Diary and Notes Of Horace Templeton

By

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CHAPTER I

The Ortles is the Mont Blanc of the Tyrol, and seen from Nader's, a village on a green, grassy table land, more than four thousand feet above the sea, can well bear comparison with the boldest of the Swiss Alps. Nader's itself, a type of a Toiler village, is situated in a wild and lonely region; it has all the picturesque elegance and neat detail of which Tyrolese are so lavish in their houses, and, like every other Doff in this country, has its proud castle standing sentry over it. The Barons of the Naudersberg were men of station in olden times, and exacted a tribute over a tract extending deep into the Engine; and now, in this great hall, whose chimney would contain the heaviest diligence that ever waddled over the Arlberg, a few Nader's notabilities are squabbling over some mysterious passage in a dispatch from Vienna, for it is the high court of the district, while I wait patiently without for some formality of my passport. To judge from their grave expressions and their anxious glances towards me, one would say that I was some dangerous or suspected personage—someone whose dark designs the government had already fathomed, and were bent on thwarting. If they did but know how few are, in all likelihood, the days I have yet to linger on, they would not rob me of one hour of them in this wild mountain.

And yet I have learned something while I wait. This little doff, Nader's, is the birthplace of a very remarkable man, although one whose humble name, Bartholomew Kleinhaus, is little known beyond Tyrol. Left an orphan at five years old, he lost his sight in the small-pox, and was taken into the house of a carpenter who compassionated his sad condition. Here he endeavored to learn something of his protector's trade; but soon relinquishing the effort, he set to work, forming little images in wood, at first from models, and then self-designed, till, at the age of thirteen, he completed a crucifix of singular beauty and elegance.

Following up the inspiration, he now labored assiduously at his new craft, and made figures of various saints and holy personages, for his mind was entirely imbued with a feeling of religious fervor; and to such an extent that, in order to speak his devotion by another sense, he actually learned to play the organ, and

with such a proficiency, that he performed the duties of organist for nearly a year in the village church of Kaltenbrunnen. As sculptor, his repute is widely spread and great in Tyrol. A St. Francis by his hand is at present in the Am bras collection at Vienna; many of his statues adorn the episcopal palaces of Churl and Brien, and the various churches throughout the province.

Leaving the sculptor and his birthplace, which already a mountain mist is shrouding, I hasten on, for my passport is at last discovered to be in order, and I am free to pursue my road to Moran.

Of all spots in the Tyrol, none can compare with Me rah, the wildest character of mountain uniting with a profusion of all that vegetation can bring. The snow peak, the glacier, the oak forest, the waving fields of yellow corn, the valley, one vast vineyard—where have such elements of grandeur and simple beauty in scenery been so gloriously commingled? And then the little town itself—what a strange reminiscence of long-buried years! The street—there is properly but one—with its deep arched passages, within which the quaint old shops, without windows, display their wares; and the courtyards, galleried around, story above story, and covered at top by a great awning to keep off the sun; for already Italy is near, and the odor of the magnolia and oleander is felt from afar.

I wandered into one of these courts last night; the twilight was closing, and there was a strange, mysterious effect in the dim distances upwards, where figures came and went along the high-perched galleries. Beyond the court lay a garden, covered over with a vine-roofed trellis, under whose shade various tables were placed. A single light, here and there, showed where one or two guests were seated; but all so still and silently, that one would have thought the place deserted. It seemed as if the great charm was that mellow air softened by silence, for none spoke.

I walked for some time through the alleys, and at last sat down to rest myself at a little table, over which a wide-leaved fig-tree spread its dark canopy.

At first I did not remark that another person was seated near the table; but as my eyes became more accustomed to the shade, I descried a figure opposite to me, and immediately rising, I offered my apology in German for intruding. He replied in French, by politely requesting I would be seated; and the tone and manner of his words induced me to comply.

We soon fell into conversation; and although I could barely distinguish his shadow as the night fell thicker, I recognized that he was an old man; his accent proclaimed him to be French. We chatted away, the topics ranging, with that willfulness conversation always inclines to, from the "Wean-cur "—the "Grape cure"—for which Moran is celebrated, to the present condition and the past grandeur of the ancient town. With its bygone history my companion seemed well acquainted, and narrated with considerable skill some of its illustrious passages, concluding one by saying, "Here, in this very garden, on a summer morning of 1342, the Emperor and the Margrave of Brandenburg sat at breakfast, when a herald came to announce the advance of the procession with the future bride of the Duke, Margareta, while the Bishops of Augsburg and Regensburg, and all the chivalry of the Tyrol, rode beside and around her. In yonder little chapel, where a light now glitters over a shrine, was the betrothal performed. From that day forth Tyrol was Austrian. Of all this gorgeous festivity, nothing remains but an iron horse-shoe nailed to the chapel door. The priest who performed the betrothal somewhat indiscreetly suggested that, with such a dowry as the bridegroom received, he might well be generous towards the Church; on which the Duke, a man of immense personal strength, at once stooped down and wrenched a four-shoe from the bride's white palfrey, saying, with sarcastic bitterness, 'Here, I give thee iron for stone!' in allusion to the rocks and precipices of the Tyrol land.

"Ungratefully spoken at the time," continued the stranger, "and equally false as a prophecy. These wild fastness’s have proved the best and last defenses of that same Austrian Empire. Indeed, so well aware was Napoleon of the united strength and resources of the Tyrol, that one of his first measures was to partition the country between Bavaria, Austria, and Illyria. And yet this Tyrol loyalty is inexplicable. They are attached to the house of Haps-burgh, but they are not Austrian in feeling. The friends of free trade need not go far in Moran to find disciples to their doctrine. Everyone remembers the time that an acme of Meaner wine was worth seventy-five gulden, which now is to be had for five; but then they were Bavarian, and might barter the grape-juice for the yellow produce of the Baierisch corn-fields. At the present day they are isolated, shut up, and imprisoned by custom-houses and toll; and they are growing daily poorer, and neglecting the only source they possessed of wealth."

We talked of Hofer, and I perceived that my companion was strongly imbued with an opinion, now very general in the Tyrol, that his merits were much less than foreigners usually ascribe to him. Sprung from the people, the host of a little wayside inn, a man with little education, and of the very roughest

manner, it is somewhat singular that his claims are most disputed among the very class he came from. Had he been an aristocrat, in all likelihood they had never ventured to canvass the merits they now so mercilessly arraign. They judge of his efforts by the most unfair of tests in such matters—the result. They say, "To what end has Tyrol fought and bled? Are we better, or richer, or freer than before?" They even go further, and accuse him of exciting the revolt as a means of escaping the payment of his debts, which assuredly were considerable. What a terrible price is paid for mob popularity, when the hour of its effervescence is past!

We fell to chat over the character of revolutions generally, and the almost invariable tendency to reaction that ensues in all popular commotions. The character of the Three Days and the present condition of France, more despotically governed than ever Napoleon dared, was too palpable an example to escape mention. I had the less hesitation in speaking my opinion on this subject, that I saw my companion's leanings were evidently of the Legitimist stamp.

From the Revolution we diverged to the struggle itself of the Three Days; and being tolerably familiar, from various personal narratives, with the event, I ventured on expressing my concurrence with the opinion that a mere mob, unprepared, unarmed, and undisciplined, could never have held for an hour against the troops had there not been foul play.

"Where do you suspect this treachery to have existed?" asked my companion.

The tone of the question, even more than its substance, confused me, for I felt myself driven to a vague reply in explanation of a direct charge. I answered, however, that the magnitude of the danger could scarcely have been unknown to many men highly placed in the service of Charles X.; and yet it was clear the King never rightly understood that any real peril impended. The whole outbreak was treated as an "échauffourée".

"I can assure you of your error, so far," replied my companion. "The greatest difficulty we encountered——" There was a slight pause here, as if by use of the word "we" an unwitting betrayal had escaped him. He speedily, however, resumed:—"The greatest difficulty was to persuade his Majesty that the entire affair was anything but a street brawl. He treated the accounts with an indifference bordering on contempt; and at every fresh narrative of the repulse of the troops, he seemed to feel that the lesson to be inflicted subsequently would be the most efficacious check to popular excess in future. To give an

instance,—a very slight one, but not without its moral, of the state of feeling of the court,—at four o'clock of the afternoon of the third day, when the troops had fallen back from the Place du Carrousel, and with great loss been compelled to retreat towards the Champs Ely sees, Captain Lang let, of the 4th Lancers, volunteered to carry a verbal message to Versailles, in doing which he should traverse a great part of Paris in the occupation of the insurgents. The attempt was a bold and daring one, but it succeeded. After innumerable hairbreadth dangers and escapes, he reached Versailles at half-past seven. His horse had twice fallen, and his uniform was torn by balls; and he entered the courtyard of the Palace just as his Majesty learned that his dinner was served. Lang-let hastened up the great staircase, and, by the most pressing entreaties to the officer in waiting, obtained permission to wait there till the king should pass. He stood there for nearly a quarter of an hour; it seemed an age to him, for though faint, wounded, and weary, his thoughts were fixed on the scene of struggle he had quitted, and the diminishing chances of success each moment told. At last the door of a salon was flung wide, and the Grand Marital, accompanied by the officers in waiting, were seen retiring in measured steps before the King. His Majesty had not advanced half-way along the corridor when he perceived the splashed and travel-stained figure of the officer. 'Who is that?' demanded he, in a tone of almost asperity. The officer on guard stepped forward, and told who he was and the object of his coming. The king spoke a few words hastily and passed on. Lang let awaited in breathless eagerness to hear when he should have his audience—he only craved time for a single sentence. What was the reply he received?—an order to present himself, 'suitably dressed,' in the morning. Before that morning broke there was no King in France!

"Take this—the story is true—as a specimen of the fatuity of the Court. Qualm Deus vault perverse;—so it is we speak of events, but we forget ourselves."

"But still," said I, "the army scarcely performed their devoir—not, at least, as French troops understand devoir—where their hearts are engaged."

"You are mistaken again," said he. "Save in a few companies of the line, never did troops behave better: four entire squadrons of one regiment were cut to pieces at the end of the Rue Royale; two infantry regiments were actually annihilated at the Hotel de Ville. For eight hours, at the Place du Carrousel, we had no ammunition, while the insurgents poured in a most murderous fire: so was it along the Quai Voltaire."

"I have heard," said I, "that the Duck de Ragusa lost his head completely."

"I can assure you, sir, they who say so calumniate him," was the calm reply. "Never before that day was a Marshal of France called upon to fight an armed host, without soldiers and without ammunition."

"His fate would induce us to be superstitious, and believe in good luck. Never was there a man more persecuted by ill fortune!"

"I perceive they are shutting the gates," said my companion, rising; "these worthy Meranersare of the very earliest to retire for the night." And so saying, and with a "Good night," so hastily uttered as to forbid further converse, my companion withdrew, while I wandered slowly back to my Inn, curious to learn who he might be, and if I should ever chance upon him again.

I heard a voice this morning on the bridge, so exactly like that of my companion of last night, that I could not help starting. The speaker was a very large and singularly handsome man, who, though far advanced in life, walked with a stature as erect, and an air as assured, as he could have worn in youth. Large bushy eye-brows, black as jet, although his hair was perfectly white, shaded eyes of undimmed brilliancy—he was evidently "some one," the least observant could not pass him without this conviction. I asked a stranger who he was, and received for answer, "Marshal Marmont—he comes here almost every autumn."

CHAPTER II. THE TYROL

Every traveller in the Tyrol must have remarked, that, wherever the way is difficult of access, or dangerous to traverse, some little shrine or statue is always to be seen, reminding him that a higher Power than his own watches over his safety, and suggesting the fitness of an appeal to Him who is "A very present help in time of trouble."

Sometimes a rude painting upon a little board, nailed on a tree, communicates the escape and gratitude of a traveller; sometimes a still ruder fresco, on the very rock, tells where a wintry torrent had swept away a whole family, and calling on all pious Christians who pass that way to offer a prayer for the departed. There is an endless variety in these little "Votive Tablets," which are never more touching than when their very rude poverty attests the simplest faith of a simple people. The Tyrolese are indeed such. Perhaps alone, of all the accessible parts of Europe, the Tyrol has preserved its primitive habits and tastes for centuries unchanged. Here and there, throughout the continent, to be sure, you will find some little "Doff," or village, whose old-world customs stand out in contrast to its neighbours; and where in their houses, dress, and bearing, the inhabitants seem unlike all else around them. Look more closely, however, and you will see that, although the grandmother is clothed in homespun, and wears her leathern pocket at her girdle, all studded with copper nails, that her grandaughter affects a printed cotton or a Swiss calico; and instead of the broad-brimmed and looped felt of the old "Bauer," the new generation sport broad-cloth and beaver.

Such hamlets are, therefore, only like the passengers left behind by their own coach, and waiting for the next conveyance that passes to carry them on their journey.

In the Tyrol, however, such evidences of progress—as it is the fashion to call it—are rare. The peasantry seem content to live as their fathers have done, and truly he must be sanguine who could hope to better a condition, which, with so few prorations, comprises so many of life's best and dearest blessings. If the mountain peaks be snow-clad, even in midsummer, the valleys (at least all in South Tyrol) are rich in vineyards and olive groves; and although wheat is seldom seen, the maize grows everywhere; the rivers swarm with trout; and he must be a poor marksman who cannot have venison for his dinner. The villages are large and well built; the great wooden houses, with their wide projecting roofs and endless galleries, are the very types of comfort. Vast piles of fire-wood, for winter use, large granaries of forage for the cattle—the cattle

themselves with great silver bells hanging to their necks—all bespeak an ease, if not an actual affluence, among the peasantry. The Tyrolese are, in a word, all that poets and tourists say the Swiss are, and of which they are exactly the reverse.

It would be difficult to find two nations so precisely alike in all external circumstances, and so perfectly dissimilar in every feature of character. Even in their religious feelings, Romanism, generally so leveling, has not been able to make them of the same measure here. The Swiss Catholic—bigoted, overbearing, and plotting—has nothing in common with the simple-minded Toiler, whose faith enters into all the little incidents of his daily life, cheering, exalting, and sustaining, but never suggesting a thought save of charity and good will to all.

That they have interwoven, so to say, their religious belief into all their little worldly concerns, if not making their faith the rule, at least establishing it as the companion of their conduct, is easily seen. You never overtake a group, returning from fair or market, that all are not engaged in prayer, repeating together some litany of the Church; and as each new arrival joins the party, his voice chimes in, and swells the solemn hum as naturally as if prearranged or practiced.

If you pass a village, or a solitary farmhouse, at sunset, the same accents meet your ears, or else you hear them singing some hymn in concert. Few "Bauer" houses, of any pretension, are without the effigy of a patron saint above the door, and even the humblest will have a verse of a psalm, or a pious sentence, carved in the oaken beam. Their names are taken from the saintly calendar, and everything, to the minutest particular, shows that their faith is an active working principle, fashioning all their actions, and mingling with all their thoughts. Their superstitions, like all simple-minded and secluded people's, are many; their ignorance is not to be denied; mayhap the Church has fostered the one, and done little to enlighten the other: still, if Romanism had no heavier sin to account for, no darker score to clear up, than her dealings in these mountains, there would be much to forgive in a creed that has conferred so many good gifts, and sowed the seeds of so few bad ones.

These pious emblems find their way, too, into places where one would scarce look for them—over the doors of village inns, and as signs to little wine and beer-houses: and frequently the Holy personages are associated with secular usages, strangely at variance with the saintly character. Thus I have seen, in the village beside me, a venerable St. Martin engaged in the extraordinary

operation of shoeing a horse; though what veterinary tastes the saint ever evinced, or why he is so represented, I can find no one to inform me. On the summit of steep passes, where it is usual, by a police regulation, to prescribe the use of a drag to all wheel carriages, the board which sets forth the direction is commonly ornamented by a St. Michael, very busily applying the drag to a heavy wagon, while the driver thereof is on his knees hard by, worshipping the saint, in evident delight at his dexterity. In the same way many venerable and holy men are to be seen presiding over savory hams and goblets of foaming beer, and beaming with angelic beatitude at a party of hard-drinking villagers in the distance. Our present business is, however, less with the practice in general, than a particular instance, which is to be met with in the Bavarian Tyrol, mid-way between the villages of Munroe and Steingaden, where over the door of a solitary little way-side inn hangs a representation of the Virgin, with a starling perched upon her wrist. One has only to remark the expression of unnatural intelligence in the bird's look, to be certain that it was not a mere fancy of the artist to have placed her thus, but that some event of village tradition, or history, is interwoven with her presence.

The motto contributes nothing to the explanation. It is merely a line from the Church Litany, "Maria, Mutter Grottos, half us,—Mary, Mother of God, help us!"

There is then a story connected with the painting, and we shall, with your leave, tell it; calling our tale by the name of the little inn,

"MARIA HULF!"

Has our reader ever heard, or read, of those strange gatherings, which take place at the early spring in the greater number of southern German cities and are called, "Year Markets?" The object is simply to assemble the youth of the mountain districts in Tyrol and Vorarlberg, that they may be hired, by the farmers of the rich pasture countries, as herds. Thither they go—-many a mile—some children of ten or eleven years old, and seeming even still younger, away from home and friends, little adventurers on the bleak wide ocean of life, to sojourn among strangers in far-off lands; to pass days long in lonely valleys or deep glens, without a sight or sound of human life around them; watching the bright sun and counting the weary minutes over, that night and rest may come, per* chance with dreams of that far-off home, which, in all its poverty, is still cheered by the fond familiar faces! Some, ruddy and stout-looking, seem to relish the enterprise, and actually enjoy the career so promising in its vicissitudes; others, sad and care-worn, bear with them the sorrows of their

last leave-taking, and are only comforted by the thought that autumn will come at last, and then the cattle must be housed for the winter: and then they shall be free to wend their way over mountain and plain, far, far away beyond Malts—high in the wild peaks of the Stevia, or deep in the lovely glens below Moran.

It was in one of these "Markets" at Innsbruck that a little boy was seen, not standing with the groups which usually gather together under a single leader, but alone and apart, seemingly without one that knew him. His appearance bespoke great poverty; his clothes, originally poor, were now in rags; his little cap, of squirrel skin, hung in fragments on either side of his pallid cheeks; his feet—a rare circumstance—were bare, and bloodstained from travel; want and privation were stamped in every feature: and his eyes, which at that moment were raised with eager anxiety as some Bauer drew nigh, grew wan, and filling at each new disappointment to his hopes, for this was his third day to stand in the market, and not one had even asked his name. And yet he heard that name; ever and anon it met his ears in sounds which stirred his feeble heart, and made it throb faster. "Fritter! ah, Fritter, good fellow!" were the words; and poor Fritter would stoop down when he heard them and peep into a little cage where a Starling was perched—a poor, emaciated little thing it was, as way-worn and poverty struck, to all seeming, as himself: but he did not think so: he deemed it the very paragon of the feathered tribe, for it had a little topping of brown feathers on its head, and a little ring of white around its neck, and would come when he called it; and, better than all, could sing, "Good Fritter—nice Fritter!" when it was pleased, and "Potztausend!" when angry. This was all its education; his master, poor little fellow, had not much more. How could he? Fritter's mother died when he was a baby; his father was killed by a fall from a cliff in the Tyrol Alps, for he was by trade a bird-catcher, and came from the Engine, where everyone loves birds, and in the pursuit of this passion met his fate.

Fritter was left an orphan at eleven years old, and all his worldly wealth was this little Starling; for although his father had left a little cabin in the high Alps, and a rifle, and some two or three articles of house gear, they all were sold to pay the expenses of his funeral, and feast the neighbours who were kind enough to follow him to the grave: so that poor Fritz kept open house for two days; and when he walked out the third, after the coffin, he never turned his steps back again, but wandered away—far, far away—to seek in the year-market of Innsbruck some kind peasant who would take him home to herd his cattle, and be a father to him now.

Fritter knew not that the children, who desire to be hired out, assemble together in little groups or gangs, electing someone to bargain for them with the Bauer's, setting forth in vehement language their various excellences and good gifts, and telling where they have served before, and what zeal and fidelity they have shown to their trust. Fritz, I say, knew not this; perhaps, if he had, it would have availed him but little; for he was so poorly clad and so weak-looking, and so ignorant of all about tending cattle besides, that he would soon have been driven from the fraternity with disgrace. It was, then, as fortunate for him that he did not know the custom of the craft, and that he took his stand alone and apart beside the fountain in the main street of Innsbruck.

And a lovely object is the same fountain; and a beautiful street it stands in, with its stately houses, all rich in stuccoes arabesques, and gorgeously carved doors and gates! And bright and cheerful, too, it looks, with its Toiler people clad in their gay colors and their gold-banded hats!

Fritz saw little of these things, or, if he saw, he marked them not. Cold, hunger, and desolation, had blunted the very faculties of his mind; and he gazed at the moving crowd with a dreamy unconsciousness that what he saw was real.

The third day of his painful watching was drawing to a close. Fritz had, several hours before, shared his last morsel of black bread with his companion; and the bird, as if sympathizing with his sorrow, sat moody and silent on his perch, nor even by a note or sound broke the stillness.

"Poor Jacob!"* said Fritz, with tears in his eyes, "my hard luck should not fall on thee! If no one comes to hire me before the shadow closes across the street, I'll open the cage and let thee go!"

* Every Starling in Germany is called Jacob.

The very thought seemed an agony, for scarcely had he uttered it when his heart felt as if it would break, and he burst into a torrent of tears.

"Potztausend!" screamed Jacob, alarmed at the unusual cries—"Potztausend!" And as Fritz sobbed louder, so were the Starling's cries of "Potztausend!" more shrill and piercing.

There were few people passing at the moment, but such as were, stopped; some to gaze with interest on the poor little boy—more, far more, to wonder at the bird; when suddenly a venerable old man, with a wide-leaved bat, and a silken

robe reaching down to his feet, crossed over towards the fountain. It was the Curate of Lenz, a pious and good man, universally respected in Innsbruck.

"What art thou weeping for, my child?" said he, mildly.

Fritz raised his eyes, and the benevolent look of the old man streamed through his heart like a flood of hope* It was not, however, till the question had been repeated, that Fritz could summon presence of mind to tell his sorrow and disappointment.

"Thou should not have been here alone, my child," said the curate; "thou should have been in the great market with the others. And now the time is well-nigh over: most of the Bauer's have quitted the town."

"Potztausend!" cried the bird, passionately.

"It will be better for thee to return home again to thy parents," said the old man, as he drew his little leathern purse from between the folds of his robe—"to thy father and mother."

"I have neither!" sobbed Fritz.

"Potztausend!" screamed the Starling—"Potztausend!"

"Poor little fellow! I would help thee more," said the kind old priest, as he put six Kreutzer's into the child's hand, "but I am not rich either."

"Potztausend!" shrieked the bird, with a shrillness excited by Fritz's emotion; and as he continued to sob, so did the Starling yell out his exclamation till the very street rang with it.

"Farewell, child!" said the priest, as Fritz kissed his hand for the twentieth time; "farewell, but let me not leave thee without a word of counsel: thou should never have taught thy bird that idle word. He that was to be thy companion and thy friend, as it seems to me he is, should have learned something that would lead thee to better thoughts. This would bring thee better fortune, Fritz. Adieu! adieu!"

"Potztausend!" said the Starling, but in a very low, faint voice, as if he felt the rebuke; and well he might, for Fritz opened his little handkerchief and spread it over the cage—a sign of displeasure, which the bird understood well.

While Fritz was talking to the Curate, an old Bauer, poorly but cleanly clad, had drawn nigh to listen. Mayhap he was not overmuch enlightened by the Curate's words, for he certainly took a deep interest in the Starling; and every time the creature screamed out its one expletive, he would laugh to himself, and mutter,—

"Thou art a droll beastie, sure enough!"

He watched the bird till Fritz covered it up with his handkerchief, and then was about to move away, when, for the first time, a thought of the little boy crossed his mind. He turned abruptly round, and said,—

"And thou, little fellow!—what art doing here?"

"Waiting," sighed Fritz, heavily—"waiting!"

"Ah, to sell thy bird?" said the old man;—"come, I'll buy him from thee. He might easily meet a richer, but he'll not find a kinder master. What wilt have?—twelve Kreutzer's, isn't it?"

"I cannot sell him," sobbed Fritz; "I have promised him never to do that."

"Silly child!" said the Bauer, laughing; "thy bird cares little for all thy promises: besides, he'll have a better life with me than thee." "That might he, easily!" said Fritz: "but I'll not break my word."

"And what is this wonderful promise touts' made, my little man?—come, tell it!"

"I told him," said Fritz, in a voice broken with agitation, "that if the shadow closed over the street down there before any one had hired me, that I would open his cage and let him free; and look! it is nearly across now—there's only one little glimpse of sunlight remaining!"

Poor child! how many in this world live upon one single gleam of hope—ay, and even cling to it when a mere twilight, fast fading before them!

The Bauer was silent for some minutes; his look wandered from the child to the cage, and back again from the cage to the child. At last he stooped down and peeped in at the bird, which, with a sense of being in disgrace, sat with his head beneath his wing.

"Come, my little man," said he, laying a hand on Fritz's shoulder, "I'll take thee home with me! Tic true I have no cattle—nothing save a few goats—but thou

shalt herd these. Pack up thy bird, and let us away, for we have a long journey before us, and must do part of it before we sleep."

Fritz's heart bounded with joy and gratitude. It would have been, in good truth, no very splendid prospect for any other to be a goatherd to a poor Bauer—so poor that he had not even one cow; but little Fritz was an orphan, without a home, a friend, or one to give him shelter for a single night. It may be believed, then, that he felt overjoyed; and it was with a light heart he trotted along beside the old Bauer, who never could hear enough about the starling—where he came from? how he was caught? who taught him to speak? what he liked best to feed upon? and a hundred other questions, which, after all, should have been far more numerous ere Fritz found it any fatigue to answer them. Not only did it give him pleasure to speak of Jacob, but now he felt actually grateful to him, since, had the old Bauer not taken a fancy to the bird, it was more than likely he had never hired its master.

The Bauer told Fritz that the journey was a long one, and true enough. It lay across the Zillerthal, where the garnets are found, and over the great mountains that separate the Austrian from the Bavarian Tyrol—many a long, weary mile—many, I say, because the Bauer had come up to Innsbruck to buy hemp for spinning when the evenings of winter are long and dark, and poor people must do something to earn their bread. This load of hemp was carried on a little wheeled cart, to which the old man himself was harnessed, and in front of him his dog—a queer-looking team would it appear to English eyes, but one meets them often enough here; and as the fatigue is not great, and the peasants lighten the way by many a merry song—as the Tyrol "Jocelyn"—it never suggests the painful idea of over-hard or distressing labor. Fritter soon took his place as a leader beside the dog, and helped to pull the load; while the Starling's cage was fastened on the sheltered side of the little cart, and there he travelled quite safe and happy.

I never heard that Fritz was struck—as he might possibly, with reason, have been—that, as he came into Bavaria, where the wide-stretching plains teem with yellow corn and golden wheat, the peasants seemed far poorer than among the wild mountains of his own Tyrol; neither have I any recollection that he experienced that peculiar freedom of respiration, that greater expansion of the chest, travellers so frequently enumerate as among the sensations whenever they have passed over the Austrian frontier, and breathed the air of liberty, so bounteously diffused through the atmosphere of other lands. Fritz, I fear, for the sake of his perceptive quickness, neither was alive to the fact nor

the fiction above quoted; nor did he take much more notice of the features of the landscape, than to mark that the mountains were further off and not so high as those among which he lived—two circumstances which weighed heavily on his heart, for a Dutchman loves not water as well as a Toiler loves a mountain.

The impression he first received did not improve as he drew near the Doff where the old Bauer lived, The country was open and cultivated; but there were few trees: and while one could not exactly call it flat, the surface was merely a waving tract that never rose to the dignity of mountain. The Bauer houses, too, unlike the great wooden edifices of the Southern Tyrol—where three, ay, sometimes four, generations may be found dwelling under one roof—were small, misshapen things, half stone, half wood. No deep shadowing eave along them to relieve the heat of a summer sun;—no trellised vines over the windows and the doorway;—no huge yellow gourds drying on the long galleries, where bright geraniums and prickly aloes stood in a row;—no Jaeger either, in his green jacket and gold-taps-swelled hat, was there, sharing his breakfast with his dog; the rich spoils of his day's sport strewed around his feet—the smooth-skinned chamois, or the stag with gnarled horns, or the gorgeously-feathered wild turkey, all so plentiful in the mountain regions. No; here was a land of husbandmen, with ploughs, and harrows, and deep-wheeled carts, driven along by poor-looking, ill-clad peasants, who never sung as they went along, scarce greeted each other as they passed.

It was true, the great plains were covered with cattle, but to Fritz's eyes the prospect had something mournful and sad. It was so still and silent. The cows had no bells beneath their necks like those in the Alpine regions; nor did the herds model to each other, as the Tyrolese do, from cliff to cliff, making the valleys ring to the merry sound. No, it was as still as midnight; not even a bird was there to cheer the solitude with his song.

If the aspect without had little to enliven Fritz's spirits, within doors it had even less. The Bauer was very poor; his hut stood on a little knoll outside the village, and on the edge of a long tract of unclaimed land, which once had borne forest-trees, but now was covered by a low scrub, with here and there some huge trunk, too hard to split, or too rotten for firewood. The hut had two rooms; but even that was enough, for there was nobody to dwell in it but the Bauer, his wife, and a little daughter, Gretchen, or, as they called her in the Doff, "Gretel's." She was a year younger than Fritz, and a good-tempered little "Made;" and who, but for over-hard work for one so young, might have been

even handsome. Her eyes were large and full, and her hair bright-cultured, and her skin clear; yet scanty food and continual exposure to the air, herding the goats, had given her a look of being much older than she really was, and imparted to her features that expression of premature cunning which poverty so invariably stamps upon childhood. It was a happy day for Gretel's that brought Fritz to the cottage; not only because she gained a companion and a playfellow, but that she needed no longer to herd the goats on the wild, bleak plain, rising often ere day broke, and never returning till late in the evening. Fritz would do all this now; and more, he would bring in the firewood from the little dark wood-house, where she feared to venture after nightfall; and he would draw water from the great deep well, so deep that it seemed to penetrate to the very center of the earth. He would run errands, too, into the Doff; and beetle the flax betimes;—in fact, there was no saying what he would not do. Fritz did not disappoint any of these sanguine expectations of his usefulness; nay, he exceeded them all, showing himself daily more devoted to the interests of his humble protectors. It was never too early for him to rise from his bed—never too late to sit up when any work was to be done; always willing to oblige—ever ready to render any service in his power. Even the Bauer's wife, a hard-natured, ill-thinking creature, in whom poverty had heightened all the faults, nor taught one single lesson of kindliness to others who were poor,—even she felt herself constrained to moderate the rancor of her harshness, and would even at times vouchsafe a word or a look of good humor to the little orphan boy. The Bauer himself, without any great faults of character, had no sense of the fidelity of his little follower. He thought that there was a compact between them, which, as each fulfilled in his own way, there was no more to be said of it. Gretchen more than made up for the coldness of her parents. The little maiden, who knew by hard experience the severe lot to which Fritz was bound, she felt her whole heart filled with gratitude and wonder towards him. Wonder, indeed; for not alone did his services appear so well performed, but they were so various and so numerous. He was everywhere and at everything; and it was like a proverb in the house— "Fritz will do it." He found time for all; he neglected—stay, I am wrong—poor little fellow, he did neglect something—something that was more than all; but it was not his fault. Fritz never entered the village church—he never said a prayer; he knew nothing of the Power that had created him, and all that he saw around him. If he thought on these things, it was with the vague indecision of a mind without guidance or direction. Why, or how, and to what end, he and others like him, lived or died, he could not, by any effort, conceive. Fritz was a bondman—as much a slave as many who are carried away in chains across the seas, and sold to strange masters. There was no bodily cruelty in his servitude; he endured no greater

hardships than poverty entails on millions; his little sphere of duties was not too much for his strength; his humble wants were met, but the darkest element of slavery was there! The daily round of service over, no thought was taken of that purer part which in the Peasant claims as high a destiny as in the Prince. The Sunday saw him go forth with his flock to the mountain like any other day; and though from some distant hill he could hear the tolling bell that called the villagers to prayer, he knew not what it meant. The better dresses and holiday attire suggested some notion of a fete-day; but as he knew there were no fête-days for him, he turned his thoughts away, lest he should grow unhappy.

If Fritz's companion, when within doors, was Greta, when he was away on the plain, or among the furze hills, the Starling was ever with him. Indeed he could easier have forgotten his little cap of squirrel-skin, as he went forth in the morning, than the cage, which hung by a string on his back. This be unfastened when he had led his goats into a favorable spot for pasturage, and, sitting down beside it, would talk to the bird for hours. It was a long time before he could succeed in obeying the Curate's counsel, even in part, and teach the bird not to cry "Potztausend!" Starlings do not unlearn their bad habits much easier than men; and, despite all Fritz's teaching, his pupil would burst out with the forbidden expression on any sudden emergency of surprise; or sometimes as it happened, when he had remained in a sulky fit for several days together without uttering a note, he would reply to Fritz's caresses and entreaties to eat by a sharp, angry "Potztausend!" that any one less deeply interested than poor Fritz would have laughed at outright. They were no laughing matters to him. He felt that the work of civilization was all to be done over again. But his patience was inexhaustible; and a circumstance, perhaps, not less fortunate—he had abundant time at his command. With these good aids he labored on, now punishing, now rewarding, ever inventing some new plan of correction, and at last—as does everyone who has that noble quality, perseverance—at last succeeding,—not, indeed, all at once perfectly; for Star's principles had been laid down to last, and he struggled hard not to abandon them, and he persisted to cry "Pots———" for three months after he had surrendered the concluding two syllables; finally, however, he gave up even this; and no temptation of sudden noise, no riotous conduct of the villagers after nightfall, no boiling over of the great metal pot that held the household supper, nor any more alarming ebullition of ill-temper of the good Fran herself, would elicit from him the least approach to the forbidden phrase. While the Starling was thus accomplishing one part of his education by unlearning, little Fritz himself, under Grettl'a's guidance, was learning to read. The labor was not all to be encountered, for he already had made some little progress in the

art under his father's tuition. But the evening hours of winter, wherein he received his lessons, were precisely those in which the poor bird-catcher, weary and tired from a day spent in the mountains, would fall fast asleep, only waking up at intervals to assist Fritz over a difficulty, or say, "Go on," when his blunders had made him perfectly unintelligible even to himself. It may be well imagined, then, that his proficiency was not very great. Indeed, when first called upon by Gretel's to display his knowledge, his mistakes were so many, and his miscalling's of words so irresistibly droll, that the little girl laughed outright; and, to do Fritz justice, he joined in the mirth himself.

The same persistence of purpose that aided him while teaching his bird, befriended him here. He labored late and early, sometimes repeating to himself by heart little portions of what he had read, to familiarize himself with new words; sometimes wending his way along the plain, book in hand; and then, when having mastered some fierce difficulty, he would turn to his Starling to tell him of his victory, and promise, that when once he knew how to read well, he would teach him something out of his book—"Something good;" for, as the Curate said, "that would bring luck."

So long as the winter lasted, and the deep snow lay on the hills, Fritz always herded his goats near the village, seeking out some sheltered spot where the herbage was still green, or where the thin drift was easily scraped away. In summer, however, the best pasturages lay further away among the hills near Steingaden, a still and lonely tract, but inexpressibly dear to poor Fritz, since there the wild flowers grew in such abundance, and from thence he could see the high mountains above Route and Paterkirchen, lofty and snow-clad like the "Jocks" in his own Tyrol land. There was another reason why he loved this spot. It was here that, in a narrow glen, where two paths crossed, a little shrine stood, with a painting of the Virgin enclosed within it—a very rude performance, it is true; but how little connation is there between the excellence of art and the feelings excited in the humble breast of a poor peasant child! The features, to his thinking, were beautiful; never had eyes a look so full of compassion and of love. They seemed to greet him as he came, and follow him as he lingered on his way homeward. Many an hour did Fritz sit upon the little bench before the shrine, in unconscious worship of that picture. Heaven knows what fancies he may have had of its origin; it never occurred to him to think that human skill could have achieved anything so lovely.

He had often remarked that the villagers, as they passed, would kneel down before it, and with bowed heads and crossed arms seem to do it reverence; and

he himself, when they were gone, would try to imitate their gestures, some vague sentiment of worship struggling for utterance in his heart.

There was a little inscription in gilt letters beneath the picture; but these he could not read, and would gaze at their cabalistic forms for hours long, thinking how, if he could but decipher them, that the mystery might be revealed.

How he longed for the winter to be over and the spring to come, that he might lead the goats to the hills, and to the little glen of the shrine! He could read now. The letters would be no longer a secret; they would speak to him, and to his heart, like the voice of that beauteous image. How ardently did he wish to be there! and how, when the first faint sun of April sent its pale rays over the plain, and glittered with a sickly delicacy on the lake, how joyous was his spirit and how light his step upon the heather!

Many a little store of childish knowledge had Gretel's opened to his mind in their winter evenings' study; but somehow, he felt as if they were all as nothing compared to what the golden letters would reveal. The portrait, the lonely glen, the solemn reverence of the kneeling worshippers, had all conspired to create for him a mass of emotions indescribably pleasurable and thrilling. Who can say the secret of such imaginings, or bound their sway?

The wished-for hour came, and it was alone and unseen that he stood before the shrine and read the words, "Maria, Mutter Gotten, half uns." If this mystery were unrevealed to his senses, a feeling of dependent helplessness was too familiar to his heart not to give the words a strong significance. He was poor, unfriended, and an orphan: who could need succor more than he did? Other children had lathers and mothers, who loved them and watched over them; their little wants were cared for, their wishes often gratified. His was an unheeded existence: who was there to "help him?"

Against the daily load of his duties he was not conscious of needing aid; his burden he was both able and willing to bear. It was against his thoughts in the long hours of solitude—against the gloomy visions of his own free-thinking spirit, he sought assistance; against the sad influence of memory, that brought up his childhood before him, when he had a father who loved him—against the dreary vista of an unloved future, he needed help. "And could she befriend him?" was the question he asked his heart.

"He must ask Gretel's this; she would know it all!" Such were the reflections with which he bent his way homeward, as eagerly as in the morning he had sought the glen. Gretel's did know it all, and more too, for she had a prayer-book, and a catechism, and a hymn-book, though hitherto these treasures had been unknown to Fritz, whose instructions were always given in a well-thumbed little volume of fairy tales, where "Hans Dumpling" and "The Nutsy-cracker" figured as heroes.

I am not able to say that Grettl'a's religious instruction was of the most enlightened nature—not any more than it was commensurate with the wishes and requirements of him who sought it; it went, indeed, little further than an explanation of the "golden letters." Still, slight and vague as it was, it comforted the poor heart it reached, as the most straggling gleam of sunlight will cheer the dweller in some dark dungeon, whose thoughts soar out upon its rays to the gorgeous luminary it flows from. Whatever the substance of his knowledge, its immediate effect upon his mind was to diffuse a hopeful trust and happiness through him he had never known till now. His loneliness in the world was no longer the solitary isolation of one bereft of friends. Not only with his own heart could he commune now. He felt there was One above who read these thoughts, and could turn them to his will. And in this trust his daily labor was lightened, and his lot more happy.

"Now," thought he, one day, as he wandered onward among the hills, "now, I can teach thee something good—something that will bring us luck. Thou shalt learn the lesson of the golden letters, Starling—ay, truly, it will be hard enough at first. It cost me many a weary hour to learn to read, and thou hast only one little line to get off by heart—and such a pretty line, too! Come, Jacob, let's begin at once." And, as he spoke, he opened the cage and took out the bird, and patted his head kindly and smoothed down his feathers. Little flatteries, that Starling well understood were preparatory to some educational requirement; and he puffed out his chest proudly, and advanced one leg with an air of importance; and drawing up his head, seemed as though he could say, "Well, what now, Master Fritz?—what new scheme is this in thy wise head?"

Fritz understood him well, or thought he did so, which in such cases comes pretty much to the same thing; and so, without more ado, he opened his explanation, which perhaps, after all, was meant equally for himself as the Starling—at least I hope so, for I suspect he comprehended it better.

He told him that for a long time his education had been grossly neglected; that having originally been begun upon a wrong principle, the great function of his teacher had been to eradicate the evil, and, so to say, to clear the soil for the new and profitable seed. The ground, to carry out the illustration, had now lain long enough in fallow—the time had arrived to attend to its better culture.

It is more than probable Fritz had never heard of the great controversy in France upon the system of what is called the "Secondary Instruction," nor troubled his head on the no less active schism in our own country between the enemies and advocates of National Education. So that he has all the merit, if it be one, of solving a very difficult problem for himself without aid or guidance; for he resolved that a religious education should precede all other.

"Now for it," said he, at the close of a longer exposition of his intentions than was perhaps strictly necessary, "now for it, Starling! repeat after me—'Maria, Mutter Gotten, half us!'"

The bird looked up in his face with an arch drollery that almost disconcerted the teacher. If a look could speak, that look said, as plainly as ever words could,—

"Why don't you ask me to say the whole Litany, Fritz?"

"Ay, ay," replied Fritz, for it was a reply, "I know that's a great deal to learn all at once, and some of the words are hard enough, too; but with time, Star, time and patience—I had to use both one and the other before I learned to read; and many a thing that looks difficult and impossible even at first, seems quite easy afterwards. Come, then, just try it: begin with the first word—'Maria'."

It was in vain Fritz spoke in his most coaxing accents, in vain did he modulate the syllables in twenty different ways; all his entreaties and petting», all his blandishments and caresses, were of no avail, Star remained deaf to them all. He even turned his back at last, and seemed as if no power on earth should make a Christian of him. Fritz had had too much experience of the efficacy of perseverance in his own case to abandon the game here; so he went to work again, and with the aid of a little lump of sugar returned to the lecture.

Had Star been a Chancery lawyer he could not have received the fee more naturally, though, for the honor of the equity bar, I would hope the similitude ends there, for he paid not the slightest heed to the "instructions."

It would, perhaps, be rash in us "featherless bipeds" to condemn Star all at once; there is no saying on what grounds he may have resisted this educational attempt. How do we know that his reasoning ran not somewhat in this strain?—

"What better off shall I be when I have learned all your hard words?—or how is it that you, my teacher, knowing them so well, should be the poor, half-fed, half-naked thing I see there before me?"

These very conjectures would seem to have crossed Fritz's mind, for he said,—

"It is not for a mere whim that I would have thee learn this; these words will bring us luck, Star! Ay, what I say is true, though thou mays shake thy head and think otherwise. I tell thee, 'Good words bring luck.'"

Whether it was that Star assumed an air of more than ordinary conceit and indifference, or that Fritz had come to the end of patience, I cannot affirm; but he hastily added, and in a voice much louder and more excited than was his wont,—"It is so; and thou shalt learn the words whether thou wilt or no—that I tell thee!"

"Potztausend!" cried the bird, frightened by his excitement, and at once recurring to his long unused exclamation: "Potztausend!"

"Hush, shameless thing!" said Fritz, angrily; "there is nothing for it but punishment!" And so he replaced him in the cage, covered him close on every side with his handkerchief, and trudged sorrowfully towards home.

For several days Fritz never spoke to Starling, even one word. He brought him his food in silence; and instead of taking him, as of old, along with him into the fields, he hung his cage in a gloomy corner of the hut, whence he could see little or nothing of what went on in the house—no small privation for a bird so alive to inquisitiveness. At length, when he believed punishment had gone far enough, he took him down and hung him on his back as usual, and brought him a long, long way into the hills. The day was fine, a fresh but balmy spring breathed over the young flowers, and the little stream danced and rippled pleasantly; and the clouds moved along overhead in large soft masses, bordered with a silvery edge. Star never noticed these things; he was indignant at the neglect, as he deemed it, which had been shown him of late. His pride and spirit—and Starlings are not deficient in either—had sustained grievous

injury; and he felt that, without due reparation made to him, he could not, consistently with honor, sign a treaty of reconciliation.

Fritz mistook these indications altogether—and who can blame him? What the world calls dignity is not infrequently mere sulk. How should poor Fritz make distinctions great Ministers and Princes are sometimes incapable of?

The end of all this was a struggle, a long and violent struggle, on each side for the ascendancy. Fritz, however, had the advantage, for he could starve out the enemy—a harsh measure, no doubt, but greater folks have adopted even more severe ones to enforce their principles. Fritz, besides, had all the stern enthusiasm of a fanatic in the cause. The dark zeal of the Holy Office itself never enforced its decrees with more inflexible purpose than did he his. "Accept this creed, or die in your sins," was, if not exactly his dictum, certainly his full meaning. Star stood out long, so long that Fritz began at last to fear that the creature meditated martyrdom, and in this dread he relaxed somewhat of his prison discipline.

It would scarcely be instructive—not any more than amusing—to recount the painful progress of this long contest—a contest, after all, in which there is nothing new to any reader of history; for when force is on one side and weakness on the other, the result may be deferred but is never doubtful. It is enough that we say, Star made submission. True, it was the submission of coercion—no matter for that, it was submission; for after three weeks of various successes on either side, the creature greeted Fritz one morning as he arose with a feint cry of "Maria, Maria!"

This was enough, more than enough, and Fritter could have hugged him to his heart.

His authority recognized, his will acknowledged, he was but too happy to take his rebellious subject into full favor again. Whether Star felt the benefits of his changed conduct so very satisfactory to his comfort, or that he was really disposed to please his master, I cannot say; but, from that hour out, he labored strenuously to learn his new profession of faith, and screamed "Maria!" from day-dawn to dusk. The two following words were, however, downright puzzles; "Mutter-Gotten" was a combination that no Starling—even a German one, bred up among strong gutturals and flat labials—could master. He worked hard, however, and so did Fritz. If life depended upon it, neither of them could have exerted themselves more zealously; but it was no use. In any other language, perhaps, Star might have been able to invoke the Virgin, but here it was out of

the question. The nearest approach the poor fellow could make was something like a cry of "Moored—Moored" (Murder—murder); so unfortunate a change that Fritz abandoned the lesson with the best grace he could, betaking himself to the concluding words, which happily presented no such unseemly similitudes.

His success here was such as to obliterate all memory of his former defeat. Starling made the most astonishing progress, and learned the words so perfectly, with such accuracy of enunciation, that to hear him at a little distance any one would say it was some pious Catholic invoking the Virgin with all his might. The "Half us" was not a mere exclamation, but a cry for actual aid, so natural as to be perfectly startling.

So long as the bird's education was incomplete, Fritter carefully screened him from public observation. He had all the susceptibility of a great artist, who would not let his canvass be looked upon before the last finishing touch was laid on the picture. No sooner, however, had full success crowned his teaching, than he proudly displayed him in a new cage made for the occasion at the door of the Bauer's hut.

It was Sunday, and the villagers were on their way to mass; and what was their astonishment to hear themselves exhorted as they passed by the fervent cry of "Maria, half us! Half us, Maria!" Group after group stood in mute amazement, gazing at the wonderful bird, some blessing themselves with a pious fervor, others disposed to regard the sounds as miraculous, and more than either stood in dumb astonishment at this new specimen of ghostly counsel.

All this while Fritter lay hid beneath the window, enjoying his triumph with a heart full almost to bursting. Never did singing-master listen to the siren notes of his pupil, while as the prima donna of a great opera she electrified or entranced a crowded audience, with more enthusiastic rapture than did Fritz at his Starling's performance. Poor little fellow! it was not merely vanity gratified by public applause—it was a higher feeling was engaged here. A sense of religious exaltation worked within him, that he had labored in a great cause; a thrill of ecstasy trembled at his heart that another voice than his own was asking aid for him, and incessantly invoking the Virgin's protection on his own head. Happy had it been for him that no other sentiment had intervened, and that he had not also indulged a vain pride in the accomplishment of his pupil!

It so chanced, that among those who passed the hut and stood to wonder at this astonishing creature, was a tall, ragged-looking, swarthy fellow, whose

dress of unmanned leather, and cap ornamented with the tail of many a wood squirrel, told that he was an "Engineer," one from the same land Fritz came himself. A strange wild land it is! where in dress, language, custom, and mode of life, there is no resemblance to anything to be seen throughout Europe. A more striking representative of his strange country need not have been wished for. His jacket was hung round with various tufts of plumage and fur for making artificial birds, with whistles and birdcalls to imitate every note that ever thrilled through a leafy grove; his leathern breeches only reached to the knee, which was entirely bare, as well as the leg, to below the calf, where a rude sandal was fastened; his arms, also, copper-cultured as those of an Indian, were quite naked, two leathern bracelets enclosing each wrist, in which some metal hooks were inserted: by these he could hang on the branch of a tree, or the edge of a rock, leafing his hands at liberty. He wore his coal-black hair far down on his back and shoulders, and his long moustache drooped deep beneath his lank jaw. If there was something wild almost to ferocity in his black and flashing eyes, the mouth, with its white and beautifully regular teeth, had a look of almost womanly delicacy and softness,—a character that was well suited to the musical sounds of his native language ~one not less pleasant to the ear than Italian itself. Such was he who stopped to listen to the bird, and who, stealing round to the end of the hut, lay down beneath some scattered branches of firewood to delight his ear to the uttermost.

It may be doubted whether a connoisseur ever listened to Orissa or Jenny Lind with more heartfelt rapture than did the Engineer to the Starling; for while the bird, from time to time, would break forth with its newly acquired invocation, the general tenor of its song was a self-taught melody—one of those wild and delicious voluntaries in which conscious power displayed itself; now, astounding the ear by efforts the wildest and most capricious, now subduing the sense by notes plaintive almost to bring tears. In these latter it was that he mingled his cry of "Maria, half—half—half us, Maria!"—words so touching and so truthful in their accents that at every time the Engineer beard them he crossed himself twice on the forehead and the breast; which devout exercise, I am constrained to say, had in his case more of habit than true piety, as the sequel proved.

I forget whether it is not Madame de Sauder has built a little theory upon the supposition that every mind has within it the tendency to yield to someone peculiar temptation. The majority, I fancy, have not limited their weakness to units. Poverty has so many wants to be supplied, wealth so many seductions to offer, that it may be affirmed he is not worse than his fellows whose heart has

only one undefended bastion. I am not anxious to claim for my Engineer any more than ordinary powers of resistance: neither his race nor his country, the habits of his life, nor his principles—if it be permitted to use the word—had taught him such self-control; but, if they had—if they had steeled his nature against every common seduction, they could not have stifled within him the native passion for bird-catching, or, what is very much akin to it, bird-stealing. He would as soon have thought it needful to restrict his lungs in their requisite quantity of atmospheric air, as to curb what he regarded as a mere human instinct. If Engineers were made for anything, it was for bird-catching: no one did anything else, thought, spoke, or dreamt of anything else, in the Engine. It was not a pastime, or a caprice; it was not that the one was skillful, or that the other was adroit at it, but the whole population felt that birds were their natural prey, and that the business of their life was comprised in catching, feeding, training, sending, and selling them all over the globe—not only in Europe, but over the vast continent of America. Wherever birds had fanciers, wherever men cared for the tints of plumage or the warbling mellowness of their notes, there an Engineer was sure to be found. And who has ever studied their nature like one of these mountaineers, who knows all their habits and their tastes, their seasons of migrating and returning, how they build their nests, and all their likings and their antipathies—the causes which influence their selection and abandonment of a peculiar locality, the meaning of their songs—ay, and they are full of meaning—of welcome, of sorrow, of love, and of despair? None like an Engineer for all this! Few would have the patience, fewer still the requisite gifts of acuteness, with uncommon powers of eye and ear—of eye to discern the tints of plumage among the dark leaves of the pine-forest—of ear to catch and imitate the notes of each tribe, so that birds themselves should answer to the sounds.

The Engineer stirred not from his hiding-place the whole day; he watched the moving throng passing to and from the village church; he saw the Bauer’s pass by, some in the Sunday "wagons," their horses gaily caparisoned, with huge scarlet tassels beneath their necks, and great wide traces all studded with little copper nails; and the more humble, on foot, the men dressed in their light Bavarian blue, and the women clad in a coarser stuff of the same color, their wealth being all centered in one strange head-dress of gold and silver filigree, which, about the size and shape of a peacock's tail when expanded, is attached to the back of the head—an unwieldy contrivance, which has not the merit of becomingness; it neither affords protection against sun or rain, and is so inconvenient, that when two peasant women walk together they have to tack

and beat, like ships in a narrow channel; and not infrequently, like such craft, run afoul of each other after all.

The Engineer watched these evidences of affluence, such as his wild mountains had nothing to compare with, and yet his heart coveted none of them. They were objects of his wonder, but no more; while every desire was excited to possess the little bird, whose cage hung scarcely three yards from where he lay.

As evening drew nigh, the Engineer became almost feverish in excitement: each stir within the house made him fear that someone was coming to take the bird away; every step that approached suggested the same dread. Twice he resolved to tear himself from the spot, and pursue his journey; but each time some liquid note, some thrilling cadence, fell like a charm upon his ear, and he sank down spell-bound. He sat for a long time with eyes riveted on the cage, and then at length, stooping down, he took from the ground beside him a long branch of pine-wood; he measured with his eye the distance to the cage, and muttered to himself an assent. With a dexterity and speed which in his countrymen are instincts, he fastened one handle of his scissors to the branch, and tied a string to the other, making an implement like that used by the grape-gatherers in the wine season. He examined it carefully, to try its strength, and even experimented with it on the Jessamine that grew over the front of the cottage. His dark eyes glistened like burning coals as the leaves and twigs were snapped off at a touch. He looked around him to see that all was still, and no one near. The moment was favorable: the Angelus was ringing from the little chapel, and all the Doff was kneeling in prayer. He hesitated no longer, but, lifting the branch, he cut through three of the little bars in the cage; they were dry and brittle, and yielded easily: in a moment more he had removed them, leaving a little door wide enough for the bird to escape. This done, he withdrew the stick, detached the scissors, and in its place tied on a small lump of maple sugar—the food the bird loves best. Starling, at first terrified by the intrusion, soon gained courage and approached the bait. He knew not that a little noose of horse-hair hung beneath it, which, no sooner had he tasted the sugar, than it was thrown over his neck and drawn tight. Less practiced fingers than the Engineers could scarcely have enclosed that little throat sufficiently to prevent even one cry, and yet not endanger life.

Every step of this process was far more rapid than we have been in telling it. The moment it was effected, the Engineer was away. No Indian ever rose from his lair with more stealthy cunning, nor tracked his enemy with a fleeter step: away over the wide plain, down through the winding glens, among the oak-

scrub, and into the dark pine-wood, who could trace his wanderings?—who could overtake him now?

With all his speed, he had not gone above a mile from the Doff when Fritz missed his treasure. He went to take his bird into the house for the night, when the whole misfortune broke full upon him, For a few seconds, like most people under sudden bereavement, his mind could not take in all the sorrow: he peered into the cage, he thrust his fingers into it, he tumbled over the moss at the bottom of it; and then, at length, conscious of ins loss, he covered his face with his hands, and sobbed as though his heart was breaking.

Men and women may find it hard to sympathize with such sorrow. A child, however, can understand a child's grief, for Fritz had lost everything he had in the world. This little bird was not only all his wealth, all his ambition, his daily companion in solitary places, his hope, his friend, but somehow it was linked mysteriously with the memories of his own home—memories that every day, every hour, was effacing—but these, Star still could call up in his heart: to lose him was, therefore, to cut the last slender cord that tied him to the past and linked him to the future.

His violent sobbing brought Gretel’s to him, but he could tell her nothing—he could only point to the cage, which now hung on its side, and mutter the one word,—

"Him! him!"—Away! away!

The little girl's grief was scarcely less poignant than his own. She wrung her hands in all the passion of sorrow, and cried bitterly.

The Bauer and his wife now came to the spot, the one to join in, the other to rebuke, their afflictions. How little the children noticed either! Their misery filled up every corner of their minds—their wretchedness was overwhelming.

Every corner of the little hut was associated with some recollection of the poor "Star." Here, it was he used to feed—here, he hopped out to greet Fritz of an evening, when the bad weather had prevented him accompanying him to the fields. There, he was accustomed to sit while they were at supper, singing his merry song; and here, would he remain silently while they were at prayers, waiting for the moment of their rising to utter the cry of "Maria, half us!"

Each time the children's eyes met, as they turned away from looking at any of these well-known spots, they burst into tears: each read the other's thoughts, and felt his sorrows more deeply in the interchange.

What a long, long night was that! They cried themselves to sleep, to awake again in tears!—now, to dream they heard "Star" calling to them—now, to fancy he had come back again, all way worn and ruffled, glad to seek his usual shelter, and be with friends once more—and then they awoke to feel the bitterness of disappointment, and know that he was gone!

"And he told me, Gretel's—he told me 'A good word brings luck!'" sobbed Fritz, whose despair had turned to skepticism.

Poor Gretel's had no argument wherewith to meet this burst of misery—she could but mingle her tears with his.

We frequently hear of the hard-heartedness of the poor—how steeled they are against the finer affections and softer feelings of the world; but it might be as well to ask if the daily business of life—which to them is one of sheer necessity—does not combat more powerfully against the indulgence of sorrow than all the philosophy that mere wisdom ever taught?

Poor Fritter awoke with a heart almost weighed down with affliction, but still he went forth with his goats to the pasture, and tended and watched after them as carefully as ever. The next day, and the day after that again, he went about his accustomed duties; but on the third day, as he sat beside Gretel's under the old linden-tree before the door, he whispered to her,—

"I can bear it no longer, Gretel's! I must away!—away!" And he pointed to the distance, which, vague and undefined as his own resolves, stretched out its broad expanse before them.

Gretel's did her best to persuade him against his rash determination: she reasoned as well as she could reason; she begged, she even cried to him; and at last, all else failing, she forgot her pledge, and actually ran and told her father.

The Bauer, sorry to lose so faithful a servant as Fritz, added his influence to the little maiden's tears; and even the Bauer's wife tried to argue him out of his resolve, mingling with her wise suggestions about a "wide world and a cold one" some caustic hints about ingratitude to his friends and protectors.

Fritz was deaf to all: if he could not yield to Gretel’s prayers and weeping eyes, he was strong against the old wife's sarcasms.

He cried all night through, and, arising before the dawn, he kissed Gretel’s as she lay sleeping, and, cautiously opening the latch, slipped out unheard. A heavy dew was on the grass, and the large, massive clouds rested on the mountains and filled the plain. It was cold, and gloomy, and cheerless—-just such as the world is to the wanderer who, friendless, alone, and poor, would tempt his fortunes in it!

Fritz wandered on over the plain—he had no choice of paths—he had nothing to guide, no clue to lead him. He took this, because he had often gone it with "Star" when he was happy and contented. As he went along, the sun rose, and soon the whole scene changed from its leaden grey to the bright tint of morning. The hoar-frost glittered like thousands of spangles scattered over the grass; the earth sent up a delicious odor; the leaves, as they opened, murmured softly in the air; and the little brooks rustled among the stones, and rippled on with a sound like fairy laughter. There was gladness and joy everywhere, save in that heart which was now bereft of all.

"What could he mean?" said he, again and again to himself: "'A good word brings luck!' When had I ever misfortune till now?"

Oh, Fritter! take care lest you are not making the common mistake, and expecting the moral before the end of the story.

Were it my object to dwell on this part of my tale, I might tell you of Fritz's long conflict with himself—his doubts, his hesitation, and his reasoning’s, before he could decide on what course to take, or whither to bend his steps. The world was a very wide one to hunt after a Starling through it: that, he knew, though not very deeply skilled in geography.

Fritz had never heard of those wise inspirations by which knights-errant of old guided their wanderings; nor, perhaps, if he bad, would he have benefited by them, seeing that to throw the rein loose on his charger's neck was a matter of some difficulty. He did, perhaps, what was the nearest thing in practice to this: he wandered along, keeping the straight path, and, neither turning right nor left, found himself at noon in the opening of the beautiful glen that leads to Route. He looked up, and there were great mountains before him—not hills, but real mountains, with pine-forests beneath, and crags above that, and over them, again, snow-peaks and glaciers. They seemed quite near, but they were

still many a mile off. No matter: the sight of them cheered and encouraged him; they reminded him of the old life among the Tyrol "Jocks," and the wild cattle sporting about, and the herdsmen springing from cliff to cliff, rifle in hand. Ob, that was a free and joyous life!

Fritz's musings on this head were suddenly put a stop to by a severe pang of hunger, in all likelihood suggested by the odor of a savory mess which steamed from the open window of a little hut on the road-side.

The peasant family were about to sit down to their twelve-o'clock dinner, when Fritz, unconsciously to himself, drew up at the window, and looked in at the tempting food.

There is one custom in Germany, which, simple as it is, it would be hard to praise above its merits: that is, the invariable habit of every one, so far as his means permit, to help the foot-traveller on his journey. By an old municipal law of most of the cities, the tradesmen cannot settle and establish themselves in their native town till they have travelled and lived in other places; thus learning, as it is supposed, whatever improvements their several crafts may have obtained in different and distant cities. These wanderings, which are usually for one year or two, are accomplished during the period of apprenticeship; so that you never travel on any of the high-roads without meeting these Lehr-Junkers, as they are called, who, with a knapsack on their back, and a spare pair of boots or two depending from it, are either smoking or singing to beguile the way. As it is not to be supposed that they are over-abundantly provided with means, it has grown into a recognized custom to assist them with some trifle: but the good habit ends not here; it extends to the poor boy returning from the gymnasium, or school, to see his parents—the discharged or furloughed soldier—the wayfarer of every class, in fact, whose condition pleads to those more plenteously endowed than himself.

Fritz was now to reap the benefit of this graceful charity; and scarcely had his wan features appeared at the window, than a sign from the chief Bauer invited him to partake. Happily for poor Fritz—happily for all who give and all who accept such aid—there is no sense of humiliation in doing so. It is, in fact, less an alms-giving than a remnant of the ancient hospitality which made the stranger welcome beneath every roof—a custom that dates before rail-roads and giant hotels.

Fritz ate and drank, and was thankful. The few words he spoke were in answer to the common questions, as to whence he came—and whither he was going—

and what was his handicraft; inquiries which puzzled him sorely to reply to. His hesitations were not rendered more embarrassing by the curiosity of his questioners; they neither cared to push him closely, nor troubled their heads upon the matter.

"Farewell," said the Bauer's wife, as he thanked her gratefully; "farewell. Be good and pious, young lad; don't keep naughty company, nor learn bad ways; and remember 'A good word brings luck.'"

His eyes filled up with tears as she spoke. Who can tell the conflict of feelings they called up in his bosom?

"Where does this path lead to?" he asked, in a faint voice*

"To Route, child."

"And then, after Rented?"

"To Zillerthal and Innsbruck."

"To Innsbruck!" said Fritz, while a sudden hope shot through him. "I'll go to Innsbruck," muttered he, lower. "Good-by, Bauer; good-by, Frau. God bless thee." And with these words he set out once more.

How little they who roll on their journey with all the speed and luxury that wealth can purchase, defying climate and distance, know the vicissitudes that fall to the lot of the weary foot-traveller! From city to city, from kingdom to kingdom, the rich man glides on, the great panorama of life revealing itself before him, without an effort on his part. The Alps—the Pyrenees, scarcely retard him; the luxuries he requires meet him at every halting-place, as though difference of region should not trench upon even his daily habits; his patience, perhaps, not more tried than by the occasional stoppages where fresh horses meet him. And yet, between two such stations a foot-traveller may spend the live-long day, wearied, footsore, heavy of heart. What crosses and trials are his! What strange adventures, too! and what strange companionships! Each day a new episode of life—but of life over which Poverty has thrown its shadow.

Fritz was now to experience all this; now, travelling with a company of wandering apprentices; now, keeping company with a group of peasants on the way to market; sometimes, partaking of a seat in a Bauer's wagon—often, alone and weary, thinking over his future—a future, that each day seemed to render more doubtful and gloomy.

As he penetrated deeper into the Zillerthal, the journeys of each day became longer, the resting-places for the night being further apart; sometimes he was obliged to stop a day, or even two days, at a village, to recruit strength sufficient for a long march; and then, he would have to walk from before daylight to late in the night ere he reached his destination. His was not strength to endure fatigue like this with impunity; and if he did encounter it, it was from an enthusiasm that supplied energy, where mere bodily strength had failed. Two hopes buoyed him up, and carried him along through every opposing difficulty. Whether Star had escaped by accident, or been taken away by design, he was lame, and would surely be soon caught; and if so, what more likely than that he would be sent to Innsbruck to be sold, for there was the greatest bird-market of all the world? at least so Fritz believed. His second sustaining hope lay in the prospect of once again meeting the old Priest, and learning from him how was it that a "good word" had not "brought luck" to him, and whether from any fault of his own.

These thoughts had so far obtained possession of his mind, that he became almost unconscious of every other; from dwelling on them so much, and revolving them so frequently and in so many different shapes and forms, he grew to think that he had no other object and aim than to reach Innsbruck and solve these two doubts. Hunger, cold, and fatigue, every privation of a long and weary journey, was unrewarded by him; and although it was now late in the autumn, and snow was beginning to fall on the mountain passes, Fritz, poorly clad, and scarcely fed, trudged on, day after day, his own heart supplying the courage which his weak frame denied.

As winter drew near the day’s grew shorter; and the atmosphere, loaded with snow ready to drop, darkened the earth, and made night come on, as it seemed, many hours before sunset. This left very little time to Fritz for his long journeys, which, just at this very period, unfortunately, were longer than ever. The way, too, had become far more dreary and deserted, not only because it led through a little-travelled district, but that the snow being too deep for wheeled carriages, and not hard enough for sledges, the travellers were fain to wait till either rain or frost should come on, to make the road practicable. Hence it happened, that not infrequently, now, Fritz journeyed the live-long day, from dawn to dark, and scarcely met a single traveller, Sometimes, too, not a hut would be seen in a whole day's march, and he would never taste a morsel of food till he reached his halting-place for the night.

All this was bad enough, but it was not the only difficulty; the worst of all was, how to find out the way in the mountain passes, where the snow lay so deep, that the balustrades or parapets that flanked the road, and often guarded it from a precipice, were now covered, and no wheel-track could be seen to guide the traveller. Fritz, when he journeyed this road before, remembered the awe and terror with which he used to peep over the little stone railing, and look down hundreds of feet into the dark valley beneath, where a great river was diminished to the size of a mere brawling rivulet; and now, where was that parapet?—on which side of him did it lie? A deep gorge was near—that he well knew; the unfrozen torrent beneath roared like thunder, but a waving surface of untraded snow stretched away on either side of him, without foot-track or ought to mark the way.

For a long time did the poor child stand uncertain which way to turn; now thinking he heard the heavy plash of wheels moving through the snow, and then discovering it was merely the sound of falling masses, which, from time to time, slipped from their places, and glided down the steep mountain sides» What desolate and heart-chilling solitude was there! A leaden, greyish sky overhead—not a cloud, nor even a passing bird, to break its dreary surface—beneath, nothing but snow; snow on the wild fantastic mountain peaks; snow in waving sweeps between them. The rocks, the fir-trees, all covered.

Fritz stood so long, that already the thin drift settled on his head and shoulders, and clothed him in the same wintry livery as the objects around; his limbs were stiff, his fingers knotted and frozen; the little tears upon his blue cheeks seemed almost to freeze; his heart, that till now bore bravely up, grew colder and heavier. He felt as if he would be happy if he could cry, but that even grief was freezing within him. Despair was near him then! He felt a drowsy confusion creeping over him. Clouds of white snow-drift seemed to fall so thickly around, that every object was hidden from view. Crashing branches and roaring torrents mingled their noises with the thundering plash of falling snow-masses. Oh! if he could but sleep, and neither here nor see these wearying sounds and sights—sleep, and be at rest! It was just at this instant his eye caught sight of a little finger-post, from which a passing gust of wind had carried away the snow. It stood at some distance beneath him, in the midst of a waving field of snow. Had poor Fritz remarked its leaning attitude, and the depth to which it was covered, scarcely more than three feet appearing above the surface, he would have known it must have been carried away from its own appointed spot; but his senses were not clear enough for such simple reasoning's, and with a last effort he struggled towards it. The snow grew

deeper at every step; not only did it rise above his foot, and half his leg, but it seemed to move in a great mass all around him, as if a huge fragment of the mountain had separated, and was floating downwards. The post, too, he came not nearer to it; it receded as he advanced;—was this a mere delusion? had his weakened faculties lost all control of sense? Alas! these sensations were but too real! He had already crossed the parapet which flanked the road—already was he in the midst of a great "wraith" of fallen snow, which, descending from the mountain peak, by a storm in the night, had carried away the finger-post, and now only waited the slightest impulse—the weight of that little child—to carry it down, down into the depth below! And down, indeed, it went; at first, slowly—moving like a great unbroken wave; then growing more hurried as it neared the edge of the precipice, thickening and swelling with fresh masses: it rose around him—now, circling his waist, now, enclosing his shoulders: he had but time to grasp the little wooden cross, the emblem of hope and succor, when the mass glided over the brink, and fell thundering into the dark abyss.

I would not risk any little credit I may, perchance, possess with the reader, by saying how deep that gorge actually was; but this will I say, when standing on the spot, in a very different season from this I have described—when the trees were in full leaf, the wild flowers blossoming, and both sky above and river beneath, blue as the bluest turquoise; yet even then, to look down the low parapet into the narrow chasm, was something to make the head reel and the heart's blood chill.

But to my story.—It was the custom in this season, when the snow fell heavily on the high passes, to transmit the little weekly mail between Route and Innsbruck by an old and now disused road, which led along the edge of the river, and generally, from its sheltered situation, continued practicable and free from snow some weeks later than the mountain road. It was scarce worthy to be called a road—a mere wheel-track, obstructed here and there by stones and masses of rock that every storm brought down, and not infrequently threatened, by the flooding of the river, to be washed away altogether.

Along this dreary way the old postilion was wending—now, pulling up to listen to the crashing thunders of the snow, which, falling several hundred feet above, might at any moment descend and engulf him—again, plying his whip vigorously, to push through the gorge, secretly vowing in his heart that, come what would, he would venture no more there that year. Just as he turned a sharp angle of the rock, where merely space lay for the road between it and the river, he found his advance barred up by a larch-tree, which, with an immense

fragment of snow, had fallen from above. Such obstacles were not new to him, and he lost no time in unharnessing his horse and attaching him to the tree. In a few minutes the road was cleared of this difficulty; and he now advanced, shovel in hand, to make a passage through the snow.

"Superlight!" cried he; "here is the finger-post! This must have come down from the upper road."

Scarcely were the words uttered, when a cry of horror broke from him. He trembled from head to foot; his eyes seemed bursting from their sockets: and well might they, for, close around the wood, just where it emerged from the snow, were two little hands clasped tightly round the timber.

He threw himself on the spot, and tore up the snow with his fingers. An arm appeared, and then the long yellow hair of a head resting on it. Working with all the eagerness of a warm and benevolent nature, he soon disinterred the little body, which, save one deep cut upon the forehead, seemed to have no other mark of injury; but it lay cold and motionless—no sign of life remaining.

He pressed the little flask of brandy—all that he possessed—against the wan, white lips of the child; but the liquor ran down the chin and over the cheek—not a drop of it was sucked. He rubbed the hands, he chafed the body, he even shook it; but, heavy and inert, it gave no sign of life.

"Ach, Got!" muttered he, "it is all over!" But still, with a hope that asked no aid from reason, he wrapped the child's body in his fur mantle, and, laying him softly down in the cart, continued his way.

The lights, which were glittering here and there through the little village inns, had been gradually extinguished as the night grew later, till, at last» none remained, save those around the door of the post-house, where a little group of loungers was gathered, As they talked together, one or other occasionally would step out into the road and seem to listen, and then rejoin his companions. "No sign of him yet! What can keep him so late as this?" cried the Post-master, holding up his watch, that the lamp-light should fall on it. "It wants but four minutes to eleven—his time, by right, is half after nine."

"He is trying the upper road be like, and the deep snow has detained him."

"No, no," said another, "Old Cristoph's too knowing for that: bad as the lower road is, the upper is worse; and with the storm of last night, there will be drift there deep enough to swallow horse and mail-cart twice over."

"There may be fallen snow on the lower road," whispered a third; "Christophe told me last week he feared it would not be safe for another journey."

"He's a daring old fellow," said the Post-master, as he resumed his walk up and down to keep his feet warm; "but he'll try that lower road once too often. He can't bear the upper road because it is a new one, and was not made when he was a boy. He thinks that the world is not half so wise, or so good, as it was some fifty years back."

"If he make no greater mistakes than that," muttered an old white-headed hostler, "he may be trusted to choose his own road."

"What's that Philip is mumbling?" said the Post-master; but a general cry of "Here he comes! Here he is now!" interrupted the answer.

"See how he drives full speed over the bridge!" exclaimed the Post-master, angrily. "Potz-Teufel! if the Burgomaster hears it, I shall have to pay a fine of four gulden; and I would not wonder if the noise awoke him."

There was less exaggeration than might be supposed in this speech, for Old Christophe, in open defiance of all German law, which requires that nothing faster than a slow walk should be used in crossing a wooden bridge, galloped at the full stride of his beast, making every crazy plank and timber tremble and vibrate with a crash like small arms.

Never relaxing in his speed, the old man drove at his fastest pace through the narrow old Roman gate, up the little paved hill, round the sharp corner, across the Plats, into the main street, and never slackened till he pulled up with a jerk at the door of the post-house: when, springing from his seat, he detached the lamp from its place, and thrust it into the wagon, crying with a voice that excitement had elevated into a scream,—"He's alive still!—I'll swear I heard him sigh! I know he's alive!"

It is hard to say what strange conjectures might have been formed of the old man's sanity, had he not backed his words by stooping down and lifting from the straw, at the bottom of the cart, the seemingly dead body of a boy, which, with the alacrity of one far younger, he carried up the steps, down the long arched passage, and into the kitchen, where he laid him down before the fire.

"Quick now, Ernest; run for the doctor! Away, Johan; bring the Stats Physics—bring two—all of them in the town! Frau Hostess, warm water and salt—salt, to rub him with—I know he is alive!"

A shake of the head from the old hostess seemed to offer a strong dissent.

"Never mind that! He is not dead, though he did fall from the Riesenfels."

"From the Riesenfels!" exclaimed three or four together in amazement.

"Who was it came galloping at full speed over the Bridge, and passed the grand guard on the Plats at the same disorderly pace?" said the deep voice of the Burger-meister, who arose from his bed to learn the cause of the tumult.

"It was I," exclaimed Christophe, ruggedly; "there lies the reason."

"The penalty is all the same," growled the man of authority: "four gulden for one, and two gulden thirty Kreutzer's for the other offence."

Christophe either did not hear or heed the speech.

"Where's the mail-bag? I haven't seen that yet," chimed in the Post-master; who, like a wise official, followed the lead of the highest village functionary.

Old Christophe bustled out, and soon returned, not only with the leathern sack in question, but with a huge fragment of a wooden cross over his shoulders.

"There's the bag, Herr Post-meister, all safe and dry," said he; "and here Herr Burger-meister, here's your fine finger-post that the Governor ordered to be stuck up on the Riesenfels. I suppose they'll need it again when the snow melts and the road is clear: though to be sure," added he, in a lower tone, "he must have worse eyes than Old Christophe who could not see his way to Imst from that cliff without a finger-post to guide him."

The Burgermeister was not disposed to suffer this irony in silence; but the occasion to exert his authority with due severity was not at that moment, when the whole attention of the bystanders was directed to the proceedings of the three village doctors—one of them no less a personage than the Stats Physics—who, with various hard terms of art, were discussing the condition of the senseless form before them.

Where I to recount one half of the learned surmises and deep prognostications of these wise Esculapians, the chances are, my reader would grow as weary of the recital as did poor old Christophe of the reality. For at last, unable to endure any longer active controversies about the pie mater and the Dura mater, the vitreous table and the cerebellum, with vague hints of "congestion,"

"depression," "effusion," and so on, he broke in with, "In God's name, dear gentlemen, let him be kept warm and have a good glass of 'schnapps' down his poor throat; and when he shows a chance of living, fight away about the name of the malady to your hearts' content."

I am far from defending, Old Cristoph's rude interruption. The learned faculties should always be treated with becoming deference; but he was a rude, unpolished old fellow, and the best one can say is, that he meant it well. Certain it is they seemed to acknowledge the force of his suggestion; for they at once removed the child to a warm bed, while they ordered the hostess to administer a very comfortable cordial of her own devising; and, to show their confidence in the remedy, had three likewise provided for their own individual comfort and support.

It is not my wish to dwell on the sad portions of our tale, wherever the recital would elicit nothing of our little hero's character: and such was the period which now ensued. Fritz was conveyed, early on the following morning, to the village hospital, where his case was pronounced of the very gravest nature. The dangers from cold, inanition, and exposure, were all inferior to the greater one resulting from some injury to the brain. I cannot be expected to be clearer and more explicit on this theme than were his doctors; and they, with proverbial propriety, did differ most amazingly: one advocating a fracture, another a concussion, and a third standing out for both, and something more. They agreed, however, on two points; one of which was, that he would die—and the other, that as he was evidently very poor and had no friends, his death was of less consequence. I would not be here understood, by any malevolent critic, as wishing to infer that the doctors' neglect of him was a strong point in Fritz's favor. I merely desire to relate a simple fact—that he continued to live from day to day, and from week to week, gaining in strength, but never once evidencing, by even the slightest trait, a return to his faculty of reasoning. Alas, poor child!—the intellect which, in all his sorrow and poverty, had been his happiness and his comfort, was now darkened, and he awoke from that long dream of death—an idiot!

Perhaps I may not have used the fitting word; but how shall I speak of his state? He seemed sad and sorrow-struck; never spoke, even to answer a question; moved listlessly and slowly about, as if in search of something, and muttering lowly to himself. No one ever saw him smile, and yet he did not weep. He looked more like one in whom reason was, by some terrible shock, suspended and held in abeyance, than actually routed or annihilated. Unlike

most others similarly afflicted, he slept very little, remaining usually, the night long, sitting beside his bed, gesticulating with his hands in a strange way, and suddenly ceasing if observed.

His eye, for some minutes, would often seem bright with intelligence; but on looking more closely, it would be discovered that the gaze was fixed on vacancy, and it might be conjectured that no image of any near object was presented to the mind, since no expression of pain, pleasure, or astonishment would follow, when different substances were displayed before him. One might say, that the faculties were entirely absorbed by their own operations, and neither took note of those recorded by the senses, nor had any sympathy with their workings—volition wad at a stand-still. But why dwell on so sorrowful a picture?

Spring came, and Fritz, whoever obeyed each command of those over him, was suffered to walk daily in the little garden of the asylum. One day—it was the first bright one of the new season—the birds were singing sweetly in the trees when he went forth, and they who came sometime after to fetch him to the house, found him in tears. His sorrow seemed, however, to have brought some sense of relief with it, for that night he slept more calmly and longer than usual. From this time out it was remarked that his appearance varied with the weather of each day. When the air was clear, and the sun shone bright, and the birds gathered together in the blossoming branches of the fruit-trees, he seemed happier; but when dark skies or rain came on, he would walk impatiently from place to place—now, as if in search of some missing object—now, as if suddenly overwhelmed by his loss.

Thus did he continue till about the first week in May, when at the usual hour of recalling him to the house he was not to be found. Search was made everywhere—through the garden—about the neighboring buildings—in all the Doff—but all in vain. No one had seen him.

Poor and unfriended as he was, his little simple ways, his sinless innocence and gentleness, had made him friends among all who had any authority in the asylum; and no pains were spared to track him out and discover him—to no end, however. He was seen there no more. Days and weeks long, with unwearyingly zeal, the search continued, and was only abandoned when all hope seemed gone. By none was this sad termination of his suffering more poignantly felt than by old Christophe. Every week he came to Imst, his first care was to ask after the little boy; and when he learned his fate, his grief was deep and heartfelt.

I know not if my reader has ever visited Innsbruck.

Everyone has been everywhere nowadays; and so the chances are, that the Tyrol capital is as well known to them as to myself. At all the hazard of being tedious, however, I must mention one feature of that beautiful old city—a little street which leads out of the Old Market, and runs westward down a somewhat steep declivity towards the Inn. It is one of those narrow, old, gloomy alleys a traveller would scarcely think of exploring. A low range of arches, supported on pillars of the most sturdy proportions, runs along either side, furnished with massive stone seats, worn smooth by the use of some centuries of gossips. The little shops within this dark arcade are undefended by windows of any kind, but lie open, displaying to the passer-by, not only the various wares exposed for sale, but frequently, as the wind, or chance, waves the folds of an old curtain at the back, the little household of the merchant himself.

The middle portion of this street, scarcely wide enough for three to walk abreast, grows even narrower as you look up, by the gradual encroachment of each story on either side; so that while the denizens of the first-floors have merely the neighborly advantages of a near salutation, they who inhabit the garrets may embrace without any fear on the score of bodily danger. Our business is only with those beneath, however, and thither I must ask of your accompanying me.

If the two groined arches—dark with age as well as feint light—the narrow gloomy-looking alley, might at first deter the stranger from entering, scarcely would he venture a few steps ere a strange fascination would lead him onward. Within these little dens—for such rather than shops do they seem—are objects to be found, the strangest and the most curious ever exposed for sale. In one, you find a collection of ancient armor the greatest Ritter Sail would be proud to choose from:—weapons of every age and country—the chain-mail of Milan—the plate-armor of Venice—the heavy double-nailed suits of Regensburg—the small conical helmet of the East—the massive but beautifully fashioned casqued of Spanish mound—the blade of Damascus—the double-handled sword of Appenzell—the jeered—the Crusader's lance—the old pike of the Tyrol, with daggers and poniards of every shape, that luxury or cruelty ever invented. Adjoining this, perhaps, lives one who deals in rare flowers and shrubs; and, strange as it may seem in such a place, the orange-tree, the cactus, the camellia, and the aloe, shed their bloom and perfume through these vaulted cells, where age, and rust, and decay would appear the most fitting denizens. Here, lives one who sells the rich brocaded silks and tamboured of a by-gone

century—great flowering waistcoats, stiff and imposing as the once wearers—huge sweeping trains of costly embroidery—relics of a time when stateliness was cultivated, and dignified deportment the distinctive sign of birth. Right opposite to this is a store of ancient articles of furniture and virtue—marquetry and Buhl—Dresden and Sevres—carved oak and ebony—ivory and box-wood. All that ever fancy conceived uncomfortable to sit upon, or a diseased imagination ever inaugurated as the throne of nightmare to sleep in—are here to be had. Stools to kneel upon and altars to kneel at—Virgins in ivory and silver—idols of Indian adoration—ancient goblets, and most curiously carved treasure-boxes of solid iron, massive little emblems of a time when men put slight faith in bankers.

A little further on you may meet with a jeweler's, where ornaments the most rare and costly are to be found: massive old necklaces of amethyst or emerald, in which the ungainly setting bears such a contrast to the value of the stone—rich clasps of pink topaz or ruby, for the collar of a cloak—sword-handles all paved with precious gems—and signet-rings, that have circled the fingers of proud Counts of the Empire, and, mayhap, sealed with their impress many a dark and gloomy record.

Some deal in old books and manuscripts, ancient rolls, and painted missals; some, in curious relics of horse-equipment, brass-mounted demi-piques and iron-strapped saddles of the sixteenth century, with spurs of a foot in length, and uncouth bits that would hold an elephant in check: and one little dusky corner-shop, kept by an old hunchback, contained the strangest of all stocks-in-trade,—an assemblage of instruments of torture: chains of every kind hung from the ceiling; thumb-screws, back-bolts, helmets made to close upon the skull, and crushed by the action of a vice; racks, hatchets, and pincers; while conspicuous in the midst, as the support of an old iron lantern, is the block of a headsman, the surface bearing the shocking record of its usage. Just where this grim and ghastly cell stands, a little rivulet of clear water crosses the street, and seems to separate it from the remaining portion, which, by a steeper declivity, inclined towards the river.

Separate, indeed, I might well say, for the two portions are as unlike as the records of all man's vanity and cruelty are unlike the emblem of Gods goodness and wisdom. You scarcely cross this tiny stream when the whole air resounds with the warbling of birds, bright in every tint and hue of plumage, golden and green, purple and crimson.

From the lordly eagle of the Oilier to the rich-toned linnet of the Bautzen valley, all are there. There, the parquet of the Stevia, gorgeous as the scarlet bustard in plumage; and here, the golden jay of the Vorarlberg. Blackbirds, thrushes, finches of a hundred different races, "Roth Kopf's," and woodpeckers, spring, chirp, flutter, and scream, on every side. The very atmosphere is tremulous with the sounds, lifelike and joyous as they are! The very bustle and movement around is such a relief from the torpid stillness of the other end of the street, where nothing is heard save the low monotonous tones of some old Jew reading in his back-shop, or the harsh clank of an iron weapon removed from its place; while, here, the merry twitter and the silvery-shake recall the greenwood and the grove, the bright fields and heath-clad mountains.

Here is the bird-market of Innsbruck. It needs but one passing glance to show what attractions the spot possesses for the inhabitants. Every rank, from the well-salaried official of the government to the humblest burgher—from the richly clad noble in his mantle of Astra can, to the peasant in his dark jacket of sheep's skin—the field officer and the common soldier—the "Frau Grain" voluminous in furs—the "Stubbed matched" in her woolen jerkin—the lounging sexagenarian from his coffee—the loitering school-boy returning from school—all jostle and meet together here; while the scantiest intimacy with the language will suffice to collect from the frequently uttered, "Wee scion!" "Ach Got!" "We wunderschon!" that admiration and delight are expressed by every tongue among them.

It is needless to say, that every corner of this little territory is familiar to all Inspruckers; not only each shop and its owner, but each separate treasure. The newly arrived bullfinch, or greywing, having the notoriety that a Parisian circulates about the last débutante of the ballet or the opera. If not exactly one of those "lions," that guide-books enforce among the duties of wandering sight-seers, it is at least a frequent resort of the town's-folk themselves, for whose gratification it supplies no small proportion of small-talk.

Among the well-known and familiar objects of this small world—for such the Juden Gasse in reality is—was a poor boy of some twelve years old, who, clad in the most wretched rags, and with want in every feature, used to sit the live-long day on one of the stone benches watching the birds. It needed but one glance at his bright but unsteady eye, his faint unmeaning smile, his vague and wild expression, to recognise that he was bereft of reason. Is it necessary to say this was poor Fritter?

Whence he came, who were his parents, how he journeyed thither, no one could tell! He appeared one morning, when the shop-people were removing the shutters, sitting close by a window, where the early songs of the birds was audible, his head bent down to listen, and his whole attitude betokening the deepest attention. Though he offered no resistance when they bade him leave the spot, he showed such deep sorrow and such reluctance, that he was suffered to remain; and this was now his dwelling-place. He never quitted it during the day, and there did he pass the night, under the shelter of the deep arches, and protected by the fragment of a mantle, which some compassionate neighbour had given him. All endeavours to induce him to speak were in vain; a sickly smile was his only answer to a question; and, if pressed too closely, the tears would come, so that none liked to give him further pain, and the hope of learning anything about him, even his name, was given up. Equally fruitless was every effort to make him perform little services. If the shopkeepers gave him a bird to carry home for a purchaser, he would at once sit down beside the cage and gaze wistfully, delightedly, at the occupant; but he could not be persuaded to quit his abiding-place. Who could rob one so poor of all the happiness his life compassed? certainly not the good-natured and kindly folk who inhabited the bird-market.

He became then a recognized part of the place, as much as the bustard with one eye in the corner shop, or the fat old owl that had lived for fifty—some said seventy—years, in the little den with the low iron door. Everyone knew him; few passed without a look of kindness towards him. It was of no use to give him money, for though he took money when offered, the next moment he would leave it on the stones, where the street children came and found it. It was clear he did not understand its meaning. The little support he needed was freely proffered by the neighboring shopkeepers, but he ate nothing save a morsel of dry bread, of which it was remarked that he each day broke off a small portion and laid it by—not to eat later on, for it was seen that he never missed it if removed, nor took it again if suffered to remain. It was one of the secrets of his nature none could rightly account for.

Although many wealthy and benevolent people of the city wished to provide the poor, boy with a more comfortable home, the shopkeepers protested against his removal. Some, loved his innocent, childish features, and would have missed him sorely; others, were superstitious enough to think, and even say, that he had brought luck to the bird-market,—that everyone had prospered since he came there; and some, too, asserted, that having selected the spot himself, it would be cruel to tear him away from a place where accustomed and familiar

objects had made for him a kind of home. All these reasoning's were backed by the proposal to build for him a little shed, in the very spot he had taken up, and there leave him to live in peace. This was accordingly done, and poor Fritz, if not a "Burgher of Innsbruck," had at least his own house in the bird-market.

Months rolled over: the summer went by, and the autumn itself now drew to a close; and the various preparations for the coming winter might be seen in little hand-barrows of firewood deposited before each door, to be split up and cut in fitting lengths for the stoves. Fur mantles and caps were hung out to air, and some prudent and well-to-do folks examined the snow-windows, and made arrangements for their adjustment. Each in his own way, and according to his means, was occupied with the cares of the approaching season. There was but one unmoved face in the whole street—but one, who seemed to take no note of time or season—whose past, and present, and future, were as one. This was Fritz, who sat on his accustomed bench gazing at the birds, or occasionally moving from his place to peep into a cage whose occupant lay hid, and then, when satisfied of its presence, retiring to his seat contented.

Had the worthy citizens been less actively engrossed by their own immediate concerns, or had they been less accustomed to this humble dependent's presence amongst them, it is likely they would have remarked the change time had wrought in his appearance. If no actual evidence of returning reason had evinced itself in his bearing or conduct, his features displayed at times varieties of expression and meaning very different from their former monotony. The cheek, whose languid pallor never altered, would now occasionally flush, and become suddenly scarlet; the eyes, dull and meaningless, would sparkle and light up; the lips, too, would part, as if about to give utterance to words. All these signs, however, would be only momentary, and a degree of depression, even to prostration, would invariably follow. Unlike his former apathy, too, he started at sudden noises in the street, felt more interest in the changes that went on in the shop, and seemed to miss certain birds as they happened to be sold or exchanged. The most remarkable of all the alterations in his manner were, that, now, he would often walk down to the river-side, and pass hours there gazing on the current. Who can say what efforts at restored reason were then taking place within him—what mighty influences were at work to bring back sense and intellect—what struggles, and what combats? It would seem as if the brain could exist in all its integrity—sound, and intact, and living—and yet some essential impulse be wanting which should impart the power of thought.

Momentary flashes of intelligence, perhaps, did cross him; but such can no more suffice for guidance, than does the forked lightning supply the luminary that gives us day. The landscape preternaturally lit up for a second, becomes darker than midnight the moment after.

Bright and beautiful as that river is, with its thousand eddies whirling along,—now, reflecting the tall spires and battlemented towers of the town—now, some bold, 'projecting cliff of those giant mountains beside it—how does its rapid stream proclaim its mountain source, as in large sheets of foam it whirls round the rocky angles of the bank, and dashes along free as the spirit of its native home! Fritz, came here, however, less to gaze on this lovely picture than on a scene which each morning presented to his eyes, close by. This was à garden, where a little girl of some seven or eight years old used to play, all alone and by herself, while the old nurse that accompanied her sat knitting in a little arbor near.

The joyous river—the fresh and balmy air—the flowers flinging delicious odors around, and gorgeous in their brilliant tints, only needed this little infant figure to impart a soul to the scene, and make it one of ravishing enchantment. Her tiny footsteps on the ground—her little song, breathing of innocence and happiness—the garlands which she wove, now, to place upon her own fair brow, now, in childish sport to throw into the clear current—all imparted to the poor idiot's heart sensations of intense delight. Who can say if that infant voice did not wake to feeling the heart that all the wisdom of the learned could not arouse from its sleep?

Not only was Fritz happy while he sat and watched this little child, but, for the entire day after, he would appear calm and tranquil, and his face would display the placid expression of a spirit sunk in a pleasing trance.

It was not unusual with him, while he was thus gazing, for sleep to come over him—a calm, delicious slumber—from which he awoke far more refreshed and rested than from his night's repose. Perhaps she was present in his dreams, and all her playful gestures and her merry tones were with him while he slept. Perhaps—it is not impossible—that his mind, soothed by the calming influence of, such slumber, recovered in part its lost power, and not being called on for the exercise of volition, could employ some of its perceptive faculties.

Be this as it may, this sleep was deep, and calm, and tranquillizing. One day, when he had watched longer than usual, and when her childish sport had more than ever delighted him, he dropped oft* almost suddenly into slumber.

Motionless as death itself he lay upon the bank,—a faint smile upon his parted lips, his chest scarcely seeming to heave, so soft and quiet was his slumber. The river rippled pleasantly beside him, the air was balmy as in the early spring, and fanned his hot temples with a delicious breath, the child's song floated merrily out—the innocent accents of infant glee—and Fritz seemed to drink these pleasures in as he slept.

What visions of heavenly shape—what sounds of angelic sweetness—may have flitted before that poor distracted brain, as with clasped hands and muttering lips he seemed to pray a prayer of thankfulness,—the outpouring gratitude of a pent-up nature finding vent at last! Suddenly he awoke with a start—terror in every feature—his eyes starting from their sockets: he reeled as he sprang to his feet, and almost fell. The river seemed a cataract—the mountains leaned over as though they were about to fall and crush him—the ground beneath his feet trembled and shook with an earthquake movement—a terrible cry rang through his ears. What could it mean? There!—there again he heard it! Oh, what a pang of heart-rending anguish was that! "Half! half! half!" were the words. The infant was struggling in the current—her little hand grasped the weeds, while at every instant they gave way—the water foamed and eddied round her—deeper and deeper she sank: her hair now floated in the stream, and her hands, uplifted, besought, for the last time, aid. "Half us! Maria! half us!" She sank. With a cry of wildest accent, Fritz sprang into the stream, and seized the yellow hair as it was disappearing beneath the flood: the struggle was severe, for the strong stream inclined towards the middle of the river, and Fritz could not swim. Twice had the waves closed over him, and twice he emerged with his little burden pressed to his heart; were it not for aid, however, his efforts would have been vain. The cry for help had brought many to the spot, and he was rescued—saved from death: saved from that worse than death—the terrible union of life and death.

He lay upon the bank, wearied and exhausted—but oh, how happy! How doubly bright the sky!—how inexpressibly soft and soothing the air upon his brow!—how sweet the human voice, that not only sounded to the ear but echoed in the heart!

In all his bright dreams of life he had fancied nothing like the bliss of that moment. Friends were on every side of him—kind friends, who never in a life-long could tell all their gratitude; and now, with words of affection, and looks of mildest, fondest meaning, they bent over that poor boy, and called him their own preserver.

Amid all these sights and sounds of gladness—so full of hope and joy—there came one shrill cry, which, piercing the air, seemed to penetrate to the very inmost chamber of Fritz's heart, telling at once the whole history of his life, and revealing the secret of his suffering and his victory. It was Star himself; who, in a cage beneath the spreading branches of a chestnut-tree, was glad to mingle his wild notes with the concourse of voices about him, and still continued at intervals to scream out, "Maria, half! half us, Maria!"

"Yes, child," said a venerable old man, as he kissed Fritz's forehead, "you see the fruits of your obedience and your trust. I am glad you have not forgotten my teaching,—'A good word brings luck.'"

Every story-teller should respect those who like to hear a tale to its very end. The only way he can evince his gratitude for their patience is by gratifying all their curiosity. It remains for me, then, to say, that Fritz returned to the little village where he had lived with Star for his companion; not poor and friendless as before, but rich in wealth, and richer in what is far better—the grateful love and affection of kind friends. His life henceforth was one of calm and tranquil happiness. By his aid the old Bauer was enabled to purchase his little farm rent-free, and buy besides several cows and some sheep. And then, when he grew up to be a man, Fritz married Gretel, and they became very well off, and lived in mutual love and contentment all their lives.

Fritz's house was not only the handsomest in the Doff, but it was ornamented with a little picture of the Virgin, with Star sitting upon her wrist, and the words of the golden letters were inscribed beneath,—

"Maria, Mutter Gotten, half us!"

Within, nothing could be more comfortable than to see Fritz and Gretel at one side of the fire, and the old Bauer reading aloud, and the "Frau" listening, and Star, who lived to a great age, walking proudly about, as if he was conscious that he had some share in producing the family prosperity; and close to the stove, on a little low seat made on purpose, sat a little old man, with a long pigtail and very shrunken legs: this was old Christophe the postilion—and who had a better right?

Fritz was so much loved and respected by the villagers, that they elected him Vorster, or rector of the Doff; and when he died—very old at last—they all, several hundreds, followed him respectfully to the grave, and, in memory of his story, called the village Maria Half, which is its name to this day.

CHAPTER III.

Karenna, Lake of Como.

Italy at last! I have crossed the Alps and reached my goal, and now I turn and look at that winding road which, for above two thousand feet, traverses the steep mountain-side, and involuntarily a sadness steals over me—that I am never to re-cross it! These same "last-times" are very sorrowful things, all emblems as they are of that one great "last-time" when the curtain falls forever! Nor am I sorry when this feeling impresses me deeply; nay, I am pleased that indifference—apathy—have no more hold upon me. I am more afraid of that careless, passionless temperament, than of aught else, and the more as hour by hour it steals over me. Yesterday a letter, which once would have interested me deeply, lay half read till evening; to-day, a very old friend of my guardian's, Sir Gordon Howard, has left his card: he is ill the inn, perhaps in the next room, and I have not energy to return his visit and chat with him over friends I am never to see again. And yet he is a gallant old officer,—one of that noble class of Englishmen whose loyalty made the boldest feats of daring, the longest years of servitude, seem only as a duty they owed their sovereign. The race is dying out fast.

What can have brought him to Italy? Let me see. Here is the Traveller's Book; perhaps it may tell something.

"Sir Gordon Howard, Officer Anglia's,"—simple enough for a Major-general and K.C.B. and G.C.H.—"de Zurich à Como." Not much to be learned from that. But stay! he is not alone. "Mademoiselle Howard." And who can she be? He never had a daughter, and his only son is in India. Perhaps she is a grandaughter; but what care I? It is but another reason to avoid seeing him. I cannot make new acquaintances now. He wants no companions who must travel the road I am going! Antoine must tell me when Sir Gordon Howard goes out, and I'll leave my card then. I feel I must remain here to-day, and I am well content to do so. This calm lake, these bold mountains, the wooded promontory of Bellagio, and its bright villas, seen amid the trees, are pleasant sights; while from the ever-passing boats, with their white arched awnings, I hear laughter and voices of happy people, whose hearts are lighter than my own.

If I could only find resolution for the task, too, there are a host of letters lying by me unanswered. How little do some of those "dear friends" who invite one to shoot grouse in the Highlands, or hunt in Leicestershire, think of the real condition of those they ask to be their guests! It is enough that you have been

seen in certain houses of a certain repute. You have visited at B———, and spent a Christmas at G———; you are known as a tolerable shot and a fair average talker; you are sufficiently recognized in the world as to be known to all men of a very general acceptance, and no more is wanted. But, test this kind of position by absence! Try, if you will, what a few years out of England effect! You are as totally forgotten as though you belonged to a past generation. You expect—naturally enough, perhaps—to resume your old place and among your old associates; but where are they? and what have they become? You left them young men about town, you find them now among the "middle ages;" when you parted they were slim, lank, agile fellows, that could spring into a saddle and fly their horse over a five-bar rail, or pull an oar with any one. Now, they are of the portly order, wear wider-skirted coats, trousers without straps, and cloth boots; their hats, too, have widened in the leaf, so as to throw a more liberal shade over broader cheeks; the whiskers are more bushy, and less accurate in curl. If they ride, the horse has more bone and timber under him; and when they bow to some fair face in a passing carriage there is no brightening of the eye, but in its place a look of easier intimacy than heretofore. These are not the men you left?—alas they are! A new generation of young men about town has sprung up, who "know not Joseph," and with whom you have few, if any, sympathies.

So I find it myself. I left England at a time when pleasure was the mad pursuit of every young fellow; and under that designation came every species of extravagance and all kind of wild excess. Men of five thousand a-year were spending twelve! Men of twelve, thirty! Every season saw some half-dozen cross the Channel, "cleared out"—some, never more to be heard of. Others, lingering in Paris or Brussels to confer with their lawyer, who was busily engaged in compromising, contesting, disputing, and bullying a host of creditors, whose very rogueries had accomplished the catastrophe they grumbled at. Lords, living on ten or twelve hundred pounds a-year were to be met with everywhere; Countesses, lodged in every little town in Germany. The Dons of dragoon regiments were seen a-foot in the most obscure of watering-places; and men who had loomed large at Don caster, and booked thousands, were now fain to risk francs and florins among the flats of Brussels and Aix-la-Chapelle. The pace was tremendous; few who came of age with a good estate held out above two or three years. And if any listener should take his place beside a group of fashionable-looking young Englishmen in the Boulevard de Grand, or the Graven at Vienna, the chances were greatly in favor of his hearing such broken phrases as, "Caught it heavily!"—"All wrong at Ascot!"—"Scott's fault!"—"Cleared out at Crock’s!"—"No standing two hundred per cent!"—"Infernal

scoundrel, Ford!"—"That villain Columbine!"—"Rascal Bevan!" and so on, with various allusions to the Quern hounds, the Clarendon, and Houlditch the coach-maker.

Such was the one song you heard everywhere.

Now the mode—a better one I willingly own it—is "Young England's." Not that superb folly of white neck cloth and vest, that swears by Disraeli and the "Morning Post," but that healthier stamp, whose steps of travel have turned eastward, towards the land of old-world wonders, and who, instead of enervating mind and body at Ems or Baden, seek higher and nobler sources of pleasure among the cities and tombs of ancient Egypt. Lord Lindsay, for instance, what a creditable specimen is he of his age and class! and Warburton's book, the "Crescent and the Cross," how redeeming is such a production among the mass of frivolity and flippancy the magazines teem with! These are the men who, returning to England more intensely national than they left it, cannot be reproached with ignorance in this preference of their native land above every other. Their nationality, not built up of the leaders of the daily newspapers, is a conviction resulting from reflection and comparison.

They are proud of England; not alone as the most powerful of nations, but as that where personal integrity and truth are held in highest repute—where character and reputation stand far above genius—and where, whatever the eminence of a gifted man, he cannot stand above his fellows, save on the condition that he is not inferior in more sterling qualities. The young man setting out to travel can scarcely be sustained by a better feeling than his strong nationality. He who sets a high store by the character of his country will be slow to do aught that will disgrace it. Of course I speak of nationality in its true sense; not the affectation of John Bullish in dress, manner, and bearing—not the insolent assumption of superiority to the French and Germans, that some very young men deem English; but, a deep conviction that, as the requirements of England are higher in all that regards fidelity to his word, consistency of conduct, and more honorable employment of time and talents than prevail abroad, he should be guardedly careful not to surrender these convictions to all the seductions of foreign life and manners.

I do not believe our country is superior to any foreign land in any one particular so strikingly as in the capabilities and habits of our higher orders. Such a class as the titled order of Great Britain, taking them collectively, never existed elsewhere.

A German, with any thing like independence, lives a life of tobacco-smoking and snipe-shooting. An Italian, is content to eke out life with a café and a theatre—lemonade and a "liaison" are enough for him. The government of foreign states, in shutting out the men of rank and fortune from political influence, have taken the very shortest road to their degradation. What is to become of a man who has a Bureaucracy for a government and Popery for a religion?

But what is the tumult in the little court-yard beneath my window? Ha! an English equipage! How neatly elegant that low-hung phaeton! and how superb in figure and style that pair of powerful dark-brown thoroughbreds!—for so it is easy to see they are, even to the smart groom, who stands so still before the pole, with each hand upon the bars of the bits. All smack of London. There is an air of almost simplicity in the whole turn-out, because it is in such perfect keeping. And here come its owners. What a pretty foot!—I might almost say, and ankle, too! How gracefully she draws her shawl around her! What! my friend Sir Gordon himself? So, this is Mille. Howard! I wish I could see her face. She will not turn this way. And now they are gone. How distinctive is the proud tramp of their feet above the shuffling shamble of the posters!

So, it is only a "piccolo gyro" they are gone to make along the lake, and come back again, to dinner. I thought I heard him say my name to his valet, as he stepped into the carriage. Who knocks at the door? I was right; Sir Gordon has sent to invite me to dine at six o'clock. Shall I go? Why should I think of it? I am sick, low, weak, heart and body. Nay, it is better to refuse.

Well, I have written my apology, not without a kind of secret regret, for somehow I have a longing—a strange wish, once more, to feel the pleasant excitement of even so much of society; but, like the hero of the Pea de Chagrin, I dread to indulge a wish, for it may lead me more rapidly down to my doom. I actually tremble lest a love of life, that all-absorbing desire to live, should lie in wait for me yet. I have heard that it ever accompanies the last stage of my malady. It is better, then, to guard against whatever might suggest it. Pleasure could not—friendship, solicitude, kindness might do so.

CHAPTER IV. Villa Cima rosa, Logo di Como.

It is a week since I wrote a line in my notebook, and, judging only from my sensations, it seems like a year. Events rapidly succeeding, always make time seem longer in retrospect. It is only monotony is brief to look back upon.

I expected ere this to have been at Naples, if not Palermo; and here I linger on the Lake of Como, as if my frail health had left me any choice of a resting-place. And yet, why should this not be as healthful as it is beautiful?

Looking out from this window, beneath which, not three paces distant, the blue lake is plashing—the music of its waves the only sound heard—great mountains rise grandly from the water to the very skies, the sides one tangled mass of olive, vine, and fig-tree. The dark-leaved laurel, the oleander, the cactus and the magnolia cluster around each rugged rocky eminence, and hang in graceful drapery over the glassy water. Palaces, temples, and villas are seen on every side; some, boldly standing out, are reflected in the calm lake, their marble columns tremulous as the gentle wind steals past; others, half hid among the embowering trees, display but a window or a portico, or perchance a deep arched entrance for the gondolas, above which some heavy banner slowly waves its drooping folds, touching the very water. The closed jalousies, the cloudless sky, the unruffled water, over which no boat is seen to glide, the universal stillness, all tell that it is noon—the noon of Italy, and truly the northern midnight is not a season of such unbroken repose. Looking at this scene, and fancying to myself the lethargic life of ease, which not even though disturbs, of these people, I half wonder within me how had it fared with us of England beneath such a sun, and in such a clime. Had the untiring spirit of enterprise, the active zeal and thirst for wealth, triumphed over every obstacle, and refused to accept, as a season of rest, the hours of the bright and glaring sunshine?

Here, the very fishermen are sleeping beneath their canvass awnings, and their boats lie resting in the dark shadows. There is something inexpressibly calm and tranquillizing in all this. The stillness of night we accept as its natural and fitting accompaniment, but to look out upon this fair scene, one is insensibly reminded of the condition of life which leaves these busiest of mortal hours, elsewhere, free to peaceful repose, and with how little labor all wants are met and satisfied.

How come I here? is a question rising to my mind at every moment, and actually demanding an effort of memory to answer. The very apartment itself is

almost a riddle to me, seeming like some magic transformation, realizing as it does all that I could ask or wish.

This beautiful little octagon room, with its marble "statuettes" in niches between the windows, its frescoed ceiling, its white marble floor, reflecting each graceful ornament, even to the silver lamp that hangs high in the coved roof; and then, this little terrace beside the lake, where under the silk awning I sit among a perfect bouquet of orange and oleander trees;—it is almost too beautiful for reality. I try to read, but cannot; and as I write I stand up at each moment to peep over the balcony at the fish, as sluggishly they move along, or, at the least stir, dart forward with arrow speed, to return again the minute after, for they have been fed here and know the spot. There is a dreamy, visionary feeling, that seems to be the spirit of the place, encouraging thought, and yet leading the mind to dalliance rather than moody reverie. And again, how came I here? Now for the answer.

On Tuesday last I was at Karenna, fully bent on proceeding by Milan to Genoa, and thence to Naples. I had, not without some difficulty, resisted all approaches of Sir Gordon Howard, and even avoided meeting him. What scores of fables did I invent merely to escape an interview with an old friend!

Well, at eight o'clock, as I sat at breakfast, I heard the bustle of preparation in the court-yard, and saw with inexpressible relief that his horses were standing ready harnessed, while my valet came with the welcome tidings that the worthy Baronet was starting for Como, near which he had taken a Villa. The Villa Camaros, the most beautiful on the lake,—frescoes—statues—hanging gardens—I know not how many more charming items, did my informant recite, with all the impassioned eloquence of George Robins himself. He spared me nothing, from the news that Mademoiselle, Sir Gordon's grandaughter, who was a prodigious heiress, was ordered to Italy for her health, and that it was more than likely we should find them at Naples for the winter, down to the less interesting fact that the courier, Giaconda Bartlett, was to proceed by the steamer and get the Villa ready for their arrival. I could only stop his communications by telling him to order horses for Lecco, pay the bill, and follow me, as I should stroll down the road and look at the caverns of rock which it traverses by the lake side.

I had seen Sir Gordon drive off—I had heard the accustomed "Boon vigil" uttered by the whole household in chorus—and now, I was free once more; and so escaping this noisy ceremony of leave-taking, I sauntered listlessly forth, and took my way along the lake. The morning was delicious; a slight breeze

from the north, the pleasantest of all the winds on the Lake of Como, was just springing up.

It is here, opposite Karenna, that the lake is widest; but nothing of bleakness results from the greater extent of water, for the mountains are still bold and lofty, and the wooded promontory of Bellagio dividing the two reaches of the lake, is a beautiful feature. Its terraced gardens and stately palaces peeping amid the leafy shade, and giving glimpses of one of the sweetest spots the "Villégiatura" ever lingered in.

I had got a considerable distance from the town of Karenna without feeling it. The enchanting picture, ever presenting some new effect, and the light and buoyant breeze from the water, and a certain feeling of unusual lightness of heart, all aiding, I walked on without fatigue; nor was I aware of the distance traversed, till at a little bend of the lake I saw Karenna diminishing away—its tall poplars and taper spires being now the most conspicuous features of the town.

At a short distance in front of me lay a little creek or bay, from one side of which a wooden pier projected—a station for the steamers that ply on the lake. There now Sir Gordon Howard's phaeton was standing, surrounded with a most multifarious heap of trunks, packing-cases, portmanteaus, and other travelling gear—signs that some portion of his following, at least, were awaiting the arrival of the packet. Nor had they to wait long: for as I looked, the vessel shot round the rocky point and darted swiftly across the smooth water, till she lay scarce moving, about a quarter of a mile from shore,—the shoal water prevented her approaching nearer to the jetty.

With the idle curiosity of a lounger, I sat down on a rock to watch the scene.

I know no reason for it, but I ever take an interest in the movements of travellers. Their comings and goings suggest invariably some amusing pictures to my mind, and many a story have I weaved for myself from nothing but the passing glimpses of those landed hurriedly from a steamer.

I watched, therefore, with all my usual satisfaction, the launching of the boat laden heavily with luggage, on the top of which, like its presiding genius, sat a burly courier, his gold-banded cap glistening brightly in the sun. Then came a lighter skiff, in the stern of which sat a female figure, shaded by a pink parasol. There was another parasol in the phaeton too—I thought I could even recognise Sir Gordon's figure in the last boat: but as I looked the sky became suddenly

overcast, and round the rocky point, where but a moment before the whole cliff lay reflected in the water, there now came splashing waves, tumbling wildly by, till the whole creek suddenly was covered by them; dark squalls of wind sweeping over the water, tossing the two boats to and fro, and even heaving up the huge steamer itself, till her bows were bathed in foaming cataracts. The suddenness of the tempest—for such it really was—was a grand and sublime "effect" in such a scene: but I could no longer enjoy it, as there seemed to be actual danger in the situation of the two boats, which, from time to time, were hidden between the swelling waves. At last, but not without a struggle, they reached the packet, and I could plainly see, by the signs of haste on board, that the captain had not been a very willing spectator of the scene. The luggage was soon on board, and the figures of the lighter boat followed quickly after.

Scarcely was this effected when the boats were cast off, and again the paddle-wheels splashed through the water. The gale at this instant increased: for no sooner was the steamer's bow to the wind, than the waves went clean over her, washing her deck from stem to stern, and dashing in columns of spray over the dark funnel. A great stir and commotion on deck drew off my attention from the boats; and now I heard a hoarse voice calling through a speaking-trumpet to those in the boats. They, however, either did not hear or heed the command, for they rowed boldly towards the shore, nor once paid any attention to the signals which, first as a flag, and afterwards as a cannon-shot, the steamer made for them.

While I was lost in conjecturing what possibly all this might mean, the vessel once more rounded to her course, and with full steam up breasted the rolling water, and stood out towards the middle of the lake. A fisherman just then ran his boat in to land, in a little creek beneath me, and from him I asked an explanation of the scene.

"It's nothing, Signor, but what one sees almost every day here," said he, jeeringly: "that 'canaille' of Pellegrino have taken people out to the steamer, and would not wait to bring them back again; and now, they must go to Como, whether they will or no."

This explanation seemed the correct one, and appeared to be corroborated by the attitude of the party on shore, for there stood the phaeton, still waiting, although all chance of the others' returning was totally by-gone. Concluding that, Sir Gordon thus carried off without his will, his servants might possibly need some advice or counsel—for I knew they were all English, except the Courier—I hastened down to the jetty, to offer them such aid as I possessed. As

I came nearer, I was more convinced that my suspicions were correct. About thirty ragged and not over-prepossessing-looking individuals were assembled around the phaeton; some busily pressing the groom, who stood at the horses' heads, with questions he could not answer; and others imploring charity with all that servile tone and gesture your Italian beggar is master of. Making my way through this assemblage, I accosted the groom, who knew me to be an acquaintance of his master's, and instead of replying to me, at once cried out,—"Oh, Miss Lucy, here is Mr. Templeton! You need not be afraid, now." I turned at once, and instead of a lady's-maid, as I had believed the figure to be, beheld a very lovely but delicate-looking girl, who with an expression of considerable anxiety in her features, was still following the track of the departing steam-boat. At the mention of my name she looked hurriedly around, and a deep blush covered her face as she said,—

"I am so happy to see Mr. Templeton! Perhaps he will forgive me if I make the first moment of our acquaintance the burden of a request?" And then, in a very few words, she told me how her Grandfather, having gone on board the steamer to give some particular orders and directions about his baggage, was unwillingly carried off, leaving her with only a groom, who could speak no language but his own. She went on to say, that they had taken the Villa Camaros on the lake, and were then proceeding thither by Lecco, when this mesa venture occurred.

"I now must ask Mr. Templeton's counsel how to act—whether to return to the inn at Karenna, and wait there till I can hear from my Grandfather, or venture on to Como with the carriage?"

"If you will take my carriage, Miss Howard, it will be here in a few minutes. My servant is a most experienced traveller, and will not suffer you to endure the slightest inconvenience; and I will follow in yours.

"But perhaps you cannot travel in an open carriage? I have heard that your health is delicate."

"I prefer it greatly."

"And I too——"

She stopped suddenly, feeling that she was about to utter what might seem an ungracious acknowledgment. There was such an evident regret in the dread of having offended me, that, without pausing to reflect, I said,—

"There is another alternative; I am a very safe whip, and if you would permit me to have the honor of accompanying you, I should be but too happy to be your escort."

She tried to answer by a polite smile of acceptance, but I saw that the proposition was scarcely such as she approved of, and so at once I added,—

"I will spare you the pain of rejecting my offer; pray, then, abide by my first suggestion. I see my carriage coming along yonder."

"I don't know," said she, with a kind of willfulness, like that of one who had been long accustomed to indulgence; "it may seem very capricious to you, but I own I detest post-horses, and cracking whips, and rope-harness. You shall drive me, Mr. Templeton."

I replied by a very sincere assurance of how I esteemed the favor, and the next moment was seated at her side. As I stole a glance at the pale but beautifully-formed features, her drooping eyelashes, dark as night, and her figure of surpassing symmetry and grace, I could not help thinking of all the straits and expedients I had practiced for three entire days to avoid making her acquaintance. As if she had actually divined what was then passing in my mind, she said,—

"You see, Mr. Temple ton, it was like a fate; you did your utmost not to meet us, and here we are, after all."

I stammered out a very eager, but a very blundering attempt at denial, while she resumed,—

"Pray do not make matters worse, which apologies in such cases always do. Grandpapa told me that ill health had made you a recluse and avoid society. This, and the mystery of your own close seclusion, were quite enough to make me desirous to see you."

"How flattered I should have been had I suspected so much interest could attach to me! but, really, I dreaded to inflict upon a very old friend what I found to be so tiresome, namely, my own company."

"I always heard that you were fastidious about going into society; but surely a visit to an old friend, in a foreign country too, might have escaped being classified in this category?"

"I own my fault, which, like most faults, has brought its own penalty."

"If this be meant to express your deep affliction at not coming to us, I accept the speech in all its most complimentary sense."

I bowed in acquiescence, and she went on:—

"You must forgive me if I talk to you with a freedom that our actual acquaintanceship does not warrant, for, while you never heard of me before, I have been listening to stories and narratives about you, I cannot say how long."

"Indeed! I scarcely suspected Sir Gordon had more than remembered me."

"I did not say that Grandpapa was my informant," said she, laughing. "Lady Catherine Douglas—the Collingwood's—the Goreville's—and then that delightful person, Madame de Fava court,—all spoke of you.... For which of my catalogue was that blush intended, Mr. Templeton?"

"I was only yielding to a very natural sentiment—call it shame, pride, or pleasure—that so many fair friends should have deemed me worthy a place in their memory. Is Mary Goreville married?"

"Yes; about a month since she accepted the hand she had, it is said, some half-dozen times rejected."

"Sir Blake Moony?"

"The same: an intolerable bore, to my thinking; and, indeed, I believe to poor Mary's, too. But, then, 'the' man did not offer. Some say, he was bashful; some, that he dreaded what he need not have dreaded—a refusal; and so, Mary went but to the Cape when her father became Governor there; and, like all governors' daughters, took a husband from the staff."

"She was very pretty, but——"

"Say on; we were never more than mere acquaintances."

"I was going to add, a most inveterate flirt."

"How I do detest to hear that brought as an accusation against a girl, from the very kind of person that invariably induces the error!—Young men like Mr. Templeton, who, entering life with the prestige of ability and public success, very naturally flatter the vanity of any girl by their attentions, and lead to a

more buoyant character of mind and a greater desire to please, which are at once set down as coquetry. For my own part, I greatly prefer old men's society to young ones, from the very fact that one is permitted to indulge all the caprices of thought or fancy without incurring the offensive imputation of a design on his heart."

"I should not always give a verdict of acquittal even in such cases."

"Very likely not. There are old men whose manner and bearing are infinitely more attractive than the self-satisfied, self-relying composure of our modern young ones. Anything, however, even boyish awkwardness, is preferable to your middle-aged gentleman, who, with a slight bald spot on his head, and a very permanent flush on his cheek, adds the stately pomp of his forty autumns to a levity that has no touch of younger days."

"Heaven help us! what are we to do from thirty to fifty-five or sixty?"

"Marry, and live in the country. I mean, do not be young men about town. Apropos to nothing—are we not, this instant, in the very scene of Manzoni's novel, 'I Promise Sops?'"

"Yes; the whole of our journey to-day lies through it, from Lecco to Como; or rather, more to the northward again—what they call here, the 'Briana.'"

"The scene deserved better actors, in my opinion. I have always thought it a very tiresome story, even among that most tiresome class—Pure love-tales."

"What say you to the 'Bride of Lammermoor?'"

"That it is only inferior to 'Romeo and Juliet.' But how many interests are there brought up before the reader in either of these—all subordinate to the great one—but all exciting mingled and conflicting emotions! The author, in neither case, was satisfied to dwell on the daily and nightly sightings of a love-stricken pair. He knew better than to weave his web of one tissue. In fact, the Master of Ravens-wood is more the slave of his own blighted ambition than of his love, which, at best, was only an element in his feeling of abasement."

"And yet, how faithfully was his love returned! Nothing short of a true passion meets such requital."

"If you said, that no heart incapable of feeling ever inspired such, I would agree with you; but I fancy that women are often imposed upon, by supposing that

they possess the entire affection of those they know capable of strong attachments."

"That may possibly be true; but I suspect that in the world—in the middle of that life where we daily meet and form friendships—there is very little time or opportunity for anything above a passing feeling of admiration, that seldom reaches esteem. The Honorable Miss Tolle Mache meets Captain Fitz Herbert of the Guards. They are introduced and dance together—the lady is pretty—the Captain amusing—they have a large number of mutual acquaintances, whom they quiz and praise by turns, with sufficient agreement to be mutually pleased. They separate; and the Captain asks if the lady really have 'twenty thousand pounds fortune.' Match-making aunts and mothers arrange preliminaries; and the young people have leisure to fail in love after the most approved fashion: that is, they meet very often, and talk more together, than common acquaintances are wont to do; but their talk is of Gris and Laplace, of the Duke's fete at Cheswick, and Lord Donning ton's yacht excursion to Malta. If the gentleman have a confidence to evoke, it is, possibly, the state of his mind on the approaching 'Derby.' Now I would ask, How much of mutual esteem, or even knowledge, grows out of all this?"

"Pretty much the same amount as exists in a French marriage, where M. le Marquis having 'fait sees farces,' is fain to marry, being somewhat too deep in debt to continue what his years admonish him to abandon. Mademoiselle is brought from the convent, or the governess's apartment, to sign the contract and accept her husband. There is enough in the very emancipation she obtains to be pleasurable, not to speak of a grand trousseau, diamonds, cashmeres, and the prettiest equipage in Paris."

"Hence," said I, "we seem agreed, that one must not choose a wife or husband à la mode Auglaize in Françoise.

"I believe not," said she, laughing; "for if marriages be made in heaven, they are about the strangest employment for angels I ever heard of."

"It entirely depends on how you regard what are commonly called accidents and chances, as to the interpretation you give that saying. If you see, in those curious coincidences that are ever occurring in life, nothing more than hazard, you at once abandon all idea of governing human actions. If, on the other hand, you read them too implicitly, and accept them as indications for the future, you rush into fatalism. For my own part, I think less of the events themselves, than as they originate or evoke sentiments in two parties, who,

though previously known to each, only discover on some sudden emergency a wonderful agreement in sentiment and feeling. In the ordinary detail of life they had gone on, each ignorant of the other's opinions: so long as the wheels of life revolved freely and noiselessly, the journey had called for nothing of mutual interest; but some chance occurrence, some accidental reencounter occurs, and they at once perceive a most fortuitous similarity in taste or thinking. Like people who have suddenly discovered a long-persisted-in mistake, they hasten to repair the past by sudden confidences. Let me give an instance, even though it be almost too bold a one for my theory. A friend of mine, who had served some years with great distinction in the East, returned to England in company with a brother officer, a man of high family, knowing and known to every one of a certain standing in London. My friend, who, from a remote province, had no town acquaintances, was, however, speedily introduced by his friend, and, heralded by his reputation, was greatly noticed in society. He soon wearied of a round of dissipations, wherein the great, if not the only interest, lies in knowledge of the actors; and was one night stealing away from a large evening party, secretly resolving that it should be his last ball. He had, by dint of great labor and perseverance, reached the last salon, and already-caught glimpse of the stair beyond, when his progress was suddenly arrested by a very sweet but excited voice, saying—'One moment, sir; may I beg you will release my scarf.' He turned and beheld a very handsome girl, who was endeavoring to disengage from her shoulders a rich scarf of lace, one end of which was caught in the star he wore on his breast—a decoration from the Noam. He immediately began to detach the delicate tissue from its dangerous situation. But his address was inferior to his zeal, so that he continually received admonitions as to greater care and caution, with mingled laments over the inevitable mischief that must follow. Something abashed by his own awkwardness, his nervousness made him worse, and he muttered to himself in German, thinking it was a safe tongue for soliloquy—'Why will ladies wear such preposterous finery?—the spider's web is not so fragile.' To which at once the lady replied, in the same language,—'If men are vain enough to carry a coat full of 'crochets' and orders, ladies ought, at least, to be careful how they pass them.' He blushed at the tart rebuke, and in his eagerness he tore a little hoop or mesh of the scarf. 'Oh, pray sir, permit me! It is real Brussels!' and so saying, she at once began, with a skill very different from his, the work of disentanglement. My friend, however, did not desist, but gave what aid he could, their fingers more than once meeting. Meanwhile a running fire of pleasantry and smartness went on between them, when suddenly his brother officer came up, saying,—

"'Oh! Lydia, here is my friend Colleton. I have been so anxious you should know him; and he leaves to-morrow.'

"'I hope he will permit me to rescue my scarf first,' said the lady, taking no heed of the introduction.

"'I am so sorry—I really am in despair,' said Colleton, as the lady, growing at last impatient, tore the frail web in order to get free.

"'It was all your fault, sir, remember that—or rather that of your star, which I'm sure I wish the Sridhar, or the Noam, had reserved for a more careful wearer.'

"'I never deemed it would have done me such service,' said Colleton, recovering courage; 'without it, I should have passed on, and you would never have taken the trouble to notice me.'

"'There, sir, I must leave you your prize,' said she, smartly, as, taking the arm of her partner, she joined the waltzes; while Colleton stood with the folds of a Brussels veil draped gracefully on his arm.

"He went home; spent half the night disengaging the intricate web, and the next day called to restore it, and apologies for his misfortune; the acquaintance thus casually formed ripened into mutual liking, and, after a time, into a stronger feeling, and in the end they were married; the whole of the event, the great event of every life, originating in the porcupine fashion of the Noam's star and the small loops of a Brussels-lace scarf! Here, then, is my case; but for this reencounter they had never met, save in the formal fashion people do as first acquaintances. Without a certain collision, they had not given forth the sparks that warmed into flame."

"I call that a pure chance, just as much as—as——"

"Our own meeting this morning, you were about to say," said I, laughingly; and she joined in the mirth, but soon after became silent and thoughtful. I tried various ways of renewing our conversation; I started new topics, miles remote from all we had been talking of: but I soon perceived that, whether from physical causes or temperament, the eager interest she exhibited when speaking, and the tone of almost excited animation in which she listened, seemed to weary and exhaust her. I therefore gradually suffered our conversation to drop down to an occasional remark on passing objects; and so we travelled onwards till, late in the afternoon, we found ourselves at the gate of a handsome park, where an avenue of trellised vines, wide enough for two

carriages to pass, led to a beautiful villa, on the terrace of which stood my old friend, Sir Gordon Howard, himself.

For a few moments he was so totally engrossed by the meeting with his grandaughter that he did not even perceive me. Indeed, his agitation was as great as it might reasonably have been had years of absence separated them, instead of the few brief hours of a twenty miles' drive; and it was only as she said, "Are you forgetting to thank Mr. Templeton, Papa?" that he turned round to greet me with all the warmth of his kindly nature.

It was to no purpose that I protested plans already formed, engagements made, and horses written for; he insisted on my staying, if not some weeks—some days—and at last, hours, at the Villa Camaros. I might still have resisted his kind entreaties, when Miss Howard, with a smile and a manner of most winning persuasiveness, said, "I wish you would stay,"—and———here I am!

CHAPTER V. La Villa Cima rosa, Octubre

How like a dream—a delicious, balmy, summer night's dream—is this life I am leading! For the first time have I tasted the soothing tranquility of domestic life. A uniformity, that tells rather of security than sameness, pervades everything in this well-ordered household, where all come and go as if under the guidance of some ruling genius, unseen and unheard. Sir Gordon, too, is like a father; at least as I can fancy a father to be, for I was too early left an orphan to preserve my memory of either parent. His kindness is even more than what we call friendship. It is actually paternal. He watches over my health with all the unobtrusive solicitude of true affection; and if I even hint at departure, he seizes the occasion to oppose it, not with the warmth of hospitality alone, but a more deeply-meaning interest that sometimes puzzles me. Can it be that he recognizes in my weakened frame and shrunken cheek, greater ravages of disease than I yet feel or know of? Is it that he perceives me nearer the goal than as yet I am aware? It was yesterday, as we sat in the library together, running over the pages of an almanac, I remarked something about my liking to travel by moonlight, when, with a degree of emotion that amazed me, he said, "Pray do not talk of leaving us; I know that in this quiet monotony there may be much to weary you; but remember that you are not strong enough for the world, did you even care to take your place in it as of old. Besides,"—here he faltered, and it was with a great effort that he resumed—"besides, for my sake, if the selfishness of the request should not deter you, for my sake remain with us some time longer."

I protested most warmly, as I had all reason to do, that for years past I had never known time pass on so happily; that in the peaceful calm we lived, I had tasted a higher enjoyment than all the most buoyant pleasures of healthier and younger days had ever given me. "But,"—I believe I tried to smile as I spoke,—"but recollect, Sir Gordon, I have got my billet: the doctors have told me to go, and die, at Naples. What a shock to science if I should remain, to live, at Como!"

"Do so, my dearest friend," said he, grasping my hands within both of his, while the tears swam in his eyes; "I cannot—I dare not—I have not strength to tell you, all that your compliance with this wish will confer on me Spare me this anguish, and do not leave us." As he uttered these words he left me, his emotion too great to let me reply.

The sick man's selfishness would say, that his anxiety is about that wasting malady, whose ravages are even more plainly seen than felt.

Turn the matter over how I will, I cannot reconcile this eager anxiety for my remaining with anything but a care for myself. It is clear he thinks me far worse than I can consent to acknowledge. I do not disguise from myself the greater lassitude I experience after a slight exertion, a higher tension of the nervous system, and an earlier access of that night fever, which, like the darkness of the coming winter, creeps daily on, shortening the hours of sunlight, and ushering in a deeper and more solemn gloom; but I watch these symptoms as one already prepared for their approach, and feel grateful that their coming has not clouded the serenity with which I hope to journey to the last.

Kind old man! I would that I were his son, that I could feel my rightful claim to the affection he lavishes on me; but for his sake it is better as it is! And Miss Howard—Lucy, let me call her, since I am permitted so to accost her—what a blessing I should have felt such a sister to be, so beautiful, so kind, so gently feminine! for that is the true charm. This, too, is better as it is. How could I take leave of life, if I were parting with such enjoyments?

She is greatly changed since we came here. Every day seems to gain something over the malady she labored under. She is no longer faint and easily wearied, but able to take even severe exercise without fatigue; her cheek has grown fuller, and its rosy tint is no longer hectic, but the true dye of health; and instead of that slow step and bent-down head, her walk is firm and her air erect; while her spirits, no longer varying from high excitement to deep depression, are uniformly good and animated. Life is opening in all its bloom to her, as rapidly as its shadows are closing and gathering around me. Were it mine to bestow, how gladly would I give what remains of flickering life to strengthen the newly-sprung vitality, her light step, her brilliant smile and dark blue eye! That coming back to health, from out of the very shadow of death, must be a glorious sensation! The sudden out bursting of all this fair world's joys, on a spirit over which the shade of sickness has only swept, and not rested long enough to leave its blight. I think I read in that almost heroic elevation of sentiment, that exquisite perception of whatever is beautiful in Lucy, the triumph of returning energy and health. She is less fanciful and less capricious, too. Formerly, the least remark, in which she construed a difference of opinion, would distress or irritate her, and her temper appeared rather under the sway of momentary impulse than the guidance of right principle. Now, she accepts even correction, mildly and gratefully, and if a sudden spark of former haste flash forth, she seems eager to check and repress it; she acts as though she felt that restored health imposed more restraint and less of self-

indulgence than sickness. How happy if one were only to bring out of the sick chamber its teaching of submission, patience, and gratitude, and leave behind its egotism and its irritability! This she would appear to aim at; and to strive is to win.

And now I quit this chronicling to join her. Already she is on her way to the boat, and we are going to see Pliny's villa; at least the dark and shadowy nook where it once stood. The lake is still as a mirror, and a gorgeous mirror it is, reflecting a scene of fiery brilliancy and beauty. She is waving her handkerchief to me to come. "Vento, suitor."

This has been a delightful day. We rowed along past Mali till we came under the tall cliffs near Bellagio; and there, in a little bay, land-locked and shaded by olive-trees, we dined. I had never seen Sir Gordon so thoroughly happy. When Lucy's spirits have been higher, and her fancy has taken wilder and bolder wings, he has usually worn a look of anxiety through all his admiring fondness. To-day, she was less animated than she generally is—almost grave at times—but not sad; and I think that "Grandpapa" loved her better in this tranquil mood, than in those of more eager enjoyment. I believe I read his meaning, that, in her highest flow of spirits, he dreads the wear and tear consequent on so much excitement; while in her more somber days he indulges the hope that she is storing up in repose the energies of future exertion. How it takes off the egotism of sickness to have someone whose ever-watchful care is busy for our benefit! how it carries away the load of "self," and all its troubles! while I.... But I must not dwell on this theme, nor disturb that deep sense of gratitude I feel for all that I possess of worldly advantage, were it no more than this blessing, that on quitting life I leave it when my sense of enjoyment has mellowed into that most lasting and enduring one, the love of quiet, of scenery, of converse with old friends on by-gone events—the tranquil pleasures of age tasted without the repining of age!

Lucy bantered me to-day upon my inordinate love of ease, as she called it, forgetting that this inactivity was at first less from choice than compulsion; now, it is a habit, one I may as well wear out, for I have no time left to acquire new ones. She even tried to stimulate my ambition, by alluding to my old career and the rewards it might have opened to me. I could have told her that a father or an uncle at the "Council" was of more avail than a clever dispatch or a well-concluded treaty; that some of our ablest Ministers are wasting life and energy at small, obscure, and insignificant missions, where their functions never rise beyond the presentation of letters of congratulation or condolence,

attendance on a court ball, or a The Deum for the sovereign's birthday; while capacities that would be unnoticed, if they were not dangerous, have the destinies of great events in their keeping. True, there is always the Foreign Office as the "Court dapple" and, whatever may be the objections—grave and weighty they certainly are at times—against those parliamentary interrogations by which the Minister is compelled to reveal the object and course of his dealings with foreign nations, there is one admirable result,—our foreign policy will always be National. No Minister can long pursue any course in defiance of the approval of Parliament; nor can any Parliament, in our day, long resist the force of public opinion.

While, therefore, Nicholas or Metternich may precipitate the nations they rule over into a war, where there is neither the sympathy nor the prejudices of a people involved, we never draw the sword without a hearty good will to wield it.

To what end all this in reference to Lucy Howard's question? None whatever; for, in truth, I was half flattered by the notion that the shattered, storm-beaten wreck, could be supposed sea-worthy, and so I promised amendment. How pleasant it was, sitting Titers-like, to dream over high rewards and honors! She, at least, seemed to think so; for whether to stimulate my ardor, or merely following the impulse of her own, I know not, but she certainly dwelt with animation and delight on the advantages of a career that placed one almost au pied deal with sovereigns. "I am sure," said she, "that you cannot look upon those who started in the race with yourself, without some repining's that others, whom you know to be inferior to you, have passed you; and that men whom you would never have thought of as competitors, are now become more than equals."

If I accede to this opinion to a certain extent, still I must protest against any feeling of real regret when I think that success is much oftener obtained by what is called a "lucky hit," than by years of zealous and intelligent exertion. I have known a man obtain credit for stopping a courier—waylaying him, I might rather call it—and taking by force a secret treaty from his hand, while the steady services of a life-long have gone unrewarded. These things have an evil influence upon diplomacy as a "career;" they suggest to young men to rely rather on address and dexterity than upon "prudence and forethought." Because Lord Palmerstone discourses foreign politics with a certain gifted and very beautiful Countess, or that M. Guizot deigns to take counsel from a most accomplished Princess of Russian origin, every small Attaché thinks he is climbing the short road to fame and honors by listening to the advice of certain

political boudoirs, and hearing "pretty ladies talk" about Spielberg and Mon Kopf. When the Northern minister sent his son to travel through the world, that he might see with his own eyes by what "commonplace mortals states were governed," he might have recommended to his especial notice Plenipo's and Envoys Extraordinary. From time to time, it is otherwise. Lord Castlereagh, whatever detraction party hate may visit on his home politics, was a consummate Ambassador. Not of that school which Talleyrand created, and of which he was the head, but a man of unflinching courage, high determination, and who, with a strong purpose and resolute will, never failed to make felt the influence of a nation he so worthily represented. With this, he was a perfect courtier; the extreme simplicity of his manner and address was accompanied by an elegance and a style of the most marked distinction. Another, but of a different stamp, was Lord Whitworth; one on whom all the dramatic passion and practiced outrage of Napoleon had no effect whatever.

Sir Gordon remarked, that in this quality of coolness and imperturbability he never saw any one surpass his friend, Sir Robert Darcy. One evening when playing at whist, at Potsdam, with the late King of Prussia, his Majesty, in a fit of inadvertence, appropriated to himself several gold pieces belonging to Sir Robert. The King at last perceived and apologized for his mistake, adding, "Why did you not inform me of it?" "Because I knew your Majesty always makes restitution when you have obtained time for reflection." Hanover was then on the tapes, and the King felt the allusion. I must not forget a trait of that peculiar sarcastic humor for which Sir Robert was famous. Although a Whig—an old blue-and-yellow of the Fox school—he hated more than any man that mongrel party which, under the name of Whigs, have carried on the Opposition in Parliament for so many years; and of that party, a certain well-known advocate for economic reforms came in for his most especial detestation: perhaps he detested him particularly, because he had desecrated the high ground of Oppositional attack, and brought it down to paltry caviling about the sums accorded to poor widows on the Pension List, or the amount of sealing-wax consumed in the Foreign Office. When, therefore, the honorable and learned gentleman, in the course of a continental tour, happened to pass through the city where Sir Robert lived as ambassador, he received a card of invitation to dinner, far more on account of a certain missive from the Foreign Office, than from any personal claims he was possessed of. The Member of Parliament was a gourmand of the first water; he had often heard of Sir Robert's cuisine—various travellers had told him that such a table could not be surpassed, and so, although desirous of getting forward, he countermanded his horses, and accepted the invitation.

Sir Robert, whose taste for good living was indisputable, no sooner read the note acceding to his request than he called his attachés together, and said, "Gentlemen, you will have a very bad dinner to-day, but I request you will all dine here, as I have a particular object in expressing the wish."

Dinner-hour came; and after the usual ceremony the party were seated at table, when a single soup appeared: this was followed by a dish of fish, and then, without entrée or hors deserve, came a boiled leg of mutton, Sir Robert premising to his guest that it was to have no successor: adding, "You see, sir, what a poor entertainment I have provided for you; but to this have the miserable economists in Parliament brought us—next session may carry it further, and leave us without even so much." Joseph was sold, and never forgot it since.

I saw, that while Sir Gordon and I discussed people and events in this strain, Lucy became inattentive and pre-occupied by other thoughts; and on charging her with being so, she laughingly remarked that Englishmen always carry about with them the one range of topics; and whether they dine in Grosvenor Square, or beneath an olive-tree in the Alps, the stream of the table-talk is ever the same. "Now a Frenchman," said she, gaily, "had uttered I cannot say how many flat sentimentalism about the place we are in; a German had mystified to no end; and an Italian would have been improvising about every thing, from the wire that restrained the champagne cork to the woes of enchained Italy. Tell us a story, Mr. Templeton."

"A story! What shall it be? A love story? a ghost story? a merry, or a sad one?"

"Any of these you like, so that it be true. Tell me something that has actually happened."

"That is really telling a secret," said I; "for while truth can be, and oftener is, stranger than fiction, it is so, rather from turning ordinary materials to extraordinary uses—making of every-day people singular instances of vice and virtue—than for any great peculiarity in the catastrophes to which they contribute."

"Well, I don't believe in the notion of everyday people. I have a theory, that what are so summarily disposed of in this fashion are just as highly endowed with individualities as any others. Do you remember a beautiful remark, made in the shape of a rebuke, that Scott one day gave his daughter for saying that something was 'Vulgar?' 'Do you know what is the meaning of the word vulgar?

It is only common; and nothing that is common, except wickedness, can deserve to be spoken of in terms of contempt: and when you have lived to my years, you will be disposed to agree with me in thanking God that nothing really worth having or caring about in this world is uncommon.'"

"When I said ordinary, every-day people, don't mistake me; I meant only those who, from class and condition, follow a peculiar ritual, and live after a certain rubric of fashion; and who, hiding themselves under a common garment, whose cut, color, and mode are the same, are really undistinguishable, save on great and trying occasions.

"Kings, for instance! whom great diplomatic folks are supposed to see a great deal of, and know in all the terms of an easy intimacy.

"But how do we see them? In an armor of reserve and caution, never assumed to anyone else. The ease you speak of is all assumed. It is the conventional politeness accorded to a certain station. Kings, so far as I have seen, are never really engaging, save to a great minister out of power. Then their manner assumes all its attractiveness; on the principle, perhaps, that Curran paid his homage to the antique Hercules,—that his day might yet come uppermost, and he would not forget the friend who visited him in adversity."

"Well, to come back, tell us a story. Let it be what you will, or of where and whom you please, so that it last while we are rowing homeward. Monologue is always better than conversation by moonlight.

"But stay; what are the lights we see yonder, glancing from amid the trees? And there, now, see the bright blaze that has sprung up, and is reflected red and lurid on the lake below. It is a 'Festal' of the Church; for hear, the bells are ringing merrily from the mountain-top, and there go the people in procession, climbing the steep path towards the summit."

Wonderful superstition! that has fashioned itself to every phase and form of human nature—now, sending its aid to the darkest impulses of passion, as we see in Ireland—now, conforming to the most simple tastes of an unthinking people; for these peasants here are not imbued with the piety of the Church—they only love its gauds. It is to the Tyrol you must go to witness the real devotional feeling of a people.

"Well, shall I tell you a story?"

"No; I am weaving one, now, for myself!

CHAPTER VI. Villa Camaros, Lake of Como

Gilbert reminds me that I had arranged my departure hence for to-morrow: this was some weeks back, and now I have no intention of leaving. I cling to this "Happy Valley," as one clings to life. To me it is indeed such. These days of sunshine and nights of starry brilliancy—this calm, delicious water—these purpled mountains, glowing with richer tints as day wears on, till at sunset they are one blaze of gorgeous splendor,—the very plash of those tiny waves upon the rocky shore are become to me like friendly sights and sounds, from which I cannot tear myself. And Lucy, too, she is to me as a sister, so full of kind, of watchful consideration about me; since her own health is so much restored, all her anxiety would seem for mine. How puzzling is the tone assumed by Sir Gordon towards me! It was only yesterday that, in speaking of his granddaughter, he expressed himself in such terms of gratitude to me for the improvement manifest in her health, as though I had really been the main agent in effecting it. I, whose power has never been greater than a heart-cherished wish that one so fair, so beautiful, and so good, should live to grace and adorn the world she moves in! What a strange race, what a hard-fought struggle, has been going on within me for some time back! Ebbing life contesting with budding affection; the calm aspect of coming death dashed by feelings and thoughts—ay, even hopes I had believed long since at rest. I feel less that I love than that I should love, if life were to be granted to me.

I believe it is the pursuit that in most cases suggests the passion; that the effort we may make to win exalts the object we wish to gain. Not so here, however. If I do love, it has been without any consciousness. It is so seldom that one who has never had a sister learns to know, in real intimacy, the whole heart and nature of a young and lovely girl, with all its emotions of ever-changing hue, its thousand caprices, its weakness, and its pride. To me this study—it has been a study—has given an inexpressible interest to my life here. And then to watch how gradually, almost imperceptibly to herself, the discipline of her mind has been accomplished—checking wild flights of fancy here, restraining rash impulses there, encouraging reflection, conquering prejudices,—all these done without my bidding, and yet palpably through my influence; What pleasant flattery!

One distressing thought never leaves me. It is this,—how will a nature so attuned as hers stand the rude jars and discords of "the world?" for, do how we will, screen the object of affection how we may from its shocks and concussions, the stern realities of life will make themselves felt. Hers is too

impassioned a nature to bear such reverses, as the most even current sustains, without injury. The very consciousness of being mistaken in our opinions of people is a sore lesson; it is the beginning of skepticism, to end—who can tell where?

She smiles whenever I lecture her upon any eccentricity of manner, and evidently deems my formalism, as she calls it, a relic of my early teaching. So, perhaps, it may be. No class of people are so unforgiving to anything like a peculiarity as your Diplomats. They know the value of the impassive bearing that reveals nothing, and they carry the reserve of office into all the relations of private life. She even quizzes me about this, and says that I remind her of the old Austrian envoy at Naples, who never ventured upon anything more explicit than the two phrases—Chest dare, or Chest sure, ringing the changes of these upon every piece of news that reached him. How altered am I, if this judgment be correct! I, that was headstrong even to rashness, led by every impulse, precipitate in everything, ready to resign all, and with one chance my favor to dare nine full against me!

But why wonder if I be so changed? How has life and every living object changed its aspect to my eyes, rendering distasteful a thousand things wherein I once took pleasure, and making of others that I deemed flat, stale, and unprofitable, the greatest charms of my existence? What close and searching scrutiny of motives creeps on with years! what distrust, and what suspicion! It is this same sentiment—the fruit of a hundred self-deceptions and disappointments—makes so many men, as they advance in life, abjure Liberalism in politics, and lean to the side of Absolute Rule. The "Practical" exercises the only influence on the mind tempered by long experience; and the glorious tyranny of St. Peter's is infinitely preferable to the miscalled freedom of Popular Government. The present Pope, however our Radical friends think of it, is no unworthy successor of Hildebrand; and however plausible be the assumed reforms in his States, the real thraldom, the great slavery, remains untouched! "Hands Free, Souls Fettered," is strange heraldry.

Why have these thoughts crept over me? I would rather dwell on very different themes; but already, far over the mountains westward, comes the distant sound of strife. The dark clouds that are hurrying over the lofty summit of Monte Brisbone are wafted from regions where armed hosts are gathering, and the cry of battle is heard; and Switzerland, whose war-trophies have been won from the invader, is about to be torn by civil strife. Even in my ride to-day towards Lugano, I met parties of peasants armed, and wearing the cockade of

Ticino in their hats, hastening towards Capo di Lago. The spectacle was a sad one; the field labours of the year, just begun, are already arrested; the plough is seen standing in the unfinished furrow, and the team is away to share the fortunes of its owners in the panoply of battle. These new-made soldiers, too, with all the loutish indifference of the peasant in their air, have none of the swaggering effrontery of regular troops, and consequently present more palpably to the eye the sufferings of a population given up to conscription and torn from their peaceful homes to scenes of carnage and bloodshed, and for what?—for an opinion? for even less than an opinion: for a suspicion—a mere doubt.

Who will be eager in this cause on either side? None, save those that never are to mingle in the contest. The firebrand Journalist of Geneva—the dark-intentioned Jesuit of Lucerne; these are they who will accept of no quarter, nor listen to one cry of mercy: such, at least, is the present aspect of the struggle. Lukewarmness, if not actual repugnance, among the soldiery; hatred supplying all the enthusiasm of those who hound them on.

The Howards are already uneasy at their vicinity to the seat of war, and speak of proceeding southward; yet they will not hear of my leaving them. I feel spell-bound, not only to them but to the very place itself; a presentiment is upon me, that, after this, life will have no pleasure left for me—that I go hence to solitude, to suffering, and to death!

A restless night, neither waking nor sleeping, but passed in wild, strange fancies, of reality and fiction commingled; and now, I am feverish and ill. The struggle against failing health is at last become torture; for I feel—alas that I must say it!—the longing desire to live. Towards daybreak I did sleep, and soundly; but I dreamed too—and how happily! I fancied that I was suddenly restored to health, with all the light-heartedness and spring of former days, and returning with my bride to Walcott.

We were driving rapidly up the approach, catching glimpses at times of the old abbey—now a gable—now some richly traceried pinnacle—some quaint old chimney—some trellised porch. She was wild with delight, in ecstasy at the sylvan beauty of the scene: the dark and silent wood—the brown, clear river, beside the road—the cooing note of the wood-pigeon, all telling of our own rural England. "Is not this better than ambition, love?" said I. "Are not leafy groves, these moss-grown paths, more peaceful than the high-roads of fame?" I felt her hand grasp mine more closely, and I awoke—awoke to know that I was dreaming—that my happiness was but a vision—my future a mere mockery.

Why should not Lucy see these scenes? She will return well and in strength. I would that she would dwell, sometimes, at least, among the places I have loved so much. I have often thought of making her my heir. I have none to claim from me—none who need it. There is one clause, however, she might object to, nay, perhaps, would certainly refuse. My grand-uncle's will makes it imperative that the property should always descend to a Templeton.

What if she rejected the condition? It would fall heavily on me were she to say "No."

I will speak to Sir Gordon about this. I must choose my time, however, and do it gravely and considerately, that he may not treat it as a mere sick man's fancy. Of course, I only intend that she should assume the name and arms; but this branch of the Howards are strong about pedigree, and call themselves older than the Norfolks.

So there is no time to be lost in execution of my plan. The Favancourts are expected here to-morrow, on their way to Naples. The very thought of their coming is misery to me. How I dread the persiflage of the beauty "en vogue;" the heartless raillery that is warmed by no genial trait; the spiritless levity that smacks neither of wit nor buoyant youth, but is the mere coinage of the salons! How I dread, too, lest Lucy should imitate her! she so prone to catch up a trait of manner, or a trick of gesture! And Lady Blanche can make herself fascinating enough to be a model. To hear once more the dull recital of that world's follies that I have left, its endless round of tiresome vice, would be a heavy infliction. Alas, that I should have gained no more by my experience than to despise it! But stay—I see Sir Howard yonder, near the lake. Now for my project!

CHAPTER VII. La Spezzia

Another month, or nearly so, has elapsed since last I opened this book; and now, as I look back, I feel like a convict who has slept soundly during the night before his doom, and passed in forgetful-ness the hours he had vowed to thought and reflection. I was reading Victor Hugo's "Dernier Jour d'un Condamné" last evening, and falling asleep with it in my hand, traced out in my dreams a strange analogy between my own fate and that of the convicted felon. The seductions and attractions of life crowding faster and faster round one as we near the gate of death—the redoubled anxieties of friends, their kinder sympathies—how delightful would these be if they did not suggest the wish to live! But, alas! the sunbeam lights not only the road before us, but that we have been travelling also, and one is so often tempted to look back and linger! To understand this love of life, one must stand as I do now; and yet, who would deem that one so lonely and so desolate, so friendless and alone, would care to live? It is so, however: sorrow attaches us more strongly than joy; and the world becomes dearer to us in affliction as violets give out their sweetest odors when pressed.

Let me recall something of the last few weeks, and remember, if I can, why and how I am here alone. My last written sentence was dated "Como, the 29th October," and then comes a blank—now to fill it up.

Sir Gordon Howard was standing near the lake as I came up with him, nor was he aware of my approach till I had my hand on his arm. Whether that I had disturbed him in a moment of deep thought, or that something in my own sad and sickly face impressed him, I know not, but he did not speak, and merely drawing my arm within his own, we wandered along the water’s edge. We sauntered slowly on till we came to a little moss-house, with stone benches, where, still in silence, we sat down. It belonged to the Villa diets, and was one of those many little ornamental buildings that were erected by that most unhappy Princess, whose broken heart would seem inscribed on every tree and rock around.

To me the aspect of the spot, lovely as it is, has ever been associated with deep gloom. I never could tread the walks, nor sit to gaze upon the lake from chosen points of view, without my memory full of her who, in her exile, pined and suffered there. I know nothing of her history, save what all others know; I am neither defender nor apologist—too humble and too weak for either. I would but utter one cry for mercy on a memory that still is dearly cherished by the poor who dwelt around her, and by whom she is yet beloved.

Whatever were Sir Gordon's thoughts, it was clear the few efforts he made to converse were not in accordance with them. The rumors of disturbance in Switzerland—the increasing watchfulness on the Lombard frontier—the growing feeling of uncertainty where and how far this new discord might extend—these he spoke of, but rather as it seemed to mask other themes, than because they were uppermost in his mind.

"We must think of leaving this," said he, after a brief pause. "'Where to?' is the question. How would Genoa agree with you?"

"With me! Let there be no question of me."

"Nay, but there must," said he, eagerly. "Remember, first of all, that we are now independent of Climate, at least of all that this side of the Alps possesses; and, secondly, bethink you that you are the pilot that weathered the storm for us."

"Happily, then," said I, laughing, or endeavoring to laugh, "I may sing,—

'The waves are laid, My duties paid.'

I must seek out some harbor of refuge and be at rest.'"

"But with us, Templeton—always with us," said the old man, affectionately.

"Upon one condition, Sir Gordon—short of that I refuse."

I fear me, that in my anxiety to subdue a rising emotion I threw into these words an accent of almost stern and obstinate resolution; for as he replied, "Name your condition," his own voice assumed a tone of cold reserve.

It was full a minute before I could resume; not only was the subject one that I dreaded to approach from fear of failure, but I felt that I had already endangered my chance of success by the inopportune moment of its introduction. Retreat was out of the question, and I went on. As much to give myself time for a little forethought, as to provide myself with a certain impulse for the coming effort, as leapers take a run before they spring, I threw out a hasty sketch of the late events of my life before leaving England, and the reasons that induced me to come abroad. "I knew well," said I, "better far than all the skill of physicians could teach, that no chance of recovery remained for me; Science had done its utmost: the machine had, however, been wound up for the last time—its wheels and springs would bear no more. Nothing remained, then, but to economies the hours, and let them glide by with as little

restriction as might be. There was but one alloy to this plan—its selfishness; but when may a man practice egotism so pardonably as when about to part with what comprises it?

"I came away from England, then, with that same sentiment that made the condemned captain beg he might be bled to death rather than fall beneath the axe. I would, if possible, have my last days and hours calm and unruffled, even by fear—little dreaming how vain are all such devices to cheat one's destiny, and that death is never so terrible as when life becomes dear. Yes, my friend, such has been my fate; in the calm happiness of home here—the first time I ever knew the word's true meaning—I learned to wish for life, for days of that peaceful happiness where the present is tempered by the past, and hope has fewer checks, because it comes more chastened by experience. You little thought, that in making my days thus blissful my sorrow to part with them would be a heavy recompense.... Nay, hear me out; words of encouragement only increase my misery—they give not hope, they only awaken fresh feelings of affection, so soon to be cold for ever."

How I approached the subject on which my heart was set I cannot now remember—abruptly, I fear; imperfectly and dubiously I know: because Sir Gordon, one of the most patient and forbearing of men, suddenly interrupted me by a violent exclamation, "Hold! stay! not a word more! Templeton, this cannot be; once for all, never recur to this again!" Shocked, almost terrified by the agitation in his looks, I was unable to speak for some seconds; and while I saw that some misconception of my meaning had occurred, yet, in the face of his prohibition, I could scarcely dare an attempt to rectify it. While I remained thus in painful uncertainty, he seemed, by a strong effort, to have subdued his emotion, and at length said, "Not even to you, my dear friend—to you, to whom I owe the hope that has sustained me for many a day past, can I reveal the secret source of this sorrow, nor say why what you propose is impossible. I dreaded something like this—I foresaw how it might be; nay, my selfishness was such that I rejoiced at it, for her sake. There—there, I will not trust myself with more. Leave me, Templeton; whatever your grief's, they are as nothing compared to mine."

I left him, and, hastening towards the lake side, soon lost myself in the dark groves of chestnut and olive, the last words still ringing in my ears—"Whatever your grief's, they are as nothing compared to mine." Such complete pre-occupation had his agitation and trouble over my mind, that it was long ere I could attempt to recall how I had evoked this burst of passion, and by what

words I had stirred him so to address me. Suddenly the truth flashed boldly out; I perceived the whole nature of the error. He had, in fact, interrupted in explanation at a point which made it seem that I was seeking his grandaughter in marriage. Not waiting to hear me out, he deemed the allusions to my name, my family arms, and my fortune, were intended to convey a proposal to make her my wife. Alas! I needed no longer to wonder at his repugnance, nor speculate further on the energy of his refusal. How entertain such a thought for his poor child! It were, indeed, to weave Cyprus with the garland of the Bride!

Impatient any longer to lie under the misconception—at heart, perhaps, vexed to think how wrongfully he must have judged me when deeming me capable of the thought—I hastened back to the Villa, determined at once to rectify the error and make him hear me out, whatever pains the interview should cost either.

On gaining the house I found that Sir Gordon had just driven from the door. Miss Howard, who for two days had been indisposed, was still in her room. Resolving, then, to make my explanation in writing, I went to my room; on the table lay a letter addressed to me, the writing of which was scarcely dry. It ran thus:—

"My dearest Friend,

"If I, in part, foresaw the possibility of what your words to-day assured me, and yet did not guard against the hazard, the sad circumstances of my lot in life are all I can plead in my favor. I have never ceased to reproach myself that I had not been candid and open with you at first, when our intimacy was fresh. Afterwards, as it became friendship, the avowal was impossible. I must not trust myself with more. I have gone from home for a day or two, that when we meet again the immediate memory of our last interview should have

been softened. Be to me—to her, also—as though the words were never spoken; nor withdraw any portion of your affection from those you have rescued from the greatest of all calamities.

"Yours ever,

"Gordon Howard."

The mystery grew darker and more impenetrable; harassing, maddening suspicions, mixed themselves up in my brain, with thoughts too terrible for endurance. I saw that, in Sir Gordon's error as to my intentions, he had unwittingly disclosed the existence of a secret—a secret whose meaning seemed fraught with dreadful import; that he would never have touched upon this mysterious theme, save under the false impression my attempted proposal had induced, was clear enough; and, that thus I had unwittingly wrung from him an avowal which, under other circumstances, he had never been induced to make.

I set about to think over every word I had used in our last interview—each expression I had employed, torturing the simplest phrases by interpretations the most remote and unlikely, that thereby some clue should present itself to this mystery: but, charge my memory how I could, reflect and ponder as I might, the words of his letter had a character of more deep and serious meaning than a mere refusal of my proposition, taken in what sense it might, could be supposed to call for. At moments, thoughts would flash across my brain so terrible in their import, that had they dwelt longer I must have gone mad. They were like sudden paroxysms of some agonizing disease, coming and recurring at intervals. Just as one of these had left me, weak, worn out, and exhausted, a carriage, drawn by four post-horses, drew up to the door of the Villa, and the instant after my servant knocked at my door, saying, "La Comatose de Fava court is arrived, sir, and wishes to see you."

Who was there whose presence I would not rather have faced?—that gay and heartless woman of fashion, whose eyes, long practiced to read a history in

each face, would soon detect in my agitated looks that "something had occurred," nor cease till she had discovered it. In Sir Gordon's absence, and as Lucy was still indisposed, I had no alternative but to receive her.

Scarcely had I entered the drawing-room than my worst fears were realized. She was seated in an arm-chair, and lay back as if fatigued by her journey; but on seeing me, without waiting to return my greeting of welcome, she asked, abruptly,—

"Where's Sir Gordon?—where's Miss Howard? Haven't they been expecting me?"

I answered, that Sir Gordon had gone over to the Briana for a day; that Miss Howard had been confined to her room, but, I was certain, had only to learn her arrival to dress and come down to her.

"Is this said de bonne foe?" said she, with a smile where the expression was far more of severity than sweetness. "Are you treating me candidly, Mr. Templeton? or is this merely another exercise of your old functions as Diplomatist?"

I started, partly from actual amazement, partly from a feeling of indignant shame, at the accusation; but, recovering at once, assured her calmly and respectfully that all I had said was the simple fact, without the slightest shade of equivocation.

"So much the better," said she gaily; "for I own to you I was beginning to suspect our worthy friends of other motives. You know what a tiresome world of puritanism and mock propriety we live in, and I was actually disposed to fear that these dear souls had got up both the absence and the illness not to receive me."

"Not to receive you! Impossible!" said I, with unfeigned astonishment. "The Howards, whom I have always reckoned as your oldest and most intimate friends——"

"Oh, yes! very old friends, certainly: but remember that these are exactly the kind of people who take upon them to be severer than all the rest of the world, and are ten times as rigid and unforgiving as one's enemies. Now, as I could not possibly know how this affair might have been told to them——"

"What affair? I'm really quite in the dark to what you allude."

"I mean my separation from Fava court."

"Are you separated from your husband, Lady Blanche?" asked I, in a state of agitation in strong contrast to her calm and quiet manner.

"What a question, when all the papers have been discussing it these three weeks! And from an old admirer, too! Shame on you, Mr. Templeton!"

I know not how it was, but the levity of this speech, given as it was, made my cheek flush till it actually seemed to burn.

"Nay, nay, I didn't mean you to blush so deeply," said she, "And what a dear, sweet, innocent kind of life you must have been leading here, on this romantic lake, to be capable of such soft emotions! Oh, dear!" sighed she, worriedly. "You men have an immense advantage in your affairs of the heart; you can always begin as freshly with each new affection, and be as youthful in sentiment with each new love, as we are with our only passion. Now I see it all; you have been getting up a 'tender' here for somebody or other:—not Tagline, I hope, for I see that is her Villa yonder,—There, don't look indignant. This same Lake of Como has long been known to be the paradise of danseuses and opera-singers; and I thought it possible you might have dramatized a little love-story to favor the illusion. Well, well," said she, sighing, "so that you have not fallen in love with poor Lucy Howard——"

"And why not with her?" said I, starting, while in my quick-beating heart and burning temples a sense of torturing pain went through me.

"Why not with her?" reiterated she, pausing at each word, and fixing her eyes steadfastly on me, with a look where no affected astonishment existed; "why not with her?—did you say this?"

"I did; and do ask, What is there to make it strange that one like her should inspire the deepest sentiment of devotion, even from one whose days are so surely numbered as mine are—so unworthy to hope—to win her?"

"Then you really are unaware! Well, I must say this was not treating you fairly. I thought every one knew it, however; and I conclude they themselves reasoned in the same way. Come, I suppose I must explain; though, from your terrified face and staring eyeballs, I wish the task had devolved on some other. Be calm and collected, or I shall never venture upon it.—Well, poor dear Lucy inherits her mother's malady—she is insane!"

Broken half-words, stray fragments of speech, met my ears, for she went on to talk of the terrible theme with the volubility of one who reveled in a story of such thrilling horror. I, however, neither heard nor remembered more; passages of well-remembered interest flashed upon my mind, but, like scenes lit up by some lurid light, glowed with meanings too direful to dwell on.

How I parted from her—how I left the Villa and came hither, travelling day and night, till exhausted strength could bear no more—are still memories too faint to recall; the realities of these last few days have less vividness than my own burning, wasting thoughts: nor can I, by any effort, separate the terrible recital she gave from my own reflections upon it.

I must never recur to this again—nor will I reopen the page whereon it is written: I have written this to test my own powers of mind, lest I too——

Shakespeare, who knew the heart as none, save the inspired, have ever known it, makes it the test of sanity to recall the events of a story in the same precise order, time after time, neither changing nor inverting them. This is Lear's reply to the accusation of madness, when yet his intelligence was unclouded,—"I will the matter re-word, which madness would gabble from."

CHAPTER VIII. Leica, Gulf of Spezzia

Another night of fever! The sea, beating heavily upon the rocks, prevented sleep; or worse—filled it with images of shipwreck and storm. I sat till nigh midnight on the terrace—poor Shelley's favorite resting-place—watching the night as it fell, at first in gloomy darkness, and then bright and starlit. There was no moon, but the planets, reflected in the calm sea, were seen like tall pillars of reddish light; and although all the details of the scenery were in shadow, the bold outlines of the distant Apennines, and of the Ponto Veneer and the Island of Palmaris, were all distinctly marked out. The tall masts and taper spars of the French fleet at anchor in the bay were also seen against the sky, and the lurid glow of the fires spangled the surface of the sea. Strange chaos of thought was mine! At one moment, Lord Byron was before me, as, seated on the affray of the "Bolivar," with all canvass stretched, he plunged through the blue waters; his fair brown hair spray-washed and floating back with the breeze; his lip curled with the smile of insolent defiance; and his voice ringing with the music of his own glorious verse. Towards midnight the weather suddenly changed; to the total stillness succeeded a low but distant moaning sound, which came nearer and nearer, and at last a "Levanter," in all its fury, broke over the sea, and rolled the mad waves in masses towards the shore. I have seen a storm in the Bay of Biscay, and I have witnessed a "whole gale" off the coast of Labrador, but for suddenness, and for the wild tumult of sea and wind commingled, I never saw anything like this. Not in huge rolling mountains, as in the Atlantic, did the waves move along, but in short, abrupt jets, as though impelled by some force beneath; now, skimming each over each, and now, spiriting up into the air, they threw foam and spray around them like gigantic fountains. As abruptly as the storm began, so did it cease; and as the wind fell, the waves moved more and more sluggishly; and in a space of time inconceivably brief, nothing remained of the hurricane save the short plash of the breakers, and at intervals someone, long, thundering roar, as a heavier mass threw its weight upon the strand. It was just then, ere the sea had resumed its former calm, and while still warring with the effects of the gale, I thought I saw a boat lying keel uppermost in the water, and a man grasping with all the energy of despair to catch the slippery planks, which rose and sank with every motion of the tide. Though apparently far out at sea, all was palpable and distinct to my eyes as if happening close to where I sat. A grey darkness was around, and yet at one moment—so brief as to be uncountable—I could mark his features, beautifully handsome and calm even in his drowning agony; at least so did their wan and wearied expression strike me. Poor Shelley! I fancied you were before me; and, long after the vision passed away, a faint,

low cry, continued to ring in my ears—the last effort of the voice about to be hushed forever. Then the whole picture changed, and I beheld the French fleet all illuminated, as if for a victory; the decks and yards crowded with seamen, and echoing with their triumphant cheers; while on the poop-deck of the "Suzerain" stood a pale and sickly youth, thoughtful and sad, his admiral's uniform carelessly half-buttoned, and his unbelted sword carried negligently in his hand. This was the Prince de Joinville, as I had seen him the day before, when visiting the fleet. I could not frame to my mind where and over whom the victory was won; but disturbed fears for our own naval supremacy flitted constantly across me, and every word I had heard from the French captain who had accompanied me in my visit kept sounding in my ears: as, for instance, while exhibiting the Paixhan's cannons, he added,—"Now, here is an arm your ships have not acquired." Such impressions must have gone deeper than, at the time, I knew of, for they made the substance of a long and painful dream; and when, awaking suddenly, the first object I beheld was the French fleet resting still and tranquil in the bay, my heart expanded with a sense of relief unspeakably delightful.

So, then, I must hence. These Levanters usually continue ten or twelve days, and then are followed by the Tramontane, as is called the wind from the Apennines; and this same Tramontane is all but fatal to those as weak as I am. How puzzling—I had almost said, how impossible—to know anything about climate! and how invariably, on this as on most other subjects, mere words usurp the place of ideas! It is enough to say "Italy," to suggest hope to the consumptive man; and yet, what severe trials does this same boasted climate involve! These scorching autumnal suns; and cold, cutting breezes, wherever shade is found;—the genial warmth of summer, here; and yonder, in that alley, the piercing air of winter;—vicissitudes that wake up the extremes of every climate, occur each twenty-four hours. And he, whose frail system can barely sustain the slightest shock, must now learn to accommodate itself to atmospheres of every density; now vapor charged and heavy, now oxygenated to a point of stimulation that, even in health, would be felt as over-exciting.

There is something of the same kind experienced here intellectually: the every-day tone of society is trifling and frivolous to a degree; the topics discussed are of a character which, to our practical notions, never rise above mere levity; and even where others of a deeper interest are introduced, the mode of treating them is superficial and meager. Yet, every now and then, one meets with some high and great intelligence, some man of wide reflection and deep research; and then, when hearing the words of wisdom in that glorious language, which

unites Teutonic vigor with every Gallic elegance, you feel what a people this might be who have such an interpreter for their thoughts and deeds. In this way I remember feeling when first I heard Italian from the lips of a truly great and eloquent speaker. He was a small old man, slightly bowed in the shoulders—merely enough so to exhibit to more advantage the greater elevation of a noble head, which rose like the dome of a grand cathedral; his forehead, wide and projecting over the brows which were heavy, and would have been almost severe in their meaning, save for the softened expression of his large brown eyes; his hair, originally-black, was now grey, but thick and massive, and hang in locky folds, like the antique, on his neck and shoulders. In manner he was simple, quiet, and retiring, avoiding observation, and seeking rather companionship with those whose unobtrusive habits made them unlikely for peculiar notice. When I met him he was in exile. Indeed I am not certain if the ban of his offence be recalled; whether or not, the voice of all Italy now invokes his return, and the name of Gilberto is associated with the highest and the noblest views of national freedom.

Well, indeed, were it for the cause of Italy if her progress were to be entrusted to men like this—if the great principles of reform were to be committed to intelligences capable of weighing difficulties, avoiding and accommodating dangers. So late as the day before last I had an opportunity of seeing a case in point. It is but a few weeks since the good people of Lucca, filled with new wine and bright notions of liberty, compelled their sovereign to abdicate. There is no denying that he had no other course open to him; for if the Grand Duke of Tuscany could venture to accord popular privileges, supported as he was by a very strong body of nobles, whose possessions will always assure them a great interest in the state, the little kingdom of Lucca had few, if any, such securities. Its sovereign must either rule or be ruled. Now, he had not energy of character for the one—he did not like the other. Austria refused to aid him—not wishing, probably, to add to the complication of Ferrara; and so he abdicated. Now comes le commencement du fin. The Luces gained the day: they expelled the Duke—they organized a national guard—they illuminated—they protested, cockaded, and—are ruined! Without trade, or any of its resources, this little capital, like almost all those of the German duchies, lived upon "the Court." The sovereign was not only the fount of honor, but of wealth! Through his household flowed the only channel by which industry was nurtured: it was his court and his dependents whose wants employed the active heads and hands of the entire city. The Duke is gone—the palace closed—the courtyard even already half grass-grown! Not an equipage is to be heard or seen; not even a footman in a court livery rides past; and all the

recompense for this is the newly conferred privileges of liberty, to a people who recognise in freedom, not a new bond of obligation, but an unbridled license of action. The spirit of our times is, however, against this. The inspired grocers, who form the Guardia Civic, are our only guides now; it will be curious enough to see where they will lead us.

When thinking of Italian liberty, or Unity, for that is the phrase in vogue, I am often reminded of the Irish priest who was supposed by his parishioners to possess an unlimited sway over the seasons, and who, when hard-pushed to exercise it, at last declared his readiness to procure any kind of weather that three farmers would agree upon, well knowing, the while, how diversity of interest must for ever prevent a common demand. This is precisely the case. An Italian kingdom to comprise the whole Peninsula would be impossible. The Lombards have no interests in common with the Neapolitans. Venice is less the sister than the rival of Genoa. How would the haughty Milanese, rich in everything that constitutes wealth, surrender their station to the men of the South, whom they despise and look down upon? None would consent to become Provincial; and even the smallest states would stand up for the prerogative of separate identity.

"A National" Guard slowly paces before the gate, within which Royalty no longer dwells; and the banner of their independence floats over their indigence! Truly, they have torn up their mantle to make a cap of Liberty, and they must bear the cold how they may!

As for the Duke himself, I believe he deserves the epithet I heard a Frenchman bestow upon him—he is a Paver Sire! There is a fatal consistency, certainly, about the conduct of these Bourbon Princes in moments of trying emergency! They never will recognise danger till too late to avert it. The Prince of Lucca, like Charles Dix, laughed at popular menace, and yet had barely time to escape from popular vengeance. There was a Ball at the palace on the very night when the tumult attained its greatest importance; frequent messages were sent by the Ministers, and more than one order to the troops given during the progress of the entertainment. A dispatch was opened at the supper-table; and as the Crown Prince led out his fair partner—an English beauty, by-the-by—to the cotillion, he whispered in her ear, "We must keep it up late, for I fancy we shall never have another dance in this sale!" And this is the way Princes can take leave of their inheritance; and so it is, the "divine right" can be understood by certain "Rulers of the people."

If the defense of Monarchy depended on the lives and characters of monarchs, how few could resist Republicanism! though, perhaps, everything considered, there is no station in life where the same number of good and graceful qualities is so certain to win men's favor and regard. Margin used to say, that we "admire wit in a woman as we admire a few words spoken plain by a parrot."

The speech was certainly not a very gallant one; but I half suspect that our admiration of royal attainments is founded upon a similar principle.

Kings can rarely be good talkers, because they have not gone through the great training-school of talk—which is, conversation. This is impossible where there is no equality; and how often does it occur to monarchs to meet each other, and when they do, what a stilted, unreal thing, must be their intercourse! Of reigning sovereigns, the King of Prussia is perhaps the most gifted in this way; of course, less endowed with that shrewd appreciation of character, that intuitive perception of every man's bias, which marks the Monarch of the Toiletries, but possessed of other and very different qualities, and with one especially which never can be overvalued—an earnest sincerity of purpose in everything. There is no escaping from the conviction, that here is a man who reflects and wills, and whose appeal to conscience is the daily rule of life. The Nationality of Germany is his great object, and for it he labours as strenuously—may it be as successfully!—as ever his "Great" predecessor did to accomplish the opposite. What a country would it be if the same spirit of nationality were to prevail from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and "Germany" have a political signification as well as a geographical one!

After all, if we have outlived the age of heroic monarchy, we have happily escaped that of royal debauches. A celebrated Civil Engineer of our day is reported to have said, in his examination before a parliamentary committee, that he regarded "rivers as intended by Providence to supply navigable canals;" in the same spirit one might opine certain characters of royalty were created to supply materials for Vaudevilles.

What would become of the minor theatres of Paris if Louis XIV., and Richelieu, and the Regency were to be interdicted? On whose memory dare they hang so much of shameless vice and iniquitous folly? Where find characters so degraded, so picturesque, so abandoned, so infamous, and so amusing? What time and trouble, too, are saved by the adoption of this era! No need of wearisome explanations and biographical details of the dramatis person. When one reads the word "Marquis," he knows it means a man whose whole aim in

life is seduction; while "Madame la Marquise" is as invariably the easy victim of royal artifice.

It might open a very curious view into the distinctive nature of national character to compare the recognized class to which vice is attributed in different countries; for while in England we select the aristocracy always, as the natural subjects for depravity, in the Piedmonts territory all the stage villains are derived from the mercantile world. Instead of a Lord, as with us, the seducer is always a Manufacturer or a Ship-owner; and vice a Captain of Dragoons, their terror of domestic peace, is a Cotton-spinner or a Dealer in Hardware.

Let it not be supposed that this originates in any real depravity, or any actual want of honesty, in the mercantile world. No! the whole is attributable to the "Censor." By his arbitrary dictate the entire of a piece is often re-cast, and so habituated have authors become to the prevailing taste, that they now never think of occasioning him the trouble of the correction. Tradesman there stands for scoundrel, as implicitly as with us an Irishman is a blunderer and a Scotchman a knave. Exercised as this power is, and committed to such hands as we find it in foreign countries, it is hard to conceive any more quiet but effectual agent for the degradation of a national taste. It is but a few weeks back I saw a drama marked for stage representation in a city of Lombardy, in which the words "Pope" and "Cardinal" were struck out as irreverent to utter; but all the appeals—and most impious they were—to the Deity were suffered to remain unmotivated.

And now I am reminded of rather a good theme for one of those little dramatic pieces which amuse the public of the Pala is Royal and the Varieties. I chanced upon it in an old French book, called "Memoirs et Souvenirs de Jules Augusta Prevost, premier Valet de Charge de S. A. le Duck de Corellas." Printed at the Hague, anno 1742.

I am somewhat skeptical about the veraciousness of many of M. Prevost’s recitals; the greater number are, indeed, little else than chronicles of his losses at Hombre, with a certain Mille. Valence, or narratives of "petites supers," where his puce-cultured shorts and coat of amber velvet were the chief things worthy of remembrance. Yet here and there are little traits that look like facts, too insignificant for fiction, and preserving something of the character of the time to which they are linked. The whole bears no trace of ever having been intended for publication; and it is not difficult to see where the new touches have been laid on over the original picture. It was in all probability a mere

commonplace book, in which certain circumstances of daily life got mixed up with the written details of his station in the Duke's household.

Neither its authenticity nor correctness, however, are of any moment to my purpose, which was to jot down—from memory if I can,—the subject I believe to be invested with dramatic material.

M. Prevost's narrative is very brief; indeed it barely extends beyond a full allusion to a circumstance very generally known at the time. The events run somewhat thus, or at least should do so, in the piece. At the close of a brilliant fête at Versailles, where every fascination that an age of unbounded luxury could procure was assembled, the King retired to his apartment, followed by that prince of vaudeville characters, the Marital Richelieu. His Majesty was wearied and out of spirits; the pleasures of the evening, so far from having, as usual, elevated his spirits and awakened his brilliancy, had depressed and fatigued him. He was tired of the unvarying repetition of what his heart had long ceased to have any share in; and, in fact, to use the vulgar, but most fitting phrase, he was bored!

Bored by the courtiers, whose wit was too prompt to have been unprepared; by the homage, too servile to have any sincerity; by the smiles of beauty, perverted as they were by jealous rivalry and subtle intrigue; and, above all, bored by the consciousness that he had no other identity than such as kingly trappings gave him, and that all the love and admiration he received were accorded to the monarch and nothing to the man.

He didn't exactly, as novel writers would say, pour his sufferings into Richelieu's ear, but in very abrupt and forcible expressions he manifested his utter weariness of the whole scene, and avowed a very firm belief that the company was almost as tired of him as he was of the company.

In vain the Marital rallies his Majesty upon successes which were wont to be called triumphs; in vain he assures him, that never at any period was the domestic peace of the lieges more endangered by his Majesty's condescension's: in fact, for once—as will happen, even with Kings now and then—he said truth; and truth, however wholesome, is not always palatable. Richelieu was too subtle an adversary to be easily worsted; and after a fruitless effort to obliterate the gloomy impression of the king, he, with a ready assurance, takes him in flank, and coolly attributes the royal dissatisfaction to the very natural weariness at ever seeing the same faces, however beautiful, and hearing the same voices, however gay and sparkling their wit.

"Your Majesty will not give yourself the credit due of winning these evidences of devotion from personal causes, rather than from adventitious ones. Happily, a good opportunity presents itself for the proof. Your Majesty may have heard of Madame de Vaugirarde, whose husband was killed at La Rochelle?"

"The pretty widow who refuses to come to court?"

"The same, sire. She continues to reside at the antique château of her late husband, alone, and without companionship; and, if report speak truly, the brightest eyes of France are wasting their brilliancy in that obscure retreat."

"Well, what is to be done? You would not, surely, order her up to Versailles by a 'letter de cachet?'"

"No, sire, the measure were too bold; nay, perhaps my counsel will appear far bolder: it is, that since Madame de Vaugirarde will not come to court, your Majesty should go to Madame de Vaugirarde."

It was not very difficult to make this notion agreeable to the king. It had one ingredient pleasurable enough to secure its good reception—it was new—nobody had ever before dreamt of his Majesty making a tour into the provinces incog. This was quite sufficient; and Richelieu had scarcely detailed his intentions than the King burned with impatience to begin his journey. The wily minister, however, had many things to arrange before they set out; but of what nature he did not reveal to his master. Certain is it that he left for Paris within an hour, hastening to the capital with all the speed of post-horses. Arrived there, he exchanged his court suit for a plain dress, and in a fiacre drove to the private entrance of the Theater François.

"Is M. Dorset engaged?" said he, descending from the carriage.

"He is on the stage, monsieur," said the porter, who took the stranger for one of the better bourgeois of Paris, coming to secure a good loge by personal intercession with the manager. Now, M. Dorset was at the very moment occupied in the not very uncommon task of giving a poor actor his conge who had just presented himself for an engagement.

As was the case in those days—(we have changed since then)—the Director, not merely content with declining the proffered services, was actually adding some very caustic remarks on the pretension of the applicant, whose miserable appearance and ragged costume might have claimed exemption from his gratuitous lecture.

"Believe me, moon cheer," said he, "a man must have a very different air and carriage from yours who plays 'Le Marquis' on the Parisian boards. There should be something of the style and bearing of the world about him—his address should be easy, without presumption—his presence commanding, without severity."

"I always played the noble parts in the provinces. I acted the 'Regent'——"

"I've no doubt of it; and very pretty notions of royalty the audience must have gained from you. There, that will do. Go back to Nancy, and try yourself at valets' parts for a year or two—that's the best counsel I can give you! Adieu! adieu!"

The poor actor retired, discomfited and distressed, at the same instant that the graceful figure of Richelieu advanced in easy dignity.

"Monsieur Dorset," said the Marital, seating himself, and speaking in the voice so habituated to utter commands, "I would speak a few words with you in confidence, and where we might be certain of not being overheard."

"Nothing could be better than the present spot, then," said the manager, who was impressed by the style and bearing of his visitor, without ever guessing or suspecting his real rank. "The rehearsal will not begin for half-an-hour. Except that poor devil that has just left me, no one has entered this morning."

"Sit down, then, and pay attention to what I shall say," said the Marital. The words were felt as a command, and instantly obeyed.

"They tell me, M. Dorset, that a young actress, of great beauty and distinguished ability, is about to appear on these boards, whose triumphs have been hitherto won only in the provinces. Well, you must defer her début for some days; and meanwhile, for the benefit of her health, she can make a little excursion to the neighborhood of Fontainebleau, where, at a short distance from the royal forest, stands a small château. This will be ready for her reception; and where a more critical taste than even your audiences boast will decide upon her merits."

"There is but one man in France could make such a proposition!" said the manager, starting back, half in amazement, half in respect.

"And I am exactly that man," rejoined the Marital. "There need never be secrets between men of sense. M. Dorset, the case is this: your beauty, whose manners

and breeding I conjecture to be equal to her charms, must represent the character of the widowed Countess of Vaugirarde, whose sorrow for her late husband is all but inconsolable. The solitude of her retreat will, however, be disturbed by the accidental arrival of a stranger, who, accompanied by his friend, will demand the hospitality of the château. Grief has not usurped every faculty and devoir of the fair Countess, who consents the following morning to receive the respectful homage of the travellers, and even invites them, weary as they seem by travel, to stay another day."

"I understand—I understand," said Dorset, hastily interrupting this narrative, which the speaker poured forth with impetuous rapidity; "but there are several objections, and grave ones."

"I'm certain of it," rejoined the other; "and now to combat them. Here are a thousand Louis; five hundred of which M. Dorset will keep—the remainder he will expend, as his taste and judgment may dictate, in the costume of the fair Countess."

"But Mademoiselle Belle chasse?"

"Will accept of these diamonds, which will become her to perfection. She is not a blonde?"

"No; dark hair and eyes."

"This suite of pearls, then, will form a most graceful addition to her toilette."

"They are magnificent!" exclaimed the manager, who, with wondering eyes, turned from one jewel-case to the other; "they are splendid! Nay"—then he added, in a lower accent, and with a glance, as he spoke, of inveterate cunning—"nay, they are a Princely present."

"Ah, M. Dorset, un home despite is always so easy to treat with! Might I dare to ask if Mademoiselle Belle chasse is here?—if I might be permitted to pay my respects?"

"Certainly; your Excel——"

"Nay, nay, M. Dorset, we are all incog." said the Marital, smiling good-humoredly.

"As you please, sir. I will go and make a brief explanation to Mademoiselle, if you will excuse my leaving you. May I take these jewels with me? Thanks."

The explanation was, indeed, of the briefest; and he returned in a few seconds, accompanied by a young lady, whose elegance of mien and loveliness of form seemed to astonish even the critical gaze of Richelieu.

"Madame la Comatose de Vaugirarde," said the Director, presenting her.

"Ah, belle Comatose!" said the Marital, as he kissed the tips of her fingers with the most profound courtesy; "may I hope that the world has still charms to win back one whose grief's should fall like spring showers, and only render more fragrant the soil they water!"

"I know not what the future may bring forth," said she, with a most gracefully-affected sadness; "but for the present, I feel as if the solitude of my ancient château, the peaceful quiet of the country, would best respond to my wishes: there alone, to wander in those woods, whose paths are endeared to me——"

"Admirable!—beautiful!—perfect!" exclaimed Richelieu, in a transport of delight; "never was the tribute of affection more touching—never a more graceful homage rendered to past happiness! Now, when can you set out?"

"To-morrow."

"Why not to-day? Time is every thing here."

"Remember, monsieur, that we have purchases to make—we visit the capital but rarely."

"Quite true; I was forgetting the solitude of your retreat. Such charms might make any lapse of memory excusable."

"Oh, monsieur! I should be, indeed, touched by this flattery, if I could but see the face of him who uttered it."

"Pardon me, fair Countess, if I do not respond to even the least of your wishes; we shall both appear in our true colors one of these days. Meanwhile, remember our proverb that says, 'It's not the cowl makes the monk.' When you shall hear this again, it will be in your château of Vaugirarde, and——"

"Is that the consignee, then?" said she, laughing.

"Yes, that is the consignee,—don't forget it;" and, with a graceful salutation, the Marital withdrew to perfect his further arrangements.

There was a listener to this scene, that none of its actors ever guessed at—the poor actor, who, having lost his way among forests of pasteboard and palaces of painted canvass, at last found himself at the back of a pavilion, from which the speakers were not more than two paces distant. Scarcely had the Marital departed, than he followed his steps, and made all haste to an obscure submerge outside the barriers, where a companion, poor and friendless as himself, awaited him. There is no need to trace what ensued at this meeting. The farce-writer might, indeed, make it effective enough, ending as it does in the resolve, that since an engagement was denied them at Paris, they'd try their fortune at Fontainebleau, by personating the two strangers, who were to arrive by a hazard at the Château de Vaugirarde.

The whole plot is now seen. They set out, and in due time arrive at the château. Their wardrobe and appearance generally are the very reverse of what the fair Countess expected, but as their stage experiences supply a certain resemblance to rank and distinction—at least to her notions of such—she never doubts that they are the promised visitors, and is convinced by the significant declaration, that if their way worn looks and strange costume seem little indicative of their actual position, yet the Countess should remember, "It is not the cowl makes the monk."

The constraint with which each assumes a new character forms the second era of the piece. The lover, far from suspecting the real pretensions he should strive to personate—the Countess, as much puzzled by the secrecy of her guest's conduct, and by guesses as to his actual rank and fortune. It is while these doubts are in full conflict, and when seated at supper, that the King and Richelieu appear, announced as two travellers, whose carriage being overturned and broken, are fain to crave the hospitality of the château.

The discomfiture of Richelieu and the anger of the King at finding the ground occupied, contrast well with the patronizing graces of the mock Countess and the insolent demeanor of the lover, who whispers in her ear that the new arrivals are strolling players, and that he has seen them repeatedly in the provinces. All Richelieu's endeavours to set matters right, unobserved by the King, are abortive; while his Majesty is scarce more fortunate in pressing his suit with the fair Countess, by whose grace and beauty he is fascinated. In the very midst of the insolent badinage of the real actors, an officer of the household arrives, with important dispatches. Their delivery brooks no delay,

and he at once presents himself, and, kneeling, hands them to the King. Shame, discomfiture, terror, and dismay, seize on the intruding players. The King, however, is merciful. After a smart reproof all is forgiven; his Majesty sagely observing, that although "the Cowl may not make the Monk," the Ermine has no small share in forming the Monarch.

CHAPTER IX. Florence

What did Shelley, what does anyone, mean by their raptures about Florence? Never, surely, was the epithet of La Bella more misapplied. I can well understand the enthusiasm with which men call Genoa Il Superb. Its mountain background, its deep blue sea, its groves of orange and acacia, the prickly aloe growing wild upon the very shore in all the luxuriance of tropical vegetation, indicative of an almost wasteful extravagance of production; while its amphitheater of palaces, proudly rising in terraced rows, are gorgeous remembrances of the haughty Republic. But Florence! dark, dirty, and discordant! Palaces, goal-like and gloomy, stand in streets where wretchedness and misery seem to have chosen their dwelling-place—the types of feudal tyranny side by side with modern destitution. The boasted Arno, too, a shrunk-up, trickling stream, not wide enough to be a river, not clear enough to be a rivulet, winds along between hills hot and sun-scorched, where the brown foliage has no touch of freshness, but stands parched and shriveled by the hot glare of eternal noon. The white-walled villas glisten in the dazzling heat, not tempered by the slightest shade, but reflecting back the scorching glow from rocks cracked and fissured by the sun!

How disappointing is all this! and how wearisome is the endeavor, from the scattered objects here and there, to make any approach to that Florence one has imagined to himself! To me the abstraction is impossible. I carry about with me, even into the galleries, before the triumphs of Raf-faelle and the wonders of Michael Angelo, the sad discordant scenes through which I have passed. The jarred senses are rendered incapable of properly appreciating and feeling those influences that should diffuse their effect upon the mind; and even the sight of the "Guardia Civic," strutting in solemn mockery beneath the archways where the proud Medici have trod, are contrasts to suggest rather a sense of sarcasm than of pleasure.

Here and there you do come upon some grand and imposing pile of building, the very stones of which seem laid by giant hands; but even these have the fortress character, the air of strongholds, rather than of princely dwellings, as at Genoa. You see at once how much more defense and safety were the guiding principles, than elegance of design and beauty of proportion. No vestibule, peopled with its marble groups, opens here to the passer-by a glimpse of a noble stair rising in spacious amplitude between walls of marble. No gate of gilded fretwork shows the terraced garden, with the plashing fountains, and the orange-trees bending with their fruit.

Like all continental cities where the English congregate, the inhabitants have a mongrel look, grafting English notions of dress and equipage upon their own, and, like most imitators, only successful in following the worst models. The Cascini, too, exhibits a very motley assemblage of gaudy liveries and, dusky carriages, riding-grooms dressed like footmen, their masters no bad resemblance to the "Jeunes Premiers" of a vaudeville. The men are very inferior in appearance to the Milanese; they are neither as well-built nor well-grown, and rarely have any pretensions to a fashionable exterior. The women are mostly ill-dressed, and, in no instance that I have seen, even well-looking. They have the wearied look, without the seductive languor, of the South; they are pale, but not fair; and their gestures are neither plastic nor graceful. In fact, in all that I have seen here, I am sadly disappointed-all, save the Raffaelle's! they are above my conception of them.

How much of this lies in myself I dare not stop to inquire; a large share, perhaps, but assuredly not all. This climate should be avoided by those of weak chest. Symptoms of further "breaking-up" crowd upon me each day; and this burning sun and piercing wind make a sad conflict in the debilitated frame. But where to go, where to seek out a quiet spot to linger a few days and die! Rome is in all the agonies of its mock liberty—Naples in open revolt: here, where I am, all rule and government have ceased to exist; the mob have everything at their mercy: that they have not abused their power, is more owing to their ignorance than their honor. When the Irish rebels carried the town of Ross by storm, they broke into the grocers' shops to eat sugar! The Florentines having bullied the Duke, are only busied about the new uniforms of their Civic Guard!

Hitherto the reforms have gone no further than in organising this same National Guard, and in thrashing the police authorities wherever found. Now, bad as this police was, it was still the only protection to the public peace. It exists no longer; and Tuscany has made her first step in liberty "en Américaine" by adopting "Lynch Law."

I was about to note down a singular instance of this indignant justice of the people, when the arrival of a letter, in a hand unknown to me, suddenly-routed all my intentions. If I am able to record the circumstance here, calmly and without emotion, it is neither from that philosophy the world teaches, nor from any higher motive—it is merely on the same principle that one would bear with tolerable equanimity the break-down of a carriage when within a few miles of the journey's end! The fact, then, is simply this, that I, Horace Templeton,

whose draughts a few days back might have gone far into the "tens of thousands," without fear of "dishonour," am now ruined! When we read this solemn word in the newspapers, we at once look back to the rank and station of him whose ruin is predicated. A Duke is "ruined" when he must sell three packs of hounds, three studs of horses, four of his five or six mansions, part with his yacht at Cowes, and his racers at New market, and retire to the Continent with a beggarly pittance of some fifteen thousand per annum. A Merchant is ruined when, by the sudden convulsions of mercantile affairs, he is removed from the unlimited command of millions to pass his days, at Lamington or Cheltenham, on his wife's jointure of two thousand a-year.

His clerk is ruined when he drops his pocket-book on his way from the Bank, and loses six hundred pounds belonging to the firm. His is more real ruin, for it implies stoppages, suspicion—mayhap loss of place, and its consequences.

But I have lost everything! Hammertoe and Scott, my bankers, have failed; their liabilities, as the phrase is—meaning thereby what they are liable to be asked for, but cannot satisfy—are enormous. My only landed property is small, and so heavily mortgaged as to be worth nothing. I had only waited for the term of an agreement to redeem the mortgage, and clear off all encumbrances; but the "crash" has anticipated me, and I am now a beggar!

Yes, there is the letter, in all cold and chilling civility, curtly stating that "the unprecedented succession of calamities, by which public credit has been affected, have left the firm no other alternative but that of a short suspension of payment! Sincerely trusting, however, that they will be enabled——" and so forth. These announcements have but one burden—the creditors are to be mulcted, while the debtor continues to hope!

And now for my own share in the misfortune. Is it the momentary access of excitement, or is it some passing rally in my constitution? but I certainly feel better, and in higher spirits, than I have done for many a day. It is long since I indulged in my old habit of castle-building; and yet now, at every instant, some new notion strikes me, and I fancy some new field for active labor and exertion. To the present Ministers I am slightly known—sufficiently to ask for employment, if not in my former career, in some other. Should this fail, I have yet powerful friends to ask for me. Not that I like either of these plans—this playing "antechamber" is a sore penance at my time of life. Had I health and strength, I'd emigrate. I really do wonder why men of a certain rank, younger sons especially, do not throw their fortunes into the colonies. Apart from the sense of enterprise, there is an immense gain, in the fact that individual

exertion, be it of head or hand, can exercise, free from the trammels of conventional prejudices, which so rule and restrain us at home. If we merely venture to use the pruning-knife in our gardens here, there, we may lay the axe to the root of the oak; and yet, in this commonwealth of labor, the gentleman, if his claim to the title be really well founded, is as certain of maintaining a position of superiority as though he had remained in his own country. The Vernon's, the Greys, and the Courtenay's, have never ceased to hold a peculiar place among their fellow-citizens of the United States; and so is it observable in our colonies, even where mere wealth was found in the opposite scale.

But let me no longer dwell on these things, nor indulge in speculations which lead to hope! Let me rather reflect on my present position, and calculate calmly by what economy I may be able to linger on, and not exhaust the means, till the lamp of life is ready to be quenched.

I am sure that most men of easy, careless temperament, could live as well on one half of their actual incomes, having all that they require, and never feeling any unusual privation; that the other half is invariably "mange" by one's servants, by tradespeople, by cases of mock distress, by importunity, and by indolence. I well know how I am blamable upon each of these several counts. Now, for a note to my banker here, to ascertain what sum he holds of mine; and then, like the shipwrecked sailor on his raft, to see how long life may be sustained on half or quarter rations!

So, here is the banker's letter:—"I have the honor to acknowledge," and so on. The question at issue is the sum—and here it stands: Three hundred and forty-two pounds, twelve shillings, and four pence. I really thought I had double the amount; but here I find checks innumerable. I have, no doubt, given to many, now far richer than I am. Be it so. The next point is—How long can a man live on three hundred and forty pounds? One man would say, Three weeks—another, as many months—and another, as many years, perhaps. I am totally ignorant what guidance to follow.

In this difficulty I shall send for Dr. Hennessey—he is the man in repute here—and try, if it may be, to ascertain what length of tether he ascribes to my case. Be it a day, a week, or a month, let me but know it. And now to compose myself, and speak calmly on a theme where the slightest appearance of excitement would create erroneous suspicions against me. If H. be the man of sense I deem him, he will not misconstrue my meaning, even should he guess it.

Gilbert reminds me of what I had quite forgotten—that yesterday I signed an agreement for a villa here: I took it for six months, expecting to live one! It struck me, when driving out on the Bologna road, both for architecture and situation; I saw nothing equal to it—an old summer-palace of the Medici, and afterwards inhabited by the Salivate, whose name it bears.

A princely house in every way is this; but how unsuited to ruined fortunes! I walked about the rooms, now stopping to examine a picture or a carved oak cabinet; now to peep at the wild glens, which here are seen dividing the hills in every direction; and felt how easy it would be to linger on here, where objects of taste and high art blend their influence with dreams of the long past. Now, I must address my mind to the different question—How to be released from my contract?

H. has just been here. How difficult it was to force him into candor! A doctor becomes, by the practice of his art, as much addicted to suspicion as a police agent. Every question, every reply of the patient, must be a "symptom." This wearies and worries the nervous man, and renders him shy and uncommunicative.

For myself, well opining how my sudden demand, "How long can I live?" might sound, if uttered with abrupt sincerity, I submitted patiently to all the little gossip of the little world of this place,—its envy, hatred, malice, and all charitableness—which certainly are prime features in an English colony on the Continent—all, that I might at last establish a character for soundness of mind and calmness of purpose, ere I put my quire.

The favorable moment came at last, and I asked in full earnest, but with a manner that showed no sign of dread,—"Tell me, Dottier miso, how long may such a chest as mine endure? I mean, taking every possible care, as I do; neither incurring any hazard nor neglect; and, in fact, fighting the battle bravely to the last?"

He tried at first, by a smile and a jocular manner, to evade the question; but seeing my determination fixed, he looked grave, felt my pulse, percussed my chest, and was silent.

"Well," said I, after a very long pause, "I await my sentence, but in no mood of hope or fear. Is it a month?—a week?—a day?—nay, surely it can hardly be so near as that? Still silent! Come, this is scarcely fair; I ask simply—"

"That which is perfectly impossible to answer, did I concede that I ought to reply, as categorically as you ask."

"Were I to tell my reasons, doctor, you might judge more harshly of my intelligence than I should like; besides, you would certainly misinterpret my meaning. Tell me, therefore, in the common course of such changes as my disease involves, can I live a year? You shake your head! Be it so. Six months?—Three, then?—Have I three? The winter, you say, is to be feared. I know it. Well, then, shall I own that my convictions anticipate you at each negative? I feel I have not a month—nay, not half of one—a week will do it, doctor; and now excuse scant ceremony, and leave me."

Alone—friendless—homeless—ruined, and dying! Sad words to write, each of them; sadder when thus brought in brotherhood together. The world and its pageants are passing fast by me, like the eddies of that stream which flows beneath my window. I catch but one glimpse and they are gone, beneath the dark bridge of Death, to mingle in the vast ocean of Eternity.

How strange to see the whole business of the world going on, the moving multitude, the tumult of active minds and bodies,—at the very moment when the creeping chill of ebbing life tells of days and hours numbered!

I am alone—not one to sit by me to combat thoughts that with the faintest help I could resist, but which unaided are too strong for me. In this window-seat where now I rest, who shall sit this day week? The youth, perhaps, in gushing pride of heart and buoyancy, now entering upon life, ardent and high-souled—or the young bride, gazing on that same river that now I watch, and reading in its circles wreathed smiles of happy promise. Oh, may no memories of him, whose tears fall fast now, haunt the spot and throw their gloom on others!

I am friendless—and yet, which of those I still call friends would I now wish beside me. To drink of the cup of consolation? I must first offer my own of misery—nay, it is better to endure alone!

Homeless am I, too—and this, indeed, I feel bitterly. Old familiar objects, associated with ties of affection, bound up with memories of friends, are meet companions for the twilight hours of life. I long to be back in my own chosen room—the little library, looking out on the avenue of old beeches leading to the lake, and the village spire rising amid the dark yew-trees. There was a spot there, too, I had often fancied—when I close my eyes I think I see it still—a little declivity of the ground beneath a large old elm, where a single tomb stood

surrounded by an iron railing; one side was in decay, and through which I often passed to read the simple inscription—"Courtenay Temple-ton, Armiger, acetates 22."

This was not the family burying-place—why he was laid there was a family mystery. His death was attributed to suicide, nor was his memory ever totally cleared of the guilt. The event was briefly this:—On the eve of the great battle of Fontenot he received an insult from an officer of a Scotch regiment, which ended in a duel. The Scotchman fell dead at the first fire. Templeton was immediately arrested; and instead of leading an attack, as he had been appointed to do, spent the hours of the battle in a prison. The next morning he was discovered dead; a great quantity of blood had flowed from his mouth and nose, which, although no external wound was found, suggested an idea of self-destruction. None suspected, what I have often heard since from medical men, that a rupture of the aorta from excessive emotion—a broken heart, in fact—had killed him: a death more frequently occurring than is usually believed.

"Ruined and dying" are the last words in my record; and yet neither desirous of fortune nor life! At least, so faint is my hope that I should use either with higher purpose than I have done, that all wish is extinguished.

Seriously I believe, that love of life is less general than the habit of projecting schemes for the future—a vague system of castle-building, which even the least speculative practices; and that death is thus accounted the great evil, as suddenly interrupting a chain of events whose series is still imperfect. The very humblest peasant that rises to daily toil has his gaze fixed on some future, some period of rest or repose, some hour of freedom from his lifelong struggle. Now, I have exhausted this source; the well, that once bubbled with eddying fancies of days to come, is dry. High spirits, health, and the buoyancy that result from both, when joined to a disposition keenly alive to enjoyment, and yet neither cloyed by excess nor depraved by corrupt tastes, will always go far to simulate a degree of ability. The very freedom a mind thus constituted enjoys is a species of power; and its liberty exaggerates its range, just as the untrammelled paces of the young colt seem infinitely more graceful and noble than the matured regularity of the trained and bitted steed.

It was thus that I set out in life—ardent, hopeful, and enthusiastic: if my mental resources were small, they were always ready at hand, like, a banker with a weak capital, but who could pay every trifling demand on the spot, I lived upon credit; and upon that credit I grew rich. Had I gone on freely as I began, I might still enjoy the fame of wealth and solvency, but with the

reputation of affluence came the wish to be rich. I contracted my issues, I husbanded my resources, and from that hour I became suspected. To avoid a "run" for gold, I ceased to trade and retired. This, in a few words, is the whole history of my life.

Gilbert comes to say that the carriage is waiting to convey me to the villa—our luggage is already there. Be it so: still I must own to myself, that going to occupy a palace for the last few hours of life and fortune is very much like good Christopher Sky’s dream of Lordliness.

CHAPTER X. SOME REVERIES ABOUT PLACES.

What would the old school of Diplomatists have said if they saw their secret wiles and machinations exposed to publicity, as is now the fashion? When any "honorable and learned gentleman" can call for "copies of the correspondence between our Minister at the Court of———— and the noble Secretary for the Foreign Department;" and when the "Times" can, in a leader, rip up all the flaws of a treaty, or expose all the dark intentions of some special compact? The Diplomatic "Holy of Holies" is now open to the vulgar gaze, and all the mysteries of the craft as commonplace as the transactions of a Poor-law Union.

Much of the "prestige" of this secrecy died out on the establishment of railroads. The Courier who travelled formerly with breathless haste from Moscow to London, or from the remotest cities of the far East, to our little Isle of the West, was sure to bring intelligence several days earlier than it could reach by any other channel. The gold greyhound, embroidered on his arm, was no exaggerated emblem of his speed; but now, his prerogative over, he journeys in "a first-class carriage" with some fifty others, who arrive along with him. Old age and infancy, sickness and debility, are no disqualifications—the race is open to all—and the tidings brought by "our messenger" are not a particle later, and rarely so full, as those given forth in the columns of a leading journal.

How impossible to affect any mysterious silence before the "House!"—how vain to attempt any knowledge from exclusive sources! "The ordinary channels of information," to use Sir Robert's periphrasis, are the extraordinary ones too; and not only do they contain whatever Ministers know, but very often "something more."

Time was when the Minister, or even the Secretary at a Foreign Court, appeared in society as a kind of casqued of state secrets,—when his mysterious whispers, his very gestures, were things to speculate on, and a grave motion of his eyebrows could make "Consoles" tremble, and throw the "Threes" into a panic. Now the question is, Have you seen the City article in the "Times?" What does the "Chronicle" say? No doubt this is a tremendous power, and very possibly the enjoyment of it, such as we have it in England, is the highest element of a pure democracy. Political information of a very high order establishes a species of education, which is the safest check upon the dangers of private judgment, and hence it is fair to hope that we possess a sounder and more healthy public opinion in England than in any of the states of the

Continent. At least it would not be too much to infer, that we would be less accessible to those sudden convulsions, those violent "coups de main" by which Governments are overturned abroad; and that the general diffusion of new notions on political subjects, and the daily reference to such able expositors as our newspaper press contains, are strong safeguards against the seductive promises of mob-leaders and liberty-mongers.

In France, a Government is always at the mercy of any one bold enough to lead the assault. The attempt may seem often a "forlorn hope"—it rarely is so in reality. The love of vagrancy is not so inherent in the Yankee as is the destructive passion in the Frenchman's heart; but it is there, less from any pleasure in demolition than in the opportunity thus. offered for reconstruction. Mirabeau, Rousseau, Fournier, La Mena's, are the social architects of French predilection, and many a clearance has been made to begin the edifice, and many have perished in laying the foundations, which never rose above the earth, but which ere long we may again witness undertaken with new and bolder hands than ever.

Events that once took centuries for their accomplishment, are now the work of days or weeks. Steam seems to have communicated its impetuosity to mind as well as matter, and ere many years pass over how few of the traces of Old Europe will remain, as our fathers knew them?

I have scarcely entered a foreign city, for the last few years, without detecting the rapid working of those changes. Old families sinking into decay and neglect—time-honored titles regarded as things that "once were." Their very homes, the palaces, associated with incidents of deep historic interests, converted into hotels or "Pensioners."

The very last time I strolled through Paris, I loitered to the "Quartier" which, in my young ambition, I regarded with all the reverence the pilgrim yields to Mecca. I remembered the first "soirée" in which I was presented, having dined at the Embassy, and being taken in the evening, by the Ambassador, that I might be introduced to the Machiavelli of his craft, Prince Talleyrand. Even yet I feel the hot blush which mantled in my cheek as I was passing, with very scant ceremony, the round-shouldered little old man who stood in the very doorway, his wide black coat, far too large for his figure, and his white hair, trimly brushed back from his massive temples.

It did not need the warning voice of my introducer, hastily calling my name, to make my sense of shame a perfect agony. "Monsieur Templeton, Monsieur le

Prince," said the Ambassador; "the young gentleman of whom I spoke;" and he added, in a tone inaudible to me, something about my career and some mention of my relatives.

"Oh, yes!" said the Prince, smiling graciously, "I am aware how 'connation,' as you call it, operates in England; but permit me, Monsieur," said he, turning towards me, "to give one small piece of advice. It is this: 'If you can win by cards never score the honors.'" The precept had little influence on himself, however. No man ever paid greater deference to the distinctions of rank, or conceded more to the prestige of an ancient name. Neither a general, an orator, nor an author—not even the leader of a faction—this astonishing man stood alone, in the resources of his fertile intellect, directing events, which he appeared to follow, and availing himself of resources which he had stored up for emergency; but so artfully, that they seemed to arise out of the natural current of events. Never disconcerted or abashed—not once thrown off his balance—not more calmly dignified when he stood beside Napoleon at Erfurt, then master of Europe itself, than he was at the Congress of Vienna, when the defeat of France had placed her at the mercy of her enemies.

It was in this same house, in the Rue Saint Florentine, that the Emperor Alexander lived when the Allies entered Paris, on the last day of March, 1814. His Majesty occupied the first floor; M. de Talleyrand, the red de chausses. He was then no more than ex-Minister for Foreign Affairs; neither empowered by the Bourbons to treat for the Restoration, nor by the nation for the conditions of a government—he was merely "one among the conquered;" and yet to this man all eyes were turned instinctively, as to one who possessed the secret of the future. That red de chausses was besieged with visitors from morning till night; and even when, according to the custom of the French, he made his lengthened toilette, his dressing-room was filled by all the foreign ministers of the conquering monarchs, and Nesselrode and Metternich waited at these daily levees. In all these discussions M. de Talleyrand took the lead, with the same ease and the same "aplomb" discussing kings to make and kingdoms to dismember, as though the clank of the muskets, which now and then interrupted their colloquy, came from the Imperial Guard of Napoleon, and not the Cossacks of the Don and the Uhland of the Danube, who crowded the stairs and the avenues, and bivouacked in the court.

Here the Restoration was decided upon, and Talleyrand himself it was who decided it. The Emperor Alexander opposed it strongly at first, alleging that the old spirit and the old antipathies would all return with the elder Bourbons, and

suggesting the Duck d'Orléans as king. Talleyrand, however, overruled the objection, asserting that no new agent must be had recourse to for governing at such a juncture, and that one usurpation could not be succeeded by another. It is said that when the news reached Vienna, in 1815, that Napoleon had landed from Elba, the Emperor Alexander came hurriedly over to where Talleyrand was sitting, and informing him what had occurred, said, "I told you before your plan would be a failure!" "Mays queue faire?" coolly retorted the calm diplomat; "of two evil courses it was the better—I never said more of it. Had you proclaimed the King of Rome, you had been merely maintaining the power of Napoleon under another name. You cannot establish the government of a great nation upon a half-measure. Besides that, Legitimacy, whatever its faults, was the only Principle that could prove to Europe at large that France and Napoleon were parted for ever; and, after so many bartering's of crowns and truckling's of kingdoms, it was a fine opportunity of showing that there was still something—whether it be or be not by right divine—which was superior to sabras and muskets, generals and armies."

It was the sanctity of right—whether of kings, people, or individuals—which embodied Talleyrand's conception of the Restoration; and this it was which he so admirably expressed when arriving at the Congress of Vienna, the ambassador of a nation without wealth or army. "Je veins" said he to the assembled Kings and Ministers of conquering Europe—"Je veins et je vows approve plus queue vows naves,—Je vows approve life du droid!" This was happily expressed; but no one more than he knew how to epigrammatize a whole volume of thought. In private life, the charm of his manner was the most perfect thing imaginable: his consciousness of rank and ancient family divested him of all pretension whatever, and the idea of entering the lists with any one never occurred to his mind. Willingly availing himself of the talents of others, and their pens upon occasion, he never felt any embittering jealousy. Approachable by all, his unaffected demeanor was as likely to strike the passing observer as the rich stores of his intellect would have excited the admiration of a more reflecting one. Such was he who has passed away from amongst us—perhaps the very last name of the eventful era he lived in which shall claim a great place in history!

A singular picture of human vicissitude is presented to us in the aspect of those places, but more particularly of those houses wherein great events have once occurred, but where times' change have brought new and very different associations. A very few years, in this eventful century we live in, will do this. The wonderful drama of the Empire sufficed to impress upon every city of

Europe some great and imposing reminiscence. A small, unpretending little house, beside the ducal park at Weimar, was Napoleon's resting-place for three days, when the whole world was at his feet! The little salon where his receptions were held at evening—and what receptions were they! the greatest Ministers and the most distinguished Generals of Europe!—scarcely more than an ordinary dressing-room in size, remains to this hour as he left it. One arm-chair, a little larger than the others, stands at the window, which always lay open. A table was placed upon the grass-plot outside, where several maps were laid. The salon itself was too small to admit it, and here from time to time the Emperor repaired, while with eagle glance and abrupt gesture he marked out the future limits of the continental kingdoms, creating and erasing monarchies, fashioning nations and people, in all the proud willfulness of Omnipotence! And now, while thinking of the Emperor, let me bring to mind another local association.

In the handsomest part of the Chausses daunting, surrounded on every side by the splendid palaces and gorgeous mansions of the wealthiest inhabitants of Paris, stands a small, isolated, modest edifice, more like a Roman villa than the house of some northern capital, in the midst of a park; one of those pleasure-grounds which the French—Heaven knows why—designate as "Jar din Anglia's." The outer gate opens on the Rue Chantereine, and here to this hour you may trace, among the time-worn and dilapidated ornaments, some remnants of the strange figures which once decorated the pediment: weapons of various ages and countries, grouped together with sphinxes and Egyptian emblems; the faint outlines of pyramids, the peaceful-looking ibis, are there, among the helmets and cuirasses, the massive swords and the death-dealing arms of our modern warfare. In the midst of all, the number 52 stands encircled with a little garland of leaves; but even they are scarce distinguishable now, and the number itself requires the aid of faith to detect it.

Within, the place speaks of neglect and decay; the shrubs are broken and uncared-for; the parterres are weed-grown; a few marble pedestals rise amid the rank grass, to mark where statues once stood, but no other trace of them remains: the very fountain itself is fissured and broken, and the water has worn its channel along the herbage, and ripples on its wayward course unrestrained. The villa is almost a ruin, the sashes have fallen in in many places; the roof, too, has given way, and fragments of the mirrors which once decorated the walls lie strewn upon the floor with pieces of rare marble. Wherever the eye turns, some emblem of the taste of its former occupant meets you. Some fresco, Stained with damp, and green with mildew; some rustic

bench, beneath a spreading tree, where the view opens more boldly; but all are decayed. The inlaid floors are rotting; the stuccoes ceilings, the richly-carved architraves, fall in fragments as your footsteps move; and the doomed walls themselves seem scarce able to resist the rude blast whose wailing cadence steals along them.

Oh, how tenfold more powerfully are the memories of the dead preserved by the scenes they habited while in life, than by the tombs and epitaphs that cover their ashes! How do the lessons of one speak home to the heart, calling up again, before the mind's eye, the very images themselves! not investing them with attributes our reason coldly rejects.

I know not the reason that this villa has been suffered thus to lapse into utter ruin, in the richest quarter of so splendid a city. I believe some long-contested litigation had its share in the causes. My present business is rather with its past fortunes; and to them I will now return.

It was on a cold dark morning of November, in the year 1799, that the street we have just mentioned, then called the Rue de la Victoria, became crowded with equipages and horsemen; cavalcades of generals and their staffs, in full uniform, arrived and were admitted within the massive gateway, before which, now, groups of curious and inquiring gazers were assembled, questioning and guessing as to the unusual spectacle. The number of led horses that paraded the street, the long lines of carriages on either side, nearly filled the way; still there reigned a strange, unaccountable stillness, among the crowd, who, as if appalled by the very mystery of the scene, repressed their ordinary tumult, and waited anxiously to watch the result.

Among the most interested spectators were the inhabitants of the neighboring houses, who saw, for the first time in their lives, their quiet quarter the scene of such excitement. Every window was filled with faces, all turned towards that portal which so seldom was seen to open in general; for they who dwelt there had been more remarkable for the retirement and privacy of their habits than for aught else.

At each arrival the crowd separated to permit the equipage to approach the gate; and then might be heard the low murmur—for it was no louder—of "Ha! that's LaSalle. See the mark of the sabre wound on his cheek!" Or, "Here comes Anger au! You'd never think that handsome fellow, with the soft eye, could be such a tiger." "Place there! place for Colonel Savory!" "Ah, dark Savory! we all know him."

Stirring as was the scene without, it was far inferior to the excitement that prevailed within the walls. There, every path and avenue that led to the villa were thronged with military men, walking or standing together in groups, conversing eagerly, and with anxious looks, but cautiously withal, and as though half fearing to be overheard.

Through the windows of the villa might be seen servants passing and reposing in haste, arranging the preparations for a magnificent jejune—for on that morning the generals of division and the principal military men in Paris were invited to breakfast with one of their most distinguished companions—General Bonaparte.

Since his return from Egypt, Bonaparte had been living a life of apparent privacy and estrangement from all public affairs. The circumstances under which he had quitted the army under his command—the unauthorized mode of his entry into France, without recall, without even permission—had caused his friends considerable uneasiness on his behalf, and nothing short of the unobtrusive and simple habits he maintained had probably saved him from being called on to account for his conduct.

They, however, who themselves were pursuing the career of ambition, were better satisfied to see him thus, than hazard anything by so bold an expedient. They believed that he was only great at the head of his legions; and they felt a triumphant pleasure at the obscurity into which the victor of Lodi and the Pyramids had fallen when measured with themselves. They witnessed, then, with sincere satisfaction, the seeming indolence of his present life. They watched him in those soirées which Madame Bonaparte gave, enjoying his repose with such thorough delight—those delightful evenings, the most brilliant for all that wit, intellect, and beauty can bestow; which Talleyrand and Sieyes, Douche, Carnot, Leerier, and a host of others frequented; and they dreamed that his hour of ambition was over, and that he had fallen into the inglorious indolence of the retired soldier.

While the greater number of the guests strolled listlessly through the little park, a small group sat in the vestibule of the villa, whose looks of impatience were ever turned towards the door from which their host was expected to enter. One of those was a tall, slight man, with a high but narrow forehead, dark eyes, deeply buried in his head, and overshadowed by long, heavy lashes; his face was pale, and evinced evident signs of uneasiness, as he listened, without ever speaking, to those about him. This was General Moreau. He was dressed in the uniform of a General of the day: the broad-skirted embroidered coat, the

half-boot, the embroidered tricolor scarf, and a chapeau with a deep feather trimming—a simple, but a handsome costume, and which well became his well-formed figure. Beside him sat a large, powerfully-built man, whose long black hair, descending in loose curls on his neck and back, as well as the jet-black brilliancy of his eye and deep olive complexion, bespoke a native of the South. Though his dress was like Moreau's, there was a careless jauntiness in his air, and a reckless "abandon" in his manner, that gave the costume a character totally different. The very negligence of his scarf-knot was a type of himself; and his thickly-uttered French, interspersed here and there with Italian phrases, showed that Murat cared little to cull his words. At his left was a hard-featured, stern-looking man, in the uniform of the Dragoons—this was Andrassy; and opposite, and leaning on a sofa, was General Lanes. He was pale and sickly; he had risen from a bed of illness to be present, and lay with half-closed lids, neither noticing nor taking interest in what went on about him.

At the window stood Marmont, conversing with a slight but handsome youth, in the uniform of the Chasseurs. Eugene Beauharnais was then but twenty-two, but even at that early age displayed the soldier-like ardor which so eminently distinguished him in after-life.

At length the door of the salon opened, and Bonaparte, dressed in the style of the period, appeared; his cheeks were sunk and thin; his hair, long, flat, and silky, hung straight down at either side of his pale and handsome face, in which now one faint tinge of color marked either cheek. He saluted the rest with a warm shake of the hand, and then stooping down, said to Murat:—

"But Bernadotte—where is he?"

"Yonder," said Murat, carelessly pointing to a group outside the terrace, where a tall, fine-looking man, dressed in plain clothes, and without any indication of the soldier in his costume, stood in the midst of a knot of officers.

"Ha! General," said Napoleon, advancing towards him; "you are not in uniform. How comes this?"

"I am not on service," was the cold reply.

"No, but you soon shall be," said Bonaparte, with an effort at cordiality of manner.

"I do not anticipate it," rejoined Bernadotte, with an expression at once firm and menacing.

Bonaparte drew him to one side gently, and while he placed his arm within his, spoke to him with eagerness and energy for several minutes; but a cold shake of the head, without one word in reply, was all that he could obtain.

"What!" exclaimed Bonaparte, aloud, so that even the others heard him—"what! are you not convinced of it? Will not this Directory annihilate the Revolution? have we a moment to lose? The Council of Ancients are met to appoint me Commander-in-chief of the Army;—go, put on your uniform, and join me at once."

"I will not join a rebellion," was the insolent reply.

Bonaparte shrunk back and dropped his arm, then rallying in a moment, added,—

"Tic well; you'll at least remain here until the decree of the Council is issued."

"Am I, then, a prisoner?" said Bernadotte, with a loud voice.

"No, no; there is no question of that kind: but pledge me your honor to undertake nothing adverse to me in this affair."

"As a mere citizen, I will not do so," replied the other; "but if I am ordered by a sufficient authority, I warn you."

"What do you mean, then, as a mere citizen!"

"That I will not go forth into the streets, to stir up the populace; nor into the barracks, to harangue the soldiers."

"Enough; I am satisfied. As for myself, I only desire to rescue the Republic; that done, I shall retire to Malison, and live peaceably."

A smile of a doubtful, but sardonic character, passed over Bernadotte's features as he heard these words, while he turned coldly away, and walked towards the gate. "What, Augural! thou here?" said he, as he passed along, and with a contemptuous shrug he moved forward, and soon gained the street. And truly, it seemed strange that he, the fiercest of the Jacobins, the General who made his army assemble in clubs and knots to deliberate during the campaign of Italy, that he should now lend himself to uphold the power of Bonaparte!

Meanwhile, the salons were crowded in every part, party succeeding party at the tables; where, amid the clattering of the breakfast and the clinking of

glasses, the conversation swelled into a loud and continued din. Douche, Breathier, and Talleyrand, were also to be seen, distinguishable by their dress, among the military uniforms; and here now might be heard the mingled doubts and fears, the hopes and dreams of each, as to the coming events; and many watched the pale, care-worn face of Burien, the secretary of Bonaparte, as if to read in his features the chances of success; while the General himself went from room to room, chatting confidentially with each in turn, recapitulating as he went the phrase, "The country is in danger!" and exhorting all to be patient, and wait calmly for the decision of the Council, which could not, now, be long of coming.

As they were still at table, M. Carnet, the deputation of the Council, entered, and delivered into Bonaparte's hands the sealed packet, from which he announced to the assembly that the legislative bodies had been removed to St. Cloud, to avoid the interruption of popular clamor, and that he, General Bonaparte, was named Commander-in-chief of the Army, and entrusted with the execution of the decree.

This first step had been effected by the skillful agency of Sieyes and Roger Ducoes, who spent the whole of the preceding night in issuing the summonses for a meeting of the Council to such as they knew to be friendly to the cause they advocated. All the others received theirs too late; forty-two only were present at the meeting, and by that fragment of the Council the decree was passed.

When Bonaparte had read the document to the end, he looked around him on the fierce, determined faces, bronzed and seared in many a battle-field, and said, "My brothers in arms, will you stand by me here?"

"We will! we will!" shouted they, with one roar of enthusiasm.

"And thou, Lefebvre, did I hear thy voice there?"

"Yes, General; to the death I'm yours."

Bonaparte unbuckled the sabre he wore at his side, and placing it in Lefebvre's hands, said, "I wore this at the Pyramids; it is a fitting present from one soldier to another. Now, then, to horse!"

The splendid cortège moved along the grassy alleys to the gate, outside which, now, three regiments of cavalry and three battalions of the 17th were drawn up. Never was a Sovereign, in all his pride of power, surrounded with a more

gorgeous staff. The conquerors of Italy, Germany, and Egypt, the greatest warriors of Europe, were there grouped around him—whose glorious star, even then, shone bright above him.

Scarcely had Bonaparte issued forth into the street than, raising his hat above his head, he called aloud, "Vive la République!" The troops caught up the cry, and the air rang with the wild cheers.

At the head of this force, surrounded by the Generals, he rode slowly along towards the Toiletries, at the entrance to the gardens of which stood Carnet, dressed in his robe of senator-in-waiting, to receive him. Four Colonels, his aides-de-camp, marched in front of Bonaparte, as he entered the Hall of the Ancients—his walk was slow and measured, and his air studiously respectful.

The decree being read, General Bonaparte replied in a few broken phrases, expressive of his sense of the confidence reposed in him: the words came with difficulty, and he spoke like one abashed and confused. He was no longer in front of his armed legions, whose war-worn looks inspired the burning eloquence of the camp—those flashing images, those daring flights, suited not the cold assembly, in whose presence he now stood—and he was ill at ease and disconcerted. It was only, at length, when turning to the Generals who pressed on after him, he addressed the following words, that his confidence in himself came back, and that he felt himself once more,—

"This is the Republic we desire to have—and this we shall have; for it is the wish of those who now stand around me."

The cries of "Vive la République!" burst from the officers at once, as they waved their chapeaux in the air, mingled with louder shouts of "Vive le General!"

If the great events of the day were now over with the Council, they had only begun with Bonaparte.

"Whither now, General?" said Lefebvre, as he rode to his side.

"To the guillotine, I suppose," said Andrassy, with a look of sarcasm.

"We shall see that," was the cold answer of Bonaparte, while he gave the word to push forward to the Luxembourg.

This was but the prologue, and now began the great drama, the greatest, whether for its interest or its actors—that ever the world has been called to witness.

We all know the sequel, if sequel that can be called which our own days would imply is but the prologue of the piece!

CHAPTER XI. Villa Salivate, near Florence

I have had a night of ghostly dreams and horrors; the imagination of Monk Lewis, or, worse, of Hoffman himself, never conceived anything so diabolical. H., who visited me last evening, by way of interesting me related the incidents of a dreadful murder enacted in the very room I slept in. There was a reality given to the narrative by the presence of the scene itself—the ancient hangings still on the walls—the antique chairs and cabinets standing, as they had done, when the deed of blood took place; but, more than all, by the marble bust of the murderess herself: for it was a woman, singularly beautiful, young, and of the highest rank, who enacted it. The story is this:—

The Villa, which originally was in possession of the Medici family, and subsequently of the Strozzi's, was afterwards purchased by Count Juliana, one of the most distinguished of the Florentine nobility.

With every personal advantage—youth, high station, and immense wealth, he was married to one his equal in every respect, and might thus have seemed an exception to the lot of humanity, his life realizing, as it were, every possible element of happiness. Still he was not happy; amid all the voluptuous enjoyments of a life passed in successive pleasures, the clouded brow and drooping eye told that some secret sorrow preyed upon him, and that his gay doublet in all its bravery covered a sad and sorrowing heart. His depression was generally attributed to the fact that, although now married three years, no child had been born to their union, or any likelihood that he should leave an heir to his great name and fortune. Not even to his nearest friends, however, did any confession admit this cause of sorrow; nor to the Countess, when herself lamenting over her childless lot, did he seem to show any participation in the grief.

The love of solitude, the desire to escape from all society, and pass hours, almost days, alone in a tower, the only admittance to which was by a stair from his own chamber, had now grown upon him to that extent, that his absence was regarded as a common occurrence by the guests of the castle, nor even excited a passing notice from any one. If others ceased to speculate on the Count's sorrow, and the daily aversion he exhibited to mixing with the world, the Countess grew more and more eager to discover the source. All her blandishments to win his secret from him were, however, in vain; vague answers, evasive replies, or direct refusals to be interrogated, were all that she met with, and the subject was at length abandoned,—at least by these means.

Accident, however, disclosed what all her artifice had failed in—the key of the secret passage to the tower, and which the Count never entrusted to any one, fell from his pocket one day, when riding from the door; the Countess eagerly seized it, and guessing at once to what it belonged, hastened to the Count's chamber.

The surmise was soon found to be correct; in a few moments she had entered the winding stairs, passing up which, she reached a small octagon chamber at the summit of the tower. Scarcely had her eager eyes been thrown around the room, when they fell upon a little bed, almost concealed beneath a heavy canopy of silk, gorgeously embroidered with the Count's armorial bearings. Drawing rudely aside the hangings, she beheld the sleeping figure of a little boy, who, even in his infantine features, recalled the handsome traits of her husband's face. The child started and awoke with the noise, and looking wildly up, cried out, "Papa;" and then suddenly changing his utterance, said, "Mamma." Almost immediately, however, discovering his error, he searched with anxious eyes around the chamber for those he was wont to see beside him.

"Who are you?" said the Countess, in a voice that trembled with the most terrible conflict of terror and jealousy, excited to the verge of madness. "Who are you?"

"Il Conte Juliana," said the child, haughtily; and showing at the same time a little medallion of gold embroidered on his coat, and displaying the family arms of the Julian’s.

"Come with me, then, and, see your father's castle," said the Countess; and she lifted him from the bed, and led him down the steps of the steep stairs into, her husband's chamber.

It was the custom of the period, that the lady, no matter how exalted her rank, should with her own hands arrange the linen which composed her husband's toilet, and this service was never permitted to be discharged by any less exalted member of the household. When the Count returned, toward night-fall, he hastened to his room—an invitation, or command, to dine at the Court that day compelling him to dress with all speed. He asked for the Countess as he passed up the stairs, but paid no attention to the reply, for as he entered his chamber he found she had already performed the accustomed office, and that the silver basket, with its snow-white contents, lay ready to his hand. With eager haste he proceeded to dress, and took up the embroidered shirt before him. When,

horror of horrors! there lay beneath it the head of his child, severed from the body, still warm and bleeding—the dark eyes glaring as if with but half-extinguished life, the lips parted as if yet breathing! One cry of shrill and shrieking madness was heard through every vaulted chamber of that vast castle; the echoes were still ringing with it as the maddened father tore wildly from chamber to chamber in search of the murderess. She had quitted the castle on horseback two hours before. Mounting his swiftest horse he followed her from castle to castle; the dreadful chase continued through the night and the next day; a few hours of terrible slumber refreshed him again to pursue her; and thus he wandered over the Apennines and the vast plain beyond them, days, weeks, months long, till in a wild conflict of his baffled vengeance and insanity he died! She was never heard of more!

Such is the horrid story of the chamber in which I sit; her bust, that of a lovely and gentle girl, fast entering into womanhood, is now before me; the forehead and the brows are singularly fine; the mouth alone reveals anything of the terrible nature within; the lips are firm and compressed—the under one drawn slightly—very slightly—backward. The head itself is low, and, for the comfort of phrenologists, sadly deficient in "veneration." The whole character of the face is, however, beautiful, and of a classic order. It is horrible to connect the identity with a tale of blood.

With this terrible tragedy still dwelling on my mind, and the features of her who enacted it, I fell asleep. The room in which I lay had witnessed the deed. The low portal in the corner, concealed behind the arras, led to the stairs of the tower; the deep window in the massive wall looked out upon the swelling landscape over which she fled, and he, in mad fury, pursued her: these, were enough to seize and hold the mind, and, blending the actual with the past, to make up a vision of palpable reality. Oftentimes did I start from sleep. Now, it was the fancy of a foot upon the tower stair; now, a child's fairy step upon the terrace overhead; now, I heard, in imagination, the one, wild, fearful cry, uttered as if the reeling senses could endure no more! At last I found it better to rise and sit by the window, so overwrought and excited had my brain become. Day was breaking, not in the cold grey of a northern dawn, but in a rich glow of violet-cultured light, which, warmer on the mountain-tops, gradually merged into a faint pinkish hue upon the lesser hills, and became still fainter in the valleys and over the city itself. A light, gauzy mist, tracked out in the air the course of the Arno; but so frail was this curtain, that the sun's rays were already rending and scattering its fragments, giving through the breaches bright peeps of villas, churches, and villages on the mountain

sides: the great dome, too, rose up in solemn grandeur; and the tall tower of Santa Croce stood, sentinel like, over the sleeping city. Already the low sounds of labor, awakening to its daily call, were heard; the distant rumbling of the heavy wagon, the crashing noise of branches, as the olive-trees beside the road brushed against the lumbering teams; and, further off, the cheering voices of the boatmen, whose fast barks were hurrying along the rapid Arno;—all pleasant sounds, for they spoke of life and movement, of active minds and laboring hands, the only bulwarks against the corroding thoughts that eat into the sluggish soul of indolence.

For this fair scene—these fresh and balmy odors—this brilliant blending of blue sky and rosy earth, I could unsay all that I have said of Florence, and own, that it is beautiful! I could wish to sit here many mornings to come, and enjoy this prospect as now I do. Vain thought! as if I could follow my mind to the contemplation of the fair scene, and so rove away in fancy to all that I have dreamed of, have loved and cared for, have trusted and been deceived in!

I must be up and stirring—my time grows briefer. This hand, whose blue veins stand out like knotted cordage, is fearfully attenuated; another day or two, perhaps, the pen will be too much fatigue; and I have still "Good-by," to say to many—friends?—ay, the word will serve as well as another. I have letters to write—some to read over once again; some to burn without reading. This kind of occupation—this "setting one's house in order," for the last time—is like a rapid survey taken of a whole life, a species of overture, in which fragments of every air of the piece enter, the gay and cheerful succeeded by the sad and plaintive, so fast as almost to blend the tones together; and is not this mingled strain the very chord that sounds through human life?

Here, then, for my letter-box. What have we here?—a letter from the Marquis of D———, when he believed himself high in ministerial favor, and in a position to confer praise or censure:—

"Carlton Club.

"Dear Tempe,

"Your speech was admirable—first-rate; the quotation

from Horace, the neatest thing I ever heard; and

astonishing, because so palpably unpremeditated. Every one

I've met is delighted, and all say that, with courage and the resolve to succeed, the prize is your own. I go to Ireland, they say, or Paris. The latter if I can; the former if I must. In either case, will you promise to come with me? The assurance of this would be a very great relief to

"Yours, truly,

"D———."

What have we pinned to the back of this? Oh, a few lines in pencil from Sir C———S———, received, I see, the same evening.

"Dear T.,

"Sir H——— is not pleased with your speech, although he owns it was clever. The levity he disliked, because he will not give D——— any presence for continuing this system of personalities. The bit of Horace had been better omitted; Canning used the same lines once before, and the réchauffée—if it were such—was poor. The Marquis of D——— was twice at Downing Street, to say that he had 'crammed' you. This, of course, no one believes; but he takes the merit of your speech to himself, and claims high reward in consequence. He asks for an Embassy! This is what Lord L——— calls 'too bad.' Come over to-morrow before twelve o'clock

"Believe me yours,

"C——— S———."

Another of the same date:—

"Go in and win, old boy! You've made capital running, and for the start too—distanced the knowing ones, and no mistake! The odds are seven to four that you're in the Cabinet before the Derby day. I've taken equal fifties that Tramp wins the Good wood, and that you're in—double event. So look out sharp, and don't baulk "Yours ever,

"Frank Lushington."

A fourth, tied in the same piece of riband:—

"Wilson Crescent.

"Dear Friend,

"We have just heard of your success. Brilliant and fascinating as it must be, do not forget those who long to share your triumph. Come over here at once. We waited supper till two; and now we are sitting here, watching every carriage, and opening the window at every noise in the street. Come then, and quickly.

"Augusta Beverly."

And here is the last of the batch:—

"The D——— of B——— presents his compliments to Mr. Templeton, and begs to inform him that his ancestor was not

the Marquis of T——— who conducted the negotiations at Malaga;' neither were 'thirty thousand pounds voted by the last Parliament to the family by way of secret service for parliamentary support,' but in compensation for two patent offices abolished—Inspectorship of Gold Mines, and Ordnance Comptrollership. And, lastly, that 'Infamous speech,' so pathetically alluded to, was made at a private theatrical meeting at Lord Sudbury's in Kent, and not 'on the Hastings,' as Mr. T. has asserted."

So much for one event, and in itself a trivial one! Who shall say that any act of his life is capable of exciting even an approach to unanimous praise or censure? This speech, which on one side won me the adhesion of some half-dozen clubs, the praise of a large body of the Upper House, the softest words that the "beauty of the season" condescended to utter, brought me, on the other, the coldness of the Minister, the chilling civility of mock admiration, and lost me the friendship—in House of Commons parlance—of the leading member of the Government!

And here is a strange, square-shaped epistle, signed in the corner, "Martin Haverstock." This rough-looking note was my first step in Diplomacy! I was a very young attaché to the mission at Florence, when, on returning to England through Milan, I was robbed of my trunk, and with it of all the money I possessed for my journey. It was taken by a process very well known in Italy, being cut off from the back of the carriage, not improbably, with the concurrence of the driver. However that might be, I arrived at the "Angelo door" without a sou. Having ordered a room, I sat down by myself, hungry and penniless, not having a single acquaintance at Milan, nor the slightest idea how to act in the emergency. My very passport was gone, so that I had actually nothing to authenticate my position—not even my name.

I sent for the landlord, who, after a very cold interview, referred me to the Consul; but the Consul had on that very morning left the city for Verona, so that his aid was cut off. My last resource—my only one, indeed—was to write to

Florence for money, and wait for the answer. This was a delay of seven, possibly of eight, days, but it was unavoidable.

This done, I ordered supper—a very humble one too, and befitting the condition of one who had not wherewithal to pay for it. I remember still the sense of shame I felt as the waiter, on entering, looked around for my luggage, and saw neither trunk nor carpet-bag—not even a hat-box. I thought—nay, there could be no mistake about it, it was quite clear—he laid the table with a certain air of careless and noisy indifference that bespoke his contempt. The very bang of the door as he went out, was a whole narrative of my purse less state.

I had been very hungry when I ordered the meal. I had not tasted food for several hours, and yet now I could not eat a morsel; chagrin and shame had routed all appetite, and I sat looking at the table, and almost wondering why the dishes were there. I thought of all the kind friends far away, who would have been so delighted to assist me; who, at that very hour perhaps, were speaking of me affectionately; and yet I had not one near, even to speak a word of counsel, or say one syllable of encouragement. It was not, it may well be believed, the monies loss that afflicted me—the sum was neither large, nor did I care for it. It was the utter desolation, and the sense of dependence, that galled me—a feeling whose painful tortures, even temporary as they were, I cannot, at this hour, eradicate from my memory.

Had I been left enough to continue my journey in the very humblest way, on foot even, it would have been happiness compared with what I felt. I arose at last from the table, where the untested food still stood, and strolled out into the streets. I wandered about listlessly, not even feeling that amusement the newly seen objects of a great city almost always confer, and it was late when I turned back to the inn. As I entered, a man was standing talking with the master of the house, who, in his broken English, said, as I passed, "There he is!" I at once suspected that my sad adventure had been the subject of conversation, and hurried up the stairs to hide my shame. In my haste, however, I forgot my key at the porter's lodge, and was obliged to go back to fetch it. On doing so, I met on the stairs a large, coarse-looking man, with a florid face, and an air of rough but of simple good-nature in his countenance. "You are a countryman, I believe?" said he in English. "Well, I've just heard of what has happened to you. The rascals tried the same trick with me at Modena; but I had an iron chain around my trunk, and as they were baulked, and while they were rattling at it, I got a shot at one of them with a pistol—not to hurt the devil, for it was only duck-shot; not a bullet, you know. Where's your room?—is this it?"

I hesitated to reply, strange enough; though he showed that he was well aware of all my loss. I felt ashamed to show that I had no baggage, nor any thing belonging to me. He seemed to guess what passed in my mind, and said,—

"Bless your heart, sir, never mind me. I know the rogues have stripped you of all you had; but I want to talk to you about it, and see what is best to be done."

This gave me courage. I unlocked the door, and showed him in.

"I suspected how it was," said he, looking at the table, where the dishes stood untouched; "you could not eat by yourself, nor I either: so come along with me, and we'll have a bit of supper together, and chat over your business afterwards."

Perhaps I might have declined a more polished invitation; whether or not, it was of no use to refuse him, for he would not accept an excuse; and down we went to his chamber, and supped together. Unlike my slender meal, his was excellent, and the wine first-rate. He made me tell him about the loss of my trunk, twice over, I believe; and then he moralised a great deal about the rascality of the Continent generally, and Italy in particular, which, however, he remembered, could not be wondered at, seeing that three-fourths of the population of every rank did nothing but idle all day long. After that he inquired whether I had any pursuit myself; and although pleased when I said Yes, his gratification became sensibly diminished on learning the nature of the employment, "I may be wrong," said he, "but I have always taken it, that you diplomatic folk were little better than spies in gold-laced coats—fellows that were sent to pump sovereigns and bribe their ministers." I took a deal of pains, "for the honor of the line," to undeceive him; and, whether I perfectly succeeded or not, I certainly secured his favor towards myself, for, before we parted, it was all settled that I was to travel back with him to England, he having a carriage and a strong purse, and that he was to be my banker in all respects till I reached my friends.

As we journeyed along through France, where my knowledge of the language and the people seemed to give the greatest pleasure to my companion, he informed me that he was a farmer near Nottingham, and had come abroad to try and secure an inheritance bequeathed to him by a brother, who for several years had been partner in a great silk factory near Piacenza. In this he had only partly succeeded, the Government having thrown all possible obstructions in his way; still he was carrying back with him nearly twenty thousand pounds—a snug thing, as he said, for his little girl, for he was a widower with

an only child. Of Amy he would talk for hours—ay, days long! It was a theme of which he never wearied. According to him, she was a paragon of beauty and accomplishments. She had been for some time at a boarding-school at Brighton, and was the pride of the establishment. "Oh, if I could only show her to you!" said he. "But why couldn't I? what's to prevent it? When you get to England and see your friends, what difficulty would there be in coming down to Hadley for a week or two? If you like riding, the Duke himself at Raton Park has not two better bred ones in his stable than I have!" No need to multiply his arguments and inducements: I agreed to go, not only to, but actually with him—the frank good-nature of his character won on me at every moment, and, long before we arrived at Calais, I had conceived for him the strongest sentiments of affection.

From the moment he touched English ground his enthusiasm rose beyond all bounds; delighted to be once back again in his own country, and travelling the well-known road to his own home, he was elated like a schoolboy. It was never an easy thing for me to resist the infectious influence of any temperament near me, whether its mood was grave or gay, and I became as excited and overjoyed as himself; and I suppose that two exiles, returning from years of banishment, never gave themselves up to greater transports than did we at every stage of our journey. I cannot think of this without astonishment, for, in honest truth, I was all my life attached to the Continent—from my earliest experience I had preferred the habits and customs to our own, and yet, such was the easy and unyielding compliance of my nature, that I actually fancied that my Anglo-mania was as great as his own.

At last we reached Hadley, and drove up a fine, trimly-kept gravel avenue, through several meadows, to a long comfortable-looking farmhouse, at the door of which, in expectant delight, stood Amy herself. In the oft-renewed embraces she gave her father I had time to remark her well, and could see that she was a fine, blue-eyed, fair-haired, handsome girl—a very flattering specimen of that good Saxon stock we are so justly proud of; and if not all her father's partiality deemed as regarded ladylike air and style, she was perfectly free from anything like pretension or any affectation whatever. This was my first impression: subsequent acquaintance strengthened it. In fact, the Brighton boarding-school had done no mischief to her; she had not learned a great deal by her two years' residence, but she had not brought back any toadying subservience to the more nobly born, any depreciating sense of her former companions, or any contempt for the thatched farmhouse at Hadley and its honest owner.

If our daily life at the farm was very unvarying, it was exceedingly pleasurable; we rose early, and I accompanied Martin into the fields with the workmen, where we remained till breakfast. After which I usually betook myself to a little brook, where there was excellent fishing, and where, her household duties over, Amy joined me. We dined about two; and in the afternoon we—that is, Amy and myself—rode out together; and as we were admirably mounted, and she a capital horsewoman, usually took a scamper "cross country," whenever the fences were not too big and the turf inviting. Home to tea, and a walk afterwards through the green lanes and mossy paths of the neighborhood, filled the day; and however little exciting the catalogue of pursuits, when did I feel time pass so swiftly? Let me be honest and avow, that the position I enjoyed had its peculiar flattery. There was through all their friendship a kind of deferential respect—a sense of looking up to me, which I was young enough to be wonderfully taken by: and my experiences at Foreign Courts—which Heaven knows were few and meager enough—had elevated me in their eyes into something like Lord Whitworth or Lord Castlereagh; and I really believe, that all the pleasure my stories and descriptions afforded was inferior to the delight they experienced in seeing the narrator, and occasionally the actor, in the scenes described, their own guest at their own table.

It was while reveling in the fullest enjoyment of this pleasant life that I received a Foreign Office letter, in reply to an application I had made for promotion, rejecting my request, and coolly commanding my immediate return to Florence. These missives were not things to disobey, and it was in no very joyful mood I broke the tidings to my host.

"What's it worth?" said Martin, abruptly.

"Oh, in point of money," said I, "the appointments are poor things. It is only that there are some good prizes in the wheel, and, whether one is lucky enough to gain them or not, even Hope is something. My salary is not quite two hundred a-year!"

Martin gave a long, low whistle, and said,—

"Why, dang it! my poor brother George, that's gone, had six hundred when he went out as inspector over that silk factory! Two hundred a-year!" mused he; "and what do you get at your next promotion?"

"That is not quite certain. I might be named attaché at Vienna, which would, perhaps, give me one hundred more—or, if I had the good fortune to win the

Ministers favor, I might be made a Secretary at some small legation and have five hundred—that is, however, a piece of luck not to be thought of."

"Well, I'm sure," sighed Martin; "I'm no judge of these matters; but it strikes me that's very poor pay, and that a man like myself, who has his ten or twelve hundreds a-year—fifteen in good seasons—is better off than the great folk dining with kings or emperors."

"Of course you are," said I; "who doubts it? But we must all do something. England is not a country where idleness is honorable."

"Why not turn farmer?" said Martin, energetically; "you'd soon learn the craft, I've not met anyone this many a-year picks up the knowledge about it like yourself. You seem to like the life too."

"If you mean such as I live now, I delight in it."

"Do you, my dear boy?" cried he, grasping my hand, and squeezing it between both his own. "If so, then never leave us. You shall live with us—we'll take that great piece of land there near the high—I've had an eye on it for years back; there's a sheep run there as fine as any in Europe. I'll lay down the whole of those two fields into meadow, and keep the green crops to the back altogether. Such partridge-shooting we will have there yet. In winter, too, the Duke's hounds meet twice a-week. I've got such a strapping three-year-old—you haven't seen him, but he'll be a clipper. Well, don't say nay. You'll stay and marry Amy. I'll give her twenty thousand down, and leave you all I have afterwards."

This was poured forth in such a voluble strain, that an interruption was impossible; and at last, when over, the speaker stood with tearful eyes, gazing on me, as if on my reply his very existence was hanging.

Surprise and gratitude for the unbounded confidence he had shown in me were my first sensations, soon to be followed by a hundred other conflicting and jarring ones. I should shame—even now, after years have gone by—to own to some of these. Alas! our very natures are at the mercy of the ordinances we ourselves have framed; and the savage red man yields not more devotion to the idol he has carved, than do we to the fashion we have made our Deity! I thought of the Lady Georgians and Caroline’s of my acquaintance, and grew ashamed of Amy Haverstock! If I had loved, this I am sure would not have been the case, but I cannot acquit myself that principle and good feeling should not

have been sufficient without love! Whether from the length of time in which I remained without answering, or that in my confusion he read something adverse to his wishes, but Martin grew scarlet, and in a voice full of emotion said,—

"There, Mr. Templeton, enough said. I see it will not do—there's no need of explaining. I was a fool, that's all!"

"But will you not let me, at least, reflect?" "No, sir; not a second. If my offer was not as frankly taken as made—ay, and on the instant too—I am only the more ashamed for ever making it: but there's an end don't. If you would be as good friends parting with me as we have been hitherto, never speak of this again." And so saying, Martin turned on his heel and walked hastily away. I followed him after a second, but he waved me back with his hand, and I was forced to comply.

That day Amy and I dined alone together. Her father, she said, "had got a bad headache;" and this she said with such evident candor, it was clear she knew nothing of our interview. The dinner was to me, at least, a very constrained affair; nor were my sensations rendered easier as she said—"My father tells me that you are obliged to leave us this evening, Mr. Templeton. I'm very sorry for it; but I hope we'll meet soon again."

We did not meet soon again, or ever. I left the farm that night for London. Martin came to the door from his bed to wish me good-by. He looked very ill, and only spoke a few words. His shake-hands was, however, hearty; and his "God bless you," uttered with kind meaning.

I have never seen that neighborhood since.

It was about two years after that I received a letter—the very one now before me—super scribed Martin Haverstock. It was brief, and to this effect. The Secretary for Foreign Affairs being a candidate for the representation in Parliament of the county in which Martin held a large stake, had, in acknowledgment of his friend Mr. Haverstock's exertions in his support, been only too happy to consider the application made respecting Mr. H.'s young friend, who, by the next Gazette, would be announced for promotion.

And thus I was made Secretary of Legation at Stuttgart!

There was a postscript to Martin's letter, which filled me with strange and varying emotions:—-"Amy is sorry that her baby is a little girl; she'd like to have called it 'Horace.'"

This packet I need not open. The envelope is super scribed, "Hints and Memes for H.T. during his residence at the Court of M———." They were given in a series of letters from old Lord H———, who had long been a resident Minister there, and knew the people thoroughly. I followed, very implicitly too, the counsels he gave, and was said to have acquitted myself well, for I was "Chargé d'Affaires." But what absurdity it is to suppose that any exclusive information is ever obtainable by a Minister, except when the Government itself is disposed to afford it! I remember well, the spy we employed was also in the pay of the French Embassy. He was a Sardinian, and had spent some years of his life an Austrian prisoner in a fortress. We all believed, whatever the fellow's sentiments on other subjects, that he was a profound hater of Austria. Well, it turned out that he sold us all to Metternich.

Old Sir Robert W——— used to say to his attachés—"Never tell me secrets, but whenever anything is publicly discussed in the clubs and cafés, let me hear it." In the same way, he always rejected the authenticity of any revelations where Talleyrand, or Metternich, or Pizza di Borg's names appeared. "These men," he always used to say, "were their own confidants, and never leaked save to serve a purpose." It was from Sir Robert I heard a story first, which has since, I believe, been fully corroborated. An Under-secretary of Talleyrand, during the Prince's residence as French ambassador at St. James's, informed his Excellency one morning, that a very tempting offer had been made to him if he would disclose the contents of his master's writing-desk. He had not accepted, nor altogether declined the proposal, wishing to know from the Prince how it might be made available to his plans, and whether a direct accusation of the author, a person of high station, would be deemed advisable. Talleyrand merely said, "Take the money; the middle board of the drawer in my secretary is removable by a very simple contrivance, which I'll show you. I had it made so at Paris. You'll find all the papers you want there. Take copies of them."

"But, Monsieur le Prince——-"

"Pray make your mind at ease. I'll neither compromise myself nor you."

The Secretary obeyed; the bargain was perfected, and a supposed "secret correspondence between Talleyrand and Armin," deposited in Lord T———'s hands. About a week afterwards Lord T——— invited the Prince to pass some

days at his seat in Herefordshire, where a distinguished party was assembled. The Ambassador accepted; and they met like the most cordial of friends. When the period of the visit drew to its conclusion, they were walking one morning in the grounds together, engaged in a conversation of the most amicable candor, each vying with the other by the frankness and unreserved of his communications.

"Come now, Prince," said Lord T———, "we are, I rejoice to find, on terms which will permit any freedom. Tell me frankly, how do you stand with Prussia? Are there any understandings between you to which we must not be parties?"

"None whatever."

"You say this freely and without reserve?"

"Without the slightest reserve or qualification."

Lord T——— seemed overjoyed, and the discussion concluded. They dined that day together, and in the evening a large company was assembled to meet the Prince before his departure for London. As usual at T——— House, the party contained a great show of distinguished persons, political and literary. Among the subjects of conversation started was the question of how it happened that men of great literary distinction so rarely could shine as statesmen; and that even such as by their writings evinced a deep insight into political science, were scarcely ever found to combine practical habits of business with this great theoretical talent.

The discussion was amusing, because it was carried on by men who themselves occupied the highest walks in their respective careers.

To arrest a somewhat warm turn of the controversy, Lord T———, turning to the Prince, said, "I suppose, Monsieur le Prince, you have seldom been able to indulge in imaginative composition?"

"Pardon me, my Lord, I have from time to time dissipated a little in that respect; and, if I must confess it, with a very considerable degree of amusement."

The announcement, made with a most perfect air of candor, interested at once the whole company, who could not subdue their murmured expressions of surprise as to the theme selected by the great Diplomatist.

"I believe," said he, smiling, "I am in a position to gratify the present company; for, if I mistake not, I have actually with me at this moment a brief manuscript of my latest attempt in fiction. As I am a mere amateur, without the slightest pretension to skill or ability, I feel no reluctance at exposing my efforts to the kind criticism of friends. I only make one stipulation."

"Oh, pray, what is it? anything, of course, you desire!" was heard on every side.

"It is this. I read very badly, and I would request that T———, our kind host, would take upon him to read it aloud for us."

Lord T——— was only too much flattered by the proposal, and the Prince retired to fetch his papers, leaving the company amazed at the singularity of a scene which so little accorded with all they had ever heard of the deep and wily Minister; some of the shrewdest persons significantly observing, that the Prince was evidently verging on those years when vanity of every kind meets fewest obstacles to its display.

"Here are my papers, my Lord," said the Prince, entering with his manuscript. "I have only to hope that they may afford to the honorable company any portion of the amusement their composition has given me."

The party seated themselves round the room, and Lord T———, disposing the papers on the table before him, arranged the candles, and prepared to begin. "The title of the piece is missing," said he, after a pause.

"Oh, no, my Lord; you'll find it on the envelope," replied Talleyrand.

"Ah, very true; here it is!—'Secret Correspondence'———" Lord T——— stopped—his hands trembled—the blood left his face—and he leaned back in his chair almost fainting.

"You are not ill!—are you ill?" broke from many voices together.

"No; not in the least," said he, endeavoring to smile; "but the Prince has been practicing a bit of 'plaisanterie' on me, which I own has astounded me."

"Won't you read it, my Lord; or shall I explain?"

"Oh, Monsieur le Prince," said Lord T———, crushing the papers into his pocket, "I think you may be satisfied;" and with this, to the company, very

mysterious excuse, his Lordship abruptly retired; while Talleyrand almost immediately set out for London.

The nature of the mystification was not disclosed till long afterwards; and it is but justice to both parties to say, not by Talleyrand, but by Lord T——— himself.

With what facility men, whose whole daily life is artifice, can be imposed on, is a very remarkable feature in all these cases. The practice of deceit would actually appear to obstruct clear-sightedness and dull the ordinary exercise of common sense. Witness that poor Dutch ambassador Fabrics, who, a few years ago, was imposed on at Paris by Buffed, the comedian, representing himself to be the first Secretary of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and offering, for a sum of money, to confide to him the secret negotiations between M. Guizot and the Belgian Government! Fabrics, deceived by the great resemblance of Buffed to the person he represented, agreed, and actually wrote to the King of Holland a triumphant dispatch, announcing his own diplomatic dexterity. Every post saw a huge packet of letters to the King, containing various documents and papers; some assuming to be in the handwriting of Guizot—some, of Nothomb—some, of the Duke of Wellington—and two or three of King Leopold himself. The task of undeceiving the unhappy dupe was taken by his Majesty Louis Philippe, who having, at an evening reception at Neuilly, exposed his attempted corruption, coolly turned his back and refused to receive him.

Another dive into this chaotic mass of reminiscence! A letter from poor Granthorpe, whose sad suicide remains the unexplained and unexplainable mystery of all who knew him. A man whose mind was remarkable for its being so deeply imbued with sentiments of religious truth—whose whole life was, so to say, devotional—is found dead, the act being by his own hand! No circumstance of domestic calamity, no pecuniary difficulty, not even a passing derangement of health, to account for the terrible event. Here is his note; we were but new acquaintances at the time, and it begins,—

"Dear Sir,

"From the conversation we held together lately at Lord N——'s

table, I believe I shall not misinterpret your

sentiments by supposing that any new fact connected with

Waterloo will interest you strongly. I therefore enclose you

a memoir, drawn up a few evenings back at W———. It was begun by way of a regular refutation of Alison, whose views are so manifestly incorrect; the idea of publication is, however, abandoned, and I am at liberty merely to show it to such of my friends as take a more than common interest in the transaction.

"Truly yours,

"S. Granthorpe."

The memoir which accompanied this is curious for two reasons: first, from its authenticity; and, secondly, from the fact that, being dictated from beginning to end, it is as clear, as consecutive, as free from unnecessary, and as full of all necessary detail, as if the events were of a few days' back, and that no recital of them had yet been given to the world. Two or three anecdotes (new to me, at least) were interspersed here and there, not for themselves, but as circumstantially evidencing facts of some importance.

One, I remember, alluded to a Prussian statement by a Captain Hahnsfelder, who stated that two British guns, placed on the height above La Hayed Sainte, were captured by the French as early as eleven o'clock. The passage in the memoir is this:—"Untrue; these guns were in the field at seven in the evening, in the same position which they stood at the beginning of the battle. They are in advance of Adam's left, and were so far unprotected that the artillerymen who served them had to retire after each discharge. The Cuirassiers made several attempts to carry them off, but as orders were given that, after each fire, one wheel should be taken off each gun, the cavalry failed in their object. They tried to lasso them, but this also failed, besides losing them some men."

Alison's strategy, for he went so far as to plan a campaign of his own, is very ably exposed, and the necessity of posting troops in particular districts clearly explained from circumstances peculiar to the localities, such as stationing the cavalry at Enchain, where alone forage was procurable. The controversy, if it can be so called, is worthless. They whose opinions are alone valuable are exactly the persons who will not speak on the subject.

A strange-looking letter is this from C——— enclosing the proof of a paper I wrote on Irish Educational matters, very laconic and editorial:—

"Dear T.,

"You are all wrong: as blue and yellow, when mixed, form green, so will your Protestant and Papist League make nothing but rampant infidelity. In any great State scheme of education there must be one grand standard of obedience—the Bible is the only one I've heard of yet. Keep this one then till you hear of better.

"Yours,

"H. C."

Another of the same hand:—

"H——— desires me to in close you these two letters: one I know is an introduction to Guizot; the other, I suppose, to be 'Eon empfehlungs Brief' to the 'Grain.' Take care to say as little as possible to the one, and to have, in Irish parlance, as little as possible 'to say' to the other. At Paris you want no guidance; and at Vienna, the Abe Disco is your man. Colorado is out of favor for the moment; but he can afford to wait, and, waiting, to win. Be assiduous in your visits at B———y's; and when the Countess affects ignorance, let us always hear from you.

"Yours ever,

"H. C."

This is a very rose-cultured and rose-adored document:—

"Dear Mr. Templeton,

"I have to make two thousand excuses; one each for two indiscretions, I believed I had your box at the Opera for last evening; and I also fancied—think of my absurdity!— that the bouquet of camellias left there was meant for me. Pray forgive me; or, rather, ask the fair lady who came in at the ballet to forgive me. I never can think of the incident without shame and self-reproach; du reset, it has given me the opportunity of knowing that your taste in beauty equals your judgment in flowers.

"Very much yours,

"Helen Colleton.

"Sir H——— bids me say, that he expects you on Wednesday. We dine earlier, as the Admiral goes on board in the evening."

This was an absurd incident; and, trivially as it is touched on here, made of that same Lady Colleton a very dangerous enemy to me.

This is not a specimen of calligraphy, certainly:—

"If you promise neither to talk of the Catholic Question, the Kildare Place Society, nor the 'Glorious Revolution of 1688.' P——— will have no objection to meet you at dinner.

Hammond, you've heard, I suppose, has lost his election; he polled more voters than there were freeholders registered on the books: this was proving too much, and he must pay the penalty. Y——— is in, and will remain if he can; but there is a hitch in it—'as the man who lent him his qualification is in goal at Bruges.' Write and say if you accept the conditions.

"Yours,

"Frederick Hamilton."

There are some memorials of a very different kind—they are bound up together; and well may they, they form an episode quite apart from all the events before or after them! I dare not open them; for, although years have passed away, the wounds would bleed afresh if only breathed on! This was the last I ever received from her. I have no need to open it—I know every line by heart!—almost prophetic, too!

"I have no fear of offending you now, since we shall never meet again. The very thought that the whole world divides us, as completely as death itself, will make you accept my words less as reproof than warning. Once more, then, abandon the career for which you have not health, nor energy, nor enduring strength. Brilliant displays, discursive efforts, however effective, will no more constitute statesmanship than fireworks suffice to light up the streets of a city. Like all men of quick intelligence, you undervalue those who advance more slowly, forgetting that their gleaning is more

cleanly made, and that, while you come sooner, they come more heavily laden. Again, this waiting for conviction—this habit of listening to the arguments on each side, however excellent in general life, is inapplicable in politics. You must have opinions previously formed—you must have your mind made up, on principles very different and much wider than those a debate embraces. If I find the person who guides me through the streets of a strange city stop to inquire here, to ask this, to investigate that, and so on, I at once conceive—and very reasonably—a doubt of his skill and intelligence; but if he advance with a certain air of assured knowledge, I yield myself to his guidance with implicit trust: nor does it matter so much, when we have reached the desired goal, that we made a slight divergence from the shortest road.

"Now, if a constituency concede much to your judgment, remember that you owe a similar debt to the leader of your party, who certainly—all consideration of ability apart—sees further, because from a higher eminence, than other men.

"Again, you take no pleasure in any pursuit wherein no obstacle presents itself; and yet, if the difficulty be one

involving a really strong effort, you abandon it. You require as many conditions to your liking as did the commander at Walcheren—the wind must not only blow from a particular quarter, but with a certain degree of violence. This will never do! The favoring gale that leads to fortune is as often a hurricane as a zephyr; some are blown into the haven half shipwrecked, but still safe.

"Lastly, you have a failing, for which neither ability, nor address, nor labor, nor even good luck, can compensate. You trust every one—not from any implicit reliance on the goodness of human nature—not that you think well of this man, or highly of that, but simply from indolence. 'Believing,' is so very easy—such a rare self-indulgence! Think of all the deception this has cost you—think of the fallacies, which you knew to be fallacies, that found their way into your head, tainting your own opinions, and mingling themselves with your matured convictions. Believe me, there is nothing but a strict quarantine can prevail against error!"

Enough of these,—now for an in cremation: would that, Hondo like, I could consume with them the memory to which they

have been wedded!

Dr. H——— has been here again; he came in just as the last flicker was expiring over the charred leaves; he guessed readily what had been my occupation, and seemed to feel relieved that the sad office of telling bad tidings of my case was taken off his hands. Symptoms seem now crowding on each other—they come, like detached battalions meeting on the field of battle when victory is won, only to show themselves and to proclaim how hopeless would be resistance. The course of the malady would, latterly, appear to have been rapid, and yet how reluctant does the spirit seem to quit its ruined temple!

I wish that I had more command over my faculties; the tricks Imagination plays me at each moment are very painful: scarcely have I composed my mind into a calm and patient frame, than Fancy sets to work at some vision of returning health and strength—of home scenes and familiar faces—of the green lanes of Old England, as seen at sunset of a summer eve, when the last song of the blackbird rings through the clear air, and odors of sweet flowers grow stronger in the heavy atmosphere.

To start from these, and think of what I am—of what so soon I shall be!

What marvelously fine aspirations and noble enterprises cross the sick man's fancy! The climate of health is sadly unfavorable to the creatures begot of fancy—one tithe of the strange notions that are now warring in my distracted brain would make matter for a whole novelist's library. Thoughts that are thus engendered are like the wines which the Germans call "Ausgelesene," and which, falling from the grape undressed, have none of the impurities of fabrication about them. After all, the things that have been left undone by all of us in this life, would be far better and greater than those we have done.

Oh, the fond hearts that have never been smitten,

And all the hot tears that have never been shed!

Not to speak of the books that have never been written;

And all the smart things that have never been said!

Weaker and weaker!—the senses fail to retain impressions, and, like cracked vases, let their contents ooze out by slow degrees. Objects of sight become commingled with those of sound; and I can half understand the blind man

Locke tells us of, who imagined "the color scarlet to be like the sound of a trumpet."

Mesmerism affects the power of transferring the operations of one sense to the organs of another; can it be that, in certain states of the brain, the nervous fluids become intermixed?

It is night—calm, still, and starlit! How large are the stars compared with what they appear in northern latitudes! And the moonlight, too, is pale as silver, and has none of the yellow tint we see with us. Beautifully it lies along that slope of the mountain yonder, where the tall dark yew-trees throw their straight shadows across the glittering surface.

It is the churchyard of St. M———; and now in the church I can perceive the twinkle of lights—they are the candles around the coffin of him whose funeral I saw this morning. The custom of leaving the body for a day in the church before consigning it to the grave is a touching one. The dimly-lighted aisles, and the solemn air of the place, seem a fitting transition from Life to the sleep of Death.

I have been thinking of that very old man, who came past the window yesterday, and sat down to rest himself on the stone-bench beside the door. Giordano never took a finer head as a study: lofty and massive, with the temples deeply indented; and such a beard, snow-white and waving! How I longed for strength enough to have wandered forth and seated myself beside him! A strange, mysterious feeling was on me—that I should hear words of comfort from his lips! This impression grew out of his own remarkable story. Yes, poor and humble as his dress, lowly as his present condition may seem, he was a "Captain of the Imperial Guard"—a proud title once! He was taken prisoner during the retreat from Moscow, and, with hundreds more, sent away to eternal exile in Siberia! At that period he was in all the pride of manhood, a true specimen of his class—gay, witty, full of daring, and a skeptic; a Frenchman of the Revolution grafted on a gentleman of the old régime! The Fatalism that sustained them—it was their only faith—through long years of banishment, brought many in sadness to the grave! It was a gloomy-religion, whose hope was but chastened despair! He himself lived on, the reckless spirit of a bold heart hardening him against grief as effectually as it excluded memory. When, at length, as time went on, and his companions dropped off around him, a severe and cheerless melancholy settled down upon him, and he lived on in a state of dreamy unreality, less like sleep than death itself! And yet,

through this dense cloud a ray of light pierced and fell upon his cold and darkened spirit, like day descending into some cleft between the mountains!

He was sitting at the door of his hut one evening, to taste the few short moments of sunset, when, unwrapping the piece of paper which surrounded his cigar—the one sole luxury the prisoners are permitted—he was proceeding to light it, when a thought occurred that he would read the lines, for it was a printed paper. He opened the bit of torn and ragged paper, and found there three verses from the Gospel of St. John. Doubtless he had often sat in weariness before the most heart-stirring appeals and earnest exhortations; and yet these few lines did what years of such teaching failed to do. The long-thirsting heart was refreshed by this one drop of clear water! He became a believer, firm and faithful! His liberation, which he owed to the clemency of the Emperor Alexander, set him free to wander over the world as a missionary, and this he has been ever since. How striking are his calm and benevolent features among the faces which pass you in every street—for we live in times of eager and insensate passion. The volcano has thrown forth ashes, and who knows how soon the flame may follow!

How long this night appears! I have sat, as I believe, for hours here, and yet it is but two o'clock! The dreary vacuity of weakness is like a wide and pathless waste. I see but one great spreading moorland, with a low, dark horizon; no creature moves across the surface—no light glimmers on it. It is the plain before the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

Poor Gilbert!—how soundly he sleeps, believing that I am also sunk to rest! The deep-drawn breathings of his strong chest are strange beside the fluttering hurry of my respiration. He was wearied out with watching—wearied, as I feel myself: but Death comes not the sooner for our weariness; we must bide our time, even like the felon whose sentence has fixed the day and the hour.

Three o'clock! What a chill is on me! The fire no longer warms me, nor does the great cloak with which I braved the snows of Canada. This is a sensation quite distinct from mere cold—it is like as though my body were itself the source from which the air became chilled. I have tried to heap more wood upon the fire, but am too weak to reach it. I cannot bear to awaken that poor fellow. It is but enduring a little—a very little longer—and all will be over!

There was a man upon the terrace below the window, walking slowly back and forwards. What can it mean, so late? It has made me nervous and irritable to watch his shadow as it crosses before me. There!—how strange!—he has

beckoned to me! Is this real? Now I see no one! Some trick of imagination; but how weak it has left me! My hand trembles, too, with a strange fear.

It has struck again! It must be four; and I have slept. What a long night it has been! O Life! Life! how little your best and highest ambitions seem to him who sits, like me, waiting to be released! Now and then the heart beats full and strong, and a momentary sense of vigor flashes across my mind; and then the icy current comes back, the faint straggle to breathe shaking the frame as a wrecked vessel trembles with each crashing wave!

Day breaks at length—that must be the dawn! But my eyes are failing, and my hands are numbed. Poor Gilbert! how sound is his sleep! He has turned—and now he dreams! What is he muttering? Good night! good night! Even so—good night!

How cold—how very cold I feel! I thought it had been over! Oh, for a little longer of this dalliance here!—ay, even here, on the last shores of life! Inexpressibly sweet the odors are, and the birds! How I drink in those strains!—they will float with me along the journey I am going! Weaker and weaker. This must be death! Farewell!

The circumstances which have placed these papers in my hands afford me the only apology I can offer for making them public. They were bequeathed to me, in some sort, as a recompense for services which my poor master had long intended to have rewarded very differently; nor, save under the pressure of an actual necessity, should I devote them now to the purpose of personal assistance. I neither understand how to correct nor arrange them. I have no skill in editorship, and send them to the printer without the addition of a letter by any hand except his who wrote them. It is true, some pages have been withheld—I am not sure whether necessarily or not—for I have no competent judgment to guide me. I would, however, hope, that what I here give to the world may, while benefiting the servant, leave no stain upon the memory of the best of masters.

GEORGE GILBERT,

Valet to the late H. Templeton, Esq.

Dover, January 1848.

Postscript to Envoy.

A word may be necessary as to the political allusions, as they were all written in the autumn of the past year, many are, of course, inapplicable to countries whose condition the wonderful events lately occurring have modified: many are, however, almost correct in every detail of prophetic foresight; and, it is not necessary that I should repeat, have neither been changed nor added to since penned by my late master.

THE END