THE ACTRESS OF PADUA

AND

OTHER TALES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE FORSAKEN."

Ridentur mala qui componunt carmina: verum
Gaudent scribentes, et se venerantur, et ultro,
Si taceas, laudant; quicquid scripsere, beati.
HORACE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

Richard Penn Smith

PHILADELPHIA:
E. L. CAREY & A. HART.
1836.

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E. G. Dorsey, Printer,
12 *Library Street.*

PREDICTION.

In the year 1812, shortly after the declaration of war with Great Britain, I made an excursion, partly on business, partly of pleasure, into that beautiful and romantic section of Pennsylvania, which lies along its north-eastern boundary. One morning, while pursuing my journey, I heard at a distance the sound of martial music, which gradually became more distinct as I ascended the Blue Ridge, and seemed to proceed from a humble village, situated in the deep valley beneath, on the bank of the Delaware. Nothing could exceed the splendour of the scene that lay below. The sun was just rising; his first beams were gradually stealing through the break or gap in the distant mountains, which seems to have been burst open by the force of the torrent; and as they gilded the dark green foliage of the wilderness, presented a view which might well awaken the genius of art, and the speculations of science, but was far too pure to be estimated by those, whose taste had been corrupted by admiration of the feeble skill of man.

There are indeed throughout the globe various features which the most plausible theories are scarce sufficient to account for, and among them may truly be classed that to which we have alluded, where the Delaware has cut its way through the rugged bosom of the Kittatinny mountain. The scene is indeed sublime, and while raising the eye from the surface

of the water to the blue summit of the ridge, a perpendicular height of twelve hundred and fifty feet, the question forcibly occurs, was this wonderful work the effect of an inward convulsion of nature, or was it occasioned by the irresistible pressure of water, ages before the European dreamed of the existence of a western world?

After gazing and reflecting for some time on the wonders of nature, thus suddenly spread before me, I resumed my journey. The music which still continued, proceeded, as I found, from a band of soldiers drawn up in the main street of the village, surrounded by their friends and families, who had evidently assembled for the purpose of taking a melancholy farewell. I descended the mountain by the circuitous path, and rode up to the inn before which the crowd had gathered, but they were all too busily engaged with their own feelings to notice the arrival of a stranger. Wives were listening to the last injunction of their husbands, the widowed mother to the voice of her valued son, the prop of her declining years, and many a bashful maiden lent her ear to the protestations of eternal affection which, at that time, sounded tenfold sweeter as they flowed from the lips of the warlike lover. The shrill fife was playing, the drum beating, and amid the jargon of voices, the corporal was heard swearing like a trooper, in order to keep up the dignity of his station. The little bandy-legged drummer beat with uncommon earnestness: it was uncalled for at the time, and I was at a loss to account for his making such a deafening noise, when I perceived a shrewish looking beldame at his elbow, whose shrill voice satisfied me that he would find comparative tranquillity in the field of battle, to being within its appalling influence. The fifer, out of compassion, lent the aid of his shrill music to relieve his friend from this last unpleasant lecture.

Removed from the crowd, I observed a young man, an officer of the corps, in conversation with a young woman, who did not strive to conceal her sor-

row on the occasion. Health, beauty, and innocence were strongly depicted in her countenance, and her rustic garb concealed a form, even thus decorated, far more attractive than many who move for a season the constellation of a ball-room, and imagine they have attained the extent of worldly ambition. The young man's face was animated, yet, in the enthusiasm of the moment, he could not conceal the sadness of his heart, while gazing on the lovely being standing in tears beside him; the order was given to march; he embraced her, imprinted a fervent kiss upon her pale forehead, placed her in the arms of an aged woman, who stood hard by, and hurried to the ranks. The soldiers left the village, followed by a troop of little urchins, who were either pleased with the parade, or were desirous of prolonging the melancholy moment of separating from a parent or brother. The women remained in the street watching them as they slowly ascended the mountain path until they were out of sight, and then returned to their lonely cottages: one only lingered on the spot until the last sound of the distant drum was no longer repeated by the echo of the mountains.

I inquired of the innkeeper concerning the young woman just mentioned, who informed me that her name was Lucy Gray, the only child of a poor widow, who in former days had been in more prosperous circumstances: that she had been betrothed to Hugh Cameron, the young soldier, from their childhood, and that their nuptials were to have been celebrated in a few weeks, but as he was draughted for the frontiers, prudence obliged them to postpone the ceremony until the campaign should be over.

Mine host was as loquacious as most village landlords, and as he was familiar with the life, birth, and parentage of every individual in the village, it was not long before I received a full account of the young officer, who, to use the narrator's own words, "had

gained the good will of all the gray heads and green hearts on that side of the Blue Mountain."

Hugh Cameron had been protected from his infancy by his grandmother, who was a native of the Highlands of Scotland, and whose mind was strongly imbued with the numerous superstitions of the uneducated of her country. He was the child of her only daughter, who had fallen a victim to unlimited confidence in him she loved, and finally expiated her offence by a broken heart. Hugh soon learnt the history of his mother's shame from his playmates, who, upon the slightest offence, would remind him of it, in derision, for man appears determined most religiously to adhere to the law, as laid down in Deuteronomy, where it is written, that the unfortunate in birth, "even to his tenth generation, shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord."

The taunts of his school-mates, preyed upon the mind of the boy; he avoided them and sought seclusion. What time was allowed from study, was passed in the deepest recesses of the mountain, or on the giddy precipice, where the eagle made his eyry. Often was he seen by the astonished villagers, apparently hanging in mid air, by some projecting rock, hitherto untrodden by mortal foot, shouting with joy at the affrighted birds of prey, as they wildly dashed in circling flight around his head. They had nothing to fear from the approach of the daring boy, for his was not a heart wantonly to inflict a wound upon the humblest of God's creatures. His feelings were acute, and his imagination vivid. For hours he would listen to the tales of his grandmother, of warlocks, witchcraft, omens, and prognostics of death. With her, not a breeze agitated the woods or the river; not a drop of rain fell, nor an insect moved, but for a special purpose. He never became weary of listening to her, nor she of relating the wonderful legends with which her mind was stored.

The village schoolmaster was also every way calculated to give a freshness of colouring to the rude narratives of the old crone, and increase their fasci-

nation with the semblance of reality. He had lived long and seen much of the world: a Hungarian, a classical scholar, and fond of that lore which too frequently destroys the worldly hopes, and enervates the mind of the possessor. He fed on thriftless verse until his mind sickened at the realities of life. His reading had been various and profound, but that which was speculative and visionary, possessed more charms for his mind, than that which partook of earthly matter. He was an accomplished musician, and many a time at midnight was his solitary flute heard in the deep recesses of the mountain, and on the surface of the river.

He was an isolated man, and imagined no earthly being possessed a feeling in unison with his own. When he discovered the wildness and delicate texture of his pupil's mind, they became almost inseparable companions. The youth improved rapidly under his guidance, not only in literature and music, but in the facility of creating theories, which, at the time they expanded and enlarged his mind, involved it in an ocean of difficulty and doubt, without a compass to guide it to a haven.

With years the feelings of the youth became more sensibly alive to the charms of nature. For hours he would contemplate the rolling river, and as wave succeeded wave, the Hungarian would discover some analogy to human life, which served to illustrate his visionary theories. The hollow moan of the forest, at midnight, which foretold the coming storm, was music to their ears, and those hours which the wearied villagers devoted to repose, were passed by the old man and his pupil in gazing at the stars. The Hungarian fancied he had ascertained the star of his nativity, and for years whenever visible, he regularly rose at the hour of twelve, to note its station in the heavens. He had made his calculations and predicted the day of his death. He communicated the time to his pupil, who, though a convert to his opinions, and fearful that the prediction would be verified, treated it lightly, and endeavoured to

remove the impression from his mind. The attempt was fruitless. The night preceding his death, at the hour of twelve, he called at Hugh Cameron's cottage, awoke him, and they proceeded to the graveyard together in silence, for the Hungarian's mind was so engrossed with thought, that Hugh did not venture to break the chain of reflection.

They paused beneath the tall cypress that stood in the eastern corner of the yard: the old man examined the position of the star upon whose movements he said depended his destiny, and then turning to his companion, added—

"It is a weakness to feel any concern about the disposition of the body when life is extinct, for though the dust of which this frail tenement is composed, be scattered to the four corners of the earth, there is that magnetism inseparable from each particle which at one day will cause re-union; yet it is natural that the mind at parting from the body, should feel some interest in its future destiny, and I have often marked spots where I fancied the sleep of the dead would be more undisturbed than in others; and this is one of them. I make but one request; when the few sands which yet linger of my life are run, see that my remains be decently interred beneath the cypress tree. This is all I ask of you in this world."

Hugh replied that he hoped he would live long to command many a service of a less melancholy nature.

The old man continued in a solemn tone: "Do you see that star; it is already low in the west, and its rays are fitful and feeble. When the first gray light of the morning shall have extinguished it, my light will also be extinguished. I have predicted it for years, and at this moment there are too many omens concurring to leave a doubt of the accuracy of my calculation. At times the mind is so delicately attuned as to shrink instinctively from unseen approaching danger, without the slightest sound or touch to communicate it to the outward senses, and

such is the present state of my feelings. My life has been a long one; not altogether unprofitably, and I humbly trust, harmlessly spent. 'My basket and my store' are not quite empty, and to you I bequeath the gleanings of my life. Among my papers you will find one to this effect. I have not much to leave, but what little there is will be of consequence to one whose mind is constituted like yours." He struck his cane into the earth, and added: "Remember this spot, Hugh Cameron; here let my head lie. Come, my last request is made."

He left his stick where he had planted it, and they returned in silence to the village. When they came in front of Hugh's cottage, they parted. It was a parting under a full conviction of meeting no more in this world. Much time elapsed before Cameron could compose his troubled mind to sleep, and when finally exhausted, he slumbered in a state of unconsciousness. He arose about two hours after the sun, and hurried towards the residence of his friend. His heart felt like a lump of lead in his bosom, as he discovered at a distance the shutters of his chamber window bowed. The chamber was on the ground floor of the cottage, and opened into a little flower-garden, the cultivation of which, was the Hungarian's chief delight. He was curious in flowers, and had acquired the art of varying their colours by the application of minerals to the root. Hugh crossed the garden, and with trembling hands, pulled open the shutters He stood for a moment transfixed with grief, then shrunk from the sight that presented itself.

On a broad board supported by chairs, lay the mortal remains of his friend, already clad in the garments of the grave. He silently closed the window, and on entering the house, learnt, that as the Hungarian had not appeared at his usual hour of rising, the family had entered the room, apprehensive that he was ill, and discovered him lying in bed, his body already stiff and cold. Upon a small table, near the head of the bed, a lamp was still burning, though

broad daylight, and his clenched hands still held his bible, which rested upon his bosom; the book still open at the page he was last reading. Every circumstance proved that his death was as calm as the sleep of the spotless infant. He was buried in the place pointed out the preceding night, and all the villagers from infancy to age, followed him in sorrow to the grave. On examining his papers his will was found, in which he bequeathed his little possessions exclusively to his pupil, Hugh Cameron.

This is briefly the substance of the prolix narrative of mine host. My horse being refreshed, I mounted and pursued my journey, reflecting upon how frail a thread human happiness depends. As I passed along the street, all was silent and dejected; not even a dog stirred to bark at me, but as the village gradually receded from my view, other thoughts engrossed my mind, and the lovely Lucy Gray and her sorrows were forgotten.

Shortly after the peace, business obliged me to take a similar journey. The sun was about setting as I found myself upon the summit of the Blue Mountain, and the welcome village in the deep valley, again presented itself. My jaded horse leisurely descended, carefully kicking every stone out of the way that lay in his rugged path. When half way down the height, I paused to rest the weary animal. A young woman suddenly emerged from a cluster of blooming laurels and wild honey suckles, which grew round the base of a large projecting rock. Her dark hair was luxuriant, and bound with neatness and simplicity; her face lovely and blooming, yet slightly overcast with sadness, and the matchless symmetry of her small and elastic frame, was heightened by the uncommon neatness of her rustic apparel. On one arm hung a basket, well stored with rich and various mountain flowers, while the other was extended, to assist a young man to rise who was seated at a short distance from the rock, and upon whose enfeebled frame the hand of death pressed heavily. He was a cripple, deprived of his right

arm, and his manly forehead was disfigured by a wound. He rose with difficulty, and stood silent; absorbed in thought.

"I fear," said Lucy, for it was the widow's child, "we have extended our walk too far. The mountain path was too rugged for you yet. You are fatigued, but in a few weeks you will be strong enough to revisit the haunt you loved so when a boy."

"No, Lucy, no," he replied in a hollow, tremulous voice, "I shall never again clamber to the rugged brow of yonder ridge, upon which the beams of the setting sun are now dancing. It would give a new impulse to my heart to be for a moment there, and the flagging stream of life would flow more freely; but I shall never again gaze on the setting sun from that loved spot; never again listen to the roar of the torrent that dashes down that precipice."

They disappeared behind the rock and struck into another path; I urged my horse forward, and as I descended, the drowsy tinkling of bells was heard, as the sheep-boy, whistling, leisurely followed his charge to the fold. The village boys were driving the herds to water; some were paddling the light canoe across the river, while others, more idle, were busied with their childish sports upon the lawn. Several women were at work with their wash-tubs on the bank, and, as I drew nigh, a momentary cessation from labour ensued. One of them in particular was calculated to attract notice. She was tall and meagre; her visage was sharp, swarth, and wrinkled, and every line of it denoted that the family into which it was the fate of Socrates to wed, had not become extinct even to the present age. My eyes were turned upon her, and I recognised her countenance. I accosted her, and she no sooner gave loose to her inharmonious tongue, than my doubts vanished. It was impossible to forget the sound having once heard it. It was the voice of the village shrew, the bandy-legged drummer's wife.

"And are you the stranger," she exclaimed, drawing her skinny arms from the suds in which they

were immersed, and placing them a kimbo, "Are you the stranger, who baited at our village years agone, when our husbands and our sons were marching to the wars in the Canadas?"

"I am the same."

"Well my old eyes have not failed me yet, in spite of all my sorrow. That was a woeful day to many of us, and many a woeful day did it bring after it." I inquired after the fate of her husband. "Good man," she continued, "he has gone to a more peaceful world than this. He was a hard-working man, and well to do, and never wronged another of the value of that suds, and that is more than some can say that ride in their gilt coaches. But he is now gone where honesty will turn to better account, than all the gold and dross of this world. If he were but back again, I should not be slaving here like a galley slave as I am, to find bread for his poor dear orphan boy. Gilbert!" she cried in a shrill tone, and continued: "but I will train him up in the right path, and he will not depart from it. Gilbert!" she again cried with increased energy. "He is the comfort of my age, the joy of my widowed heart. Gilbert, you Gilbert," she shrieked, "which way can the brat have gone?". She espied the luckless little ragged urchin hard by, laughing aloud and wrestling with a water dog, dripping wet from the river. "I'll change your note, you undutiful hound, take that," she exclaimed, at the same time suiting the action to the word. The boy made a hasty retreat, crying, and the dog ran after him, barking, and rubbing his wet skin on the green sward, in the fulness of joy, which can hardly be attributable to the lad's misfortune.

I inquired of the virago how her husband, the drummer, died.

"Like a soldier on the frontiers. He was shot with a musket ball, and fell by the side of Hugh Cameron, who, Heaven bless him, was at the same time maimed, and made a cripple for life. See, yon he goes, leaning on the arm of Lucy Gray. Poor souls, their only joy is to be together, but that joy will not

last long. I have lived a goodly time, and have seen many, but never a pair like them. Their troth was plighted before the wars; he loved Lucy more than life, from the time he was a boy, and used to break the hush of the mountains with the sound of his flute at midnight, with him who now rests under the big cypress tree. Yet when he found himself a cripple, and unable to support his Lucy by the labour of his hands, he sent a letter from the hospital where he was lying, many a long mile from this, releasing Lucy from her vows, and making her quite free to marry another if she fancied him."

"It was nobly done on his part: what answer returned Lucy?"

"She wrote to him, that as Hugh Cameron was no longer able to work for Lucy Gray, she was able and willing to work for Hugh Cameron. He no sooner received the letter than he left the hospital, and travelled homewards, for he was impatient to see her that he now loved more than ever. He travelled far and fast, night and day, which brought on a fever, and when he arrived at last, he looked like the shadow of what he was. He lay on his sick bed for weeks; the fever was cured, but it left behind a disease which no medicine can cure."

Lucy and the invalid had by this time entered the village; I felt a curiosity to see more of them, and taking an abrupt leave of the loquacious widow, I rode up to the inn, and was cordially welcomed by my quondam host. I lost no time in directing my steps towards the widow Gray's cottage: As I approached the unceasing hum of the widow's wheel denoted that she was at her station. I entered, and on making myself known as an early acquaintance of her husband, she recognised me, though her features had escaped my memory. The room was uncommonly neat. The fragrance of the wild flowers, culled by Lucy, was perceptible. They were placed in water upon a bureau, in front of a looking glass, in a well polished mahogany frame. Lucy and the young soldier were in the garden. We passed into

it through the back door of the cottage, shaded by an arbour, over which the vines were already gradually stealing. The lovely girl was at the extremity of the little garden, bending over a flower that required her attention.

"Every evening it is thus," said the widow, "whenever she can spare an hour from her labour, she devotes it to the garden, and really the care she takes adds much to the appearance of our dwelling."

"Truly," I observed, "her labour has not been idly spent."

"A blessing," continued the widow, "appears to attend all she does."

The invalid appeared intent upon what Lucy was doing, but the praise which escaped the widow's lips, did not escape him. He turned towards us and said—

"True, mother, even the drooping narcissus revives at her touch, your aged heart grows glad in her presence, and the weight of years is forgotten; nay, even I dream of coming happiness when I see her smile, but the narcissus will bloom only for a few days longer, then wither and sink to the earth."

"But the flower will revive again in spring," said Lucy, "more beautiful than at the time it faded."

"All things look glad in spring," he continued, "the notes of the various birds are more melodious, the buds burst forth, the mountain trees put on their rich attire, the flowers of the valley dispense their hidden fragrance, the ice-bound brook is freed from its fetters, and every breeze is fresh with fragrance; but I, amid this general revival, must fade and die alone. I would the autumn were already arrived, and the leaves were falling, for then to die would be natural, and I should leave the world with less regret."

We returned to the cottage, and the widow resumed her station at the wheel, while Lucy prepared the tea-table, which was covered with fine bleached linen, which the widow mentioned with an air of pride, was the product of her hands. The humble

meal was soon ready, and was eaten with thankfulness and delight by the cottagers; a joy unknown to those who have not by their own labour first produced the sustenance of life.

The meal being over, the widow returned to her wheel, and recounted the occurrences of former days, until the sadness of the present was forgotten in the remembrance of the past. The brow of the invalid became more cheerful, and Lucy's spirits resumed their natural buoyancy from the transient gleam of sunshine that lit up the face of her lover. She sang. Her voice was sweet, and there was a heart-thrilling wildness in it, seldom to be found in those more refined and cultivated. It was powerful and spirit-stirring. Hugh Cameron dwelt upon each note with intense interest. His features became animated, and he mingled his voice with her's. The widow stopped her incessant wheel and lifted her head to listen. The invalid suddenly raised his voice, and cried, "That note again, Lucy, that note again."

She repeated it with so full a tone, and so clearly, that the glasses in the window, and on the cupboard, vibrated with the sound.

"Hush; that is the note, I know it well. Now listen." He attempted to imitate the note, but he failed, for his voice was too feeble. He then added, "Not yet, Lucy, not yet; my time is not come yet." The cheerfulness of the poor girl was suddenly changed to sadness; she ceased to sing; the widow's countenance fell, and she resumed her labour in silence.

The evening was now considerably advanced, and I arose to take my departure. The invalid accompanied me towards the inn. I expressed my curiosity to know what he meant by his observation, when he failed to imitate the note.

"That," said he, "was the note to which the heavenly spheres were attuned, when concord prevailed throughout the creation; when the plan was first set in motion, and God pronounced all good."

I looked at him with astonishment. He continu-

ed: "I have heard that note, at midnight, proceed from the voice of my dog, as he howled beneath my chamber window at the moon. It was ominous. I have heard it in the voice of the screech-owl, while perched on the large cypress tree in the churchyard; I have heard it in the echoes of the mountains when I have shouted; in the howling of the tempest, in the murmuring of the waters, and the rustling of the trees; for every thing, animate and inanimate, retains that sound, to which universal harmony will again be attuned by the masterhand. And when that sound proceeds from this voice, I shall cease to think of earthly matters. I perceive you doubt the truth of my theory. If you suspend a piece of metal or glass by a thread, and strike the note which lies dormant therein, upon a musical instrument, you will draw it forth; the substance will respond; and when the heavenly harps are attuned, and their notes are permitted to extend to the numberless spheres, all created things, both animate and inanimate, will join in the concord, the discordant particles will be reconciled and all be harmony again. All things partake of heaven. Even the daisy of the valley and the wild flowers of the mountain, retain and diffuse a portion of the aromatic atmosphere, which prevails in purer regions than this. As we approach death, the sense of smelling becomes more acute and delicate; so much so, that I can already discover in the flowers of the season, that fragrance which belongs to this world, and that which is ethereal. There are numberless omens in nature, which warn the wise man of approaching change, and they are not to be idly slighted." With these remarks we arrived at the inn; he pressed my hand at parting, and slowly retraced his steps to the widow's cottage.

I arose early the succeeding morning, and continued my journey towards the border line of New York. I was absent about two weeks from the village, and it was a calm evening as I again approached it, through the valley formed by the Delaware.

Before the village appeared, I heard the solemn tolling of a church bell, which grew louder and fainter, as the breeze that swept up the valley rose and died away. Every hill responded to the knell. I quickened my pace, and as I drew nigh to the village, it appeared quite deserted. I rode up to the tavern, but my attentive host did not make his appearance. I remained seated on my horse, with my face towards the Blue Ridge. The winding road which led across the mountain, though nearly concealed by the towering trees, was at intervals to be seen, perfectly bare, from the village. A long retinue appeared crossing one of those interstices; it moved slowly along, and was lost in the shades of the forest. When the last had disappeared I alighted, and discovered at a short distance a lad with his eyes fixed intently on the spot, over which the mournful train had passed. It was little Gilbert, the drummer's child. I inquired the reason of the village being deserted, and he sobbed, "Hugh Cameron is dead, and they are now burying him where he wished to be buried." The boy, still weeping, led the way to the stable, and supplied the horse with food.

What are the promises of this world! There was a time when fancy whispered to Hugh Cameron, the ceaseless hum of the widow's wheel would be silenced; her chair would occupy the most conspicuous place around his fire-side, and clambering on her knees would be seen, a little image of his lovely Lucy. The dream was a joyous one, and life is but a dream. He whose fancy can paint the hopes of to-morrow in the most vivid colours, attains the summit of all earthly bliss; for there is much, very much in anticipation, but little, very little in fruition.

In the evening I went to condole with the mourners. Lucy had already retired, for her's was a sorrow to obtrude upon which, would add to its poignancy.

"The day you left us," said the widow, "the de-

parted crossed the river with Lucy and little Gilbert. They strolled up the cypress hollow until they arrived at his favourite retreat, where the torrent dashes impetuously down the side of the mountain, and the surrounding precipices send back numberless echoes. He seated himself, and listened intently to the roar of the waters. Not a sound escaped him, and every note was tried by his ear. He stooped by the stream where the water gurgled over its pebbly bed, and discovered notes imperceptible to any ear less acute than his own. A sudden gust of wind agitated the tall pines; he stood erect, paused, and pointing to the bending tops of the trees, exclaimed, 'it is there too, Lucy; even in that hollow moan of the monarch of the forest I detect it.' He shouted, and the valley rung with echo; he repeated it, listened to every sound, and his face became animated as he caught the faint return made by the most distant hill. His dog raised his ears and barked. 'It is there too, Lucy,' he exclaimed, 'even the voice of poor Carlo is full of melody, and your voice, Lucy, even when you first told me that you loved, sounded not so musically, so heavenly sweet.' He directed Gilbert to gather for him the mountain honey-suckle, the cypress branches, the laurel, and such flowers and blossoms as were putting forth. The boy soon came with his arms full, and laid them at the feet of the invalid. 'My sense of smelling,' he said, 'was never so acute. The fragrance arising from these branches almost overpowers me. Yet I enjoy it, and although widely different in their odours, I can perceive a portion of the same subduing fragrance proceeding from each. Their colours are more vivid, sounds are more distinct, and my touch more sensible than formerly. These changes tell me that I shall never visit this valley again.' He rose from the rock upon which he was seated, took Lucy by the arm, and proceeded towards the village in silence. Carlo walked closely and dejectedly by his master's side, and even the reckless Gilbert did not venture to break the silence, until he had

safely paddled them across the river, and was left alone to secure the canoe.

"From that day," continued the widow, "he grew worse, and it was evident to all that the dear boy would not be long with us. The evening preceding his death, he was lying on the bed, and Lucy and myself were taking our solitary meal with little appetite, for he who dispensed joy around our board, was unable to take his wonted place. He turned in his bed, and said in a voice scarcely above his breath, 'Mother, what time does the moon go down?' I told him the hour, and inquired why he asked. 'Nothing,' he added, 'only this, mother, say all you have to say to me before the moon goes down.' His voice was scarcely articulate. Lucy burst into tears, and removed her chair to the head of his bed. He perceived her grief, and pressing her hand to his feverish lips, said, 'Do not weep, Lucy, indeed I have more cause to grieve than you, though my heart feels little of sorrow at present.' She asked him his cause of grief. 'It is this, Lucy, that I cannot repay your matchless love and unwearied care of me.'" The poor girl's tears flowed afresh, and her heart sobbed as if it would break. The evening was spent in reading such passages of the scriptures to him as he pointed out. His mind continued firm and clear. About midnight he desired that the casement of the window might be thrown open. It opened upon a full view of the river. The night was sultry, and almost as bright as day. An owl was hooting from the grave-yard, and the whip-poor-will was flying low and screaming. Poor Carlo howled sorrowfully. The sounds did not escape the notice of the dying man. Two or three canoes were in the middle of the river, with a bright blazing fire kindled in the stern of each. He said in a low voice, 'The villagers are preparing to spear the salmon trout; then the moon must be nearly down.' His bed lay beside the window, and he desired to be removed to the extremity that he might look out upon the sky. He did so. His face became ani-

mated, and as we replaced him in his former position, he said, 'The works of God never before appeared to me so exquisitely beautiful;' and yet his whole life had been passed in admiring the works of God. He whispered to me, that it was time for us to take our last farewell. My heart, in the course of a long life, met only once with so trying a moment as that of parting with the boy; but my Lucy —my poor Lucy; I thought her heart would break outright. He then desired the window to be closed; the light to be removed into the next room, and not to be disturbed. At a short distance, we listened to the rattling in his throat, for about an hour, when it suddenly ceased. Lucy imagined he slept, and softly approached the bed. I put my hand under the bed cover, and felt his feet. They were stone cold. Animal heat had forsaken his extremities, and the chills of death were fast invading his heart. I induced my child to retire to her chamber, under the belief that he slept, and she did not learn his fate until she arose in the morning." Thus ended the widow's simple narrative.

Poor Lucy Gray! No being is more deserving of commiseration, than an amiable female brooding over the sorrows of hopeless love. If her afflictions are occasioned by the treachery of man, the bitterness of thought poisons the very sources of life, and works a sure and rapid decay. Even a deviation from the path of rectitude, may be philosophised into a virtue, when occasioned by one beloved, but it will rise up in judgment when passion has lost its influence, and the fatal conviction flashes upon the mind, that the object was unworthy of the sacrifice. But she who has watched by the death-bed of him she doated on, and by her angel presence drawn his thoughts to heaven, and taught him resignation; who kissed his soul when parting from his lips, and watched the glazed eye that even in death expressed his tenderness, until she fancied that he lingered still, and paused to hear him breathing—such a one may mingle in society, and pass along unnoticed

with the rest of the crowd; she may join the sportive dance, and seem to partake of its merriment; the wound may apparently be healed, and the smile of cheerfulness may enlighten her countenance; but still her midnight thoughts are working in the grave, and straining near to madness to picture the being that is mouldering there. She fades, without being conscious herself of gradual decay, and like the tulip, becomes more lovely, in consequence of disease engendered at the root. Such has been the fate of myriads of the fairest and best of creation; and such was the destiny of Lucy Gray.

THE

MAN WITH A NOSE.*

"What need'st thou run so many miles about,
When thou may'st tell thy tale the nearest way."
Shakspeare.

On stepping into a stage coach, we all feel a greater or less degree of curiosity respecting our travelling companions. We immediately inquire of ourselves, "Who can they be, and whither are they going?"—though, had we met them elsewhere, we would not have given five straws to have been put in possession of their history from the time of their birth, and to have a revelation of their future

*This sketch was first published in January, 1830. Another, and it is presumed the true, version of the same anecdote, has since appeared in Mr. Dunlap's entertaining work, entitled "The History of the Arts of Design." This fact is referred to in order to avoid the charge of plagiarism, from an author who has done so much for American literature, in his quiet way, and without the customary flourish of trumpets. His literary talents are acknowledged;—he stands at the head of the little band of native dramatists—and it is to be hoped that the time is not far distant, when he may be encouraged to lay before the public a collection of his dramatic pieces, which justly entitle him to a lasting and enviable reputation.

destiny thrown into the bargain. Were I disposed to moralize, I would say that a stage coach is your only true leveller; and to be squeezed into one, and jolted over a turnpike, for sixteen hours in succession, at the rate of eight miles an hour, is the surest way to awaken the sensibilities, in spite of cushions, bolstering, and a seat between the axletrees.

I was called to the interior of Pennsylvania last spring. The stage was full, and, as we left Philadelphia before day, the passengers could not see each other's visages. A profound silence prevailed for the first ten miles, which may have been in consequence of the difficulty of making an *observation* in the dark; but, no sooner had the first golden tints of the sun appeared, than the drowsy travellers, one and all, rubbed their eyes, and the talent of Lavater was called in requisition.

We rode a few hundred yards farther in silence, when a fat, pursy gentleman, who occupied about two-thirds of the back seat, broke the spell by saying,—

"We are packed like figs in a drum, and every jolt only serves to settle us more compactly."

"If that be the case, my dear, we shall be well *settled* by the time we arrive at our journey's end," observed a young woman on the same seat. A simper accompanied the remark, which denoted that she intended to be witty; and perhaps she was so, for her husband chuckled at the idea until the low, growling chuckle was changed into an asthmatic cough. When he had recovered sufficient breath, he said, "Your wit will be the death of me yet."

"And that," said she, looking tenderly, "would be the death of my wit." I judged from the look that they had been recently married; and, if so, the principle which prevails in preparing fowls for market had been observed in the present instance—fat and lean together.

Immediately after this sally, another exclaimed, in a theatrical tone, "'Sdeath, I undergo more cramps and pains than ever Prospero inflicted on Caliban.

The scoundrel of a driver must have stowed more than his complement into the vehicle."

"Let us count noses," cried the young woman.

"That I must beg you to undertake, madam," replied the other, bowing; "for, if I begin with you, I shall never get to the end of my task." He was a little dapper fellow, of about five feet five, with a profusion of hair on his head, which was surrounded by a travelling cap, stuck on with a rakish air. He wore a rusty frock coat, with military collar, buttoned tight up to the neck, around which was swathed a large cravat, which made up in quantity what it wanted in cleanliness. The collar of his shirt had modestly retired—perhaps ashamed to be seen in such company. His right hand was thrust in his bosom, and his left arm was placed akimbo, to the great annoyance of his next neighbour; but then it gave the little tragedian an air of importance, such as became the representative of kings and princes of the blood. He determined to be "every inch a king," though riding in a stage coach. When he paid the lady the foregoing compliment, he bowed, and endeavoured to throw a vast deal of meaning into his countenance, by way of elucidating what he would be at; but it was unnecessary. Let a woman alone to ferret out a compliment, even though it be spoken in high Dutch. She archly replied, "If that be the case, sir, begin on the other side of the stage, and you will count more rapidly." The little fellow with the bushy head bowed and smirked, while the pursy gentleman growled, and moved his mass of mortality as if his seat had become rather uncomfortable. His better half—better, perhaps, in quality, but not in quantity—observed his uneasiness, and enquired what ailed him.

"The road is rough, my pet bird, and it seems as if every stone were a load-stone, and attracted the wheels to it."

"Oh! is that all?" said she, and smiled more sweetly than ever Hero smiled upon Leander, or Eurydice upon her fiddling husband, after having

defied the devil and all his works to get possession of her.

"All, quite all!" replied the pursy gentleman, and smiled also; but his smile was not quite as sweet as that of his bewitching companion.

"When shall we proceed to count noses?" inquired the bushy-headed tragedian, at the same time drawing his chin within his military collar and enormous cravat.

"At once," said the lady. "So, begin."

"Shall I trouble you?"

"Since you insist. One, two, three."—She paused.

"Go on."

"One, two, three."—She paused again.

"Zounds! there are more than three in the stage, or is that the extent of your arithmetic, madam?" said the tragedian, smiling.

The lady made no reply, but kept her eyes bent towards the opposite part of the stage. He complimented her again, but she seemed not to hear him, and her eyes were immovable. Could she have been shocked at the complexion of his cravat, or did she imitate the retiring modesty of his dickey?—Neither! A lady will receive a compliment from a dirty beau as the pearl fisher takes his prize, without regard to the rough and dirty shell of the oyster.

"One, two, three!"—She could go no further. The tragedian turned to see what object thus engrossed her attention, and rendered her deaf even to a compliment. He beheld it, and his lower jaw fell with astonishment. When somewhat recovered, he exclaimed,

"Bardolph, by all that's wonderful!"

"Slawkenbergius was a fool to him," cried the lady. The pursy gentleman looked in the same direction, and grumbled something like "Heaven protect us!" half chuckle, half earnest.

The object of their admiration was a man of about fifty. He was dressed in a rusty black coat, of the Lord Townly cut, which gave incontrovertible marks of having belonged to a former age. The wearer had

increased in size since the time of first putting it on; so much so, that the button holes could now scarcely squint at each other, around a certain protuberance which shall be nameless, but which adds more to the dignity of a justice, in his chair, than a knowledge of the statutes. A degree of relationship was, however, still kept up between the button holes, by means of pieces of tape. His rusty coat had been carefully brushed, and, though a piece of antiquity, it had nothing of the dust of former ages about it. His linen was as white as snow, and his small cravat, in all respects unlike that of the tragedian, was twisted into the dimensions of a rope, and tied as tight as a halter round his neck. He wore a foxy scratch, which was surmounted by a hat, which appeared not to have had a nap since the days of the seven sleepers, but which had been brushed with the accustomed care from long habit.—His hands were locked in each other before him; he sat erect, and looked out with evident delight upon the surrounding landscape. There was an air of gentility about him that could not be mistaken, and yet the sprightly woman found it impossible to get beyond this object in her enumeration. And why so?—His face, in longitude, would have corresponded with that of a horse, and was of a mahogany complexion. His forehead was elevated and wrinkled. His eyebrows were long, gray and bushy; and his eyes small, black, and protruded like those of a lobster. His nose!—how can I possibly describe that nose!—In its formation, as little regard had been paid to the line of beauty as in the growth of a potato. It was studded with warts, which added to its magnitude, and the skin covering the whole strongly resembled a fig turned inside outwards; and yet he exhibited it to public view with apparent unconsciousness. How frequently is a man's face the most repulsive part of him; and yet, in consequence of the custom of the times, that, and that alone, is he compelled to expose to public scrutiny.

Beside the man with a nose was seated an old

lady with a bandbox, whose face was a mere caricature upon that of the gentleman. It was but little more than half a span from the tip of the chin to the top of the forehead. Her mouth was toothless, and her nose—if it deserved the name—was unequal, in point of size, to one of the protuberances that grew spontaneously upon the proboscis just described. A pair of spectacles rode astride of this mere apology for a nasal organ, and were kept in their position by means of a piece of riband fastened to her cap. An old lady of this cast of countenance generally proves to be an annoyance in a stage coach, more especially if she travels with a bandbox.

Women will talk, at home or abroad, whether they have any thing to say or not; and I have observed that in a stage, an old woman is never at a loss for a subject. She feels an irresistible desire to know the business of her fellow travellers, and propounds questions as confidently as if she had a right to interrogate. I was, therefore, not astonished when I heard the old lady with an apology for a nose, commence her battery upon the gentleman with the unearthly proboscis.

"Where did you come from this morning, Sir?" said she abruptly, at the same time adjusting her glasses, and, bending forward, peered up into his face.

"From the Boar's Head, in Eastcheap," replied the tragedian, in a low tone, to the young lady, who smiled approbation; and even the pursy gentleman gave a low growl, as if he relished the jest.

"From home; madam," said the man with the nose, bowing graciously. His inquisitive companion, who took a deliberate survey of the wonderful work of nature, shook her head knowingly and said, "It's impossible all that can be real flesh and blood!"

The stage now stopped at an inn, and the passengers alighted for breakfast. Inbred politeness never leaves a man, no matter in what situation he may be placed. A gentleman, from the caudle-cup upwards, maintains the same character at home and abroad;

he neither puts it on with a new coat, nor lays it down when his coat becomes thin at the elbows. It is his birth-right, and the world cannot deprive him of it. But this remark does not hold good with your gentleman of yesterday. He may be compared with the poor player who assumes the part of royalty, struts an hour upon the stage, and feels himself a king; but is no sooner divested of his pasteboard crown and mantle, than his dignity leaves him, and he reverts to the original blackguard again. But while I am moralizing, I lose the thread of my story.

As the stage drove up to the door of the inn, the little tragedian assisted the witty lady to alight, and escorted her to the breakfast room, leaving her overgrown helpmate to get out as he could. One after another the travellers jumped out and entered the tavern; and, finally, the gentleman with the mahogany face alighted, and stood at the door and assisted the pursy gentleman and the old lady to come to a landing. This was the true touch-stone of good feeling and politeness. Had the lady been young, handsome and witty, all might have accounted for his attention; but she was old, toothless and disagreeable; but it was enough for him that she appeared invested with petticoats. Had he lived in the age of chivalry, for that act alone he would have been knighted, and called the knight of the brazen proboscis. He entered the breakfast room supporting the pursy gentleman and the old lady with the bandbox. They took seats at the table, and she sat beside him.

The man with a nose was a perfect Chesterfield at table. While the rest of the company ate as though they were eating for a wager against time, he pressed them to partake of various dishes, fearing they might not help themselves without being invited. All was hurry and bustle; and there was a constant clattering of knives and forks, and a whisking of servants in and out of the room.

The gentleman with the nose had not yet tasted

a mouthful. He had been attending to others instead of minding his own business. "A cup of coffee, Sir," cried a servant, and thrust it beneath his proboscis. He raised his head, and turned his face towards the waiter. The servant started—his hand shook, and the cup of coffee was deposited in the lap of the traveller. His face became of a darker mahogany hue. —He made use of such an exclamation as any gentleman would have given vent to on such an occasion, and rose from his seat as nimbly as if Gammer Gurton's needle had been sticking in his small clothes. The servant handed him a towel to rub himself down, and, after making an awkward apology, left the room, muttering, "Why the devil does he travel with such a nose?"

Now, the gentleman wore white cassimere small clothes, and, though they were thread bare, and darned across the right knee, there was not a speck of soil upon them when he first stepped into the stage in the morning. But of what avail was their primitive purity? A dish of muddy coffee had been slushed over them, and they presented a convincing proof that even the cleanest unmentionables, like every other mortal production, are liable to be sullied in this world. The traveller resumed his seat, after being rubbed down with a tow towel; the old lady of the bandbox adjusted her spectacles, and leaned forward to take a survey of the afflicted premises. The distressed traveller did the same. His nose had assumed all the colours of the rainbow, and his face seemed to have extended to twice its usual dimensions. After a careful examination of the damage done, the old lady looked her companion in the face, and shaking her head sorrowfully, said, "What a pity!"

"A great pity," replied the other, and shook his head too. There is some comfort in being commiserated in our misfortunes.

"Tara, tara, tara, tara," went the horn of the stage driver. "The stage is waiting, gentlemen," cried

the landlord, bustling into the room with an air of importance.

"Waiting! let it wait," cried the tragedian, with his mouth filled after the fashion of Sancho Panza—"I have not half finished my breakfast yet." The man with the nose had not yet began.

"Tara, tara, tara," again went the horn.

"Silence that dreadful horn, it frightens the inn from its propriety," exclaimed the little Roscius, with a tragedy swell.

"Waiter, a cup of coffee," exclaimed the distressed traveller. The bar maid handed it to him, and smiled as she did so. But why did she smile? She was a blooming girl, and perhaps had been told that a smile added to her beauty. Be this as it may, I have observed that few pretty girls can look a man full in the face without smiling. I leave it to physiologists to find out the reason.

"Gentlemen, the stage is waiting," again cried the landlord. The man with the nose swallowed his coffee, and scalded his throat in the hurry—the tragedian rose from the table swearing that he had not made half a meal, though all the dishes were empty within arm's reach of him—and the pursy gentleman, as he waddled out, grumbled something like an insinuation that there was an understanding between the driver and the landlord to disturb the travellers as soon as they were comfortably seated, in order to save the victuals. The reason of this dissatisfaction was a plain one—They were now called on to discharge their bills, and some folks make it a rule never to pay money without first getting into a passion. How different the deportment of the mahogany faced gentleman. He had had his clean white cassimeres drenched with muddy coffee, and his throat scalded with the slops of the pot three times replenished and concocted, and yet he paid his bill without a complaint, and bowed to the landlord as he deposited his change in the right hand pocket of his hapless small clothes. He left the breakfast room escorting the lady with the bandbox to the stage.

As they left the room, there was a spontaneous exclamation among the inmates of the inn, "What a nose!"

The landlord shook his head mysteriously, and protested that he had never seen any thing like it belonging to either fish, flesh or fowl. The girls came rushing from all parts of the house titterings; they gathered together, and had their joke to themselves. Something tickled them mightily—what it was I do not pretend so say. The landlady bounced in in a fluster, exclaiming, "Where is it?—which way has it gone?" She would have hurried out to the stage, but her husband interfered, by saying,—

"Remember you are not in a situation now, my dear, to look upon a sight of that nature."

"Fiddle de dee," cried the hostess, snapping her fingers—"I must have a look at it, if I die by it."

"It may cost you your life," replied mine host, again shaking his head.

"Well, I might as well die that way as from curiosity," said the hostess, and made for the door; but the landlord was an athletic man, and catching her in his arms, in spite of her struggles, fairly carried her to her chamber and turned the key on her. The landlord entertained certain old womanish notions, and had a proper regard for the personal appearance of his progeny. As the stage drove off, the landlady was seen at her chamber window, looking out with all the eyes that nature had given her. The whole inn was in an uproar—the dogs barked after us, and, as we passed along, the teamsters stood staring vacantly in the middle of the road.

The passenger who had occasioned all this consternation looked out and enjoyed the beauties of nature, apparently unconscious that nature had been to him so niggard of her gifts. The lady with the bandbox was still next to him, for she now considered herself as having a kind of legal right to his protection, having commiserated with him on the fate

of his breeches. It is astonishing upon how slight a foundation stage coach friendships are built.

"Where are you travelling to?" asked the old woman, as the stage turned upon the soft road.

"To Gadshill, I'll vouch for him," replied the tragedian.

"Or to the Promontory of Noses," added the witty lady.

"To the end of my journey," replied the gentleman, making a bow that would have served as a model for Sir Charles Grandison.

Nothing occurred worthy of note until the stage drove up for dinner. The mysterious gentleman had scarcely opened his lips during the morning, but kept his eyes constantly fixed on the passing scenery. This may be accounted for by his having a toothless old woman seated at his opposite elbow.

Dinner was on table as we alighted. An experienced traveller avoids the post of carver as he would the seat of famine. It is diverting to see the company seated, with their hands before them, and looking anxiously for some one possessed of sufficient courage to attack the eatables and cut them out employment. As I said before, the man with a nose was Chesterfield revivified. He assumed the post of honour, and, after whetting his knife, he commenced operations on a roasted goose, displaying a knowledge of the science that would have done credit to the grand carver of an eastern monarch. He was skilful, but the goose was obstinate; turning to the waiter, he said—

"Had you lived in the days of ancient Rome, they would have hurled you from the Tarpeian Rock for this."

"Anan?" said the servant.

"You have roasted one of the sacred geese that cackled in the capitol," continued the other, gravely. This was the first attempt at a joke that the man with the nose had made during the day, and it was so good that the servant left the room ready to split his sides with laughter. I do not pretend to say that he

saw clearly through the remark, but he saw the gentleman's nose clear enough, and that of itself was worth the best jest in Joe Miller. The traveller continued the dissection with renewed vigour, and finally succeeded in dismembering the goose; but during this undertaking his fellow travellers had each despatched a plate full from another dish, and were now ready to reap the harvest of his labour. He helped them all round, and consulted the palate of each in his equitable distribution.

"Shall I trouble you for a side bone," grumbled the pursy gentleman, without raising his chin from his plate, but kept his gastronomic powers in full operation until such time as more grist should be ready for his grinders. The carver complacently undertook the task, and, bracing every nerve, laboured until large beads of perspiration stood on his forehead, and his nose

> "Dropp'd tears as fast as the Arabian trees
> Their med'cinable gums."

Alcides, it is said, cleansed the Augean stable, but it is no where to be found on record that he ever severed the back bone of a goose similar to that under consideration. The carver was a man of resolute spirit; he persevered—and what will not perseverance accomplish? His labour done, he wiped the sweat from his brow with a white linen handkerchief, which still retained the marks of its folds, and then helped the pursy gentleman to his favourite part. The carver had not yet tasted a mouthful. The goose had flown before the incessant fire kept up by the travellers; not a particle remained on the dish but the parson's nose, and that was a favourite mouthful with the patient gentleman. He understood every branch of the science of carving, and the least important is by no means that which teaches the carver how to help the company satisfactorily, and still retain his favourite part upon the dish. This will account for the parson's nose having survived the general havoc. The traveller

now rested from his labour, and casting a complacent glance upon the dish, stuck a fork into the delicate morsel. He raised it, and was about to translate it to his own plate, when the lady of the bandbox, who was seated close at his left elbow, watched his motions like a cat, and thrusting her plate immediately beneath the sorry remnant of the goose, exclaimed, "I'll thank you for that." The gentleman bowed, the morsel dropped from the point of his fork, and the next moment it was mumbled between the nose and chin of the old woman. The carver dropped his knife and fork in despair, and the stage driver's horn now informed him that the time he had devoted to politeness should have been devoted to eating. He took a mouthful of bread and a glass of brandy and water, and returned to his seat in the stage. The little tragedian was in an ill humour at being disturbed before he had emptied more than half the dishes—and the pursy gentleman growled something about the extortionate charges, but his voice stuck by the way, unable to pass through the quantity of dinner he had swallowed.

The lady with the bandbox resumed her seat beside the man with a nose, and the rest of the company being packed as before, the driver flourished his whip, and we left the inn at a brisk pace, which promised much, but promises are not always realized. Any one who is at all acquainted with the nature of man, must have remarked that, if there be any thing like good nature in his composition, it will be sure to show itself shortly after dinner, provided the dinner was a good one. If you have a favour to ask, never ask it of a man while his stomach is empty. Shakspeare says something about a judge hanging a prisoner lest his dinner should grow cold; and Shakspeare, it is acknowledged, understood something of human nature. Now, though the mysterious gentleman had not dined on any other than the chameleon's dish, his countenance brightened, either from long habit of being better satisfied with

human affairs at that hour of the day, or from the aforesaid glass of brandy and water, which he swallowed with a mouthful of bread, on the summons of the stage driver. Be this as it may, he surveyed the surrounding country, as they rode along, with increased delight.

When Eve was turned out of Paradise, she still retained that unquenchable thirst after knowledge which has entailed such countless woes upon her progeny; and all her daughters, even to the present day, are sure to inherit that trait of character, which may be the reason of the impossibility of regaining Eden on this side of the grave.

The lady of the bandbox had made some progress in her second half century, and doubtless had drunk deep of the fountain of knowledge, but still her thirst was unallayed. One would naturally suppose that ladies of her age, who had seen so much, would rest satisfied with their stock of information; but, on the contrary, the appetite becomes insatiable with years; and, while there is any thing to be learnt, they are on thorns until they get at the bottom of it. Speaking figuratively, such was the case with the lady of the bandbox. I do not mean to say that she was actually seated on thorns in the stage coach.

The old lady was not what may be called a woman of few words—they are scarce, and she was not of the number—but she was a blunt woman, and came to the point without circumlocution. With her compressed face, button nose, and projecting chin, Lavater would not have read her character without the aid of spectacles.

"What trade may you follow for a livelihood?" said she to her companion, adjusting her spectacles, and looking him full in the face. Not a word had been spoken during the preceding half hour.

"I sometimes make shoes," replied the gentleman, and took a pinch of snuff. It was the first pinch he had taken; but if every man wore a nose like his, and took but such a pinch once in a day,

Crœses himself would be denied admittance into the company of our tobacco planters.

"Impossible that you should be a shoemaker," exclaimed the old lady. The gentleman bowed, smiled, but returned no answer.

"That's an odd fish," said the tragedian; "I wonder who he can be!"

The witty lady made a reply, which was intended to be witty, but as it proved an abortion, I refrain from putting it on record. Her husband, however, growled something like a laugh of approbation. I heard it rumbling its way upwards, like distant thunder, but it was smothered in the intricate passage before it could find its way to his lips.

By this time no small degree of curiosity prevailed among the passengers to know who the mysterious gentleman actually was, but the old lady was decidedly the most curious. How to gratify her thirst after knowledge in the present instance was a difficult question, for her companion was not disposed to be more communicative than an oyster at ebb tide. Silence again prevailed, but was broken this time by the strange gentleman. He was not talkative, as I have just remarked, but when he did speak it was to the purpose.

"Madam!" said he, bowing to the old lady; but as she was rather dull of hearing, he was obliged to repeat his salutation and bow also. She caught the sound, and, adjusting her spectacles, thrust her apology for a nose within the shade of his proboscis, that not a word might escape her ear in the rattling of the stage wheels.

"Did you speak, sir?"

"I did, madam."

"And what did you say, sir?"

"I believe your bandbox has got between my knees, that's all."

He was right in his conjecture; the bandbox was actually there. Now, though a bandbox is not only a necessary but indispensable appendage to a travelling lady, yet all must allow that it can very

readily be dispensed with when it gets between a gentleman's knees in a stage coach, for it does not at all accord with the fitness of things to have it there, and this was the opinion entertained by the man with the nose. The old lady removed the box, and as she did so, resumed the attack.

"Well, really, now I should like to know what business you follow."

"I sometimes make a coat," replied the other, smiling.

"Oh, la! impossible that so polite a gentleman as you should be a tailor," exclaimed the old lady. The gentleman bowed, and made no reply.

"A mysterious fellow, that," said the tragedian; "and I should not be astonished if he were some German prince in disguise."

"In disguise! In a mask, you mean," said the witty lady.

"No, it is real flesh and blood, every inch of it," replied the tragedian, looking askance at the traveller's nose.

"Perhaps so; but then it must be of foreign growth. Such fruits are not indigenous to our soil."

The stage now approached a village. "I believe I shall get out here," said the gentleman. The old lady became fidgetty at the prospect of losing her companion before her curiosity should be gratified. She repeated her question.

"I sometimes make noses," replied the persecuted gentleman, with a contortion of muscles that approximated a smile.

"Make noses!" exclaimed the old lady, and involuntarily applied her hand to her own apology for a nose, and looked as though she would say, "Is this beyond your skill to remedy?"

"Make noses!" cried the witty lady; and after casting a suspicious glance at his proboscis, turned to the tragedian and said, with an air of triumph, "I knew I could not be mistaken."

"Make noses!" said the tragedian doubtingly.

"Make noses!" growled the pursy gentleman, in

a tone that seemed to be a distant echo of the tragedian's voice.

The mysterious gentleman sat erect, apparently indifferent to what was passing. The muscles of his rigid countenance were immovable, and by his twinkling black eyes alone did he betray that he enjoyed the consternation into which he had thrown his fellow travellers.

"Yes," repeated he, "make noses;" and took another pinch of snuff. I described the first pinch; it is unnecessary to describe the second, farther than to state that it was such a pinch as no other mortal breathing could have taken. It made him sneeze, and as he sneezed every passenger started electrified from his seat.

"Angels and ministers of grace defend us!" exclaimed the tragedian.

"What strange noise was that?" asked the pursy gentleman, who was rather dull of hearing.

Every one turned an eye of suspicion towards the man with the nose, but not a word was uttered, for they imagined that the devil himself was ensconsed within that brown coat and white cassimere breeches. They looked at each other in silent astonishment. The stage driver blew his horn again, to announce his approach to the village.

"Oh! is that all!" they cried simultaneously.

"All, I assure you," said the gentleman, bowing. They laughed heartily at their ridiculous mistake, but the lady with the bandbox could not even smile, for they now rapidly approached the village, and her curiosity had not yet been gratified. The stage drove up to the inn, and the passengers unpacked themselves and alighted. The important moment had arrived, when the old lady's curiosity must be gratified or never. Why she was so desirous of ascertaining his pursuit, is a difficult question to answer. It may have been nothing more than a natural impulse, or she may have mistaken his marked attention for something more than common courtesy. Women are, at all stages of life, subject to delu-

sions of this nature. The strange gentleman rose from his seat, and was about leaving the stage. The impulse, no matter from what cause it originated, now became too strong to be controlled. The lady of the bandbox now laid violent hands upon the tail of the black coat of the Lord Townly cut mentioned in an early part of this narrative. The wearer of it turned—an inconvenience that he would not have been subject to had nature provided him with an eye in the back of his head. The old lady assumed a girlish air, which dowagers of a certain, or rather uncertain age are in the habit of assuming, though quite as unseasonable as green peas at Christmas, and simpering, cried, "Really, you shall not stir until I have gained my point."

"What point, madam?" inquired the gentleman, bowing gravely.

"You must tell me by what means you make a livelihood."

"By making faces," exclaimed the gentleman. The lady shrieked, and let go of his coat. The persecuted traveller still retained his politeness, but the expression of his countenance was such as I shall not attempt to describe. There is nothing on record to be compared with it, unless, indeed, that mysterious picture mentioned by Washington Irving in his story of the young Italian. The gentleman walked off, like the honourable Dick Dowlass, with his wardrobe tied up in a pocket handkerchief.

"Who can he be!" exclaimed the travellers, looking after him with astonishment, as he slowly proceeded along the street. My curiosity was also excited, and, on examining the way-bill, I discovered that the man with a nose had adhered to the truth in his various accounts of his means of making a living. He was a portrait painter.

AN APOLOGUE.

Upon a time, Love, Death and Reputation entered into a compact to traverse the world together. They came beside a smoothly-flowing river, where they paused, for Love had already become weary of his companions, and he discovered a shepherdess tending her flocks, on the sunny side of a grassy knoll, on the opposite bank of the stream.

"Here let us part for a time," said Love, "and I will tarry with that simple girl and her sheep, until you seek me there."

"She is a favourite of mine," replied Reputation, "and I shall certainly soon be there."

"I mark the spot well, said Death, "and trust me, ere long you shall find me there."

"I shall await your coming," said Love to Death, and leaped into a light skiff on the shore of the stream, and laughed aloud as he spread his rainbow wings to the breeze. The shepherdess played merrily on her rural pipe, while from the high hills beyond the grassy knoll, the shrill notes of a huntsman's horn were heard, and suddenly a stag, pursued by the full-mouthed pack, broke cover. Close in the rear, followed the eager huntsman. Love clapped his little wings and shouted, as he beheld the wearied stag shape his course towards the spot where the peaceful sheep were browsing.

Death and Reputation pursued their journey. They had not proceeded far when they were overtaken by a warrior, armed for the fight.—He was clad in royal robes; his turban was over-shadowed

by flowing plumes, and his gallant steed foamed and champed the bit with impatience.

"Ho! ho!" cried Death; "thou lookest like my emissary. Whither in such haste?"

"The Monguls and the Persians are in the field," replied the warrior, "and I must be there."

"And what canst thou do without my aid?" said Death, and leaped behind the warrior, and they dashed madly onward.

"I will meet you there," said Reputation, meekly; but her voice was lost in the clatter of arms, and the neighing of the steed.

As the sun was descending in the west, Reputation arrived weary and dejected at the field of battle. Every thing denoted that Death had not been idle. The Monguls and the Persians were strewed in indiscriminate masses over the plain; and as she pursued her search for the plumed warrior, she touched scarcely one of the many thousand human carcasses who had fallen to minister to his ambition. At length she found him surrounded by heaps of slain. His white plumes and costly robes were torn and soiled with blood. The gallant steed and his rider lay a ghastly spectacle in the pale moonlight, and the figure of Death bestrode them with his fatal spear upraised, still dripping with human gore.

"Where have you loitered so long?" cried Death. "Behold, my work is done, and I am impatient to be gone."

"I am permitted," replied Reputation, "to remain with but few that you have not first visited. This gallant warrior long courted my favours, but the clamorous voices of whole nations drove me violently away. Those voices are now hushed in eternal silence, and I will now fulfil my promise, and linger with him as long as I may."

"The hyenas and the birds of prey will pay little respect to thy watchfulness," cried Death. "But I must see the simple shepherdess on the grassy knoll, where Love awaits my coming. When you have

become weary of making a Golgotha your dwelling-place, meet us there."

He arose and departed, and Reputation seated herself on the breast of the dead warrior. When the morn came, she was still there, sad and disconsolate, and she continued throughout the following day; but as night again approached, she became sickened at the scenes of horror, and arose and fled, convinced that she could not long exist in a field of carnage. She had many thousand times visited similar scenes, and endeavoured to remain, but her stay had invariably been but a few short days, and no more.—How brief is the stay of Reputation with both the living and the dead!

Death sought the shepherdess, and he found her alone. Her flock was straying without protection, and her rural pipe lay by her side, silent and neglected.

"Where is Reputation?" demanded Death.—"She promised to meet me here."

The shepherdess hung her head, and replied, "I have not seen her since Love first came, though, till then, she had been my constant companion from childhood."

"And where is the huntsman whose jocund horn made the hills speak as if with a voice of life, as we passed by but a few days since?"

"He is gone, and I know not whither."

"And where is Love, with his rainbow wings? He has not flown too?—He promised to remain in this peaceful spot until Death should arrive."

"He made the same promise to me over and over."

"And where is the truant boy?"

"I have endeavoured to conceal him," replied the shepherdess, blushing, "ever since the huntsman deserted me."

"It is well," said Death. "Their promises are lightly made and as lightly broken; but I never deceive."

He laid his bony hand upon the pale brow of the

shepherdess, and she faded and shrunk like the spring-flower, when the night frost touches it, and with her last sigh she said—"When Love and Reputation have both left me, what can be more welcome than the touch of Death!"

Death now espied on the opposite side of the stream his two former companions, and immediately joined them, and found they were reproaching each other.

"How often," said Reputation, "have you, in a moment of levity, driven me with shame from those who have been my choicest care; and by your blandishments and promises, never designed to be fulfilled, destroyed, in one instant, the labour of my hands for years?"

"And how often," replied Love, laughing, "have your prudish precepts imposed on me the labour of years, when my task, otherwise, would have been but the sport of an hour?"

"And I," cried Death, "too frequently thwart the views of both. So forbear your mutual reproaches, and I will take my leave of you. But before I go, I would recommend to you, young Love, quit not Reputation; for if she once leave you, she is so coy a damsel, no wooing on earth will win her back again; and rest assured, wherever you visit without her, I soon shall follow your footsteps. Away, both of you," he continued, "and take up your abode with the young poet Selim, and the dark-haired Biribi. Years, many years, shall elapse before I molest your repose there: and even then, when I call to summon the virtuous couple to their last repose, Reputation will have become so enamoured of their society, that long will she continue to hover with affection over their graves. For my part, the Sophi of Persia awaits my coming.—Neither of you ever crossed his palace-gate, nor can you reproach me with having deprived you of a votary in him. Farewell."

Love and Reputation, hand in hand, sought out the poet Selim, and Death hastened to the palace of the Persian monarch, where every thing denoted his

arrival was expected. Many years after he sought out his former companions, and he found them still in the humble cottage of the happy Selim and Biribi. As they reluctantly led the aged pair to the grim visitant, he opened his arms to receive them, who smiled upon each other as he pressed them together to his bosom. The prediction of Death was verified, for Reputation for ages hovered around the peaceful grave of the poet Selim.

THE

APPARITION.

Jubeo—manesque exire sepulchris.—Ovid.

The question whether the incorporeal essence, after its departure from this terrestrial sphere, has in any instance been permitted to resume the shape of mortality, and appear to the outward senses of its former associates, has agitated the minds of the most enlightened for centuries, and we are still as much in the dark as we were the hour speculation began. There are, it must be allowed, many well authenticated circumstances, calculated to fix the belief of the credulous; nay, more, to stagger the cooler judgment of the sceptic. Some, it is true, may be traced to natural causes, while others defy the subtilty of human reason to elucidate—for instance, the preternatural visitation, which announced to Roscommon the poet, while yet a boy, the death of his father, and that which indicated to Miles Peter Andrews the sudden dissolution of Lord Littleton, if we admit their authenticity, put all theories at defiance, and the sceptic must shield himself by placing them to the account of remarkable coincidence. For the truth of the fact which I am about to relate, I vouch without hesitation. I knew the hero of the event, and place the most implicit reli-

ance on his statements, though in making the avowal, I may be charged with superstition, ridiculous in the enlightened age in which we live. In the autumn of 1810, returning from the western part of Pennsylvania, I closed my day's journey at Clark's ferry, on the Susquehanna, at that time one of the most romantic and picturesque spots that ever delighted the eye of the lover of nature. Immediately in front of the tavern rolled the expanded and noble river, from the surface of which was heard the horn of the passing boatman, as he bore along the product of the wealthy country, through which the river and its tributaries flow. On the opposite side rose a lofty and extended mountain, frowning in all the wildness of nature, save that midway appeared a hut, and a small clearance, though the spot seemed inaccessible to the foot of man, a place where the eagle might build his eyry, without fear or molestation. Looking up the river, on the point of an island, the eye was presented with a building of a better order of architecture, which proved that refinement had already made considerable progress, while the extended view down the river, which pursued its course through the bosom of the lofty and uncultivated mountains, was such as bade defiance to the art of man to heighten. Considerable innovations have since been made upon the wildness of the scene. Turnpike roads and canals are merciless destroyers of primitive scenery and romantic feelings; but as it appears they can be converted to more practical use than the latter, our good citizens of the west will have but little reason to complain of the innovation.

As I alighted from my horse, a group of farmers and travellers were seated beneath the piazza. I saluted them, and took a seat among them. Their conversation had been interrupted by my approach, but, on my being seated, several voices desired Mr. Jones to proceed with his story.

Mr. Jones was a portly personage, with a jolly red countenance, which plainly indicated that he

did not belong to that school of philosophers who despise the flesh pots of Egypt, or that class of politicians who advocate an excise on strong waters. He was dressed in plain drab apparel, and wore a slouched hat of the same colour, and from the meal-dust about his person, I at once put Mr. Jones down for a thrifty miller. After a preparatory *hem*, he commenced his narrative, nearly in the following words.

"Neighbours, most of you remember farmer Grimes, who lived on Wild-cat Run, and who hung himself about five years ago, out of spite at having lost five hundred dollars, that he loaned Job Worson on usury?"

"I knew him bravely," replied one of the company. "He sued Worson before the court at Carlisle, and though he had David Watts for his attorney, and where could he have found a better? he was cast, which took a cool fifty more from his ill-gotten gains, to pay the costs, besides another fifty for his lawyer's fee. If you had seen old Grimes's face when the jury brought in a verdict against him, you would have thought it enough to frighten even an usurer back to honesty. He could not stand this blow; so he went home, and hung himself in his orchard the next day. Remember Grimes? bless you, Mr. Jones, I remember him as well as I do my own father."

"Very well," continued the miller, "you may also remember, if you were ever in Wild-cat creek settlement, that his farm adjoined mine." This important fact being also within the knowledge of the other, Jones proceeded: "After the burial of neighbour Grimes, many strange stories were circulated through the country, as how that he had been seen walking about his farm at midnight, with a rope around his neck, and then of a sudden, he would start towards the orchard, and quick as lightning he would suspend himself from the bough of an apple tree, where he would hang until the cocks crew in the morning, when he would vanish."

"I have heard as much," replied the other, "and more too, that Job Worson could not sleep at nights for months afterwards, for the old man, as soon as Job would fall into a doze, was heard dancing in his room, rattling his money-bag. This I heard straight from the lips of Job's brother's wife's sister, and may therefore be relied on for truth. It made a prodigious talk at the time."

"These stories," continued the miller, "had very little effect on me, for though I was his next neighbour, and sat on the coroner's jury when he was cut down, yet he had not appeared to me, and I found that the people of Millerstown, Carlisle, and those about the ferry here, knew more about his appearing than we of the Wild-cat settlement. So I put it down to the account of humbug and gossip. But my day was to come."

"And I'll warrant you it did come."

"It did."

"I knew it would: you were always a scoffer, Mr. Jones, but you have learnt that it is a dangerous thing to scoff at the devil and his doings." This remark was made by a small personage, whom I took for a tailor, from the skein of thread around his neck, and thimble on his finger.

"About six months after the death of Grimes," continued the miller, "business called me up to Shirleysburg, and, by the way, it was to settle an account of long standing with that very Job Worson, who, you know, while he lived in these parts, had the name of being slow at wiping off old scores. Well, he seemed to thrive at Shirley, for weeds, as the saying is, flourish in a poor soil, and Shirley is poor enough for that matter, though it is a somewhat noted place, on account of the old fort that stood there during the Indian wars. Those were piping times, neighbours, and bullets may be picked up at this day in the road as you descend the hill a short distance north-west of the village. Worson spoke of Grimes, and made sport of the old usurer having hung himself out of vexation. He also told me many

stories that were current about Shirley, as how that he could not rest in peace in his grave. I had now heard these tales so often, and from so many different sources, that I began to think that there might be some truth in them, though we of the Wild-cat settlement, who should have known most, knew less of the matter than other people."

"It is not unfrequently the case," observed a sober looking personage, "that a man has to travel abroad to learn the occurrences of his own fireside."

Mr. Jones nodded assent to the remark, and proceeded in his narrative:

"Having closed my business with Worson, I left Shirley to return home, and having a long dreary ride without company, I turned over in my mind all the different stories I had heard respecting neighbour Grimes. My mind began to waver, and somehow, when I entered the Shades of Death, which was after night-fall, and you know, even at mid-day it is a gloomy part of the road, I did not feel altogether as bold as a man ought to feel on such an occasion. I fancied there was an unusual sound in the wind as it moaned through the old pines, and more than once my blood crawled chilly through my veins, at the indistinct view of a projecting rock, or the moss covered trunk of some tree that the storm had snapped and riven. Even the tread of my horse sounded hollow on the earth; his steps were short, and in quick succession; his ears were raised; he shyed at every object, and moved more briskly at every sound. He evidently partook of the fears of his rider."

"I have often heard," said the tailor, "that a horse can see a ghost as soon as a man can, unless as how the man be born with a caul before his eyes, and then they say he can see the very air as it blows. But I should not wonder if he saw *spooks*, or somewhat of the kind in the Shades of Death, for it is a frightful place to pass at the lone hour of night, and never shall I forget the first time I travelled that

road. It was a stormy night in the month of November—"

"Don't interrupt Mr. Jones's story," cried one, whose leather apron and sooty visage proved him to be the blacksmith, and whose curiosity was already stretched on tenter hooks.

The miller resumed the account of his adventure:

"The alarm which evidently possessed my horse increased my own. The acuteness of my senses became more than natural. The moon had not yet risen, yet I imagined my sight could penetrate the darkness that surrounded me, and that sounds which at any other time would have been inaudible, were now clear and distinct. I was all eye, and all ear; for every part of my body seemed to be endowed with the sense of seeing and hearing. I felt lighter than I had ever felt before, and my horse moved with unusual freedom, yet the sound of his tread was heavy and appalling. It was the only mortal sound to be heard, and that circumstance gave it an indescribable influence over my imagination. It proved to me that I was alone, and in such a spot as superstition and credulity would delight to people with beings the most fearful and inimical to our nature, and if roused, I alone was responsible to them. I urged my horse forward, hoping to outstrip my fears, but the repeated echoes of his hoofs increased my terror. I had now rode some distance, and believed I was about emerging from the Shades, when a frightful noise, between a groan and a yell, startled me, and suddenly a white figure darted across my path and disappeared. My horse stopped; he was going at full speed, and the sudden shock threw me to the ground. I was more dead than alive with fright, and when I regained my horse, I found the poor animal still standing in the same spot, and trembling like an aspen leaf."

"I'll warrant you," replied the tailor. "Did you not say that the figure that startled him was white?"

"Nearly white; rather of a drab colour."

"I would have sworn to as much," continued the

tailor, "for old Grimes always dressed in a drab suit; but what could he have been doing so far from his orchard, passes my learning."

"And I myself was at a loss how to resolve the difficulty," continued the miller, "unless, indeed, that gloomy and lonely place was selected to produce a more lasting impression on my mind. Having regained my horse, I leaped into the saddle, and plied the lash without mercy, until I had passed the Shades. I then rode more moderately, and endeavoured to account for the sound I had heard, and the object of which I had had but a momentary glance. Speculation was unsatisfactory. I became bewildered, and yet neither before nor since that hour have I ever experienced such a vividness of imagination, combined with quickness of corporeal perception. New ties between the body and the mind appeared to have been created. Still I rode on, but all idea of time and space had vanished. The horse was left to his own guidance, for my mind was wandering; when suddenly I was awakened by the shrill neigh of the animal. The moon was just rising. I looked around, and to my no small satisfaction, beheld that I was on the border of Grimes's farm, which adjoined my own. I checked my horse a moment to reflect. By crossing my neighbour's farm, I should save a circuit of nearly a mile. It was an object at that late hour, for I was weary and feverish both in body and mind. I pulled down the fence, and entered the field."

"Rather than have done as much," exclaimed the tailor, "I would have crawled ten miles on my hands and knees, at any hour in the four and twenty. It was little else than challenging the devil and his works. What do you say, neighbour Sledge?"

"For my part," replied the smith, "I should have considered the highway the safest, for, mark you, the moon was just rising."

"And Mr. Jones would have found it the safest too, I reckon," remarked the tailor, which was accompanied by a Lord Burleigh nod.

"You are perfectly right," continued Jones, "for after crossing the first field, I found myself in the very orchard in which the usurer had put an end to his existence. The whole scene of the coroner's jury came fresh upon my mind. His pale and distorted countenance, and stiffened form, were again before me. I strove to banish the image, but it was impossible: and its appalling power increased as I drew nigh the spot where he had fulfilled his dreadful determination. The wind was high, and the dark clouds that were rapidly flying indicated an approaching storm. The light of the moon was occasionally obscured by the passing clouds. I drew nigher to the fatal spot, and I found it impossible to turn my gaze in an opposite direction. My eyes searched eagerly to single that tree out from the rest. At length I discovered it, and standing beneath it, the outline of a human figure. I at first doubted my senses, but as the moon gleamed forth, I was convinced that there was no delusion. Cold drops of perspiration drenched my limbs. I shook as if an ague fit had been on me. Still I could not remove my eyes from the fearful object. I gazed until it assumed the appearance of the suicide. Yes, he stood before me in shape as palpable to the sight, as either of you at present." The miller's voice became husky at the recollection, and his rude auditory listened in breathless suspense. He moistened his lips and proceeded. "I ejaculated a prayer for mercy. The figure was still before me; to remove my eyes from it was impossible; my faculties were paralyzed, and I felt as if desperation were coming over me. I made one desperate effort; it was for life or death. I lashed the horse; he darted off, and speedily bore me beyond the dreaded influence of the spectre. When I arrived at the door of my house, my horse was white with foam, and I was trembling and pale as ashes."

"I was thinking," said the tailor, "that it would have been better to have kept to the highway."

Jones nodded assent, and continued.

"The noise I made on entering the yard, awoke

my son. He dressed himself and descended. I had not yet dismounted. He saw my confusion, and the state of the horse, and inquired into the cause; but I had resolved to keep that night's adventure to myself, and accordingly evaded his question. I gave the horse to his care, and hurried to my bed more dead than alive. I soon slept, from absolute exhaustion; but the fearful events of the night assumed a thousand different shapes, and were not an instant absent from my imagination. I arose about noon, faint and feverish, having been but slightly refreshed by my sleep. My son was curious to know what had thus affected me, but I touched not on the subject to any one of the family, secretly determining to sift the mystery myself. The day closed, and I went to bed as usual, but as the hour approached at which the object had appeared to me on the preceding night, I quietly arose, descended, and directed my steps towards my neighbour's orchard. The moon was just rising as I came within a hundred yards of the well-known tree. I looked about, but perceived nothing. I advanced more than half the distance, when I again beheld the figure. I endeavoured to be as collected as man could be under such circumstances. My heart throbbed violently, and my fears increased; still the desire to satisfy my doubts rooted me to the spot. Every moment the resemblance of the spectre to Grimes became stronger. I had fully satisfied myself of the identity, when it waved a red cloth extended in its right hand, as if it wished me to depart. I saw the bloody cloth, and heard it flap in the breeze. It would have been madness longer to have provoked my fate. I obeyed the warning, and fled. Would you not all have done the same."

"Certainly, if I had not been spell-bound," replied the tailor.

"I hastened to my bed, and arose as usual the following morning, but did not open my lips to my family concerning the events of the night. My wife and son perceived that there was something unusual on my mind, and endeavoured to find it out, but I

evaded their inquiries. I was reserved and abstracted during the day. My mind was occupied with one engrossing subject. I viewed it in all its various aspects, and reproached myself with weakness and cowardice, for not speaking to the spectre, and ascertaining the cause of this fearful visitation. What had I to dread from an interview? I had neither wronged him living, nor cast obloquy on his memory. On the contrary, I had always conducted myself as became a good neighbour. These reflections emboldened me to sift the matter, and accordingly I again sallied forth at midnight with my rifle on my shoulder."

"This was the third time!" exclaimed the tailor in a tremulous voice, "and I have never heard of a ghost yet that would not speak after seeing a man three times."

"Unless, indeed," said the blacksmith gravely, "it was the ghost of a dumb person, and such, for the most part, I take it, continue silent forever."

"That admits of an argument," rejoined the other," and if so be as how you will listen to me for five minutes, I will clearly prove to you, that by the laws of nature, the ghost of a dumb man may talk as glibly as the ghost of a lawyer."

"Very well, neighbour," replied the blacksmith, "but as old Grimes was not dumb, we will hear Mr. Jones out before we settle that there matter."

The miller continued:—"As I approached the orchard, I breathed with increased difficulty; there was an unnatural weight about my heart, and my brain was in a whirl. I trembled in every joint, and could scarcely drag one limb after the other. Was the cause of this change within myself, or was I labouring under external influence? I dreaded the latter; still I moved on, for my determination was fixed. The object at length appeared to me again. I will not attempt to describe my sensations at that moment. I stood as if all the functions of vitality had forsaken me. My eyes were fixed on it, but for a time I was deprived of the power of vision. When

my sight returned, it was still there. I summoned resolution to speak to it, but such was my agitation that my voice died in a whisper; I again exerted myself, and cried, "In heaven's name, speak"—it waved a red cloth—"if I can be of service—if there be any thing you would impart to mortal ear"—the cloth still waved me from it—My limbs became stiffened with desperation—my whole mind was centred in one object—"By heaven!" I cried—

"You should not have sworn on such an occasion," gravely observed the tailor.

"True, I should not, but I did swear that I would not stir until I learnt the purport of that mysterious visitation. "Speak," I continued, "what is it disturbs your rest, and calls you back from the eternal world to the world of time?" It still waved me to depart. "I am not to be baffled now.—Speak, or a rifle ball shall quickly end all my doubts."—It still remained silent, and the red cloth was waved in a more agitated manner—"Speak"—no answer was returned—I raised my rifle to my shoulder, took deliberate aim;—"speak or perish," I cried; the bloody cloth was waved in defiance—I fired; the spectre fell, and my ears were saluted with a demoniac laugh. I sunk senseless upon the earth."

"I would not have been in your place for all old Grimes died possessed of," said the tailor.

"When I revived," continued the miller," "the first object that struck my sight was a figure bending over me.—'Avaunt! back to your native hell,' I shrieked. It clasped me in its arms, and raised me; I shuddered, and every instant expected to be flown away with."

"And did it remain silent all this while?"

"Yes; but at length it spoke."

"And what did it say?" inquired the tailor, every feature of his fox-like countenance indicative of impatience.

"Father, what the devil ails you?"

"Ha!"

"It was my son, who, observing my abstraction

during the day, determined to keep an eye upon me."

"And the ghost?"

"Was a suit of Grimes's clothes, stuffed with straw to frighten the crows from the cornfield."

"But the object you saw in the Shades of Death?"

"Was a large hog belonging to a shingle-maker, who had recently built himself a cabin among the hemlocks."

"You are a wag, Mr. Jones, but, mark me, your day will come."

"Perhaps so. I have seen many similar ghosts since, but have never been so much frightened as on this occasion."

THE

EMIGRANT'S DAUGHTER.

On the margin of Lake Erie, on the Canada side, stands a neat village, every way calculated to induce those who are perplexed with the turmoils of a city life, to believe that there is no paradise on earth to compare with such a place of retirement. The spire of the church, which is reflected on the glassy surface of the lake, seems to extend a protecting care over the humble cottages beneath, each of which stands in a neatly planned and fruitful garden. The surrounding country presents a number of well cultivated farms, some of which are tilled by the villagers, and others by French emigrants and their descendants, who inheriting a portion of the manners of their ancestors, combined with the primitive simplicity and rudeness of their native border, compose almost an anomaly in the human race.

Among the farms in the vicinity of the village was one cultivated by Jean Baptiste, a native, whose father had emigrated from Normandy, and being of a family once in affluence, he bequeathed to his son a proper sense of his importance; but, as is too frequently the case, neglected to bestow the means to support the dignity. This is an awkward predicament for a man to be in: to look upon himself and family through a prism, by which they are decorated in the gaudiest colours, while their associates view them

with the naked eye, or through glasses that are far from placing their defects in a pleasing light, or magnifying their merits.

Baptiste was finally awakened to a proper sense of the worth of his inheritance. While beggary was staring him in the face, he found it impossible to obtain a single sous upon the credit of his dead ancestors, and that a man may think of himself as favourably as he pleases, but unless the world coincides in opinion with him, it all amounts to less than nothing. His pride could not support him, nor would it suffer him to support himself, so in good time they parted. Baptiste cast his eyes around him, and they fell upon the pretty daughter of an emigrant to whom the little farm then belonged, where our worthy subsequently resided.

Baptiste was the beau of the village; a ragged one we admit, but as he led a life of idleness, played well on the flute, and knew the name of his great-grandfather, no one ventured to dispute his claims to gentility and family. He lost no time in making the customary protestations of eternal love, and considered it as a matter of course, that the charming Louise would be highly flattered with the overtures of a personage of his distinction; but he was received with a degree of coolness calculated to chill even those hardened by a Canadian winter. Mortified at this discomfiture, he consoled himself with attributing it to her rustic ideas and want of discernment.

There was enough of the raw material about our lover, to make, if properly worked up, a very clever and useful man. This the father of Louise soon discovered, and accordingly told Baptiste that the girl should be his on two conditions, which the impatient lover eagerly demanded, confident that in such a cause he could readily surpass the dangers encountered in days of old to obtain the Hesperian fruit.

"Louise shall be your wife," said the father, "as

soon as you have satisfied me that you can support a wife, and that she is willing to marry you."

The latter difficulty, thought Baptiste, may be speedily surmounted, but the former was a stumbling block, for she could not feed on air, and there was nothing within his reach of a more substantial nature to offer her. If lovers could only dispense with that terrestrial practice of eating, no poet could present a more glowing picture of Mahomet's paradise than this world would be; but many a rapturous dream of connubial bliss has been put to flight by the obtrusive spectre of a chine of beef or a shoulder of mutton. Baptiste, like Othello, "was perplexed in the extreme," and his hopes were daily approaching despair, when at length the old farmer again spoke to him:—

"You say you love my daughter."

"More than life, or even meat in lent time," exclaimed the lover.

"What proof can you give me of your affection?"

"I will marry her to-morrow; if that is not conclusive, I will undergo the agony of waiting a month longer."

"Very fine; but what assurance have I of its continuance?"

"Oh, let her alone for that, she will keep me as true as the needle to the pole, I warrant you."

"Keep you! but how will you keep her?"

"Now that is a pretty question," exclaimed the single-minded lover; "look at me and be satisfied."

"Right! she may feast her eyes upon you, but I am inclined to think that such a feast will not satisfy her hunger. When poverty stalks in at the door—you know the proverb."

"Eh!" ejaculated Baptiste, his lower jaw falling at least an inch from the other.

"Remember, she is no angel yet, though you fancy her such; she must have bread and meat, man."

"Oh, curse the realities of life! Bread and meat! There is nothing of the kind in Cupid's calendar from the title page to the last chapter."

"Still Cupid has no objection to a plentiful larder, and if you expect to marry my daughter, you must come over to my way of thinking."

"I am not prepared to argue against you, if that is your manner of reasoning," replied Baptiste. "You have made me a convert already."

"Then come to my farm to-morrow by sunrise," replied the other, "and the truth of your conversion shall be tested."

They parted; the old emigrant to pursue his daily labour, and Baptiste to dream of future happiness. Before sunrise the following morning he rose and dressed himself in his best apparel, which had descended like an heir-loom from the great-grandfather already mentioned, and which, in our lover's opinion, would have done credit to the court of Louis le Debonnair. The suit consisted of a yellow levantine coat, a sky-blue silk waistcoat, with enormous flaps at the pockets, and a pair of scarlet satin small-clothes, all of which bore conclusive testimony to the uncommon magnitude of the aforesaid great-grandfather, and the degeneracy of his present representative. They hung around the slender figure of Baptiste like a surplice on a broomstick; yet it would have been worse than sacrilege to have made the slightest alteration; such an act, in his imagination, would have disturbed the endless repose of his ancestors, for every thread in those scarlet breeches was more highly treasured, and possessed as much magic as that fatal handkerchief which was died with the "conserve of maidens' hearts." How wayward and inexplicable are the affections of the human heart! Here we see one entrusting his happiness upon the uncertain existence of another; there we behold the miser locking up his whole soul with his gold and jewels; that fashionable fair loves nothing on earth like a splendid equipage; this sportsman despises the human race, when compared with his horses and dogs; that primitive damsel dotes upon her tabby and lap-dog, and our hero views with feelings bordering on veneration, the old scarlet small-

clothes worn by his progenitors. But enough of moralizing, and to resume our story.

Baptiste having made his toilet, and buckled a rusty rapier by his side, which had descended from the same distinguished personage, took his flute in his hand, and sallied forth to the place of appointment. He had ruminated for twelve hours on the foregoing conversation, and could not by any course of reasoning arrive at any other conclusion, than that the old man having discovered his merits had determined to yield his daughter without further opposition. His heart beat wildly, and hope was on tiptoe as he drew near the emigrant's romantic cottage. The neatness of all about the house did not escape his notice. Against the southern side of the cottage was an arbour overshadowed by the rose tree, jasmine, and honeysuckle. He drew near to it, and the fragrance of the flowers seemed to increase, as he reflected by what hand they had been planted. All was silent, for the family had not yet risen. He gazed with a wistful eye upon the small window just above the arbour, and into which the vines were creeping, for well he knew who sanctified that chamber by her presence. He sighed as he gazed, and envied the jasmine flower that was slyly peeping through a broken pane of the window.

With throbbing heart he breathed a plaintive air on his flute, while the birds flitting among the trees and shrubbery, swelled their little throats to emulate the serenade. It was not long before the casement opened, and a smiling face peered among the green foliage, with lips that might have been mistaken for buds of the vine, and cheeks for full-blown flowers. It was too much for a lad of Baptiste's temperament. His flute was suddenly silenced, and without loss of time he called in the aid of words, as being more expressive than music. He poured forth his feelings with ardour and eloquence, for love works miracles, and had made even Baptiste eloquent, and as he proceeded in his declaration, the smiling face among the foliage became brighter; the

change did not escape the quick perception of the lover: "the victory is gained already," thought he, "she can never resist a personage of my family, parts, and figure"—on the instant the window closed, the smiling face disappeared, and Baptiste's ears were saluted with a sound that too nearly resembled laughter to be agreeable at that moment. He stood —not thunder-struck—for the morning was perfectly clear, and there was no thunder; but an electric shock would not have astonished him more than did the closing of the window, and the laughter that succeeded.

"What are you doing there, dressed off like a new-fledged popinjay?" exclaimed a hoarse voice. He turned and beheld the old emigrant, who repeated his question.

"Serenading Louise," replied Baptiste.

"Serenading! very pretty, by Saint Anthony! Henceforward, as you value my opinion, never let me hear a tune from your lips, unless it is whistled between the ploughshafts. And what is the meaning of this tawdry dress? Silks and satins, and of all the colours in the rainbow! Very well for a clown in a playhouse, but not altogether the thing if you intend driving my cart, or digging in my garden."

"I came to make myself agreeable to Louise," replied Baptiste, "and therefore put on my best apparel."

"Agreeable to Louise indeed! Do you think it was for this I asked you to my cottage! No: it was to make yourself useful to me. But in doing the one you may possibly do the other; so begone, strip off your fool's dress, and come in homespun, and you will be welcome. Make haste back, or my breakfast will grow cold."

Baptiste bowed in acquiescence, started off with unusual alacrity, and the farmer entered his barnyard to attend to his stock. In the course of half an hour Baptiste returned dressed in a more appropriate suit, the old man met him with a smiling counte-

nance, and led him into the cottage, where Louise had already spread the plain but clean and inviting breakfast-table.

From that hour the prospects of Baptiste underwent an entire revolution. From being the most idle and worthless young fellow of the village, he became the most industrious and most respected. After undergoing a twelvemonth's probation, the farmer consented to his marriage with Louise, who by this time was nothing loath, and as Baptiste was a wag, the maddest charevari ever known in Canada, before or since, took place on this occasion. Baptiste was notorious for playing a conspicuous part in frolics of this kind, and accordingly many a rustic Benedict came far and near to retaliate. A mad scene ensued, compared to which, the sufferings of the redoubtable lieutenant Lismahago on his wedding night were as paradise to purgatory. Baptiste discountenanced charevaris from that day, and it is now looked upon as a custom "more honoured in the breach than the observance." We omitted to remark that on the wedding night the splendid family dress, which had lain perdu ever since Baptiste entered the cottage, was again displayed, and his rusty rapier suspended by his side. Thus equipped, he imagined the ancient glory of the Baptistes regenerate. His flute was again brought forth, and was often listened to with delight by the little family circle when the labours of the day were over.

Human affairs are but transitory. In the course of time Baptiste buried his father-in-law, and his beloved wife, who had brought him a daughter and a son, of whom more will be learnt in the subsequent narrative.

There resided in the village a wealthy advocate, who valued himself not only upon his fortune, but that his father before him had lived by his wits, and not by the labour of his hands. Counsellor Martin, as the rustics called him, had a son about twenty years of age, who had early imbibed all the prejudices of his father, and entertained an exalted opinion

of his own inherent importance. He made but little progress at school, for he was too lofty a personage to be under the control of one who had neither wealth nor pride of ancestry to boast of. The village schoolmaster was a preacher also, and verily Frank Martin called into practice during six days of the week, the precepts of moderation and forbearance duly delivered from the pulpit on the sabbath. Frank, as he approached the state of manhood, was seldom seen abroad without his rifle on his shoulder, or his angle in his hand. He was dexterous at hooking a trout, and seldom failed to put out the eye of a squirel at the distance of fifty paces.

Frank had from his childhood watched the growing beauties of Claudine, the daughter of Baptiste, as they were gradually developed, and daily became more sensible of their influence; his pride, however, shrunk from the suggestion that the best feelings of his nature had been awakened by a rustic girl: he called to his aid what casuistry he could command to define his sentiments; he reasoned like another Locke to satisfy himself that he was not in love; he anatomised his mind; new-christened his feelings by the names of regard, respect, esteem, but even under their new titles they remained as irresistible as before, and still were as sensibly alive in the presence of Claudine, as though he had deigned to call them by the name of love.

Towards the close of a day in autumn, as Frank was returning home from a ramble through the hills, with his gun on his shoulder, he chanced to cross a meadow where Baptiste's little herd of cattle was at that time grazing. He had not proceeded far before he met a female approaching the meadow. It was Claudine. Frank's heart throbbed, and it flew to his lips as he accosted her—

"Good evening, pretty Claudine; which way do you go at this hour?"

"No farther than the meadow, sir."

"And why to the meadow, child?"

"Victor has gone to the village, and I have come to drive the cattle to the cottage."

"That must not be while I am with you."

"You will not prevent me, Mr. Francis," inquired Claudine, half jest, half earnest.

"Certainly; I will do it for you."

"You, sir! That indeed would be a strange sight," she exclaimed, laughing.

"Then we will do it together, Claudine, and the oddity will not appear so glaring."

She rallied him on his gallantry, and as her lovely features became animated, Frank gazed with increased delight, and doubted whether esteem or regard was a term warm enough to describe his feelings. Claudine was possessed of much beauty, and archness mingled with simplicity, and Frank felt more forcibly their influence, as he walked by her side towards her father's cottage. The succeeding evening, as the sun was declining, Frank unaccountably found himself lounging near Baptiste's meadow; the herd was still grazing there; he felt overjoyed at the sight, but was at a loss to tell why a few cows peaceably grazing occasioned such a throbbing at the heart. He remained quite restless for half an hour, with his eye constantly bent in the direction of the farm-house, the smoke from which was seen curling above a hill at a distance, when a shout was heard, and winding around the hill, little Victor appeared, running after a huge watch-dog in the direction of the meadow. One look was enough for Frank, for he felt little interest in the gambols of the boy and the dog. His heart beat twenty pulsations less in a minute, and as he slowly retraced his steps, he had time enough to investigate philosophically his feelings and motives.

Frank's intimacy with Baptiste increased from that day forward, and his visits at the cottage became so frequent, that it was a question with the curious whether he resided there or at his father's mansion. His field sports had given place to a love of agriculture, and few were more active than Frank

in the hay-field or at harvest time, for on these occasions the females left their housewifery to assist, and it was remarked that Frank was always near Claudine, and preferred doing her share, to his own, of the labour.

Claudine had now completed her seventeenth year, and the day that ushered in the eighteenth, was a day of hilarity beneath her father's humble roof. The affectionate old man arose in the morning earlier than usual, and when Claudine descended, she beheld his face dressed with smiles, and his person in the pride of his wardrobe, the legacy of his great-grandfather. To have started any objection to the antiquated cut of this dress, would have been to Baptiste conclusive proof of barbarous taste, for it was the standard by which he tested every modern fashion, and he looked upon it with reverence, as the connecting link between the present humble state of the family and its former consequence. At times when Baptiste was riding his hobby of family distinction, in the presence of some incredulous rustic, the scarlet breeches and rusty rapier were produced, and invariably closed the contest triumphantly.

The countenance of Claudine as she entered the room was overshadowed with grief, which in vain she endeavoured to conceal as her father rose from his seat to greet her.

"How is this, my child, you look sad, but are not ill, I hope?"

"I did not rest well, and my head aches in consequence."

"The truth is you are pale, but cheer up, it will never do for the pride of the village to be ill on this day; your birth-day, and that of your happy old father too, Claudine."

Every nation has some peculiar custom, which is religiously upheld by the people as a birth-right, and looked upon as a spot of verdure in the waste of life. In Canada, from the earliest settlement, it has been the practice on the birth-day of any person, for his

friends to assemble and present a bouquet to the individual, whose birth-day is commemorated. If a man, the present is usually a pipe decorated with flowers; and if a female, a cake similarly adorned, if it is the season for flowers, otherwise artificial flowers are substituted.

At an early hour the villagers began to assemble on the lawn in front of Baptiste's cottage. Among them were gray heads and light hearts; dimpled faces and elastic feet, for the companions of Baptiste's early days were seen among the young and gay friends of his charming daughter. The farmer soon espied them from his window, and went out to meet them, leading Claudine by the hand. It appeared as if they had changed the time and condition of life, for as they approached the crowd, they were greeted with strains of enlivening music, to which Baptiste's heart beat time, and his feet indicated the same propensity, but Claudine looked as if she were in a place of mourning, rather than of festivity.

At no time of life had Baptiste felt prouder than on this occasion. As he approached, he frequently cast a glance of delight upon his child, and then raising his eyes to his old friends, gave them an inquisitive look, which seemed to ask, is she not indeed the pride of the village? Many a hearty greeting passed between the old man and the villagers, among whom were some who were conspicuous in the charevari, on the night of his marriage, thirty years before. Baptiste recalled that memorable event, and enjoyed the recollection much more than he had the circumstance.

A seat intended as a sylvan throne was speedily constructed, and Baptiste and his child were escorted to it with no little "pomp and circumstance." Frank was officious on this occasion, and, though an hour of general joy, his countenance was evidently troubled. Little Victor was delighted, as also was his favourite watch-dog, and in the fulness of their joy, the one laughed and the other barked and turned

somersets on the green together. During the ceremony a simple air was sung by the villagers. There was one voice distinguished from the rest by the richness and wildness of its melody. It proceeded from a young woman, who, in spite of both mental and bodily suffering, still possessed no ordinary share of beauty. Her tall and slender figure was covered by a shapeless, black gown, which descended so low that her feet were concealed, but still the perfect symmetry of her person was discernible. From her stately neck was suspended, by a string of large black beads, a little silver crucifix, with the image of our Saviour on it. Her dark hair hung in profuse curls around her neck, and rested in the hood of her dress, which at that time was thrown from her head. There was a nervous quickness in her motions; her eyes were wandering, the expression wild, and on her lips, which were still beautiful, an unmeaning smile seemed to be constantly playing.

The ceremony of presenting the pipe and cake being over, the assemblage was about to adjourn to the cottage, when Frank inquired of the female just alluded to, who was at the time in a state of mental abstraction,

"Ninon, have you not your usual offering to make to Claudine?" The sound of his voice recalled her wandering thoughts; she hastened to Claudine, and presented her with a small cake, and a rich bouquet, and said—

"If you have been an apt scholar, Claudine, you may read my regard in this bunch of flowers; it has been carefully culled. There is the amaranth, that crowns all, the emblem of virtue; the budding rose will stand for constancy, and the sprig of rosemary that peeps between, bids you remember me. Here is a cluster of heart's-ease——" she was going on to illustrate the flowers, when Claudine interrupted her—

"But where is the yellow jonquil?"

"The emblem of sorrow!"

"Ninon, my bouquet should have been composed of the jonquil alone."

She descended; Baptiste invited his friends to partake of an entertainment, and they moved towards the cottage.

Ninon Leclair was the only daughter of a wealthy merchant of Quebec, and, on arriving at marriageable state, her father destined her to become the wife of his partner in trade, who was at least three times her age, and whose ruling passion was avarice. Ninon was accomplished both in mind and person, consequently such an unequal match could not fail to be revolting to her feelings, even if her affections had not been pre-engaged. The object of her passion was well calculated to please a woman's eye, but not to realize the golden dreams of her father, who soon discovered the bias her sentiments had received. He now strenuously urged a speedy marriage, with his old friend and partner, which she as obstinately resisted, and words losing their effect, Ninon was finally consigned to the walls of a nunnery.

She bore her seclusion from the world with resignation, for she looked upon herself as a martyr in the cause of virtuous love, and was consoled with the hope that the day would arrive when her constancy would be rewarded. Her swain belonged to that numerous class, who care not at what shrine they bend, or in what creed they worship, and Ninon being out of sight, she was soon out of mind also, and he married a friend of the lovely creature he had forsaken. She bitterly mourned his faithlessness, and as afflictions usually crowd upon the stricken, her father died shortly after, without forgiving her disobedience. The bulk of his property was bequeathed to his partner, and a certain sum to his daughter, on condition she married him, otherwise she was left destitute. The old man made an offer of his hand, which was rejected with scorn, and he left the heart-broken novice to console himself with his legacy.

Ninon still continued in the nunnery, and as her earthly affections had been blighted, she devoted her

whole heart to heaven, but doubts constantly arose whether the offering would be accepted, as she had not made it until this world had lost all charms for her. She dwelt upon the fearful trials undergone by the several saints in her calendar, and felt her own unworthiness when compared with their purity, fortitude, and resignation. Her doubts increased with study, and her distempered imagination clothed her God in terrors. He appeared a jealous God, who created but to punish, and weighed not the frailties that his own hand had implanted in the bosom of his creature. The stability of her mind was shaken, and as she had not taken the veil, she left the nunnery to lead the life of a mendicant, and encounter suffering, for she felt assured that our joys hereafter will be in proportion to the severity of our trials here. Since her arrival at the village, by her amiability, piety, and sorrow, she had acquired the respect and compassion of all, and to none was she dearer than to Claudine, who profited much by her instruction.

During the entertainment, which Baptiste had prepared for the villagers in his garden, Frank, who sat beside Claudine, urged her to taste of the present of her favourite, Ninon, as her feelings might be wounded by apparent neglect. She replied—

"Ninon knows that I too highly value the giver to slight the gift."

Ninon bowed her head in acknowledgment. Claudine broke the cake, and added, in a tone which only reached Frank's ear—

"And as a proof of the value I set on it, I give one half to him whom most I value."

Frank slightly recoiled as she presented it, and replied in a hurried low tone, accompanied with a forced smile—

"True, the evil and good we should share alike, Claudine, but the good be wholly thine."

She sighed in a voice scarcely above her breath—

"The evil we have shared indeed, and it is right we also share this token of unmerited regard."

Frank remained silent; received one half of the cake, and Claudine ate the other. Frank's countenance became distorted; his eyes were kindling with fierceness, and his mind was evidently racked with contending passions. Claudine perceived the change without surprise, for she had of late been accustomed to these sudden and violent transitions in his moody disposition, from one extreme to the other.

"What is it ails you?" she inquired tenderly.

"Nothing."

"I fear you are ill."

"Slightly; but what troubles me will speedily be removed." He smiled, and Claudine would have shuddered, had she not been accustomed to his smile. She again pressed him to partake of Ninon's present.

"No!" he replied, "it would but increase my illness. But farewell, Claudine." He rose and left the table: she followed him.

"Do not leave me yet. Remember it is my birthday, and it rests with you to say whether I should bless it or curse it."

"Bless it, Claudine, bless it; though it has cursed my earthly prospects, bless it."

"That thought is a curse heavy enough to outweigh every blessing this world could bestow," she replied, and wept.

"Forgive me, Claudine, I am a selfish wretch, unworthy of your love. But the next time we meet your mind shall be at rest."

"You have promised me that so often!"

"I now swear it: I will place it beyond your power ever to reproach me again."

"And have I ever reproached you! If so, it was not intended, and I ask your forgiveness. True, I have troubled you with my griefs, but if I may not unburthen my heart to you, in whom else on earth may I confide?"

"In none; for if our secret were divulged you would be cut off from all the world but me."

"I acknowledge the dreadful truth, but at times

when you are kind to me, I feel, that great as my loss is, you are even more than all the world to me."

She fell on Frank's neck, and the plaintive tone of her voice touched a chord that had seldom been awakened. Tears stood in his eyes, which he hastily wiped off, and said in a hurried voice—

"Farewell, Claudine, for the present, and look forward to happier hours."

"I do, I do—in the grave."

The last words, though scarcely audible, did not escape Frank's ear, and he echoed them in the same tone; "Yes, in the grave." He pressed her to his bosom and hurried away. Claudine stood gazing after him until out of sight, then returned dejectedly to the company, and resumed her seat at the table. She had not been long seated before she became as pale as death, and trembled violently. Ninon observed the change in her countenance, and inquired—

"Are you ill, Claudine?"

"Deadly sick," she faintly replied, and supported herself on the shoulder of the other who sat beside her.

"What has occasioned it?"

"I know not: something I have eaten, I fear. I arose with a headache this morning, and now it feels as if it would burst. My sight fails me, and I tremble. Water, or I shall faint."

She drank, and Ninon bathed her temples.

"I feel revived," continued Claudine, "but still deadly sick. While I have strength, pray assist me to my chamber."

They retired from the table, and the company dispersed in consequence of Claudine's sudden illness. Joy was an inmate in Baptiste's cottage in the morning, but sorrow had driven her thence before the close of the day. Claudine's illness increased, and the fears of her doting father were wrought to the highest pitch. Medical assistance was resorted to. Days and weeks passed away, still she was confined to her bed, and her recovery was doubtful. Ninon

seldom left her bedside, and by the most assiduous attentions proved the affection she entertained for the invalid. She read to her, and was the most tender and watchful nurse. Frank visited the cottage but twice during the illness of Claudine. Finally, her constitution surmounted the ravages of disease, and she again rose from her bed, but was now little else than the shadow of the beautiful creature, once admitted to be the pride of the village. She had not smiled since the commencement of her illness, or in such sort as indicated more forcibly the utter hopelessness of her affliction. She became fond of solitary walks, and seclusion in some rustic bower.

Shortly after her recovery she went on an errand to the village. Night closed in, and yet she returned not. As the darkness increased, her father's impatience changed to alarm, for he could not assign any satisfactory cause for her absence. It was not probable she was detained at any of the neighbours, for she had not expressed such an intention, and knowing her father's affection, she was too considerate to occasion him unnecessary anxiety.

The old man went to the village in search of her; he called at every house she was in the habit of visiting, but could gain no tidings of the stray one. Some had seen her the day preceding, others a week before, and others on that morning. This was all he learnt, and he hastened towards his cottage with a heavy heart, trusting, however, that she had returned during his absence. He opened the door with a tremulous hand, entered, and looked anxiously around the room.

"Has she not returned?"

"Not yet," replied Victor, who was there awaiting the result of his father's search. Baptiste sunk into a chair, and said, in a tone mingled with grief and despair—

"Light the lantern, my son—sorrow has overtaken me in my old days."

The lantern was speedily brought; the boy whistled for his dog, who slowly crawled from his kennel,

and they directed their course towards the margin of the lake, for the fears of Baptiste suggested the worst. The boy hurried on with the light, and the father followed in silence, which was only broken by his sighs. They walked near a mile along the beach, the boy stopping at intervals, and raising the lamp above his head to throw a light upon the surface of the water. The anxious father looked and strained his eyeballs, until the intensity of his gaze gave to every obscure object the outline of the image that engrossed his mind. He remained for some moments silent in this attitude, and at length cried—

"She is not here!" and turned away with feelings partaking of disappointment; for dreadful as even such a discovery would have been, it could scarcely have surpassed his agony of suspense. As the enjoyment of pleasure seldom equals the anticipation, so the pang of dreaded sorrow, when endured, is often found to be less acute than the apprehension. They again moved on in silence; again paused and raised the lantern. Baptiste gazed and trembled.

"Father of mercies, what is that! Raise the light, my son; higher yet; my old eyes are dim."

"What is it you see, father?"

"Look there. Your eyes are young. Tell me, is it my child; my dear Claudine?"

"Oh! no, father; your eyes deceive you again. It is but the white surge. Cheer up, I soon will satisfy you."

He called the dog to his side, at the same time throwing a stick into the lake. The dog plunged in and swam through the froth which had there accumulated.

"Thank God! she is not here," exclaimed Baptiste. "We will search the meadow next."

They turned to execute this determination, when a figure was indistinctly seen receding at a distance. They hailed it, but no answer was returned. Baptiste conjured the person to stay and assist their search, but he hurried on, and soon disappeared in the obscurity of the night. The mastiff growled

and darted off in pursuit. He seized hold of the fugitive, who fled with increased speed. The dog became furious, and as the person fled he in vain strove to beat the animal from him. He was now closely beset, and, in his fear, called several times to the dog by name. The dog then desisted; the man patted him, made himself known, and hurried away.

"Whose voice is that?" inquired Baptiste; "I know that voice as well as the voice of my own child."

"As I live, father, it was Frank Martin."

"I thought so. But why should he avoid us, and what does he out at this time of night?"

"You know, father, he is abroad at all hours, trapping and hunting; which I would not be if I were rich as he is."

"I now remember he was absent when I called at his father's house in search of my poor Claudine," said Baptiste. "But why did he not answer when I hailed him? Impossible it could have been he!"

"I know his voice well," replied Victor, "and do not think I am mistaken now."

Baptiste's heart felt like lead in his bosom; his fears were increased, but the cause was undefined. The fact that Frank had not answered them, if it were he, was inexplicable; it wrought his apprehension to the most fearful pitch; he knew not why he feared or what he dreaded, but he knew enough of human nature, and the course of human events, to pronounce the depression of his mind the infallible precursor of approaching sorrow. Baptiste implicitly believed, as many others believe, that there are times when the mind is permitted slightly to raise the dark curtain which conceals the future, and ascertain whether light or shade is to prevail. His feelings on this occasion, proved truer to him than the weird sisters to the thane of Cawdor.

The dog, with his nose alternately close to the earth, and raised in the air, made a wide and rapid circuit as if he were on the scent of some object.

He frequently gave tongue, and after traversing the ground for some time, came to Baptiste, howled piteously, appeared restless, and darted off again in the direction of the meadow.

"Father, what ails Rover?—he is on some strong scent."

"He scent's blood!" exclaimed the father, in an agony of fear.

The yelping of the dog continued at a distance:—"Hark! the scent becomes stronger; he is on the trail. Come, my son, let us follow him."

"Do not give way to your fears, father. A fox or a rackoon may have occasioned all this."

"True, boy, true; but see, the dog is already back again."

The dog came to his feet, looked up into his face, howled, made a short and hurried circuit around them, and darted off again.

"He would have us follow him: come on, Victor."

They moved rapidly in the direction of the meadow; the dog kept far ahead, but at intervals gave a short bark, which served to guide them. They crossed the meadow, and paused in their progress; for the dog had not been heard for some time, and they knew not which direction to take. A few moments of doubt elapsed, when several short, hurried yelps were given by the dog, as if he were close upon a fresh scent.

"Where is he now, my son?"

"As I judge from the echo, in the cypress hollow, near the falls of the creek."

"A wild and dreary place," sighed the father; and the obtrusive thought flashed across his mind—"a place fit for murder."

A piteous and protracted howl from the dog now reached them: the sound was in unison with Baptiste's feelings.

"His search is done," said Baptiste. "Whatever it is, the faithful brute has found it. Listen, Victor. Do you know the spot?"

"He cannot be more than a quarter of a mile from us. Hasten, father, and we will soon be there."

"Your limbs are young and light, but mine are old, and my heart is heavy. But move on, my son, I will keep pace with you."

They hurried forward; the plaintive moan of the dog continued, and as they entered the mouth of the deeply overshadowed ravine, the faithful creature appeared, and crouching at his master's feet, whined and licked the hand extended to caress him.

"Lead on Rover, and we will follow you," said Baptiste. The dog continued to whine, but stirred not. Victor urged him on the scent, but he was spiritless.

"Why Rover, do you not know me, Rover? See, father, how he looks. What is it ails the dog?"

"I fear the worst; move on, Victor, this is the path he came."

"A little higher up, father, and we can cross the stream more easily."

They followed the margin of the creek a short distance, and having crossed it, entered into the depths of the ravine. The dog preceded them, slowly and dejectedly. The aged pines towered loftily, and added their shade to the almost impenetrable darkness of the night. The lantern carried by Victor, served to discover the intricate path. Having walked some distance in silence, Baptiste inquired, in a voice scarcely articulate, and hollow with anxiety, "Do you know where we now are, my son?"

"Oh yes, sir, and Rover knows right well too; we are on the way to the deer-lick."

"Raise the lantern; the path is nearly overgrown with laurel bushes."

"The walking will become better when we pass this rising, and draw near the basin of the creek."

"What a wild and frightful place it is!"

"Even in day time, for seldom a single ray of the sun reaches it, and at night it is indeed a fearful

place. They must love venison who venture here at night to watch the licking."

They proceeded some distance farther, and having crossed a slightly elevated piece of ground, entered a dell where the creek had extended into a basin. This spot was free from the underwood which had heretofore obstructed the path of Baptiste and his son. The old man paused: "Hark! do I not hear music, or have my senses already become distempered?"

"I hear nothing but the raven and her young on the pine tree."

"Again! It sounds like a hymn for the rest of the departed."

"Father, you frighten me."

"Listen, boy. I hear it yet. What can it mean? Are there spirits in the air, or does it proceed from a human voice?"

Victor trembled, and drew close to his father; the dog did the same, and they observed a profound silence until the voice ceased, when Baptiste hurried towards the spot whence it proceeded. It came from the margin of the basin, and as he drew near, he indistinctly beheld a human figure seated on the earth; he heard it sob; and when he called to it, a shriek of terror was returned. The figure stood erect; the light of the lamp fell upon it, and discovered a female form, which glided rapidly forward, and disappeared in the intricacies of the wilderness.

"What does all this mean?" exclaimed the father.

"I think," said Victor, "it was Ninon Leclair."

"I think so too, but she vanished from the glare of the lantern before my old eyes could distinctly see. The dog has left us."

"He has not gone far: I hear his moan."

They were guided by the sound to the spot where the dog stood, mourning over the object of their search. The light of the lamp fell full upon the pale features of the lovely Claudine, prostrate on the earth.

"God of mercy, my child!" exclaimed Baptiste, and sunk beside her.

"My sister Claudine dead! Oh, father, who has done this?"

"Her cheek is cold as ice; her limbs are stiff. See how her glossy hair is entangled, and her clothes are bloody. Oh! my child, my child!" He groaned as if his heart were breaking, and sunk upon the corpse and kissed it repeatedly.

"Raise her, father, from the cold earth; something may yet be done to save her."

"Not in this world! From the cold earth! to that she must soon return, for she is as cold as the earth upon which she lies."

His voice was lost: his son knelt beside him, and their tears mingled together on the body. The dog whined, as if he participated in their affliction.

"See here where the murderous wretch has stabbed her," exclaimed Baptiste, pointing to a rent in the left side of her garment, which was stained with blood as it spouted from the wound. "And see, her right hand is all cut! God! what a fearful struggle she has had! My child, my child, why was I not near you in your time of need!"

Baptiste raised the body in his arms, Victor preceded with the light, and the dog followed dejectedly as they retraced their steps to the cottage. The stricken father did not quit the body for an instant during the night. The human heart will cling to the excess of grief with even greater tenacity than to the excess of joy. The following morning, Ninon Leclair was arrested on suspicion of having committed the murder.

The day of burial having arrived, the mourners slowly ascended the hill where were deposited the remains of the first settlers of the village. Their narrow abodes were designated by rough slate stones, on which the names of the tenants were rudely chiseled, while here and there might be seen a polished marble slab, with a fulsome epitaph upon it, as if the grave admitted of distinction, and

pride might be gratified even after the portals of death had closed.

The mourners drew near to the newly-dug grave, and the bier was placed beside it. The preacher commenced his functions; the father listened to his voice, and strove to subdue his feelings, but consolation administered at the grave, by those whose affections have not been equally bruised, rather aggravates than allays the poignancy of grief.

At Baptiste's feet stood his dog, a mute but not unconcerned spectator of what was passing. The discourse being over, preparations were made to deposit the coffin. Baptiste and his son sobbed aloud. Until the moment when the body is about to be taken from the sight of the mourner for ever, he is unconscious of the full extent of his heart's desolation.

Baptiste bent forward and rested his hand upon the coffin; Victor did the same, while the severest pang they had yet experienced rent the heart of each. A half-subdued groan indicated their deep mental suffering. It was audibly responded by one of the crowd, at some distance, who hurried towards the grave. His looks were pale and haggard; his dress neglected; his eyes inflamed and rolling wildly, and the muscles of his face were in motion. He was the picture of despair. As he approached, Baptiste shrunk instinctively; the dog gave a warning growl, and Frank, for it was he, looked at the dog, and hesitated whether to proceed or not. He paused but for a moment; the dog kept his eyes fixed on him, and continued to growl. Frank was sensible of his danger, yet advanced and stretched out his right hand to touch the coffin. The dog seized him; a struggle ensued, and Frank fell to the ground. The dog continued the attack, and it was with difficulty that he was torn from the affrighted youth. During the contest, a wild laugh was heard to proceed from one of the spectators, which was followed by an exclamation—

"Old Rover knows him well, I know him, and the world shall know him too!" The words were utter-

ed by Ninon Leclair, who stood near the grave in the custody of the jailer. She continued to laugh, and as the dog worried the prostrate youth, she burst forth in a shout of triumph—

"Well done, old friend! you are the true and sure avenger! You wait not on the dull perception of man, nor the tedious ceremonies of his courts of justice, but act by never-failing instinct, and punish on the spot. Well done! well done!"

She still laughed and pointed at Frank, who writhed beneath the wild glare of her eye, more than he had while under the fangs of the mastiff. Silence prevailed in the assemblage, and he felt that all eyes were fixed on him. He heard nothing but the triumphant laugh of Ninon, and the silence was dreadful; every moment seemed an age. Ninon called the dog to her, and patted him; he fondled on her: she looked him full in the face, laughed, and pointed at Frank. The dog growled and darted towards him, but was driven back by those present.

"He knows him, and justice will yet be satisfied, and the guilty punished."

"What does the idiot mean?" exclaimed Frank.

"That Claudine's murderer is known; that he will be condemned before God and man; be punished in this world and in the world to come."

The young man trembled like an aspen leaf, as he said,

"True, Claudine's murderer is known; you are accused of the inhuman deed, and if not guilty, where is the wretch?"

"There!" exclaimed the other, deliberately pointing her finger at Frank, at the same time erecting her tall and slender form. "There," she repeated, "stands the trembling, conscience-stricken, merciless murderer!"

Frank averted his face, tottered, and his limbs could scarcely support him.

"She raves!" exclaimed several voices at the same time. Frank's love for Claudine was known to all the village, and his deep affliction, occasioned by her

death, was plainly indicated by his haggard and woe-worn countenance.

"No, no, I am not mad," continued Ninon, "though I have experienced enough to make me so, and he and the rest will pronounce me mad, yet I am not mad."

After a pause, Frank said, in a faltering voice—

"Who is my accuser?"

"Ninon Leclair."

"The accused the accuser!"

He endeavoured to assume a smile of contempt, but the woman fixed her penetrating eye upon him, and the conflicting passions which rent her bosom were partially depicted in his countenance, but nothing fully expressed; combined they presented an object painful to look upon. Frank was conscious of this, and averted his face. Ninon appealed to the bystanders, and deliberately said,

"Look there and judge; innocent or guilty?"

"Enough of this, neighbours," exclaimed one of the villagers; "it is not for us to listen to such a shocking charge against one of the wealthiest, made by one of the humblest among us."

"True, I am the lowliest among ye, yet God makes no such distinction, though man in his wisdom permits it to influence every thought and action."

"She is crazed," said another, "and knows not what she says."

"Those who obstinately close their eyes, and those who were born blind," replied Ninon, "possess equally the powers of perception."

"Jailer, lead her to her prison," said the man who first spoke.

"I return to my prison with a light heart. My limbs are shackled for a time, but my soul is free;" then casting a look at Frank, she exclaimed, "Thy limbs are free, but thy soul is shackled with bonds which time cannot eat away—they last for ever." She then moved towards the coffin, and bending over it, murmured,

"Unhappy, murdered Claudine! the grateful tears of her you cherished are shed over you; receive them, for they will shine more brilliantly than diamonds or pearls on your garment, in that world where we shall soon meet again."

Ninon was taken back to the prison, the coffin was deposited, the grave was closed, and the villagers returned to their homes. How changed was the home of Baptiste! She who had made it all sunshine, was shrouded in the gloom of the grave; her gentle voice was hushed, and the cheering light of her eye extinguished for ever; but she still retained her influence over the little circle of which she was the centre, though that influence partook of her altered condition.

At the next assizes Ninon Leclair was arraigned and tried for the murder of Claudine, it having been decided that she was of sufficiently sound mind to be placed on her trial. Old Martin conducted the prosecution. The evidence against her was strong, both circumstantial and positive. Frank testified to frequent evidences of marked dislike betrayed by the prisoner towards the deceased; recalled to mind the circumstance that Claudine was taken deadly sick, and continued so, immediately after eating the cake presented by Ninon on the birth-day of the former, and suggested that the effect might have been occasioned by poison.

"Oh! monstrous!" exclaimed the prisoner; "he knows that the cake was made at his father's house; that his mother gave me the ingredients; nay, assisted in the making. But I know not—" she paused; "if poison was in it, he can best tell who placed it there."

Frank shrunk at the implication, and proceeded in his testimony with a faltering voice. He stated that he was out on the night of the murder; that about a mile from the village he had met the prisoner; that sometime after he had heard a violent scream, but sought in vain to ascertain whence it proceeded.

"It is false," cried Ninon, "you did not meet me,

though I had a faint glimpse of your figure. True, you heard a scream, but well you knew the cause, and from whom it proceeded. You heard a second shriek, which you could not account for, and it frightened you from your victim. I hastened to the spot you had left, and found Claudine bleeding; she was speechless; I raised her; her head reclined upon my shoulder, and she breathed her last. My situation was fearful; my mind became a hurricane; the rush and vividness of thought were too much for my brain; a light suddenly flashed upon me, figures appeared, and I instinctively fled from the scene of horror. But mark, he confesses he was out at the hour the murder was doing, and now let him state what it was took him from the village at that hour."

"I went to the licking," said Frank, "to kill a deer."

"To kill a deer! true, and you did so, but one more innocent than the spotted fawn."

Frank's father arose and asked the protection of the court for the witness.

Baptiste inquired of Frank why he returned no answer when called to, the night the dog pursued him.

"The question is irrelevant to the matter before the court," replied his father, "nor do we admit that the individual pursued by the dog was the witness."

They proceeded in the examination. Baptiste and his son testified as to their having found the prisoner alone, with the dead body, and while it was still bleeding, and that her garments were stained with blood when apprehended."

"The old man's voice against me, and the boy's too," exclaimed Ninon, and laughed; it was the unmeaning laugh of an idiot. She sank upon the bench in the prisoner's bar; and from that moment took no note of what was passing. The elder Martin argued the cause, and gave to the testimony such a colouring, that an immediate conviction was the consequence. The verdict being rendered, Ninon was

called to stand up. She looked about vacantly, and the command was repeated.

"Oh! I had forgot; I crave your pardon. I am in a court of justice to answer to a charge of murder. I now remember well."

"Ninon Leclair," said the judge, "after a patient and impartial trial, you have been convicted of the crime of murder."

"What, is it all over? I did not think they would have been so speedy. Murder! I that would not harm an insect knowingly!"

"Due weight has been given," continued the judge, "to all advanced in your defence by your learned counsel; and after mature deliberation your crime is manifest, and so says the jury."

"Then so it needs must be," said the prisoner, without appearing conscious of what she was saying. "If they insist on it that I am guilty, be it so, for it will only anger them in me to deny it."

"Have you any thing to offer why sentence should not be passed upon you?"

"Nothing—but let me think."

"Take time to reflect, for after this hour we may not hear you."

"I have nothing. The meekest and the purest that ever was on earth, suffered by the blindness and iniquity of man, without complaint and without resistance; and I am ready and willing to suffer too."

Sentence of death was passed upon her, and as the words coldly fell from the lips of the judge, she appeared unconscious of their import. He concluded with the pious wish, expressed for all criminals, but frequently in such a manner, as if it were nothing more than a mere legal form—

"God have mercy on your sinful soul, for there is no hope for you in this world."

"Amen!" responded the stricken woman. "God have mercy on me, for there is none among men."

Her countenance was placid and she was resigned to her fate. The court broke up, and as the prisoner was led from the bar, she passed near Frank Mar-

tin. He was absorbed in thought. She touched him, and he shrunk as if he had been stung by a viper.

"Fear not, young man," she said, "I have not the power to harm you. You have triumphed before this tribunal, where wealth is conclusive evidence of innocence and poverty of guilt: but remember, we shall again be heard before a court, where the dross of this world may not enter, and every thought is read by the searching eye of the Eternal Judge. Remember!"

She was led away, and Frank leaned on his father for support, as they retired from the court-house.

The day fixed for the public execution of Ninon at length arrived. The crowd assembled early to witness the fearful exhibition. Ninon was conducted to the gallows, and while beneath it she asserted her innocence, but expressed no regret at leaving a world, which for years had been one unbroken scene of sorrow, and entertained but little fear as to her future destiny. There was not an eye to shed a tear for her, though there was not a more deserving and less harmless being in the whole concourse present. The executioner was about to perform his last office, and the crowd was in breathless suspense, when a horseman at a distance was seen riding at full speed towards the spot. He shouted, and the executioner paused. The horseman rode up to the gallows, and cried aloud—

"She is pardoned, she is innocent, and here is the governor's warrant to set her at liberty."

Ninon fainted at the shock occasioned by this sudden change. Her mind was prepared to meet death, but not to encounter again the ills of a life of hopelessness. She was removed to Baptiste's cottage, amidst the fruitless conjectures of the crowd, at the manner in which the fact of her innocence came to his knowledge who had never heard of her existence until he signed her death warrant. The mystery increased on returning to the village, and seeing placards offering a reward for the apprehension of

Frank Martin, as the murderer of Claudine. Search was made for him, but he had fled the country, and no trace could be found of the course he had taken.

Baptiste lived to see his son Victor arrive at manhood, but seldom smiled after the death of his daughter. Among the best and purest feelings which nature has implanted in the human breast, there is not one so sublimated, partaking so exclusively of heaven, as that which a fond father entertains for a lovely and deserving daughter. He looks upon her as the very essence of all that is good in him; even more lovely than her who won his early affections, when romance threw the richest colouring upon the things of this world.

Ninon continued an inmate of Baptiste's cottage until her death, which occurred about two years after the events just related. The pride of the Martin family was humbled by the public disgrace of Frank, for like a baneful disease, disgrace, if it touch but one member, extends to the whole body. They removed to a remote part of the province, where it was not probable the name of the fugitive would ever be heard.

Thirty years after these events, on a fine summer evening, while the village boys were playing among the tombs in the grave yard, an old man suddenly appeared, and approached the spot where Claudine was buried. His figure was covered with a black cloak, and his beard was gray and fell over his bosom. He supported himself with a staff, and trembled and wept as he bent over the grave. The boys suspended their sports and timidly drew nigh to him. One bolder than the rest, approached and accosted him.

"You appear tired, old man, and in sorrow."

"Indeed I am both, my son, for I have travelled far to-day."

"Then come with me to my father's house, where you may rest for the night and be comforted."

"Bless you, my child, the poor man's blessing be on you. Where is your father's house?"

"Not far from this. At the foot of yon hill on which the cattle are grazing."

"Ah!"—the old man trembled. "Your name?"

"Victor Baptiste."

"God of heaven!" His agitation increased as he asked, "Know you whose grave this is?"

"Who in the village does not know! It is the grave of my aunt Claudine, who was murdered by Frank Martin, many years ago, in the cypress hollow; and this beside it is the grave of my grandfather, who, I am told, never smiled after her death."

"Generations may pass away," sighed the old man, "but crime is never forgotten. It is perpetuated from father to son, and tradition proves as immutable as recorded history." He turned to the boy—"Your father is still alive?"

"Oh, yes: come with me and you shall see him in a few minutes."

"Not for the wealth of the world!—Look at me; describe me to him as I am; feeble, broken down in body and in spirit—tell him where you found me mourning, then give him this." He extended a paper to the boy. "God bless you, my child!—I leave you in a state of things where a pebble may turn the whole current of your life awry, but as for myself, old as I am, I return to the wilderness to find my grave."

After a mental struggle which agitated his feeble frame, he tottered from the yard and struck into the most unfrequented path that led to the forest. In a few moments he disappeared, and the boys returned to the village. The paper on being opened, was to this effect:—

"Providence has implanted in the human breast passions which the weakness of our nature cannot subdue, and which it is eternal death to the soul to indulge; and as if our earthly career had not been sufficiently prescribed and straitened by the divine law, society has created distinctions, which, if observed, literally verify the poet's dream, and render

the path to heaven through purgatory, even before we have passed the confines of this world.

"Why should man make distinctions which God will not acknowledge! If intrinsic worth alone were the standard of the human race, what a multitude of evils should we escape, since all would study to become more worthy; but as it is, the best feelings of our nature are debased to acquire that which alone elevates man in the estimation of the world. But it is not for the guilty to arraign the decrees of Providence, or call in question the justice of human laws.

"I was the victim of false pride. Having inflicted a lasting injury on one of the best of God's creatures, I feared to redress it, for the eyes of the world were on me, and rather than encounter the judgment of man, and be humbled in his sight, I trampled on the laws of God, and became a devil.—Oh, Claudine!—I attempted to poison her who loved me most, and failing in this, inhumanly murdered her. To screen my guilt, another was convicted through my instrumentality. I calculated much on the prejudice created by the absurd distinctions among men, and matters terminated as I foresaw. I had the mind to plot and the hand to execute, but my load of guilt already weighed like a mountain on my soul. I dreaded an increase of the weight.

"My brain became wild, and as the day appointed for the death of my second victim approached, the fever of my mind increased. I had already sacrificed every hope of happiness in this world, and every hope in the next. The thought pursued me night and day. The suffering and injured Ninon was constantly before my sight. I resolved to save her, but wavered, and when the time had nearly elapsed, I wrote to the governor, confessing my crime, and fled from justice—but let it not be supposed from punishment;—an outcast on the face of the earth, the never-dying worm was in my bosom: death on the instant had been mercy, for cut off from communion with my race, I held it with my

offended God alone in the wilderness. What punishment so appalling could be inflicted on a wretch so guilty as I had been! But I trust a life of sincere contrition may have atoned for an act, the recollection of which, even at this distant day, sinks my soul in despair. Thus much I have written that you may know I am still in existence, and to beseech that your curse may be recalled before I die. Let me quit the world reconciled, at least, with those who are still living. I shall visit Claudine's grave once more, that my slumbering feelings may be roused to agony, and then in the wilderness await the fearful day, which I feel is not far distant."

THE DAUGHTER.

A PLAY, IN THREE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT ROSENBERG, *Husband of Euphemia.*
VALMORE, *French Ambassador.*
MONTALBAN, *supposed father of Clara.*
PETER, *Marcelle's Son.*

EUPHEMIA, *sister of the Grand Duke of Lithuania.*
CLARA, *under the name of Olympia.*
MARCELLE, *a Cottager.*

Peasants, Servants, Guards.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Rural Prospect—Front of Marcelle's cottage—View of a chateau in the distance.*

Enter Clara, followed by Marcelle.

Marcelle. Dear Olympia, do you still persist in quitting the farm? Can you abandon without regret those who so cordially received you?

Clara. No, good Marcelle, never shall I forget your kindness in protecting a stranger to you; a wretch without parents—destitute and friendless.

Marcelle. Say not so—you have two sincere friends—in the first place, there's myself.

Clara. Generous woman.

Marcelle. And in the next, the princess Euphemia. Heaven bless her!—No station in life is exempt from sorrows, and she has had her share. Though the sister of our sovereign, the grand duke of Lithuania, for fifteen years was she secluded in a convent; but since the death of her father, she has returned to the world, and at present inhabits yonder chateau. She visits her vassals more frequently of late; and it is to you, my child, that we are indebted for this honour, for I plainly see she has serious views in relation to your welfare.

Clara. Ah! if you love me, frustrate a project so contrary to my wishes.—What shall I do?

Marcelle. You will not reject her friendship?

Clara. Not that—O! not that! But I shall resist with firmness all attempts to draw me back to a world where I again may never appear.

Marcelle. Always the same language! Is it natural at your age to entertain such aversion to society?

Clara. Society has cast me from its bosom!

Marcelle. So young, and yet so wretched! What has occurred to call forth so severe a destiny?

Clara. O! cease!—My soul sickens at the bare recollection.

Marcelle. Speak to me, Olympia.—Look upon me as a mother, and do not reject the consolation my love may afford you.

Clara. Yes, yes—I will confide in you. Your attachment merits my confidence. Hear, then, a secret that should perish with us in the eternal darkness of the grave. Olympia, whom you treat so affectionately—whom you love as your own child—is no other than the wretched Clara, whose supposed crime is known to all Europe, and who may yet be condemned to a death of infamy, to save a wretch whom her conscience will not permit her to denounce.

Marcelle. What is it I hear?—

Clara. Spurn me,—cast me from you—imitate the rest of the world!—

Marcelle. Never! Poor unfortunate, proceed.

Clara. I was on the eve of being married to the most worthy of men,—the Count de Valmore. He had a child, called Julian, by a former wife. I loved them both—God knows how truly I did love them! —My father was apprised that the whole of the count's fortune was entailed upon his son, which induced him to withhold his consent to our union.

Marcelle. 'Twas ever the way with the calculating world.

Clara. I was at that time at de Valmore's chateau with his sister. My father was at Paris, and, profiting by circumstances that detained de Valmore at court, he wrote, directing me to hold myself in readiness to quit the chateau, and fixed the day and hour when he would himself come for me. I resolved to submit, though obedience drove me to despair. At length the fatal day arrived. Amidst my preparations to depart, I had given the governess of Julian a commission, that required her absence. The dear child slept in a pavilion apart from the chateau. I arose with the dawn, wishing to caress him for the last time. The governess had already departed. As I approached the pavilion, I perceived a man entering the door. I recognised him, in spite of his disguise, and followed, but he was too intent upon the crime he meditated, to observe any thing else than his victim. I trembled, and, fearing to be seen, concealed myself beneath a table covered with a cloth; but was scarcely there, when he returned from the chamber, his manner wild, and his eyes darting fire. He fled, without perceiving that any one was near him, and as he passed, mechanically threw a bloody poniard under the table, and left the pavilion.

Marcelle. Gracious heavens! he did not kill the child!

Clara. The bloody weapon fell upon my garments—at that sight my heart recoiled with horror. I rushed to aid the poor boy, but my strength failed me, and I fell senseless in the middle of the apartment.

Marcelle. Unhappy Clara!

Clara. The governess returned, and her shrieks soon attracted the domestics to the spot. They discovered Julian assassinated—the poniard by my side,—and my garments stained with blood. I was recalled to life by their maledictions, and the injuries they heaped upon me. I was accused; and, O, God! even Valmore himself, deceived by appearances, was among my accusers. I was arraigned, tried, and condemned, and should have suffered by the hand of the public executioner, had not powerful friends, who did not deign to recognise me in my shame, succeeded in changing my sentence to perpetual imprisonment.

Marcelle. And how did you escape from prison?

Clara. I know not. The unseen hand that had my sentence commuted removed me to my father's chateau of Rosmal on the Rhone, where I was kept in close confinement.

Marcelle. You have said that you recognised the assassin of Julian. Why not denounce him, and save yourself?

Clara. Never!—They may tear me piecemeal on the rack, but never shall his name escape my lips. Never!—

Marcelle. You say your father was not at the chateau.

Clara. He did not appear at the day and hour appointed.

Marcelle. I see it all. You are the victim of filial piety, for it is not in nature to undergo such sufferings but in a parent's cause.

Clara. Marcelle, what a thought!—be careful not to divulge a suspicion so terrible.

Marcelle. I know enough to sympathise with you, but too little to hazard an accusation. Depend on my prudence. Your heroism, dear Olympia, towards a father whom I believe guilty, endears you to me more than ever. The only request I have to make is, if you persist in rejecting the protection of the princess Euphemia, that you will still remain with me.

Clara. Can you ask it, in spite of the prejudice against me?

Marcelle. Where the heart is concerned prejudice loses its influence.—You will remain?

Clara. I will remain.

Enter a Peasant.

Peasant. News, Marcelle, news. The Count Rosenberg is hourly expected at the chateau, from Paris.

Marcelle. And my son Peter?

Peasant. Has already arrived, and brings the news.

Marcelle. Is it possible!—How is it I have not seen him yet?—I flattered myself I should have been the first.

Peasant. Here he comes, as gay and lively as ever.

Enter Peter, followed by peasants.

Peter. What a stupid pump you are. I would have finished my travels with theatrical effect; taken them by surprise, and all that. But by your confounded hurry, you have made my arrival as flat as my old mother's stale beer, and be d—d to you.

Marcelle. Do I see you at last, my dear Peter? Come to my arms. [*embraces him.*

Peter. That's right. Another hug, old lady. Here I am, fresh from Paris, and with a budget of stories that will amaze you for the rest of your days, I promise you. Another hug. Bless your old heart.

Marcelle. I am glad to see you so happy; and no doubt you have many fine things to tell us about Paris.

Peasants. O! let us hear all about Paris.

Peter. To the girls who crowd around him.] Be quiet, girls, don't pester me. Paris! bless your ignorance, I have been at Madrid, Naples, Venice, Rome,—saw the pope's holy toe,—in a word, have run over Europe and Asia.

Marcelle. And Africa and America.

Peter. Not exactly—I was satisfied with seeing those places on a map. But of all places, France is the place for spirit, fun, and folly. Ah! there are fine fellows in France! They do nothing all day long but laugh, dance, and chatter like the devil. In Paris you may see men of all complexions—costumes of all nations. It's a menagerie of strange animals. There are honest men dressed as ragged as knaves, and pickpockets as gay as princes; beaux as proud as peacocks, and damsels as tender as turtle-doves; husbands devoid of curiosity, and wives who have a vast deal. But the cooks! God bless the cooks! They will dress you a dish fit for an emperor's palate out of a pair of postilion's boots, and no epicure could tell a rat from a rabbit when it has passed through their hands. O! delicious! God bless the cooks!—that's my maxim.

Marcelle. The count's departure was sudden. What occasioned it?

Peter. A terrible business! Don't exactly know what; but it relates to the daughter of a certain Montalban. Shocking affair!

Clara, (apart.) My father!

Peter. She was in love with a young gentleman, who had an infant child by a former wife. She liked the young man well enough; but the child was not altogether to her fancy, and so to get rid of it she killed it. That was her maxim.

Marcelle. Seriously!

Peter. To be sure! Zounds! you don't think she would stick a dagger in its heart merely by way of a joke? No joke in that.

Clara, (apart.) I must retire. My grief will betray me. [*Going.*

Marcelle. Stay, dear Olympia.

Clara. I am unwell. Permit me to withdraw.

Marcelle. (to Clara.) Imprudent girl, conceal your agitation. Sit down.

[*Clara sits—peasants range around her.*

Peter. Faith, mother, that's a confounded pretty creature. Eh! but what ails her?

Marcelle. Your recital has made her ill; she is so sensitive.

Peter. Well, well, I'll say no more about it. I wouldn't distress so sweet a girl for the best dinner in Paris. Now, mother, I would bet my life that she could never be guilty of the crime of that wretched Clara.

Marcelle. Hold your tongue, babbler. *(To Clara.)* Be calm.

Peter. And do you know, they say she was as beautiful as—as—a haunch of venison, or a roasted pig with apple sauce.

Marcelle. Beautiful, I believe; but culpable, impossible! *(To peasants.)* Am I not right, my friends? Is it in nature that one so lovely should be so wicked? What say you, Olympia? *(Apart to Clara.)* Courage, courage.

Clara. I think—as you do.

Marcelle. Then I am certain. And I must say to you Peter, if you have no other news to tell us, you have travelled to little purpose, and had better hold your tongue.

Peter. Why how you fly out, mother!—Hold my tongue! I will until dinner time. But what's the matter?

Marcelle. I defend the truth and honour of my sex.

Peasant. Make way for the Princess.

Marcelle. Go, and render to her the honours which her benevolence and protection merit.

[*Exeunt Peasants and Peter.*

Stay, dear Olympia.—

Clara. Permit me to retire.

Marcelle. Nay, nay remain, and assume an air more calm and collected in the presence of the princess.

Enter Euphemia and attendants, followed by Peter and Peasants.

Euphemia. Thanks my friends. I am flattered by the reception you give me.—You repay with usury the benefits I have conferred upon you.—Still

you are under no obligation to me for this visit. It was intended less for you than for the amiable Olympia. I wish the pleasure of being alone with her.

Peter. [*Wishing to speak and Marcelle preventing him.*] Mother be quiet.—If my lady the princess would permit a faithful servant of her husband to present his respectful homage before he retires, there would not be a happier dog unhung in Lithuania.

Euphemia. And where is this faithful servant?

Peter. [*to his mother.*] Can't you be quiet, old woman.—I am the man, your highness.—The count's confidential groom in chief, and principal postilion in particular.

Euphemia. And above all son of Marcelle.—It is well; I shall not forget you.

Peter. My business is settled. True, I may live a poor devil, but I shall die a great man at last.—Girls, you see how it is.—Permit me to honour you.

[*Exit Peter, strutting; peasants following.*

Marcelle. [*to Clara.*] Suppress your feelings.

Euphemia. Leave us, good Marcelle, and see that no one approaches to interrupt us.

[*Exit Marcelle, regarding Clara.*

Euphemia. I am at a loss, dear Olympia, to define the sentiments I entertain for you. The first moment I beheld you, you inspired me with the most lively interest, and every succeeding interview has tended to increase my attachment for you. We must not part.

Clara. Ah! madam, I am sensible how much I am honoured by your kindness, but I would avoid the brilliant sphere to which you would remove me. A court is no place for one so humble as I am.

Euphemia. You were formed to adorn any sphere in which fate may place you. But you would sojourn at court but a short time: it is with me I would have you pass your days, at the chateau, devoted to retirement and friendship.

Clara. What generosity! But madam you do not perceive all the difficulties—all the dangers!—

Euphemia. Listen, while I make known to you my source of grief, after which mark of confidence you may be induced to accept my offer. It is now twenty years since I was secretly married to Count Rosenberg.—Six months had passed in a delirium of joy, when a prince demanded my hand of my father. —The Count despairing of ever obtaining the consent of my family, proposed a secret marriage. I hesitated—trembled—but finally consented. His chaplain, one of my maids, and a friend of the Count's were the only witnesses to our union.—I refused the prince who solicited my hand, and my father became indignant at my refusal.—An infant daughter, the fruits of my alliance with the Count, betrayed my secret.—My father, exasperated, issued orders that my husband should be arrested, my child taken from me, and that I should be immured in a cloister for the rest of my days.

Clara. And had they the inhumanity to separate you from your babe.

Euphemia. They had. My husband disguised himself for a long time, less for the purpose of evading his pursuers, than to discover where our infant was concealed. He was successful, and escaped with our little treasure into France. I remained alone to encounter the resentment of an irritated father. My prayers, my tears availed nothing; he would never approve of my marriage, and until his death, I continued ignorant of the fate of my husband and my child.

Clara. My heart bleeds for you.

Euphemia. The Count then went to Paris. Alas! what bitter disappointment awaited him there! He apprised me by a letter, blotted with his tears and dictated by despair, that he had arrived just in time to receive the dying breath of our child.—I had beheld her but once, and but once had embraced this precious pledge of an attachment so ardent yet so cruelly tried.

Clara. You indeed have cause to mourn.

Euphemia. The first act of my brother, on being

invested with my deceased father's power, was to approve of my marriage, and at the same time he appointed the Count to terminate certain differences with the court of France. This negotiation detained him six months, which has at length been crowned with success, and I now await his return—but he comes without my child. This is the source of my sorrow; this is the reason why I indulge in solitude.

Enter Marcelle.

Marcelle. A stranger who appears fatigued by a long journey, hearing at the chateau that you were here, begs permission to approach you.

Euphemia. A stranger! Did he tell you his name?

Marcelle. No madam. His figure is enveloped in a cloak; and his hat is drawn over his eyes, so that I could not perceive his countenance, but he assures me that you know him.

Euphemia. I cannot receive him here, at this time.

Clara. He is a stranger, worn down with fatigue. —Perhaps some unfortunate who stands in need of immediate succour.—Let me not for an instant delay your charity.—Permit me to retire.

Euphemia. Marcelle, bid him approach.—[*Exit Marcelle.*] Always kind and compassionate, Olympia, our interview has redoubled the interest I feel for you.—Reflect upon the propositions I have made. I would share with you what felicity is left me, and henceforth let me possess your entire confidence.—

Clara. I can refuse you nothing.

Enter Marcelle and Montalban at the back of the stage. —Clara takes Euphemia's hand and kisses it.—Euphemia kisses her on the forehead.—Marcelle approaches Clara.—Montalban recognises her, makes a gesture of surprise, and exclaims apart—

Montalban. Good heavens, Clara here!—

[*Clara makes an obeisance to Euphemia: Montalban menaces her with gestures.*]

Marcelle. Come, my dear Olympia.

Montalban. [*apart.*] Olympia! I breathe again. She has disguised her name, and the Princess knows nothing.—

[*Exit Clara with Marcelle. Euphemia makes a sign to Montalban to approach. He takes off his hat and throws his cloak on a bench.*

Euphemia. Is it possible! Montalban!

Montalban. Yes, madam; that wretched father, known to a scoffing world by his shame and his misfortunes.

Euphemia. What service can I render you.

Montalban. Learning that Count Rosenberg has returned from Paris, I would ask of his humanity assistance to enable me to pass over into England, as a last refuge from the opprobrium that pursues me here.

Euphemia. Your claim upon my kindness is not forgotten. You were the friend of my husband and the witness to our marriage, and I hear that the vengeance that Heaven poured upon us has not escaped you.

Montalban. Ah! madam, if it was a crime to have assisted at your nuptials, Heaven has indeed punished me severely for it.—More so than yourselves.—Your daughter was cut off in the flower of her youth; she lived beloved and died deplored; but mine, by her crimes, has brought ceaseless agony to my heart, eternal shame upon my head.—No resting place is left to me.—I mourn her, living, blackened with opprobrium never to be effaced;—I would that it had been granted to me to weep for her in the tomb where her virtues were recorded.

Euphemia. Yes, Montalban, I have learnt your griefs from my husband, and acknowledge that they are far greater than my own.

Montalban. [*apart.*] So, the Count has kept his word.

Euphemia. You were acquainted with my daughter: Do you not know to whom her father entrusted her during his absence?

Montalban. [*apart.*] Invention aid me.——He

placed her in one of those religious asylums where infants are protected.

Euphemia. And did you see her at times?

Montalban. But seldom. The war occasioned my absence from Paris for years.

Euphemia. Did she ever learn the name of her mother?

Montalban. Never.—Neither that of her father nor her mother.—It would not have been prudent to have entrusted a secret of such importance to one so young.

Euphemia. Poor child! Poor child!

Montalban. Her father saw her only in her tender infancy, and were she now alive, it is more than possible he would not recognise his own child.

Euphemia. What a destiny!—Return to the chateau, and you will there see the Count. Explain to him the motives of your voyage, and we will devise means to serve you. I have some orders to leave in this cottage and must part from you for the present. —Montalban depend upon my friendship.

[*Exit into the cottage.*

Montalban. How embarrassing is my situation! Clara here! and I behold her receiving a kiss from the lips of her mother! Fortunately I possessed sufficient presence of mind to conceal my confusion at this unexpected interview.—But how is it that I find her here, and whence arises this affection that Euphemia entertains for her?—When the Count, the better to conceal the mystery of her birth required that she should pass for my child, he exacted an oath that I should never hint, even to her, that she was otherwise.—Still Clara is with her mother; and if Rosenberg, surprised by the weakness of his nature, should betray the secret, I am irretrievably lost.— She saw me commit the crime for which she suffers. —My fate hangs by a single hair.—They come.—I must find some pretext to speak to her.—

[*Draws his cloak around him.*

Enter Marcelle from the cottage, and Peter by the back entrance.

Peter. Mother, I feel the elements of a great man strong within me. I shall magnify the family yet. If you desire a place at court, say so, and a word from me will do the business. Speak quick.

Marcelle. Peter, you're a fool.

Peter. I know it, and have heard so daily for these twenty years; but that's no stumbling block to a man's preferment. A fool for luck you know, mother.—That's my maxim.—But who have we here?

Marcelle. [*to Mont.*] I hope sir you were satisfied with the reception the princess gave you.

Peter. Ha! a petitioner to the princess!—I am your man in that quarter.—We are all going to the chateau with the lovely Olympia, and we shall have rare sport there, I tell you.—You had better make one of the party.—Consider yourself invited.

Montalban. [*abstracted.*] True, true, I should return there.

Peter. To be sure you should.—There will be a grand fete in honour of my arrival and the Count's. —And such eating and drinking!—You must come along if it is for the pleasure of seeing what sleight of hand I have in playing with a knife and fork.

Marcelle. Hold your tongue, blockhead! I believe you only live to eat.

Peter. I am a Lithuanian to the very gizzard, mother, and love good living. It is natural. A man, you know, must eat to live, and when he finds good sauce to his food, it is as well to reverse the order of things and live to eat.—That's my maxim.

Marcelle. [*to Mont.*] If you are so disposed, join the villagers, and they will conduct you to the chateau. In the meantime I must assist Olympia in arranging the handsome dresses with which the princess presented her.

Montalban. It appears that she entertains a lively friendship for that young woman.

Marcelle. And deservedly.

Montalban. She is apparently an orphan, and yet you treat her with the affection due to a child.

Peter. My old mother has a heart of pure gold—a real jewel!—but 'tis n't every one has the key to it.

Marcelle. Olympia has gained the affection of all. She is goodness personified.

Montalban. [*with joy.*] Providence then has conducted me to this spot.

Marcelle. How! Explain.

Montalban. I have made a long journey to solicit a favour from the princess. She has neither granted it, nor denied; but if my petition were seconded by one so young and innocent as Olympia, I might succeed.

Peter. You are right; but if she fails, apply to me, and the business is settled.

Montalban. Might I with confidence entrust a secret of importance to her?

Marcelle. I can answer for her. She has given me proofs of her discretion.

Montalban. Will you afford me an opportunity of speaking a few moments with her, alone.

Marcelle. Alone! And why alone!

Peter. Curse his impudence! As independent as a turnspit in the kitchen.

Montalban. I have secrets to impart that I would be loath to make known in the presence of a third person. What has she to fear? You will be near us.

Marcelle. Your wishes shall be complied with. Come along, Peter.

Montalban. [*apart.*] So far success attends me!

Peter. But, mother, what are you about? No man should ever be left alone with a pretty woman. That's my maxim.

Marcelle. Come along. I will call Olympia, and in a moment she will be with you. Come Peter.

Peter. I don't half like that black muzzled fellow.

[*Exeunt Marcelle and Peter into cottage.*

Montalban. This interview is of vital importance

to me. She comes, and alone! Let me guard against too sudden a surprise.

Enter Clara.

Clara. Is it true, sir, that you require my interest with the princess? Speak without restraint. She has honoured me with her friendship, and I shall esteem it a happiness if the first favour I ask shall prove to the advantage of the unfortunate.

Montalban. Her presence troubles me, in spite of myself! [*aside.*]

Clara. Say, in what manner can I serve you?

Montalban. They have given me so touching a picture of your sensibility—

Clara. That voice!—

Montalban. That I could not resist the desire of being known to you. [*discovers himself.*]

Clara. My father! O! heavens, I am lost!

Montalban. Collect yourself, my child, and think of the fatal consequences that must follow this interview, if they suspect the cause that leads to it.

Clara. Open earth, and bury me!

Montalban. Collect yourself, I say, and answer my questions. When I obtained from the French government the favour to remove you from the prison to which you were condemned for the rest of your days, and transfer you to my chateau at Rosmal, under a pledge to keep you in close confinement, wherefore did you escape from those who had you in custody, and by what means?

Clara. By the assistance of a man whose heavenly example is my greatest consolation in the midst of my sorrows.

Montalban. And that man was Father Anselmo?

Clara. It was.

Montalban. Do you know to what your flight has exposed you, and me also? You cannot be ignorant that even here you are liable to be dragged again before the dreadful tribunal of justice.

Clara. Again! O! not again, great God!

Montalban. But there is still a way to escape their severity. The means are in my power.

Clara. Name it. O, name it.

Montalban. Consent to follow me.

Clara. [*shrinking.*] Ah! follow you!

Montalban. Your safety depends upon it.

Clara. Never! Death sooner!

Montalban. What! in a loathsome prison!

Clara. Aye, in a prison, or on the rack; in any shape, still I say death sooner!

Montalban. Misguided girl, do you forget the duty that you owe me?

Clara. Duty! It is for that, and that only. Respect for a father's name has compelled me to endure with patience this dreadful weight of opprobrium and wrong. But thanks to your barbarity, you heap no more upon me. Rest satisfied. You have sacrificed me yourself, and I know it. I am degraded enough to ensure your safety; but urge me no farther, for the ties by which nature bound us together at length are broken forever.

Montalban. I sacrificed you! What can you mean?

Clara. Ask your own heart, and it will answer you.

Montalban. And can you suppose me guilty of the frightful crime for which you suffer?

Clara. Had I ever doubted it, that question would have convinced me.

Montalban. Horrible! a child to accuse a father!

Clara. Had you not been conscious of the danger of such an accusation, you would never have taken so much care to prevent my escape. Alas! I had the weakness to attempt to awaken your sympathies, believing that overwhelmed with remorse, and humiliated by your crime, you would at least have given those tears to my misfortunes, that even a stranger would not refuse to suffering humanity. But no; you were as insensible as stone, and in spite of the sacrifice I had made, you are fearful

that my courage at length may fail, and now meditate my total ruin.

Montalban. Have I merited this!

Clara. True, you obtained my enlargement from the prison where I was doomed to perish; but not out of compassion for my sufferings, but that you might the more readily secure your own safety by poison, which was prepared for my lips at the chateau of Rosmal.

Montalban. O, my child! What monster has made you credit a tale so horrible!

Clara. The confidant whom you selected to fulfil your purpose. Fortunately that wretch, still retaining some feeling of pity, not wholly extinguished by your bribes and promises, acquainted me with your design. I contrived to acquaint Father Anselmo, and by the means of money, so potent in the hands of villains, that good man succeeded in saving the innocent.

Montalban. And have you suffered yourself to be duped by an artifice so gross! It is plain that this mercenary wretch excited your terrors in order to make you pay dearly for a service that he would not render gratuitously.

Clara. I admit that his motives were mercenary, still fatal experience satisfies me of the probability of his story, shocking as it appears.

Montalban. I pity your sufferings, and pardon a suspicion that your fears have created. Have you decided what course to take?

Clara. I have told you my resolution, and shall persist in it till death.

Montalban. Your character is changed.

Clara. Not changed, but strengthened by adversity.

Montalban. Father Anselmo is in his grave; on what do you depend?

Clara. My innocence and the princess.

Montalban. The princess! But when she hears your story—

Clara. And how will she hear it? Will you betray me?

Montalban. Never! But how can it be concealed when every passing breeze is tainted with it.

Clara. Then, sir, it will become your duty to do me justice. But, alas! that is an act too noble for such a heart as thine.

Montalban. Do you forget to whom you speak?

Clara. No, sir; nor do I forget the advantage that my knowledge gives me over you. Be advised in time, lest you weary out my patience by your persecutions, and, driven to madness, I point out the proper victim for the axe of justice.

Montalban. Clara!—My child!—

Clara. That word, which should not escape a father's lips but with tenderness, can only awaken in your bosom recollections the most terrible. Man, what a frightful picture have you created, and yet appear insensible to the magnitude of its horror!—A guilty father, who, by the blackness of his crimes, has poisoned the holy fountain of affection, and filled the bosom of his child with bitter hate!—A father, aware that his dreadful secret's known, and that he is dependent on the forbearance of a persecuted child to save him from a death of infamy; and yet you have the boldness to confront me even here. Again I caution you; be advised in time.

Montalban. And dare you thus brave my authority!

Clara. I owe you no obedience—nothing but a life of wretchedness and shame; and, in saving you from a death of shame, I have heavily repaid the debt. Hear me, and reflect well upon what I say, before you adopt any course in relation to me. A woman who has the courage to suffer herself to be conducted even to a scaffold to save a guilty father, may summon sufficient fortitude to resist oppression. In immolating myself for you, I have fearfully exercised the deplorable right of disposing of my fate; I shall continue to exercise it to the last,—it depends on you whether I crush others in my ruin, or fall

alone. Farewell. Live happily if you can, and forget a wretched being who has renounced all on earth to save her father. [*exit.*

Montalban. Do I dream!—so changed!—There's nothing more to hope from her submission!—I tread upon an earthquake!—Something must be done, and quickly. The count!—They must be separated as far as this world will admit.—I'll seek the count—seas, seas must flow between them! [*exit.*

ACT II.

Scene I.—*A gallery at the chateau.*

Enter Euphemia and Count Rosenberg.

Rosenberg. My dear Euphemia, how sensibly am I touched by these marks of your affection! Every thing breathes new life at my appearance, and seems to be animated by your sentiments for me.

Euphemia. Yes, my lord, even the humblest villager participates in the happiness I find in your return after so long an absence.

Rosenberg. I revel in delights. But if you would indulge me, postpone your preparations for a fete until the arrival of the Marquis de Valmore. He is on his way to France, with a treaty recently ratified by our sovereign, and is unwilling to quit Lithuania without first paying his respects to you. He may be hourly expected.

Euphemia. Alas! if our child were still living, that I might have the joy of dividing between you the tenderness that fills my heart at this moment.

Rosenberg. O! harrowing thought! Banish a reflection so distressing. Your child is no more. Look upon her death as the last punishment that Heaven will inflict upon us.

Euphemia. The severest, though it may not be

the last. That blow has prepared me for whatever else may follow.

Rosenberg. Your grief is natural, but your tears awaken in my heart thoughts that time can never obliterate, and such as I have not the courage to lay open to your eyes. Spare my feelings, cease to cherish your own sorrows, and thank Heaven that you were distant from the wretched scene of which I was a witness.

Euphemia. Were her last moments then so awful.

Rosenberg. For heaven's sake change the discourse. Tell me who is that young person whom you have mentioned to me so frequently in your letters? Do you know any thing respecting her birth?

Euphemia. Nothing more than that she is of French origin. She has been three months at Marcelle's cottage, where, by accident, I first met her. Her noble and modest demeanour interested me, and every succeeding interview tended to deepen the impression. Her image is constantly in my mind; her virtues have penetrated my heart; and, with the exception of the love I bear you, there is no feeling more powerful than my attachment for this lovely orphan.

Rosenberg. I trust she may prove worthy of your good opinion.

Euphemia. I do not doubt that you will approve of my predilection. I wish a friend, who can reciprocate my regard, and in some measure supply the place of the unfortunate we have lost.

Rosenberg. Your wishes shall always be a law to me.

Enter a Page.

Page. A stranger desires to speak to the count.

Euphemia. Ah! show him in. It is Montalban your old friend.

Rosenberg. Montalban!

Euphemia. I recommend this unfortunate father to your sympathy.

Rosenberg. He has it. I feel for him—O! God, how exquisitely!

Euphemia. The fête shall be delayed until the arrival of de Valmore, and I will give orders that he may be received in a manner worthy of his rank. As soon as Olympia arrives, I shall take occasion to present her to you.

[*Going out meets Montalban, and makes a sign to him to approach her husband.*] [*exit.*

Rosenberg. You here!

Montalban. I came to tax your friendship for the last time, and was far from thinking that my presence here would be so essential to your peace.

Rosenberg. What have you done with that wretched being who has occasioned me so many tears?

Montalban. Should I not rather ask you that question, when I find her here.

Rosenberg. Here! Explain.

Montalban. Concealed under the name of Olympia, she has practised on the feelings of the princess, until she has gained her affections.

Rosenberg. Ah! Is it possible!

Montalban. Have you not seen her yet?

Rosenberg. I see her!—Could I, without overwhelming her with reproaches; without treating her as one who merits any thing but pity.

Montalban. Be prudent, or you will yourself divulge the shame you dread to encounter.

Rosenberg. Ah! Montalban!—Nature is struggling in her behalf in my bosom, but in vain. Her crime will admit of no extenuation; she is unworthy even of compassion. I cannot see her. Frame some pretext to bear her from this place, and free me from her sight for ever.

Montalban. That may be readily done. I intend to pass the seas to some distant land where prejudice may not reach me. Condescend to aid me in the execution of this project, and I shall soon remove from your presence that guilty one, whose existence only tends to your dishonour.

Rosenberg. Be it so. I approve your plan, and will forward it to the extent of my power.

Montalban. [*Apart.*] Success is mine!

Rosenberg. You must above all things be cautious to keep the secret of her parentage concealed from her.

Montalban. Depend on my discretion. You see, count, how highly I prize your esteem! By disavowing Clara as my child, I might return with honour to society; but gratitude for the services you have rendered me, seals my lips. Self-interest has never been the motive of my actions. I gave convincing proof of that when Clara's marriage with the Count de Valmore was projected. In the zeal of the moment, you wrote me that if I succeeded in effecting the union, you would pay my debts, and bestow a pension of six thousand florins upon me for my services. Another, less scrupulous, to have enjoyed your bounty, would have concealed the situation of de Valmore; but I preferred your esteem to wealth acquired by deception, and informed you of all. The result was, you changed your opinion, and directed me to break off the overtures. I did not hesitate to obey, and, renouncing the brilliant fortune you had promised me, required Clara to quit the chateau of her lover. Then came the fatal resolution that destroyed her.

Rosenberg. Be calm. Your services are not forgotten, and you shall soon have substantial proof that there is no need to excite my gratitude. Count de Valmore is momentarily expected here.

Montalban. De Valmore! If they should meet!

Rosenberg. I dread it. It is necessary to accelerate your departure, to avoid the fatal results of such an interview.

Montalban. It is doubtful whether she will consent to follow me. She regards me as a severe judge, whose presence is a constant and painful reproach; and I fear that the friendship with which the princess honours her may encourage her to resist my authority.

Rosenberg. Will she have the audacity?

Montalban. She is capable of any thing.

Rosenberg. True; we have bitter proof of that—but still she looks upon you as her father.

Montalban. Doubtless. But if the princess oppose her departure, it may lead to explanations that it would be prudent to avoid.

Rosenberg. Should she compel us to that, we must make known her crime.

Montalban. Fatal expedient! Is there no one here upon whose prudence you can depend?

Rosenberg. Explain.

Montalban. If reason fail to have influence over Clara, we must have recourse to stratagem. She may be secretly abducted.

Rosenberg. And must be, rather than be permitted to remain here.

Montalban. Some one approaches. Dismiss this intruder, and let us hasten to form a plan that will relieve you from all your anxiety.

Enter Marcelle and Peter.

Peter. My lord, I have come to report myself. You see I have arrived safe and sound after all. Slow and sure. That's my maxim.

Rosenberg. It is well, Peter; you come in good time. [*To Montalban.*] This simpleton will answer your purpose.

Peter. Allow me to offer a continuation of my services, my lord. I am very well satisfied with both you and your cook, and if you are equally so with me, there needs but two words to the bargain.

Rosenberg. I will still retain you.

Marcelle. This kindness, my lord, to my poor boy—

Rosenberg. Yes, Marcelle, he shall enter upon his duties from this hour; and, to commence, I enjoin upon him to obey whatever orders he may receive from this gentleman.

Peter. Obey orders if you break owners; that's my maxim.

Rosenberg. Have you, Marcelle, brought with you

the young woman to whom you gave an asylum at your cottage?

Marcelle. She is with the princess, who loves her so fondly that, previous to presenting her to you, she wished her to appear in a manner worthy of herself.

Rosenberg. Go, and tell the princess to send Olympia to me, as I would speak to her a few moments alone. Mark you, alone. [*Marcelle hesitates.*

Peter. Devilish strange! Every body wishes to have a tête-a-tête with pretty Olympia. Shouldn't object myself.

Rosenberg. You have heard me. You may add that I ask it as a favour, and await her compliance.

Marcelle. But, sir, if the princess——

Rosenberg. No remarks, but obey.

Peter. Shut your fly trap, mother, when the big bugs are abroad. That's my maxim. [*exit Marcelle.*

Rosenberg. [*To Peter.*] Follow this gentleman, and obey without hesitation whatever he may command. [*To Montalban.*] See that the horses are ready, and depart the first favourable moment. I shall see you within an hour, and give you unequivocal proofs of my gratitude.

Montalban. I go to afford additional evidence of the value I set on your friendship. Come along, Peter. Courage, Montalban! [*exit.*

Peter. What the devil does he want with me!—If his heart now should be as black as his muzzle! I begin to feel rather uncomfortable.

Rosenberg. Well, what are you doing there. Begone. Be obedient and discreet, and trust to me for your reward.

Peter. O! I smell a galley business here. Pardon, my lord, I obey. Here I go, neck or nothing; that's my maxim. [*exit Peter.*

Rosenberg. Dreadful duty! To tear the daughter from the mother's arms, and break the hearts of both. But tyrant honour rules the lofty mind with whips and scourges, and I must triumph over my own feelings, lest her opprobrium fall upon my head

and crush me. Ah! they come! Euphemia with her! This I feared, and foresee that it will be a difficult task to separate them.

Enter Euphemia and Clara, splendidly dressed.

Euphemia. Is it true, my lord, that you would have deprived me of the pleasure of presenting my Olympia to you?

Rosenberg. Her presence agitates me, and I am interested in spite of myself. [*aside.*

Euphemia. I could not believe it, and imagined that Marcelle had misunderstood your words.

Rosenberg. She faithfully communicated my wishes. I would interrogate the young stranger, and discover whether she is deserving of the favour you have bestowed upon her.

Clara. If firm attachment and profound respect for that virtue of which the princess is so bright a model, are sufficient title to the bounties her kindness proposes, I will be bold to say, there is no one more worthy than myself of her regard and confidence. But, my lord, though I am young, and destitute of experience, vanity has not yet assumed such an ascendancy over reason as to induce me to accept so rashly an honour for which I was never destined.

Rosenberg. [*apart.*] She does herself justice.

Euphemia. [*to the Count.*] I have not deceived you. She is as diffident as she is lovely.—[*to Clara.*] You fear the court and its deceitful splendour. That salutary fear will save you from danger. Your indifference to grandeur will excite no jealousy, and all hearts will be ready to pay you homage.

Rosenberg. [*aside.*] I feel for her.

Clara. I only aspire to your friendship, and instead of the many proffered favours, I would ask you to grant but one.—Did I not fear to displease the Count I would beseech him to use his influence in obtaining it.

Rosenberg. A favour; name it.

Euphemia. An extravagant idea. She would re-

tire from the world.—Why deprive society of one of its most lovely ornaments! What has the world done to one so young and innocent that you should manifest such an aversion?—You are distant from your parents; the court and myself will supply their places, and we shall love you as our child.

Rosenberg. [*aside.*] Love her as our child!—

Euphemia. You will recall to our hearts feelings that have been rudely crushed, and console us for the heavy loss we have sustained.

Rosenberg. No, madam, that idea can never be effaced from my memory. The image of my expiring child will pursue me to the grave.—I see her—I hear her still.—Her voice clings to my soul.—She is overwhelmed with trouble and despair, and in vain I strive to cast a veil over the fearful catastrophe!—Urge this no farther, but permit Olympia to follow her own inclinations. She wishes to renounce the world and I approve of her decision.

Euphemia. You fill me with surprise.

Rosenberg. One of her youth and beauty, destitute of parents and fortune, cannot better escape the snares of a corrupt world, than by flying to a place of refuge where sin may not enter.

Euphemia. Strange reasons! Have I not said that I would be as a mother to her.

Rosenberg. Persist Olympia in your resolution.—I will aid you to the extent of my power.—Make choice of your asylum, and this hour, if you desire it, I will see that you are conducted there, and that you receive all the comforts becoming your new condition.

Clara. This kindness overwhelms me.

Euphemia. Can it be possible, that you, my lord, who possess a heart so noble and compassionate—

Rosenberg. Still does it sympathise in the afflictions of others, though in itself it is but a gloomy record of a life of sorrows. But let us break off this interview; it distresses me. She doubtless has not adopted this course without imperative reason, to

explain which might embarrass her. Let us respect her motives and applaud her resolution.

Clara. [*aside.*] Ah! whither does this tend?

Rosenberg. Retire, Olympia. They wait to conduct you to Marcelle's cottage, and to-morrow all your wishes shall be realized.

Euphemia. What haste! Do you think Count, that I can so readily renounce the happy illusion that my imagination had formed. We cannot be separated, at all events not so abruptly.—Whether my partiality is the result of an excited imagination, or of a sentiment that I am unable to define, I have not sought to discover, but the source is a pure one and my project merits your approbation.

Clara. Ah! madam, my griefs have been sufficient; do not let me reproach myself with being the cause of misunderstanding between yourself and husband.

Enter Montalban.

Montalban. Count, the Marquis de Valmore has this moment arrived.

Clara. [*aside.*] Valmore!— [*Shouts without.*

Montalban. The shouts of your vassals announce his presence.

Rosenberg. My love, let us go and bid him welcome.—[*apart to Clara.*] Olympia, I prohibit you from appearing in his presence.

Clara. [*aside.*] What means that injunction?

Euphemia. Olympia, I trust you will not leave the chateau without first seeing me.—[*embraces her.*] You promise.—Why do you tremble child?—

Clara. I promise.—

Montalban. [*apart to Rosenberg.*] All is ready.

Rosenberg. [*to Montalban.*] Conduct her to Marcelle's dwelling; to night I will meet you there. Olympia, remain not here.—Montalban, conduct her into the adjoining apartment, and keep a vigilant eye upon her.

[*Euphemia expresses surprise, Clara horror. Euphemia takes Rosenberg's hand with impatience, and appears to quit Clara with regret.*]

[*Exeunt Rosenberg and Euphemia.*

Montalban. You have heard the orders of the Count.

Clara. [*too much agitated to hear him.*] Valmore beneath the same roof with me!—I have not seen him since that day of ceaseless agony.—Chance has conducted him to this spot; another opportunity may never occur on earth, and I will seize the occasion to justify myself.—That thought inspires my heart with renewed energy.

Montalban. What madness do you contemplate? Can you imagine that de Valmore will remain for an instant in your presence.

Clara. He shall remain. During the course of my fatal trial I in vain endeavoured to see him. He refused.—But since the hand of fate has at length brought us together, he shall hear me, until his heart confesses how deeply I've been injured.

Montalban. I will not consent to so distressing an interview.

Clara. He believes me criminal. Doubtless detests me!—and I sink beneath the burthen of his hate.—Alas! I do not aspire to his love. I renounce that hope forever; but still I may regain his esteem, and when he knows how cruelly I have suffered he may accord to me a tear of pity.—Convinced of my innocence, he will cease to curse a name once so dear to him, and perhaps, strive to soothe a lacerated heart where his image is indelibly engraved.

Montalban. [*aside.*] Dangers are gathering fast. —Retire my child.

Clara. No.— I will not retire.

Montalban. Do not oblige me to step beyond the character of a father to enforce obedience.

Clara. Nor me, beyond the duty of a child to vindicate myself.—Here I remain.

Montalban. Audacious girl!

Clara. Banish your fears. I shall justify myself in his eyes without accusing you. Your secret is buried in my bosom, and I have already given sufficient proof, that even the rack cannot extort it from me.—Rest satisfied.

Montalban. You count too much upon your resolution.—They come.—This way; follow me.—Resistance is useless.—Clara, I beseech you leave this place, ere you encounter a man whose presence excites so much apprehension.

Clara. Go, and leave me. I am resolved to meet him.

Montalban. For the last time I bid you withdraw.—[*seizes her.*] I will not hear you.—Nay, then, if persuasion fail force must be resorted to.

Clara. Monster! Is this then the reward for all my sacrifices.

[*She breaks from him and runs to the door. Montalban follows and closes it. She returns and shrieks in despair.*]

Help, help, for the love of Heaven!

[*Montalban seizes her by the arm and forces her off by a door in the side wing.*]

Montalban. You struggle in vain. And thus I avert the fearful destiny that you would madly call down upon us both. [*exeunt.*

[*Enter in procession, pages and guards preceding Euphemia. Then Rosenberg and de Valmore, to whom Euphemia gives her hand. They are followed by vassals of both sexes, with Marcelle at their head.*]

Euphemia to Valmore. Illustrious cavalier, in whom loyalty and valour so happily conjoin, behold in the homage of my people, the esteem of the Lithuanians for the powerful nation you represent.

Valmore. These voluntary tributes are grateful to the receiver, and eulogy is doubly flattering from the lips of a princess such as you are.

[*Euphemia gives signal, and the fete commences. During the prelude she perceives Marcelle, and whispers to her. Marcelle manifests joy and goes out. Valmore and Rosenberg conduct Euphemia to her place.—Dance.—After the ballet, Marcelle enters in haste and says—*

Marcelle. Madam, hasten to the aid of Olympia. They have borne her away, and her resistance proves that it is contrary to your wishes and her own.

Euphemia. Borne her away! Quick, fly my friends and restore her to me. [*Exeunt vassals.*

Marcelle. Luckily, madam, my son Peter drives the carriage, and when he heard my voice he refused to go on.

Euphemia. What audacious wretch has committed this outrage within the very precincts of my palace.

Rosenberg. Nothing has been done without my orders.

Euphemia. Your orders! Count, you amaze me.

Rosenberg. I cannot longer conceal from you that Olympia is unworthy of your bounty. She is here under an assumed name, and the person who has borne her away has claims upon her of a more sacred nature than yours.

Vassals. [*behind.*] She is here, she is here.

Enter Clara, Montalban, and Vassals.

Marcelle. [*goes to Clara.*] My dear Olympia, let me conduct you to the arms of your benefactress. There no danger can approach you.

Clara, [*apart.*] Valmore! I tremble in his presence.

[*Throws herself into the arms of Euphemia, who receives her with transports.*

Valmore. O! heavens! Do my eyes deceive me, or is it Clara that I behold!

Montalban. Yes, signor, it is my wretched daughter, whom I in vain endeavoured to keep from your presence.

Euphemia. Your daughter!

[*Looks with horror upon her.*

Clara. [*to Valmore, throwing herself at his feet.*] Ah! signor, stay, stay I beseech you. Moderate the indignation with which you behold me. Hear the appeal of persecuted innocence, for it is perhaps the last time you will be allowed to hear it.

Valmore. Innocence! Wretched girl, withdraw—the sight of you is horror!

Clara. No, no, I will cling to your knees until you deign to hear me. I have more than life at

stake. You may spurn and trample on me, but you shall hear me.

Valmore. Too many proofs attest your crime. In return for love the most devoted, you assassinated my child. You, whom he adored—called by the tender name of mother, and clung to as his support and guide. Is it for a father to pardon an outrage so horrible!

Clara. [*rising.*] I answer, no! But the more atrocious the crime the less reason you have to impute it to me.

Valmore. Who else had an interest in doing it? Sole possessor of the wealth of my ancestors, his life defeated the ambition that inflamed your soul, and you wished to open to your children a source of fortune, of which his existence would have effectually deprived them.

Clara. God, what a thought! Where is there safety on earth, when the pure in heart can impute the blackest motives to the innocent, and upon their bare knowledge of human frailty convict the accused of crimes too horrible even for fiends to contemplate.

Valmore. What other motive could exist?

Clara. Again! Say then it did exist—that idea alone should draw the veil from your eyes;—still think me capable of a crime so atrocious; believe me the calculating fiend you have pictured, in spite of all that has passed between us, and then answer me whether it would have been in character to have selected the time we were about to be united, for the performance of such a deed. No. Once your wife, and the step-mother of Julian, would I not have had a thousand occasions to have destroyed him without leaving the slightest vestige of my crime.

Valmore. These thoughts are the result of after reflection.

Marcelle. [*regarding Mont. with indignation.*] He hears it all, and is silent. Not even a frown. Defend her, sir.

Montalban. [*manifests rage*] Away!

Euphemia. What means this, Marcelle?

Marcelle. Is he not her father?

Valmore. What can he urge in her defence? She was condemned before her judges. It was there he should have spoken.

Marcelle. And did he not speak—not even there?

Valmore. What could he allege against truth which overwhelmed her with shame and dismay.

Marcelle. What could *not* a parent allege in defence of a child! O! if he had been a father, nature would have furnished him with voice and argument, though truth had flashed like a stream of light from heaven.

Rosenberg. [*aside.*] That thought!

Clara. You speak of my judges. They were but mortals, liable to be deceived, and took appearances for reality.

Rosenberg. It was for you to enlighten their consciences. Why did you not do it? The situation in which you were surprised admitted of but two constructions. You were either the author or the witness of the assassination.

Valmore. Reply to that.

Marcelle. [*apart.*] O! that *I* dare.

Clara. Fatal duty!

Euphemia. Answer, Clara. We all desire that you should appear innocent.

Clara. I am innocent. I asserted it before my judges—I proclaim it to the whole world—I repeat it with the accents of despair—I swear it in the presence of Him who reads the inmost thoughts of all hearts—I am innocent! But such is the horror of my destiny that I dare not cite the guilty wretch before a human tribunal to meet the heavy punishment imposed on me.

Valmore. I have listened to you too long. Hence, from my sight forever.

Clara. What! you still refuse to credit me? Ah! Valmore do not turn from me—do not crush the last hope I have on earth. [*approaches him.*

Valmore. [*recoiling.*] Approach me not. I still

see your hands stained with the innocent blood of my child; and his death remains unavenged. Fly, fly from my presence. Hate and disdain have taken the place of love in this wounded heart. Away—lest in my agony I curse you.

Clara. Curse me!

Valmore. If there is justice in heaven it will yet inflict all the anguish on your heart that you have heaped on mine.

Clara. [*wildly.*] What!—wherefore do you pursue me? Is there no hiding place on earth?—no safety this side the grave!

Valmore. Montalban, free me from her odious presence.

Clara. Still, still they follow me! That voice! Men are changed to fiends, and hunt me down. Still I care not though all on earth were open-mouthed against me, if that voice were not in the fearful cry, urging them on. O! that voice!

Montalban. Come, come, my child.

Clara. [*in despair.*] O! God, if it is your will to try me, I will bear all. Give me but strength, but strength!

Montalban. Clara, we must begone.

Clara. Not yet, it is not time. Hark! they follow, and I am too feeble to move. Hide me! Ha! darkness surrounds me. That is well. Hist!—my heart throbs with pain—my head is bursting—my eyes grow dim! All's dark—dark—dark—

[*She places her hands on her forehead, and stands stupified.*

Rosenberg. Painful sight.

Euphemia. My heart bleeds for her.

Clara. [*Looks wildly around, and beholds Montalban. She fixes her eyes steadfastly on him, then recoils with horror.*] Where am I! You here! Wherefore are you here? Speak, where am I?

Montalban. With your heart-broken father.

Clara. My father! You my father! O, mockery!

[*Gesture as if she would repulse him.*

Montalban. Is it possible that in her frenzy she can spurn even me! [*approaches her.*

Clara. Go, go, go—I ask but that.

Euphemia. What means this terror at the sight of her father?

[*Clara again casts her eyes over the scene. She approaches Rosenberg, who points out Montalban to her. She recoils.*]

Clara. O! no, no, no! Not even a tear bedims his eyes, although he is my father! You would not have me follow him? You cannot mean it!

[*Rosenberg turns from her; she tremblingly approaches de Valmore, who points to Montalban. She exclaims in a tone of despair—*

Send me to the grave. I will meet death cheerfully, if it is your will, but save me from that man.

Rosenberg. Montalban, do your duty.

Clara. I have said I would die. Will not that content ye? Ye can but have my life, and I will yield it.

Rosenberg. Montalban, I say!

Clara. They are not human! [*Turns to Euphemia.*] I appeal to you. Angel of light! do not abandon me! They are not human! How have they treated me! They charge me with the worst of crimes—yet I am innocent! Pursue me as a wretch unfit to live—yet will not let me die!

[*Euphemia averts her face.*

Do not turn from me! Not one look!—one word! abandoned at last by you—even you! 'Tis well, 'tis well! I now can die!

[*Faints, supported by Marcelle.*

Euphemia. This trial has been too severe. I will protect her until the truth's discovered!

TABLEAU.

[*Curtain falls.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—*An apartment in the chateau.*

Enter Marcelle and Peter.

Peter. Well mother, what think you of all these strange doings?

Marcelle. I am enraged that I dare not speak my mind.

Peter. That's enough to enrage any woman.

Marcelle. [*to herself.*] But what good will come out of accusing Montalban? They will punish him, but his daughter will not be less unhappy! There is nothing but grief and despair on all sides.

Peter. Very true, mother. Our fete's knocked on the head.—Olympia is in affliction, every body's in the dumps; no more dancing—and to crown our misfortunes, I fear the dinner will be overdone before they have an appetite to eat it.—But grin and bear it, that's my maxim.

Marcelle. Poor Clara!—

Peter. How refreshing it smells.—Delicious perfume! They may talk of their Arabian gums, but to my taste there is no odour half as fragrant as the steam of a kitchen.

Marcelle. Have you observed how thoughtful Montalban appears?

Peter. Good Lord, not I. I have been talking with the cook on the philosophy of roasting venison.—He's a magnificent creature; formed when nature was in one of her most bountiful moods! They may talk of Alexander the Great and Julius Cæsar, but I would wager my appetite to a mess of porridge, he would beat them all hollow in basting a turkey.—If I were not Peter, I would be that cook.

Marcelle. [*abstractedly.*] I must see him, for I have a great desire to speak to him.

Peter. You shall see him, mother,—and you shall

speak to him; but have a care how you interrupt him while he is roasting the wild boar, for then he is hot and peppery, and snaps one up as short as a griskin. All great men are irritable; passionate myself at times.

Marcelle. Of whom are you speaking?

Peter. Of whom?—My friend the cook!

Marcelle. [*impatiently.*] Insatiable glutton, you should blush to think of nothing but eating, at a time we are all overwhelmed with grief.

Peter. Am I the cause? Am I exempt from disappointment? Was not I to be the cock of the walk in the amusements; and is not the whole affair knocked on the head, and my comb cut as smooth as your chin?—Answer me that, mother, and then handle me with gloves on, I beseech you. Disappointments indeed!—There's my speech!—What use can I make of it now!—And such a speech!—Listen, mother.—"Illustrious Princess—"

Marcelle. I have no time to listen to your fiddle faddle.

Peter. Don't interrupt me.—"Illustrious princess, on this momentous occasion—"

Marcelle. Po, po, hold your tongue, you silly fellow.

Peter. Zounds! I say, mother, you shall hear my speech. Sit down; I am charged to the muzzle, and you may expect to hear a pretty loud report.—"Illustrious—" [*forcing her into a chair.*

Marcelle. Come, it is time for us to be going home.

Peter. Home!—what!—without dinner?—are you mad?

Marcelle. What should we do here?

Peter. Eat the dinner if we die by it.—Victory or death,—that's my maxim.

Marcelle. Grief is depicted in every countenance. Clara is so distressed that no one can speak to her. —The princess is disconsolate.—Valmore pensive and taciturn, and the count, which most astonishes me, is still more affected than the others.—Montalban is sullen, and appears more like one who medi-

tates a crime, than one oppressed by sorrow. He comes. Observe him. Has he not the step of a criminal?

Peter. Yes, mother, on the way to the gallows.

Enter Montalban.

Montalban. How does my daughter find herself?

Marcelle. Ill at ease.

Montalban. Can I see her?

Marcelle. For what purpose?

Montalban. Am I not her father?

Marcelle. Her father! True, to her sorrow she has a father.

Peter. [*apart to Marcelle.*] Softly, you tread upon his kibes.

Montalban. What mean you by that remark?

Marcelle. Ask your own heart.

[*Montalban betrays passion, but suddenly checks himself.*]

Peter. [*apart to Marcelle.*] You'll have all the fat in the fire presently, mother.

Marcelle. Your presence makes a strange impression on her.

Montalban. With reason, since she is so highly culpable.

Marcelle. Culpable! And do you accuse her?

Montalban. Is it in my power to defend her?

Marcelle. Who has it more in his power than yourself?

Montalban. [*regarding her sternly—apart.*] O! rage!

Marcelle. She has related her misfortunes to me; and though she appears to the world in the light of a criminal, if I were but allowed to express my suspicions, I would wager my life that you know better than any other that Clara is innocent.

Peter. [*apart.*] Softly.—You tickle him till he grins.

Montalban. Are you aware of what you say!—What an absurd idea!—Can you suppose a father

could be so debased as to see his child perish if he had it in his power to save her? You are a parent, Marcelle.

Marcelle. We sometimes see a child more worthy than his father, and who would encounter even a death of ignominy, for his sake.

Peter. True, mother, that is my maxim. I would even forego tasting the wild boar to gratify you.

Montalban. Unworthy woman, are you aware of the barbarity of your calumnious imputations, and the punishment that you may invoke upon yourself. But hear and mark my words. If you breathe a syllable by which another may entertain the most distant idea of your odious suspicion, I swear I shall call down vengeance on your head equally just and terrible.

Peter. O that tongue of yours, mother! I knew how it would be. Out of the frying-pan into the fire, that's my maxim.

Marcelle. Bah! bah! I don't fear his menaces.

Peter. Ha! the count is coming.—I'll go take a turn in the kitchen and meditate on the vanity of human wishes. [*exit.*

Marcelle. I leave you to go and confer with your daughter. She is happy in the midst of her misfortunes in finding hearts more capable of feeling than your own. [*exit.*

Montalban. [*looking after her.*] What a woman! —Is it possible she has become acquainted with Clara's secret!—If I supposed so.—But the Count is here.—Now to ascertain whether his suspicions have also been awakened.

Enter Rosenberg.

Well, Count.

Rosenberg. I am in despair. Clara persists in disclosing nothing. Until this day I was disposed to believe her guilty, but now my soul is divided between hope and fear.—Ah! Montalban, what a dreadful state for a father!

Montalban. Calm your feelings. Think of the

honour of your family, and do not in a moment of weakness expose yourself to the scorn of the world.

Rosenberg. Barbarous prejudice!

Montalban. It is unjust, still it exists, and the high-born have as much to fear from it as the lowly.

Rosenberg. I admit it.—But since she has returned to her country, even to our presence, should she not find an asylum, where without fear of the future she may await her justification.—An event difficult to imagine, but perhaps not impossible.

Montalban. What a project!—This hope appears chimerical. Certainly I should be the last to instil doubt in your mind, but since she has constantly refused to make a confession even to me, which I have solicited with tears and prayers, to what other cause can we attribute her silence, than to a full conviction of the impossibility of affecting the solemn judgment that condemned her.

Rosenberg. True, true, but still she is my child.

Montalban. Remember that one accused—trembling between life and death, has little regard for the safety or feelings of others. If he had the power he would overturn nature itself to put aside the sword of justice, and create suspicions, which of themselves should condemn him to breathe his last sigh upon the scaffold.

Rosenberg. Still we have had examples of the innocent perishing in the place of the guilty.

Montalban. Granted. But when one is connected by blood even with the throne itself, he should rise superior to the weakness of nature, rather than run the chance of an experiment so uncertain and dangerous. The wounds of the heart heal of themselves, but honour once lost is never to be recovered.

Rosenberg. But where is the danger in permitting Clara to remain in her country?

Montalban. Should she be recognised—

Rosenberg. I will conceal her from the eyes of all.

Montalban. Impossible!—Your vassals already know that she is here. This news passes from

mouth to mouth, and we may expect the French tribunals will soon despatch their agents in pursuit of her.—That they will reclaim her is certain; what then will be your feelings! You will be reduced to the cruel necessity of delivering her to her executioners, or of declaring yourself to be her father, and it is still doubtful whether even such a declaration would be sufficient to save her.

Rosenberg. Your conjectures are frightful, but cannot destroy in my heart the sentiment that speaks in her favour. The presumption of her innocence presents an image so seductive, and creates so exalted an idea of her courage and virtue, that I reproach myself for the rigour of my proceedings against her. Judge of my despair should my desertion be the cause of her death, and her innocence be one day made manifest! Ah! Montalban, save me from the remorse that would follow!

Montalban. [*aside.*] He is not to be shaken.

Rosenberg. Place yourself in my situation. Since your heart is so deeply affected even by friendship, you can readily judge what it must cost me to renounce the sacred title by which nature has bound me to her.

Montalban. [*aside.*] I must try what fear will do. No, count, I will not place myself in your situation. I have felt too long the curse that attaches to it, and now I am resolved to return to my own humble but honourable station in society.

Rosenberg. What mean you?

Montalban. Friendship has blinded me, but reason at length awakens me to honour. Protect in your bosom a daughter whose crime will stamp upon your name a blot never to be effaced. Cover her with caresses, though nature recoils while caressing her; but for me, I prefer the esteem of my fellow men, to your fruitless and dangerous benefactions.

Rosenberg. You would not divulge the secret of her birth?

Montalban. Should it be divulged without my participation, in what light would I stand before the

public? Malignity would calumniate my intentions. They shun me for having a daughter so guilty, but if another's lips were to publish that she is your child, I should be execrated as a mercenary wretch, willing to traffic his sacred honour for gold. The pity I inspire would be converted to scorn, and I should forfeit all claims to the protection of mankind.

Rosenberg. What proofs would you have from me? Express your wishes, and I will accomplish them on the instant.

Montalban. I have done. Follow your own resolution, and I will accomplish mine. But should Clara perish in disgrace, her mother become distracted in despair, you may, perhaps, when too late, reproach yourself with the tragic result of your hasty determination. After having been disgraced by your prince for a marriage that he condemned, should you now encounter the hate of his successor, from the monstrous results produced by that alliance, you can reproach yourself alone for all your disasters. When abandoned by your friends, and humbled by malignity, you will have reason to regret not having followed the councils of a man who has given you so many fruitless proofs of his devotion.

Rosenberg. Ah! cease to wound a heart already tormented by its own sorrows. Still let us await until the close of the day. We will again see Clara, and make a last effort to draw the truth from her, and should it not prove successful, I promise to abandon her to your guidance.

Montalban. I dare not trust your courage.

Rosenberg. Your presence will sustain me.

Montalban. It would be more prudent to renounce this interview.

Rosenberg. I have promised it at the solicitation of the princess.

Montalban. You can evade the promise. Ha! they come! No, 'tis de Valmore alone. Collect yourself, lest your agitation awaken his suspicions.

Enter Valmore.

Valmore. Clara is more composed. The princess, who is unwilling to leave her for an instant, is about to conduct her to us.

Montalban. What can you hope from another interview? Why annoy her with useless questions? If she has discoveries to make, would she have waited until this time to justify herself?

Valmore. This language is extraordinary from your lips. Instead of being grateful for the interest we manifest, you seem disposed to throw obstacles in our way.

Montalban. I, signor! Such an intention is distant from my thoughts. Still I would spare her feelings, knowing that no good can arise from the torture to which you would subject her.

Valmore. [*fixedly.*] Do you assist in the examination about to take place?

Montalban. Who should interrogate her, if not her father?

Valmore. [*observing him.*] The princess has remarked that your presence—nay, the bare mention of your name, agitates her in a manner beyond her control.

Montalban. Ought not a daughter who has entailed deathless shame upon her family to shrink at the sight of the father she has dishonoured?

Valmore. So we imagined. But that woman, Marcelle, who appears so fondly attached to Clara, and with whom she has lived for three months on terms of the closest intimacy, attributes these sentiments to another cause.

Rosenberg. Then there is still hope, thank heaven!

Montalban. [*apart to Rosenberg.*] Count, you will betray yourself. And this cause; pray has she explained it to you?

Valmore. No; but in spite of all, she believes Clara's heart to be spotless, and her courage beyond all praise.

Montalban. [*observing Rosenberg.*] Count, be prudent. The prejudice of a weak mind in favour

of the unfortunate. Address and hypocrisy have secured her friendship.

Valmore. Is it not possible that in a moment of confidence Clara has made her the depository of her secret?

Montalban. You suppose then that a secret exists?

Valmore. Should you be displeased if it were so?

Montalban. Be careful how you credit it; though heaven is my witness I would abandon all earthly hopes to know it.

Valmore. Why then have you all along rejected the idea?

Montalban. I fear to indulge in it. The disappointment would be as severe as the first dreadful blow. But I am not astonished at your credulity. You love Clara. Your fatal passion has perhaps been rekindled by her presence, and it is painful to hate when the heart is burning with love. So far from blaming your efforts, I will second them with all my power. Endeavour to discover that innocence in my daughter that I have so frequently sought for in vain, and with transports I will bless the hand that restores me to honour and happiness.

Valmore. The attempt shall be made.

Montalban. She comes. Interrogate her. I will hear all without interfering; but this is the last time, I trust, that you will compel her to appear before you.

Enter Euphemia, Clara, Marcelle.

[*Clara advances slowly, supported by Marcelle. Euphemia precedes them, and should have time to speak before Clara descends.*]

Euphemia. Gentlemen, in order to obtain her consent to appear again before you, I have promised that she shall be treated with that delicacy which her situation is entitled to. Inspire her with confidence by the mildness of your proceedings, for it is the only way to obtain her confession.

Montalban. [*apart.*] This, I hope, is my last trial.

Clara. O! temper with mercy the power that my

misfortune has given you, and without renewing those questions that I am resolved never to answer, deign to point out an asylum to me where I may terminate in peace a life, the morning of which promised a close less fatal.

Valmore. Listen to me, Clara. We wish to behold you receiving that homage and respect due to beauty and virtue. If possible, restore you to the world.

Clara. I ask not that. Rather draw a veil as inky as midnight between me and this world. That would be an act of mercy; the other, punishment.

Valmore. Nay, nay. Allow me but one question. From all that you have said, we presume that you beheld the murderer.

Clara. Not again—O, not again!

Valmore. Clara, pardon me. If you have not denounced him, is it from motives of fear or affection, or that you could not at the time mark him sufficiently to establish an accusation precise and positive?

Clara. [*Her eyes wander from one to another, and finally fixing on Montalban, she says with effort.*] That's it—I *could* not. The last motive has kept me silent.

Valmore. You are not now before inflexible judges, who will tax as artifice the assertions of one accused should he be unable to establish their truth. Name the person you suspect. Measures shall be taken to verify this important fact, and every circumspection used that the delicacy of the case requires. Nothing shall be divulged, unless we obtain sufficient proof, and then with what ardour shall I not enter upon your defence, if we have the good fortune to unmask the wretch who has thrown upon you the burthen of his crime.

Clara. Vain hope.—A rampart, impassable, protects him from the blow.

Rosenberg. The greater reason that he should not be spared.—If he has nothing to fear from our resentment, whence arises this concern that you have for him?

Euphemia. Reflect upon the happy change that this confession would make in your own situation.—In seeing another denounced, your friends would examine the actions of his life, and the circumstances of the crime; and though the veil of mystery in which it is enveloped should prove too dark for truth to appear, still a doubt will be created that must result in your favour.

Clara. Ah! cease to assail me with arguments so powerful.

Montalban. Courage my child. All our hearts are open to you. If there is a criminal, deliver him without remorse to our vengeance.—Surrender him, I say, to the scaffold, and return him torment for torment.—Triumph, my child, whilst he expires amidst tortures that justice reserves for the guilty, and bears to his felon grave the public execrations he would have entailed upon you.

Clara. Ah! horrible thought!

Marcelle. [*apart.*] His heartlessness shocks me. O! that I were allowed to ask her a question.

Valmore. What would you ask?

Euphemia. Speak, Marcelle.

Rosenberg. Go on. I allow you.

Montalban. What!—Count!

Rosenberg. Let her explain herself.

Clara. Marcelle be careful that you commit no imprudence.

Marcelle. The wretch, then, has in your eyes a title so sacred that you prefer your own death to his degradation?

Clara. [*troubled.*] Marcelle!—I will speak no more.

Marcelle. The thing is plain. You are innocent; you have said so, and your tears attest it. Still the crime was committed,—you beheld the assassin, and rather than name him, heroically submit to the worst conjectures. So fearful a sacrifice could only be prompted by the strong feelings which nature or profound love implants in a magnanimous heart, and

I see here but two persons upon whom that suspicion could rest.

Valmore. What a strange supposition.

Montalban. Urge no farther this audacity and imprudence.

Marcelle. Why this passion.—Be cautious.—True, I have been guilty of presumption, but I have not accused you.

Clara. Marcelle, excess of friendship carries you too far.—Imitate my reserve, and cease to bring in question those who have suffered already too much by my misfortune.

Marcelle. Yes, doubtless, here is one who has suffered, and has reason to grieve.—[*pointing at Valmore.*]—— But the other is a monster who deserves to be strangled.

Euphemia. What language!

Montalban. Count, will you not impose silence on that slanderous woman.

Marcelle. Do you wish it?—But the count has allowed me to speak, and I will speak in spite of you.

Clara. You can affirm nothing.—Your conjectures are false, fearfully false!—It is useless to propagate the error by which you are deluded.—I protest against all that you have said—all you have conjectured.

Marcelle. Holy nature! and yet his lips were sealed in the midst of your fiery trial!—I cannot bear the idea of crime triumphing over persecuted virtue.—You beheld the criminal—you recognised him, and though nature may prevent you from breathing his name, there is nothing to compel me to that generous silence.

Rosenberg. Well.

Euphemia. Go on.

Valmore. Do you know the wretch?

Marcelle. [*Pointing at Montalban.*] Behold him there!

Euphemia. Her father!

Montalban. What madness!

Valmore. Have you any proofs!

Clara. Proofs!—O! no, she has no proofs!—And you would not credit such a charge as this without the clearest proof.

Marcelle. She herself told me that she was going to embrace your child when she recognised the monster who preceded her into the apartment. Surprised and trembling, she concealed herself, and was not apprised of his crime, until she beheld the bloody dagger which he threw upon her without being aware of her presence.

Rosenberg. What new light is this that breaks upon me!

Clara. [*with energy.*] I deny it all.—These are mere suspicions, vague, unsubstantiated, and before you all I deny the guilty imputation.

Rosenberg. Courageous girl! I now divine the motive that influences your magnanimous conduct.

Clara. [*With increased energy.*] No,—I say to you, they accuse him wrongfully.—He is innocent.—Come my father.—Let us quit this place, and seek an asylum where calumny cannot reach us.—Come, come! You have a daughter still.—[*Leads Montalban away.*]

Rosenberg. Hold!—Guards arrest him.

Enter Guards, Peter and Vassals.

Montalban. What! Count, are you aware what you are about to do?—Arrested!

Rosenberg. Think how to defend yourself.—Clara, approach.

Clara. I remain with my father. His fate is mine.

Rosenberg. I see it all.—It is to the sacred title Montalban bears, that you would immolate yourself so generously. Satisfy me of your innocence, and I will instantly prove to you that he is not your father.

Clara. Gracious heavens! not my father!

Valmore. What do I hear!

Montalban. [*apart.*] I am lost!

Rosenberg. [*takes Clara's hand.*] O! Clara, cease to appear criminal from excess of virtue. Behold the contending feelings by which my bosom is agitated.—Witness these tears.—Their fountain is both joy and grief.—Still if you doubt my transports are sincere, turn to your fond mother's arms, and there fully enjoy the blessing that has so long been withheld from you.

Clara. My mother! Do I dream! My mother!

Euphemia. Count, what fabrication is this?

Rosenberg. No, madam. Behold your child, whom I was about to sacrifice to the miserable pride that tyrannizes over man. But, innocent or guilty, she is ours, and as such must be acknowledged to the world.

Euphemia. [*embracing Clara.*] Unlooked for happiness!

Montalban. [*apart.*] The thunderbolt has fallen!

Clara. [*embraces Rosenberg.*] O, my father!—And he, for whom I have endured so much! O! away!

Valmore. Wretched villain!

Clara. Yes, Valmore, behold the murderer of Julian!

Valmore. Hell has not sufficient tortures to punish you for your wicked deeds.

Montalban. Spare me your fruitless reproaches. I might, by a positive denial, prolong my life, and perhaps escape the punishment that awaits me. But what is existence in a world like this! Death is preferable, and I approach his reeking altar without fear. The heroic conduct of that virtuous girl has awakened feelings that have long been buried, and fiendlike as I have been, I will yet make one sacrifice to virtue. I am the criminal!

Valmore. What motive could impel you to such a deed?

Montalban. A motive, capable of rending every human tie asunder, and for which man will forfeit even his inheritance in heaven—avarice! Is it astonishing that the lowly and the oppressed should

yield to its allurements, when we behold the high-born and the prosperous its votaries and its victims? Clara's father had promised me a liberal recompense if I should effect a union between you and his daughter. One obstacle interposed,—a fatal one to his views,—and I removed it, believing that by one blow I should become disenthralled from the heavy load an oppressive world had heaped upon me. I have done—lead me to my prison.

[*Led off by guards.*

Euphemia. O, my child! The mystery is at last unveiled that so long deprived us of each other's love.

Valmore. Noble minded Clara! What mortal could believe himself worthy of possessing a heart such as yours!

Rosenberg. We have found him, Valmore, and when we have restored this courageous victim of error, we promise not to dispose of her without first consulting you. Good Marcelle, you shall never quit my daughter; her happiness and mine are owing to your friendship. [*To vassals.*] And you, my friends, recognise in Clara the child of your benefactress, and participate in the happiness of a father, who offers you in this virtuous pledge of his love, a heart to solace you in your misfortunes.

[*The Curtain falls.*

A TALE OF HARD SCRABBLE.

"Believe it, there's ne'er a mistress in the world
Can mislike it."

Cynthia's Revels.

The attorney and the apothecary, by prescriptive right, belong to the aristocracy of every village;—by aristocracy is meant that class of the community who live by doing nothing—a laborious kind of life, certainly, and by no means profitable, still many adopt it of choice, and believe it conclusive evidence of their gentility, in spite of a seedy coat and pockets to let.

There is a little village called Hard Scrabble, somewhere in New Jersey—true, several places in that state are justly entitled to the same cognomen, but, in order to prevent all geographical mistakes, the Hard Scrabble referred to fronts upon the Atlantic, while behind extends the deserts of Arabia in little, and is justly celebrated for blue-fish and oysters, white sand and black mosquitoes; all of which are considered staple commodities, except the last.

There is scarcely a spear of grass growing for many miles around Hard Scrabble. It is so barren

that a whip-poor-will would not fly over it, and it is on record that a flock of crows, in making the attempt, fell dead when they spied out the nakedness of the land. Notwithstanding all this, it is a place of resort in the summer season, by such as imagine that they can find pleasure in any other place than their own homes. It is astonishing how much privation and annoyance some people can undergo, if it be only christened by the name of pleasure.

Our village, like every other village, could boast of an attorney and apothecary, and if the fact of doing nothing be a legitimate claim to aristocracy, their caste was an elevated one, for Capias, the attorney, had not issued a writ for a twelve-month, and the same length of time had elapsed since death had released the last patient of little Tapioca by writ of habeas corpus—still our worthies did not despond. Hope feeds her votaries on the chamelion's dish; a rattle is sufficient to amuse us through life, and if we unfortunately break the toy, and discover the tinsel of which it is composed, we sit down and weep like children.

It would have been a handsome speculation to have purchased our village worthies at their real value, and to have sold them again for what they imagined they were worth. They were on excellent terms with themselves, were both bachelors, and looked forward to the day when Hymen and Fortune would combine to make them happy. The non-productives, whenever abandoned by the latter, have implicit faith in Hymen working miracles in their favour. Every prudent man should have two strings to his bow, and the ladies say it is not amiss to have two beaux to your string.

Hard Scrabble, as already observed, was resorted to in the summer season, by those who fancied that mosquito phlebotomy would benefit their health, and while the other watering places were as crowded and uncomfortable as the Black Hole of Calcutta, the few who visited here had ample room to battle with the swarms of insects that every breeze from

the sea brought upon them. This is no small advantage to those who object to being bitten, and do not consider the monotonous hum of his little trumpet, as one of the pleasures of a watering place. The sting of a mosquito may be compared to olives, tomatoes, and the condiments used in French cookery—we must be accustomed to them before they become palatable, and a man must be stung very often by a mosquito before he likes it.

Miss Deborah Nightshade visited Hard Scrabble for the benefit of her health. It was so retired, and there was such a delightful view of gray sand all around, particularly when the sun was beating on it, and it was so charmingly romantic to see the fishermen and the wreckers at their labour, and the seabreeze was so bracing even in the dog-days, that Miss Nightshade felt convinced that her health would be speedily reinstated and her beauty renovated. The latter is seldom the work of time.

Miss Nightshade belonged to that much-injured class of society, in vulgar parlance styled old maids. Having refused, according to her own account, six advantageous offers, in the bloom of youth and beauty, she ultimately found herself on the wrong side of matrimony, and reluctantly despaired of ever warming her chilled bosom at the torch of Hymen. For a few years it was her sole delight to relate to her friends her former conquests; and a glow, something of a brickdust hue, would return to her withered cheeks, when she dwelt upon the entire control she at one time had over her heart-stricken admirers—"Hoc est vivere bis," says Martial, but as this, by continual repetition, gradually ceased to afford gratification, Miss Deborah sought for amusement in censuring the imprudence and immodesty of the belles of the present age. By this time she had purchased a pair of spectacles, and consequently very few follies of this nature passed under her nose without the closest observation. When a cynic, in spite of his satire and reproof, observes all around him enjoying their pleasures, without showing any

disposition to mend their follies, he soon becomes weary of growling, and though his disgust is heightened by having been treated with indifference, he swallows his spleen, and suffers the world to work its own salvation. After Miss Deborah had ceased to take any amusement in censuring the foibles of the rising generation, finding she had but little gratification in society, she fancied that there would be a pleasure still remaining, if she could only appear the most miserable member of it. She was not peculiar in this particular.

The arrival of Miss Nightshade created quite a sensation in Hard Scrabble. True there was no military parade, discharge of ordnance, nor was she invited to a public dinner by the functionaries of the village, in conformity with the fashion of the day on great occasions; still there was neither man, woman, nor child in Hard Scrabble who was not full of the important arrival, within ten minutes after its taking place. It is astonishing how rapidly news circulates in a village.

Among those who felt most deeply interested in the new comer were Counsellor Capias and Dr. Tapioca. The former was moved thereunto as he prided himself upon being a man of gallantry, the cock of the village, and the lady would naturally expect numberless little attentions which he alone was calculated to perform; while on the other hand the apothecary looked forward to having a profitable patient, for he already heard that the lady was an invalid, and had visited that distinguished watering place, Hard Scrabble, for the benefit of her health.

Miss Nightshade imagined herself afflicted with more complaints than physiologists have touched upon, and she protested that her feelings were, at times, such as were not to be paralleled by those of any case on record. Her physicians were amazingly puzzled. They avoided naming any disease in her presence, as she was sure to have it the next day, though she was systematic in appropriating a day to each disorder, and was careful not to have two com-

plaints at the same time, lest the shock should be too violent for her constitution. Mondays she appropriated to the rheumatism, Tuesdays to palpitation of the heart, Wednesdays to the ague, Thursdays to dyspepsia, and so on throughout the week, by which prudent arrangement she greatly facilitated the practice of her medical advisers, who usually prescribed, in all cases,

℞. Panis micar. ℥ss.
Aq. fontan. ℥x.
M. ft. pil. x.
Sumat. i, pro re natâ.

Which hieroglyphics Champollion, after intense study, has deciphered to mean neither more nor less than ten pills made up of bread and pure water, a medicine fully as efficacious as Dr. Last's chalk and vinegar, which if it could do no good, could do no harm. Strange it is that the science of medicine should be so mystified as to give a frightful aspect even to the staff of life.

Such being the constitution of Miss Nightshade, she was no sooner warm in her chamber at Hard Scrabble than she made inquiry for the physician of the village. But our watering place, in one respect, resembled Gilead, "there was no physician there," and accordingly little Tapioca was summoned to her bedside as the most available succedaneum in the emergency. His heart dilated with hope as he seized his ivory-headed cane to visit his new patient, and he felt satisfied that there was no place that held out such encouragement to a young practitioner as Hard Scrabble. He had only been ten years in practice, and already had had ten patients, without including the parson's cow.

He paid his first visit on Monday, and accordingly found his patient labouring under a violent attack of fancied rheumatism, in hourly expectation of her approaching dissolution. A short time before his arrival, as her nurse was assisting her to rise, the old lady, groaning most piteously, exclaimed, "Gently, gently, I beseech you;—do you think I am made of

iron!—be careful how you touch that arm,—Oh! it will certainly drop off with pain—dear me, unless I obtain relief very soon, I cannot last much longer," with a hundred similar exclamations; but they succeeded in supporting her to a sofa, into which she fell, exhausted with pain and weakness. Her temples were immediately bathed, smelling bottles applied, and the house was in a bustle from the garret down to the cellar. The cockles of Miss Nightshade's heart warmed as she beheld the anxiety of all around her. She had not remained long in this happy situation, before Tapioca was announced as ascending the staircase. What was to be done in this emergency? Scarcely half drest,—her clothes had been opened during her fainting fit,—and too weak to reach the bed, if they had time to support her to it—must she be detected in this dishabille? Maiden modesty forbid. She rose from the sofa, made but one spring, and "swift as Camilla over the bending corn," she regained the bed, huddled herself beneath the covering, and overturned the old nurse in her rapid passage. When Tapioca entered, the fainting scene was again enacted with considerable effect, and after applying every remedy, apparently to little purpose, he left her, with a doleful countenance and an ominous shake of the head.

Our disciple of Galen had no sooner departed than his patient recovered sufficiently to give instructions to her nurse. "To-morrow she said. I feel that I shall be deprived of the use of speech, and you must relate particularly the different stages of my sickness to the Doctor, that he may be enabled to treat my case correctly." Here followed a long and minute statement—at such an hour she was taken with a violent chill, which was succeeded by a raging fever—after lying in a delirious state for three hours, she fell into a short and restless sleep, and awoke with the most excruciating head-ache—and much more, of a similar nature, which occupied the old nurse the whole afternoon to commit to memory.

The first person that Tapioca met when he

emerged into the street was his friend Capias, to whom he related all that had transpired, and was full of golden dreams as to the future. He looked upon his patient as the true Eldorado, and he assumed an air of superiority over the briefless attorney, which did not escape his notice, and it mortified his pride. How strangely constituted is the mind of man!—The one was elated at the prospect of physicking an old woman to death, and had already reached the zenith of his ambition, while the other was sunk to the nadir of despondency for the lack of an opportunity of prosecuting some poor devil for robbing a hen-roost.—A cause like that, ye Gods! would have enabled him to eclipse the reputation of Cicero and Demosthenes, and though the jury might sleep and the judges snore, still fame, with her brazen trump would blow a blast that would be heard even to the four corners of Hard Scrabble.—And what is life without fame?

Poor Capias was in the slough of despond as he contemplated the air of importance assumed by his friend the apothecary; for as long as they continued upon the same footing, he considered himself at the head of the village; true, he maintained but a divided empire, but now his rival had fearfully outstripped him in the race for glory, and the consequences were to be deprecated. Moreover Tapioca himself had undergone an alarming metamorphosis. He was no longer the slouchy, quiescent creature, willing to yield his opinions to the dogmatisms of his friend Capias. On the contrary, he felt his importance and was determined that others should feel it also; he accordingly pulled up his frill, drew his hat over his forehead, applied the ivory head of his cane to his nose, and paraded the main street of Hard Scrabble for two hours, knee deep in sand, and over head and ears in a brown study.—The dogs barked at him, the ragged urchins followed in his wake, and the old women threw up their arms in amazement, still the apothecary stalked on, and felt himself like Selkirk, "the monarch of all he surveyed."

Capias watched his movement, for one hour, and finally, overpowered by his feelings, shut himself up in his office, and dropped into his arm chair the picture of incurable despair.

It is said that the night is darkest as the morn approaches, and so it proved to the desponding attorney, for just as he had concluded to pull up stakes and abandon Hard Scrabble for ever to the victorious Tapioca, he was awakened from his gloomy reflections by a violent knock at the door, and on opening it a messenger from Miss Nightshade stood before him, with a summons to appear in her presence without delay.—It was sometime before the attorney recovered sufficiently from his astonishment to demand the nature of the lady's business with him.

"She wishes to employ you professionally," said the messenger.

"Ha! What! How!"—ejaculated the attorney. It had been so long since the poor fellow had been employed professionally that he had almost forgot the meaning of the phrase.

"She wants you to draw up her will," continued the other, "for she thinks she is agoing to die."

"Make her will!—Going to die!—I knew how it would be when she called in that d—d cow doctor Tapioca.—He's not fit to physic a pig with the measles."

Tapioca was still wading through the sand, with his cane applied to his nose, unconscious of the illiberal remarks of his friend the attorney.—The messenger proposed informing him of the desperate state of his patient, but Capias objected, protesting that a second visit from the apothecary would effectually supercede the necessity of his own services, for he looked upon him as Death's catch-pole, that in every pill and potion was a *Capias ad respondendum*, from which there was not even a temporary escape by any species of bail or mainprize. How a single drop of envy will curdle a whole pail full of the milk of human kindness!

The attorney took from his shelf a book of forms, and a quire of paper, then cocking his hat fiercely, and assuming an air of gravity, becoming a man of business, he proceeded to the dwelling of his client, and as he passed his triumphant rival, he did not even condescend to bestow a look of recognition upon him.—Tapioca checked his perambulation, and with amazement beheld the attorney enter the residence of his patient, and though he had been pluming himself for the last two hours, it was now a difficult matter for him to conceal the white feather.

Capias was solemnly ushered into the chamber of the invalid, and introduced to her, bolstered up in an easy chair, an old nurse refreshing her olfactories with a bottle of hartshorn.—Preliminaries being settled, the attorney seated himself at a table, spread his papers, and commenced taking down the heads of the instrument.

"This is a solemn business, Mr. Capias," observed Miss Nightshade, in a faint voice.

"Very, madam, but one which it is the duty of us all to perform sooner or later. Now for my part I regularly make my will on the 31st day of December.—I settle up my affairs, and am always prepared at a moment's warning. Life is uncertain."

"Then you do not think, Mr. Capias, that making one's will, is likely to hasten one's death?"

"A vulgar error, madam.—On the contrary, it is calculated to renew our lease—I may call it our lease for life, for we are all nothing more than mere tenants for life, here; no fee simple;—an estate tail with remainder to the worms. Making one's will is calculated to tranquillize the mind, and there is nothing so conducive to long life as a tranquil mind. Mens conscia recti—as the poet says—you understand, madam."

"Well the thoughts of making my will always shattered my nerves to that degree!—Nurse, that bottle of salts.—But since it must be done—and you are sure it will not hasten my end, Mr. Capias?"—

"Positive. Ten years ago, old squire Polywog

was considered *in articulo mortis*, and I was sent for post-haste to make his will. Now the squire was a bachelor, and when he came to look over the large estate he was about to bequeath to a parcel of thankless relatives, who wished him out of the way, he protested that it would be very disagreeable to die under such circumstances, so he plucked up courage, pulled off his night cap, got out of bed, got married, lived like an emperor, spent his estate, and inundated Hard Scrabble with a shoal of little Polywogs."

"O, shocking!" exclaimed Miss Nightshade, "you do not mean to recommend the same course of conduct to me, Mr. Capias?"

"Much better than dying, madam," responded the attorney, bowing, "and a safer remedy than taking Tapioca's physic."

"Dear, dear, I should never live to go through with it!—Some hartshorn, nurse.—The bare idea shocks my nervous system to that degree!—You can't think, Mr. Capias!"—

The nurse bathed her temples, applied the salts to her nostrils, and the invalid finally recovered sufficiently to give Capias the heads of the manner in which she wished to dispose of her worldly possessions, as follows:—

"To my brother Jeroboam, and his heirs, Mr. Capias, I give all my farm in Crane Neck Valley.—It was the family homestead, and it is but right that brother Jerry should have it, as he is my elder brother."

"Perfectly right"—responded Capias, making a memorandum. "We do not pay sufficient regard to the continuance of old families among us. Few are so fortunate as to survive two generations.—What shall Crane Neck farm be rated at, madam?"

"Ten thousand dollars," replied Miss Deborah, refreshing her drooping spirits with the hartshorn. "It has been valued at twelve thousand, but as Jerry is a favourite brother, put it at ten."

"Very well, madam, pray proceed."

"His little son Joktan, I should like to provide for, dear little cherub!—the hartshorn nurse—so I will give him the grazing meadows in Muck Slush Swamp; they may be a handsome estate by the time he comes of age."

"Sufficient, no doubt, madam, to keep him from being swamped in this dirty world," responded Capias, noting little Joktan's legacy.

"Women, you know, Mr. Capias, are always imposed upon in the management of real estate, so I will give all my stock in the five per cents. to my dear sister Lucretia."

"All the stock in the five per cents."—muttered Capias, writing—"How much, madam!"

"Only eight thousand dollars," replied the other, with a sigh of regret that it was not more.

"Only eight thousand! what an eternity of practice in Hard Scrabble!" ejaculated the attorney.

The invalid proceeded to make handsome bequests to uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces, and concluded by nominating the favourite little Joktan as residuary legatee, by which time she was completely exhausted by the exertion, and Capias withdrew to put the instrument in form, but not before he had received instructions to have it ready to be executed the following day.

Capias on the way to his office encountered his friend Tapioca still standing in the same position as when they last parted. His curiosity was wrought to the pitch of agony to ascertain what business the attorney could possibly have had with his patient. But that he had business was evident, for he waded through the sand with an unusual swell, his law book in one hand, and ostentatiously displaying the roll of paper in the other.—The children ran away, abashed, and even the whiffets were afraid to bark at him. Tapioca followed in his wake, as crest fallen and dejected as Rolla when kneeling to the haughty Spaniard. Capias entered his office and the apothecary followed.

Adversity is said to be the school of virtue; but

this is questionable; for in some minds the worst feelings take deepest root when fortune frowns, like poisonous weeds that become more rank in the shade, while in the sunshine of prosperity flowers alone would bud and blossom in the same soil.—When a man is on good terms with himself he usually looks with an eye of complacency upon the whole world, and so it was with Capias. Finding himself in the ascendent, the bitter feelings that had annoyed him a few hours before were no longer remembered, and he looked upon his rival with a smile of complacency, at the same time assuming a sort of patronizing air.—This constant aiming at superiority is happily illustrated in one of Sheridan's comedies, where an errand boy having been cuffed by the footman, exclaims "Master kicks Tag, Tag kicks me, and I'll go kick the dog."—He is a poor devil indeed who has not even a dog to kick.

Tapioca encouraged by the smile aforesaid, ventured to ask in a faltering voice, what it was had called him to Miss Nightshade's lodgings.

"Professional business," replied Capias, pompously.

"I rejoice to hear it"—that was a white lie.—"Of what nature, pray?"

"To make the old lady's will.—She already smokes that you are not a regular practitioner and she thinks it well to be prepared for the worst."

"Bless my soul! You did not hint at such a thing?"

"Dr. Tapioca you must be aware that I am superior to such a pitiful act of treachery.—You are my friend, and to prove that I think you so, I will let you into a secret."

"A secret! I am all impatience."

"You have read of the mines of Peru?" said Capias, with an air of mystery.

"I have."

"You have also heard of the golden fleece of Jason?"

"Certainly."

"And of Sinbad's cavern of diamonds?"

"I have read of that also."

"Then, my dear fellow, you will be astonished," continued Capias, tapping him gently on the shoulder, "when I inform you that the wealth of all these is united in that old woman. Zounds, man, she's the only true philosopher's stone."

"I am amazed! But how do you know all this?"

"How do I know? I am her legal adviser, and we gentlemen of the law are entrusted with important secrets at times. See here," he continued, spreading open the sheet of memoranda he had taken, as deliberately as if he had been opening Pandora's box—"See here is a brief outline of her possessions."

Tapioca cast his eye over the several bequests, and ejaculated, with uplifted hands, "Bless my soul!"

"Now answer me one question, upon the honour of a medical man," continued Capias—"Is she seriously ill?"

"Very."

"What is her complaint?"

"Can't say—all sorts—a complication of disorders; sometimes one, sometimes another."

"You are of opinion she can't last long?"

"A month at farthest."

"You are her physician, and no doubt will see your prediction verified. Now, my friend, I have another secret to impart. I have been a long time at the bar, and wish to retire from practice."

"That would be repaying practice in its own coin," replied the apothecary, with a sardonic grin.

"You may laugh, sir, but there's no joke in that," continued the other, gravely. "Business is becoming too fatiguing, and it is time that I should think of settling myself comfortably for life. I have an idea of making the old lady Mrs. Capias."

"And at the same time making yourself comfortable with the golden fleece?"

"Precisely so. I shall then, my dear friend, leave to you the undivided throne of Hard Scrabble, and

retire to my plantation in Crane Neck Valley; and while I sink into the obscurity of private life, I must endeavour to console myself with the ten thousand in the five per cents., brother Jerry's consternation, and little Joktan's residuary legacy. What think you of my plan?"

"Admirable! nothing could be better."

"Do what you can to forward it, and we shall have rare sport, snipe shooting in Muck Slush meadows. I know you are fond of snipe shooting."

"Always was."

"I am to see her to-morrow, at four o'clock, with the will, and I shall change her thoughts from death, or my tongue has lost the power of persuasion. Now go, and let me finish the will. Business, you know, is paramount to all other considerations."

"Certainly. To-morrow at four?"

"At four precisely, I shall make an opening into the mines of Peru."

"And bear off the Hesperian fruit, in spite of the dragon," said Tapioca.

"Dragon and all," added Capias, as Tapioca left the office, and the attorney commenced the last will and testament of Miss Nightshade.

The following day, about two o'clock, Tapioca was seen slowly walking along the street of Hard Scrabble towards the lodgings of his patient, in deep thought, with his ivory-headed cane applied to his thin proboscis. The reader is already aware that Miss Deborah had foretold that at this time she would be speechless, and accordingly she lay in state, as mute as an oyster awaiting the tide, at the same time enjoying the commiseration of the village gossips, who had assembled on the momentous occasion. This is a custom which regular practitioners protest against, as the incessant clatter which half a dozen old women necessarily must occasion, is considered even more injurious to the patient than the physic which the established routine of science compels him to swallow.

The windows were all darkened, and not a word

was spoken above a whisper, although the conclave was composed of the most loquacious gossips of Hard Scrabble. But then the whisper was as unbroken as the hum in a bee-hive, when its inmates are preparing to swarm. The invalid overheard their whispering with inward satisfaction, and slily watched their motions without the apprehension of being seen, as the bed curtains were carefully closed to prevent the light from incommoding her.

At length Tapioca arrived. On passing the threshhold, his under jaw suddenly fell, his cadaverous countenance became distended, and he assumed the mock solemnity of a verger at the head of a funeral procession. He approached the bed, felt the patient's pulse, and after a few significant interjections, such as, hum! ha! delightful pulse! moist skin! changes for the better, &c. he seated himself and inquired of the nurse the progress of the complaint since his last visit, as he found it impossible to elicit an answer from Miss Deborah. The old nurse began her story:—

"She was taken with a fever, sir, shortly after you left her."

"A chill, a chill you mean," exclaimed Miss Deborah, petulantly.

"True, true, I remember now. She was taken with a violent chill, which was succeeded by a raging fever."

"That's right," interrupted the speechless patient, at the same time raising herself upon her elbow, to attend to the interesting relation.

"She then fell into a restless sleep," continued the nurse.

"Not so," cried the old maid, "your memory is very treacherous. After lying in a delirious state—"

"Oh! yes, that's it. After lying in a delirious state for three hours, she awoke with the most excruciating head-ache."

"No, no—you stupid old —— what's to become of the restless sleep? Get out of the room, and I will relate it to the doctor myself, although the exer-

tion may occasion a relapse;"—which she accordingly did, in a narration interspersed with a few interesting episodes, which occupied a full hour. Tapioca listened like a lineal descendant of Job, occasionally throwing in a "hum," or a "ha!" by way of keeping up the dialogue, or enlivening the conversation.

When the invalid had finished, the gossips began to deplore the state of the sick woman, and to express their doubts as to the propriety of the course of treatment the apothecary had adopted. One contended that the medicine he had prescribed was too active for her feeble system, and that a second dose would be the death of her. Another was positive that there was *marcury* in the pills, and there was nothing worse in cases like the present than *marcury* pills. A third had lost her husband in two hours after taking a dose of pills, and she could never abide the sight of a pill since, for they were all rank *pisen*. She put on her spectacles, opened the box, and protested that they were the same *pisenous* things that her husband had taken, for they looked as much alike as two peas. Miss Nightshade herself, besought Tapioca not to prescribe any more of those pills, for they had occasioned such violent spasms that she was certain she could not survive a return of her sufferings. Tapioca was astounded; for in compounding the pills he had most scrupulously followed the mystical recipe already adverted to, with the addition of a little liquorice powder, in order to give his boluses of bread a legitimate aspect.

Seeing the practitioner confounded, the gossips benevolently undertook to prescribe for the patient themselves. One was certain she could cure her, and was for drenching her with *yarb* tea, for her complaint lay on her *innards* and should be brought out by *presperation* through the pores. Another thought the complaint was *narvous*, and that the patient should have nourishing food, so she recommended clam soup, for every body knows there's nothing so strengthening as clam soup; and the old

lady with the spectacles, who had peeped into the pill box, was positive it was a fit of the *agy*, and there was nothing better for the *agy* than brandy and black pepper. She had cured even the dumb *agy* with six doses, when the patient had become too lazy even to shake. Another old woman contended that it was the cholera, and she was for applying bags of hot sand to the patient's stomach, and injecting her veins with boiling sea water. This, she contended, was the most approved and speedy method of relieving the patient, and that the experiment might be made without expense, as Hard Scrabble abounded with both the remedies.

When doctors disagree, then comes the tug of war. We occasionally see whole colleges of physicians going to loggerheads about matters of as little importance as herb tea, clam soup, brandy and pepper, and hot sand and salt water, and then we behold

> ——— Corruption boil and bubble
> Till it o'errun the stew,

and peace is not to be restored until the advocate of herb tea is dethroned, and he of the clam soup party elevated to his place; and as the lights of true science become more effulgent, we behold the clam soup champion, in his turn, "whistled down the wind, to bray at fortune," while the triumphant champion of hot sand and salt water mounts the throne, and, flushed with victory, "cries havoc, and let's slip the dogs of war." All things in this mundane sphere are subject to the mutations of fashion, and he is indeed a skilful licentiate, and beyond reproach, who makes it his business to dispose of all his patients in the most recent and fashionable manner, without distinction of parties. It would be exceedingly mortifying to the humblest and best-tempered man in the world, to be slovenly despatched by phlebotomy, at a season when blistering is all the rage.

The practitioners of Hard Scrabble, after voting,

nem. con., that Tapioca would kill his patient, if he continued to administer the active remedies he had resorted to, commenced dissertations on the virtues of herb tea, clam soup, &c. each advocating her favourite panacea, with that zeal peculiar to village matrons who have brooded over one cherished idea, until it stands as prominent and fixed in the waste of mind as Chimborazo in the map of South America. As they were all talkers and no listeners, the jargon soon became as deafening as was the confusion of tongues at the building of Babel. Tapioca looked on in silent amazement, while his patient peeped from behind the curtains and evidently enjoyed the commotion her case had occasioned. The disputants, finding words to be weak weapons, having thoroughly rung the changes upon *yarb* tea, clam soup, and salt water, finally fell to pulling each other's caps, when Tapioca thought it high time to interfere, and endeavour to dislodge the invaders, which he succeeded in doing, but not until the skirt of his coat, and his enormous frill, had received tristful tokens of the fierceness of the struggle. Disciples of the healing art in a village have much to encounter from rivals of this description.

Our hero, having possession of the field, adjusted his discomfitted apparel, then seated himself beside the bed to tranquillize the agitated nerves of his patient, and in order to produce this result, took her hand and gave it a gentle squeeze, at the same time looking as tenderly as the Macedonian upon Statira, or Antony upon the crocodile of the Nile. True, this was a strange prescription for excited nerves, but we all know that country apothecaries occasionally administer a wrong medicine, still as the present did not appear to be disagreeable, and was perfectly harmless, the mistake was excusable. Like a cautious practitioner, he closely watched the effects, and finding the symptoms favourable, he repeated the dose, which acted as a charm, and like Othello, "upon that hint he spake."

"I understand your system, madam, thoroughly,

and take my word for it, there is but one remedy can restore you."

"And what is that, doctor?"

"Matrimony, madam," he replied, in a tone of decision that would have become Esculapius himself—"Matrimony is a radical cure."

"Do not mention it. The bare idea shocks my nerves to that degree you cannot think!" She covered her face, to conceal her confusion, or rather that she might appear to be confused.

"It is the only prescription that will avail, I assure you," he continued, gravely—"You might swallow my whole shop, madam, and still not recover. There is more virtue in matrimony than in antimony, though at times they operate in the same manner—a little nausea, which tends to keep up a wholesome excitement, and renews the energies of life."

"Mr. Capias hinted at something of the kind," replied Miss Nightshade, in a bashful tone.

"He did! And what does that pettifogger know about the healing art? An impudent fortune-hunter, and so poverty-stricken that even Lazarus himself would blush to claim kindred with him."

"A fortune-hunter! You shock me!"

"A desperate fortune-hunter, madam, and I assure you, on the honour of a medical man, that he has already fixed his eye upon the farm in Crane Neck Valley, and little Joktan's legacy."

"Dear little Joktan!—And could he be so cruel as to deprive the poor child of its inheritance?"

"Fortune-hunters have no more bowels than a chameleon; moreover he's an attorney, 'a dull and muddy mettled rascal,' who manages to keep body and soul together by shooting snipe and catching oysters, which he calls practising law.—You know him now, madam, so be on your guard."

"It is to be deplored that such are suffered to go at large and prey upon the credulous and unsuspecting," said Miss Deborah, with a sigh.

"Greatly to be deplored," responded Tapioca

gravely, "for if there is any thing I heartily despise, it is your idle, worthless fortune-hunter."

"They are the bane of society," said Miss Deborah.

"Destroyers of the peace and happiness of families," responded Tapioca.

"Should be shunned as a pestilence," added Miss Nightshade.

"Hunted as beasts of prey," continued the apothecary,—"and should be doomed to drink of the bitter waters of disappointment."

"I am delighted to hear such correct sentiments," said the lady.

"A man without sentiment, may be compared to —to—a bitter shaddock; tempting without, gall within," added Tapioca.—"But may I ask what it was Mr. Capias presumed to say to you?"

"He incidentally referred to the case of a certain Squire Polywog, who was restored to health by matrimony, and though he did not speak plainly, the conclusion was irresistible."

"Sly dog!—Well I must say the case of the old squire was miraculous;—he was under my hands for six months; went through the whole pharmacopoeia, and was beginning anew, when to the astonishment of all, he insisted on the parson saying the marriage ceremony instead of the funeral service, and is now the merriest man in Hard Scrabble."

"I should like to see him," exclaimed the invalid, her eye sparkling like a pewter button.

"It would do your heart good," continued the man of drugs, "and then the dear little Polywogs paddling in the puddles!"

"O, don't name it!—Shocking! I can't think of such a thing!"

"Think of what, madam?" asked the apothecary in a tone as insinuating as a seton.

"I can never consent to be restored to health on those conditions," replied the patient with a languishing air.

"Self preservation is the first law of nature," replied the apothecary, gravely.

"True, very true. I have heard as much from brother Jerry."

"No one should wantonly abandon the post assigned him," continued Tapioca, applying his ivory headed cane to his nose.

"O dear! you shock my nerves to that degree!"

"Desperate means are resorted to by bold practitioners in desperate cases."

"And do you really think my case so desperate, doctor?"

"Very." He felt her pulse, which was attended with a great squeeze of the hand, as he added, "and unless you follow my prescriptions implicitly, I will not answer for the consequences."

"It's a shocking thing to die, doctor."

"Terrible.—It is a step, that once taken cannot be recalled.—'To die, to sleep no more,' as Shakspeare has it."

"To sleep no more!—Nay, doctor, one does nothing but sleep."

"True; you are right; Shakspeare's wrong. To sleep! perchance to dream! ay, there's the rub."

"And such frightful dreams, doctor!"

"Worse than the nightmare, no doubt."

"Do you think so?"

"Upon the veracity of a medical man," replied Tapioca, spreading his broad hand upon his bosom. "True, I never died myself, but my patients have, and I have consequently a right to know something about it."

"Dear, dear, it is shocking to that degree, that I must submit to your prescription. But I should like to see Squire Polywog and his interesting progeny before I venture."

She desired Tapioca to withdraw, and await her appearance in the parlour. He bowed profoundly and obeyed, and before a quarter of an hour had elapsed, he was gratified in finding that his prescrip-

tion had operated like the wand of Marquino,* for his patient came tripping in and smiling as the month of May after a hard winter, a smart bunch of ribands sticking in her cap, like the red flag of a pirate, indicating slaughter to all who might fall in her way. A bunch of pink riband should operate as a caution to all old bachelors, for when it is hung out on the maintop, they may rest assured that no quarter will be shown, when they come to boarding.

The delighted couple sallied forth through the sand to visit the Nestor of the village, Squire Polywog. What were the topics of their conversation on the way history has failed to record, and never having attempted the character of Pyramus to a Thisbe in her grand climacteric, even imagination affords no clue to supply the interesting hiatus. What was said can never be known, but doubtless all that could be said on such a trying occasion, was said by the little apothecary, for Miss Nightshade appeared at the squire's office, "with a blush on her cheek and a smile in her eye," while her whole face was dimpled like a basin of cream. The man who can suddenly produce such astonishing results, must be intimately acquainted with all the secret avenues to the human heart.

The portly squire was seated in his curule chair, looking out with a placid and benign countenance upon a swarm of little breechless Polywogs playing in the hot sand before the door. He was in one of those happy moods when a man thinks he thinks, and the looker-on might labour under the same delusion, and place him on the list of philosophers, when in fact he was only sleeping, and lacked sufficient energy even to close his eye-lids. Village justices are subject to this disease, especially after dinner in the dog days.

The entrance of Tapioca and the lady recalled the wandering senses of the squire from the land of

* A necromancer in Cervantes' tragedy of Numantia, who possessed the power of raising the dead.

dreams. He rubbed his eyes, grunted out something like an apology for being caught dozing in the seat of justice, as if an occurrence of that nature required an apology, when Tapioca interrupted him, by introducing Miss Nightshade, who was delighted, for there was such an air of comfort, and the sweet pretty little Polywogs, looked so healthy and happy, and ragged and dirty, and the old justice gave such a hearty paternal chuckle, as they boxed each other heels over head in the sand, that the spinster could not restrain her feelings, and she ejaculated, "Well, this is indeed a rural felicity!"

"Them ere chaps, ma'am, are the *rale* bone and *sinner* of the nation," exclaimed the delighted father. "Tough twigs from the *genwine* tree of democracy; and if they live long enough they'll all be congressmen or militia colonels, I warrant 'em. The Polywogs were never born to stick in the mud."

The old squire had a proper share of that family pride and ambition, inseparable from your true republican, who is disposed to look upon all mankind as "free and equal," though he inwardly feels himself a *leetle* superior to the general batch, and accordingly our justice had twice dreamed that he was President of the United States, but unfortunately for the destinies of the nation, he could not dream it the third time. Others have had a similar dream, but did not come as near the mark as Squire Polywog, for he dreamt twice.

Tapioca desired the squire to show them into a more private apartment, when the retailer of law in the small way, cried to his progeny in front of the door,

"Washington, tell Lafayette, to call Napoleon, to run round the house, and open the back window of the little parlour."

The mandate was passed from one to the other, and the little bareheaded Napoleon was promptly seen turning the corner to obey orders, as ragged as a colt, and with his right hand twitching up a pair of razeed galligaskins, which had descended like an

heir-loom from his worthy progenitor, to Washington, from Washington to Lafayette, and from Lafayette to the present possessor. Such is the state of man!

"You perceive there is discipline in my family, doctor," remarked the squire, with a significant nod. "A word is sufficient. Obedient children are a great blessing."

"Dear little pets, they must be a great source of comfort to you," said the spinster, as they entered the parlour together, and closed the door.

A few minutes after they had disappeared, Capias entered the office, giving evidence of the excitement of the moment, by wiping the perspiration from his forehead. He had been at Miss Nightshade's lodgings agreeably to appointment, and learning from the nurse that she had gone to take a walk with her physician, he started in pursuit, and succeeded in tracing them to justice Polywog's office. He was allowed sufficient time to cool himself before the parties returned from the parlour, and on their entrance, he said, addressing the spinster,

"I am amazed, madam, at your speedy restoration to health."

"A skilful practitioner, can at times work miracles, Mr. Capias," responded the lady.

"Especially when he understands the constitution of his patient," added Tapioca.

"I have drawn up your will, madam, agreeably to your instructions," continued the attorney.

"I am sorry to have given you so much unnecessary trouble," replied the lady, "as I shall now be under the necessity of altering my will in favour of another."

"Another!—Jerry and Joktan cut off with a shilling! And who is the favourite now?"

"My husband, sir."

"Your husband! I am all amazement!"

"Allow me, Mr. Capias, to introduce you to Mrs.

Tapioca," said the apothecary, with a pompous air. Squire Polywog had made them flesh of one flesh.

"Ha! Mrs. Tapioca! Unheard of treachery!" exclaimed the attorney.

"Practice is becoming too burdensome, and I thought it time to settle for life," whispered the apothecary.

"To be outwitted by a quack!"

"You shall go snipe shooting on Muck Slush meadows," continued Tapioca—"You are fond of snipe shooting?"

"Blood and thunder!"

"Never mind; I will leave you the undivided throne of Hard Scrabble, while I lie snug in the golden fleece."

"This is beyond endurance. Madam, there is the will, and though you have thought proper to change your mind, I expect to be paid for my service. Dr. Tapioca, I shall find a time to punish this breach of friendship."

"You will find me delving in the mines of Peru," exclaimed the apothecary, laughing, as Capias quit the office in a rage. The happy couple bent their way towards the dwelling place of the man of drugs.

Before the honey moon had elapsed, Tapioca was desirous of seeing his farm in Crane Neck Valley, Muck Slush meadows, and the ten thousand in the five per cents., but he might as well have searched for the elixir of life, for they were all in *terra incognita*. He asked his helpmate for information, but she could afford him none. He reproached her with having deceived him, and she charged him with having deceived himself, as she never told him she possessed any thing.

"And after all it appears, my dear, you married me for my fortune."

"Damn your fortune," exclaimed poor pilgarlic, in a rage.

"Remember, love, a fortune-hunter should be shunned as a pestilence."

"Ha!"

"The destroyer of the peace and happiness of families."

"Ha!" His lower jaw fell, and he stared vacantly.

"Hunted as a beast of prey."

"You hunted me," he sighed, dolefully.

"Should be doomed to drink of the bitter waters of disappointment. Those, I think, lovey, were your very words."

"Doomed to drink opium!" he exclaimed, as he left the room to escape from her irony.

Tapioca's mortification did not terminate here. As Capias could not get paid for his trouble in making the will which had seduced our worthy into all his difficulties, he sued him before Justice Polywog, for services done his wife, and judgment, according to custom, went for the plaintiff. Tapioca never paid money with so ill a grace. It is scarcely necessary to add that he could never get out of Hard Scrabble, and that all he gained by his matrimonial speculation, was a constant patient, who imagined herself afflicted with more complaints than may be found in an hospital, and who afforded our disciple of Galen regular practice—a decided advantage to a young beginner. This veracious narrative will tend to illustrate the proverbs which tell you to "look before you leap," and "never to buy a pig in a poke."

THE

PAUPER AND HIS DOG.

The short and simple annals of the poor.

No funeral rights, nor man in mournful weeds,
Nor mournful bell shall ring *his* burial.

SHAKSPEARE.

THERE is something peculiarly sweet of a summer evening, in a country village, when the heat and bustle of the day are over, and smiling clusters are assembled before each door to enjoy the gossip of the day, or hear the news that the post has lately brought. There is certainly witchery in this hour, for no heart, however rugged, can resist its influence—the tender wife clings with increased fondness to her husband, and though her tongue had sounded its fearful alarm, through the house since breakfast time, she is now prepared to greet his return with smiles and caresses. Every glance of the young lover, seems to make an impression, and the delighted heart of his mistress most religiously believes all the soft nonsense that he whispers to her. The children have changed their rough amusements for those of a softer nature. The tongue is licensed. Every faint attempt at wit or humour, is greeted with a hearty welcome, and the rude jest that at any

other time might have provoked a frown, is treated as innocent, and turned off with a hearty burst of laughter; and even the rough house dog slowly wags his tail, as if he participated in the good humour.

One evening, as I was taking my accustomed walk, I directed my steps, by chance, towards the grave-yard, which is a lonely and romantic spot, somewhat more than a quarter of a mile distant from the village. The last rays of the sun were just seen above the horizon. The universal calm that prevailed, was broken alone by the tinkling of the bells, and the occasional lowing of the herd that was slowly winding home, intermingled with the shout and whistle of the cow-boy as he gambolled with his watch-dog. A few stray birds were flying low, and hastily to their nests, while one or two remained to twitter their vespers of gratitude, before they retired.

I approached the yard, and in the most remote part of it, discovered the old sexton preparing a grave, whilst his little son, seated on a tomb stone, was conning aloud, the fulsome epitaph that was chiselled on it; the old man interrupted him at every line, to comment on the virtues and errors of the departed. "A tender husband"—'tis very strange' said the old man, leaning on his spade, 'that I never found it out sooner—he beat his wife once a week to my certain knowledge, and she, poor soul, is weeping for him now.—But go on boy.' "An affectionate father and brother." 'Stop there—he suffered his only son to wander a vagabond, without a cent in his pocket, and he cheated his brother.' "His heart was ever alive to charity." 'Humph! just as much so as it is now—it was as hard as the stone that my pick strikes against.' "A zealous Christian." 'True, he attended meeting regularly, I cannot blame him there.' "And an honest man." 'Right, I believe he never stole. We must remove that stone, boy, and place it at the head of this grave; the poor fellow that is to rot here, is much more deserving of the epitaph, though he died too

miserably poor to purchase one—well, at all events, that stone should be removed, and not replaced, until the being who now moulders beneath it lives in the memory of no one.' I interrupted them, and discovered that this eulogium was bestowed upon the remains of a wealthy villager, whose funeral I attended a few weeks before. The old sexton was somewhat abashed at my having overheard his remarks; but a life of the strictest virtue is no protection against calumny of this kind—every little error rises in judgment against us here, while each good action remains buried in the grave, or is remembered alone where it can never be forgotten.

The shallow grave was soon finished—the setting sun had now quite disappeared, and the old man expressed some displeasure that the corpse had not yet arrived. I mentioned that the grave was scarcely deep enough—he coolly replied, "It is deep enough for Davy." For whom? "For old Davy, the village pauper." My lips began to quiver, and I felt a sudden tug at the heart; a tear was stealing from it—I turned away, ashamed to discover my weakness, and suffered the foolish drop to be congealed on the lid of compassion, by the cold indifference of the person near me—the first perhaps to follow him!—What smote my heart, I know not—was it the death of the poor old soldier, or "*'tis deep enough for Davy?*" But this is of little moment—there are many avenues to the human heart, that the most skilful anatomists have been unable to discover—many that are never travelled a second time, and I envy not that man his feelings, who has not shed full many a tear, without being able to assign a reason.

Scarcely ten days before this, I had seen poor Davy, wandering about in perfect health, and though destitute of both home and kindred, he had the grace not to murmur, but strived to appear satisfied with his condition. At length he has found a home, and is now upon a par with the wealthiest monarch since the world began! On inquiring of the sexton about

his death, I learnt that in consequence of frequently lodging in the open air, he had contracted a violent fever that deprived him of life in the short space of three days. He had died that morning at the hut of an old woman, who has the reputation of being a witch throughout the village; but what degree of belief should be attached to these reports, I cannot take upon myself to decide. Certain it is there are many wonderful stories in circulation, and all the accidents that take place in the country for ten miles round are attributed to her mischievous disposition. Not long since, Jenkins, the schoolmaster, was thrown from his horse and broke his arm; and the old woman at the same time was discovered crossing the road with a bundle of sticks upon her head. The sexton had the misfortune to quarrel with her, and the next morning, when business called him to a neighbouring village, his nag was taken with a string halt. And Betty the milk-maid tells me, that once having churned for three hours without any sign of butter, she looked into the lid of the churn, and saw old mother Tanner's face at the bottom of it, laughing at her. But this was entrusted to me on promise of secrecy, as she would not have it come to the ears of the old woman for the world.

We now observed the hearse approaching at a brisk pace, through the dark lane of thick cedars that led to the grave yard. The driver whistled carelessly on his seat. The retinue consisted of four or five ragged urchins, without hat or shoes, who ran almost breathless beside the hearse, "to see old Davy buried," each striving to be at the grave-yard first. But there was one mourner whose sorrow was sincere—he appeared as if he had lost the only friend that he had in this world, for he had been the only friend and constant companion of the pauper through all his wanderings. It was his dog! who trotted dejectedly beneath the hearse, with tail hanging, and head bent to the earth. Was this reason? Was the poor animal conscious of his loss?—or did he follow his master to the grave merely from the

habit of being with him? Man, in his wisdom, no doubt will call it powerful instinct—well, be it so; the name is of little weight, for the warm tear of instinct, I humbly trust, may plead as eloquently at the gates of heaven as that which is shed by cold calculating reason.

The hearse was drawn to the grave, and the remains of the pauper, enclosed in a rough board coffin, were taken from it. The boys crowded together on the brink of the grave, to witness the performance of the last sad ceremony, but not a tear was shed. The dog was driven back repeatedly, for being in the way, until he came to where I stood, and seemed to beg protection. The coffin was deposited, and they were proceeding to cover it, when I interrupted them, by commencing the funeral service—they paused and heard me patiently to the end. The mourner, during the whole time, stood gazing intently where his master lie, and when the first shovel-full of earth rattled on the coffin, he leapt across the grave, and violently bit the sexton on the leg—the old man smote him with his spade, for his heart was not framed to value the affection of a dog. The earth being hastily closed, the driver remounted his hearse, and drove off rapidly through the dark lane of cedars, followed by the raggamuffin boys, who ran away delighted at having seen "old Davy buried." The sexton shouldered his pick-axe and spade, and slowly bent his way towards the village, repeating to his little son the faults of the wealthy villager. The dog and myself remained alone.

The last glimpse of twilight now was vanishing—a few light clouds, made nearly transparent by the beams of the moon, hung motionless in the air. The shriek of the whip-poor-will, as he darted his rapid flight, and the whirl of the beetle were the only sounds now heard. The lofty pines that cast their deep shadows over the tenements of the dead, slowly waved their tops in the gentle breeze, and seemed to sleep in the calmness of the evening. By caresses

and attention at length I induced the dog to leave the grave of his master; he licked my hand and reluctantly followed me, but stopt repeatedly and looked back in expectation of poor Davy. Imagination can flatter the strongest reasoning mind with such a hope, when leaving the last remains of those we love—then do not smile that instinct was deluded. I had not proceeded more than half way through the solitary lane of cedars, when I discovered that the dog had left me. I called him several times, but as he did not return, I pursued my way, reflecting most bitterly how very few men I have met with in the course of my life, possessing hearts as sincere and affectionate as the pauper's dog.

The next evening, in the course of my walk, I visited the grave of Davy. All was as still as the night preceding—a solitary crow was cawing and rocking himself upon the blighted top of an aged oak that stood beside the grave yard. The dog was there lying upon the earth that covered his master, keeping a flock of sheep at bay that was pasturing all around upon the tombs of those who had full many a tear of friendship shed for them. One mourner only attended the pauper's burial, but the sorrows of that one speak more plainly the virtues of his master's heart, than if a long train of sabled mourners had bewailed his loss. Reason may easily be deceived and cheated into love—the blackest heart, from interested motives, may assume the face of virtue, and blind all reason—instinct never errs, for man has here no motive for deceit, and every caress must spring from the innate virtues of his heart. Farewell, poor wanderer—thy sufferings are over. The close of thy life was a solitary one, and shows the vanity of human prediction. There was a time—but whose life is exempt from a close like this? Not one. It may be your fate, and it may be mine; but be that as it may, I very much question whether either of us shall have as sincere a mourner as poor Davy's dog. Well, he had but one!—and may the tears shed by the humble partaker of his tenderness

have due weight in that place where every drop from the heart's sincerity is recorded. I will erect a stone to the pauper's memory—not in ostentation, nor the vanity of human pride, but to teach a lesson to mankind. One short line will include all his virtues—he needs no longer epitaph, for it speaks volumes:—

"He was beloved by his dog."

THE

OLD MAID'S LEGACY.

CHAPTER I.

Old maids, at times, have singular notions of metaphysics, and why should they not; since the remark is equally applicable to some able professors, who receive large salaries to declaim in colleges.

Penelope Singleton, early imbibed the idea that there was no family as free from alloy as the Singletons on this side of the Atlantic. There was not a tradesman or mechanic to be found even among the most distant branches of the genealogical tree. All the Singletons were either gentlemen or ladies;—born to consume, not to produce. Ornamental, but not useful. Panoplied with these notions, Miss Penelope was unapproached, and unapproachable.

Her brother, Reginald Singleton, of Singleton Hall, was the magnus Apollo of the family. Every family has its magnus Apollo. There is a white bird in all flocks, no matter how black the rest may be. Reginald had been a colonel in the militia, before it was customary to appear on parade armed with corn-stocks and broom-sticks, and as he had been

called colonel time out of mind, it was generally believed that he had served under Washington. This opinion he deemed it unnecessary to rectify, and whenever the question was too closely pressed, he would evade it by saying, "it was unpleasant to talk about the services he had rendered his country." Like the rest of the family, the colonel was a great stickler for gentility, and that he might maintain his pretensions to the last, he died one day with a fit of the gout in his stomach. There needs no other proof that he was a gentleman; for as Galen sagely remarks, the gout is the most aristocratic of all diseases, and Galen was tolerable authority before panaceas and catholicons came in fashion.

The colonel, like non-productives generally, died involved. He had made a nice calculation that Singleton Hall would supply his wants for a certain number of years, and when that time elapsed the accuracy of his arithmetic was fully tested. The colonel died, having spent his last dollar, and his property was found to be mortgaged for its full value. It requires talents of no ordinary grade to make a calculation of this description; for if he had accidentally slipped a figure, and the gout in his stomach had not come to his relief, at the precise moment his resources had left him, it is no difficult matter to conceive how the colonel would have been astonished. It is the lot of many to play their part through life with credit, but few have the knack to time a happy exit, and that to the ambitious is all important, for we are remembered only as we were when we died, and not as when we lived.

The colonel, besides a host of creditors, left two daughters to mourn his loss. The elder, whose name was Isabel, was about twenty, and her sister Mary two years younger. They were both lovely girls, though the elder had been partially deprived of reason for several years. The girls at the time of our story resided in Singleton Hall, a splendid mansion on the banks of the Delaware, without any other means of support than the interest of what

their father owed. Many live in a similar manner and keep their coaches.

The time having arrived when aunt Penelope felt that she was about to be gathered to her fathers, she prepared to set her house in order; and though she had herself done but little to perpetuate the Singleton family, she imagined that the world would come to an end, should it become extinct. What would after ages do without them! No; Mary must be married "to give the world assurance of a man," But who was worthy to receive the hand of the sole heir of all the pride of the Singletons! No one but a Singleton! Fortunately Mary had a cousin Arthur, a lieutenant in the navy, otherwise her worthy aunt would have condemned her to the Malthusian life she had led herself.

Arthur was fixed upon for this important duty. But he was at sea, and as the young couple had not seen each other for four years, possibly in this world of disappointments something might occur to thwart her latest wishes. Accordingly, she framed her will in such a way as she imagined would bring about what she most desired. If there was any thing on earth to be relied upon, it was the generosity of the Singletons. There was not a selfish bone in the body of one of them. Taking this position for granted, she bequeathed all her fortune to Arthur and Mary, but the one who should first refuse to accept the other in marriage should be entitled to the whole legacy. This was working by the rule of contraries, but then she knew that neither would be so selfish as to refuse for the purpose of enriching himself.

There was a certain Mr. Jenkins living in the vicinity of Singleton Hall. Joseph Jenkins, a cotton spinner, who was as full of motion and bustle as one of his own jennies. He belonged to that class of men who appear to have been sent into the world for no other purpose than to spin cotton, and make money. He possessed the charm of Midas, and he cared not a rush for high tariff or low tariff, for

whatever he touched was promptly converted into gold. Your undistinguished Joseph Jenkins is the right fellow to travel prosperously through this dirty world. Your high sounding Mortimers and Fitzhughs, too frequently sink dejected by the way-side; but who ever heard of a Jenkins, Smith or Jones sticking in the mire. And if such an accident should chance to befall them, they have the consolation of not being identified in the myriads of the same cognomen, and shortly you see them brushing the dirt from their heels, and travelling on as spruce and impudently as ever. The name of Jones or Smith is about as convenient an inheritance as a man's godfather can bestow upon him.

Joseph Jenkins was a good fellow in the main. He was as industrious as a brewer's horse, and at the same time as liberal as a prince. Colonel Singleton was charmed with his company, for Jenkins lent him money freely, without examining too closely into the security, and the cotten spinner was equally charmed with the company of the colonel, as it afforded him frequent opportunities of seeing the fair face of Mary. And many a long yarn he spun with her, until she began to look upon him with much favour in spite of his plebeian calling.

Our veracious history commences in the month of May, in the year 18—. The colonel and his sister Penelope had resolved themselves into their primitive elements, and notwithstanding the large space they had occupied in their passage through this world, they now remained perfectly quiet in a very narrow compass, and in spite of their pride, their possessions were upon an equality with the meanest of their neighbours. Death is your only true radical; he reduces all to the same level; a heap of ashes;—nothing more! We occasionally meet with men, loth to believe this fact, though solemnly proclaimed every Sabbath from the pulpit.

It was the smiling month of May; the fields had put on their livery of green; the blue birds were singing on the budding trees, and old Delaware

rolled as freely and as majestically as though he had never been subject to ice-bound fetters. Phœbus was spurring his fiery footed steeds over the Jersey hills, with such speed, as though he had over slept his time in the rosy arms of Tethys, or in common parlance, it was about two hours after sun rise, when a gallant, well mounted, and gay as a bird in spring, rode up to the lofty piazza in front of Singleton Hall. He dismounted, deliberately fastened his fine bay hackney to a post, there planted for the purpose, set his dress in order, and then knocked at the door, with an air that spoke, as plainly as a knock could speak, that he was confident of receiving a cordial welcome. Having waited some time and no one appearing, he repeated the knock, rather impatiently, when an old negro man unlocked the door, opened it, and stood in the door-way. He was dressed in a drab frock-coat, of the fashion of that described in the celebrated ballad of Old Grimes; the cuffs and collar of which were of tarnished scarlet, as an evidence that he belonged to a family of distinction. There is nothing like your negro in livery, for settling the true caste of a family, from Maine to Georgia.

"Good morning, Cato; charming morning this," said the gentleman, as the old black stood in the door-way.

"Fine day, Massa Jenkins," replied Cato, for the new comer was no other than the veritable Joseph Jenkins, of cotton spinning celebrity.

"Is your Mistress stirring yet, Cato?"

"Yes, sar. She rises with the lark, every morning, sar. We study to preserve our health at Singleton Hall, sar."

"That's right, Cato. There is no wealth like health. The sun seldom catches me with my night-cap on. We were not born to sleep out our existence. Now, Cato, announce my arrival to Miss Singleton, for I must be at the factory again in a couple of hours. Business, business, you know, must be attended to. Eh! Cato."

"Yes, sar. And you had better lose no time, sar, for you cannot see my young mistress, sar."

"Cannot see her!" exclaimed Jenkins, "I, her friend, lover—almost husband! to be denied an interview! Come, come, old ebony, you are jesting."

"No joke, sar. Miss Isabel charged me to give you your dismissal in as polite a manner as possible."

"My dismissal!" exclaimed Jenkins, starting like a young tragedian in the ghost scene in Hamlet—"My dismissal!"

"Yes, sar; no joke, sar," continued Cato, with philosophic phlegm, "as you will perceive by this letter, written by Miss Singleton's own little white hand. We do every thing according to etiquette at Singleton Hall, sar."

Cato handed Jenkins a letter, at the same time slightly bending his erect body, and shaking his curly gray head, which he considered the only legitimate aristocratical bow, being modelled upon that of his master, the colonel. Jenkins received the letter, and with some agitation breaking the seal, read as follows:

My dear Jenkins,—

Circumstances that it is impossible for me to explain to-day, compel me to postpone our union for the present, and perhaps forever. If I have any influence over you, pray suspend your visits at Singleton Hall, until such time as I may deem it prudent to recall you.

Mary Singleton.

"It is plain; plain as noon day!" ejaculated Jenkins.

"Very true, sar. Nothing could be plainer," responded Cato, bowing. "There is no mistake at Singleton Hall, sar."

"Here is a pretty piece of caprice! It was but yesterday she partook of all my joy, and now—no matter! Let those explain woman who can; for my part, I would sooner attempt to unravel the riddle of the Sphynx, or find out the philosopher's stone."

"It would be an easier task, sar," replied Cato. "I am now sixty, and never attempted to unravel a woman in my life; and strange to say, the older I grow, the less am I inclined to undertake it."

Jenkins heard nothing of the interruption of Cato, for his mind was engrossed with reflections which arose in too rapid succession even to give them utterance. What was it had created this sudden revolution in his matrimonial prospects? Had family pride, which, according to his notions, was "vox et preterea nihil," made his bank stock, spinning-jennies, cotton stuff, and rail-road scrip kick the beam? Had she taken a sudden dislike to his person?—or had some one made a more advantageous offer? Had he been slandered?—or had he done any thing to offend her delicacy? Various queries of this kind arose in the mind of Mr. Jenkins, not one of which could he answer satisfactorily; but on one point he was perfectly satisfied, and that was that he had been very shabbily treated, for it occurred to Mr. Jenkins that he had already lent more money on Singleton Hall than he ever expected to see again, and its inmates had for years past, in all cases of emergency, first applied to him for advice, and never failed to receive assistance. Such reflections, in a moment of irritation, might have occurred to a less matter of fact mind than that of Mr. Jenkins, and the obligation might have been cancelled by giving them utterance; for it is somewhere laid down, that as soon as you advert to a favour conferred you deserve to be repaid with ingratitude—a cheap and common mode, by the way, of repaying an obligation—but Mr. Jenkins did nothing of the kind; he kept his thoughts between his teeth, walked silently and deliberately to the post where he had hitched his horse, mounted, and retraced his steps at a brisk canter.

"Good morning, sar, and a pleasant ride to you," exclaimed Cato, bowing; but Mr. Jenkins returned no answer, and Cato entered the house and closed the door.

CHAPTER II.

Miss Mary Singleton had witnessed the foregoing interview from the parlour window, and though she had overheard nothing she had seen enough to convince her that her lover had departed in a less pleasant humour than he approached the house. She arose from the breakfast table as Cato entered.

"Well, Cato, has Mr. Jenkins gone?"

"Yes, Miss, as fast as his horse can carry him; and a very fine horse dat too of Mr. Jenkins—good bit of flesh for a factory man to ride, but not to be compared to old master's Nicodemus. Han't got the blood no how."

"I hope you acquitted yourself of your message with all delicacy."

"O, certainly, Miss—old Cato never loses sight of the family dignity no how. But my politeness was thrown away. Massa Jenkins has gone off in a furious passion. Only see how he puts the spur to his nag. Hard life that, to be a factory man's hackney."

Miss Singleton looked out of the window, and beheld her lover riding along the avenue as if he had studied the art of horsemanship in the school of the celebrated John Gilpin.

"Poor fellow!" she sighed, "he loves me very much!"

"Never saw a man so much in love in all my life," responded Cato.

"Ah! Why do you imagine so?"

"Thing's very plain, missus. Only see how he

rides. Your true lover always goes ahead as if old Nick were driving him."

The young lady, perfectly satisfied with the conclusion of Cato, withdrew, while the old man continued watching the progress of the manufacturer, inwardly congratulating himself upon the diplomatic manner in which he had upheld the dignity of the Singleton family. Indeed, since the death of his master, he began to look upon himself as one of the Corinthian pillars of the ancient house—in fact the only one to sustain the magnificent ruin.

Old Cato's meditations were interrupted by a handsome vehicle dashing along the avenue, which drove up to the house and stopped at the door. A handsome young fellow dressed in a naval uniform, alighted and rang at the bell. Cato immediately recognised in the new comer, Arthur Singleton, and hastened to receive him in due form; but before opening the door, he was heard crying out, "John, William, Thomas!" but neither of these imaginary personages making his appearance, after growling at their negligence he opened the door, and with an air of importance proceeded to ring a bell, which extended to the back buildings.

"Never mind disturbing yourself, old man," said Arthur, "my servant can attend to the horses."

"These fellows, sar, are always out of the way, since the death of the colonel. But they shall all be discharged. Useless *varment!* And you shall not see one of them under this roof to night." He could make that assertion with safety.

"Come, come, be pacified, and don't make so much disturbance on my account."

"For whom should I make it, if not for Captain Singleton?"

"So, you know me, it seems, old fellow."

"Yes, sar. You are the only son of Marmaduke Singleton, who was the brother of my old master the colonel, peace to his remainders, who married a Howard of Howard Park in Virginny, whose mother was a Talbot, whose grandmother was a Calvert,—

"Stop, stop, Cato, why you are a living record; and the genealogical tree, though long since reduced to ashes is still green in your memory."

"Ah! sar, these matters are too important to be forgotten; and we who belong to good families should set a proper value on our birthright, even when there's nothing else remaining."

"And are you also tinctured with family pride, old lad?"

"Yes, sar," replied the old black, standing more erect, "Thank heaven, I can boast that the Catos have been born and bred in the Singleton family for two centuries. No low black puddle in these veins. My great grandfather was old Cudjo, who married Quashee, whose father was a king in Guinea. Their eldest son was Sambo, famous in his day for playing on the banjo. Sambo he married Phillis, then come the first Cato——"

"I will hear the remainder when I am more at leisure, so show me into the parlour, and announce my arrival."

Cato, with many bows, ushered the young officer into the parlour, then returned to the piazza, and again rang lustily at the bell; but no one appearing, he called over the roll of imaginary servants, and then showed the coachman the way to the stable, all the time muttering at the want of attention on the part of the "useless *varment*."

Mary Singleton, upon whom the care of the family had almost exclusively devolved, in consequence of the mental aberration of her sister, was of a tall and stately figure, though agile as a sylph in her movements. Her eyes and luxuriant hair were jet black, and her beautiful and delicate features, had an expression of masculine firmness, that denoted more decision of character than might have been expected from so fragile and lovely a being, educated in seclusion. Still this very seclusion may have produced the results referred to, as from her childhood she had been taught to respect herself, and to believe that her family occu-

pied a large space in the public eye. When opinions of this kind have taken root, even the harshest collision with the world proves insufficient to dissipate the delusion. No one can patiently bear even a sprig to be taken from the tree of his self-esteem. It germinates in childhood, and too frequently in our progress through this world, we find that it is all that the world has left us. Well, let the world take all but that, for it is heaven's own legacy—a green spot in the desert.

Arthur had examined the pictures, with which the room was decorated, over and over again, with the eye of a connoisseur, not that he had a taste for the arts, but for the lack of something to do, when his fair cousin Mary entered; her cheeks were flushed, and her manner somewhat embarrassed, as she said,

"A thousand pardons, cousin Arthur, for having made you wait."

"Nay, cousin, I should rather ask to be excused, as I arrive a day sooner than my letter announced. But my impatience was natural, and now I have seen you, I regret we had not met earlier."

This compliment only tended to increase the embarrassment of Miss Singleton, which doubtless will appear very strange to my fair reader; but it should be borne in mind that my heroine was born and educated in the country. Arthur, who had not the gift of ornamental flourish in conversation, proceeded, it must be allowed, not in the most diplomatic manner, to explain the object of his visit.

"Cousin, you are aware we are destined for each other. Under these circumstances it is natural on our first interview to feel some embarrassment, but I beseech you to banish all restraint with me. Speak frankly, and act frankly."

Miss Singleton making no reply, Arthur continued—

"As for myself, I acknowledge without hesitation that I find you even more lovely than I anticipated; and faith coz, I expected much too, for well I remembered what a little sylph you were when we were

playfellows. I have thought of you many a time, when the ocean rolled between us, and taxed my imagination to present me with the full development of your early promise."

"And are you not disappointed, Arthur?" demanded Mary, in a tone that denoted any thing but satisfaction at the favourable impression she had produced. This may appear strange, but still not the less true.

"Disappointed!—I am but too happy that our names have been joined together in the last will of our aunt, and for myself I will undertake that there shall be no lapse of the legacy."

"You increase my embarrassment. I know not how to answer."

"Come, come, I am not that coxcomb to imagine that my merit on a first interview could make as favourable an impression as your's has done. But to-morrow—"

"To-morrow! Shall I discover all your merit in twenty-four hours?" replied Mary, archly. "Really, cousin, you must acknowledge the term is rather short for such a labour."

"Not to an apt scholar, Mary, with a good preceptor. But there's a clause in the will which forbids my giving you longer time. To-morrow we must demand each other's answer, and I forewarn you that you will obtain no delay; for it would be dangerous for me to prolong my stay near you, when with a single word you can destroy all my hopes."

"Pray be seated, and explain."

"The will in question is one of the strangest acts that can be imagined, even in an age resolved to be astonished at nothing. Our aunt has laid down two principles as incontestible truths; the first, that you are the most accomplished woman on this side of the Atlantic, and that the possessor of your hand will be the happiest creature in christendom."

"The jest pleases me. Pray go on."

"On the first point I confess I am entirely of her opinion, but as to the second—"

"Well, well—why hesitate? Let us hear the second."

"Pardon my confusion—she pretends that I am exactly such a man as you are a woman."

"It appears that she had not a bad opinion of the family," replied Mary, laughing.

"O, she was a woman of discernment, coz, and notwithstanding her modesty, out of respect to her memory we must admit that she was right. So, these two principles being taken for granted—"

"It is easy to foresee the consequences."

"Plain as noonday," continued Arthur. "We are absolutely formed for each other—there is no escape for either, and in marrying we shall make a match of both convenience and inclination."

"And have we but twenty-four hours to make up our minds?" demanded Miss Singleton.

"That's all. The will is positive."

"It appears, notwithstanding the perfection which our aunt supposed us to be possessed of, that she did not believe us capable of standing a very long examination."

"She rather presumed an examination to be altogether unnecessary. But this is not all; she has taken other means to insure our union. She leaves all her fortune between us, in case we fulfil her wishes, but, on the contrary, should one be refused by the other—"

"She leaves that one all, no doubt, as a consolation," exclaimed Miss Singleton. "Cousin, I have a great mind to make you rich. What say you?"

"Make me rich! How?—by rejecting me?"

"Certainly. True, you will lose the most accomplished woman on this side the Atlantic; but then you will receive a handsome fortune, without the incumbrance of a wife."

"Zounds! Have a care, or you will ruin me," exclaimed the young sailor. "The better to insure the success of her plan, she makes that one her sole legatee who shall first refuse the other."

"Ah! that alters the case. I cannot reject you on those terms, Arthur."

"And she forbids all kind of collusion, on the penalty of the estate passing to distant relations."

They were interrupted by an exclamation at the door:—"I tell you I will go in. It is useless. I will see him again; I will." Isabel entered the apartment with a hurried step. Her long auburn hair was straying in confusion, her gentle and lovely countenance was animated and suffused with blushes, and an unnatural wildness kindled in her deep blue eyes. Her sylph-like form would have served as a model for a poet when he peoples his ideal world with all that is delicate and beautiful, and her gentle mind might be likened to the eolean harp, that discourses most eloquent music when wooed by the summer breeze, but the first rude blast jars every string and turns all the harmony to discord.

Isabel, looking around wildly, continued:—"I wished—I came—I know not now why I came—but there was something! Assist me sister. I tremble and I blush as when you sometimes scold me. But for all that you are very good to me, sister, very good. Ah! hide me! I'm afraid"—she concealed her face in Mary's bosom.

"Recover yourself, dear Isabel," said Mary, and turning to Arthur, continued, "You see, cousin, the situation of this poor unfortunate."

"I am distressed that my presence has caused this apprehension," he replied, and at the sound of his voice Isabel raised her head, but did not turn her face towards him.

"Mary, I believe he spoke to me. Did he not speak?"

"He did."

"O! how sweet his voice is! I remember that voice."

"My presence, I fear, offends her; I had better retire."

Isabel turned to him, her face illuminated with smiles, and exclaimed hurriedly—

"O! no, no, no! Do not leave us. Stay, stay." She paused and looked at him intently—"Ah! I have it. Stay—Arthur."

"You have not forgot my name, then?"

"I just this moment recollected it. Arthur!—Arthur!" she repeated, and laughed. "Is it not strange I had forgotten it! When I spoke of you to my sister, and said '*he*,' he loved me much, *he* was very good to me, she always asked me, what *he*? She could not understand me. Nevertheless it was very clear. *He*—that meant Arthur. And you have not forgotten my name, I hope?"

"Dear Isabel!"

"Right, that is my name. I knew you would not forget it. But years ago you used to call me your little Bell. We were children then. Still call me so, and I shall feel like a happy child again."

"My gentle little Bell."

"That's it. The same gentle tone. It has rung in my ears since we parted. I always hear it at night, but never in the day time. But, Arthur—you see I do not forget—I have two names now; they have given me another since I last saw you, and a very terrible one it is. Whenever I go to the village, the little children follow me, and point their fingers at me, crying 'the silly girl, there goes the silly girl.' My sister is very good to me—very—she always calls me Isabel; and you too, Arthur—you see—will you not call me Isabel?"

"I will call you my little Bell, as in the days of our childhood."

"Do, O! do! and then I shall dream of the green fields and the flowers, and shall hear the gay birds sing again as sweetly as they sang in our childhood. It is strange that the birds no longer sing as blithely as they used to."

The major domo of Singleton Hall, old Cato, now entered, and with many bows announced that Arthur's chamber was now ready for him. That the room assigned to him was that in which Lafayette had slept the night after the battle of Brandy-

wine, which would account for the furniture being somewhat antiquated, as, for the honour of the family, nothing had been changed since that memorable epoch.

"That's well, Cato," replied Arthur, "a seaman is not difficult to please. Give him but sea room and a hammock, and he is satisfied."

"Then, sar," continued Cato, "there is a fine view of the river, the green meadows, and a garden of flowers under your window."

"A fine view, and a garden of flowers! nothing more is wanting. I love flowers."

"Farewell, sister. Good-by, Arthur," exclaimed Isabel, gaily; and was about hurrying out of the room.

"Where are you going, child?"

Isabel approached her sister, and said, with a mysterious air—"I will return presently; but do not betray me. Say nothing to any one. It is a secret. Good-by, Arthur." She raised her finger to Mary, as if she would impose secrecy, and ran smiling out of the room."

"Where is she going in such haste?"

"I know not," replied Miss Singleton. "Some idea has struck her, but the light of reason no sooner breaks upon her than she becomes crazed again. Your pardon, cousin, you are fatigued. Cato, conduct Lieutenant Singleton to his chamber."

She was about to retire, and Arthur handed her to the door of the apartment. Old Cato placed his fore-finger beside his ebony proboscis, and thus gave vent to his cogitations:—

"Well, all goes right. The captain will carry the day. I was half afraid of that cotton spinning Massa Jenkins; but O! these women! An officer's coat, with a handsome man in it, is a good excuse for changing her mind."

Arthur returned, and clapping the old philosopher on the shoulder, awakened him from his reverie, and said,

"Well, Cato, you have not shown me the La Fayette chamber."

"Pardon me, captain. I wait on you. This way, this way, sar;" and he showed him out with all the ceremony of the grand chamberlain of the court of France, or any other court where flummery is in fashion.

CHAPTER III.

Colonel Singleton had been twice married; Isabel was the daughter of the first wife, and Mary of her successor. There exists a vulgar prejudice against step-mothers; and the conduct of the colonel's helpmate towards Isabel, did not form an exception to the prevalent opinion. She was a haughty, selfish woman, and ambitious that all the honours and wealth of the family should descend to her own daughter, to the exclusion of Isabel; and when she heard that aunt Penelope purposed making her nephew Arthur, and the colonel's eldest daughter her heirs, she determined that her own child's name should be inserted in the will, in the place of that of her sister; and what cannot woman accomplish when she devotes all her energies to one object.

Isabel's life became one series of annoyance; her step-mother's dislike was manifested on all occasions, and finally the poor girl perceived that even the affection of her father was in some degree alienated from her. In order to make "assurance double sure," her step-mother proposed that she should be married to a penurious old man, who, attracted by her beauty, had solicited her hand, and the colonel was tempted by the proposal. as the suitor was wealthy, which encouraged his helpmate to press the matter zealously, and at the same time enabled her to cloak her

sinister motives. Persuasion failing, force was threatened, and the poor girl whose mind had been enfeebled by a series of persecutions, finding herself about to be consigned to the arms of an old man she despised, fell into convulsions, from which she narrowly escaped with life; and when she was restored to health her tears ceased to flow; her countenance was changed; and the vacant glare of the eye denoted an alienated mind. About a year after this event, death issued his summons for her step-mother; but in the mean time aunt Penelope had made her will, as already recited.

Early in the morning, following the arrival of Arthur, Isabel was alone in the parlour, arranging a beautiful bouquet of spring flowers. She performed her task with an air of caution, as if she wished to avoid being detected, and her blushing countenance was illuminated by a smile of satisfaction. When her task was completed, she murmured as she stood gazing at it, "I love flowers—those were his words. This will afford him pleasure, and I shall be very happy." Arthur entered the apartment without perceiving her—she ran to him and said,

"Arthur—yes, it is you. I knew your step."

"Isabel!—what, here alone!"

"Alone! oh, no; you are here!" she replied, placing her hand upon her heart.

"My charming cousin."

"And you—have you thought about poor Isabel, since we parted last evening?"

"Have I thought of you? Indeed have I, incessantly."

"I am glad of that. I have thought of you until I dreamt that you had returned. Tell me, you have been far distant, and have at length returned."

"Yes, Isabel."

"Heavens! If she should also return!"

"Whom do you mean?"

"My mother. Hark! do you not hear her," she exclaimed wildly. "She comes—that is her voice! —there—there! Ah! she threatens me." She

clasped her hands in an imploring attitude." Mother, mercy, mercy, I beseech you. Do not force me,—I cannot marry him. My heart's another's. Ah! approach me not," she continued with increased violence. "I cannot, will not—death sooner." She recoiled and threw herself, trembling, into the arms of her cousin.

"Dear Isabel, recover yourself."

"Where am I! Who calls me, in that kind and gentle voice! Ah—is it you, Arthur, is it you! What has happened? How I burn here," she added, touching her forehead.

"You suffer."

"O, no;" she replied in a voice of tenderness, and smiling fondly on him, "O, no!—I have seen you once again, and that repays me for all. But who was it told me you had gone away—forsaken me. It is not true, is it? You would not give me pain. You love me too much for that, Arthur?"

"Indeed do I."

"Take care," she continued with an air of mystery, "if you deceive me, I shall soon discover it." She ran smiling to the vase of flowers, and taking one of them, carefully stripped it of its leaves, one by one. "You remember, this is the way I tested your love in our childhood."

They were interrupted by Mary, who now entered the parlour, followed by old Cato, who stood erect at the door. She spoke to him as they entered—

"It is well, Cato; if he returns, let me know. Fortunately he has gone without seeing Arthur," she added, in a low tone.

The bustling Mr. Joseph Jenkins, early as it was, had already been at Singleton Hall, and this time he determined to have an interview with his dulcinea, for Joseph was as systematic in his love affairs as he was in business, and he succeeded. The interview was a brief one, and abruptly terminated in the cotton spinner leaping on his hackney in a huff, and starting off at a brisk trot, after bidding a

hasty and cold adieu to his mistress. Cato withdrew.

"Good morning, cousin. How do you like Singleton Hall?" said Mary.

"It is a charming spot, and its inmates render it more so. I have been conversing with Isabel. What a strange existence. So young, so beautiful, and for ever deprived of reason. But let us quit so painful a subject. I thank you Miss, for the delicate attention you have paid me."

"How! in what manner?"

"I yesterday by chance, spoke of my taste for flowers, and I find the parlour decorated with them."

"No, cousin, it is not to me, but doubtless to old Cato, that you are indebted for this attention."

"At all events, allow me to present you this," he said, selecting a bouquet and presenting it to Mary. Isabel, who watched him in silence, darted forward and snatched the flowers from her sister, saying,

"That must not be. That bouquet is for me, me only. It was I who gathered them."

"You!" exclaimed Arthur.

"Yes. Why should that astonish you. I heard you say that you loved flowers, and I remember a little flaxen headed boy who used to gather the wild flowers in the meadows with me; he loved them much, and he loved me also."

"It was for me then. Pardon me Isabel, I will repair the wrong." He took the bouquet and presented it to her; she received it with a smile, and pressed it to her heart, saying, "Now it shall never leave me, but wither and fade there."

"Truly, dear Arthur, you work miracles," said Mary. "Since your arrival she seems at times to have some recollection."

"Ah! look at her now. She has again fallen into the reverie from which she escaped for a moment." Isabel stood motionless, her eyes fixed on the ground. Cato entered, and said to Miss Singleton in an under tone,

"Massa Jenkins come back again, Missus."

"Tell him, I will see him presently." She apologised to Arthur for abruptly leaving him, and went out of the room with the old servant.

"I am glad they are gone," said Isabel, "We can now talk together. Tell me, Arthur, what were we speaking of when my sister interrupted us. Help me to recall my thoughts. How terrible it is to forget, and to know that one forgets!"

"Dear Isabel, do not dwell on this subject, it injures you much."

"It has injured me; it injures me still. It was of my step-mother we were speaking."

"You have been very unhappy in my absence, have you not?"

"O, yes; for I was fearful. But that is over; you have returned, and my fears are gone. You will defend me, will you not?"

"Certainly, I will protect you, and be ever near you."

"How you encourage me! My good sister also often strove to encourage me, but she did not succeed so well. Your presence, your looks, the tone of your voice inspire me with confidence. Speak, speak, I love to hear you speak."

"Dear Isabel, listen to me. Let us try to reason together."

"O yes, yes, let us reason," she exclaimed, laughing and rubbing her hands.

"There is one thing I must premise, and that is, if you relapse into your terrors, I shall believe that you don't love me."

"O, don't believe any such thing. I no longer fear, and as a proof of it, I am now thinking of my step-mother, speaking of her, and scarcely tremble."

"Since that is the case, let us dwell on the subject, and you shall see that it will cease to alarm you. It is long since you beheld her?"

"I have not forgot that. One day she slept so profoundly that they could not awaken her. Her face was as pale as the vestments in which they wrapped her, and they bore her to the church and

sung a long time around her, but she still slept. My sister Mary wept much, and I also wept, because she grieved. Then they clothed me all in black, and since that time I have been very happy, except when she comes back to threaten me."

"But she will never threaten you again."

"Ah! do you believe so?"

"I am sure of it."

"If you are sure, then I am satisfied. What a weight you have taken from my mind. I am now tranquil; breathe freely, and it is to you that I owe this happiness. How I love you!"

"Dear Isabel!"

"But if you should again leave me!"

"Be composed. I am coming, perhaps, to remain here always—to marry your sister."

"Marry, marry my sister! Then who will marry me?" she said dejectedly, and her mind suddenly relapsed, as she continued, without recognising him—

"You know not how constant I am. I was once to have been married formerly, to one of my cousins named Arthur—but this is a secret, which I have told to no one except yourself. We were both very young, and I loved him more than a brother, he was so good, so gentle and generous. How happy I was when he was near me. All the marvellous stories and old legends of the country, were related to me by him, and we had bright visions of the future. But alas! one day he was forced to leave us; he went on board his ship, and I saw him no more, but I have always thought of him—always."

"You saw him no more, Isabel? You do not recollect me, then?" demanded Arthur in a tone of increased interest.

"How! not recollect you," she replied with an air of gaiety, "thou art Arthur; I recollected thee immediately."

"I have been unconsciously guilty; each word renders me more criminal still. Can you ever pardon me?"

"Pardon thee! Ah, yes! I always forgive when I am supplicated; it would be so cruel to refuse." She drew nigher to him, paused and gazed fondly in his face, as she added, "To prove I haven't forgot you, I will search for the ring you sent me from the sea side. I have preserved it carefully, and no person has seen it. Wait for me here, and I will return directly. Arthur, I love thee,—do not forget that I am your betrothed." She ran away smiling, and kissed her hand to him as she closed the door.

Our hero was as much perplexed as most heroes are, when they get two women into their heads at the same time. He was amazed to discover that the silken web, that he had unconsciously woven in his boyhood, had been so closely intertwined with the thread of that fair creature's life, as to serve as a clue to lead her wandering mind even through the mazes of her madness; and was the sole idea to which she fondly clung in the general wreck and ruin. He was at a loss how to act; by marrying the one, he would disinherit the other; and by fulfilling the conditions of the will, he would for ever extinguish the returning spark of reason, in the mind of the delicate being so long and devotedly attached to him. At length, he resolved to ascertain the true state of Mary's fortune, and should it prove ample, he would reject her, and enrich her sister with his hand and aunt Penelope's legacy. Old Cato entered opportunely, to throw some light on the subject.

"My mistress begs you to excuse her absence, captain," said the old man bowing, "she will be disengaged presently."

"Stand on no ceremony with me. Fine property this, old Cato?"

"Splendid estate; none better on the Delaware, sar."

"Still affords a very handsome living?"

"None better, sar. A fortune might be made from this farm; but the Singletons are above selling

their produce,—consume all. Then there's bank stock, and loans, and mortgages——"

"Enough, I am satisfied; and with this assurance I can no longer hesitate not to marry your mistress."

"Not marry her, sar? Pardon me, captain, you misunderstand me," exclaimed the old servant, somewhat disconcerted.

"No, no, I understand you perfectly. Your mistress is at least in easy circumstances."

"Better than that, sar,—very rich. The greatest fortune in these parts." The old fellow knew this to be a lie; but felt satisfied that it ought to be true.

Mr. Joseph Jenkins happened to bustle into the parlour at this critical moment, and overhearing Cato's boastful speech, exclaimed,

"Rich! A great fortune! they deceive you, sir, she is ruined, totally ruined."

"Ruined, sir!" exclaimed Arthur.

"Will you be silent, sar! He don't know what he says, sar," exclaimed the old man in confusion.

"Examine for yourself, sir," continued Joseph Jenkins, producing papers. "Read these documents, and you will perceive that Singleton Place belongs to me. I am the master here."

Arthur cast his eyes over the papers and returned them saying, "It is true. I cannot recover from my surprise. Miss Singleton reduced to a state of poverty."

"If you longer doubt, behold the confusion of this old domestic," continued Jenkins. "That speaks more plainly than all my words."

"My poor cousin in distress!" sighed Arthur, "In that case I will marry her."

"How! you marry her! What the devil do you mean?" exclaimed Jenkins with increased restlessness.

"Go and inform your mistress, Cato, that I am ready to make her my wife this evening if she consents," said Arthur. The faithful old fellow's ebony visage, "creamed and mantled like a standing pool,"

and as he left the room, he was heard to ejaculate, "This now is, just like a Singleton. Gem'man all over!" Jenkins, after making a few nervous circuits around the parlour, suddenly stopped, and said, "How! marry her this evening! Do you intend to insult me, sir?"

"Insult you? I was not thinking about you at all."

"Not thinking about me! But you shall think about me. I will be thought about in this matter, sir; and I demand the motives of your conduct," replied Joseph, testily.

"Indeed. But I am not in the habit of answering, when interrogated in so gentle a manner," replied the other, coolly.

"Then there may be a mode of making you speak," said Joseph, with increased irritation.

"Pray, name it."

"Pistols," exclaimed the cotton spinner.

"Precisely. That is a branch of my business, and I never neglect business."

"I like you the better for that," continued Jenkins. "I have a pair of bull dogs in the next room; I used to practise shooting at a mark with the old colonel. We can jump into a boat, and be on the Jersey shore in half an hour."

"That's unnecessary trouble. You are at home here, you know, and we can just step out behind the stable, and settle the affair quietly. We shall avoid both delay and trouble."

"Zounds! you are right again!" exclaimed Jenkins. "Do you know that you have risen fifty per cent. in my esteem, and if I drill a hole through you, I shall grieve for you, and do the decent thing by your remains."

"You are very good."

"I give you my word and honour, sir."

"Thank you; but I shall endeavour to dispense with your grief."

"A spirited young fellow!" exclaimed Jenkins. "I begin to like him. A business man. I will go for

the pistols, sir, and shall expect you behind the stable in five minutes."

Jenkins bustled out, and at the same instant Isabel rushed into the room, and threw her arms about the neck of her cousin, who was about to follow him, and exclaimed,

"Stay, stay, you shall not go. I know your fearful purpose; but you shall not leave me. I'll hang upon you."

"Unfortunate! would you drive me to dishonour?"

"Would you drive me to despair?"

"Isabel, you will see me again in five minutes."

"Yes, I shall see you again, as I saw my brother, perhaps, brought back, pale and covered with blood." She shrieked and fainted in his arms. We omitted to state in the proper place, that a son of Colonel Singleton had been killed in a duel, and that Isabel's aberration of mind was in some degree attributed to the shock received on the occasion. It is of importance to every family that one member, at least, should be killed in a duel, as that circumstance alone is sufficient to establish the courage and gentility of all the survivors.

The shriek brought Miss Singleton and her major domo into the parlour. Arthur consigned the unconscious Isabel to the arms of her sister, and without saying a word, hurried from the room. Isabel slowly recovered; the expression of her countenance was calm, and she assumed an air of gaiety, as she said,

"Sister, if you only knew the good news I have to tell you. She will never come back,—never! Then there's going to be a wedding; do you know the bride? I know her. And there will be a splendid ball. I ought to open it with him. I love dancing so much!"

The report of pistols was now heard, and Isabel starting from her sister's arms, stood motionless for a moment, then pressed her forehead with both hands, and shricked, "Ah! I remember now! Death is at

work! Let go your hold; I fly to save him!" She violently disengaged herself from Mary, who attempted to restrain her, and rushed from the room. Her sister and the old servant alarmed and amazed, hastily followed her.

Isabel reached the spot where the combatants stood opposed to each other, pistols in hand, ready to fire a second time. She rushed between them, her hair dishevelled, wildness in her looks, and summoning all her energy, she shrieked, "Hold! Forbear your murderous intent, I implore you, I command you!" and fell senseless to the ground.

Our worthies forgot their angry feelings, in their amazement at this singular interruption, and mutually hastened to her assistance, and supported her to the house. She was conducted to her chamber, and the next moment the prompt and active Joseph Jenkins was seen hurrying along the avenue, upon his bay hackney, in pursuit of medical assistance, without having intimated to any one his errand.

The doctor, like all prudent practitioners, could not pronounce with certainty,—he was of opinion that the fearful impressions she had received from the duel, would have a decisive influence over her mind; that a crisis had arrived, that would either bring about a complete restoration to reason, or destroy all hope of her recovery. This was considered a sound, and certainly a safe opinion.

Joseph Jenkins returned to Singleton Hall, shortly after the physician, and on entering the parlour, he found Miss Singleton alone. She arose as he entered and exclaimed in evident alarm—"Good heavens! What is it brings you back after the scene which has just passed? If my cousin should meet you!"

"Have no fear, Miss; I shall not be here long," replied Joseph, taking a stride or two across the room.

"Ah! why speak to me so coolly. Can you believe"—

Now Joseph was any thing but cool, and he hastily interrupted her with saying,

"No more of that, Miss. You have no need to justify yourself to me. I came not here to reproach you. If I have failed to please you, the fault is mine, and not yours. You are handsome and lively, —your cousin is a dashing, brave and generous young fellow, but as for me, I am rough, plain and without address. He is entitled to the preference; but perhaps the future may prove that with all my abruptness, I loved you as tenderly as he does. But I do not wish that"—he turned his face to conceal a starting tear. "I hope you may always be happy. We are now about to part, but before we separate, we have some affairs of importance to settle together. Your father, at his death, owed to John Jones five thousand dollars—here are the bonds; to me ten thousand on mortgage—this is the instrument," he deliberately tore the papers into fragments, and added, "now those debts are settled."

"What are you doing?"

"Nothing. I restore the property to you unencumbered, for I would not have your future husband reproach the woman whom I have loved, with her want of fortune."

"Ah! Joseph, so much generosity."

"No thanks, Miss. I only ask one thing from you. If ever you should experience any reverse, which is very possible, then think of your old friend. Write to me, and the next mail will bring you a satisfactory answer. Farewell, Miss, farewell."

He bustled out of the room, and even Mary's tender exclamation, of "Dear Joseph, listen to me," in no measure retarded his impetus. Finding he returned no answer, and was already out of hearing, she called aloud for Cato, who promptly obeyed the summons, followed by the young lieutenant. She turned to the old servant, and said in a low voice, "Cato, hasten after Mr. Jenkins, who has just gone, and tell him to defer his departure for an hour. I wish to speak to him—must speak to him. Go."

Cato left the room muttering, "what de devil signify, running first after one, den after toder, and

cotch no body at last." Jenkins and his poney were now seen from the parlour windows, scudding along the avenue, at even a brisker gait than usual. Possibly the horse felt that his master was several thousand dollars lighter than when he came.

The young couple, finding themselves alone, again attempted to broach the delicate subject of the will, each feeling the impossibility of complying with its conditions, and yet from generosity afraid to reject the other. After much manœuvring and finesse on both sides, without success, each came to the conclusion that the other wished for nothing so ardently as to have Aunt Penelope's will carried into effect, and heaved a sigh of regret for the sudden and hopeless passion. Old Cato entered at this critical juncture, to inform Miss Singleton that he had despatched a man on horseback after Mr. Jenkins, which timely interruption relieved them from their mutual embarrassment.

"What news have you of your mistress Isabel?" demanded Arthur.

"You must see her directly, sar. She is looking for you, and desires to speak to you."

"To speak to me! Has she left her chamber?"

"Yes, sar. The doctor ordered that we should obey her in every thing, and not contradict her. Here she comes, sar."

Isabel entered the apartment. Her manner had undergone a striking change; it was now serious, collected, composed. She calmly said:—

"Sister, I have caused you much trouble; is it not so? But I am better at present—much better. I thank you for all your attentions to me, but I have a favour to ask; retire, for I would speak with my cousin, alone."

"Cousin, I leave you, and in a little time expect to receive your answer," said Mary, and left the room, followed by Cato.

"What can she want with me? What is passing in her mind? That singular air!" said Arthur, mentally—"Isabel, my dear Isabel."

"Sir."

"Why this reserve?—why this coldness towards me?"

"It becomes the position in which I find myself."

"What do I hear! You, who seemed but yesterday—"

She proceeded, with slight emotion—"If my words have not been always what they ought to be, it would be generous on your part to forget the past, as I shall study to forget it myself."

"Unhappy that I am!" he exclaimed—"She no longer recollects me, no longer loves me! This apparent flash of reason may be only a new feature of her madness. My dear Isabel, in the name of heaven listen to me—look at me. I am Arthur, your cousin, your friend,—in one word, he who has chosen you for his betrothed."

She became more deeply affected as she replied, "I recollect you perfectly, Arthur; but this word betrothed recalls to me the object of this interview. I was your betrothed, it is true—I have not forgotten that; but I come to give you back your promise, and the ring with which you sealed it. Take it—be henceforth free; marry my sister, and receive every wish that I can form for your happiness."

"Heavens! What say you, Isabel! Can you imagine"—

"I know all, have heard all—even at a time when I could not comprehend its meaning. But singular changes have taken place. It seems that until now I have not lived. Even yesterday I spoke without reflection; I answered without listening, or listened without understanding; but now the cloud has vanished, ideas crowd upon me, words rush to explain my thoughts, and I am no longer an object of pity. This happiness I owe to Arthur. When near him I am animated, exalted; but without him I feel that I should relapse into my former state. Ah, stay, stay always near me—never leave me—be my support, my guide, my husband. I live only in thee, for thee, and shall be nothing without thee."

"Dear Isabel, you are once more restored to me. Do not repent of the avowal that insures my happiness. Speak, will you be my wife. You cannot refuse me?"

"How, refuse what I so much desire," she replied, artlessly.

"You no longer believe that I love your sister?"

"O, no, no. I rely on you. You would not deceive me; it would render me so unhappy."

"But reflect. I am poor, without resources."

"Poor! I scarcely know what that means."

"I cannot surround you with luxuries."

"I shall not love you the less—and ask no other luxury."

"No dress—no equipage."

"Shall I appear less attractive in your eyes? If not, I care not."

"I can no longer resist," he exclaimed, and falling on his knees, passionately kissed her hand. Mary entered at the same instant.

"Ah! cousin, you refuse me then. I came for your answer, but you have anticipated a reply to all my questions."

"No, coz, I don't refuse you," said Arthur, rising. "I love you very much, but will marry Isabel. I don't want to ruin you—keep the fortune."

"You will marry her, coz? Then I will have nothing to do with this legacy, which constrains us both, and thank you for having laid it at the feet of my sister."

"This generosity—"

"Is mixed up with a little selfishness, Arthur, as you will see in the end," replied Mary.

There was a noise at the door, and Joseph Jenkins bustled in, followed by Cato. He entered just as Arthur was in the act of gallantly kissing Mary's hand, in gratitude for her generosity.

"Death and the devil!" exclaimed Joseph—"and was it for this that you brought me back?"

"Dear Joseph, be a witness"—said Mary.

"Damn it, I have seen too much already," exclaimed Jenkins.

Arthur commenced—"Mr. Jenkins, I wish you to understand—"

"I don't want to understand any thing more."

Isabel ran to him, and placed her sister's hand in his, saying, "There, understand that. She is yours—Arthur is mine. Will you kill him now?"

"Ha! What! How! Bless my soul! Mary, is it so?" ejaculated Jenkins. Mary smiled and blushed in a manner plain to be understood by the dullest physiognomist, and the cotton-spinner whirled about like one of his jennies.

"All very strange! Don't understand!" muttered Cato. "Captain, will you marry—"

"Love has restored her to reason."

"More strange still. You told me love usually turns young ladies' heads. Can't understand, no how I can fix him."

Arthur and Jenkins became fast friends, and the fallen family was once again restored to its former consequence, through the exertions of the worthy and unpretending Joseph Jenkins. He called his eldest son Reginald, after his old friend, the colonel; but he protested against christening his daughter after Aunt Penelope, as he could not forget the annoyance that her absurd legacy had occasioned.

THE END.

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1836 The actress of
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