusion of the moment, twenty crude plans of sending intelligence to the girl whom I was leaving passed through my mind, of which two alone seemed practicable,—to leave a message to be conveyed by one of the servants, or to pretend that I had left something of value on the shore, and to go down there on pretext of looking for it. The embarrassment of being obliged to direct a dozen matters of arrangement about which I was asked prevented my taking any clear conclusion, and while I was debating confusedly what I should do, my father called out that all was ready, and lifting me into the coach, while bashfulness and perplexity kept me from executing either of the plans I had designed, we drove rapidly off. Cursing the circumstances which balked me, I submitted to their control.

"My tour proved far less agreeable than I had expected. It carried me into social scenes for which I was unfitted. My morbid temper prevented my joining in conversation in the companies to which I was presented, and made me feel acutely the failure which itself had caused. Incensed by my incapacity, and stung by my father's comments on my stupidity, I returned home gloomy and fretted. I flew to the sea-side to meet the joy in which I had been wont to forget all pains and weaknesses. The object of my search was not to be found. I sought her dwelling: it was in the occupancy of another family, and I learned that she for whom I inquired had been married the week before, and that the whole party had moved at once from the neighbourhood. The barren and abasing desperation which gathered over me as I heard this tale, 'making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb,' I have not power to describe. I was without a friend, without a consolation in the world. I had never strengthened myself within, to encounter the adversity which might be nigh, but had leaned on that which was without, for comfort; and that had failed. The abject, goading weakness of my former days returned upon me,

'The fear that kills;
The hope that is unwilling to be fed.'

"In a blind numbness of feeling which made me insensible to every source of contentment I turned towards the shore. Even the memory of what I had once enjoyed there, had passed from my thoughts.

"In a dull, blank mood of dreary misery I strolled sullenly along the beach. That time I remember as an incident of yesterday. The evening was dark with the gloom of a protracted storm, and the air was heavy with thick vapours. An agony of despondency gathered in my bosom. My life seemed stripped of every leaf and bud of hope; I could look no where for a comfort or a joy. Within my heart there was a restless striving after happiness which now goaded me on to feel intensely the vacuity of purpose which disappointment had left behind, and to brood almost to madness upon the absence of a rich delight on which my soul might leap. It was the cowardice of a mind that shrank from encountering the smallest pain that thus drove me upon the thorns of torture to escape from moderate grief. A diseased sensibility which strove to be gratified, made me think that existence was wasted unless I enjoyed intensely. Despising the indifferent interest of ordinary feeling, my passions had been spoilt and pampered into a despotic craving after boundless bliss; and that this was unattainable, fretted and vexed me almost to despair. As in the morbidness of a reason 'covetous to feel, and impotent to bear,' I wrung torture from my troubles, my spirit writhed beneath its suffering, until the added sadness of successive moments weighed me down with a distress intolerable. Brought thus to a wo that mocked endurance, I gnashed my teeth with rage, and roused all the powers of my outraged soul! 'Why,' I exclaimed, 'am I thus cursed above my fellows? Why am I thus tormented by these griefs? I will defy their pangs: I will combat with my calamity, and strangle the life of suffering within me.' In that crisis and struggle of my soul there arose within me a clear spirit of power which rolled away the clouds which had pressed me to the earth, and in the self-same moment I felt strong and at peace. In the armour of confidence and the panoply of resolution I turned and fronted the pain which had persecuted me. The fury

of desperation had given me a might which laughed their energy to scorn. They might break against me and break over me, but could not sweep me with them. It was the effort to escape from them and be purely happy without a thought being ruffled by a contest with annoyance which had given them such power to harass; but when I renounced the hoarded hope of joy, and flung myself against the storm that it might do its worst, it had no farther strength to harm me. I battled against the keenness of sensibility, and it shrank away within me; I flung feebleness beneath my feet, and a firmer peace than I had ever known was the reward I reaped. In that hour I felt the immortal truth of that sentiment of the poet which should be graven on the breast of every man:—'To be weak, is to be miserable.'

"With an eye that kindled with the fire of a fixed determination, and a brow where control was throned with calmness, I looked out upon the sea with an elevation and a happiness, which till then, I had not enjoyed. It was not that I had found aught to gratify the longings of my bosom, but that I had rooted from my heart the sting and lust of insane desire; and then the natural temper of a mind at rest, was a state of placid joy. Till now, I had urged my feelings outward and striven to find a pleasure in the external, and this effort had racked my bosom with a necessary pain; but when I threw up the struggle, and tore from my mind the cravings to possess the palpable, which had fixed upon a thousand objects and distracted it in all the directions where they clung, I left my spirit to itself, and in the composure of quietude then welled from its depths the living waters of natural contentment. Thus did I turn right on the failure of all my hopes, and reached success; and thus did I enter the perfect palace I had striven to frame, by walking over the ruins of the scaffolding I had erected to build it. 'The *heart* is its own place,' and for creating that food of happiness which it requires is 'all-sufficient to itself.' It has vitality and a generating principle within itself, and if we will refrain to cumber it with material impressions and thoughts which are alien to its essence, it will evolve

supplies that satisfy, while the mind forgets to toil, and the wish has ceased to strive and stimulate. In truth, the heart alone works out that peace which makes life lovely, and of its operations the reason takes no cognizance, and man, whose reason is his identity, is unaware till he feels the effect; but if by any qualities of whose exertion we are conscious we labour to be happy and to enjoy, we bring to the task powers which have no such function, and whose exercise in a work unfitted to their strength gives pain and failure. Thus did I learn, that henceforth I was to be happy by no more caring for happiness, and that I must let feeling sway about as it will, and place all my joy in the serenity of my mind. I am not certain that you will understand what I have said, for peculiar feelings of the spirit are like peculiar senses of the body, and their qualities cannot be understood save by those who possess them. But I have thought it necessary to give you this detail, in order that you might learn that the circumstance which gave me all my power and stamped upon my life that individuality which it has exhibited, was the enfranchisement which I in this hour obtained from all influence of *feeling*, and that you might learn that this release was obtained by the psycholical discovery then made, that feeling is not the impression of an object or an incident, but the heart's resistance to the impression —the passion's reaction against an impulse; and that suffering, both of pain and pleasure, is annihilated by letting sensibility take its free swing through the breast and making no opposition to it, just as the boisterous breakers would be destroyed by removing the barrier of the shore on which they lean to crest themselves. Thus by preserving my bosom passive, and never minding what was wrought within it, I have delivered myself from feeling and have been left capable to carve out in action the history of an existence, whose only architect was reason, and you will guess how free I was when you remember that feeling is the only bail we give to virtue, the only veto which morality has upon our conduct, and the only handle by which Deity directs our souls. In confirmation of what I have said, I may remark that the Scriptures, which contain a system of

the most profound philosophy which was ever deduced from a consummate penetration into the nature of man, propose to liberate us from the tyranny of evil passions by preserving the soul in peace. 'Fret not thyself because of the ungodly,' says King David; and again, 'Fret not thyself, else shalt thou be tempted to do evil.'

From that moment I had attained that majesty of moral freedom which is mental power, and which, perhaps, the Stoic sought; "Liber, honoratus, pulcher, rex denique regum." By including within my own bosom all that I was subject to, or cared for, and placing all my consciousness in my intellect, I was beyond all outward sway whether its throne were earth or heaven or hell. Punishment could no more fasten upon my soul, than upon the ever-yielding form of Proteus. God had no more control of me; he might go his way, and I should go mine. I had learned the secret by which he keeps his own supremacy, for his nature charged with sensibility is yet painless in its power. Henceforth, there were two of us to reign.

I have said, that the apathy which the Stoics assumed, was perhaps, the independence which I had won. But I marked the error which destroyed their system. They sought, without composing their spirits to that peacefulness which is piety, to stave off suffering by indifference or defiantness, and yet dwell in the quietness of thought or conversation, and not compel their attention to be absorbed by some great object and their mind to be ever struggling after some great end. This is being wise by halves. It will, indeed, take away the sting which there is in the influences of all which is external; but there live within the soul wild lusts and tyrannous desires, and longings after that which excites and interests, and if these have no aim nor quarry, the tumult of their restiveness will make the breast uneasy, and having nothing outward to stay their hunger they will agitate and annoy the calmness of the heart. To be thoroughly beyond the reach of disturbance and weakness, we must *forget* our moral being; we must lose our personality in the madness of a mind goaded by ambition, and the eagerness of an unresting intellect,

must drink up all the softness of sensibility. This rapid vehemence of reason can only be kept up by the incessant excitement of action. As the nightingale leans its breast against a thorn to sing, so must attention be braced against some great effort that the mute melody of the heart's composure may gush forth. This necessity I distinctly saw, and that idleness might not fret the knot by which I had bound the unruliness of passion, I resolved to plunge into the strife of action and entertain reflections with only the various events of safe or successless enterprise.

"When I returned to my home on that evening, I was a far different man from what I had gone out. Before, it had seemed as if all and all things had been leagued to persecute and pain me; now, I looked resolutely upon the scene of life which was around me, and hostility shrank back, and I was safe and free. What if taunt and insult were showered upon me? I could suffer, yet not be overwhelmed. I despised opinion; happy in the selfish ardour of an earnest intellect, and the strong clear sense of individuality. Cutting off all mental fellowship with externality, and finding in the depths of my own glowing spirit all the joy I sought, I was beyond injury and above assault. Sweet is the taste of strong existence; the full throb of concentered life is the most strenuous bliss we know. That secured, we are cut loose from all the fastenings and the fetters by which the pursuit of happiness binds us to the world and draws us abroad. No man who has not attained this contentedness with self, can feel that he is wholly delivered from the thraldom of surrounding things, and equal to endeavour, promptly and unpausingly, every thing which his wish suggests or his reason recommends. The seeking or the cherishment of love, regard for character or voices of praise, admiration of things or respect for men, these and other sentiments which connect us with what we see, compromit the energy of the mind to dare what it desires. For the mind leaves its trail upon the objects on which with meekness or regard it clings or lingers, and thus are they no longer the passive prey of power, but portions of a soul which that subtraction hath weakened, and

thus have we given hostages to enterprise. I resolved to place my enjoyment on none and nothing but myself; certain, thus, that the sources of pleasure would only fail with life, I determined that

> My own feelings should be my meed
> The only guerdon I would ever know.

My life should thenceforth have only the interest that there is in inward might, and the joy that dwells in kingliness of thought. Upon none other can the Eternal feed, nor can his bliss be any thing but the fruition of his own essence. I tore from my nature all those ties of affection and consideration which, though they be Lilliputian, confine us to the earth. And when love and fear, which are the two-edged sword of the cherubim, whose waving drives back the soul from attempting the apparent paradise of unrestrained desire, had been stricken from their throne, is it wonderful that the spirit darkened into a demon of ambition? The heart in its naked savage state burns with a fierce jealousy of things and a ferocious hate of men; and all the virtues which our imperfect state attains, are but the rest or the restraint of passions never subdued. And thus has it been wisely said by one whose genius 'may speak e'en bonneted,' to Shakspeare's, and whose words have in them as much of the trumpet tone of immortality as any that have startled the silence of centuries.

> O, sages have found out that man is born
> For various ends—to love, to know. Has ever
> One stumbled in his search on any signs
> Of a nature in him form'd to *hate*? To *hate*?
> If that be man's true object which evokes
> His powers in fullest strength, be sure 'tis hate.

"This feeling, which, when its object is an individual, is concentrated into malignity, becomes ambition when it spreads over a broader scene of persons, place, and time. But in all its forms it is fed by bitterness and directed by selfishness. The expansion of its object takes from it that vehemence and strangling turbidness of fervour which when it strives with individuals disturbs the possessor's breast with a surcharge of feeling,

and the wideness of its scope makes ardour calm and exalts enmity into generosity of scorn.

"There is no pleasure like that of conscious power; there is no rapture like the rankness of the joy infused by the lonely sense of unparticipated triumph. Life in its barrenness is delight; and when we refuse to dissolve the strength of our existence in the weakness of companionship with any thing that encircles us, and charge our soul with the intensity of unshared purpose, we secure a gladness which is as deep as our vitality and as imperishable as our spirits. The lover leans upon a cloud, and builds his seat in the branches of an annual stem that knows no second growth; the miser rakes hillocks in the sea-sapped sand; and the toiler after fame heaps favours on the wind; but he who will live in solitude of strength and know no source of comfort beyond his own bosom is like God, the perfect poet,

'Who in his own person acts his own creations:'

success is undivided gratefulness, and defeat is only a darker and a grosser form of exultation.

"Then did I seek the loneliness of the mountain-margined ocean with a pleasure and a profit before unknown. In the energetic calmness of that mighty scene, I mastered and developed in its fulness that depth of passion which in an hour had grown within my breast from infancy to manhood. I lay along the shaded beach, and pondered the grandness of the spectacle till my soul was fed and strengthened on the atmosphere of might which surrounded the view, and thus by unconscious growth was my spirit matured, and

> The eye can never choose but see;
> We cannot bid the ear be still;
> Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
> Against or with our will.
>
> Nor less I deem that there are Powers
> Which of themselves our minds impress;
> That we can feed this mind of ours
> In a wise passiveness.

"There is no form or phase of moral being in which there is not enwrapped a seed of wisdom. Suffering is

but a ploughshare that reveals the hidden wealth of the nature which it furrows, and calamity is but a blast which exposes the pearly treasures of a deep which had else seemed void or worthless. Thus I reaped rich benefit from pain which, as it passed had only made me writhe; from my own weakness I learned to explore the infirmity of others. I had felt every link of the moral fetters by which the nature of man is bound and led, and the ineffaceable memory of my own experience would serve as a mirror in which to read the means by which the slavery of others might be regulated to reward. A saner and a calmer state of feeling had delivered me from the morbidness of temper in which I once supposed that my emotions were peculiar to myself, and that all that the world endured was alien to my nature; and I now perceived that precisely in proportion to the severeness of the subjugation under which I had laboured would be the mastery which the same power would enable me to attain over others. I could sit in the centre of a thousand schemes, and calm as the central point of a revolving system, and silent as the resistless breadth of the sweeping whirlpool, could behold mankind self-ruined for my good. The forces by which the human race are driven and destroyed exist abundantly in their own proud passions, and to control to gainfulness the blindness of this self-sought headlong tyranny nothing is demanded but an eye of clearness and a heart of steel. The ship of the world's history sails along before winds that spring up at every step and never cease: and he who amid the bustling crowd will lay his hand upon the rudder, may bid her make what port he pleases.

"To the unthoughtful observer of results, it seems that the life of men is capricious, uncertain, and void of law—that his course is like the current of a brook which drives along equally eager in a thousand inconsistent directions, and not the less earnest because it has no purpose. Yet those who more closely scan the workings of the bosom, well know that the wildness of human action serves a rule, and that the labyrinth of human motives has its file; even as the brook, disordered as it appears, obeys a course which the geometer

may measure and the arithmetician may define. Whatever may be the volcanic chaos of thoughts and passions that convulses the bosom, man must always obey the strongest motive. Play that spell with judgment, and you control the world. Weigh inducements as in scales of diamond, and scrutinise character as if its lines were veins in a gold-mine's chart, and you may sit in your chamber and direct masses, with the force and the exactness of sway with which the sun, even when unseen and unremembered whirls worlds around him as if every ray of his glory was an arm of Titan power. If in morals it be an important truth that

> Chance can do nothing;—there's no turn of earth
> No, not the blowing of the summer wind,
> Or the unstable sailing of a cloud,
> But hath a will that orders it;

equally certain and equally valuable in politics is it, that action cannot choose but follow a fixed path of influence, and that conduct is always the creature of control. Therefore may the man who is covetous of power take home to his heart the firm conclusion that there is a means by which his despot will may work out in life what ends it orders. A commanding intellect may frame ascendancy into a system, and reduce persuasion to a science. Strength of resolution is, in itself, dominion and ability; and there is a seed of sovereignty in the bareness of unflinching determination. To this must be ascribed the inexplicable constancy of that success for which Sylla would have deified Fortune; and Cicero acknowledged its virtue, though he refused to explore its origin, when he recommended that Pompey should be appointed general because he had always been lucky. There is a natural majesty in depth of purpose, and common minds, yea and the unreflecting course of things is rebuked before it, 'as it is said Mark Antony was by Cæsar,' while yet exertion slumbers. The whole condition of existence and the entire constitution of society aids that supremacy which he who has escaped the weakness of feeling by accident or effort is entitled to aspire to. For the nature of our relations, especially in early life, and the tendency of our education, is such as to make us in all things de-

pendent. The contrivance of families and the prolongation of parental authority teaches us to lean upon the advice of others, and never to feel satisfied with proceeding. In religion we are pupils to the day of our death, and so false and artificial is our scheme of justice, that we must be blindfolded and submissive while we beg another to reach for us that privilege which is our own by right.

"But while the inventions of men thus favour our sway by securing the inferiority of others, the appointments of nature are equally serviceable by enabling us to develope a distinct superiority in ourselves. For it is in the power of all men to make their minds and their characters whatever they please. The cant which pervades the world, respecting genius and natural ability, is a groundless notion contrived by the eminent that they might share the honour of a superior nature, and admitted by the inferior that they might escape the imputation of having wasted their powers. There are moral but not mental differences between men. All may attain what they are *disposed* to attempt; in other words, men's designs and projects are always commensurate with their genius. And this has been admitted by the great master of ethical wisdom, where he says, 'It is, I believe, a very just observation, that men's ambition is generally proportionate to their capacity. Providence seldom sends any into the world, with an inclination to attempt great things, who have not abilities likewise to perform them.' I therefore assert nothing which the most scrupulous thinker will refuse to admit when I declare that man may do whatever he will, and that any man may accomplish whatever he will undertake. But I maintain that there is no limit to the extent of the developement and improvement by which the mental faculties may be enlarged. What quality is there of the mind or of the temper which may not be advanced by care and culture till it exceeds the primary possession as the oak transcends the acorn? Mind is in its essence endowed with the capacity of being indefinitely developed, and he who will forget the toys of joy, and trifles of indolence, and bend all the power of an earnest purpose to the task of evolving the

deep and endless strength that inhabits the intellect, may measure himself at last against the mightiest of earth's moral monarchs. Look upon the gravest and the greatest, whose inlaid copiousness of character shows no touch of natural weakness, and remember that all of them once rolled the hoop in the insignificant carelessness of childhood, and you will learn what miracles of transformation, fixed intention and a constant toil will work. It has been said that the child is parent of the man, and if it be meant that there is as little moral resemblance between the epochs as generally exists between the relatives, the remark is true; for the rest, between the infant and the adult there needs to be as little similitude in spirit as in feature. Let any one form a rigorous habit of *thinking* on all the affairs of life, and although he may generally think inaccurately and always feebly, yet as the great herd of men never think at all—thought, in fact, being the rarest thing in existence—his perseverance even in a scanty method of regulation will give him the same certain and incalculable superiority over the multitude that the half-disciplined soldiery of Egypt, though not to be named with the armies of Europe, possess over the hordes of the desert. The occasional vigour of passion and the temporary exertion of momentary ambition must always yield to a prolonged and intelligent system of operation. 'Think wrong, and welcome,' said Lessing; 'but think;' and that maxim is the plain corner-stone of greatness. Reflection is a faculty which more than all others is extended and improved by exercise, and with it are advanced in like degree all the subsidiary qualities of the mind; for the custom of thought generates the habit of thoughtfulness.

"Those who look vacantly at the way of the world fall into a notion that life is a broad and resistless stream of events which passes on its appointed course with a might that is not to be influenced by the agency of man, and a destructiveness that, at best, he can only escape. Such gaping theorists should remember that a ploughshare has often turned the channel of a river, and that the facility of the change is in proportion to the violence of the waters. If men will only look Occurrence in the

face, and grapple keenly with Circumstance in a vehemence of temper that knows but to prevail or perish, God and our station must bemock our nature if the victory is not gained. What on earth is the mind's master? and shall the arm of the Days be alone invincible? The substance of the future is an unfixed and fluent thing, and man may bid it pass through what mould of the present he pleases, into that region of the Past where its shape petrifies into a firmness which is the only thing unchangeable in time. Men, dreaming in their chairs, picture to their thoughts a stern and iron-fronted being, whom they call Fate or Destiny, weighing down the course of incidents with a benumbing force which it is vain to combat. But this power is only the grand nominal resultant of the efforts of myriads of small human minds, and if these can be conquered in detail, that will be changed in its imposing unity. History is not a plant, which is swollen to a fore-ordered size by an inward might of seminal strength, but is a coral form created into method by a thousand blindly-toiling insects, and cannot their toil be made a task? Wherever there is life there is volition; and wherever there is volition there may be control.

"That subjugation of mankind to the wishes and purposes of an individual, which is what ambition craves, is less the forging of a chain than the brandishing of a whip; for men are born in slavery and cradled in thraldom. As long as the passions constitute a portion of our being, be assured that in your dealings with men you treat with the servile spirits of mental serfs and moral Helots. He who, either by an instant strength that shall destroy passion or a constant vigilance that shall detect and shun its lash, emancipates himself from the bonds which are his birth-doom, rises above this born equality of subjection and becomes king, not by depressing others, but by elevating himself. Every passion is by its nature an injury to our nature and an enemy of our power. Love is a fester of the fancy, and by the incessant shapes of gaudy fiction which it flashes before the consciousness, the mind itself is fretted to disease, as animals are maddened by the persecution of their own shadows. No drug drunkens the sense like

Vanity. The motliest wear that ever fool was coated in, is the robe of Pride. Ambition sets the eyes so high that they cannot see the rock which is before the feet. Cunning loops leashes for its own limbs. Revenge is the unreasoning rage that leaves its life in the wound it makes. Then, there is Jealousy, to distort straightness and bend light till it shows every colour that it pleases; Anger, to drown the judgment in its furious waters; Hate, to darken and disturb the air of the intellect. Then there are habits of the mind, good or bad, which warp and wear it; Patriotism, Love of Principle, Religion—which are intoxications of the reason. Moreover, most of those mental faculties which make up men's fancied greatness, are in truth, detractions from his power and obstacles to his progress. Imagination, like a marsh, is ever sending up its painted mists to conceal reality, delude observation, and dilute resolution. Memory, like a superannuated tutor, is annoying the reason with its pedantic counsels. Even Invention and the Logical Faculty, bright, though they may be, and keen, as the sword of the cherubim, yet by the delay of their variety and depth, they plague decision in those momentous instants in the heat of action, whose epitaph is 'Resolve any thing; but Resolve.' Thus are men blinded by the brilliance of their own best powers, and thus are the most splendid attributes of humanity but the expanded pinion by which the fowler snares the eagle.

"That mind is might, and that of Dominion, in things moral or material, Thought is the only Vizier, are truths every where asserted. Yet what is mind, unless it is exercised, or thought, unless it is applied? In daring to put forth their strength, lies the difference of those who differ not in strength. The exercise of mental power is a talent or a spirit apart from the power it brings out; for plebeian reason, like books, bears no label which directs its use, and the highest order of intellect is separated from the commonest order of comprehension less by the size and splendour of its weapons, than by an acquaintance with the method of employing them. It is idle then to talk of all being equal, because all possess reason; that is only the *fond* on which are painted the distinctions of using or neglecting reason.

Intellect must be measured if we would know the actual value of humanity; the exertion of it is to be estimated if we would learn the comparative power of individuals. The latter determines the relative positions of men in life, and may be referred to as a thing which some will exhibit and others will not. Thought is, perhaps, the most painful effort that can be endured; and an observing thinker has told us that people will, in general, do any thing to escape from it. He, therefore, that will practice meditation, may reasonably expect advantage over the many; for he has a precise and palpable power which they have not, and never will have. In such a man the expectation of pre-eminence cannot be presumptuous.

"Self-dependence, then, which generates all that is grand in plan and power, is the great source of strength; and piety, which wraps up the reason in a distant dream and warps the will by the force of one huge attraction, is the great source of weakness. These break up the natural equality of men; and they teach us that by cultivating the one and renouncing the other we may attain what height of place we wish. Religion is the master spell of mortal tyranny, and to Ambition it suggests a double sureness of success; in the inherent weakness which its long influence has induced in men, and in showing by its prevalence, that man is naturally prone to worship. The religious part of the world is, therefore, fitted for vassalage by slavishness of temper; and the irreligious portion, by wandering from the proper object of the adoring sense within them, are compelled, by the necessity of their nature, to create from humanity, some likeness of God, for the satisfaction of their own spirit. The tyranny of pious epochs is, therefore, debased and grovelling; that of faithless nations is willingly and passionately glad. By whatever qualities man is raised to God, by them may man be subdued to man. The bonds are not excepted in the similitude the Christian bears to Paul. All the powers by which our race is strengthened in its contests, are clouded and enfeebled by the air of devotion: Selfishness, the sentinel of safety, is lulled to indifference; Charity blinds the eye of Suspicion; prayer quenches the earnest spirit of self-reliance; the hope of heaven deadens the enter-

prise of earth; and meekness, humility, and the other virtues are the alphabets of spiritual feebleness. These qualities are, perhaps, rarely attained; but the effort to win them, fixes the attention on the state of the heart within, and prevents that scrutiny of outward things which is necessary to victory in worldly matters. It is indeed true, that religion, when in some enthusiastic form it addresses itself to one great passion in an earnest breast, is capable of being an incitement to high action and unconquerable zeal; but it will always be found that those, in whom sincere piety has kindled the flame of great ambition, have, by the alliance, lost in prudence as much as they have gained in power; for superstition may be an impulse and a spur, but cannot be a guide. A blind energy that fixes its eyes upon the desired end so eagerly as to be reckless of the proper means, is all that the stimulus of devotion can ever evolve. Such Cyclopean strength of eyeless rage is potent either to build or to destroy, when its path is plain and its object clear; but in a tortuous scheme of protracted policy, it is the sport and the tool of them whose weapons are in their glances and whose armour is in their feet.

"The seminal maxims of greatness are neither many nor obscure. They are all comprehended in the single statement, that the man who would be powerful must stand alone; that he must own no connexion of loyalty or attachment with what is in heaven above, or in earth around; that he must cut loose from all esteem and interest in principles, feelings, and duties, so that no compromise of his moral independence can make his nature or his purpose swerve at the bidding of an exterior thing. Tenderness for men must be alien from all his thoughts, and joining himself with the powers of evil, he must not, like Marcius, leave in that whole universe which he assaults, any hostages of affection which will rise up and paralyze his arm when he is about to strike the final blow. Those abstract qualities of virtue which lodge themselves in the fancy of men in the form and fashion of celestial gods, but with the frown and the threat and thong of infernal deities, he must destroy by his disclaimer; for in faith as in fiefs, homage makes the lord. There must be within

the limits of existence, nothing, nor thought, nor memory, by whose seductive softness the straightness of his aim shall be drawn aside, or to whose brow of terror the strength of his soul shall vail. There must be no holy things to him; nor must his eye be dazzled by the lightning-blaze of imputed reverence.

"Boldness in attempting, is the first wisdom which the man of action should impress upon his counsels. It is, in itself, a principle of power. There is much in the world that is defended by a wall of prescriptive strength that is impregnable because it is unassailed; such protection is sapped by a suggestion and destroyed by a design. Your foes in such a case, whose fear is father to their feebleness, will find in present daring the surest evidence of future deeds, and astonishment which begets dismay will do the work of conquest; while to your followers and the bombastic crowd, who at once will join the assault, it is the actual author of unthought of vigour. There are schemes whose mention maddens men, and the mere picture of a gigantic enterprise will make those insane who look upon it; and this wildness takes the shape of lust, and is urged irrepressibly forward to gain what it has gazed at. Thus does presumption bear a spell to summon its assistants; and bravery is like the seventh day's trumpet of the priest at Jericho, whose preluding blast demolished that which it defied. No great anarchist or reformer has not found that

> His plain denial of established points
> Ages had sanctified, and none supposed
> Could be oppugned, while earth was under him
> And heaven above—which chance, or change, or time
> Affected not—did more than the array
> Of argument that followed.

The mob are delighted with any thing that relieves them from the dulness of common life, and, like hounds, will fawn upon any man that shows them sport. The established system of things has evils, as the established scheme of belief has objections; and in one case and in the other, men through promise of greater good will, embrace what is new, seeing that it has not the faults of the old, and neglecting to inquire whether its own de-

fects of another sort are not more numerous. Therefore what is bold and revolutionary, by appealing to the deepest and most tyrannous passions of men, carries with it a promise of prevailing which does not belong to what is calmer and has less of the 'hiatus' of the poet.

"Constancy in continuing is as needful as boldness in beginning. Alike in opinion and in conduct is the force of frequency signally displayed. It has been said by the great philosophical orator of England, that if one man were to say to another every morning for twenty days that the moon was a Gloster cheese, or that the sun was black, the listener at the end of the time would not be so sure it was not the fact: and in events, the strength of steadiness is no less encroaching. The perseverance that is always pressing forward, profits doubly;—actually, by gaining all the ground that is hazarded by accident, remissness or vacillation of purpose in opposition; and morally, by impressing men's minds with the notion that that which is like a star, and moves ever onward, showing nothing of the fluctuations and instability of most human counsels, has in it some divine destiny of succeeding which it is vain to combat. The human mind delights in marvels, and never believes with such hearty readiness, as when the tale it accredits has in it a touch of impossibility. The progressing history, which seems to be sketching in supramortal tints, is acquiesced in and advanced as a thing that is appointed; and what bears so strong resemblance to the forms of fate as that which substitutes a sight of regularity and certainty for a scene of irresolute attempts, fragmentary plans, and interrupted pursuits. The world, moreover, is always willing in a grand way to reward qualities that seem generous or good, whether brilliant in bravery or respectable in patience; and that persistance which is understood to be meritorious in common things, wins friends among those—a larger number than is thought—who, among the debasements of life, love to discern and to sympathize with whatever in any cause is noble or commendable. Let him, therefore, who would be great, never pause and never be precipitate; let him never hurry and never slacken; secure that by the laws of

life that which always offers will at some time be opportune, and that that which never loses casually will always gain certainly. The most earnest sometimes remits, and the least volatile sometimes varies; and that which presses with a hand of iron what it presents with a face of brass, will benefit by all the inherent causes of failure which from the beginning of the world have ruined great enterprises, and which to the end of time will make mankind the bubble of their hopes. Let us take counsel from the inanimate, and win wisdom from the inarticulate, and let 'the things which are seen' give a lesson for 'the things that are not seen;' then shall we learn how Time floats systems from their moorings, which no impulse could have moved, and Tides wear caverns in the base of continents, *non vi sed sæpe cadendo*. The nerve that never relaxes,—the eye that never blenches—the thought that never wanders—these are the heirs of victory. Who waits and watches needs must win. When we observe the career of men whose only talent is to plod and push, we might be tempted to think that the deities who distribute mortal issues, are like the Hindoo divinities memorized in Kehama, whose favour was bought and bound by appointed sacrifices in whatever spirit made,—so certain, yet seemingly inexplicable, is their success. If thus there be in dumb pertinacity a virtue to overawe the giddiness of Fortune, and to mount the rattling car of Triumph, how can we exaggerate the result which will follow when to instancy is added intellect, and genius is joined to urgency?—Let us then array ourselves in the armour of confidence and endurance with which our northern ancestors encircled their breasts as with a triple breastplate. Let us obey the order of Palnatoko to his Jomsburgers, not only to fear nothing, but never to utter the name of fear.

"But the sovereign charm of mortal power lies in calmness and self-possession. Nothing controls men so much as the placid brow and the untrembling lip. The mob whose own bosom gives them no other notion of force than fury, and of power than passion, find in quiescent might the surest marks of deity. It was the highest magic of that mysterious man whose rare medical

skill was the least miraculous of all his qualities. Amid the brilliant group of strong and brightly-minded men in our own time, whom the inspiring energy of one great person kindled into heroes, you still detect the master by the unmoving eyeball and the arm reposing on the heart. Calmness is the most abundant origin of all that is keen and deep in the movements of the mind; it is the essence of judgment, the author of penetration, the substitute of invention. The intellect of man is a pure spiritual substance, of which, in its single separate state, infinity is by the law of spirit naturally and necessarily always predicable; but when lodged in the breast of man, it is like the expansive Genius of the Arabian Tale which, when shut in its narrow box, was maimed of its mighty strength, as it was marred of its towering size; for it is compressed and clogged in by a cloud of fluttering fancies, noisy fears, restless hopes, and hot passions, which are the heavy vapours that excited blood sends up; and that coolness of the mental temper which I speak of, lies in scattering these winged enemies that darken the air of the mind, and dismay and paralyse its powers, and in suffering its inborn, natural majesty to erect itself in silence and composure. Thus to all is there opened the assurance, that if the sternness of resolution will frown back to its dusky cave, the spirit of agitation that rises within the soul of man to alarm and to disturb, the faculties of reason will develope themselves to any extent that the exigencies of action shall require; for every man contains within himself boundless genius contracted and kept down by these external causes which it is thus possible to remove. Mark the countenance of the lion, when with an eye of fire and a face of marble he regards the prey he is about to crush; and learn what strength serenity implies. There are a thousand passionate errors disturbing the course of politics on the one side and on the other, and blinding their enemies instead of betraying their authors; and he that will be fooled by none of them,—who will be dazzled by no novelty,—moved by no voices,—shaken by no opinion, and daunted by no veneration, but will explore principles and scrutinize substances with unthrobbing composure and unstartled peace, will scan the strife, as the far-sighted eagle from

his clear-aired aëry looks on the clamorous contest of the birds beneath him. He knows little of the wisdom which experience impresses on the meditative mind that works in an age-long toil for truth, who has not learned to value one still suggestion of the calm heart above all the splendid wealth of glowing genius, high-heaping pearls of thought and golden dreams, and all that bright Invention brings of rare and wonderful from the darkest caves of Speculation; and he has seen less of the interior mysteries of action, who has not discovered that not upon the throne of Passion, nor in the halls of Pride, but in the shades of Peace dwells the spirit of Empire. Why to the decline of life is given the prerogative of unerring judgment, except that to it belongs to view without violence and meditate without agitation?—Youth may supply by history the absence of experience, and may be taught by reflection the necessity of caution; but rarely is resolution able to present to the prime of days that self-control which age brings with it in a temperate pulse. To examine without emotion, that is strength; to touch without trembling, that is conquest. To inflame the ardour of others, itself unkindled, and to rouse the enthusiasm of multitudes, its own gaze untroubled by one impulse of excitement,—to be 'passionless midst its passionate votaries'—is the crested sign of every mind that ever yet displayed a high and sustained system of greatness. And the explanation of it is briefly thus:—turbulence of thought and unbalanced vehemence of ardour arise only when all the faculties of the intellect are not fairly and equally developed, and when the powers of the character are mingled in irregular and unordered union; and self-command in the storms of action implies a full completeness of all the qualities that enter into the formation of mental and of moral power.

"That 'men at some time are masters of their fate' is a sentiment which the moral Momus of the human heart has illustrated in many ways; and that upon no course of changing planets, but on the power of the unchanging will, depends the fate of man, is perhaps the only notion which he has twice uttered in almost unva-

ried language.* Tell me if fortune has ever smiled continuedly upon a man unworthy of her favours, or if destiny has ever selected for her instrument any one of whom when the sneers of frivolity and the scoffs of malignity have yielded to the impersonal decisions of history, impartial judgment will allow to have been a person of extraordinary qualities. Even upon this theory which asserts that men are but the tools of an unseen Lachesis, it shall appear that the ministry of providence is not over-supplied, and that any one who will fit himself to do what fate desires, and will stand ready to be called, will not fail to be chosen. That man can make himself whatever observation will tell him is required for great actions, is a declaration which only indolence will deny and only jealousy will dispute. That man can make his moral nature whatever he chooses, is the sense and substance of what Christianity teaches, and the more intelligent of churchmen will avow as much in form: and if this is true in what pertains to the spirit, why should not the same law lie upon the mind. Moreover, great men differ from common ones in moral more than in intellectual qualities.

"Habits of cautious observation, comprehensive calculation, and unslumbering prudence are within the attainment of all; and though the bold instincts of an impetuous intellect or the unattainable sagacity of profound passion may sometimes and often sweep on to greatness with the freedom and power of the uneddying blast; yet the issues of long exertions and protracted struggles are in the hands of those other virtues. In Napoleon, whose passions were powers, and Talleyrand whose habits were talents, the two systems were brought in comparison. He who regards the splendid exhibitions of superhuman might that in the former hourly seemed to seal a mission from on high, might yield unquestioning preference to faculties like his; he who, more slowly wise, follows the maxim 'respice finem,' and sees what is the abiding sum and perma-

* The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
Julius Cæsar, Act I, scene 2.

'Tis in ourselves, that we are thus, or thus.
Othello, Act I, scene 3.

nent result of the two fortunes, will give to the other a homage which if colder is more confident. If a man like Napoleon might always succeed, a man like Talleyrand could never fail. Talleyrand might not have won Marengo, but he would not have lost Waterloo.* The one often gained by chance, the other never missed by accident. If Napoleon sometimes pressed on miraculously by the rapid concentration of wide-reaching generalities, Talleyrand was never pulled back unexpectedly by a casual deficiency in some co-operating particular. The one summed up his high conclusions by that splendid science of probabilities which is 'so true in general, so fallacious in particular;' the other took the sceptre from the hands of fortune by turning to certainties before he began the hypothesis of all his schemes. Thus, as might have been divined, Napoleon triumphed in a thousand fields, and was at last ruined because one blunder in practical detail robbed him of a battle which he had secured in theory; and Talleyrand, who never strode and never stumbled, keeps calmly on the path of sure supremacy, and because he had been frigid where others were fervent, was enabled to be firm when others were failing. The faculties of the latter, it will be granted, were self-bestowed, and any who will have them may create them; the germ of their life is in the centre of the heart, and as that corrupts and perishes they flourish. In pacific epochs, these abilities are the only ones that can find a field of exercise, and in times of excitement and emergency, though they perform nothing, they profit by all; they reap what others have planted, they direct the stream to which others give force. To one who is thus placed on the calm centre of the balance it is indifferent which end predominates.

"Such were some of the reflections which passed through my mind as I pondered upon what properties of the human heart greatness is founded, and resolved that I too would be great. I surveyed the history of the world and saw that in every age and epoch there were to be found some men who carved out a path that led to power and trod the high steps of eminence with the strength and certainty of advancing Fate; I re-

* The similarity of these battles will be remembered.

membered that they were of like nature and faculties with myself, and that their lofty works were but the creatures of a lofty will; and I saw that there was no reason why to me the same career might not be given. I perceived that though accident sometimes gave assistance, and fortune often fathered progress, yet in the general scope of history, whether men were 'the corrigible authority of it,' was in themselves. I felt within me the spirit to emulate their efforts and to accomplish all that a soul sacrificed to its objects could accomplish. As in the silence of my lonely meditations I evoked the deepest fervour of my nature, I felt that there were within me energies that were fitted to essay all that was most in enterprise. A clear and undying ardour toned through my bosom with a throb that gave assurance of a fulness that nothing would exhaust. There was roused within me a vehemence of robust ambition which no common joys of quiet life could appease or satisfy—a troubled earnestness of temper, which never again would taste the placid pleasure of unpurposed musings, but must find its only pleasure in the stern conflicts of excited life. The file of our days is short; why should they be squandered in idleness and trifling? Let us act while we are able; we may rest in the grave.

"To educate my character into a fitness for the scenes I meditated, and to train the powers of my mind for the labours that were before me, then became an employment and a delight. With the ardent devotion of a man that made ventures for eternity, I dedicated to earnest study all the vigour of my intellect; and I found that the stimulus of the desperate determination which I brought to the task, elevated and enlightened the ability which it taxed, to a degree that I had not dreamed of. I took note of all the sorts of knowledge which the varied affairs of policy and of society could possibly exact, and I applied myself to acquire and lay up all that was thus suggested. In the loneliness of my country residence I spent several years of thought and toil ere I went forth to the struggle; and I prepared myself for every call, sudden or deliberate, which could be made upon me. Never neglecting any of the counsels which experienced men had recorded in books for the instruction of the world, yet never suffering the load of learn-

ing to cumber or weigh down the agile energy of naked reason, I sought to furnish rather than to feed my mind with facts and principles. When I met with any opinion which struck me as new yet just, I was less anxious to store it in my memory than to discover what defect in my fundamental elements of logical discourse, or what slight perversion, thus made manifest, of the faculties of observation had prevented by easily inferring that truth from the data which I had, or perceiving it intuitively; and when the error was detected, I was solicitous to correct it cautiously and considerately. With a deep and careful scepticism I explored the charts of history, and deciphered the hieroglyphics of political wisdom which are inscribed upon the surviving monuments of departed power or the ruins of the unstable trophies of erring ambition. I unshelled the hidden kernels of vital prudence which lie husked from the common eye in those quaint proverbs that are repeated by the unthinking crowd as merry jests, or at best are employed by the more sagacious to suggest the conduct of the drawing-room, when they might properly control the policy of empires. It has been said boldly by a great astronomer that all the truths of science float in a fragmentary form through the conversation of the vulgar, and that if the speeches of the market-place and of the street were analyzed, we should possess whatever is educed from the hypotheses of the learned. If this be true of physics, it is far more true of philosophy; feeling and experience have uttered in apothegms more than schools or treatises can teach. With all the great questions that in occasional meditation or usual debate employ the unoccupied hours of statesmen and men of genius, and all the topics of wit and gayety which amuse the days of the vacant and the vain, I made myself familiar. The theories of the chemist and the conclusions of the mechanician, the dialect of mathematics and the quibbles of scholarship, the couplets of the satirist and the passages of the dramatist, the sarcasms of the misanthopist, and the sentences of the moralist, all became a portion of my knowledge; until I at last became satisfied that no emergency could arise in private company

or in public assembly, for which I should not be prepared.

"Nor from books alone and from recorded facts did I deduce the laws of moral action and the prudential precepts by which I proposed to regulate my conduct. The example of great poets who dwelling alone and being unpractised in the business of the world have strung their lyres to harmonize with the emotions of their own gentle hearts and have thus called forth the deathless sympathies of our general nature, showed me that the natural movements of a single nature are as a mirror in which are glassed all of motive and of passion that the varied strife of tumultuous action can display. The elementary powers of feeling are the same in all men. The saint bears within him, though undeveloped or controlled, all the tempers that tyrannize over the assassin; and the high emotions that raise the pure to the ecstasies of piety, all lie slumbering yet vital in the breast of the felon. Imagination throwing unreal scenes about the mind can call out these antagonist qualities; and by placing himself in fictitious circumstances, a Fenelon shall describe all the pains of the profligate, and a Byron shall exhibit the seraphic peace of a sinless child of heaven. While Shakspeare was creating the character of Richard, he was himself, for the nonce, the monster that he drew. Proceeding upon this knowledge I explored the nature and the impulses of both the darkest and the least debased of those with whom I was to deal; rehearsing thus in the solitude of fancy the stirring drama that future days were to realize. The guile of kings, the craft of councils, the passions of the daring and the lusts of the profligate, were reproduced in living likeness within the musing heart, as, like the Dervish friend of Fatima I flung my spirit into their condition, and made their natures a portion of myself. Realizing the fable of the Greek, their bosom was windowed to my view, and thus I learned their *rôle* before I stepped upon the stage. The eye may scan the face, but souls are only read by souls. It was remarked by the ingenious Campanella that when he wished to discover the leading characteristics of any one whom he saw, he arranged his features into a similitude with theirs and then observed what emotions rose within his

heart to *play up*, as it were, to that expression of countenance; in the same manner, if we dispose our interests, and wishes, which may be called the features of feeling, into a conformity with those of others, we shall find that their thoughts and counsels start naturally up in our mind. It is thus that the hermit heart of a gray-haired diplomatist may 'predict the progress of the passions,' in the young and the impetuous. Every theory of the sentiments, whether philosophical or phrenological, will second observation in affirming that men are not endowed with a mere selection of mental senses, but are born with the completeness of a whole system of feelings. Action, of which any given plan can employ but a consistent portion of these, calls upon persons to select a few and leave the rest inactive. The meditative moralist who with a religious autopsy of soul surveys all that he may heal some, and the pensive poet who with the circling sympathy of a literary artist holds his nature freely open to susceptibility from influences of every species, exert, in apprehension, all the spiritual members of the moral life; and it is no unusual thing to find, as the remark of Pope about Gay exhibits on the one hand, and as more instances than may conveniently be named, demonstrate on the other, that one set of inclinations, whether good or bad, may always be exercised by a man in thought and theory, and an opposite sort in conduct. If men in years have through life displayed and seemed to own but some of the qualities that are the inheritance of the race, it is because the others have not been addressed by circumstance. Sudden transformations wrought in men by violent occurrences, when no power is either given or taken away, but old passions are frightened into frigidness and new ones roused from slumber, confirm the sufficientness of the plan of study that I adopted; and the fears of the saint and the hopes of the sinner show that in practice the world adopts the system.

"It was in no heated fervour of youthful excitement, but after the toil of years had developed and hardened every power and purpose of an ardent mind and a long unsparing severity of thought had enriched my nature with resources which the labours of a life would not exhaust, that I came forth to effect among men the plans

which I had arranged. Behold, then, a being in whom all the softness of feeling was dead for ever, and to whom virtue and vice were forgotten words—in whom fear had perished when feeling had departed, and on whom no longer rested the liens of hope and love and dread—who, shutting in his own bosom the ends as the origins of all his deeds, and fixing there the rewards of resolution, was beyond the reach of all restraint and the course of all control—who looked on the theatre of life with that high spectatorial strength which has been said to belong only to God and his angels—and in whom when the love of self failed to be a guiding and compelling genius, hate of others would be an impulse and an inspiration. You may judge in some degree what history awaited him whose stern severity of soul could find no pastime but in deeds of strife—to whom inaction was a toil and rest was a fatigue,—who had renounced all prospect of the life to come, and set up time against eternity, determined that the 'crowded hours' of terrestrial enterprise should outweigh the feebler length of everlasting days. The spirit that springs upon the scene of great events enfranchised from the exterior influence of things above and things beneath, and charged with the restless strength that marks a heart not filled and satisfied with dreams of heaven or loves of earth, bears in itself prophetic surety of high acts. The pride of lofty purposes is to such souls thin aliment, and daring efforts are their necessary exercise of healthful life; they cannot choose but be distinguished, for hazard is the home of their nature. The passions feeding no more on sentiments of persons, press after thoughts of things, and urgently compel the intellect to politic inventions of engrossing business. When affection and its pleasant versions are dead, and when Religion and its reveries are banished, the spirit is vacant and desolate; and craving an interest, yet strengthened in the temper of its taste by the deprivation of that which softened while it soothed, it is at once its pleasure and its self-compelled necessity to replenish the void with the views and memories of performed realities in the present or the past. Piety ensures the fulfilment of its own declaration, 'that its kingdom is not of this world;' for it bears beneath its wings such

honied nourishment for the heart as appeases its demanding appetite and prevents its preying on the pleasures of tumultuous life; and that influence, whether it be personal or abstract is justly named the 'prince of this world,' which, tearing up the feelings from their natural gentle resting-place, makes the spirit agitated and impetuous, renders it powerful by the discipline of pain and dark with the might of settled desperation. The temptation of Christ was the symbol and expression of all the intercourse between humanity and hell, and to every one does the lord of sin renew the promise 'all these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me;' and the primeval and appointed operations of the character ensure the certain fulfilment of the saying. The powers of ambition are communicated by evil, as much as its practices are suggested by it.

"Of the years which intervened between this time and that in which I arrived in that place where I have met with you, and of the events which belonged to them, it is not my intention now to speak. I have left some written memorials of my career in those days, and I shall direct that they be delivered into your hands after my death; their interest may perhaps reward the trouble of perusal.* I hasten to allude briefly to that part of my history with which you have some acquaintance, and which you may be glad to have explained. It is now nearly two years since, after an absence of several years, I returned to these shores, with a hearty inclination never to quit them again. I had mingled deeply and extensively in the intrigues of European courts, and participated in the more ardent passion of Asiatic empires, till neither had longer any power to interest

* These manuscripts came accordingly into my hands, and I examined them with considerable curiosity. They contain the history of a life as extraordinary as the character of its subject. They abound with remarkable adventures and incidents in various parts of Europe, and in the East; sketches of distinguished and curious personages; and opinions and speculations of singular boldness and novelty. How far the biography of such a man is fitted to engage the attention of the common class of readers, is yet doubtful; if sufficient interest should appear to be felt in the matter, the volumes spoken of, will probably be given to the world.

me. I had seen what I wished of marvellous and gratifying, and done whatever I desired of great and splendid; novelty had passed away from the paths which I pursued, and vanity was exhausted throughout the scenes which I traversed. I was anxious only to establish myself in some peaceful spot where the memory of past events and the thoughts and judgments which they excited might be to me companionship and occupation through the remainder of my days. There was but one thing which delayed the execution of this purpose and which yet detained me amid the affairs of life. I was poor. The wealth which foreign labours had amassed, foreign pleasures had exhausted; and the variations of condition between success and overthrow had finally left me, in matter of fortune, about where I began. I had not enough for the luxuries which I desired to have about me, nor that feeling of independence and unclouded power which nothing but wealth will bestow. I determined, therefore, to devote some time to the acquisition of gold; and my old interest returning upon me as I scanned the project which promised pleasure as well as gain, I determined to organize a great system of action in this purpose, and not to rest till splendid possessions were around me. Such an occupation, sufficient to fill the mind without wracking its powers as former pursuits had done, stood half-way between the contests I was leaving and the calmness I looked for, and furnished an agreeable medium of passing from one to the other. Besides, being connected with society and social relations, it opened and implied a free participation in that refined and rich conversation, which is one of the most pleasant diversions of life, and unites the composure of a thinking life with much of the exercise of a life of action. This scheme, though in itself treacherous and degrading, had no such aspect nor influence for one, who had ceased to classify pursuits according to their honour or their infamy, and whose mind no longer noticed those distinctions, but who cultivated things according to their profit and valued them according to their difficulty. To such an one there was nothing in intrigue or deceit, that could taint or tarnish the strenuous energy of his self-respect. Upon occasional visits to these shores in former years, I had

in detached cases acted on such a plan: and it was in this way, that by the aid of Thompson, the operations respecting your father had taken place.

"To one familiar even to fatigue with the tactic by which men are ordered for systematic action, there was nothing difficult in the arrangements required for the performance of my purpose. I lost no time in assembling a considerable number of persons, who for their profit were willing to do any thing for my own. In every community you may find abundance of those, who under a leader who receives their confidence, will undertake any thing that promises immediate gain. The maxim 'that every man has his price,' does not indeed imply, that every man may be bought, for there are many whom you cannot ask how much their price is; but under condition that the individual can be approached and the question put, be assured, that it is a saying of universal truth. The company which I had brought together consisted of persons in all ranks of life; some moving, like myself, in the highest stations in society, and others of a low and unknown position. They quickly caught the tone of character which I displayed, and I was sometimes amused, as well as gratified, to observe that most of them soon cast their views, their habits of thought, their manners and their speech in the mould of my own. We proceeded in this way carefully and securely. I took care that there should not long be one of the number whom I did not betray, myself unparticipant, into some heinous act of which the damning knowledge was in my memory alone; and managing that influence skilfully, so as to control and not to gall, I made each one my thrall. Men can only be governed by fear; in fact, though it may seem a paradox, men are attached by love to a government of fear. Men are pleased when they find any one they can respect; for the perception and appreciation of respectable qualitities of reverence in another is itself tinged, through sympathy, with the character of the respectability it regards and thus assimilates the mind of the worshipper to the dignity he descries and homages. By this means, and the aid of a manner which being at once familiar and severe, cordial and strong, prevented awe from turning into jealousy or hate, every man pro-

ceeded as if he was a portion of myself; and energy, unanimity and secrecy, which is less rare matter than many suppose, marked all the proceedings of the body.

"The first step to a complete and brilliant execution of my design was to tie up the arm of detecting and vindictive justice, by occupying all the posts of municipal and legal authority with members of our own confederacy. In a country where free trade in politics goes so far that qualification is almost the only disqualifying thing for office, and demerit in manners, standing, mind, and character, is the only thing the candidate is required to prove, the task was sufficiently easy; and in a few months my creatures were holding the batons of the police and sitting on the platforms of the bench, and grateful justice was supporting acts which so long had supported her. Under this sanction of safety, my designs had only to be formed, in order to be fulfilled. This principle of purchasing the co-operation of all those whose position naturally rendered them the protectors of the community and the enemies of practices like ours, was carried through all the departments of business. The innkeeper, for example, by the sea-side, to whom you confided a note for Seward, was one of my confidential agents. You will readily explain to yourself, all the circumstances connected with the incidents that befel you at the shore and afterwards, which surprised you at the time. You may not have been able to comprehend all that you saw and experienced at the place to which I introduced you as a club-house. That was an old building, originally erected for what purpose I know not, which I chanced to discover while walking in that remote part of the city, and understanding of what use it might be to me, immediately purchased, and destined as a retreat and meeting-place for my party. Before, however, I suffered any one to enter it, or even to be informed of my intention in possessing it, I caused every part of it to be traversed by private passages running through the walls, and secret entrances and hiding-places, which allowed me undetected to pass rapidly through the whole of the structure and be the unseen spectator of what occurred in every chamber it contained. This enabled me to keep a constant watch over the actions of my confederates, which

put me in possession of all that was going on among them, and gave me the means of guarding against all danger of treachery or error on their part, and to maintain a mysterious reputation of having faculties and powers of observation little less than miraculous. How far I was acquainted at the time with the efforts made by you to obtain information of the proceedings of the party who occupied that house, and whether it was intention or indifference that prevented any attempts to interfere with your conduct, it would hardly be worth while now to explain.

"The object which I had proposed to myself at the outset of the undertaking I have spoken of, was completely accomplished before I met you at the sea. I had before that fully resolved to abandon the company I had organized, and I lingered in connexion with it less because its advantages continued, than because the inducements which the life I meant should succeed it held out were not strong enough to urge me to the decision of change. Of the events which brought about a separation between me and my allies, you are not uninformed. They originated in a blunder committed in relation to you, but the cause of that error which was earlier and deeper than appeared, lay in the indifference and presumption which had been induced in those connected with me, by wealth and long success,—for by that conservative tendency which on a large scale pervades the affairs of men, matters cannot long be divided into great accumulations on the one hand and great deficiencies on the other, for the former bears with it the growing seed of its own destruction, and the latter of its own re-establishment. You may, perhaps, be at a loss to conjecture why the subordinate members of this company should be anxious to prevent the discovery of the transactions by which your father had been deprived of his fortune, seeing that those affairs were the prior private dealings of myself and Thompson; but Thompson had been for a time connected with our general labours, and was possessed of a complete knowledge of all who were concerned therein, and it was understood by all engaged that the letters which he had written to Mr. Stanley contained matter which betrayed the whole association, and which touched the

earnest personal interest of every member implicated. Without following that history farther, you are possessed of the circumstances which, in completion of my original design, brought me here. The main reason for my having solicited your company at this time and place was to restore to you the estates of which I had despoiled your father. The title papers of that property are on the desk behind you. Take them when you go.

"I arrived in this spot with wealth and its luxuries abounding around me, with abundant sources of gratification to the intellect and taste, and with not a fear or a care to disturb my repose. There was no possibility of my retreat being invaded or my plans molested, and I pictured to myself a scene of contentment bounded only by the grave. And for a time my life was glad with as rich a vigour of delight as can visit the senses of a man of strength. Whatever a mind that in the present glowed with the might of fervent power, and in the memories of the past was soothed in its musings by scenes of splendour and sights of triumph, could give of bright and brilliant, was fully mine; and whatever annoyances a temper calm and self-centred, and beyond the mercy of petty griefs and troubles could keep off, I was delivered from; and I dwelt in the strong composure of a firm and free and manly nature. But it was not long before a cloud began to gather around me which no effort could permanently dispel; my mind grew listless,—my spirit grew sombre: a melancholy haze of nameless fear dimmed the clear vigour of my views. My sleep became disturbed, and I never rose in the morning without feeling for an hour or two an inexplicable heaviness of heart which lay too deep for resolution to throw off. This usually passed away towards the middle of the day, and for the remaining hours I was cheerful. I thought at first that, like the dark-cloaked Prince of Denmark, my disposition might thus be saddened because I had 'forgone all custom of exercises,' and I accordingly began some extensive improvements in various parts of my estate which gave me an excuse for being on horseback a great part of the day. But I speedily found that the ardour of spirit which could alone make these exertions sufficient to banish my disease was itself destroyed by the disease I

combated, and that the labour which I followed fatigued and not refreshed. Failing thus to find any relief in domestic efforts, I meditated a return to the scenes of action which I had left, and a fresh bracing of my nature for the dark deeds of politics and passion. But the feelings of the night and the struggles of the day had weakened that might of soul with which I once looked out upon the world, and I felt a timidness of nerve and an inward apprehension, which seemed to tell me that the day of my pride was gone. The interest and the excitement, moreover, which once tinted action with 'hues that were words' and spoke of all that I conceived of glad and exalting, were dead within my bosom. I had mingled in the deepest contests of every court and capital in Europe, and I had left them because I was wearied and disgusted. I felt within me no force sufficient again to inspire those spots with that attraction of enchantment which was needed to react upon my decaying spirit. And even if the trial should prove successful, and hope should again gild my life with its immortal splendour, at the last I was to fail as now I failed, and youth must at some time yield, and joy decay, and existence fade into a lighted sepulchre; and what did it matter whether the grief,—which conscience told me must be tasted,—came now or then, save that the protracted wo would be more bitter. So I resolved to stay and struggle with my fate,—to live in peace, if peace would revisit me,—to die in solitude, if death were inevitable.

"From that moment, my calamities grew heavier and deeper, and the course of my nature was downward and downward. My passions had been exhausted by the perils of my youth, and they failed to sustain me in the hour of my decline. The passions are in the breast of genius the sources of life, and few survive their decay. The thought of God and the visions of a future world, which I had torn and banished from my intellect, seated themselves in my fancy and my feelings with a strength and fulness that would not be overcome. With the vacancy of nature and the silence of solitude around me, these considerations engrossed my being. Though I deny a deity and laugh at hell, there is not a moment that I do not think of God and judgment. It is

with me as if the voyager of a desert should raise his eyes and be assured there was no vulture nigh, while the beak of the monster was fastened in his heart. But if the day were the only period of my trial, I might conquer and destroy this power: it is the phantoms of sleep that I cannot resist. In the light I am living in a sphere external to all thoughts of heaven; but sleep seems to be a stream on which I pass into an inner spiritual world which angels and demons alone inhabit. Believe me, no man was ever an atheist in his dreams. That was a fine mythologic fancy that made the furies the daughters of night. Like the inward eye of the murderess-queen who wanders through her midnight palace, the darkness remembers what the day has drowned; and like her, the souls of men who can be calm in waking, are racked by 'nightly fears' and scourged in the torturing hour of the reign of slumber. In the process of clinical composure, the will sleeps first, the reason next, the imagination later, and the feelings last of all. I awake from these unutterable terrors unstrung and disheartened; and the stain and dye of the horror in which my spirit has been steeped, lies upon me through the remainder of the day. The unseen, polluting impressions that leave their darkening and degrading trail through the slumbering bosom, are sins which past years have fixed within him that then are soaking out; and when in waking hours, unfathered grief lies on his bosom, heavy but meaningless, and wakes a deep but vacant sigh, it is because conscience with instinctive pain then remembers acts which the reason has forgotten. Oh! if the memory of the intellect were as tenacious as the memory of the conscience, what a splendid creature man would be!—As splendid then as he is wretched now!

"In the dark and anguish-breathing hours that like waves of fire have washed over my spirit in this lonely chamber, my soul has unsaid what my understanding asserted, and my nature has recanted what my mind declared. I have laid before you the system upon which my life was built. Logic may, perhaps, never disprove its truth, yet I tell you that from the foundation to the finial it is false. Its construction consults but a portion of our powers; the *soul* of man—its mysterious

unseen changes, its undying sensibilities, its tremendous influence on the happiness of its owner,—is wholly overlooked. In studying what action one half the qualities of our nature can possibly produce upon the world, we forget to inquire what effect the world will certainly have upon the other half. He who sins becomes the slave of sin;—the spot upon the hands and the soil upon the garments may be rubbed off, or will wear off; but from the stain upon the mind, from the tinge upon the thoughts, how shall we be delivered? The memory of the act has become the state and condition of our existence; sin has become the atmosphere of our spirits; our thoughts, our hopes, our feelings, are for ever coloured by that dark vapour; for us the universe is black for aye; the hideous image sits at the fountain of our life, and poisons all the springs of our moral being:—the colour of the past is burned into our nature, and nothing but hell-fire will burn it out.

"He who sins, sins doubly: he sins against God, and he sins against his own soul. In expiation of the former heaven has appointed a great atonement,—a sign whereon we may look and be forgiven. But of the latter sin there is no ablution; the white surface of the soul is fouled, and no flow of heart-rained tears, nor stream of sweated blood, shall wash it clean; the white robe of life is defiled, and never can it be restored to its virgin fairness. While I had dwelt in the polluted vaults of vice and intrigue, far from the upper air of natural virtue, I was satisfied to see that the fierce and flashing fervour of my vivid intellect flung off the sapping dampness of self-contempt; and it was only when on another side the foundations of my nature suddenly gave way, and my being sank down a ruin and a wreck, that I became aware that, all the while, other and more vital essences within me had been perishing in this dark and poisonous air. We may sneer or we may scowl at these feelings; but neither contempt nor hate will disturb the FACT of their existence. They have their being; and that theory, which like all worldly theories, does not provide for them, is a reasoning lie.

"Other considerations have pressed upon me, in the recent hours of bitter meditation, as demonstrative of

the unsoundness of the sentiments which have controlled my career; of which this is one,—that the logical exposition of any worldly system as a rational scheme of life assumes the immortality of man, and that on the hypothesis of his speedy and certain death, it wholly fails. It assures us that we need not concern ourselves about a definite class of dangers, which it will appear can only be avoided by them that never die; and it impels us to sacrifice ourselves for particular joys which we soon find can only be reached by them that live for ever. To make ambition wisdom, our days should be lengthened by the line of our hopes,—our health should be high as the flight of our wishes,—our ardour as undefective as the circle of our views. 'Sickness,' says Burton, 'is the mother of modesty.' Piety sustains the sick, while it gladdens the strong; but the promises of infidelity are only to the vigorous. The illness which is hourly visiting the active, and whose touch in a moment seals every sense by which the joys of the world are tasted, and the deaths that momently descend upon the valued and the eager, show that there is a power working in the universe against and traverse to the schemes of man, and that the thread of his destiny is not for him to weave, and that his thoughts and plans are dashed aside by the course of nature;—in short, that other views, and hopes, and notions, and rewards, than all that the world contains must be taken into the account, if, as philosophers, we would decide on what course of life a prudent man should follow. I am willing to admit that men ought not to die; that death is a wretched blunder in creation,—an offensive trifling on the part of man,—a stupid foolery—a barbarous, silly, and unmeaning custom. But I say, as before, that the fact of mortality must not be forgotten; and it thunders an irreparable overthrow upon all the systems of earthly ambition. Is not life always and every where a scene of unattained wishes, unfinished plans, broken and fragmentary acts!—How few can be said to live out their days, or finish and wind up the drama which they undertook to perform!—How less than few find the applause that ends the act any thing but the surprise or regrets of the mourners! If we confine our view to

sublunary rewards alone, we must hourly exclaim, as the young and the busy drop around us, as in the irrepressible discontent of a tortured heart, the loftiest philosopher of our time exclaimed, when his friend and associate fell beside him, 'There was no reason for his dying!—he ought not to have died!' I know that I assert what no adverse argument can ever touch, when I declare that the system which provides for this sphere alone, and which fixes in this world the crown of all the efforts that it instigates, is unphilosophic and unsound. Its strength is strongest when it least is wanted, and when its aid is needed, it has fallen with its follower. The universe in which the moral being of the atheist lives is of his own forming,—the passionate creation of warm wishes and young blood; as he decays, it fails. He surrounds his life with a self-generated scheme of hopes, depending on him for their vitality, and,

'As the northern rays,
First fading in the centre, whence they flow.'

The pursuit of religion adds something to man's own resources, and its offers extend as his weakness increases. When the platform of life and living schemes fails beneath his feet, it holds out an arm of might to raise him from the deep.

"To the theories which I have laid before you, there is needed no other confutation than the unresistible and maddening anguish which has pressed upon my bosom in this conclusion of my days. I have learned what awful vengeance the spirit takes on him who has blasphemed it by denial. The feelings which I outraged and trod under foot, rise against me in the time of my calamity, and glut their raging ire. Neglecting to provide them the food which their nature demanded, they suddenly strike *in* their falcon beaks and prey upon my vital being. My life is unbalanced and overthrown; I dwell in a state of moral madness. The power of the resolute will is overflowed and drowned: on the wave of hot and deep emotion it floats like the buoy which though ringed to the bottom is swayed and jarred. But I still struggle, and will never yield." And he folded his robe around his bosom as he spoke, and his eye gleamed

darkly with the light of strange and fearful thoughts. He was silent for a little while, and his face assumed a concentrated look of expectation, that had in it an aspect that was dreadful.

"Of late," he continued, and his voice had a deep and hollow sound, far different from his former tones, and slow and low, as if he were speaking to himself, "I have had mysterious visitations of dark horror which I cannot comprehend. I know not whether it is a cloud that rises around me from within, or whether the shade of a shapeless demon overshadows me and frowns in silent blackness. I would combat with it, but I cannot. It stands before me in its iron gloom, and I feel the terror of its presence; but discern it distinctly, or resist it intelligently, I cannot. Yet I will maintain my being. If I cannot crush or destroy *it*, I will yet live beneath its scowl, and be content to live only. It may torture, but I will bear; and as I do not struggle, I cannot be defeated. It cannot annihilate.—He comes. Stand still; —he comes only for me."

He rose from his seat, and his eyes, which glared not nor were vacant, but were calm, clear and strong, were fixed with keen intelligence upon the air before him, as if he gazed face to face with some immortal form. His countenance was resolute and earnest, but composed; —his brow was bent with grave serenity,—his lips compressed,—and the whole expression of his features singularly keen and commanding. As he gazed, his look grew darker and more determined, and an agony of controlled excitement seemed to thrill through his frame. He raised his hands, as if in the attitude of defending himself from some unseen foe, and it was fearful to behold the might of the smothered passion under which his bosom heaved in irregular throbs. His breathing grew harder, heavier, and deeper. With his clenched hand extended, and his teeth firmly set, he advanced two steps forward, as if he drove an enemy before him; then tottered for a moment, and fell lifeless on the floor.

THE END.

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