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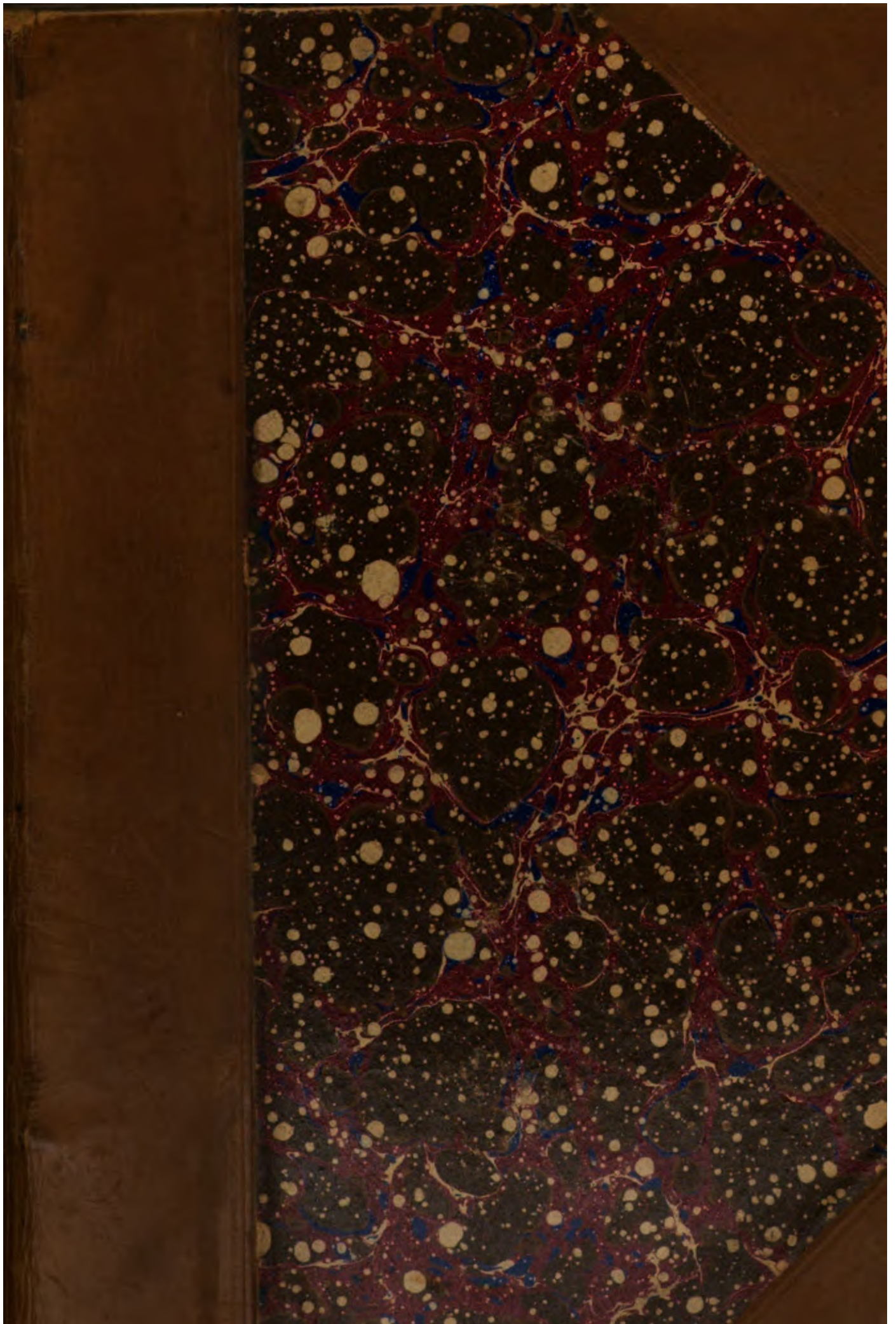
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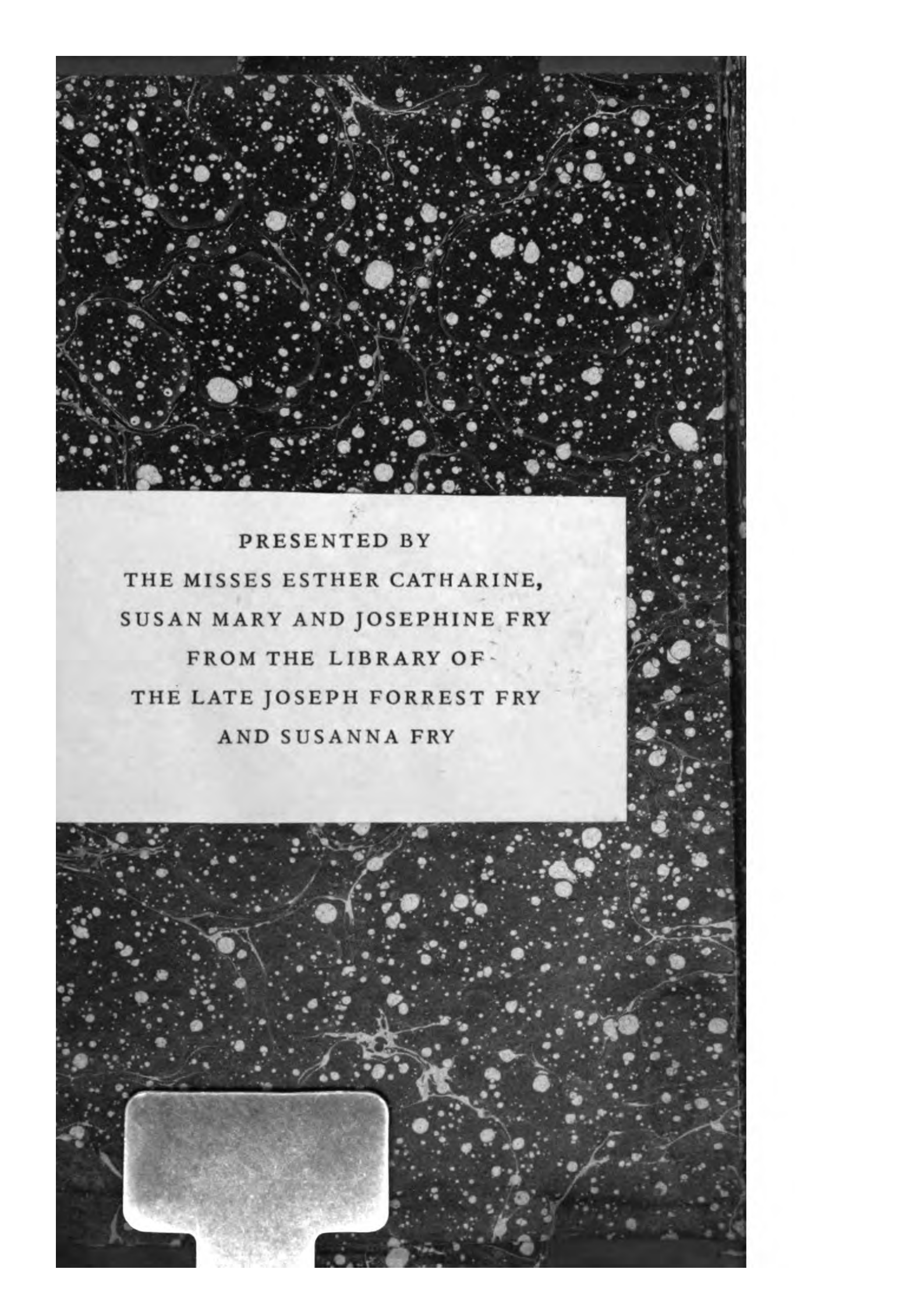
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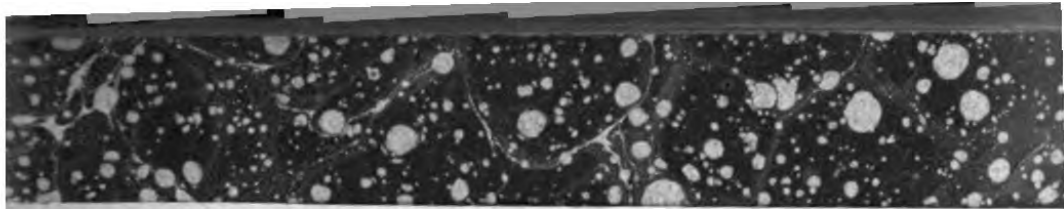


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THE WORKS
OF
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.



FANSHAWE.
THE DOLLIVER ROMANCE.

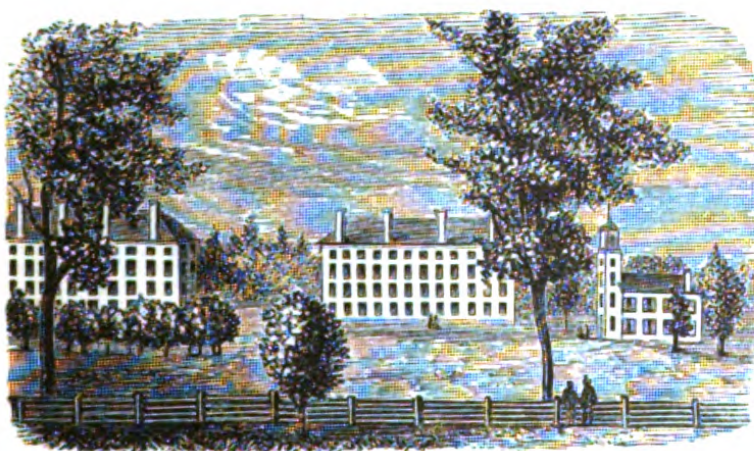


Fanshawe,

AND OTHER PIECES.

BY

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.



BOSTON:

HOUGHTON, OSGOOD, AND COMPANY.

The Riverside Press, Cambridge.

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FANSHAWE.







FANSHAWE.

CHAPTER I.

“Our court shall be a little academy.” — SHAKESPEARE.

IN an ancient though not very populous settlement in a retired corner of one of the New England States arise the walls of a seminary of learning, which, for the convenience of a name, shall be entitled “Harley College.” This institution, though the number of its years is inconsiderable compared with the hoar antiquity of its European sisters, is not without some claims to reverence on the score of age; for an almost countless multitude of rivals, by many of which its reputation has been eclipsed, have sprung up since its foundation. At no time, indeed, during an existence of nearly a century, has it acquired a very extensive fame; and circumstances, which need not be particularized, have, of late years, involved it in a deeper obscurity. There are now few candidates for the degrees that the college is authorized to bestow. On two of its annual “Commencement Days,” there has been a total deficiency of baccalaureates; and the lawyers and divines,

on whom doctorates in their respective professions are gratuitously inflicted, are not accustomed to consider the distinction as an honor. Yet the sons of this seminary have always maintained their full share of reputation, in whatever paths of life they trod. Few of them, perhaps, have been deep and finished scholars; but the college has supplied — what the emergencies of the country demanded — a set of men more useful in its present state, and whose deficiency in theoretical knowledge has not been found to imply a want of practical ability.

The local situation of the college, so far secluded from the sight and sound of the busy world, is peculiarly favorable to the moral, if not to the literary habits of its students; and this advantage probably caused the founders to overlook the inconveniences that were inseparably connected with it. The humble edifices rear themselves almost at the farthest extremity of a narrow vale, which, winding through a long extent of hill-country, is well-nigh as inaccessible, except at one point, as the Happy Valley of Abyssinia. A stream, that farther on becomes a considerable river, takes its rise at a short distance above the college, and affords, along its wood-fringed banks, many shady retreats, where even study is pleasant, and idleness delicious. The neighborhood of the institution is not quite a solitude, though the few habitations scarcely constitute a village. These consist principally of farm-houses, of rather an ancient date (for the settlement is much older than the college), and of a little inn, which even in that secluded spot does not fail of a moderate support. Other dwellings are scattered up and down the valley; but the difficulties of the soil will long

avert the evils of a too dense population. The character of the inhabitants does not seem — as there was, perhaps, room to anticipate — to be in any degree influenced by the atmosphere of Harley College. They are a set of rough and hardy yeomen, much inferior, as respects refinement, to the corresponding classes in most other parts of our country. This is the more remarkable, as there is scarcely a family in the vicinity that has not provided, for at least one of its sons, the advantages of a “liberal education.”

Having thus described the present state of Harley College, we must proceed to speak of it as it existed about eighty years since, when its foundation was recent, and its prospects flattering. At the head of the institution, at this period, was a learned and Orthodox divine, whose fame was in all the churches. He was the author of several works which evinced much erudition and depth of research; and the public, perhaps, thought the more highly of his abilities from a singularity in the purposes to which he applied them, that added much to the curiosity of his labors, though little to their usefulness. But, however fanciful might be his private pursuits, Dr. Melmoth, it was universally allowed, was diligent and successful in the arts of instruction. The young men of his charge prospered beneath his eye, and regarded him with an affection that was strengthened by the little foibles which occasionally excited their ridicule. The president was assisted in the discharge of his duties by two inferior officers, chosen from the alumni of the college, who, while they imparted to others the knowledge they had already imbibed, pursued the study of divinity

under the direction of their principal. Under such auspices the institution grew and flourished. Having at that time but two rivals in the country (neither of them within a considerable distance), it became the general resort of the youth of the Province in which it was situated. For several years in succession, its students amounted to nearly fifty, — a number which, relatively to the circumstances of the country, was very considerable.

From the exterior of the collegians, an accurate observer might pretty safely judge how long they had been inmates of those classic walls. The brown cheeks and the rustic dress of some would inform him that they had but recently left the plough to labor in a not less toilsome field; the grave look, and the intermingling of garments of a more classic cut, would distinguish those who had begun to acquire the polish of their new residence; and the air of superiority, the paler cheek, the less robust form, the spectacles of green, and the dress, in general of threadbare black, would designate the highest class, who were understood to have acquired nearly all the science their Alma Mater could bestow, and to be on the point of assuming their stations in the world. There were, it is true, exceptions to this general description. A few young men had found their way hither from the distant seaports; and these were the models of fashion to their rustic companions, over whom they asserted a superiority in exterior accomplishments, which the fresh though unpolished intellect of the sons of the forest denied them in their literary competitions. A third class, differing widely from both the former, con-

sisted of a few young descendants of the aborigines, to whom an impracticable philanthropy was endeavoring to impart the benefits of civilization.

If this institution did not offer all the advantages of elder and prouder seminaries, its deficiencies were compensated to its students by the inculcation of regular habits, and of a deep and awful sense of religion, which seldom deserted them in their course through life. The mild and gentle rule of Dr. Melmoth, like that of a father over his children, was more destructive to vice than a sterner sway; and, though youth is never without its follies, they have seldom been more harmless than they were here. The students, indeed, ignorant of their own bliss, sometimes wished to hasten the time of their entrance on the business of life; but they found, in after-years, that many of their happiest remembrances, many of the scenes which they would with least reluctance live over again, referred to the seat of their early studies. The exceptions to this remark were chiefly those whose vices had drawn down, even from that paternal government, a weighty retribution.

Dr. Melmoth, at the time when he is to be introduced to the reader, had borne the matrimonial yoke (and in his case it was no light burden) nearly twenty years. The blessing of children, however, had been denied him, — a circumstance which he was accustomed to consider as one of the sorest trials that checkered his pathway; for he was a man of a kind and affectionate heart, that was continually seeking objects to rest itself upon. He was inclined to believe, also, that a common offspring would have exerted a meliorating influence on the tem-

per of Mrs. Melmoth, the character of whose domestic government often compelled him to call to mind such portions of the wisdom of antiquity as relate to the proper endurance of the shrewishness of woman. But domestic comforts, as well as comforts of every other kind, have their drawbacks; and, so long as the balance is on the side of happiness, a wise man will not murmur. Such was the opinion of Dr. Melmoth; and with a little aid from philosophy, and more from religion, he journeyed on contentedly through life. When the storm was loud by the parlor hearth, he had always a sure and quiet retreat in his study; and there, in his deep though not always useful labors, he soon forgot whatever of disagreeable nature pertained to his situation. This small and dark apartment was the only portion of the house to which, since one firmly repelled invasion, Mrs. Melmoth's omnipotence did not extend. Here (to reverse the words of Queen Elizabeth) there was "but one master, and no mistress"; and that man has little right to complain who possesses so much as one corner in the world where he may be happy or miserable, as best suits him. In his study, then, the doctor was accustomed to spend most of the hours that were unoccupied by the duties of his station. The flight of time was here as swift as the wind, and noiseless as the snowflake; and it was a sure proof of real happiness, that night often came upon the student before he knew it was midday.

Dr. Melmoth was wearing towards age (having lived nearly sixty years), when he was called upon to assume a character to which he had as yet been a stranger. He had possessed in his youth a very dear friend, with whom

his education had associated him, and who in his early manhood had been his chief intimate. Circumstances, however, had separated them for nearly thirty years, half of which had been spent by his friend, who was engaged in mercantile pursuits, in a foreign country. The doctor had, nevertheless, retained a warm interest in the welfare of his old associate, though the different nature of their thoughts and occupations had prevented them from corresponding. After a silence of so long continuance, therefore, he was surprised by the receipt of a letter from his friend, containing a request of a most unexpected nature.

Mr. Langton had married rather late in life; and his wedded bliss had been but of short continuance. Certain misfortunes in trade, when he was a Benedict of three years standing, had deprived him of a large portion of his property, and compelled him, in order to save the remainder, to leave his own country for what he hoped would be but a brief residence in another. But, though he was successful in the immediate objects of his voyage, circumstances occurred to lengthen his stay far beyond the period which he had assigned to it. It was difficult so to arrange his extensive concerns that they could be safely trusted to the management of others; and, when this was effected, there was another not less powerful obstacle to his return. His affairs, under his own inspection, were so prosperous, and his gains so considerable, that, in the words of the old ballad, "He set his heart to gather gold"; and to this absorbing passion he sacrificed his domestic happiness. The death of his wife, about four years after his departure, undoubtedly con-

tributed to give him a sort of dread of returning, which it required a strong effort to overcome. The welfare of his only child he knew would be little affected by this event; for she was under the protection of his sister, of whose tenderness he was well assured. But, after a few more years, this sister, also, was taken away by death; and then the father felt that duty imperatively called upon him to return. He realized, on a sudden, how much of life he had thrown away in the acquisition of what is only valuable as it contributes to the happiness of life, and how short a time was left him for life's true enjoyments. Still, however, his mercantile habits were too deeply seated to allow him to hazard his present prosperity by any hasty measures; nor was Mr. Langton, though capable of strong affections, naturally liable to manifest them violently. It was probable, therefore, that many months might yet elapse before he would again tread the shores of his native country.

But the distant relative, in whose family, since the death of her aunt, Ellen Langton had remained, had been long at variance with her father, and had unwillingly assumed the office of her protector. Mr. Langton's request, therefore, to Dr. Melmoth, was, that his ancient friend (one of the few friends that time had left him) would be as a father to his daughter till he could himself relieve him of the charge.

The doctor, after perusing the epistle of his friend, lost no time in laying it before Mrs. Melmoth, though this was, in truth, one of the very few occasions on which he had determined that his will should be absolute law. The lady was quick to perceive the firmness of his

purpose, and would not (even had she been particularly averse to the proposed measure) hazard her usual authority by a fruitless opposition. But, by long disuse, she had lost the power of consenting graciously to any wish of her husband's.

"I see your heart is set upon this matter," she observed; "and, in truth, I fear we cannot decently refuse Mr. Langton's request. I see little good of such a friend, doctor, who never lets one know he is alive, till he has a favor to ask."

"Nay; but I have received much good at his hand," replied Dr. Melmoth; "and, if he asked more of me, it should be done with a willing heart. I remember in my youth, when my worldly goods were few and ill managed (I was a bachelor, then, dearest Sarah, with none to look after my household), how many times I have been beholden to him. And see — in his letter he speaks of presents, of the produce of the country, which he has sent both to you and me."

"If the girl were country-bred," continued the lady, "we might give her house-room, and no harm done. Nay, she might even be a help to me; for Esther, our maid-servant, leaves us at the month's end. But I warrant she knows as little of household matters as you do yourself, doctor."

"My friend's sister was well grounded in the *re familiari*," answered her husband; "and doubtless she hath imparted somewhat of her skill to this damsel. Besides, the child is of tender years, and will profit much by your instruction and mine."

"The child is eighteen years of age, doctor," observed

Mrs. Melmoth, "and she has cause to be thankful that she will have better instruction than yours."

This was a proposition that Dr. Melmoth did not choose to dispute; though he perhaps thought that his long and successful experience in the education of the other sex might make him an able coadjutor to his wife in the care of Ellen Langton. He determined to journey in person to the seaport where his young charge resided, leaving the concerns of Harley College to the direction of the two tutors. Mrs. Melmoth, who, indeed, anticipated with pleasure the arrival of a new subject to her authority, threw no difficulties in the way of his intention. To do her justice, her preparations for his journey, and the minute instructions with which she favored him, were such as only a woman's true affection could have suggested. The traveller met with no incidents important to this tale; and, after an absence of about a fortnight, he and Ellen Langton alighted from their steeds (for on horseback had the journey been performed) in safety at his own door.

If pen could give an adequate idea of Ellen Langton's loveliness, it would achieve what pencil (the pencils, at least, of the colonial artists who attempted it) never could; for, though the dark eyes might be painted, the pure and pleasant thoughts that peeped through them could only be seen and felt. But descriptions of beauty are never satisfactory. It must, therefore, be left to the imagination of the reader to conceive of something not more than mortal, nor, indeed, quite the perfection of mortality, but charming men the more, because they felt, that, lovely as she was, she was of like nature to themselves.

From the time that Ellen entered Dr. Melmoth's habitation, the sunny days seemed brighter, and the cloudy ones less gloomy, than he had ever before known them. He naturally delighted in children; and Ellen, though her years approached to womanhood, had yet much of the gayety and simple happiness, because the innocence, of a child. She consequently became the very blessing of his life, — the rich recreation that he promised himself for hours of literary toil. On one occasion, indeed, he even made her his companion in the sacred retreat of his study, with the purpose of entering upon a course of instruction in the learned languages. This measure, however, he found inexpedient to repeat; for Ellen, having discovered an old romance among his heavy folios, contrived, by the charm of her sweet voice, to engage his attention therein till all more important concerns were forgotten.

With Mrs. Melmoth, Ellen was not, of course, so great a favorite as with her husband; for women cannot, so readily as men, bestow upon the offspring of others those affections that nature intended for their own; and the doctor's extraordinary partiality was anything rather than a pledge of his wife's. But Ellen differed so far from the idea she had previously formed of her, as a daughter of one of the principal merchants, who were then, as now, like nobles in the land, that the stock of dislike which Mrs. Melmoth had provided was found to be totally inapplicable. The young stranger strove so hard, too (and undoubtedly it was a pleasant labor), to win her love, that she was successful to a degree of which the lady herself was not, perhaps, aware. It was

soon seen that her education had not been neglected in those points which Mrs. Melmoth deemed most important. The nicer departments of cookery, after sufficient proof of her skill, were committed to her care; and the doctor's table was now covered with delicacies, simple indeed, but as tempting on account of their intrinsic excellence as of the small white hands that made them. By such arts as these, — which in her were no arts, but the dictates of an affectionate disposition, — by making herself useful where it was possible, and agreeable on all occasions, Ellen gained the love of every one within the sphere of her influence.

But the maiden's conquests were not confined to the members of Dr. Melmoth's family. She had numerous admirers among those whose situation compelled them to stand afar off, and gaze upon her loveliness, as if she were a star, whose brightness they saw, but whose warmth they could not feel. These were the young men of Harley College, whose chief opportunities of beholding Ellen were upon the Sabbaths, when she worshipped with them in the little chapel, which served the purposes of a church to all the families of the vicinity. There was, about this period (and the fact was undoubtedly attributable to Ellen's influence), a general and very evident decline in the scholarship of the college, especially in regard to the severer studies. The intellectual powers of the young men seemed to be directed chiefly to the construction of Latin and Greek verse, many copies of which, with a characteristic and classic gallantry, were strewn in the path where Ellen Langton was accustomed to walk. They, however, produced no perceptible effect;

nor were the aspirations of another ambitious youth, who celebrated her perfections in Hebrew, attended with their merited success.

But there was one young man, to whom circumstances, independent of his personal advantages, afforded a superior opportunity of gaining Ellen's favor. He was nearly related to Dr. Melmoth, on which account he received his education at Harley College, rather than at one of the English universities, to the expenses of which his fortune would have been adequate. This connection entitled him to a frequent and familiar access to the domestic hearth of the dignitary, — an advantage of which, since Ellen Langton became a member of the family, he very constantly availed himself.

Edward Walcott was certainly much superior, in most of the particulars of which a lady takes cognizance, to those of his fellow-students who had come under Ellen's notice. He was tall; and the natural grace of his manners had been improved (an advantage which few of his associates could boast) by early intercourse with polished society. His features, also, were handsome, and promised to be manly and dignified when they should cease to be youthful. His character as a scholar was more than respectable, though many youthful follies, sometimes, perhaps, approaching near to vices, were laid to his charge. But his occasional derelictions from discipline were not such as to create any very serious apprehensions respecting his future welfare; nor were they greater than, perhaps, might be expected from a young man who possessed a considerable command of money, and who was, besides, the fine gentleman of the little community of which he

was a member, — a character which generally leads its possessor into follies that he would otherwise have avoided.

With this youth, Ellen Langton became familiar, and even intimate; for he was her only companion, of an age suited to her own, and the difference of sex did not occur to her as an objection. He was her constant companion on all necessary and allowable occasions, and drew upon himself, in consequence, the envy of the college.





CHAPTER II.

“Why, all delights are vain, but that most vain,
Which, with pain purchased, doth inherit pain :
As painfully to pore upon a book
To seek the light of truth, while truth, the while
Doth falsely blind the eyesight of his look.”

SHAKESPEARE.

ON one of the afternoons which afforded to the students a relaxation from their usual labors, Ellen was attended by her cavalier in a little excursion over the rough bridle-roads that led from her new residence. She was an experienced equestrian, — a necessary accomplishment at that period, when vehicles of every kind were rare. It was now the latter end of spring ; but the season had hitherto been backward, with only a few warm and pleasant days. The present afternoon, however, was a delicious mingling of spring and summer, forming in their union an atmosphere so mild and pure, that to breathe was almost a positive happiness. There was a little alternation of cloud across the brow of heaven, but only so much as to render the sunshine more delightful.

The path of the young travellers lay sometimes among tall and thick standing trees, and sometimes over naked

and desolate hills, whence man had taken the natural vegetation, and then left the soil to its barrenness. Indeed, there is little inducement to a cultivator to labor among the huge stones which there peep forth from the earth, seeming to form a continued ledge for several miles. A singular contrast to this unfavored tract of country is seen in the narrow but luxuriant, though sometimes swampy, strip of interval, on both sides of the stream, that, as has been noticed, flows down the valley. The light and buoyant spirits of Edward Walcott and Ellen rose higher as they rode on; and their way was enlivened, wherever its roughness did not forbid, by their conversation and pleasant laughter. But at length Ellen drew her bridle, as they emerged from a thick portion of the forest, just at the foot of a steep hill.

“We must have ridden far,” she observed, — “farther than I thought. It will be near sunset before we can reach home.”

“There are still several hours of daylight,” replied Edward Walcott; “and we will not turn back without ascending this hill. The prospect from the summit is beautiful, and will be particularly so now, in this rich sunlight. Come, Ellen, — one light touch of the whip, — your pony is as fresh as when we started.”

On reaching the summit of the hill, and looking back in the direction in which they had come, they could see the little stream, peeping forth many times to the daylight, and then shrinking back into the shade. Farther on, it became broad and deep, though rendered incapable of navigation, in this part of its course, by the occasional interruption of rapids.

“There are hidden wonders of rock and precipice and cave, in that dark forest,” said Edward, pointing to the space between them and the river. “If it were earlier in the day, I should love to lead you there. Shall we try the adventure now, Ellen?”

“O no!” she replied. “Let us delay no longer. I fear I must even now abide a rebuke from Mrs. Melmoth, which I have surely deserved. But who is this, who rides on so slowly before us?”

She pointed to a horseman, whom they had not before observed. He was descending the hill; but, as his steed seemed to have chosen his own pace, he made a very inconsiderable progress.

“O, do you not know him? But it is scarcely possible you should,” exclaimed her companion. “We must do him the good office, Ellen, of stopping his progress, or he will find himself at the village, a dozen miles farther on, before he resumes his consciousness.”

“Has he then lost his senses?” inquired Miss Langton.

“Not so, Ellen, — if much learning has not made him mad,” replied Edward Walcott. “He is a deep scholar and a noble fellow; but I fear we shall follow him to his grave ere long. Dr. Melmoth has sent him to ride in pursuit of his health. He will never overtake it, however, at this pace.”

As he spoke, they had approached close to the subject of their conversation; and Ellen had a moment’s space for observation before he started from the abstraction in which he was plunged. The result of her scrutiny was favorable, yet very painful.

The stranger could scarcely have attained his twentieth

year, and was possessed of a face and form such as Nature bestows on none but her favorites. There was a nobleness on his high forehead, which time would have deepened into majesty; and all his features were formed with a strength and boldness, of which the paleness, produced by study and confinement, could not deprive them. The expression of his countenance was not a melancholy one: on the contrary, it was proud and high, perhaps triumphant, like one who was a ruler in a world of his own, and independent of the beings that surrounded him. But a blight, of which his thin pale cheek, and the brightness of his eye, were alike proofs, seemed to have come over him ere his maturity.

The scholar's attention was now aroused by the hoof-tramps at his side; and, starting, he fixed his eyes on Ellen, whose young and lovely countenance was full of the interest he had excited. A deep blush immediately suffused his cheek, proving how well the glow of health would have become it. There was nothing awkward, however, in his manner; and, soon recovering his self-possession, he bowed to her, and would have rode on.

"Your ride is unusually long to-day, Fanshawe," observed Edward Walcott. "When may we look for your return?"

The young man again blushed, but answered, with a smile that had a beautiful effect upon his countenance, "I was not, at the moment, aware in which direction my horse's head was turned. I have to thank you for arresting me in a journey which was likely to prove much longer than I intended."

The party had now turned their horses, and were about

to resume their ride in a homeward direction; but Edward perceived that Fanshawe, having lost the excitement of intense thought, now looked weary and dispirited.

“Here is a cottage close at hand,” he observed. “We have ridden far, and stand in need of refreshment. Ellen, shall we alight?”

She saw the benevolent motive of his proposal, and did not hesitate to comply with it. But, as they paused at the cottage door, she could not but observe, that its exterior promised few of the comforts which they required. Time and neglect seemed to have conspired for its ruin; and, but for a thin curl of smoke from its clay chimney, they could not have believed it to be inhabited. A considerable tract of land in the vicinity of the cottage had evidently been, at some former period, under cultivation, but was now overrun by bushes and dwarf pines, among which many huge gray rocks, ineradicable by human art, endeavored to conceal themselves. About half an acre of ground was occupied by the young blades of Indian-corn, at which a half-starved cow gazed wistfully over the mouldering log-fence. These were the only agricultural tokens. Edward Walcott, nevertheless, drew the latch of the cottage door, after knocking loudly but in vain.

The apartment which was thus opened to their view was quite as wretched as its exterior had given them reason to anticipate. Poverty was there, with all its necessary and unnecessary concomitants. The intruders would have retired, had not the hope of affording relief detained them.

The occupants of the small and squalid apartment

were two women, both of them elderly, and, from the resemblance of their features, appearing to be sisters. The expression of their countenances, however, was very different. One, evidently the younger, was seated on the farther side of the large hearth, opposite to the door, at which the party stood. She had the sallow look of long and wasting illness; and there was an unsteadiness of expression about her eyes, that immediately struck the observer. Yet her face was mild and gentle, therein contrasting widely with that of her companion.

The other woman was bending over a small fire of decayed branches, the flame of which was very disproportionate to the smoke, scarcely producing heat sufficient for the preparation of a scanty portion of food. Her profile only was visible to the strangers, though, from a slight motion of her eye, they perceived that she was aware of their presence. Her features were pinched and spare, and wore a look of sullen discontent, for which the evident wretchedness of her situation afforded a sufficient reason. This female, notwithstanding her years, and the habitual fretfulness (that is more wearing than time), was apparently healthy and robust, with a dry, leathery complexion. A short space elapsed before she thought proper to turn her face towards her visitors; and she then regarded them with a lowering eye, without speaking, or rising from her chair.

"We entered," Edward Walcott began to say, "in the hope—" But he paused, on perceiving that the sick woman had risen from her seat, and with slow and tottering footsteps was drawing near to him. She took his hand in both her own; and, though he shuddered at the

touch of age and disease, he did not attempt to withdraw it. She then perused all his features with an expression, at first of eager and hopeful anxiety, which faded by degrees into disappointment. Then, turning from him, she gazed into Fanshawe's countenance with the like eagerness, but with the same result. Lastly, tottering back to her chair, she hid her face, and wept bitterly. The strangers, though they knew not the cause of her grief, were deeply affected; and Ellen approached the mourner with words of comfort, which, more from their tone than their meaning, produced a transient effect.

"Do you bring news of him?" she inquired, raising her head. "Will he return to me? Shall I see him before I die?" Ellen knew not what to answer; and, ere she could attempt it, the other female prevented her.

"Sister Butler is wandering in her mind," she said, "and speaks of one she will never behold again. The sight of strangers disturbs her, and you see we have nothing here to offer you."

The manner of the woman was ungracious; but her words were true. They saw that their presence could do nothing towards the alleviation of the misery they witnessed; and they felt that mere curiosity would not authorize a longer intrusion. So soon, therefore, as they had relieved, according to their power, the poverty that seemed to be the least evil of this cottage, they emerged into the open air.

The breath of heaven felt sweet to them, and removed a part of the weight from their young hearts, which were

saddened by the sight of so much wretchedness. Perceiving a pure and bright little fountain at a short distance from the cottage, they approached it, and, using the bark of a birch-tree as a cup, partook of its cool waters. They then pursued their homeward ride with such diligence, that, just as the sun was setting, they came in sight of the humble wooden edifice which was dignified with the name of Harley College. A golden ray rested upon the spire of the little chapel, the bell of which sent its tinkling murmur down the valley to summon the wanderers to evening prayers.

Fanshawe returned to his chamber that night, and lighted his lamp as he had been wont to do. The books were around him, which had hitherto been to him like those fabled volumes of Magic, from which the reader could not turn away his eye till death were the consequence of his studies. But there were unaccustomed thoughts in his bosom now; and to these, leaning his head on one of the unopened volumes, he resigned himself.

He called up in review the years, that, even at his early age, he had spent in solitary study, in conversation with the dead, while he had scorned to mingle with the living world, or to be actuated by any of its motives. He asked himself, to what purpose was all this destructive labor, and where was the happiness of superior knowledge. He had climbed but a few steps of a ladder that reached to infinity: he had thrown away his life in discovering, that, after a thousand such lives, he should still know comparatively nothing. He even looked forward with dread — though once the thought had been

dear to him—to the eternity of improvement that lay before him. It seemed now a weary way, without a resting-place and without a termination; and at that moment he would have preferred the dreamless sleep of the brutes that perish, to man's proudest attribute,—of immortality.

Fanshawe had hitherto deemed himself unconnected with the world, unconcerned in its feelings, and uninfluenced by it in any of his pursuits. In this respect he probably deceived himself. If his inmost heart could have been laid open, there would have been discovered that dream of undying fame, which, dream as it is, is more powerful than a thousand realities. But, at any rate, he had seemed, to others and to himself, a solitary being, upon whom the hopes and fears of ordinary men were ineffectual.

But now he felt the first thrilling of one of the many ties, that, so long as we breathe the common air, (and who shall say how much longer?) unite us to our kind. The sound of a soft, sweet voice, the glance of a gentle eye, had wrought a change upon him; and in his ardent mind a few hours had done the work of many. Almost in spite of himself, the new sensation was inexpressibly delightful. The recollection of his ruined health, of his habits (so much at variance with those of the world),—all the difficulties that reason suggested, were inadequate to check the exulting tide of hope and joy.



CHAPTER III.

“And let the aspiring youth beware of love, —
Of the smooth glance beware; for 't is too late
When on his heart the torrent softness pours;
Then wisdom prostrate lies, and fading fame
Dissolves in air away.”

THOMSON.

A FEW months passed over the heads of Ellen Langton and her admirers, unproductive of events, that, separately, were of sufficient importance to be related. The summer was now drawing to a close; and Dr. Melmoth had received information that his friend's arrangements were nearly completed, and that by the next home-bound ship he hoped to return to his native country. The arrival of that ship was daily expected.

During the time that had elapsed since his first meeting with Ellen, there had been a change, yet not a very remarkable one, in Fanshawe's habits. He was still the same solitary being, so far as regarded his own sex; and he still confined himself as sedulously to his chamber, except for one hour — the sunset hour — of every day. At that period, unless prevented by the inclemency of the weather, he was accustomed to tread a path that

wound along the banks of the stream. He had discovered that this was the most frequent scene of Ellen's walks; and this it was that drew him thither.

Their intercourse was at first extremely slight, — a bow on the one side, a smile on the other, and a passing word from both; and then the student hurried back to his solitude. But, in course of time, opportunities occurred for more extended conversation; so that, at the period with which this chapter is concerned, Fanshawe was, almost as constantly as Edward Walcott himself, the companion of Ellen's walks.

His passion had strengthened more than proportionably to the time that had elapsed since it was conceived; but the first glow and excitement which attended it had now vanished. He had reasoned calmly with himself, and rendered evident to his own mind the almost utter hopelessness of success. He had also made his resolution strong, that he would not even endeavor to win Ellen's love, the result of which, for a thousand reasons, could not be happiness. Firm in this determination, and confident of his power to adhere to it; feeling, also, that time and absence could not cure his own passion, and having no desire for such a cure, — he saw no reason for breaking off the intercourse that was established between Ellen and himself. It was remarkable, that, notwithstanding the desperate nature of his love, that, or something connected with it, seemed to have a beneficial effect upon his health. There was now a slight tinge of color in his cheek, and a less consuming brightness in his eye. Could it be that hope, unknown to himself, was yet alive in his breast; that a sense of the possibil-

ity of earthly happiness was redeeming him from the grave?

Had the character of Ellen Langton's mind been different, there might, perhaps, have been danger to her from an intercourse of this nature with such a being as Fanshawe; for he was distinguished by many of those asperities around which a woman's affection will often cling. But she was formed to walk in the calm and quiet paths of life, and to pluck the flowers of happiness from the wayside where they grow. Singularity of character, therefore, was not calculated to win her love. She undoubtedly felt an interest in the solitary student, and perceiving, with no great exercise of vanity, that her society drew him from the destructive intensity of his studies, she perhaps felt it a duty to exert her influence. But it did not occur to her that her influence had been sufficiently strong to change the whole current of his thoughts and feelings.

Ellen and her two lovers (for both, though perhaps not equally, deserved that epithet) had met, as usual, at the close of a sweet summer day, and were standing by the side of the stream, just where it swept into a deep pool. The current, undermining the bank, had formed a recess, which, according to Edward Walcott, afforded at that moment a hiding-place to a trout of noble size.

"Now would I give the world," he exclaimed with great interest, "for a hook and line, a fish-spear, or any piscatorial instrument of death! Look, Ellen, you can see the waving of his tail from beneath the bank!"

"If you had the means of taking him, I should save him from your cruelty, thus," said Ellen, dropping a

pebble into the water, just over the fish. "There! he has darted down the stream. How many pleasant caves and recesses there must be under these banks, where he may be happy! May there not be happiness in the life of a fish?" she added, turning with a smile to Fanshawe.

"There may," he replied, "so long as he lives quietly in the caves and recesses of which you speak. Yes, there may be happiness, though such as few would envy; but, then, the hook and line —"

"Which, there is reason to apprehend, will shortly destroy the happiness of our friend the trout," interrupted Edward, pointing down the stream. "There is an angler on his way toward us, who will intercept him."

"He seems to care little for the sport, to judge by the pace at which he walks," said Ellen.

"But he sees, now, that we are observing him, and is willing to prove that he knows something of the art," replied Edward Walcott. "I should think him well acquainted with the stream; for, hastily as he walks, he has tried every pool and ripple where a fish usually hides. But that point will be decided when he reaches yonder old bare oak-tree."

"And how is the old tree to decide the question?" inquired Fanshawe. "It is a species of evidence of which I have never before heard."

"The stream has worn a hollow under its roots," answered Edward, — "a most delicate retreat for a trout. Now, a stranger would not discover the spot; or, if he did, the probable result of a cast would be the loss of

hook and line, — an accident that has occurred to me more than once. If, therefore, this angler takes a fish from thence, it follows that he knows the stream.”

They observed the fisher, accordingly, as he kept his way up the bank. He did not pause when he reached the old leafless oak, that formed with its roots an obstruction very common in American streams; but, throwing his line with involuntary skill as he passed, he not only escaped the various entanglements, but drew forth a fine large fish.

“There, Ellen, he has captivated your *protégé*, the trout, or, at least, one very like him in size,” observed Edward. “It is singular,” he added, gazing earnestly at the man.

“Why is it singular?” inquired Ellen Langton. “This person, perhaps, resides in the neighborhood, and may have fished often in the stream.”

“Do but look at him, Ellen, and judge whether his life can have been spent in this lonely valley,” he replied. “The glow of many a hotter sun than ours has darkened his brow; and his step and air have something foreign in them, like what we see in sailors who have lived more in other countries than in their own. Is it not so, Ellen? for your education in a seaport must have given you skill in these matters. But come, let us approach nearer.”

They walked towards the angler, accordingly, who still remained under the oak, apparently engaged in arranging his fishing-tackle. As the party drew nigh, he raised his head, and threw one quick, scrutinizing glance towards them, disclosing, on his part, a set of bold and

rather coarse features, weather-beaten, but indicating the age of the owner to be not above thirty. In person he surpassed the middle size, was well set, and evidently strong and active.

"Do you meet with much success, sir?" inquired Edward Walcott, when within a convenient distance for conversation.

"I have taken but one fish," replied the angler, in an accent which his hearers could scarcely determine to be foreign, or the contrary. "I am a stranger to the stream, and have doubtless passed over many a likely place for sport."

"You have an angler's eye, sir," rejoined Edward. "I observed that you made your casts as if you had often trod these banks, and I could scarcely have guided you better myself."

"Yes, I have learned the art, and I love to practise it," replied the man. "But will not the young lady try her skill?" he continued, casting a bold eye on Ellen. "The fish will love to be drawn out by such white hands as those."

Ellen shrank back, though almost imperceptibly, from the free bearing of the man. It seemed meant for courtesy; but its effect was excessively disagreeable. Edward Walcott, who perceived and coincided in Ellen's feelings, replied to the stranger's proposal.

"The young lady will not put the gallantry of the fish to the proof, sir," he said, "and she will therefore have no occasion for your own."

"I shall take leave to hear my answer from the young lady's own mouth," answered the stranger, haughtily.

“If you will step this way, Miss Langton” (here he interrupted himself), — “if you will cast the line by yonder sunken log, I think you will meet with success.”

Thus saying, the angler offered his rod and line to Ellen. She at first drew back, then hesitated, but finally held out her hand to receive them. In thus complying with the stranger’s request, she was actuated by a desire to keep the peace, which, as her notice of Edward Walcott’s crimsoned cheek and flashing eye assured her, was considerably endangered. The angler led the way to the spot which he had pointed out, which, though not at such a distance from Ellen’s companions but that words in a common tone could be distinguished, was out of the range of a lowered voice.

Edward Walcott and the student remained by the oak: the former biting his lip with vexation; the latter, whose abstraction always vanished where Ellen was concerned, regarding her and the stranger with fixed and silent attention. The young men could at first hear the words that the angler addressed to Ellen. They related to the mode of managing the rod; and she made one or two casts under his direction. At length, however, as if to offer his assistance, the man advanced close to her side, and seemed to speak, but in so low a tone, that the sense of what he uttered was lost before it reached the oak. But its effect upon Ellen was immediate and very obvious. Her eyes flashed; and an indignant blush rose high on her cheek, giving to her beauty a haughty brightness, of which the gentleness of her disposition in general deprived it. The next moment, however, she

seemed to recollect herself, and, restoring the angling-rod to its owner, she turned away calmly, and approached her companions.

“The evening breeze grows chill ; and mine is a dress for a summer day,” she observed. “Let us walk homeward.”

“Miss Langton, is it the evening breeze alone that sends you homeward ?” inquired Edward.

At this moment the angler, who had resumed, and seemed to be intent upon, his occupation, drew a fish from the pool, which he had pointed out to Ellen.

“I told the young lady,” he exclaimed, “that, if she would listen to me a moment longer, she would be repaid for her trouble ; and here is the proof of my words.”

“Come, let us hasten towards home,” cried Ellen, eagerly ; and she took Edward Walcott’s arm, with a freedom that, at another time, would have enchanted him. He at first seemed inclined to resist her wishes, but complied, after exchanging, unperceived by Ellen, a glance with the stranger, the meaning of which the latter appeared perfectly to understand. Fanshawe also attended her. Their walk towards Dr. Melmoth’s dwelling was almost a silent one ; and the few words that passed between them did not relate to the adventure which occupied the thoughts of each. On arriving at the house, Ellen’s attendants took leave of her, and retired.

Edward Walcott, eluding Fanshawe’s observation with little difficulty, hastened back to the old oak-tree. From the intelligence with which the stranger had received his meaning glance, the young man had supposed that he

would here await his return. But the banks of the stream, upward and downward, so far as his eye could reach, were solitary. He could see only his own image in the water, where it swept into a silent depth; and could hear only its ripple, where stones and sunken trees impeded its course. The object of his search might, indeed, have found concealment among the tufts of alders, or in the forest that was near at hand; but thither it was in vain to pursue him. The angler had apparently set little store by the fruits of his assumed occupation; for the last fish that he had taken lay, yet alive, on the bank, gasping for the element to which Edward was sufficiently compassionate to restore him. After watching him as he glided down the stream, making feeble efforts to resist its current, the youth turned away, and sauntered slowly towards the college.

Ellen Langton, on her return from her walk, found Dr. Melmoth's little parlor unoccupied; that gentleman being deeply engaged in his study, and his lady busied in her domestic affairs. The evening, notwithstanding Ellen's remark concerning the chillness of the breeze, was almost sultry; and the windows of the apartment were thrown open. At one of these, which looked into the garden, she seated herself, listening, almost unconsciously, to the monotonous music of a thousand insects, varied occasionally by the voice of a whippoorwill, who, as the day departed, was just commencing his song. A dusky tint, as yet almost imperceptible, was beginning to settle on the surrounding objects, except where they were opposed to the purple and golden clouds, which the vanished sun had made the brief inheritors of a por-

tion of his brightness. In these gorgeous vapors, Ellen's fancy, in the interval of other thoughts, pictured a fairy-land, and longed for wings to visit it.

But as the clouds lost their brilliancy, and assumed first a dull purple, and then a sullen gray tint, Ellen's thoughts recurred to the adventure of the angler, which her imagination was inclined to invest with an undue singularity. It was, however, sufficiently unaccountable that an entire stranger should venture to demand of her a private audience; and she assigned, in turn, a thousand motives for such a request, none of which were in any degree satisfactory. Her most prevailing thought, though she could not justify it to her reason, inclined her to believe that the angler was a messenger from her father. But wherefore he should deem it necessary to communicate any intelligence that he might possess only by means of a private interview, and without the knowledge of her friends, was a mystery she could not solve. In this view of the matter, however, she half regretted that her instinctive delicacy had impelled her so suddenly to break off their conference, admitting, in the secrecy of her own mind, that, if an opportunity were again to occur, it might not again be shunned. As if that unuttered thought had power to conjure up its object, she now became aware of a form standing in the garden, at a short distance from the window where she sat. The dusk had deepened, during Ellen's abstraction, to such a degree, that the man's features were not perfectly distinguishable; but the maiden was not long in doubt of his identity, for he approached, and spoke in the same low tone in which he had addressed her when they stood by the stream.

“Do you still refuse my request, when its object is but your own good, and that of one who should be most dear to you?” he asked.

Ellen's first impulse had been to cry out for assistance; her second was to fly: but, rejecting both these measures, she determined to remain, endeavoring to persuade herself that she was safe. The quivering of her voice, however, when she attempted to reply, betrayed her apprehensions.

“I cannot listen to such a request from a stranger,” she said. “If you bring news from — from my father, why is it not told to Dr. Melmoth?”

“Because what I have to say is for your ear alone,” was the reply; “and if you would avoid misfortune now, and sorrow hereafter, you will not refuse to hear me.”

“And does it concern my father?” asked Ellen, eagerly.

“It does — most deeply,” answered the stranger.

She meditated a moment, and then replied, “I will not refuse, I will hear — but speak quickly.”

“We are in danger of interruption in this place, and that would be fatal to my errand,” said the stranger. “I will await you in the garden.”

With these words, and giving her no opportunity for reply, he drew back; and his form faded from her eyes. This precipitate retreat from argument was the most probable method that he could have adopted of gaining his end. He had awakened the strongest interest in Ellen's mind; and he calculated justly in supposing that she would consent to an interview upon his own terms.

Dr. Melmoth had followed his own fancies in the mode of laying out his garden; and, in consequence, the plan that had undoubtedly existed in his mind was utterly incomprehensible to every one but himself. It was an intermixture of kitchen and flower garden, a labyrinth of winding paths, bordered by hedges, and impeded by shrubbery. Many of the original trees of the forest were still flourishing among the exotics which the doctor had transplanted thither. It was not without a sensation of fear, stronger than she had ever before experienced, that Ellen Langton found herself in this artificial wilderness, and in the presence of the mysterious stranger. The dusky light deepened the lines of his dark, strong features; and Ellen fancied that his countenance wore a wilder and a fiercer look than when she had met him by the stream. He perceived her agitation, and addressed her in the softest tones of which his voice was capable.

“Compose yourself,” he said; “you have nothing to fear from me. But we are in open view from the house, where we now stand; and discovery would not be without danger to both of us.”

“No eye can see us here,” said Ellen, trembling at the truth of her own observation, when they stood beneath a gnarled, low-branched pine, which Dr. Melmoth’s ideas of beauty had caused him to retain in his garden. “Speak quickly; for I dare follow you no farther.”

The spot was indeed sufficiently solitary; and the stranger delayed no longer to explain his errand.

“Your father,” he began, — “do you not love him? Would you do aught for his welfare?”

“Everything that a father could ask I would do,”

exclaimed Ellen, eagerly. "Where is my father? and when shall I meet him?"

"It must depend upon yourself, whether you shall meet him in a few days or never."

"Never!" repeated Ellen. "Is he ill? Is he in danger?"

"He is in danger," replied the man, "but not from illness. Your father is a ruined man. Of all his friends, but one remains to him. That friend has travelled far to prove if his daughter has a daughter's affection."

"And what is to be the proof?" asked Ellen, with more calmness than the stranger had anticipated; for she possessed a large fund of plain sense, which revolted against the mystery of these proceedings. Such a course, too, seemed discordant with her father's character, whose strong mind and almost cold heart were little likely to demand, or even to pardon, the romance of affection.

"This letter will explain," was the reply to Ellen's question. "You will see that it is in your father's hand; and that may gain your confidence, though I am doubted."

She received the letter; and many of her suspicions of the stranger's truth were vanquished by the apparent openness of his manner. He was preparing to speak further, but paused, for a footstep was now heard, approaching from the lower part of the garden. From their situation, — at some distance from the path, and in the shade of the tree, — they had a fair chance of eluding discovery from any unsuspecting passenger; and, when Ellen saw that the intruder was Fanshawe, she hoped that his usual abstraction would assist their concealment.

But, as the student advanced along the path, his air was not that of one whose deep inward thoughts withdrew his attention from all outward objects. He rather resembled the hunter, on the watch for his game ; and, while he was yet at a distance from Ellen, a wandering gust of wind waved her white garment, and betrayed her.

"It is as I feared," said Fanshawe to himself. He then drew nigh, and addressed Ellen with a calm authority that became him well, notwithstanding that his years scarcely exceeded her own. "Miss Langton," he inquired, "what do you here at such an hour, and with such a companion?"

Ellen was sufficiently displeased at what she deemed the unauthorized intrusion of Fanshawe in her affairs ; but his imposing manner and her own confusion prevented her from replying.

"Permit me to lead you to the house," he continued in the words of a request, but in the tone of a command. "The dew hangs dank and heavy on these branches ; and a longer stay would be more dangerous than you are aware."

Ellen would fain have resisted ; but though the tears hung as heavy on her eyelashes, between shame and anger, as the dew upon the leaves, she felt compelled to accept the arm that he offered her. But the stranger, who, since Fanshawe's approach, had remained a little apart, now advanced.

"You speak as one in authority, young man," he said. "Have you the means of compelling obedience ? Does your power extend to men ? Or do you rule only over simple girls ? Miss Langton is under my protection,

and, till you can bend me to your will, she shall remain so."

Fanshawe turned calmly, and fixed his eyes on the stranger. "Retire, sir," was all he said.

Ellen almost shuddered, as if there were a mysterious and unearthly power in Fanshawe's voice; for she saw that the stranger endeavored in vain, borne down by the influence of a superior mind, to maintain the boldness of look and bearing that seemed natural to him. He at first made a step forward, then muttered a few half-audible words; but, quailing at length beneath the young man's bright and steady eye, he turned and slowly withdrew.

Fanshawe remained silent a moment after his opponent had departed; and, when he next spoke, it was in a tone of depression. Ellen observed, also, that his countenance had lost its look of pride and authority; and he seemed faint and exhausted. The occasion that called forth his energies had passed; and they had left him.

"Forgive me, Miss Langton," he said almost humbly, "if my eagerness to serve you has led me too far. There is evil in this stranger, more than your pure mind can conceive. I know not what has been his errand; but let me entreat you to put confidence in those to whose care your father has intrusted you. Or if I — or — or Edward Walcott — But I have no right to advise you; and your own calm thoughts will guide you best."

He said no more; and, as Ellen did not reply, they reached the house, and parted in silence.



CHAPTER IV.

“The seeds by nature planted
Take a deep root in the soil, and though for a time
The trenchant share and tearing harrow may
Sweep all appearance of them from the surface,
Yet with the first warm rains of spring they'll shoot,
And with their rankness smother the good grain.
Heaven grant, it may n't be so with him.”

RICHES.

THE scene of this tale must now be changed to the little inn, which at that period, as at the present, was situated in the vicinity of Harley College. The site of the modern establishment is the same with that of the ancient; but everything of the latter that had been built by hands has gone to decay and been removed, and only the earth beneath and around it remains the same. The modern building, a house of two stories, after a lapse of twenty years, is yet unfinished. On this account, it has retained the appellation of the “New Inn,” though, like many who have frequented it, it has grown old ere its maturity. Its dingy whiteness, and its apparent superfluity of windows (many of them being closed with rough boards), give it somewhat of a dreary look, especially in a wet day.

The ancient inn was a house, of which the eaves approached within about seven feet of the ground; while the roof, sloping gradually upward, formed an angle at several times that height. It was a comfortable and pleasant abode to the weary traveller, both in summer and winter; for the frost never ventured within the sphere of its huge hearths; and it was protected from the heat of the sultry season by three large elms that swept the roof with their long branches, and seemed to create a breeze where there was not one. The device upon the sign, suspended from one of these trees, was a hand holding a long-necked bottle, and was much more appropriate than the present unmeaning representation of a black eagle. But it is necessary to speak rather more at length of the landlord than of the house over which he presided.

Hugh Crombie was one for whom most of the wise men, who considered the course of his early years, had predicted the gallows as an end before he should arrive at middle age. That these prophets of ill had been deceived was evident from the fact that the doomed man had now passed the fortieth year, and was in more prosperous circumstances than most of those who had wagged their tongues against him. Yet the failure of their forebodings was more remarkable than their fulfilment would have been.

He had been distinguished, almost from his earliest infancy, by those precocious accomplishments, which, because they consist in an imitation of the vices and follies of maturity, render a boy the favorite plaything of men. He seemed to have received from nature the

convivial talents, which, whether natural or acquired, are a most dangerous possession; and, before his twelfth year, he was the welcome associate of all the idle and dissipated of his neighborhood, and especially of those who haunted the tavern of which he had now become the landlord. Under this course of education, Hugh Crombie grew to youth and manhood; and the lovers of good words could only say in his favor, that he was a greater enemy to himself than to any one else, and that, if he should reform, few would have a better chance of prosperity than he.

The former clause of this modicum of praise (if praise it may be termed) was indisputable; but it may be doubted, whether, under any circumstances where his success depended on his own exertions, Hugh would have made his way well through the world. He was one of those unfortunate persons, who, instead of being perfect in any single art or occupation, are superficial in many, and who are supposed to possess a larger share of talent than other men, because it consists of numerous scraps, instead of a single mass. He was partially acquainted with most of the manual arts that gave bread to others; but not one of them, nor all of them, would give bread to him. By some fatality, the only two of his multifarious accomplishments in which his excellence was generally conceded were both calculated to keep him poor rather than to make him rich. He was a musician and a poet.

There are yet remaining in that portion of the country many ballads and songs, — set to their own peculiar tunes, — the authorship of which is attributed to him.



In general, his productions were upon subjects of local and temporary interest, and would consequently require a bulk of explanatory notes to render them interesting or intelligible to the world at large. A considerable proportion of the remainder are Anacreontics; though, in their construction, Hugh Crombie imitated neither the Teian nor any other bard. These latter have generally a coarseness and sensuality intolerable to minds even of no very fastidious delicacy. But there are two or three simple little songs, into which a feeling and a natural pathos have found their way, that still retain their influence over the heart. These, after two or three centuries, may perhaps be precious to the collectors of our early poetry. At any rate, Hugh Crombie's effusions, tavern-haunter and vagrant though he was, have gained a continuance of fame (confined, indeed, to a narrow section of the country) which many who called themselves poets then, and would have scorned such a brother, have failed to equal.

During the long winter evenings, when the farmers were idle round their hearths, Hugh was a courted guest; for none could while away the hours more skillfully than he. The winter, therefore, was his season of prosperity; in which respect he differed from the butterflies and useless insects, to which he otherwise bore a resemblance. During the cold months, a very desirable alteration for the better appeared in his outward man. His cheeks were plump and sanguine; his eyes bright and cheerful; and the tip of his nose glowed with a Bardolphian fire, — a flame, indeed, which Hugh was so far a vestal as to supply with its necessary fuel at all

seasons of the year. But, as the spring advanced, he assumed a lean and sallow look, wilting and fading in the sunshine that brought life and joy to every animal and vegetable except himself. His winter patrons eyed him with an austere regard; and some even practised upon him the modern and fashionable courtesy of the "cut direct."

Yet, after all, there was good, or something that Nature intended to be so, in the poor outcast, — some lovely flowers, the sweeter even for the weeds that choked them. An instance of this was his affection for an aged father, whose whole support was the broken reed, — his son. Notwithstanding his own necessities, Hugh contrived to provide food and raiment for the old man: how, it would be difficult to say, and perhaps as well not to inquire. He also exhibited traits of sensitiveness to neglect and insult, and of gratitude for favors; both of which feelings a course of life like his is usually quick to eradicate.

At length the restraint — for such his father had ever been — upon Hugh Crombie's conduct was removed by his death; and then the wise men and the old began to shake their heads; and they who took pleasure in the follies, vices, and misfortunes of their fellow-creatures, looked for a speedy gratification. They were disappointed, however; for Hugh had apparently determined, that, whatever might be his catastrophe, he would meet it among strangers, rather than at home. Shortly after his father's death, he disappeared altogether from the vicinity; and his name became, in the course of years, an unusual sound, where once the lack of other topics of

interest had given it a considerable degree of notoriety. Sometimes, however, when the winter blast was loud round the lonely farm-house, its inmates remembered him who had so often chased away the gloom of such an hour, and, though with little expectation of its fulfilment, expressed a wish to behold him again.

Yet that wish, formed, perhaps, because it appeared so desperate, was finally destined to be gratified. One summer evening, about two years previous to the period of this tale, a man of sober and staid deportment, mounted upon a white horse, arrived at the Hand and Bottle, to which some civil or military meeting had chanced, that day, to draw most of the inhabitants of the vicinity. The stranger was well though plainly dressed; and anywhere but in a retired country town would have attracted no particular attention: but here, where a traveller was not of every-day occurrence, he was soon surrounded by a little crowd, who, when his eye was averted, seized the opportunity diligently to peruse his person. He was rather a thick-set man, but with no superfluous flesh; his hair was of iron-gray; he had a few wrinkles; his face was so deeply sunburnt, that, excepting a half-smothered glow on the tip of his nose, a dusky yellow was the only apparent hue. As the people gazed, it was observed that the elderly men, and the men of substance, gat themselves silently to their steeds, and hied homeward with an unusual degree of haste; till at length the inn was deserted, except by a few wretched objects to whom it was a constant resort. These, instead of retreating, drew closer to the traveller, peeping anxiously into his face, and asking, ever and anon, a question, in

order to discover the tone of his voice. At length, with one consent, and as if the recognition had at once burst upon them, they hailed their old boon-companion, Hugh Crombie, and, leading him into the inn, did him the honor to partake of a cup of welcome at his expense.

But, though Hugh readily acknowledged the not very reputable acquaintances who alone acknowledged him, they speedily discovered that he was an altered man. He partook with great moderation of the liquor for which he was to pay; he declined all their flattering entreaties for one of his old songs; and finally, being urged to engage in a game at all-fours, he calmly observed, almost in the words of an old clergyman on a like occasion, that his principles forbade a profane appeal to the decision by lot.

On the next Sabbath Hugh Crombie made his appearance at public worship in the chapel of Harley College; and here his outward demeanor was unexceptionably serious and devout, — a praise which, on that particular occasion, could be bestowed on few besides. From these favorable symptoms, the old established prejudices against him began to waver; and as he seemed not to need, and to have no intention to ask, the assistance of any one, he was soon generally acknowledged by the rich as well as by the poor. His account of his past life, and of his intentions for the future, was brief, but not unsatisfactory. He said that, since his departure, he had been a seafaring man, and that, having acquired sufficient property to render him easy in the decline of his days, he had returned to live and die in the town of his nativity.

There was one person, and the one whom Hugh was most interested to please, who seemed perfectly satisfied of the verity of his reformation. This was the landlady of the inn, whom, at his departure, he had left a gay, and, even at thirty-five, a rather pretty wife, and whom, on his return, he found a widow of fifty, fat, yellow, wrinkled, and a zealous member of the church. She, like others, had at first cast a cold eye on the wanderer; but it shortly became evident to close observers, that a change was at work in the pious matron's sentiments respecting her old acquaintance. She was now careful to give him his morning dram from her own peculiar bottle, to fill his pipe from her private box of Virginia, and to mix for him the sleeping-cup in which her late husband had delighted. Of all these courtesies Hugh Crombie did partake with a wise and cautious moderation, that, while it proved them to be welcome, expressed his fear of trespassing on her kindness. For the sake of brevity, it shall suffice to say, that, about six weeks after Hugh's return, a writing appeared on one of the elm-trees in front of the tavern (where, as the place of greatest resort, such notices were usually displayed), setting forth that marriage was intended between Hugh Crombie and the Widow Sarah Hutchins. And the ceremony, which made Hugh a landholder, a householder, and a substantial man, in due time took place.

As a landlord, his general conduct was very praiseworthy. He was moderate in his charges, and attentive to his guests; he allowed no gross and evident disorders in his house, and practised none himself; he was kind and charitable to such as needed food and lodging, and

had not wherewithal to pay, — for with these his experience had doubtless given him a fellow-feeling. He was also sufficiently attentive to his wife; though it must be acknowledged that the religious zeal which had had a considerable influence in gaining her affections grew, by no moderate degrees, less fervent. It was whispered, too, that the new landlord could, when time, place, and company were to his mind, upraise a song as merrily, and drink a glass as jollily, as in the days of yore. These were the weightiest charges that could now be brought against him; and wise men thought, that, whatever might have been the evil of his past life, he had returned with a desire (which years of vice, if they do not sometimes produce, do not always destroy) of being honest, if opportunity should offer; and Hugh had certainly a fair one.

On the afternoon previous to the events related in the last chapter, the personage whose introduction to the reader has occupied so large a space was seated under one of the elms in front of his dwelling. The bench which now sustained him, and on which were carved the names of many former occupants, was Hugh Crombie's favorite lounging-place, unless when his attentions were required by his guests. No demand had that day been made upon the hospitality of the Hand and Bottle; and the landlord was just then murmuring at the unfrequency of employment. The slenderness of his profits, indeed, were no part of his concern; for the Widow Hutchins's chief income was drawn from her farm, nor was Hugh ever miserly inclined. But his education and habits had made him delight in the atmosphere of the inn, and in

the society of those who frequented it ; and of this species of enjoyment his present situation certainly did not afford an overplus.

Yet had Hugh Crombie an enviable appearance of indolence and ease, as he sat under the old tree, polluting the sweet air with his pipe, and taking occasional draughts from a brown jug that stood near at hand. The basis of the potation contained in this vessel was harsh old cider, from the widow's own orchard ; but its coldness and acidity were rendered innocuous by a due proportion of yet older brandy. The result of this mixture was extremely felicitous, pleasant to the taste, and producing a tingling sensation on the coats of the stomach, uncommonly delectable to so old a toper as Hugh.

The landlord cast his eye, ever and anon, along the road that led down the valley in the direction of the village ; and at last, when the sun was wearing westward, he discovered the approach of a horseman. He immediately replenished his pipe, took a long draught from the brown jug, summoned the ragged youth who officiated in most of the subordinate departments of the inn, and who was now to act as hostler, and then prepared himself for confabulation with his guest.

“ He comes from the sea-coast,” said Hugh to himself, as the traveller emerged into open view on the level road. “ He is two days in advance of the post, with its news of a fortnight old. Pray Heaven he prove communicative ! ” Then, as the stranger drew nigher, “ One would judge that his dark face had seen as hot a sun as mine. He has felt the burning breeze of the Indies, East and West, I warrant him. Ah, I see we shall send away the even-

ing merrily! Not a penny shall come out of his purse,— that is, if his tongue runs glibly. Just the man I was praying for— Now may the Devil take me if he is!” interrupted Hugh in accents of alarm, and starting from his seat. He composed his countenance, however, with the power that long habit and necessity had given him over his emotions, and again settled himself quietly on the bench.

The traveller, coming on at a moderate pace, alighted, and gave his horse to the ragged hostler. He then advanced towards the door near which Hugh was seated, whose agitation was manifested by no perceptible sign, except by the shorter and more frequent puffs with which he plied his pipe. Their eyes did not meet till just as the stranger was about to enter, when he started apparently with a surprise and alarm similar to those of Hugh Crombie. He recovered himself, however, sufficiently to return the nod of recognition with which he was favored, and immediately entered the house, the landlord following.

“This way, if you please, sir,” said Hugh. “You will find this apartment cool and retired.”

He ushered his guest into a small room the windows of which were darkened by the creeping plants that clustered round them. Entering, and closing the door, the two gazed at each other a little space without speaking. The traveller first broke silence.

“Then this is your living self, Hugh Crombie?” he said. The landlord extended his hand as a practical reply to the question. The stranger took it, though with no especial appearance of cordiality.

"Ay, this seems to be flesh and blood," he said, in the tone of one who would willingly have found it otherwise. "And how happens this, friend Hugh? I little thought to meet you again in this life. When I last heard from you, your prayers were said, and you were bound for a better world."

"There would have been small danger of your meeting me there," observed the landlord, dryly.

"It is an unquestionable truth, Hugh," replied the traveller. "For which reason I regret that your voyage was delayed."

"Nay, that is a hard word to bestow on your old comrade," said Hugh Crombie. "The world is wide enough for both of us; and why should you wish me out of it?"

"Wide as it is," rejoined the stranger, "we have stumbled against each other, — to the pleasure of neither of us, if I may judge from your countenance. Methinks I am not a welcome guest at Hugh Crombie's inn."

"Your welcome must depend on the cause of your coming, and the length of your stay," replied the landlord.

"And what if I come to settle down among these quiet hills where I was born?" inquired the other. "What if I, too, am weary of the life we have led, — or afraid, perhaps, that it will come to too speedy an end? Shall I have your good word, Hugh, to set me up in an honest way of life? Or will you make me a partner in your trade, since you know my qualifications? A pretty pair of publicans should we be; and the quart pot would have little fest between us."

"It may be as well to replenish it now," observed Hugh, stepping to the door of the room, and giving orders accordingly. "A meeting between old friends should never be dry. But for the partnership, it is a matter in which you must excuse me. Heaven knows I find it hard enough to be honest, with no tempter but the Devil and my own thoughts; and, if I have you also to contend with, there is little hope of me."

"Nay, that is true. Your good resolutions were always like cobwebs, and your evil habits like five-inch cables," replied the traveller. "I am to understand, then, that you refuse my offer?"

"Not only that; but, if you have chosen this valley as your place of rest, Dame Crombie and I must look through the world for another. But hush! here comes the wine."

The hostler, in the performance of another part of his duty, now appeared, bearing a measure of the liquor that Hugh had ordered. The wine of that period, owing to the comparative lowness of the duties, was of more moderate price than in the mother-country, and of purer and better quality than at the present day.

"The stuff is well chosen, Hugh," observed the guest, after a draught large enough to authorize an opinion. "You have most of the requisites for your present station; and I should be sorry to draw you from it. I trust there will be no need."

"Yet you have a purpose in your journey hither," observed his comrade.

"Yes; and you would fain be informed of it," replied

the traveller. He arose, and walked once or twice across the room; then, seeming to have taken his resolution, he paused, and fixed his eye steadfastly on Hugh Crombie. "I could wish, my old acquaintance," he said, "that your lot had been cast anywhere rather than here. Yet, if you choose it, you may do me a good office, and one that shall meet with a good reward. Can I trust you?"

"My secrecy, you can," answered the host, "but nothing further. I know the nature of your plans, and whither they would lead me, too well to engage in them. To say the truth, since it concerns not me, I have little desire to hear your secret."

"And I as little to tell it, I do assure you," rejoined the guest. "I have always loved to manage my affairs myself, and to keep them to myself. It is a good rule; but it must sometimes be broken. And now, Hugh, how is it that you have become possessed of this comfortable dwelling and of these pleasant fields?"

"By my marriage with the Widow Sarah Hutchins," replied Hugh Crombie, staring at a question which seemed to have little reference to the present topic of conversation.

"It is a most excellent method of becoming a man of substance," continued the traveller; "attended with little trouble, and honest withal."

"Why, as to the trouble," said the landlord, "it follows such a bargain, instead of going before it. And for honesty, — I do not recollect that I have gained a penny more honestly these twenty years."

"I can swear to that," observed his comrade. "Well, mine host, I entirely approve of your doings, and, more-

over, have resolved to prosper after the same fashion myself."

"If that be the commodity you seek," replied Hugh Crombie, "you will find none here to your mind. We have widows in plenty, it is true; but most of them have children, and few have houses and lands. But now to be serious, — and there has been something serious in your eye all this while, — what is your purpose in coming hither? You are not safe here. Your name has had a wider spread than mine, and, if discovered, it will go hard with you."

"But who would know me now?" asked the guest.

"Few, few indeed!" replied the landlord, gazing at the dark features of his companion, where hardship, peril, and dissipation had each left their traces. "No, you are not like the slender boy of fifteen, who stood on the hill by moonlight to take a last look at his father's cottage. There were tears in your eyes then; and, as often as I remember them, I repent that I did not turn you back, instead of leading you on."

"Tears, were there? Well, there have been few enough since," said his comrade, pressing his eyelids firmly together, as if even then tempted to give way to the weakness that he scorned. "And, for turning me back, Hugh, it was beyond your power. I had taken my resolution, and you did but show me the way to execute it."

"You have not inquired after those you left behind," observed Hugh Crombie.

"No — no; nor will I have aught of them," exclaimed the traveller, starting from his seat, and pacing rapidly

across the room. "My father, I know, is dead, and I have forgiven him. My mother — what could I hear of her but misery? I will hear nothing."

"You must have passed the cottage as you rode hitherward," said Hugh. "How could you forbear to enter?"

"I did not see it," he replied. "I closed my eyes, and turned away my head."

"O, if I had had a mother, a loving mother! if there had been one being in the world that loved me, or cared for me, I should not have become an utter castaway," exclaimed Hugh Crombie.

The landlord's pathos, like all pathos that flows from the winecup, was sufficiently ridiculous; and his companion, who had already overcome his own brief feelings of sorrow and remorse, now laughed aloud.

"Come, come, mine host of the Hand and Bottle," he cried in his usual hard, sarcastic tone; "be a man as much as in you lies. You had always a foolish trick of repentance; but, as I remember, it was commonly of a morning, before you had swallowed your first dram. And now, Hugh, fill the quart pot again, and we will to business."

When the landlord had complied with the wishes of his guest, the latter resumed in a lower tone than that of his ordinary conversation, —

"There is a young lady lately become a resident hereabouts. Perhaps you can guess her name; for you have a quick apprehension in these matters."

"A young lady?" repeated Hugh Crombie. "And what is your concern with her? Do you mean Ellen

Langton, daughter of the old merchant Langton, whom you have some cause to remember?"

"I do remember him; but he is where he will speedily be forgotten," answered the traveller. "And this girl, — I know your eye has been upon her, Hugh, — describe her to me."

"Describe her!" exclaimed Hugh with much animation. "It is impossible in prose; but you shall have her very picture in a verse of one of my own songs."

"Nay, mine host, I beseech you to spare me. This is no time for quavering," said the guest. "However, I am proud of your approbation, my old friend; for this young lady do I intend to take to wife. What think you of the plan?"

Hugh Crombie gazed into his companion's face for the space of a moment, in silence. There was nothing in its expression that looked like a jest. It still retained the same hard, cold look, that, except when Hugh had alluded to his home and family, it had worn through their whole conversation.

"On my word, comrade!" he at length replied, "my advice is, that you give over your application to the quart pot, and refresh your brain by a short nap. And yet your eye is cool and steady. What is the meaning of this?"

"Listen, and you shall know," said the guest. "The old man, her father, is in his grave."

"Not a bloody grave, I trust," interrupted the landlord, starting, and looking fearfully into his comrade's face.

"No, a watery one," he replied calmly. "You see,

Hugh, I am a better man than you took me for. The old man's blood is not on my head, though my wrongs are on his. Now listen : he had no heir but this only daughter ; and to her, and to the man she marries, all his wealth will belong. She shall marry me. Think you her father will rest easy in the ocean, Hugh Crombie, when I am his son-in-law ? ”

“ No, he will rise up to prevent it, if need be,” answered the landlord. “ But the dead need not interpose to frustrate so wild a scheme.”

“ I understand you,” said his comrade. “ You are of opinion that the young lady's consent may not be so soon won as asked. Fear not for that, mine host. I have a winning way with me, when opportunity serves ; and it shall serve with Ellen Langton. I will have no rivals in my wooing.”

“ Your intention, if I take it rightly, is to get this poor girl into your power, and then to force her into a marriage,” said Hugh Crombie.

“ It is ; and I think I possess the means of doing it,” replied his comrade. “ But methinks, friend Hugh, my enterprise has not your good wishes.”

“ No ; and I pray you to give it over,” said Hugh Crombie, very earnestly. “ The girl is young, lovely, and as good as she is fair. I cannot aid in her ruin. Nay, more : I must prevent it.”

“ Prevent it ! ” exclaimed the traveller, with a darkening countenance. “ Think twice before you stir in this matter, I advise you. Ruin, do you say ? Does a girl call it ruin to be made an honest wedded wife ? No, no, mine host ! nor does a widow either, else have you much to answer for.”

“I gave the Widow Hutchins fair play, at least, which is more than poor Ellen is like to get,” observed the landlord. “My old comrade, will you not give up this scheme?”

“My old comrade, I will not give up this scheme,” returned the other, composedly. “Why, Hugh, what has come over you since we last met? Have we not done twenty worse deeds of a morning, and laughed over them at night?”

“He is right there,” said Hugh Crombie, in a meditative tone. “Of a certainty, my conscience has grown unreasonably tender within the last two years. This one small sin, if I were to aid in it, would add but a trifle to the sum of mine. But then the poor girl!”

His companion overheard him thus communing with himself, and, having had much former experience of his infirmity of purpose, doubted not that he should bend him to his will. In fact, his arguments were so effectual, that Hugh at length, though reluctantly, promised his co-operation. It was necessary that their motions should be speedy; for on the second day thereafter, the arrival of the post would bring intelligence of the shipwreck by which Mr. Langton had perished.

“And after the deed is done,” said the landlord, “I beseech you never to cross my path again. There have been more wicked thoughts in my head within the last hour than for the whole two years that I have been an honest man.”

“What a saint art thou become, Hugh!” said his comrade. “But fear not that we shall meet again. When I leave this valley, it will be to enter it no more.”

“And there is little danger that any other who has known me will chance upon me here,” observed Hugh Crombie. “Our trade was unfavorable to length of days, and I suppose most of our old comrades have arrived at the end of theirs.”

“One whom you knew well is nearer to you than you think,” answered the traveller; “for I did not travel hitherward entirely alone.”





CHAPTER V.

“A naughty night to swim in.” — SHAKESPEARE.

THE evening of the day succeeding the adventure of the angler was dark and tempestuous. The rain descended almost in a continuous sheet; and occasional powerful gusts of wind drove it hard against the northeastern windows of Hugh Crombie's inn. But at least one apartment of the interior presented a scene of comfort and of apparent enjoyment, the more delightful from its contrast with the elemental fury that raged without. A fire, which the chillness of the evening, though a summer one, made necessary, was burning brightly on the hearth; and in front was placed a small round table, sustaining wine and glasses. One of the guests for whom these preparations had been made was Edward Walcott: the other was a shy, awkward young man, distinguished, by the union of classic and rural dress, as having but lately become a student of Harley College. He seemed little at his ease, probably from a consciousness that he was on forbidden ground, and that the wine, of which he nevertheless swallowed a larger share than his companion, was an unlawful draught.

In the catalogue of crimes provided against by the laws of Harley College, that of tavern-haunting was one of the principal. The secluded situation of the seminary, indeed, gave its scholars but a very limited choice of vices; and this was, therefore, the usual channel by which the wildness of youth discharged itself. Edward Walcott, though naturally temperate, had been not an unfrequent offender in this respect, for which a superfluity both of time and money might plead some excuse. But, since his acquaintance with Ellen Langton, he had rarely entered Hugh Crombie's doors; and an interruption in that acquaintance was the cause of his present appearance there.

Edward's jealous pride had been considerably touched on Ellen's compliance with the request of the angler. He had, by degrees, imperceptible perhaps to himself, assumed the right of feeling displeased with her conduct; and she had, as imperceptibly, accustomed herself to consider what would be his wishes, and to act accordingly. He would, indeed, in no contingency have ventured an open remonstrance; and such a proceeding would have been attended by a result the reverse of what he desired. But there existed between them a silent compact (acknowledged perhaps by neither, but felt by both), according to which they had regulated the latter part of their intercourse. Their lips had yet spoken no word of love; but some of love's rights and privileges had been assumed on the one side, and at least not disallowed on the other.

Edward's penetration had been sufficiently quick to discover that there was a mystery about the angler, that

there must have been a cause for the blush that rose so proudly on Ellen's cheek ; and his Quixotism had been not a little mortified, because she did not immediately appeal to his protection. He had, however, paid his usual visit the next day at Dr. Melmoth's, expecting that, by a smile of more than common brightness, she would make amends to his wounded feelings ; such having been her usual mode of reparation in the few instances of disagreement that had occurred between them. But he was disappointed. He found her cold, silent, and abstracted, inattentive when he spoke, and indisposed to speak herself. Her eye was sedulously averted from his ; and the casual meeting of their glances only proved that there were feelings in her bosom which he did not share. He was unable to account for this change in her deportment ; and, added to his previous conceptions of his wrongs, it produced an effect upon his rather hasty temper, that might have manifested itself violently, but for the presence of Mrs. Melmoth. He took his leave in very evident displeasure ; but, just as he closed the door, he noticed an expression in Ellen's countenance, that, had they been alone, and had not he been quite so proud, would have drawn him down to her feet. Their eyes met, when, suddenly, there was a gush of tears into those of Ellen ; and a deep sadness, almost despair, spread itself over her features. He paused a moment, and then went his way, equally unable to account for her coldness, or for her grief. He was well aware, however, that his situation in respect to her was unaccountably changed, — a conviction so disagreeable, that, but for a hope that is

latent even in the despair of youthful hearts, he would have been sorely tempted to shoot himself.

The gloom of his thoughts — a mood of mind the more intolerable to him, because so unusual — had driven him to Hugh Crombie's inn in search of artificial excitement. But even the wine had no attractions; and his first glass stood now almost untouched before him, while he gazed in heavy thought into the glowing embers of the fire. His companion perceived his melancholy, and essayed to dispel it by a choice of such topics of conversation as he conceived would be most agreeable.

“There is a lady in the house,” he observed. “I caught a glimpse of her in the passage as we came in. Did you see her, Edward?”

“A lady!” repeated Edward, carelessly. “What know you of ladies? No, I did not see her; but I will venture to say that it was Dame Crombie's self, and no other.”

“Well, perhaps it might,” said the other, doubtfully. “Her head was turned from me, and she was gone like a shadow.”

“Dame Crombie is no shadow, and never vanishes like one,” resumed Edward. “You have mistaken the slipshod servant-girl for a lady.”

“Ay; but she had a white hand, a small white hand,” said the student, piqued at Edward's contemptuous opinion of his powers of observation; “as white as Ellen Langton's.” He paused; for the lover was offended by the profanity of the comparison, as was made evident by the blood that rushed to his brow.

“We will appeal to the landlord,” said Edward, re-

covering his equanimity, and turning to Hugh, who just then entered the room. "Who is this angel, mine host, that has taken up her abode in the Hand and Bottle?"

Hugh cast a quick glance from one to another before he answered, "I keep no angels here, gentlemen. Dame Crombie would make the house anything but heaven for them and me."

"And yet Glover has seen a vision in the passageway, — a lady with a small white hand."

"Ah, I understand! A slight mistake of the young gentleman's," said Hugh, with the air of one who could perfectly account for the mystery. "Our passageway is dark; or perhaps the light had dazzled his eyes. It was the Widow Fowler's daughter, that came to borrow a pipe of tobacco for her mother. By the same token, she put it into her own sweet mouth, and puffed as she went along."

"But the white hand," said Glover, only half convinced.

"Nay, I know not," answered Hugh. "But her hand was at least as white as her face: that I can swear. Well, gentlemen, I trust you find everything in my house to your satisfaction. When the fire needs renewing, or the wine runs low, be pleased to tap on the table. I shall appear with the speed of a sunbeam."

After the departure of the landlord, the conversation of the young men amounted to little more than monosyllables. Edward Walcott was wrapped in his own contemplations; and his companion was in a half-slumberous state, from which he started every quarter of an hour, at the chiming of the clock that stood in a corner. The fire

died gradually away ; the lamps began to burn dim ; and Glover, rousing himself from one of his periodical slumbers, was about to propose a return to their chambers. He was prevented, however, by the approach of footsteps along the passageway ; and Hugh Crombie, opening the door, ushered a person into the room, and retired.

The new-comer was Fanshawe. The water that poured plentifully from his cloak evinced that he had but just arrived at the inn ; but, whatever was his object, he seemed not to have attained it in meeting with the young men. He paused near the door, as if meditating whether to retire.

“ My intrusion is altogether owing to a mistake, either of the landlord’s or mine,” he said. “ I came hither to seek another person ; but, as I could not mention his name, my inquiries were rather vague.”

“ I thank Heaven for the chance that sent you to us,” replied Edward, rousing himself. “ Glover is wretched company ; and a duller evening have I never spent. We will renew our fire and our wine, and you must sit down with us. And for the man you seek,” he continued in a whisper, “ he left the inn within a half-hour after we encountered him. I inquired of Hugh Crombie last night.”

Fanshawe did not express his doubts of the correctness of the information on which Edward seemed to rely. Laying aside his cloak, he accepted his invitation to make one of the party, and sat down by the fireside.

The aspect of the evening now gradually changed. A strange wild glee spread from one to another of the party, which, much to the surprise of his companions, began

with, and was communicated from, Fanshawe. He seemed to overflow with conceptions inimitably ludicrous, but so singular, that, till his hearers had imbibed a portion of his own spirit, they could only wonder at, instead of enjoying them. His applications to the wine were very unfrequent; yet his conversation was such as one might expect from a bottle of champagne endowed by a fairy with the gift of speech. The secret of this strange mirth lay in the troubled state of his spirits, which, like the vexed ocean at midnight (if the simile be not too magnificent), tossed forth a mysterious brightness. The undefined apprehensions that had drawn him to the inn still distracted his mind; but, mixed with them, there was a sort of joy not easily to be described. By degrees, and by the assistance of the wine, the inspiration spread, each one contributing such a quantity, and such quality of wit and whim, as was proportioned to his genius; but each one, and all, displaying a greater share of both than they had ever been suspected of possessing.

At length, however, there was a pause, — the deep pause of flagging spirits, that always follows mirth and wine. No one would have believed, on beholding the pensive faces, and hearing the involuntary sighs of the party, that from these, but a moment before, had arisen so loud and wild a laugh. During this interval Edward Walcott (who was the poet of his class) volunteered the following song, which, from its want of polish, and from its application to his present feelings, might charitably be taken for an extemporaneous production: —

The wine is bright, the wine is bright;
And gay the drinkers be:

Of all that drain the bowl to-night,
Most jollily drain we.
O, could one search the weary earth, —
The earth from sea to sea, —
He 'd turn and mingle in our mirth;
For we 're the merriest three.

Yet there are cares, oh, heavy cares!
We know that they are nigh:
When forth each lonely drinker fares,
Mark then his altered eye.
Care comes upon us when the jest
And frantic laughter die;
And care will watch the parting guest —
O late, then let us fly!

Hugh Crombie, whose early love of song and minstrelsy was still alive, had entered the room at the sound of Edward's voice, in sufficient time to accompany the second stanza on the violin. He now, with the air of one who was entitled to judge in these matters, expressed his opinion of the performance.

"Really, Master Walcott, I was not prepared for this," he said in the tone of condescending praise that a great man uses to his inferior when he chooses to overwhelm him with excess of joy. "Very well, indeed, young gentleman! Some of the lines, it is true, seem to have been dragged in by the head and shoulders; but I could scarcely have done much better myself at your age. With practice, and with such instruction as I might afford you, I should have little doubt of your becoming a distinguished poet. A great defect in your

seminary, gentlemen, — the want of due cultivation in this heavenly art.”

“Perhaps, sir,” said Edward, with much gravity, “you might yourself be prevailed upon to accept the professorship of poetry?”

“Why, such an offer would require consideration,” replied the landlord. “Professor Hugh Crombie of Harley College: it has a good sound, assuredly. But I am a public man, Master Walcott; and the public would be loath to spare me from my present office.”

“Will Professor Crombie favor us with a specimen of his productions?” inquired Edward.

“Ahem, I shall be happy to gratify you, young gentleman,” answered Hugh. “It is seldom, in this rude country, Master Walcott, that we meet with kindred genius; and the opportunity should never be thrown away.”

Thus saying, he took a heavy draught of the liquor by which he was usually inspired, and the praises of which were the prevailing subject of his song; then, after much hemming, thrumming, and preclusion, and with many queer gestures and gesticulations, he began to effuse a lyric in the following fashion:—

I've been a jolly drinker this five-and-twenty year,
And still a jolly drinker, my friends, you see me here:
I sing the joys of drinking; bear a chorus, every man,
With pint pot and quart pot and clattering of can.

The sense of the professor's first stanza was not in exact proportion to the sound; but, being executed with great spirit, it attracted universal applause. This Hugh

appropriated with a condescending bow and smile; and, making a signal for silence, he went on, —

King Solomon of old, boys (a jolly king was he), —

But here he was interrupted by a clapping of hands, that seemed a continuance of the applause bestowed on his former stanza. Hugh Crombie, who, as is the custom of many great performers, usually sang with his eyes shut, now opened them, intending gently to rebuke his auditors for their unseasonable expression of delight. He immediately perceived, however, that the fault was to be attributed to neither of the three young men; and, following the direction of their eyes, he saw near the door, in the dim background of the apartment, a figure in a cloak. The hat was flapped forward, the cloak muffled round the lower part of the face; and only the eyes were visible.

The party gazed a moment in silence, and then rushed *en masse* upon the intruder, the landlord bringing up the rear, and sounding a charge upon his fiddle. But, as they drew nigh, the black cloak began to assume a familiar look; the hat, also, was an old acquaintance; and, these being removed, from beneath them shone forth the reverend face and form of Dr. Melmoth.

The president, in his quality of clergyman, had, late in the preceding afternoon, been called to visit an aged female who was supposed to be at the point of death. Her habitation was at the distance of several miles from Harley College; so that it was nightfall before Dr. Melmoth stood at her bedside. His stay had been lengthened beyond his anticipation, on account of

the frame of mind in which he found the dying woman ; and, after essaying to impart the comforts of religion to her disturbed intellect, he had waited for the abatement of the storm that had arisen while he was thus engaged. As the evening advanced, however, the rain poured down in undiminished cataracts ; and the doctor, trusting to the prudence and sure-footedness of his steed, had at length set forth on his return. The darkness of the night, and the roughness of the road, might have appalled him, even had his horsemanship and his courage been more considerable than they were ; but by the special protection of Providence, as he reasonably supposed (for he was a good man, and on a good errand), he arrived safely as far as Hugh Crombie's inn. Dr. Melmoth had no intention of making a stay there ; but, as the road passed within a very short distance, he saw lights in the windows, and heard the sound of song and revelry. It immediately occurred to him, that these midnight rioters were, probably, some of the young men of his charge ; and he was impelled, by a sense of duty, to enter and disperse them. Directed by the voices, he found his way, with some difficulty, to the apartment, just as Hugh concluded his first stanza ; and, amidst the subsequent applause, his entrance had been unperceived.

There was a silence of a moment's continuance after the discovery of Dr. Melmoth, during which he attempted to clothe his round, good-natured face in a look of awful dignity. But, in spite of himself, there was a little twisting of the corners of his mouth, and a smothered gleam in his eye.

“This has, apparently, been a very merry meeting,

young gentlemen," he at length said; "but I fear my presence has cast a damp upon it."

"O yes! your reverence's cloak is wet enough to cast a damp upon anything," exclaimed Hugh Crombie, assuming a look of tender anxiety. "The young gentlemen are affrighted for your valuable life. Fear deprives them of utterance: permit me to relieve you of these dangerous garments."

"Trouble not yourself, honest man," replied the doctor, who was one of the most gullible of mortals. "I trust I am in no danger; my dwelling being near at hand. But for these young men —"

"Would your reverence but honor my Sunday suit, — the gray broadcloth coat, and the black velvet small-clothes, that have covered my unworthy legs but once? Dame Crombie shall have them ready in a moment," continued Hugh, beginning to divest the doctor of his garments.

"I pray you to appease your anxiety," cried Dr. Melmoth, retaining a firm hold on such parts of his dress as yet remained to him. "Fear not for my health. I will but speak a word to those misguided youth, and be gone."

"Misguided youth, did your reverence say?" echoed Hugh, in a tone of utter astonishment. "Never were they better guided than when they entered my poor house. O, had your reverence but seen them, when I heard their cries, and rushed forth to their assistance. Dripping with wet were they, like three drowned men at the resurrec — Ahem!" interrupted Hugh, recollecting that the comparison he meditated might not suit the doctor's ideas of propriety.

“But why were they abroad on such a night?” inquired the president.

“Ah! doctor, you little know the love these good young gentlemen bear for you,” replied the landlord. “Your absence, your long absence, had alarmed them; and they rushed forth through the rain and darkness to seek you.”

“And was this indeed so?” asked the doctor, in a softened tone, and casting a tender and grateful look upon the three students. They, it is but justice to mention, had simultaneously made a step forward in order to contradict the egregious falsehoods of which Hugh’s fancy was so fertile; but he assumed an expression of such ludicrous entreaty, that it was irresistible.

“But methinks their anxiety was not of long continuance,” observed Dr. Melmoth, looking at the wine, and remembering the song that his entrance had interrupted.

“Ah! your reverence disapproves of the wine, I see,” answered Hugh Crombie. “I did but offer them a drop to keep the life in their poor young hearts. My dame advised strong waters; ‘But, Dame Crombie,’ says I, ‘would ye corrupt their youth?’ And in my zeal for their good, doctor, I was delighting them, just at your entrance, with a pious little melody of my own against the sin of drunkenness.”

“Truly, I remember something of the kind,” observed Dr. Melmoth. “And, as I think, it seemed to meet with good acceptance.”

“Ay, that it did!” said the landlord. “Will it please your reverence to hear it? —

King Solomon of old, boys (a wise man I 'm thinking),
Has warned you to beware of the horrid vice of drinking —

But why talk I of drinking, foolish man that I am! And all this time, doctor, you have not sipped a drop of my wine. Now I entreat your reverence, as you value your health and the peace and quiet of these youth."

Dr. Melmoth drank a glass of wine, with the benevolent intention of allaying the anxiety of Hugh Crombie and the students. He then prepared to depart; for a strong wind had partially dispersed the clouds, and occasioned an interval in the cataract of rain. There was, perhaps, a little suspicion yet remaining in the good man's mind respecting the truth of the landlord's story: at least, it was his evident intention to see the students fairly out of the inn before he quitted it himself. They therefore proceeded along the passageway in a body. The lamp that Hugh Crombie held but dimly enlightened them; and the number and contiguity of the doors caused Dr. Melmoth to lay his hand upon the wrong one.

"Not there, not there, doctor! It is Dame Crombie's bedchamber," shouted Hugh, most energetically. "Now Beelzebub defend me!" he muttered to himself, perceiving that his exclamation had been a moment too late.

"Heavens! what do I see?" ejaculated Dr. Melmoth, lifting his hands, and starting back from the entrance of the room. The three students pressed forward; Mrs. Crombie and the servant-girl had been drawn to the spot by the sound of Hugh's voice; and all their wondering eyes were fixed on poor Ellen Langton.

The apartment in the midst of which she stood was

dimly lighted by a solitary candle at the farther extremity ; but Ellen was exposed to the glare of the three lamps, held by Hugh, his wife, and the servant-girl. Their combined rays seemed to form a focus exactly at the point where they reached her ; and the beholders, had any been sufficiently calm, might have watched her features in their agitated workings and frequent change of expression, as perfectly as by the broad light of day. Terror had at first blanched her as white as a lily, or as a marble statue, which for a moment she resembled, as she stood motionless in the centre of the room. Shame next bore sway ; and her blushing countenance, covered by her slender white fingers, might fantastically be compared to a variegated rose with its alternate stripes of white and red. The next instant, a sense of her pure and innocent intentions gave her strength and courage ; and her attitude and look had now something of pride and dignity. These, however, in their turn, gave way ; for Edward Walcott pressed forward, and attempted to address her.

“ Ellen, Ellen ! ” he said, in an agitated and quivering whisper ; but what was to follow cannot be known ; for his emotion checked his utterance. His tone and look, however, again overcame Ellen Langton, and she burst into tears. Fanshawe advanced, and took Edward’s arm. “ She has been deceived,” he whispered. “ She is innocent : you are unworthy of her, if you doubt it.”

“ Why do you interfere, sir ? ” demanded Edward, whose passions, thoroughly excited, would willingly have wreaked themselves on any one. “ What right have you to speak of her innocence ? Perhaps,” he continued, an

undefined and ridiculous suspicion arising in his mind, — “perhaps you are acquainted with her intentions. Perhaps you are the deceiver.”

Fanshawe's temper was not naturally of the meekest character; and having had a thousand bitter feelings of his own to overcome, before he could attempt to console Edward, this rude repulse had almost aroused him to fierceness. But his pride, of which a more moderate degree would have had a less peaceable effect, came to his assistance; and he turned calmly and contemptuously away.

Ellen, in the mean time, had been restored to some degree of composure. To this effect, a feeling of pique against Edward Walcott had contributed. She had distinguished his voice in the neighboring apartment, had heard his mirth and wild laughter, without being aware of the state of feeling that produced them. She had supposed that the terms on which they parted in the morning (which had been very grievous to herself) would have produced a corresponding sadness in him. But while she sat in loneliness and in tears, her bosom distracted by a thousand anxieties and sorrows, of many of which Edward was the object, his reckless gayety had seemed to prove the slight regard in which he held her. After the first outbreak of emotion, therefore, she called up her pride (of which, on proper occasions, she had a reasonable share), and sustained his upbraiding glance with a passive composure, which women have more readily at command than men.

Dr. Melmoth's surprise had during this time kept him silent and inactive. He gazed alternately from one to

another of those who stood around him, as if to seek some explanation of so strange an event. But the faces of all were as perplexed as his own; even Hugh Crombie had assumed a look of speechless wonder, — speechless, because his imagination, prolific as it was, could not supply a plausible falsehood.

“Ellen, dearest child,” at length said the doctor, “what is the meaning of this?”

Ellen endeavored to reply; but, as her composure was merely external, she was unable to render her words audible. Fanshawe spoke in a low voice to Dr. Melmoth, who appeared grateful for his advice.

“True, it will be the better way,” he replied. “My wits are utterly confounded, or I should not have remained thus long. Come, my dear child,” he continued, advancing to Ellen, and taking her hand, “let us return home, and defer the explanation till the morrow. There, there: only dry your eyes, and we will say no more about it.”

“And that will be your wisest way, old gentleman,” muttered Hugh Crombie.

Ellen at first exhibited but little desire, or, rather, an evident reluctance, to accompany her guardian. She hung back, while her glance passed almost imperceptibly over the faces that gazed so eagerly at her; but the one she sought was not visible among them. She had no alternative, and suffered herself to be led from the inn.

Edward Walcott alone remained behind, the most wretched being (at least such was his own opinion) that breathed the vital air. He felt a sinking and sickness of the heart, and alternately a feverish frenzy, neither

of which his short and cloudless existence had heretofore occasioned him to experience. He was jealous of, he knew not whom, and he knew not what. He was ungenerous enough to believe that Ellen — his pure and lovely Ellen — had degraded herself; though from what motive, or by whose agency, he could not conjecture. When Dr. Melmoth had taken her in charge, Edward returned to the apartment where he had spent the evening. The wine was still upon the table; and, in the desperate hope of stupefying his faculties, he unwisely swallowed huge successive draughts. The effect of his imprudence was not long in manifesting itself; though insensibility, which at another time would have been the result, did not now follow. Acting upon his previous agitation, the wine seemed to set his blood in a flame; and, for the time being, he was a perfect madman.

A phrenologist would probably have found the organ of destructiveness in strong development, just then, upon Edward's cranium; for he certainly manifested an impulse to break and destroy whatever chanced to be within his reach. He commenced his operations by upsetting the table, and breaking the bottles and glasses. Then, seizing a tall heavy chair in each hand, he hurled them with prodigious force, — one through the window, and the other against a large looking-glass, the most valuable article of furniture in Hugh Crombie's inn. The crash and clatter of these outrageous proceedings soon brought the master, mistress, and maid-servant to the scene of action; but the two latter, at the first sight of Edward's wild demeanor and gleaming eyes, retreated with all imaginable expedition. Hugh chose a position behind the

door, from whence, protruding his head, he endeavored to mollify his inebriated guest. His interference, however, had nearly been productive of most unfortunate consequences; for a massive andiron, with round brazen head, whizzed past him, within a hair's-breadth of his ear.

"I might as safely take my chance in a battle," exclaimed Hugh, withdrawing his head, and speaking to a man who stood in the passageway. "A little twist of his hand to the left would have served my turn as well as if I stood in the path of a forty-two pound ball. And here comes another broadside," he added, as some other article of furniture rattled against the door.

"Let us return his fire, Hugh," said the person whom he addressed, composedly lifting the andiron. "He is in want of ammunition: let us send him back his own."

The sound of this man's voice produced a most singular effect upon Edward. The moment before, his actions had been those of a raving maniac; but, when the words struck his ear, he paused, put his hand to his forehead, seemed to recollect himself, and finally advanced with a firm and steady step. His countenance was dark and angry, but no longer wild.

"I have found you, villain!" he said to the angler. "It is you who have done this."

"And, having done it, the wrath of a boy—his drunken wrath—will not induce me to deny it," replied the other, scornfully.

"The boy will require a man's satisfaction," returned Edward, "and that speedily."

"Will you take it now?" inquired the angler, with a

cool, derisive smile, and almost in a whisper. At the same time he produced a brace of pistols, and held them towards the young man.

"Willingly," answered Edward, taking one of the weapons. "Choose your distance."

The angler stepped back a pace; but before their deadly intentions, so suddenly conceived, could be executed, Hugh Crombie interposed himself between them.

"Do you take my best parlor for the cabin of the 'Black Andrew,' where a pistol-shot was a nightly pastime?" he inquired of his comrade. "And you, Master Edward, with what sort of a face will you walk into the chapel to morning prayers, after putting a ball through this man's head, or receiving one through your own? Though, in this last case, you will be past praying for, or praying either."

"Stand aside: I will take the risk. Make way, or I will put the ball through your own head," exclaimed Edward, fiercely: for the interval of rationality that circumstances had produced was again giving way to intoxication.

"You see how it is," said Hugh to his companion, unheard by Edward. "You shall take a shot at me, sooner than at the poor lad in his present state. You have done him harm enough already, and intend him more. I propose," he continued aloud, and with a peculiar glance towards the angler, "that this affair be decided tomorrow, at nine o'clock, under the old oak, on the bank of the stream. In the mean time, I will take charge of these popguns, for fear of accidents."

"Well, mine host, be it as you wish," said his com-

rade. "A shot more or less is of little consequence to me." He accordingly delivered his weapon to Hugh Crombie, and walked carelessly away.

"Come, Master Walcott, the enemy has retreated. Victoria! And now, I see, the sooner I get you to your chamber, the better," added he aside; for the wine was at last beginning to produce its legitimate effect, in stupefying the young man's mental and bodily faculties.

Hugh Crombie's assistance, though not, perhaps, quite indispensable, was certainly very convenient to our unfortunate hero, in the course of the short walk that brought him to his chamber. When arrived there, and in bed, he was soon locked in a sleep scarcely less deep than that of death.

The weather, during the last hour, had appeared to be on the point of changing: indeed, there were, every few minutes, most rapid changes. A strong breeze sometimes drove the clouds from the brow of heaven, so as to disclose a few of the stars; but, immediately after, the darkness would again become Egyptian, and the rain rush like a torrent from the sky.





CHAPTER VI.

“ About her neck a packet-mail
Fraught with advice, some fresh, some stale,
Of men that walked when they were dead.”

HUDIBRAS.

SCARCELY a word had passed between Dr. Melmoth and Ellen Langton, on their way home; for, though the former was aware that his duty towards his ward would compel him to inquire into the motives of her conduct, the tenderness of his heart prompted him to defer the scrutiny to the latest moment. The same tenderness induced him to connive at Ellen's stealing secretly up to her chamber, unseen by Mrs. Melmoth; to render which measure practicable, he opened the house-door very softly, and stood before his half-sleeping spouse (who waited his arrival in the parlor) without any previous notice. This act of the doctor's benevolence was not destitute of heroism; for he was well assured, that, should the affair come to the lady's knowledge through any other channel, her vengeance would descend not less heavily on him for concealing, than on Ellen for perpetrating, the elopement. That she had, thus far, no suspicion of the fact, was evident from

her composure, as well as from the reply to a question, which, with more than his usual art, her husband put to her respecting the non-appearance of his ward. Mrs. Melmoth answered, that Ellen had complained of indisposition, and after drinking, by her prescription, a large cup of herb-tea, had retired to her chamber early in the evening. Thankful that all was yet safe, the doctor laid his head upon his pillow; but, late as was the hour, his many anxious thoughts long drove sleep from his eyelids.

The diminution in the quantity of his natural rest did not, however, prevent Dr. Melmoth from rising at his usual hour, which at all seasons of the year was an early one. He found, on descending to the parlor, that breakfast was nearly in readiness; for the lady of the house (and, as a corollary, her servant-girl) was not accustomed to await the rising of the sun in order to commence her domestic labors. Ellen Langton, however, who had heretofore assimilated her habits to those of the family, was this morning invisible, — a circumstance imputed by Mrs. Melmoth to her indisposition of the preceding evening, and by the doctor, to mortification on account of her elopement and its discovery.

“I think I will step into Ellen’s bedchamber,” said Mrs. Melmoth, “and inquire how she feels herself. The morning is delightful after the storm, and the air will do her good.”

“Had we not better proceed with our breakfast? If the poor child is sleeping, it were a pity to disturb her,” observed the doctor; for, besides his sympathy with Ellen’s feelings, he was reluctant, as if he were the guilty one, to meet her face.

“Well, be it so. And now sit down, doctor; for the hot cakes are cooling fast. I suppose you will say they are not so good as those Ellen made yesterday morning. I know not how you will bear to part with her, though the thing must soon be.”

“It will be a sore trial, doubtless,” replied Dr. Melmoth, — “like tearing away a branch that is grafted on an old tree. And yet there will be a satisfaction in delivering her safe into her father’s hands.”

“A satisfaction for which you may thank me, doctor,” observed the lady. “If there had been none but you to look after the poor thing’s doings, she would have been enticed away long ere this, for the sake of her money.”

Dr. Melmoth’s prudence could scarcely restrain a smile at the thought that an elopement, as he had reason to believe, had been plotted, and partly carried into execution, while Ellen was under the sole care of his lady, and had been frustrated only by his own despised agency. He was not accustomed, however, — nor was this an eligible occasion, — to dispute any of Mrs. Melmoth’s claims to superior wisdom.

The breakfast proceeded in silence, or, at least, without any conversation material to the tale. At its conclusion, Mrs. Melmoth was again meditating on the propriety of entering Ellen’s chamber; but she was now prevented by an incident that always excited much interest both in herself and her husband.

This was the entrance of the servant, bearing the letters and newspaper, with which, once a fortnight, the mail-carrier journeyed up the valley. Dr. Melmoth’s situation at the head of a respectable seminary, and his

character as a scholar, had procured him an extensive correspondence among the learned men of his own country; and he had even exchanged epistles with one or two of the most distinguished dissenting clergymen of Great Britain. But, unless when some fond mother enclosed a one-pound note to defray the private expenses of her son at college, it was frequently the case, that the packets addressed to the doctor were the sole contents of the mail-bag. In the present instance, his letters were very numerous, and, to judge from the one he chanced first to open, of an unconscionable length. While he was engaged in their perusal, Mrs. Melmoth amused herself with the newspaper, — a little sheet of about twelve inches square, which had but one rival in the country. Commencing with the title, she labored on through advertisements old and new, through poetry lamentably deficient in rhythm and rhymes, through essays, the ideas of which had been trite since the first week of the creation, till she finally arrived at the department that, a fortnight before, had contained the latest news from all quarters. Making such remarks upon these items as to her seemed good, the dame's notice was at length attracted by an article which her sudden exclamation proved to possess uncommon interest. Casting her eye hastily over it, she immediately began to read aloud to her husband; but he, deeply engaged in a long and learned letter, instead of listening to what she wished to communicate, exerted his own lungs in opposition to hers, as is the custom of abstracted men when disturbed. The result was as follows: —

“A brig just arrived in the outer harbor,” began Mrs.

Melmoth, "reports, that on the morning of the 25th ult. —" Here the doctor broke in, "Wherefore I am compelled to differ from your exposition of the said passage, for those reasons, of the which I have given you a taste; provided —" The lady's voice was now almost audible, "ship bottom upward, discovered by the name on her stern to be the *Ellen* of —" "and in the same opinion are Hooker, Cotton, and divers learned divines of a later date."

The doctor's lungs were deep and strong, and victory seemed to incline toward him; but Mrs. Melmoth now made use of a tone whose peculiar shrillness, as long experience had taught her husband, augured a mood of mind not to be trifled with.

"On my word, doctor," she exclaimed, "this is most unfeeling and unchristian conduct! Here am I endeavoring to inform you of the death of an old friend, and you continue as deaf as a post."

Dr. Melmoth, who had heard the sound, without receiving the sense, of these words, now laid aside the letter in despair, and submissively requested to be informed of her pleasure.

"There, read for yourself," she replied, handing him the paper, and pointing to the passage containing the important intelligence, — "read, and then finish your letter, if you have a mind."

He took the paper, unable to conjecture how the dame could be so much interested in any part of its contents; but, before he had read many words, he grew pale as death. "Good Heavens! what is this?" he exclaimed. He then read on, "being the vessel wherein

that eminent son of New England, John Langton, Esq., had taken passage for his native country, after an absence of many years."

"Our poor Ellen, his orphan child!" said Dr. Melmoth, dropping the paper. "How shall we break the intelligence to her? Alas! her share of the affliction causes me to forget my own."

"It is a heavy misfortune, doubtless; and Ellen will grieve as a daughter should," replied Mrs. Melmoth, speaking with the good sense of which she had a competent share. "But she has never known her father; and her sorrow must arise from a sense of duty, more than from strong affection. I will go and inform her of her loss. It is late, and I wonder if she be still asleep."

"Be cautious, dearest wife," said the doctor. "Ellen has strong feelings; and a sudden shock might be dangerous."

"I think I may be trusted, Dr. Melmoth," replied the lady, who had a high opinion of her own abilities as a comforter, and was not averse to exercise them.

Her husband, after her departure, sat listlessly turning over the letters that yet remained unopened, feeling little curiosity, after such melancholy intelligence, respecting their contents. But, by the handwriting of the direction on one of them, his attention was gradually arrested, till he found himself gazing earnestly on those strong, firm, regular characters. They were perfectly familiar to his eye; but from what hand they came, he could not conjecture. Suddenly, however, the truth burst upon him; and after noticing the date, and reading a few lines, he rushed hastily in pursuit of his wife.

He had arrived at the top of his speed and at the middle of the staircase, when his course was arrested by the lady whom he sought, who came, with a velocity equal to his own, in an opposite direction. The consequence was a concussion between the two meeting masses, by which Mrs. Melmoth was seated securely on the stairs; while the doctor was only preserved from precipitation to the bottom by clinging desperately to the balustrade. As soon as the pair discovered that they had sustained no material injury by their contact, they began eagerly to explain the cause of their mutual haste, without those reproaches, which, on the lady's part, would at another time have followed such an accident.

"You have not told her the bad news, I trust?" cried Dr. Melmoth, after each had communicated his and her intelligence, without obtaining audience of the other.

"Would you have me tell it to the bare walls?" inquired the lady in her shrillest tone. "Have I not just informed you that she has gone, fled, eloped? Her chamber is empty; and her bed has not been occupied."

"Gone!" repeated the doctor. "And, when her father comes to demand his daughter of me, what answer shall I make?"

"Now, Heaven defend us from the visits of the dead and drowned!" cried Mrs. Melmoth. "This is a serious affair, doctor, but not, I trust, sufficient to raise a ghost."

"Mr. Langton is yet no ghost," answered he; "though this event will go near to make him one. He was fortunately prevented, after he had made every preparation, from taking passage in the vessel that was lost."

“And where is he now?” she inquired.

“He is in New England. Perhaps he is at this moment on his way to us,” replied her husband. “His letter is dated nearly a fortnight back; and he expresses an intention of being with us in a few days.”

“Well, I thank Heaven for his safety,” said Mrs. Melmoth. “But truly the poor gentleman could not have chosen a better time to be drowned, nor a worse one to come to life, than this. What we shall do, doctor, I know not; but had you locked the doors, and fastened the windows, as I advised, the misfortune could not have happened.”

“Why, the whole country would have flouted us!” answered the doctor. “Is there a door in all the Province that is barred or bolted, night or day? Nevertheless, it might have been advisable last night, had it occurred to me.”

“And why at that time more than at all times?” she inquired. “We had surely no reason to fear this event.”

Dr. Melmoth was silent; for his worldly wisdom was sufficient to deter him from giving his lady the opportunity, which she would not fail to use to the utmost, of laying the blame of the elopement at his door. He now proceeded, with a heavy heart, to Ellen’s chamber, to satisfy himself with his own eyes of the state of affairs. It was deserted too truly; and the wild-flowers with which it was the maiden’s custom daily to decorate her premises were drooping, as if in sorrow for her who had placed them there. Mrs. Melmoth, on this second visit, discovered on the table a note addressed to her husband, and containing a few words of gratitude from Ellen, but

no explanation of her mysterious flight. The doctor gazed long on the tiny letters, which had evidently been traced with a trembling hand, and blotted with many tears.

“There is a mystery in this, — a mystery that I cannot fathom,” he said. “And now I would I knew what measures it would be proper to take.”

“Get you on horseback, Dr. Melmoth, and proceed as speedily as may be down the valley to the town,” said the dame, the influence of whose firmer mind was sometimes, as in the present case, most beneficially exerted over his own. “You must not spare for trouble, no, nor for danger. Now — O, if I were a man!” —

“O, that you were!” murmured the doctor, in a perfectly inaudible voice. “Well — and when I reach the town, what then?”

“As I am a Christian woman, my patience cannot endure you!” exclaimed Mrs. Melmoth. “O, I love to see a man with the spirit of a man! but you —” And she turned away in utter scorn.

“But, dearest wife,” remonstrated the husband, who was really at a loss how to proceed, and anxious for her advice, “your worldly experience is greater than mine, and I desire to profit by it. What should be my next measure after arriving at the town?”

Mrs. Melmoth was appeased by the submission with which the doctor asked her counsel; though, if the truth must be told, she heartily despised him for needing it. She condescended, however, to instruct him in the proper method of pursuing the runaway maiden, and directed him, before his departure, to put strict inquiries

to Hugh Crombie respecting any stranger who might lately have visited his inn. That there would be wisdom in this, Dr. Melmoth had his own reasons for believing; and still, without imparting them to his lady, he proceeded to do as he had been bid.

The veracious landlord acknowledged that a stranger had spent a night and day at his inn, and was missing that morning; but he utterly denied all acquaintance with his character, or privity to his purposes. Had Mrs. Melmoth, instead of her husband, conducted the examination, the result might have been different. As the case was, the doctor returned to his dwelling but little wiser than he went forth; and, ordering his steed to be saddled, he began a journey of which he knew not what would be the end.

In the mean time, the intelligence of Ellen's disappearance circulated rapidly, and soon sent forth hunters more fit to follow the chase than Dr. Melmoth.





CHAPTER VII.

“There was racing and chasing o’er Cannobie Lee.”

WALTER SCOTT.

WHEN Edward Walcott awoke the next morning from his deep slumber, his first consciousness was of a heavy weight upon his mind, the cause of which he was unable immediately to recollect. One by one, however, by means of the association of ideas, the events of the preceding night came back to his memory; though those of latest occurrence were dim as dreams. But one circumstance was only too well remembered,—the discovery of Ellen Langton. By a strong effort he next attained to an uncertain recollection of a scene of madness and violence, followed, as he at first thought, by a duel. A little further reflection, however, informed him that this event was yet among the things of futurity; but he could by no means recall the appointed time or place. As he had not the slightest intention (praiseworthy and prudent as it would unquestionably have been) to give up the chance of avenging Ellen’s wrongs and his own, he immediately arose, and began to dress, meaning to learn from Hugh Crombie those particulars which his own memory had not

retained. His chief apprehension was, that the appointed time had already elapsed; for the early sunbeams of a glorious morning were now peeping into his chamber.

More than once, during the progress of dressing, he was inclined to believe that the duel had actually taken place, and been fatal to him, and that he was now in those regions to which, his conscience told him, such an event would be likely to send him. This idea resulted from his bodily sensations, which were in the highest degree uncomfortable. He was tormented by a raging thirst, that seemed to have absorbed all the moisture of his throat and stomach; and, in his present agitation, a cup of icy water would have been his first wish, had all the treasures of earth and sea been at his command. His head, too, throbbed almost to bursting; and the whirl of his brain at every movement promised little accuracy in the aim of his pistol, when he should meet the angler. These feelings, together with the deep degradation of his mind, made him resolve that no circumstances should again draw him into an excess of wine. In the mean time, his head was, perhaps, still too much confused to allow him fully to realize his unpleasant situation.

Before Edward was prepared to leave his chamber, the door was opened by one of the college bed-makers, who, perceiving that he was nearly dressed, entered, and began to set the apartment in order. There were two of these officials pertaining to Harley College; each of them being (and, for obvious reasons, this was an indispensable qualification) a model of perfect ugliness in

her own way. One was a tall, raw-boned, huge-jointed, double-fisted giantess, admirably fitted to sustain the part of Glumdalia, in the tragedy of Tom Thumb. Her features were as excellent as her form, appearing to have been rough-hewn with a broadaxe, and left unpolished. The other was a short, squat figure, about two thirds the height, and three times the circumference, of ordinary females. Her hair was gray, her complexion of a deep yellow; and her most remarkable feature was a short snub nose, just discernible amid the broad immensity of her face. This latter lady was she who now entered Edward's chamber. Notwithstanding her deficiency in personal attractions, she was rather a favorite of the students, being good-natured, anxious for their comfort, and, when duly encouraged, very communicative. Edward perceived, as soon as she appeared, that she only waited his assistance in order to disburden herself of some extraordinary information; and, more from compassion than curiosity, he began to question her.

"Well, Dolly, what news this morning?"

"Why, let me see, — O, yes! It had almost slipped my memory," replied the bed-maker. "Poor Widow Butler died last night, after her long sickness. Poor woman! I remember her forty years ago, or so, — as rosy a lass as you could set eyes on."

"Ah! has she gone?" said Edward, recollecting the sick woman of the cottage which he had entered with Ellen and Fanshawe. "Was she not out of her right mind, Dolly?"

"Yes, this seven years," she answered. "They say she came to her senses a bit, when Dr. Melmoth visited

her yesterday, but was raving mad when she died. Ah, that son of hers! — if he is yet alive. Well, well!”

“She had a son, then?” inquired Edward.

“Yes, such as he was. The Lord preserve me from such a one!” said Dolly. “It was thought he went off with Hugh Crombie, that keeps the tavern now. That was fifteen years ago.”

“And have they heard nothing of him since?” asked Edward.

“Nothing good, — nothing good,” said the bed-maker. “Stories did travel up the valley now and then; but for five years there has been no word of him. They say Merchant Langton, Ellen’s father, met him in foreign parts, and would have made a man of him; but there was too much of the wicked one in him for that. Well, poor woman! I wonder who’ll preach her funeral sermon.”

“Dr. Melmoth, probably,” observed the student.

“No, no! The doctor will never finish his journey in time. And who knows but his own funeral will be the end of it,” said Dolly, with a sagacious shake of her head.

“Dr. Melmoth gone a journey!” repeated Edward.

“What do you mean? For what purpose?”

“For a good purpose enough, I may say,” replied she. “To search out Miss Ellen, that was run away with last night.”

“In the Devil’s name, woman, of what are you speaking?” shouted Edward, seizing the affrighted bed-maker forcibly by the arm.

Poor Dolly had chosen this circuitous method of com-

municating her intelligence, because she was well aware that, if she first told of Ellen's flight, she should find no ear for her account of the Widow Butler's death. She had not calculated, however, that the news would produce so violent an effect upon her auditor ; and her voice faltered as she recounted what she knew of the affair. She had hardly concluded, before Edward — who, as she proceeded, had been making hasty preparations — rushed from his chamber, and took the way towards Hugh Crombie's inn. He had no difficulty in finding the landlord, who had already occupied his accustomed seat, and was smoking his accustomed pipe, under the elm-tree.

“Well, Master Walcott, you have come to take a stomach-reliever this morning, I suppose,” said Hugh, taking the pipe from his mouth. “What shall it be? — a bumper of wine with an egg? or a glass of smooth, old, oily brandy, such as Dame Crombie and I keep for our own drinking? Come, that will do it, I know.”

“No, no! neither,” replied Edward, shuddering involuntarily at the bare mention of wine and strong drink. “You know well, Hugh Crombie, the errand on which I come.”

“Well, perhaps I do,” said the landlord. “You come to order me to saddle my best horse. You are for a ride, this fine morning.”

“True; and I must learn of you in what direction to turn my horse's head,” replied Edward Walcott.

“I understand you,” said Hugh, nodding and smiling. “And now, Master Edward, I really have taken a strong liking to you; and, if you please to hearken to it, you shall have some of my best advice.”

“Speak,” said the young man, expecting to be told in what direction to pursue the chase.

“I advise you, then,” continued Hugh Crombie, in a tone in which some real feeling mingled with assumed carelessness, — “I advise you to forget that you have ever known this girl, that she has ever existed; for she is as much lost to you as if she never had been born, or as if the grave had covered her. Come, come, man, toss off a quart of my old wine, and keep up a merry heart. This has been my way in many a heavier sorrow than ever you have felt; and you see I am alive and merry yet.” But Hugh’s merriment had failed him just as he was making his boast of it; for Edward saw a tear in the corner of his eye.

“Forget her? Never, never!” said the student, while his heart sank within him at the hopelessness of pursuit which Hugh’s words implied. “I will follow her to the ends of the earth.”

“Then so much the worse for you and for my poor nag, on whose back you shall be in three minutes,” rejoined the landlord. “I have spoken to you as I would to my own son, if I had such an incumbrance. — Here, you ragamuffin; saddle the gray, and lead him round to the door.”

“The gray? I will ride the black,” said Edward. “I know your best horse as well as you do yourself, Hugh.”

“There is no black horse in my stable. I have parted with him to an old comrade of mine,” answered the landlord, with a wink of acknowledgment to what he saw were Edward’s suspicions. “The gray is a stout nag,

and will carry you a round pace, though not so fast as to bring you up with them you seek. I reserved him for you, and put Mr. Fanshawe off with the old white, on which I travelled hitherward a year or two since."

"Fanshawe! Has he, then, the start of me?" asked Edward.

"He rode off about twenty minutes ago," replied Hugh; "but you will overtake him within ten miles, at farthest. But, if mortal man could recover the girl, that fellow would do it, even if he had no better nag than a broomstick, like the witches of old times."

"Did he obtain any information from you as to the course?" inquired the student.

"I could give him only this much," said Hugh, pointing down the road in the direction of the town. "My old comrade trusts no man further than is needful, and I ask no unnecessary questions."

The hostler now led up to the door the horse which Edward was to ride. The young man mounted with all expedition; but, as he was about to apply the spurs, his thirst, which the bed-maker's intelligence had caused him to forget, returned most powerfully upon him.

"For Heaven's sake, Hugh, a mug of your sharpest cider; and let it be a large one!" he exclaimed. "My tongue rattles in my mouth like —"

"Like the bones in a dice-box," said the laudlord, finishing the comparison, and hastening to obey Edward's directions. Indeed, he rather exceeded them, by mingling with the juice of the apple a gill of his old brandy, which his own experience told him would at that time have a most desirable effect upon the young man's internal system.

“It is powerful stuff, mine host; and I feel like a new man already,” observed Edward, after draining the mug to the bottom.

“He is a fine lad, and sits his horse most gallantly,” said Hugh Crombie to himself as the student rode off. “I heartily wish him success. I wish to Heaven my conscience had suffered me to betray the plot before it was too late. Well, well, a man must keep his mite of honesty.”

The morning was now one of the most bright and glorious that ever shone for mortals; and, under other circumstances, Edward’s bosom would have been as light, and his spirit would have sung as cheerfully, as one of the many birds that warbled around him. The raindrops of the preceding night hung like glittering diamonds on every leaf of every tree, shaken, and rendered more brilliant, by occasional sighs of wind, that removed from the traveller the superfluous heat of an unclouded sun. In spite of the adventure, so mysterious and vexatious, in which he was engaged, Edward’s elastic spirit (assisted, perhaps, by the brandy he had unwittingly swallowed) rose higher as he rode on; and he soon found himself endeavoring to accommodate the tune of one of Hugh Crombie’s ballads to the motion of the horse. Nor did this reviving cheerfulness argue anything against his unwavering faith, and pure and fervent love for Ellen Langton. A sorrowful and repining disposition is not the necessary accompaniment of a “leal and loving heart”; and Edward’s spirits were cheered, not by forgetfulness, but by hope, which would not permit him to doubt of the ultimate success of his pursuit. The uncertainty

itself, and the probable danger of the expedition, were not without their charm to a youthful and adventurous spirit. In fact, Edward would not have been altogether satisfied to recover the errant damsel, without first doing battle in her behalf.

He had proceeded but a few miles, before he came in sight of Fanshawe, who had been accommodated by the landlord with a horse much inferior to his own. The speed to which he had been put had almost exhausted the poor animal, whose best pace was now but little beyond a walk. Edward drew his bridle as he came up with Fanshawe.

"I have been anxious to apologize," he said to him, "for the hasty and unjust expressions of which I made use last evening. May I hope, that in consideration of my mental distraction, and the causes of it, you will forget what has passed?"

"I had already forgotten it," replied Fanshawe, freely offering his hand. "I saw your disturbed state of feeling, and it would have been unjust both to you and to myself to remember the errors it occasioned."

"A wild expedition this," observed Edward, after shaking warmly the offered hand. "Unless we obtain some further information at the town, we shall hardly know which way to continue the pursuit."

"We can scarcely fail, I think, of lighting upon some trace of them," said Fanshawe. "Their flight must have commenced after the storm subsided, which would give them but a few hours the start of us. May I beg," he continued, noticing the superior condition of his rival's horse, "that you will not attempt to accommodate your pace to mine?"

Edward bowed, and rode on, wondering at the change which a few months had wrought in Fanshawe's character. On this occasion, especially, the energy of his mind had communicated itself to his frame. The color was strong and high in his cheek; and his whole appearance was that of a gallant and manly youth, whom a lady might love, or a foe might fear. Edward had not been so slow as his mistress in discovering the student's affection; and he could not but acknowledge in his heart that he was a rival not to be despised, and might yet be a successful one, if, by his means, Ellen Langton were restored to her friends. This consideration caused him to spur forward with increased ardor; but all his speed could not divest him of the idea that Fanshawe would finally overtake him, and attain the object of their mutual pursuit. There was certainly no apparent ground for this imagination; for every step of his horse increased the advantage which Edward had gained, and he soon lost sight of his rival.

Shortly after overtaking Fanshawe, the young man passed the lonely cottage formerly the residence of the Widow Butler, who now lay dead within. He was at first inclined to alight, and make inquiries respecting the fugitives; for he observed through the windows the faces of several persons, whom curiosity, or some better feeling, had led to the house of mourning. Recollecting, however, that this portion of the road must have been passed by the angler and Ellen at too early an hour to attract notice, he forbore to waste time by a fruitless delay.

Edward proceeded on his journey, meeting with no

other noticeable event, till, arriving at the summit of a hill, he beheld, a few hundred yards before him, the Rev. Dr. Melmoth. The worthy president was toiling onward at a rate unexampled in the history either of himself or his steed; the excellence of the latter consisting in sure-footedness rather than rapidity. The rider looked round, seemingly in some apprehension at the sound of hoof-tramps behind him, but was unable to conceal his satisfaction on recognizing Edward Walcott.

In the whole course of his life, Dr. Melmoth had never been placed in circumstances so embarrassing as the present. He was altogether a child in the ways of the world, having spent his youth and early manhood in abstracted study, and his maturity in the solitude of these hills. The expedition, therefore, on which fate had now thrust him, was an entire deviation from the quiet pathway of all his former years; and he felt like one who sets forth over the broad ocean without chart or compass. The affair would undoubtedly have been perplexing to a man of far more experience than he; but the doctor pictured to himself a thousand difficulties and dangers, which, except in his imagination, had no existence. The perturbation of his spirit had compelled him, more than once since his departure, to regret that he had not invited Mrs. Melmoth to a share in the adventure; this being an occasion where her firmness, decision, and confident sagacity — which made her a sort of domestic hedgehog — would have been peculiarly appropriate. In the absence of such a counsellor, even Edward Walcott — young as he was, and indiscreet as the doctor thought him — was a substitute not to be de-

spised; and it was singular and rather ludicrous to observe how the gray-haired man unconsciously became as a child to the beardless youth. He addressed Edward with an assumption of dignity, through which his pleasure at the meeting was very obvious.

“Young gentleman, this is not well,” he said. “By what authority have you absented yourself from the walls of Alma Mater during term-time?”

“I conceived that it was unnecessary to ask leave at such a conjuncture, and when the head of the institution was himself in the saddle,” replied Edward.

“It was a fault, it was a fault,” said Dr. Melmoth, shaking his head; “but, in consideration of the motive, I may pass it over. And now, my dear Edward, I advise that we continue our journey together, as your youth and inexperience will stand in need of the wisdom of my gray head. Nay, I pray you lay not the lash to your steed. You have ridden fast and far; and a slower pace is requisite for a season.”

And, in order to keep up with his young companion, the doctor smote his own gray nag; which unhappy beast, wondering what strange concatenation of events had procured him such treatment, endeavored to obey his master's wishes. Edward had sufficient compassion for Dr. Melmoth (especially as his own horse now exhibited signs of weariness) to moderate his pace to one attainable by the former.

“Alas, youth! these are strange times,” observed the president, “when a doctor of divinity and an undergraduate set forth, like a knight-errant and his squire, in search of a stray damsel. Methinks I am an epitome of

the church militant, or a new species of polemical divinity. Pray Heaven, however, there be no encounter in store for us; for I utterly forgot to provide myself with weapons."

"I took some thought for that matter, reverend knight," replied Edward, whose imagination was highly tickled by Dr. Melmoth's chivalrous comparison.

"Ay, I see that you have girded on a sword," said the divine. "But wherewith shall I defend myself, my hand being empty, except of this golden-headed staff, the gift of Mr. Langton?"

"One of these, if you will accept it," answered Edward, exhibiting a brace of pistols, "will serve to begin the conflict, before you join the battle hand to hand."

"Nay, I shall find little safety in meddling with that deadly instrument, since I know not accurately from which end proceeds the bullet," said Dr. Melmoth. "But were it not better, seeing we are so well provided with artillery, to betake ourselves, in the event of an encounter, to some stone-wall or other place of strength?"

"If I may presume to advise," said the squire, "you, as being most valiant and experienced, should ride forward, lance in hand (your long staff serving for a lance), while I annoy the enemy from afar."

"Like Teucer behind the shield of Ajax," interrupted Dr. Melmoth, "or David with his stone and sling. No, no, young man! I have left unfinished in my study a learned treatise, important not only to the present age, but to posterity, for whose sakes I must take heed to my safety. — But, lo! who ride yonder?" he exclaimed, in

manifest alarm, pointing to some horsemen upon the brow of a hill at a short distance before them.

"Fear not, gallant leader," said Edward Walcott, who had already discovered the objects of the doctor's terror. "They are men of peace, as we shall shortly see. The foremost is somewhere near your own years, and rides like a grave, substantial citizen, — though what he does here, I know not. Behind came two servants, men likewise of sober age and pacific appearance."

"Truly your eyes are better than mine own. Of a verity, you are in the right," acquiesced Dr. Melmoth, recovering his usual quantum of intrepidity. "We will ride forward courageously, as those who, in a just cause, fear neither death nor bonds."

The reverend knight-errant and his squire, at the time of discovering the three horsemen, were within a very short distance of the town, which was, however, concealed from their view by the hill, that the strangers were descending. The road from Harley College, through almost its whole extent, had been rough and wild, and the country thin of population; but now, standing frequent, amid fertile fields on each side of the way, were neat little cottages, from which groups of white-headed children rushed forth to gaze upon the travellers. The three strangers, as well as the doctor and Edward, were surrounded, as they approached each other, by a crowd of this kind, plying their little bare legs most pertinaciously in order to keep pace with the horses.

As Edward gained a nearer view of the foremost rider, his grave aspect and stately demeanor struck him with involuntary respect. There were deep lines of thought

across his brow ; and his calm yet bright gray eye betokened a steadfast soul. There was also an air of conscious importance, even in the manner in which the stranger sat his horse, which a man's good opinion of himself, unassisted by the concurrence of the world in general, seldom bestows. The two servants rode at a respectable distance in the rear ; and the heavy portmanteaus at their backs intimated that the party had journeyed from afar. Dr. Melmoth endeavored to assume the dignity that became him as the head of Harley College ; and with a gentle stroke of his staff upon his wearied steed and a grave nod to the principal stranger, was about to commence the ascent of the hill at the foot of which they were. The gentleman, however, made a halt.

“Dr. Melmoth, am I so fortunate as to meet you ?” he exclaimed in accents expressive of as much surprise and pleasure as were consistent with his staid demeanor. “Have you, then, forgotten your old friend ?”

“Mr. Langton ! Can it be ?” said the doctor, after looking him in the face a moment. “Yes, it is my old friend indeed : welcome, welcome ! though you come at an unfortunate time.”

“What say you ? How is my child ? Ellen, I trust, is well ?” cried Mr. Langton, a father's anxiety overcoming the coldness and reserve that were natural to him, or that long habit had made a second nature.

“She is well in health. She was so, at least, last night,” replied Dr. Melmoth, unable to meet the eye of his friend. “But — but I have been a careless shepherd ; and the lamb has strayed from the fold while I slept.”

Edward Walcott, who was a deeply interested observer of this scene, had anticipated that a burst of passionate grief would follow the disclosure. He was, however, altogether mistaken. There was a momentary convulsion of Mr. Langton's strong features, as quick to come and go as a flash of lightning; and then his countenance was as composed — though, perhaps, a little sterner — as before. He seemed about to inquire into the particulars of what so nearly concerned him, but changed his purpose on observing the crowd of children, who, with one or two of their parents, were endeavoring to catch the words that passed between the doctor and himself.

“I will turn back with you to the village,” he said in a steady voice; “and at your leisure I shall desire to hear the particulars of this unfortunate affair.”

He wheeled his horse accordingly, and, side by side with Dr. Melmoth, began to ascend the hill. On reaching the summit, the little country town lay before them, presenting a cheerful and busy spectacle. It consisted of one long, regular street, extending parallel to, and at a short distance from, the river; which here, enlarged by a junction with another stream, became navigable, not indeed for vessels of burden, but for rafts of lumber and boats of considerable size. The houses, with peaked roofs and jutting stories, stood at wide intervals along the street; and the commercial character of the place was manifested by the shop door and windows, that occupied the front of almost every dwelling. One or two mansions, however, surrounded by trees, and standing back at a haughty distance from the road, were evidently the abodes of the aristocracy of the village. It was not

difficult to distinguish the owners of these — self-important personages, with canes and well-powdered periwigs — among the crowd of meaner men who bestowed their attention upon Dr. Melmoth and his friend as they rode by. The town being the nearest mart of a large extent of back country, there were many rough farmers and woodsmen, to whom the cavalcade was an object of curiosity and admiration. The former feeling, indeed, was general throughout the village. The shop-keepers left their customers, and looked forth from the doors; the female portion of the community thrust their heads from the windows; and the people in the street formed a lane through which, with all eyes concentrated upon them, the party rode onward to the tavern. The general aptitude that pervades the populace of a small country town to meddle with affairs not legitimately concerning them was increased, on this occasion, by the sudden return of Mr. Langton after passing through the village. Many conjectures were afloat respecting the cause of this retrograde movement; and, by degrees, something like the truth, though much distorted, spread generally among the crowd, communicated, probably, from Mr. Langton's servants. Edward Walcott, incensed at the uncourteous curiosity of which he, as well as his companions, was the object, felt a frequent impulse (though, fortunately for himself, resisted) to make use of his riding-switch in clearing a passage.

On arriving at the tavern, Dr. Melmoth recounted to his friend the little he knew beyond the bare fact of Ellen's disappearance. Had Edward Walcott been called to their conference, he might, by disclosing the adventure

of the angler, have thrown a portion of light upon the affair; but, since his first introduction, the cold and stately merchant had honored him with no sort of notice.

Edward, on his part, was not well pleased at the sudden appearance of Ellen's father, and was little inclined to co-operate in any measures that he might adopt for her recovery. It was his wish to pursue the chase on his own responsibility, and as his own wisdom dictated: he chose to be an independent ally, rather than a subordinate assistant. But, as a step preliminary to his proceedings of every other kind, he found it absolutely necessary, having journeyed far, and fasting, to call upon the landlord for a supply of food. The viands that were set before him were homely but abundant; nor were Edward's griefs and perplexities so absorbing as to overcome the appetite of youth and health.

Dr. Melmoth and Mr. Langton, after a short private conversation, had summoned the landlord, in the hope of obtaining some clew to the development of the mystery. But no young lady, nor any stranger answering to the description the doctor had received from Hugh Crombie (which was indeed a false one), had been seen to pass through the village since daybreak. Here, therefore, the friends were entirely at a loss in what direction to continue the pursuit. The village was the focus of several roads, diverging to widely distant portions of the country; and which of these the fugitives had taken, it was impossible to determine. One point, however, might be considered certain, — that the village was the first stage of their flight; for it commanded the only outlet from the valley, except a rugged path among the hills, utterly im-

passable by horse. In this dilemma, expresses were sent by each of the different roads; and poor Ellen's imprudence—the tale nowise decreasing as it rolled along—became known to a wide extent of country. Having thus done everything in his power to recover his daughter, the merchant exhibited a composure which Dr. Melmoth admired, but could not equal. His own mind, however, was in a far more comfortable state than when the responsibility of the pursuit had rested upon himself.

Edward Walcott, in the mean time, had employed but a very few moments in satisfying his hunger; after which his active intellect alternately formed and relinquished a thousand plans for the recovery of Ellen. Fanshawe's observation, that her flight must have commenced after the subsiding of the storm, recurred to him. On inquiry, he was informed that the violence of the rain had continued, with a few momentary intermissions, till near daylight. The fugitives must, therefore, have passed through the village long after its inhabitants were abroad; and how, without the gift of invisibility, they had contrived to elude notice, Edward could not conceive.

“Fifty years ago,” thought Edward, “my sweet Ellen would have been deemed a witch for this trackless journey. Truly I could wish I were a wizard, that I might bestride a broomstick, and follow her.”

While the young man, involved in these perplexing thoughts, looked forth from the open window of the apartment, his attention was drawn to an individual, evidently of a different, though not of a higher, class than the countrymen among whom he stood. Edward now recollected that he had noticed his rough dark face among

the most earnest of those who had watched the arrival of the party. He had then taken him for one of the boatmen, of whom there were many in the village, and who had much of a sailor-like dress and appearance. A second and more attentive observation, however, convinced Edward that this man's life had not been spent upon fresh water; and, had any stronger evidence than the nameless marks which the ocean impresses upon its sons been necessary, it would have been found in his mode of locomotion. While Edward was observing him, he beat slowly up to one of Mr. Langton's servants who was standing near the door of the inn. He seemed to question the man with affected carelessness; but his countenance was dark and perplexed when he turned to mingle again with the crowd. Edward lost no time in ascertaining from the servant the nature of his inquiries. They had related to the elopement of Mr. Langton's daughter, which was, indeed, the prevailing, if not the sole, subject of conversation in the village.

The grounds for supposing that this man was in any way connected with the angler were, perhaps, very slight; yet, in the perplexity of the whole affair, they induced Edward to resolve to get at the heart of his mystery. To attain this end, he took the most direct method, — by applying to the man himself.

He had now retired apart from the throng and bustle of the village, and was seated upon a condemned boat, that was drawn up to rot upon the banks of the river. His arms were folded, and his hat drawn over his brows. The lower part of his face, which alone was visible, evinced gloom and depression, as did also the deep sighs, which,

because he thought no one was near him, he did not attempt to restrain.

"Friend, I must speak with you," said Edward Walcott, laying his hand upon his shoulder, after contemplating the man a moment, himself unseen.

He started at once from his abstraction and his seat, apparently expecting violence, and prepared to resist it; but, perceiving the youthful and solitary intruder upon his privacy, he composed his features with much quickness.

"What would you with me?" he asked.

"They tarry long, — or you have kept a careless watch," said Edward, speaking at a venture.

For a moment, there seemed a probability of obtaining such a reply to this observation as the youth had intended to elicit. If any trust could be put in the language of the stranger's countenance, a set of words different from those to which he subsequently gave utterance had risen to his lips. But he seemed naturally slow of speech; and this defect was now, as is frequently the case, advantageous in giving him space for reflection.

"Look you, youngster: crack no jokes on me," he at length said, contemptuously. "Away! back whence you came, or —" And he slightly waved a small rattan that he held in his right hand.

Edward's eyes sparkled, and his color rose. "You must change this tone, fellow, and that speedily," he observed. "I order you to lower your hand, and answer the questions that I shall put to you."

The man gazed dubiously at him, but finally adopted a more conciliatory mode of speech.

“Well, master; and what is your business with me?” he inquired. “I am a boatman out of employ. Any commands in my line?”

“Pshaw! I know you, my good friend, and you cannot deceive me,” replied Edward Walcott. “We are private here,” he continued, looking around. “I have no desire or intention to do you harm; and, if you act according to my directions, you shall have no cause to repent it.”

“And what if I refuse to put myself under your orders?” inquired the man. “You are but a young captain for such an old hulk as mine.”

“The ill consequences of a refusal would all be on your own side,” replied Edward. “I shall, in that case, deliver you up to justice: if I have not the means of capturing you myself,” he continued, observing the seaman’s eye to wander rather scornfully over his youthful and slender figure, “there are hundreds within call whom it will be in vain to resist. Besides, it requires little strength to use this,” he added, laying his hand on a pistol.

“If that were all, I could suit you there, my lad,” muttered the stranger. He continued aloud, “Well, what is your will with me? D——d ungenteel treatment this! But put your questions; and, to oblige you, I may answer them, — if so be that I know anything of the matter.”

“You will do wisely,” observed the young man. “And now to business. What reason have you to suppose that the persons for whom you watch are not already beyond the village?”

The seaman paused long before he answered, and gazed earnestly at Edward, apparently endeavoring to ascertain from his countenance the amount of his knowledge. This he probably overrated, but, nevertheless, hazarded a falsehood.

“I doubt not they passed before midnight,” he said. “I warrant you they are many a league towards the sea-coast, ere this.”

“You have kept watch, then, since midnight?” asked Edward.

“Ay, that have I! And a dark and rough one it was,” answered the stranger.

“And you are certain, that, if they passed at all, it must have been before that hour?”

“I kept my walk across the road till the village was all astir,” said the seaman. “They could not have missed me. So, you see, your best way is to give chase; for they have a long start of you, and you have no time to lose.”

“Your information is sufficient, my good friend,” said Edward, with a smile. “I have reason to know that they did not commence their flight before midnight. You have made it evident that they have not passed since: ergo, they have not passed at all, — an indisputable syllogism. And now will I retrace my footsteps.”

“Stay, young man,” said the stranger, placing himself full in Edward’s way as he was about to hasten to the inn. “You have drawn me in to betray my comrade; but, before you leave this place, you must answer a question or two of mine. Do you mean to take the law with

you? or will you right your wrongs, if you have any, with your own right hand?"

"It is my intention to take the latter method. But, if I choose the former, what then?" demanded Edward.

"Nay, nothing: only you or I might not have gone hence alive," replied the stranger. "But as you say he shall have fair play —"

"On my word, friend," interrupted the young man, "I fear your intelligence has come too late to do either good or harm. Look towards the inn: my companions are getting to horse, and, my life on it, they know whither to ride."

So saying, he hastened away, followed by the stranger. It was indeed evident that news of some kind or other had reached the village. The people were gathered in groups, conversing eagerly; and the pale cheeks, uplifted eyebrows, and outspread hands of some of the female sex filled Edward's mind with undefined but intolerable apprehensions. He forced his way to Dr. Melmoth, who had just mounted, and, seizing his bridle, peremptorily demanded if he knew aught of Ellen Langton.





CHAPTER VIII.

“ Full many a miserable year hath passed :
She knows him as one dead, or worse than dead ;
And many a change her varied life hath known ;
But her heart none.” MATURIN.

SINCE her interview with the angler, which was interrupted by the appearance of Fanshawe, Ellen Langton's hitherto calm and peaceful mind had been in a state of insufferable doubt and dismay. She was imperatively called upon — at least, she so conceived — to break through the rules which nature and education impose upon her sex, to quit the protection of those whose desire for her welfare was true and strong, and to trust herself, for what purpose she scarcely knew, to a stranger, from whom the instinctive purity of her mind would involuntarily have shrunk, under whatever circumstances she had met him. The letter which she had received from the hands of the angler had seemed to her inexperience to prove beyond a doubt that the bearer was the friend of her father, and authorized by him, if her duty and affection were stronger than her fears, to guide her to his retreat. The letter spoke vaguely of losses and misfortunes, and of a necessity for

concealment on her father's part, and secrecy on hers; and, to the credit of Ellen's not very romantic understanding, it must be acknowledged that the mystery of the plot had nearly prevented its success. She did not, indeed, doubt that the letter was from her father's hand; for every line and stroke, and even many of its phrases, were familiar to her. Her apprehension was, that his misfortunes, of what nature soever they were, had affected his intellect, and that, under such an influence, he had commanded her to take a step which nothing less than such a command could justify. Ellen did not, however, remain long in this opinion; for when she re-perused the letter, and considered the firm, regular characters, and the style, — calm and cold, even in requesting such a sacrifice, — she felt that there was nothing like insanity here. In fine, she came gradually to the belief that there were strong reasons, though incomprehensible by her, for the secrecy that her father had enjoined.

Having arrived at this conviction, her decision lay plain before her. Her affection for Mr. Langton was not, indeed, — nor was it possible, — so strong as that she would have felt for a parent who had watched over her from her infancy. Neither was the conception she had unavoidably formed of his character such as to promise that in him she would find an equivalent for all she must sacrifice. On the contrary, her gentle nature and loving heart, which otherwise would have rejoiced in a new object of affection, now shrank with something like dread from the idea of meeting her father, — stately, cold, and stern as she could not but imagine him. A sense of duty was therefore Ellen's only sup-

port in resolving to tread the dark path that lay before her.

Had there been any person of her own sex in whom Ellen felt confidence, there is little doubt that she would so far have disobeyed her father's letter as to communicate its contents, and take counsel as to her proceedings. But Mrs. Melmoth was the only female — excepting, indeed, the maid-servant — to whom it was possible to make the communication; and, though Ellen at first thought of such a step, her timidity, and her knowledge of the lady's character, did not permit her to venture upon it. She next reviewed her acquaintances of the other sex; and Dr. Melmoth first presented himself, as in every respect but one an unexceptionable confidant. But the single exception was equivalent to many. The maiden, with the highest opinion of the doctor's learning and talents, had sufficient penetration to know, that, in the ways of the world, she was herself the better skilled of the two. For a moment she thought of Edward Walcott; but he was light and wild, and, which her delicacy made an insurmountable objection, there was an untold love between them. Her thoughts finally centred on Fanshawe. In his judgment, young and inexperienced though he was, she would have placed a firm trust; and his zeal, from whatever cause it arose, she could not doubt.

If, in the short time allowed her for reflection, an opportunity had occurred for consulting him, she would, in all probability, have taken advantage of it. But the terms on which they had parted the preceding evening had afforded him no reason to hope for her confidence;

and he felt that there were others who had a better right to it than himself. He did not, therefore, throw himself in her way; and poor Ellen was consequently left without an adviser.

The determination that resulted from her own unassisted wisdom has been seen. When discovered by Dr. Melmoth at Hugh Crombie's inn, she was wholly prepared for flight, and, but for the intervention of the storm, would, ere then, have been far away.

The firmness of resolve that had impelled a timid maiden upon such a step was not likely to be broken by one defeat; and Ellen, accordingly, confident that the stranger would make a second attempt, determined that no effort on her part should be wanting to its success. On reaching her chamber, therefore, instead of retiring to rest (of which, from her sleepless thoughts of the preceding night, she stood greatly in need), she sat watching for the abatement of the storm. Her meditations were now calmer than at any time since her first meeting with the angler. She felt as if her fate was decided. The stain had fallen upon her reputation: she was no longer the same pure being in the opinion of those whose approbation she most valued.

One obstacle to her flight — and, to a woman's mind, a most powerful one — had thus been removed. Dark and intricate as was the way, it was easier now to proceed than to pause; and her desperate and forlorn situation gave her a strength which hitherto she had not felt.

At every cessation in the torrent of rain that beat against the house, Ellen flew to the window, expecting to see the stranger form beneath it. But the clouds

would again thicken, and the storm recommence with its former violence ; and she began to fear that the approach of morning would compel her to meet the now dreaded face of Dr. Melmoth. At length, however, a strong and steady wind, supplying the place of the fitful gusts of the preceding part of the night, broke and scattered the clouds from the broad expanse of the sky. The moon, commencing her late voyage not long before the sun, was now visible, setting forth like a lonely ship from the dark line of the horizon, and touching at many a little silver cloud the islands of that aerial deep. Ellen felt that now the time was come ; and, with a calmness wonderful to herself, she prepared for her final departure.

She had not long to wait, ere she saw between the vacancies of the trees the angler, advancing along the shady avenue that led to the principal entrance of Dr. Melmoth's dwelling. He had no need to summon her either by word or signal ; for she had descended, emerged from the door, and stood before him, while he was yet at some distance from the house.

"You have watched well," he observed in a low, strange tone. "As saith the Scripture, 'Many daughters have done virtuously ; but thou excellest them all.'"

He took her arm ; and they hastened down the avenue. Then, leaving Hugh Crombie's inn on their right, they found its master in a spot so shaded that the moonbeams could not enlighten it. He held by the bridle two horses, one of which the angler assisted Ellen to mount. Then turning to the landlord, he pressed a purse into his hand ; but Hugh drew back, and it fell to the ground.

"No! this would not have tempted me; nor will it reward me," he said. "If you have gold to spare, there are some that need it more than I."

"I understand you, mine host. I shall take thought for them; and enough will remain for you and me," replied his comrade. "I have seen the day when such a purse would not have slipped between your fingers. Well, be it so. And now, Hugh, my old friend, a shake of your hand; for we are seeing our last of each other."

"Pray Heaven it be so! though I wish you no ill," said the landlord, giving his hand.

He then seemed about to approach Ellen, who had been unable to distinguish the words of this brief conversation; but his comrade prevented him. "There is no time to lose," he observed. "The moon is growing pale already, and we should have been many a mile beyond the valley ere this." He mounted as he spoke; and, guiding Ellen's rein till they reached the road, they dashed away.

It was now that she felt herself completely in his power; and with that consciousness there came a sudden change of feeling, and an altered view of her conduct. A thousand reasons forced themselves upon her mind, seeming to prove that she had been deceived; while the motives, so powerful with her but a moment before, had either vanished from her memory, or lost all their efficacy. Her companion, who gazed searchingly into her face, where the moonlight, coming down between the pines, allowed him to read its expression, probably discerned somewhat of the state of her thoughts.

"Do you repent so soon?" he inquired. "We have

a weary way before us. Faint not ere we have well entered upon it."

"I have left dear friends behind me, and am going I know not whither," replied Ellen, tremblingly.

"You have a faithful guide," he observed, turning away his head, and speaking in the tone of one who endeavors to smother a laugh.

Ellen had no heart to continue the conversation; and they rode on in silence, and through a wild and gloomy scene. The wind roared heavily through the forest, and the trees shed their raindrops upon the travellers. The road, at all times rough, was now broken into deep gullies, through which streams went murmuring down to mingle with the river. The pale moonlight combined with the gray of the morning to give a ghastly and unsubstantial appearance to every object.

The difficulties of the road had been so much increased by the storm, that the purple eastern clouds gave notice of the near approach of the sun just as the travellers reached the little lonesome cottage which Ellen remembered to have visited several months before. On arriving opposite to it, her companion checked his horse, and gazed with a wild earnestness at the wretched habitation. Then, stifling a groan that would not altogether be repressed, he was about to pass on; but at that moment the cottage-door opened, and a woman, whose sour, unpleasant countenance Ellen recognized, came hastily forth. She seemed not to heed the travellers; but the angler, his voice thrilling and quivering with indescribable emotion, addressed her.

"Woman, whither do you go?" he inquired.

She started, but, after a momentary pause, replied, "There is one within at the point of death. She struggles fearfully; and I cannot endure to watch alone by her bedside. If you are Christians, come in with me."

Ellen's companion leaped hastily from his horse, assisted her also to dismount, and followed the woman into the cottage, having first thrown the bridles of the horses carelessly over the branch of a tree. Ellen trembled at the awful scene she would be compelled to witness; but, when death was so near at hand, it was more terrible to stand alone in the dim morning light than even to watch the parting of soul and body. She therefore entered the cottage.

Her guide, his face muffled in his cloak, had taken his stand at a distance from the death-bed, in a part of the room which neither the increasing daylight nor the dim rays of a solitary lamp had yet enlightened. At Ellen's entrance, the dying woman lay still, and apparently calm, except that a plaintive, half-articulate sound occasionally wandered through her lips.

"Hush! For mercy's sake, silence!" whispered the other woman to the strangers. "There is good hope now that she will die a peaceable death; but, if she is disturbed, the boldest of us will not dare to stand by her bedside."

The whisper by which her sister endeavored to preserve quiet perhaps reached the ears of the dying female; for she now raised herself in bed, slowly, but with a strength superior to what her situation promised. Her face was ghastly and wild, from long illness, approaching death, and disturbed intellect; and a disembodied spirit

could scarcely be a more fearful object than one whose soul was just struggling forth. Her sister, approaching with the soft and stealing step appropriate to the chamber of sickness and death, attempted to replace the covering around her, and to compose her again upon the pillow. "Lie down and sleep, sister," she said; "and, when the day breaks, I will waken you. Methinks your breath comes freer already. A little more slumber, and to-morrow you will be well."

"My illness is gone: I am well," said the dying woman, gasping for breath. "I wander where the fresh breeze comes sweetly over my face; but a close and stifled air has choked my lungs."

"Yet a little while, and you will no longer draw your breath in pain," observed her sister, again replacing the bedclothes, which she continued to throw off.

"My husband is with me," murmured the widow. "He walks by my side, and speaks to me as in old times; but his words come faintly on my ear. Cheer me and comfort me, my husband; for there is a terror in those dim, motionless eyes, and in that shadowy voice."

As she spoke thus, she seemed to gaze upon some object that stood by her bedside; and the eyes of those who witnessed this scene could not but follow the direction of hers. They observed that the dying woman's own shadow was marked upon the wall, receiving a tremulous motion from the fitful rays of the lamp, and from her own convulsive efforts. "My husband stands gazing on me," she said again; "but my son, — where is he? And, as I ask, the father turns away his face. Where

is our son? For his sake, I have longed to come to this land of rest. For him I have sorrowed many years. Will he not comfort me now?"

At these words the stranger made a few hasty steps towards the bed; but, ere he reached it, he conquered the impulse that drew him thither, and, shrouding his face more deeply in his cloak, returned to his former position. The dying woman, in the mean time, had thrown herself back upon the bed; and her sobbing and wailing, imaginary as was their cause, were inexpressibly affecting.

"Take me back to earth," she said; "for its griefs have followed me hither."

The stranger advanced, and, seizing the lamp, knelt down by the bedside, throwing the light full upon his pale and convulsed features.

"Mother, here is your son!" he exclaimed.

At that unforgotten voice, the darkness burst away at once from her soul. She arose in bed, her eyes and her whole countenance beaming with joy, and threw her arms about his neck. A multitude of words seemed struggling for utterance; but they gave place to a low moaning sound, and then to the silence of death. The one moment of happiness, that recompensed years of sorrow, had been her last. Her son laid the lifeless form upon the pillow, and gazed with fixed eyes on his mother's face.

As he looked, the expression of enthusiastic joy that parting life had left upon the features faded gradually away; and the countenance, though no longer wild, assumed the sadness which it had worn through a long

course of grief and pain. On beholding this natural consequence of death, the thought, perhaps, occurred to him, that her soul, no longer dependent on the imperfect means of intercourse possessed by mortals, had communed with his own, and become acquainted with all its guilt and misery. He started from the bedside, and covered his face with his hands, as if to hide it from those dead eyes.

Such a scene as has been described could not but have a powerful effect upon any one who retained aught of humanity; and the grief of the son, whose natural feelings had been blunted, but not destroyed, by an evil life, was much more violent than his outward demeanor would have expressed. But his deep repentance for the misery he had brought upon his parent did not produce in him a resolution to do wrong no more. The sudden consciousness of accumulated guilt made him desperate. He felt as if no one had thenceforth a claim to justice or compassion at his hands, when his neglect and cruelty had poisoned his mother's life, and hastened her death. Thus it was that the Devil wrought with him to his own destruction, reversing the salutary effect which his mother would have died exultingly to produce upon his mind. He now turned to Ellen Langton with a demeanor singularly calm and composed.

"We must resume our journey," he said, in his usual tone of voice. "The sun is on the point of rising, though but little light finds its way into this hovel."

Ellen's previous suspicions as to the character of her companion had now become certainty so far as to convince her that she was in the power of a lawless and

guilty man; though what fate he intended for her, she was unable to conjecture. An open opposition to his will, however, could not be ventured upon; especially as she discovered, on looking round the apartment, that, with the exception of the corpse, they were alone.

“Will you not attend your mother’s funeral?” she asked, trembling, and conscious that he would discover her fears.

“The dead must bury their dead,” he replied. “I have brought my mother to her grave, — and what can a son do more? This purse, however, will serve to lay her in the earth, and leave something for the old hag. Whither is she gone?” interrupted he, casting a glance round the room in search of the old woman. “Nay, then, we must speedily to horse. I know her of old.”

Thus saying, he threw the purse upon the table, and, without trusting himself to look again towards the dead, conducted Ellen out of the cottage. The first rays of the sun at that moment gilded the tallest trees of the forest.

On looking towards the spot where the horses had stood, Ellen thought that Providence, in answer to her prayers, had taken care for her deliverance. They were no longer there, — a circumstance easily accounted for by the haste with which the bridles had been thrown over the branch of the tree. Her companion, however, imputed it to another cause.

“The hag! She would sell her own flesh and blood by weight and measure,” he muttered to himself. “This is some plot of hers, I know well.”

He put his hand to his forehead for a moment's space, seeming to reflect on the course most advisable to be pursued. Ellen, perhaps unwisely, interposed.

"Would it not be well to return?" she asked, timidly. "There is now no hope of escaping; but I might yet reach home undiscovered."

"Return!" repeated her guide, with a look and smile from which she turned away her face. "Have you forgotten your father and his misfortunes? No, no, sweet Ellen: it is too late for such thoughts as these."

He took her hand, and led her towards the forest, in the rear of the cottage. She would fain have resisted; but they were all alone, and the attempt must have been both fruitless and dangerous. She therefore trod with him a path so devious, so faintly traced, and so overgrown with bushes and young trees, that only a most accurate acquaintance in his early days could have enabled her guide to retain it. To him, however, it seemed so perfectly familiar, that he was not once compelled to pause, though the numerous windings soon deprived Ellen of all knowledge of the situation of the cottage. They descended a steep hill, and, proceeding parallel to the river, — as Ellen judged by its rushing sound, — at length found themselves at what proved to be the termination of their walk.

Ellen now recollected a remark of Edward Walcott's respecting the wild and rude scenery through which the river here kept its way; and, in less agitating circumstances, her pleasure and admiration would have been great. They stood beneath a precipice, so high that the loftiest pine-tops (and many of them seemed to soar to

heaven) scarcely surmounted it. This line of rock has a considerable extent, at unequal heights, and with many interruptions, along the course of the river; and it seems probable, that at some former period it was the boundary of the waters, though they are now confined within far less ambitious limits. The inferior portion of the crag, beneath which Ellen and her guide were standing, varies so far from the perpendicular as not to be inaccessible by a careful footstep. But only one person has been known to attempt the ascent of the superior half, and only one the descent; yet, steep as is the height, trees and bushes of various kinds have clung to the rock, wherever their roots could gain the slightest hold; thus seeming to prefer the scanty and difficult nourishment of the cliff to a more luxurious life in the rich interval that extends from its base to the river. But, whether or no these hardy vegetables have voluntarily chosen their rude resting-place, the cliff is indebted to them for much of the beauty that tempers its sublimity. When the eye is pained and wearied by the bold nakedness of the rock, it rests with pleasure on the cheerful foliage of the birch, or upon the darker green of the funereal pine. Just at the termination of the accessible portion of the crag, these trees are so numerous, and their foliage so dense, that they completely shroud from view a considerable excavation, formed, probably, hundreds of years since, by the fall of a portion of the rock. The detached fragment still lies at a little distance from the base, gray and moss-grown; but corresponding, in its general outline, to the cavity from which it was rent.

But the most singular and beautiful object in all this

scene is a tiny fount of crystal water, that gushes forth from the high, smooth forehead of the cliff. Its perpendicular descent is of many feet ; after which it finds its way, with a sweet diminutive murmur, to the level ground.

It is not easy to conceive whence the barren rock procures even the small supply of water that is necessary to the existence of this stream ; it is as unaccountable as the gush of gentle feeling which sometimes proceeds from the hardest heart : but there it continues to flow and fall, undiminished and unincreased. The stream is so slender, that the gentlest breeze suffices to disturb its descent, and to scatter its pure sweet waters over the face of the cliff. But in that deep forest there is seldom a breath of wind ; so that, plashing continually upon one spot, the fount has worn its own little channel of white sand, by which it finds its way to the river. Alas that the Naiades have lost their old authority ! for what a deity of tiny loveliness must once have presided here !

Ellen's companion paused not to gaze either upon the loveliness or the sublimity of this scene, but, assisting her where it was requisite, began the steep and difficult ascent of the lower part of the cliff. The maiden's ingenuity in vain endeavored to assign reasons for this movement ; but when they reached the tuft of trees, which, as has been noticed, grew at the ultimate point where mortal footstep might safely tread, she perceived through their thick branches the recess in the rock. Here they entered ; and her guide pointed to a mossy seat, in the formation of which, to judge from its regularity, art had probably a share.

“Here you may remain in safety,” he observed, “till I obtain the means of proceeding. In this spot you need fear no intruder; but it will be dangerous to venture beyond its bounds.”

The meaning glance that accompanied these words intimated to poor Ellen, that, in warning her against danger, he alluded to the vengeance with which he would visit any attempt to escape. To leave her thus alone, trusting to the influence of such a threat, was a bold, yet a necessary and by no means a hopeless measure. On Ellen it produced the desired effect; and she sat in the cave as motionless, for a time, as if she had herself been a part of the rock. In other circumstances this shady recess would have been a delightful retreat during the sultry warmth of a summer's day. The dewy coolness of the rock kept the air always fresh, and the sunbeams never thrust themselves so as to dissipate the mellow twilight through the green trees with which the chamber was curtained. Ellen's sleeplessness and agitation for many preceding hours had perhaps deadened her feelings; for she now felt a sort of indifference creeping upon her, an inability to realize the evils of her situation, at the same time that she was perfectly aware of them all. This torpor of mind increased, till her eyelids began to grow heavy, and the cave and trees to swim before her sight. In a few moments more, she would probably have been in dreamless slumber; but, rousing herself by a strong effort, she looked round the narrow limits of the cave in search of objects to excite her worn-out mind.

She now perceived, wherever the smooth rock afforded

place for them, the initials, or the full-length names, of former visitants of the cave. What wanderer on mountain-tops or in deep solitudes has not felt the influence of these records of humanity, telling him, when such a conviction is soothing to his heart, that he is not alone in the world? It was singular, that, when her own mysterious situation had almost lost its power to engage her thoughts, Ellen perused these barren memorials with a certain degree of interest. She went on repeating them aloud, and starting at the sound of her own voice, till at length, as one name passed through her lips, she paused, and then, leaning her forehead against the letters, burst into tears. It was the name of Edward Walcott; and it struck upon her heart, arousing her to a full sense of her present misfortunes and dangers, and, more painful still, of her past happiness. Her tears had, however, a soothing, and at the same time a strengthening effect upon her mind; for, when their gush was over, she raised her head, and began to meditate on the means of escape. She wondered at the species of fascination that had kept her, as if chained to the rock, so long, when there was, in reality, nothing to bar her pathway. She determined, late as it was, to attempt her own deliverance, and for that purpose began slowly and cautiously to emerge from the cave.

Peeping out from among the trees, she looked and listened with most painful anxiety to discover if any living thing were in that seeming solitude, or if any sound disturbed the heavy stillness. But she saw only Nature in her wildest forms, and heard only the plash and murmur (almost inaudible, because continual) of the

little waterfall, and the quick, short throbbing of her own heart, against which she pressed her hand, as if to hush it. Gathering courage, therefore, she began to descend; and, starting often at the loose stones that even her light footstep displaced and sent rattling down, she at length reached the base of the crag in safety. She then made a few steps in the direction, as nearly as she could judge, by which she arrived at the spot, but paused, with a sudden revulsion of the blood to her heart, as her guide emerged from behind a projecting part of the rock. He approached her deliberately, an ironical smile writhing his features into a most disagreeable expression; while in his eyes there was something that seemed a wild, fierce joy. By a species of sophistry, of which oppressors often make use, he had brought himself to believe that he was now the injured one, and that Ellen, by her distrust of him, had fairly subjected herself to whatever evil it consisted with his will and power to inflict upon her. Her only restraining influence over him, the consciousness, in his own mind, that he possessed her confidence, was now done away. Ellen, as well as her enemy, felt that this was the case. She knew not what to dread; but she was well aware that danger was at hand, and that, in the deep wilderness, there was none to help her, except that Being with whose inscrutable purposes it might consist to allow the wicked to triumph for a season, and the innocent to be brought low.

“Are you so soon weary of this quiet retreat?” demanded her guide, continuing to wear the same sneering smile. “Or has your anxiety for your father induced

you to set forth alone in quest of the afflicted old man?"

"O, if I were but with him!" exclaimed Ellen. "But this place is lonely and fearful; and I cannot endure to remain here."

"Lonely, is it, sweet Ellen?" he rejoined; "am I not with you? Yes, it is lonely, — lonely as guilt could wish. Cry aloud, Ellen, and spare not. Shriek, and see if there be any among these rocks and woods to hearken to you!"

"There is, there is One," exclaimed Ellen, shuddering, and affrighted at the fearful meaning of his countenance. "He is here! He is there!" And she pointed to heaven.

"It may be so, dearest," he replied. "But if there be an Ear that hears, and an Eye that sees all the evil of the earth, yet the Arm is slow to avenge. Else why do I stand before you a living man?"

"His vengeance may be delayed for a time, but not forever," she answered, gathering a desperate courage from the extremity of her fear.

"You say true, lovely Ellen; and I have done enough, ere now, to insure its heaviest weight. There is a pass, when evil deeds can add nothing to guilt, nor good ones take anything from it."

"Think of your mother, — of her sorrow through life, and perhaps even after death," Ellen began to say. But, as she spoke these words, the expression of his face was changed, becoming suddenly so dark and fiend-like, that she clasped her hands, and fell on her knees before him.

"I have thought of my mother," he replied, speaking

very low, and putting his face close to hers. "I remember the neglect, the wrong, the lingering and miserable death, that she received at my hands. By what claim can either man or woman henceforth expect mercy from me? If God will help you, be it so; but by those words you have turned my heart to stone."

At this period of their conversation, when Ellen's peril seemed most imminent, the attention of both was attracted by a fragment of rock, which, falling from the summit of the crag, struck very near them. Ellen started from her knees, and, with her false guide, gazed eagerly upward, — he in the fear of interruption, she in the hope of deliverance.





CHAPTER IX.

“At length, he cries, behold the fated spring!
Yon rugged cliff conceals the fountain blest,
Dark rocks its crystal source o’ershadowing.”

PSYCHE.

THE tale now returns to Fanshawe, who, as will be recollected, after being overtaken by Edward Walcott, was left with little apparent prospect of aiding in the deliverance of Ellen Langton.

It would be difficult to analyze the feelings with which the student pursued the chase, or to decide whether he was influenced and animated by the same hopes of successful love that cheered his rival. That he was conscious of such hopes, there is little reason to suppose; for the most powerful minds are not always the best acquainted with their own feelings. Had Fanshawe, moreover, acknowledged to himself the possibility of gaining Ellen’s affections, his generosity would have induced him to refrain from her society before it was too late. He had read her character with accuracy, and had seen how fit she was to love, and to be loved, by a man who could find his happiness in the common occupations of the world; and Fanshawe never deceived himself so

far as to suppose that this would be the case with him. Indeed, he often wondered at the passion with which Ellen's simple loveliness of mind and person had inspired him, and which seemed to be founded on the principle of contrariety, rather than of sympathy. It was the yearning of a soul, formed by Nature in a peculiar mould, for communion with those to whom it bore a resemblance, yet of whom it was not. But there was no reason to suppose that Ellen, who differed from the multitude only as being purer and better, would cast away her affections on the one, of all who surrounded her, least fitted to make her happy. Thus Fanshawe reasoned with himself, and of this he believed that he was convinced. Yet ever and anon he found himself involved in a dream of bliss, of which Ellen was to be the giver and the sharer. Then would he rouse himself, and press upon his mind the chilling consciousness that it was and could be but a dream. There was also another feeling, apparently discordant with those which have been enumerated. It was a longing for rest, for his old retirement, that came at intervals so powerfully upon him, as he rode on, that his heart sickened of the active exertion on which fate had thrust him.

After being overtaken by Edward Walcott, Fanshawe continued his journey with as much speed as was attainable by his wearied horse, but at a pace infinitely too slow for his earnest thoughts. These had carried him far away, leaving him only such a consciousness of his present situation as to make diligent use of the spur, when a horse's tread at no great distance struck upon his ear. He looked forward and behind; but, though a

considerable extent of the narrow, rocky, and grass-grown road was visible, he was the only traveller there. Yet again he heard the sound, which, he now discovered, proceeded from among the trees that lined the roadside. Alighting, he entered the forest, with the intention, if the steed proved to be disengaged, and superior to his own, of appropriating him to his own use. He soon gained a view of the object he sought; but the animal rendered a closer acquaintance unattainable, by immediately taking to his heels. Fanshawe had, however, made a most interesting discovery; for the horse was accoutred with a side-saddle; and who but Ellen Langton could have been his rider? At this conclusion, though his perplexity was thereby in no degree diminished, the student immediately arrived. Returning to the road, and perceiving on the summit of the hill a cottage, which he recognized as the one he had entered with Ellen and Edward Walcott, he determined there to make inquiry respecting the objects of his pursuit.

On reaching the door of the poverty-stricken dwelling, he saw that it was not now so desolate of inmates as on his previous visit. In the single inhabitable apartment were several elderly women, clad evidently in their well-worn and well-saved Sunday clothes, and all wearing a deep grievous expression of countenance. Fanshawe was not long in deciding that death was within the cottage, and that these aged females were of the class who love the house of mourning, because to them it is a house of feasting. It is a fact, disgusting and lamentable, that the disposition which Heaven, for the best of purposes, has implanted in the female breast—to watch by the

sick, and comfort the afflicted — frequently becomes depraved into an odious love of scenes of pain and death and sorrow. Such women are like the Ghouls of the Arabian Tales, whose feasting was among tombstones and upon dead carcasses.

(It is sometimes, though less frequently, the case, that this disposition to make a “joy of grief” extends to individuals of the other sex. But in us it is even less excusable and more disgusting, because it is our nature to shun the sick and afflicted; and, unless restrained by principles other than we bring into the world with us, men might follow the example of many animals in destroying the infirm of their own species. Indeed, instances of this nature might be adduced among savage nations.) Sometimes, however, from an original *lusus naturæ*, or from the influence of circumstances, a man becomes a haunter of death-beds, a tormentor of afflicted hearts, and a follower of funerals. Such an abomination now appeared before Fanshawe, and beckoned him into the cottage. He was considerably beyond the middle age, rather corpulent, with a broad, fat, tallow-complexioned countenance. The student obeyed his silent call, and entered the room, through the open door of which he had been gazing.

He now beheld, stretched out upon the bed where she had so lately laid in life, though dying, the yet unconfined corpse of the aged woman, whose death has been described. How frightful it seemed! — that fixed countenance of ashy paleness, amid its decorations of muslin and fine linen, as if a bride were decked for the marriage-chamber, as if death were a bridegroom, and the coffin

a bridal bed. Alas that the vanity of dress should extend even to the grave!

The female who, as being the near and only relative of the deceased, was supposed to stand in need of comfort, was surrounded by five or six of her own sex. These continually poured into her ear the stale, trite maxims which, where consolation is actually required, add torture insupportable to the wounded heart. Their present object, however, conducted herself with all due decorum, holding her handkerchief to her tearless eyes, and answering with very grievous groans to the words of her comforters. Who could have imagined that there was joy in her heart, because, since her sister's death, there was but one remaining obstacle between herself and the sole property of that wretched cottage?

While Fanshawe stood silently observing this scene, a low, monotonous voice was uttering some words in his ear, of the meaning of which his mind did not immediately take note. He turned, and saw that the speaker was the person who had invited him to enter.

“What is your pleasure with me, sir?” demanded the student.

“I make bold to ask,” replied the man, “whether you would choose to partake of some creature comfort, before joining in prayer with the family and friends of our deceased sister?” As he spoke, he pointed to a table, on which was a moderate-sized stone jug and two or three broken glasses; for then, as now, there were few occasions of joy or grief on which ardent spirits were not considered indispensable, to heighten the one or to alleviate the other.

“I stand in no need of refreshment,” answered Fanshawe; “and it is not my intention to pray at present.”

“I pray your pardon, reverend sir,” rejoined the other; “but your face is pale, and you look wearied. A drop from yonder vessel is needful to recruit the outward man. And for the prayer, the sisters will expect it; and their souls are longing for the outpouring of the Spirit. I was intending to open my own mouth with such words as are given to my poor ignorance, but —”

Fanshawe was here about to interrupt this address, which proceeded on the supposition, arising from his black dress and thoughtful countenance, that he was a clergyman. But one of the females now approached him, and intimated that the sister of the deceased was desirous of the benefit of his conversation. He would have returned a negative to this request, but, looking towards the afflicted woman, he saw her withdraw her handkerchief from her eyes, and cast a brief but penetrating and most intelligent glance upon him. He immediately expressed his readiness to offer such consolation as might be in his power.

“And in the mean time,” observed the lay-preacher, “I will give the sisters to expect a word of prayer and exhortation, either from you or from myself.”

These words were lost upon the supposed clergyman, who was already at the side of the mourner. The females withdrew out of ear-shot to give place to a more legitimate comforter than themselves.

“What know you respecting my purpose?” inquired Fanshawe, bending towards her.

The woman gave a groan — the usual result of all

efforts at consolation — for the edification of the company, and then replied in a whisper, which reached only the ear for which it was intended. “I know whom you come to seek: I can direct you to them. Speak low, for God’s sake!” she continued, observing that Fanshawe was about to utter an exclamation. She then resumed her groans with greater zeal than before.

“Where — where are they?” asked the student, in a whisper which all his efforts could scarcely keep below his breath. “I adjure you to tell me.”

“And, if I should, how am I like to be bettered by it?” inquired the old woman, her speech still preceded and followed by a groan.

“O God! The *auri sacra fames!*” thought Fanshawe with a sickening heart, looking at the motionless corpse upon the bed, and then at the wretched being, whom the course of nature, in comparatively a moment of time, would reduce to the same condition.

He whispered again, however, putting his purse into the hag’s hand. “Take this. Make your own terms when they are discovered. Only tell me where I must seek them — and speedily, or it may be too late.”

“I am a poor woman, and am afflicted,” said she, taking the purse, unseen by any who were in the room. “It is little that worldly goods can do for me, and not long can I enjoy them.” And here she was delivered of a louder and a more heartfelt groan than ever. She then continued, “Follow the path behind the cottage, that leads to the river-side. Walk along the foot of the rock, and search for them near the water-spout. Keep a slow pace till you are out of sight,” she added, as the student started to his feet.

The guests of the cottage did not attempt to oppose Fanshawe's progress, when they saw him take the path towards the forest, imagining, probably, that he was retiring for the purpose of secret prayer. But the old woman laughed behind the handkerchief with which she veiled her face.

"Take heed to your steps, boy," she muttered; "for they are leading you whence you will not return. Death, too, for the slayer. Be it so."

Fanshawe, in the mean while, contrived to discover, and for a while to retain, the narrow and winding path that led to the river-side. But it was originally no more than a track, by which the cattle belonging to the cottage went down to their watering-place, and by these four-footed passengers it had long been deserted. The fern-bushes, therefore, had grown over it; and in several places trees of considerable size had shot up in the midst. These difficulties could scarcely have been surmounted by the utmost caution; and as Fanshawe's thoughts were too deeply fixed upon the end to pay a due regard to the means, he soon became desperately bewildered both as to the locality of the river and of the cottage. Had he known, however, in which direction to seek the latter, he would not, probably, have turned back; not that he was infected by any chivalrous desire to finish the adventure alone, but because he would expect little assistance from those he had left there. Yet he could not but wonder — though he had not in his first eagerness taken notice of it — at the anxiety of the old woman that he should proceed singly, and without the knowledge of her guests, on the search. He nevertheless continued to wander on, —

pausing often to listen for the rush of the river, and then starting forward with fresh rapidity, to rid himself of the sting of his own thoughts, which became painfully intense when undisturbed by bodily motion. His way was now frequently interrupted by rocks, that thrust their huge gray heads from the ground, compelling him to turn aside, and thus depriving him, fortunately perhaps, of all remaining idea of the direction he had intended to pursue.

Thus he went on, his head turned back, and taking little heed to his footsteps, when, perceiving that he trod upon a smooth, level rock, he looked forward, and found himself almost on the utmost verge of a precipice.

After the throbbing of the heart that followed this narrow escape had subsided, he stood gazing down where the sunbeams slept so pleasantly at the roots of the tall old trees, with whose highest tops he was upon a level. Suddenly he seemed to hear voices — one well-remembered voice — ascending from beneath ; and, approaching to the edge of the cliff, he saw at its base the two whom he sought.

He saw and interpreted Ellen's look and attitude of entreaty, though the words with which she sought to soften the ruthless heart of her guide became inaudible ere they reached the height where Fanshawe stood. He felt that Heaven had sent him thither at the moment of her utmost need, to be the preserver of all that was dear to him ; and he paused only to consider the mode in which her deliverance was to be effected. Life he would have laid down willingly, exultingly : his only care was, that the sacrifice should not be in vain.

At length, when Ellen fell upon her knees, he lifted a small fragment of rock, and threw it down the cliff. It struck so near the pair, that it immediately drew the attention of both.

When the betrayer, at the instant in which he had almost defied the power of the Omnipotent to bring help to Ellen, became aware of Fanshawe's presence, his hardihood failed him for a time, and his knees actually tottered beneath him. There was something awful, to his apprehension, in the slight form that stood so far above him, like a being from another sphere, looking down upon his wickedness. But his half-superstitious dread endured only a moment's space; and then, mustering the courage that in a thousand dangers had not deserted him, he prepared to revenge the intrusion by which Fanshawe had a second time interrupted his designs.

"By Heaven, I will cast him down at her feet!" he muttered through his closed teeth. "There shall be no form nor likeness of man left in him. Then let him rise up, if he is able, and defend her."

Thus resolving, and overlooking all hazard in his eager hatred and desire for vengeance, he began a desperate attempt to ascend the cliff. The space which only had hitherto been deemed accessible was quickly passed; and in a moment more he was half-way up the precipice, clinging to trees, shrubs, and projecting portions of the rock, and escaping through hazards which seemed to menace ineviabile destruction.

Fanshawe, as he watched his upward progress, deemed that every step would be his last; but when he perceived that more than half, and apparently the most difficult

part, of the ascent was surmounted, his opinion changed. His courage, however, did not fail him as the moment of need drew nigh. His spirits rose buoyantly; his limbs seemed to grow firm and strong; and he stood on the edge of the precipice, prepared for the death-struggle which would follow the success of his enemy's attempt.

But that attempt was not successful. When within a few feet of the summit, the adventurer grasped at a twig too slenderly rooted to sustain his weight. It gave way in his hand, and he fell backward down the precipice. His head struck against the less perpendicular part of the rock, whence the body rolled heavily down to the detached fragment, of which mention has heretofore been made. There was no life left in him. With all the passions of hell alive in his heart, he had met the fate that he intended for Fanshawe.

The student paused not then to shudder at the sudden and awful overthrow of his enemy; for he saw that Ellen lay motionless at the foot of the cliff. She had indeed fainted at the moment she became aware of her deliverer's presence; and no stronger proof could she have given of her firm reliance upon his protection.

Fanshawe was not deterred by the danger, of which he had just received so fearful an evidence, from attempting to descend to her assistance; and, whether owing to his advantage in lightness of frame, or to superior caution, he arrived safely at the base of the precipice.

He lifted the motionless form of Ellen in his arms, and, resting her head against his shoulder, gazed on her cheek of lily paleness with a joy, a triumph, that rose almost to madness. It contained no mixture of hope;

it had no reference to the future : it was the perfect bliss of a moment, — an insulated point of happiness. He bent over her, and pressed a kiss — the first, and he knew it would be the last — on her pale lips ; then, bearing her to the fountain, he sprinkled its waters profusely over her face, neck, and bosom. She at length opened her eyes, slowly and heavily ; but her mind was evidently wandering, till Fanshawe spoke.

“ Fear not, Ellen : you are safe,” he said.

At the sound of his voice, her arm, which was thrown over his shoulder, involuntarily tightened its embrace, telling him, by that mute motion, with how firm a trust she confided in him. But, as a fuller sense of her situation returned, she raised herself to her feet, though still retaining the support of his arm. It was singular, that, although her insensibility had commenced before the fall of her guide, she turned away her eyes, as if instinctively, from the spot where the mangled body lay ; nor did she inquire of Fanshawe the manner of her deliverance.

“ Let us begone from this place,” she said in faint, low accents, and with an inward shudder.

They walked along the precipice, seeking some passage by which they might gain its summit, and at length arrived at that by which Ellen and her guide had descended. Chance — for neither Ellen nor Fanshawe could have discovered the path — led them, after but little wandering, to the cottage. A messenger was sent forward to the town to inform Dr. Melmoth of the recovery of his ward ; and the intelligence thus received had interrupted Edward Walcott’s conversation with the seaman.

It would have been impossible, in the mangled remains of Ellen's guide, to discover the son of the Widow Butler, except from the evidence of her sister, who became, by his death, the sole inheritor of the cottage. The history of this evil and unfortunate man must be comprised within very narrow limits. A harsh father, and his own untamable disposition, had driven him from home in his boyhood; and chance had made him the temporary companion of Hugh Crombie. After two years of wandering, when in a foreign country and in circumstances of utmost need, he attracted the notice of Mr. Langton. The merchant took his young countryman under his protection, afforded him advantages of education, and, as his capacity was above mediocrity, gradually trusted him in many affairs of importance. During this period, there was no evidence of dishonesty on his part. On the contrary, he manifested a zeal for Mr. Langton's interest, and a respect for his person, that proved his strong sense of the benefits he had received. But he unfortunately fell into certain youthful indiscretions, which, if not entirely pardonable, might have been palliated by many considerations that would have occurred to a merciful man. Mr. Langton's justice, however, was seldom tempered by mercy; and, on this occasion, he shut the door of repentance against his erring *protégé*, and left him in a situation not less desperate than that from which he had relieved him. The goodness and the nobleness, of which his heart was not destitute, turned, from that time, wholly to evil; and he became irrecoverably ruined and irreclaimably depraved. His wandering life had led him, shortly before the period of this tale, to his native

country. Here the erroneous intelligence of Mr. Langton's death had reached him, and suggested the scheme, which circumstances seemed to render practicable, but the fatal termination of which has been related.

The body was buried where it had fallen, close by the huge, gray, moss-grown fragment of rock, — a monument on which centuries can work little change. The eighty years that have elapsed since the death of the widow's son have, however, been sufficient to obliterate an inscription, which some one was at the pains to cut in the smooth surface of the stone. Traces of letters are still discernible; but the writer's many efforts could never discover a connected meaning. The grave, also, is overgrown with fern-bushes, and sunk to a level with the surrounding soil. But the legend, though my version of it may be forgotten, will long be traditional in that lonely spot, and give to the rock and the precipice and the fountain an interest thrilling to the bosom of the romantic wanderer.





CHAPTER X.

“Sitting then in shelter shady,
To observe and mark his mone,
Suddenly I saw a lady
Hasting to him all alone,
Clad in maiden-white and green,
Whom I judged the Forest Queen.”

THE WOODMAN'S BEAR.

DURING several weeks succeeding her danger and deliverance, Ellen Langton was confined to her chamber by illness, resulting from the agitation she had endured. Her father embraced the earliest opportunity to express his deep gratitude to Fanshawe for the inestimable service he had rendered, and to intimate a desire to requite it to the utmost of his power. He had understood that the student's circumstances were not prosperous, and, with the feeling of one who was habituated to give and receive a *quid pro quo*, he would have rejoiced to share his abundance with the deliverer of his daughter. But Fanshawe's flushed brow and haughty eye, when he perceived the thought that was stirring in Mr. Langton's mind, sufficiently proved to the discerning merchant that money was not, in the present instance, a circulating medium. His penetra-

tion, in fact, very soon informed him of the motives by which the young man had been actuated in risking his life for Ellen Langton; but he made no allusion to the subject, concealing his intentions, if any he had, in his own bosom.

During Ellen's illness, Edward Walcott had manifested the deepest anxiety respecting her: he had wandered around and within the house, like a restless ghost, informing himself of the slightest fluctuation in her health, and thereby graduating his happiness or misery. He was at length informed that her convalescence had so far progressed, that, on the succeeding day, she would venture below. From that time, Edward's visits to Dr. Melmoth's mansion were relinquished. His cheek grew pale, and his eye lost its merry light; but he resolutely kept himself a banished man. Multifarious were the conjectures to which this course of conduct gave rise; but Ellen understood and approved his motives. The maiden must have been far more blind than ever woman was in such a matter, if the late events had not convinced her of Fanshawe's devoted attachment; and she saw that Edward Walcott, feeling the superior, the irresistible strength of his rival's claim, had retired from the field. Fanshawe, however, discovered no intention to pursue his advantage. He paid her no voluntary visit, and even declined an invitation to tea, with which Mrs. Melmoth, after extensive preparations, had favored him. He seemed to have resumed all the habits of seclusion by which he was distinguished previous to his acquaintance with Ellen, except that he still took his sunset walk on the banks of the stream.

On one of these occasions, he stayed his footsteps by the old leafless oak which had witnessed Ellen's first meeting with the angler. Here he mused upon the circumstances that had resulted from that event, and upon the rights and privileges (for he was well aware of them all) which those circumstances had given him. Perhaps the loveliness of the scene and the recollections connected with it, perhaps the warm and mellow sunset, perhaps a temporary weakness in himself, had softened his feelings, and shaken the firmness of his resolution, to leave Ellen to be happy with his rival. His strong affections rose up against his reason, whispering that bliss — on earth and in Heaven, through time and eternity — might yet be his lot with her. It is impossible to conceive of the flood of momentary joy which the bare admission of such a possibility sent through his frame; and, just when the tide was highest in his heart, a soft little hand was laid upon his own, and, starting, he beheld Ellen at his side.

Her illness, since the commencement of which Fanshawe had not seen her, had wrought a considerable, but not a disadvantageous change in her appearance. She was paler and thinner; her countenance was more intellectual, more spiritual; and a spirit did the student almost deem her, appearing so suddenly in that solitude. There was a quick vibration of the delicate blood in her cheek, yet never brightening to the glow of perfect health: a tear was glittering on each of her long, dark eyelashes; and there was a gentle tremor through all her frame, which compelled her, for a little space, to support herself against the oak. Fanshawe's first impulse was

to address her in words of rapturous delight ; but he checked himself, and attempted — vainly indeed — to clothe his voice in tones of calm courtesy. His remark merely expressed pleasure at her restoration to health ; and Ellen's low and indistinct reply had as little relation to the feelings that agitated her.

“ Yet I fear,” continued Fanshawe, recovering a degree of composure, and desirous of assigning a motive (which he felt was not the true one) for Ellen's agitation, — “ I fear that your walk has extended too far for your strength.”

“ It would have borne me farther with such a motive,” she replied, still trembling, — “ to express my gratitude to my preserver.”

“ It was needless, Ellen, it was needless ; for the deed brought with it its own reward,” exclaimed Fanshawe, with a vehemence that he could not repress. “ It was dangerous, for — ”

Here he interrupted himself, and turned his face away.

“ And wherefore was it dangerous ? ” inquired Ellen, laying her hand gently on his arm ; for he seemed about to leave her.

“ Because you have a tender and generous heart, and I a weak one,” he replied.

“ Not so,” answered she, with animation. “ Yours is a heart full of strength and nobleness ; and if it have a weakness — ”

“ You know well that it has, Ellen, — one that has swallowed up all its strength,” said Fanshawe. “ Was it wise, then, to tempt it thus, when, if it yield, the result must be your own misery ? ”

Ellen did not affect to misunderstand his meaning. On the contrary, with a noble frankness, she answered to what was implied rather than expressed.

“Do me not this wrong,” she said, blushing, yet earnestly. “Can it be misery? Will it not be happiness to form the tie that shall connect you to the world? to be your guide — a humble one, it is true, but the one of your choice — to the quiet paths from which your proud and lonely thoughts have estranged you? O, I know that there will be happiness in such a lot, from these and a thousand other sources!”

The animation with which Ellen spoke, and, at the same time, a sense of the singular course to which her gratitude had impelled her, caused her beauty to grow brighter and more enchanting with every word. And when, as she concluded, she extended her hand to Fanshawe, to refuse it was like turning from an angel, who would have guided him to heaven. But, had he been capable of making the woman he loved a sacrifice to her own generosity, that act would have rendered him unworthy of her. Yet the struggle was a severe one ere he could reply.

“You have spoken generously and nobly, Ellen,” he said. “I have no way to prove that I deserve your generosity, but by refusing to take advantage of it. Even if your heart were yet untouched, if no being more happily constituted than myself had made an impression there, even then, I trust, a selfish passion would not be stronger than my integrity. But now —” He would have proceeded; but the firmness which had hitherto sustained him gave way. He turned aside to hide the

tears which all the pride of his nature could not restrain, and which, instead of relieving, added to his anguish. At length he resumed, "No, Ellen, we must part now and forever. Your life will be long and happy. Mine will be short, but not altogether wretched, nor shorter than if we had never met. When you hear that I am in my grave, do not imagine that you have hastened me thither. Think that you scattered bright dreams around my pathway, — an ideal happiness, that you would have sacrificed your own to realize."

He ceased; and Ellen felt that his determination was unalterable. She could not speak; but, taking his hand, she pressed it to her lips, and they saw each other no more. Mr. Langton and his daughter shortly after returned to the seaport, which, for several succeeding years, was their residence.

After Ellen's departure, Fanshawe returned to his studies with the same absorbing ardor that had formerly characterized him. His face was as seldom seen among the young and gay; the pure breeze and the blessed sunshine as seldom refreshed his pale and weary brow; and his lamp burned as constantly from the first shade of evening till the gray morning light began to dim its beams. Nor did he, as weak men will, treasure up his love in a hidden chamber of his breast. He was in reality the thoughtful and earnest student that he seemed. He had exerted the whole might of his spirit over itself, and he was a conqueror. Perhaps, indeed, a summer breeze of sad and gentle thoughts would sometimes visit him; but, in these brief memories of his love, he did not wish that it should be revived, or mourn over its event.

There were many who felt an interest in Fanshawe; but the influence of none could prevail upon him to lay aside the habits, mental and physical, by which he was bringing himself to the grave. His passage thither was consequently rapid, terminating just as he reached his twentieth year. His fellow-students erected to his memory a monument of rough-hewn granite, with a white marble slab for the inscription. This was borrowed from the grave of Nathanael Mather, whom in his almost insane eagerness for knowledge, and in his early death, Fanshawe resembled.

THE ASHES OF A HARD STUDENT AND A GOOD SCHOLAR.

Many tears were shed over his grave; but the thoughtful and the wise, though turf never covered a nobler heart, could not lament that it was so soon at rest. He left a world for which he was unfit; and we trust, that, among the innumerable stars of heaven, there is one where he has found happiness.

Of the other personages of this tale, — Hugh Crombie, being exposed to no strong temptations, lived and died an honest man. Concerning Dr. Melmoth, it is unnecessary here to speak. The reader, if he have any curiosity upon the subject, is referred to his *Life*, which, together with several sermons and other productions of the doctor, was published by his successor in the presidency of Harley College, about the year 1768.

It was not till four years after Fanshawe's death, that Edward Walcott was united to Ellen Langton. Their future lives were uncommonly happy. Ellen's gentle, almost imperceptible, but powerful influence drew her

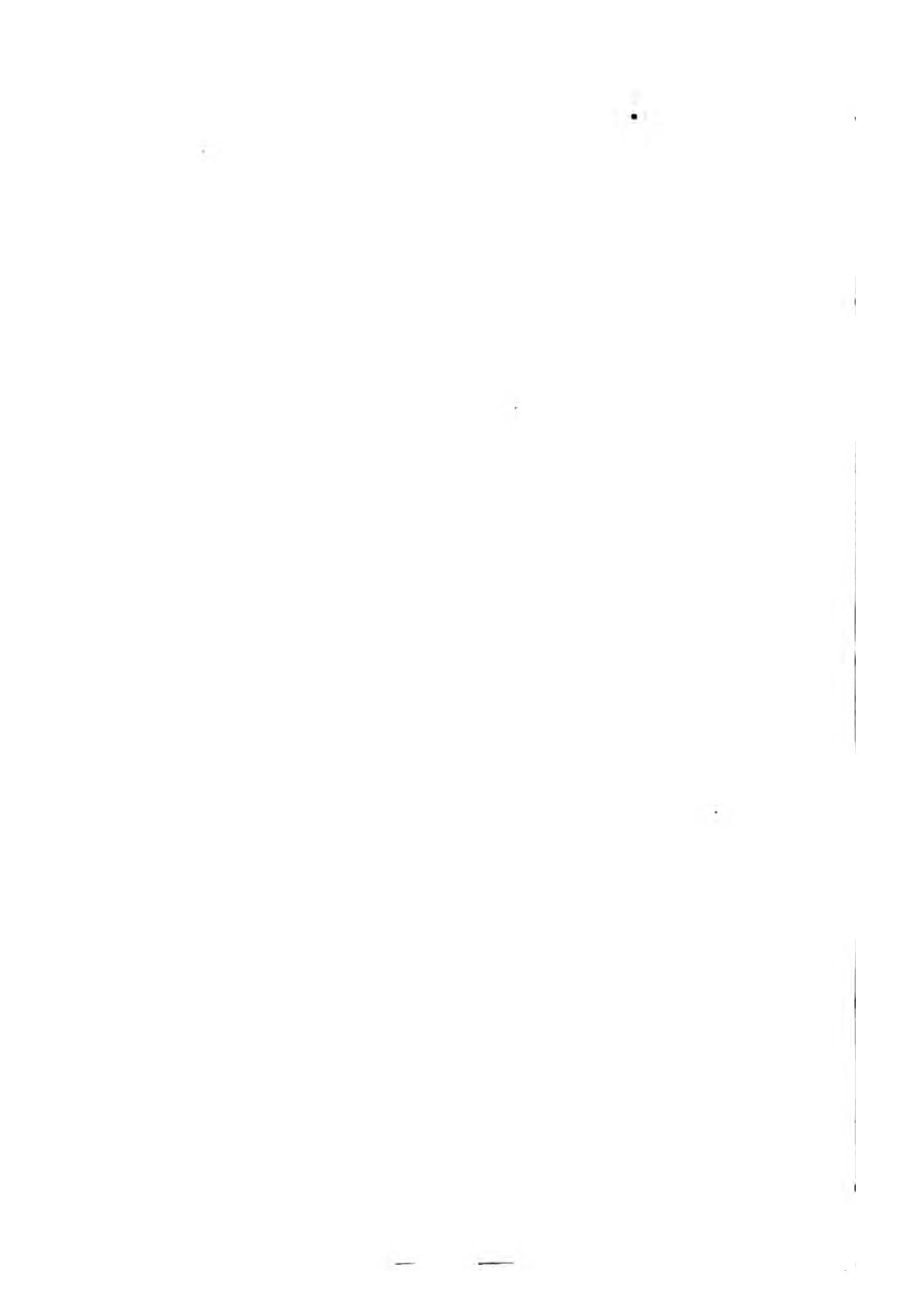
husband away from the passions and pursuits that would have interfered with domestic felicity; and he never regretted the worldly distinction of which she thus deprived him. Theirs was a long life of calm and quiet bliss; and what matters it, that, except in these pages, they have left no name behind them?





BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.







MRS. HUTCHINSON.

THE character of this female suggests a train of thought which will form as natural an Introduction to her story, as most of the Prefaces to Gay's Fables, or the tales of Prior; besides that, the general soundness of the moral may excuse any want of present applicability. We will not look for a living resemblance of Mrs. Hutchinson, though the search might not be altogether fruitless. But there are portentous indications, changes gradually taking place in the habits and feelings of the gentle sex, which seem to threaten our posterity with many of those public women, whereof one was a burden too grievous for our fathers. The press, however, is now the medium through which feminine ambition chiefly manifests itself; and we will not anticipate the period (trusting to be gone hence ere it arrive) when fair orators shall be as numerous as the fair authors of our own day. The hastiest glance may show how much of the texture and body of cisatlantic literature is the work of those slender fingers from which only a light and fanciful embroidery has heretofore been required, that might sparkle upon the garment without enfeebling the web. Woman's intellect should never

give the tone to that of man; and even her morality is not exactly the material for masculine virtue. A false liberality, which mistakes the strong division-lines of Nature for arbitrary distinctions, and a courtesy, which might polish criticism, but should never soften it, have done their best to add a girlish feebleness to the tottering infancy of our literature. The evil is likely to be a growing one. As yet, the great body of American women are a domestic race; but when a continuance of ill-judged incitements shall have turned their hearts away from the fireside, there are obvious circumstances which will render female pens more numerous and more prolific than those of men, though but equally encouraged; and (limited, of course, by the scanty support of the public, but increasing indefinitely within those limits) the ink-stained Amazons will expel their rivals by actual pressure, and petticoats wave triumphantly over all the field. But, allowing that such forebodings are slightly exaggerated, is it good for woman's self that the path of feverish hope, of tremulous success, of bitter and ignominious disappointment, should be left wide open to her? Is the prize worth her having, if she win it? Fame does not increase the peculiar respect which men pay to female excellence, and there is a delicacy (even in rude bosoms, where few would think to find it) that perceives, or fancies, a sort of impropriety in the display of woman's natal mind to the gaze of the world, with indications by which its inmost secrets may be searched out. In fine, criticism should examine with a stricter, instead of a more indulgent eye, the merits of females at its bar, because they are to justify themselves for an

irregularity which men do not commit in appearing there; and woman, when she feels the impulse of genius like a command of Heaven within her, should be aware that she is relinquishing a part of the loveliness of her sex, and obey the inward voice with sorrowing reluctance, like the Arabian maid who bewailed the gift of prophecy. Hinting thus imperfectly at sentiments which may be developed on a future occasion, we proceed to consider the celebrated subject of this sketch.

Mrs. Hutchinson was a woman of extraordinary talent and strong imagination, whom the latter quality, following the general direction taken by the enthusiasm of the times, prompted to stand forth as a reformer in religion. In her native country, she had shown symptoms of irregular and daring thought, but, chiefly by the influence of a favorite pastor, was restrained from open indiscretion. On the removal of this clergyman, becoming dissatisfied with the ministry under which she lived, she was drawn in by the great tide of Puritan emigration, and visited Massachusetts within a few years after its first settlement. But she bore trouble in her own bosom, and could find no peace in this chosen land. She soon began to promulgate strange and dangerous opinions, tending, in the peculiar situation of the colony, and from the principles which were its basis, and indispensable for its temporary support, to eat into its very existence. We shall endeavor to give a more practical idea of this part of her course.

It is a summer evening. The dusk has settled heavily upon the woods, the waves, and the Trimountain peninsula, increasing that dismal aspect of the embryo town,

which was said to have drawn tears of despondency from Mrs. Hutchinson, though she believed that her mission thither was divine. The houses, straw thatched and lowly roofed, stand irregularly along streets that are yet roughened by the roots of the trees, as if the forest, departing at the approach of man, had left its reluctant footprints behind. Most of the dwellings are lonely and silent: from a few we may hear the reading of some sacred text, or the quiet voice of prayer; but nearly all the sombre life of the scene is collected near the extremity of the village. A crowd of hooded women, and of men in steeple-hats and close-cropped hair, are assembled at the door and open windows of a house newly built. An earnest expression glows in every face; and some press inward, as if the bread of life were to be dealt forth, and they feared to lose their share; while others would fain hold them back, but enter with them, since they may not be restrained. We, also, will go in, edging through the thronged doorway to an apartment which occupies the whole breadth of the house. At the upper end, behind a table, on which are placed the Scriptures and two glimmering lamps, we see a woman, plainly attired, as befits her ripened years: her hair, complexion, and eyes are dark, the latter somewhat dull and heavy, but kindling up with a gradual brightness. Let us look round upon the hearers. At her right hand, his countenance suiting well with the gloomy light which discovers it, stands Vane, the youthful governor, preferred by a hasty judgment of the people over all the wise and hoary heads that had preceded him to New England. In his mysterious eyes we may read a dark

enthusiasm, akin to that of the woman whose cause he has espoused, combined with a shrewd worldly foresight, which tells him that her doctrines will be productive of change and tumult, the elements of his power and delight. On her left, yet slightly drawn back, so as to evince a less decided support, is Cotton, no young and hot enthusiast, but a mild, grave man in the decline of life, deep in all the learning of the age, and sanctified in heart, and made venerable in feature, by the long exercise of his holy profession. He, also, is deceived by the strange fire now laid upon the altar; and he alone among his brethren is excepted in the denunciation of the new apostle, as sealed and set apart by Heaven to the work of the ministry. Others of the priesthood stand full in front of the woman, striving to beat her down with brows of wrinkled iron, and whispering sternly and significantly among themselves as she unfolds her seditious doctrines, and grows warm in their support. Foremost is Hugh Peters, full of holy wrath, and scarce containing himself from rushing forward to convict her of damnable heresies. There, also, is Ward, meditating a reply of empty puns, and quaint antitheses, and tinkling jests that puzzle us with nothing but a sound. The audience are variously affected; but none are indifferent. On the foreheads of the aged, the mature, and strong-minded, you may generally read steadfast disapprobation, though here and there is one whose faith seems shaken in those whom he had trusted for years. The females, on the other hand, are shuddering and weeping, and at times they cast a desolate look of fear around them; while the young men lean forward, fiery and impatient, fit instru-

ments for whatever rash deed may be suggested. And what is the eloquence that gives rise to all these passions? The woman tells them (and cites texts from the Holy Book to prove her words) that they have put their trust in unregenerated and uncommissioned men, and have followed them into the wilderness for nought. Therefore their hearts are turning from those whom they had chosen to lead them to heaven; and they feel like children who have been enticed far from home, and see the features of their guides change all at once, assuming a fiendish shape in some frightful solitude.

These proceedings of Mrs. Hutchinson could not long be endured by the provincial government. The present was a most remarkable case, in which religious freedom was wholly inconsistent with public safety, and where the principles of an illiberal age indicated the very course which must have been pursued by worldly policy and enlightened wisdom. Unity of faith was the star that had guided these people over the deep; and a diversity of sects would either have scattered them from the land to which they had as yet so few attachments, or, perhaps, have excited a diminutive civil war among those who had come so far to worship together. The opposition to what may be termed the Established Church had now lost its chief support by the removal of Vane from office, and his departure for England; and Mr. Cotton began to have that light in regard to his errors, which will sometimes break in upon the wisest and most pious men, when their opinions are unhappily discordant with those of the powers that be. A synod, the first in New England, was speedily assembled, and

pronounced its condemnation of the obnoxious doctrines. Mrs. Hutchinson was next summoned before the supreme civil tribunal, at which, however, the most eminent of the clergy were present, and appear to have taken a very active part as witnesses and advisers. We shall here resume the more picturesque style of narration.

It is a place of humble aspect where the elders of the people are met, sitting in judgment upon the disturber of Israel. The floor of the low and narrow hall is laid with planks hewn by the axe; the beams of the roof still wear the rugged bark with which they grew up in the forest; and the hearth is formed of one broad, unhammered stone, heaped with logs that roll their blaze and smoke up a chimney of wood and clay. A sleety shower beats fitfully against the windows, driven by the November blast, which comes howling onward from the northern desert, the boisterous and unwelcome herald of a New England winter. Rude benches are arranged across the apartment, and along its sides, occupied by men whose piety and learning might have entitled them to seats in those high councils of the ancient church, whence opinions were sent forth to confirm or supersede the gospel in the belief of the whole world and of posterity. Here are collected all those blessed fathers of the land, who rank in our veneration next to the evangelists of Holy Writ; and here, also, are many, unpurified from the fiercest errors of the age, and ready to propagate the religion of peace by violence. In the highest place sits Winthrop, — a man by whom the innocent and guilty might alike desire to be judged; the first confiding in his

integrity and wisdom, the latter hoping in his mildness. Next is Endicott, who would stand with his drawn sword at the gate of heaven, and resist to the death all pilgrims thither, except they travelled his own path. The infant eyes of one in this assembly beheld the fagots blazing round the martyrs in Bloody Mary's time : in later life he dwelt long at Leyden, with the first who went from England for conscience' sake ; and now, in his weary age, it matters little where he lies down to die. There are others whose hearts were smitten in the high meridian of ambitious hope, and whose dreams still tempt them with the pomp of the Old World and the din of its crowded cities, gleaming and echoing over the deep. In the midst, and in the centre of all eyes, we see the woman. She stands loftily before her judges with a determined brow ; and, unknown to herself, there is a flash of carnal pride half hidden in her eye, as she surveys the many learned and famous men whom her doctrines have put in fear. They question her ; and her answers are ready and acute : she reasons with them shrewdly, and brings Scripture in support of every argument. The deepest controversialists of that scholastic day find here a woman, whom all their trained and sharpened intellects are inadequate to foil. But, by the excitement of the contest, her heart is made to rise and swell within her, and she bursts forth into eloquence. She tells them of the long unquietness which she had endured in England, perceiving the corruption of the Church, and yearning for a purer and more perfect light, and how, in a day of solitary prayer, that light was given. She claims for herself the peculiar power of dis-

tinguishing between the chosen of man, and the sealed of Heaven, and affirms that her gifted eye can see the glory round the foreheads of saints, sojourning in their mortal state. She declares herself commissioned to separate the true shepherds from the false, and denounces present and future judgments on the land, if she be disturbed in her celestial errand. Thus the accusations are proved from her own mouth. Her judges hesitate; and some speak faintly in her defence; but, with a few dissenting voices, sentence is pronounced, bidding her go out from among them, and trouble the land no more.

Mrs. Hutchinson's adherents throughout the colony were now disarmed; and she proceeded to Rhode Island, an accustomed refuge for the exiles of Massachusetts in all seasons of persecution. Her enemies believed that the anger of Heaven was following her, of which Governor Winthrop does not disdain to record a notable instance, very interesting in a scientific point of view, but fitter for his old and homely narrative than for modern repetition. In a little time, also, she lost her husband, who is mentioned in history only as attending her footsteps, and whom we may conclude to have been (like most husbands of celebrated women) a mere insignificant appendage of his mightier wife. She now grew uneasy away from the Rhode Island colonists, whose liberality towards her, at an era when liberality was not esteemed a Christian virtue, probably arose from a comparative insouciance on religious matters, more distasteful to Mrs. Hutchinson than even the uncompromising narrowness of the Puritans. Her final movement was

to lead her family within the limits of the Dutch jurisdiction, where, having felled the trees of a virgin soil, she became herself the virtual head, civil and ecclesiastical, of a little colony.

Perhaps here she found the repose hitherto so vainly sought. Secluded from all whose faith she could not govern, surrounded by the dependants over whom she held an unlimited influence, agitated by none of the tumultuous billows which were left swelling behind her, we may suppose that, in the stillness of Nature, her heart was stilled. But her impressive story was to have an awful close. Her last scene is as difficult to be described as a shipwreck, where the shrieks of the victims die unheard, along a desolate sea, and a shapeless mass of agony is all that can be brought home to the imagination. The savage foe was on the watch for blood. Sixteen persons assembled at the evening prayer: in the deep midnight their cry rang through the forest; and daylight dawned upon the lifeless clay of all but one. It was a circumstance not to be unnoticed by our stern ancestors, in considering the fate of her who had so troubled their religion, that an infant daughter, the sole survivor amid the terrible destruction of her mother's household, was bred in a barbarous faith, and never learned the way to the Christian's heaven. Yet we will hope that there the mother and child have met.





SIR WILLIAM PHIPS.

FEW of the personages of past times (except such as have gained renown in fireside legends as well as in written history) are anything more than mere names to their successors. They seldom stand up in our imaginations like men. The knowledge communicated by the historian and biographer is analogous to that which we acquire of a country by the map, — minute, perhaps, and accurate, and available for all necessary purposes, but cold and naked, and wholly destitute of the mimic charm produced by landscape-painting. These defects are partly remediable, and even without an absolute violation of literal truth, although by methods rightfully interdicted to professors of biographical exactness. A license must be assumed in brightening the materials which time has rusted, and in tracing out half-obliterated inscriptions on the columns of antiquity: Fancy must throw her reviving light on the faded incidents that indicate character, whence a ray will be reflected, more or less vividly, on the person to be described. The portrait of the ancient governor whose name stands at the head of this article will owe any interest it may possess, not to his internal self, but to certain peculiarities of his fortune. These must be briefly noticed.

The birth and early life of Sir William Phips were rather an extraordinary prelude to his subsequent distinction. He was one of the twenty-six children of a gunsmith, who exercised his trade — where hunting and war must have given it a full encouragement — in a small frontier settlement near the mouth of the river Kennebec. Within the boundaries of the Puritan provinces, and wherever those governments extended an effectual sway, no depth nor solitude of the wilderness could exclude youth from all the common opportunities of moral, and far more than common ones of religious education. Each settlement of the Pilgrims was a little piece of the Old World inserted into the New. It was like Gideon's fleece, unwet with dew: the desert wind that breathed over it left none of its wild influences there. But the first settlers of Maine and New Hampshire were led thither entirely by carnal motives: their governments were feeble, uncertain, sometimes nominally annexed to their sister colonies, and sometimes asserting a troubled independence. Their rulers might be deemed, in more than one instance, lawless adventurers, who found that security in the forest which they had forfeited in Europe. Their clergy (unlike that revered band who acquired so singular a fame elsewhere in New England) were too often destitute of the religious fervor which should have kept them in the track of virtue, unaided by the restraints of human law and the dread of worldly dishonor; and there are records of lamentable lapses on the part of those holy men, which, if we may argue the disorder of the sheep from the unfitness of the shepherd, tell a sad tale as to the morality of the eastern provinces. In this state of

society, the future governor grew up; and many years after, sailing with a fleet and an army to make war upon the French, he pointed out the very hills where he had reached the age of manhood, unskilled even to read and write. The contrast between the commencement and close of his life was the effect of casual circumstances. During a considerable time, he was a mariner, at a period when there was much license on the high-seas. After attaining to some rank in the English navy, he heard of an ancient Spanish wreck off the coast of Hispaniola, of such mighty value, that, according to the stories of the day, the sunken gold might be seen to glisten, and the diamonds to flash, as the triumphant billows tossed about their spoil. These treasures of the deep (by the aid of certain noblemen, who claimed the lion's share) Sir William Phips sought for, and recovered, and was sufficiently enriched, even after an honest settlement with the partners of his adventure. That the land might give him honor, as the sea had given him wealth, he received knight-hood from King James. Returning to New England, he professed repentance of his sins (of which, from the nature both of his early and more recent life, there could scarce fail to be some slight accumulation), was baptized, and, on the accession of the Prince of Orange to the throne, became the first governor under the second charter. And now, having arranged these preliminaries, we shall attempt to picture forth a day of Sir William's life, introducing no very remarkable events, because history supplies us with none such convertible to our purpose.

It is the forenoon of a day in summer, shortly after the governor's arrival; and he stands upon his doorsteps,

preparatory to a walk through the metropolis. Sir William is a stout man, an inch or two below the middle size, and rather beyond the middle point of life. His dress is of velvet, — a dark purple, broadly embroidered; and his sword-hilt and the lion's head of his cane display specimens of the gold from the Spanish wreck. On his head, in the fashion of the court of Louis XIV., is a superb full-bottomed periwig, amid whose heap of ringlets his face shows like a rough pebble in the setting that befits a diamond. Just emerging from the door are two footmen, — one an African slave of shining ebony, the other an English bond-servant, the property of the governor for a term of years. As Sir William comes down the steps, he is met by three elderly gentlemen in black, grave and solemn as three tombstones on a ramble from the burying-ground. These are ministers of the town, among whom we recognize Dr. Increase Mather, the late provincial agent at the English court, the author of the present governor's appointment, and the right arm of his administration. Here follow many bows and a deal of angular politeness on both sides. Sir William professes his anxiety to re-enter the house, and give audience to the reverend gentlemen: they, on the other hand, cannot think of interrupting his walk; and the courteous dispute is concluded by a junction of the parties; Sir William and Dr. Mather setting forth side by side, the two other clergymen forming the centre of the column, and the black and white footmen bringing up the rear. The business in hand relates to the dealings of Satan in the town of Salem. Upon this subject, the principal ministers of the province have been consulted; and these three

eminent persons are their deputies, commissioned to express a doubtful opinion, implying, upon the whole, an exhortation to speedy and vigorous measures against the accused. To such councils, Sir William, bred in the forest and on the ocean, and tinctured with the superstition of both, is well inclined to listen.

As the dignitaries of Church and State make their way beneath the overhanging houses, the lattices are thrust ajar, and you may discern, just in the boundaries of light and shade, the prim faces of the little Puritan damsels, eying the magnificent governor, and envious of the bolder curiosity of the men. Another object of almost equal interest now appears in the middle of the way. It is a man clad in a hunting-shirt and Indian stockings, and armed with a long gun. His feet have been wet with the waters of many an inland lake and stream; and the leaves and twigs of the tangled wilderness are intertwined with his garments: on his head he wears a trophy which we would not venture to record without good evidence of the fact,—a wig made of the long and straight black hair of his slain savage enemies. This grim old heathen stands bewildered in the midst of King Street. The governor regards him attentively, and, recognizing a playmate of his youth, accosts him with a gracious smile, inquires as to the prosperity of their birthplace, and the life or death of their ancient neighbors, and makes appropriate remarks on the different stations allotted by fortune to two individuals born and bred beside the same wild river. Finally he puts into his hand, at parting, a shilling of the Massachusetts coinage, stamped with the figure of a stubbed pine-tree, mistaken by King Charles for the

oak which saved his royal life. Then all the people praise the humility and bountifulness of the good governor, who struts onward flourishing his gold-headed cane; while the gentleman in the straight black wig is left with a pretty accurate idea of the distance between himself and his old companion.

Meantime, Sir William steers his course towards the town dock. A gallant figure is seen approaching on the opposite side of the street, in a naval uniform profusely laced, and with a cutlass swinging by his side. This is Captain Short, the commander of a frigate in the service of the English king, now lying in the harbor. Sir William bristles up at sight of him, and crosses the street with a lowering front, unmindful of the hints of Dr. Mather, who is aware of an unsettled dispute between the captain and the governor, relative to the authority of the latter over a king's ship on the provincial station. Into this thorny subject, Sir William plunges headlong. The captain makes answer with less deference than the dignity of the potentate requires: the affair grows hot; and the clergymen endeavor to interfere in the blessed capacity of peacemakers. The governor lifts his cane; and the captain lays his hand upon his sword, but is prevented from drawing by the zealous exertions of Dr. Mather. There is a furious stamping of feet, and a mighty uproar from every mouth, in the midst of which his Excellency inflicts several very sufficient whacks on the head of the unhappy Short. Having thus avenged himself by manual force, as befits a woodman and a mariner, he vindicates the insulted majesty of the governor by committing his antagonist to prison. This done, Sir William removes

his periwig, wipes away the sweat of the encounter, and gradually composes himself, giving vent to a few oaths, like the subsiding ebullitions of a pot that has boiled over.

It being now near twelve o'clock, the three ministers are bidden to dinner at the governor's table, where the party is completed by a few Old Charter senators, — men reared at the feet of the Pilgrims, and who remember the days when Cromwell was a nursing-father to New England. Sir William presides with commendable decorum till grace is said, and the cloth removed. Then, as the grape-juice glides warm into the ventricles of his heart, it produces a change, like that of a running stream upon enchanted shapes; and the rude man of the sea and wilderness appears in the very chair where the stately governor sat down. He overflows with jovial tales of the fore-castle and of his father's hut, and stares to see the gravity of his guests become more and more portentous in exact proportion as his own merriment increases. A noise of drum and fife fortunately breaks up the session.

The governor and his guests go forth, like men bound upon some grave business, to inspect the trainbands of the town. A great crowd of people is collected on the common, composed of whole families, from the hoary grandsire to the child of three years. All ages and both sexes look with interest on the array of their defenders; and here and there stand a few dark Indians in their blankets, dull spectators of the strength that has swept away their race. The soldiers wear a proud and martial mien, conscious that beauty will reward them with her approving glances; not to mention that there are a few

less influential motives to contribute to keep up an heroic spirit, such as the dread of being made to "ride the wooden horse" (a very disagreeable mode of equestrian exercise, — hard riding, in the strictest sense), or of being "laid neck and heels," in a position of more compe-ndiousness than comfort. Sir William perceives some error in their tactics, and places himself with drawn sword at their head. After a variety of weary evolutions, evening begins to fall, like the veil of gray and misty years that have rolled betwixt that warlike band and us. They are drawn into a hollow square, the officers in the centre ; and the governor (for John Dunton's authority will bear us out in this particular) leans his hands upon his sword-hilt, and closes the exercises of the day with a prayer.





SIR WILLIAM PEPPERELL.

THE mighty man of Kittery has a double claim to remembrance. He was a famous general, the most prominent military character in our ante-Revolutionary annals; and he may be taken as the representative of a class of warriors peculiar to their age and country, — true citizen-soldiers, who diversified a life of commerce or agriculture by the episode of a city sacked, or a battle won, and, having stamped their names on the page of history, went back to the routine of peaceful occupation. Sir William Pepperell's letters, written at the most critical period of his career, and his conduct then and at other times, indicate a man of plain good sense, with a large share of quiet resolution, and but little of an enterprising spirit, unless aroused by external circumstances. The Methodistic principles, with which he was slightly tinctured, instead of impelling him to extravagance, assimilated themselves to his orderly habits of thought and action. Thus respectably endowed, we find him, when near the age of fifty, a merchant of weight in foreign and domestic trade, a provincial counsellor, and colonel of the York County militia, filling a large space in the eyes of his generation, but likely to

gain no other posthumous memorial than the letters on his tombstone, because undistinguished from the many worshipful gentlemen who had lived prosperously and died peacefully before him. But in the year 1745, an expedition was projected against Louisburg, a walled city of the French in the island of Cape Breton. The idea of reducing this strong fortress was conceived by William Vaughan, a bold, energetic, and imaginative adventurer, and adopted by Governor Shirley, the most bustling, though not the wisest ruler, that ever presided over Massachusetts. His influence at its utmost stretch carried the measure by a majority of only one vote in the legislature: the other New England provinces consented to lend their assistance; and the next point was to select a commander from among the gentlemen of the country, none of whom had the least particle of scientific soldiership, although some were experienced in the irregular warfare of the frontiers. In the absence of the usual qualifications for military rank, the choice was guided by other motives, and fell upon Colonel Pepperell, who, as a landed proprietor in three provinces, and popular with all classes of people, might draw the greatest number of recruits to his banner. When this doubtful speculation was proposed to the prudent merchant, he sought advice from the celebrated Whitefield, then an itinerant preacher in the country, and an object of vast antipathy to many of the settled ministers. The response of the apostle of Methodism, though dark as those of the Oracle of Delphos, intimating that the blood of the slain would be laid to Colonel Pepperell's charge, in case of failure, and that the envy of the living would persecute him,

if victorious, decided him to gird on his armor. That the French might be taken unawares, the legislature had been laid under an oath of secrecy while their deliberations should continue; this precaution, however, was nullified by the pious perjury of a country member of the lower house, who, in the performance of domestic worship at his lodgings, broke into a fervent and involuntary petition for the success of the enterprise against Louisburg. We of the present generation, whose hearts have never been heated and amalgamated by one universal passion, and who are, perhaps, less excitable in the mass than our fathers, cannot easily conceive the enthusiasm with which the people seized upon the project. A desire to prove in the eyes of England the courage of her provinces; the real necessity for the destruction of this Dunkirk of America; the hope of private advantage; a remnant of the old Puritan detestation of Papist idolatry; a strong hereditary hatred of the French, who, for half a hundred years, had shed the blood of the English settlers in concert with the savages; the natural proneness of the New-Englanders to engage in temporary undertakings, even though doubtful and hazardous,—such were some of the motives which soon drew together a host, comprehending nearly all the effective force of the country. The officers were grave deacons, justices of the peace, and other similar dignitaries; and in the ranks were many warm householders, sons of rich farmers, mechanics in thriving business, husbands weary of their wives, and bachelors disconsolate for want of them. The disciples of Whitefield also turned their excited imaginations in this direction, and increased the resem-

blance borne by the provincial army to the motley assemblages of the first crusaders. A part of the peculiarities of the affair may be grouped in one picture, by selecting the moment of General Pepperell's embarkation.

It is a bright and breezy day of March; and about twenty small white clouds are scudding seaward before the wind, airy forerunners of the fleet of privateers and transports that spread their sails to the sunshine in the harbor. The tide is at its height; and the gunwale of a barge alternately rises above the wharf, and then sinks from view, as it lies rocking on the waves in readiness to convey the general and his suite on board the Shirley galley. In the background, the dark wooden dwellings of the town have poured forth their inhabitants; and this way rolls an earnest throng, with the great man of the day walking in the midst. Before him struts a guard of honor, selected from the yeomanry of his own neighborhood, and stout young rustics in their Sunday clothes; next appear six figures who demand our more minute attention. He in the centre is the general, a well-proportioned man with a slight hoar-frost of age just visible upon him; he views the fleet in which he is about to embark, with no stronger expression than a calm anxiety, as if he were sending a freight of his own merchandise to Europe. A scarlet British uniform, made of the best of broadcloth, because imported by himself, adorns his person; and in the left pocket of a large buff waistcoat, near the pommel of his sword, we see the square protuberance of a small Bible, which certainly may benefit his pious soul, and, perchance, may keep a bullet from his body. The middle-aged gentleman at his right hand, to whom

he pays such grave attention, in silk, gold, and velvet, and with a pair of spectacles thrust above his forehead, is Governor Shirley. The quick motion of his small eyes in their puckered sockets, his grasp on one of the general's bright military buttons, the gesticulation of his forefinger, keeping time with the earnest rapidity of his words, have all something characteristic. His mind is calculated to fill up the wild conceptions of other men with its own minute ingenuities; and he seeks, as it were, to climb up to the moon by piling pebble-stones, one upon another. He is now impressing on the general's recollection the voluminous details of a plan for surprising Louisburg in the depth of midnight, and thus to finish the campaign within twelve hours after the arrival of the troops. On the left, forming a striking contrast with the unruffled deportment of Pepperell, and the fidgety vehemence of Shirley, is the martial figure of Vaughan: with one hand he has seized the general's arm; and he points the other to the sails of the vessel fluttering in the breeze, while the fire of his inward enthusiasm glows through his dark complexion, and flashes in tips of flame from his eyes. Another pale and emaciated person, in neglected and scarcely decent attire, and distinguished by the abstracted fervor of his manner, presses through the crowd, and attempts to lay hold of Pepperell's skirt. He has spent years in wild and shadowy studies, and has searched the crucible of the alchemist for gold, and wasted the life allotted him, in a weary effort to render it immortal. The din of warlike preparation has broken in upon his solitude; and he comes forth with a fancy of his half-maddened brain, — the model of a flying bridge,

— by which the army is to be transported into the heart of the hostile fortress with the celerity of magic. But who is this, of the mild and venerable countenance shaded by locks of a hallowed whiteness, looking like Peace with its gentle thoughts in the midst of uproar and stern designs? It is the minister of an inland parish, who, after much prayer and fasting, advised by the elders of the church and the wife of his bosom, has taken his staff, and journeyed townward. The benevolent old man would fain solicit the general's attention to a method of avoiding danger from the explosion of mines, and of overcoming the city without bloodshed of friend or enemy. We start as we turn from this picture of Christian love to the dark enthusiast close beside him, — a preacher of the new sect, in every wrinkled line of whose visage we can read the stormy passions that have chosen religion for their outlet. Woe to the wretch that shall seek mercy there! At his back is slung an axe, wherewith he goes to hew down the carved altars and idolatrous images in the Popish churches; and over his head he rears a banner, which, as the wind unfolds it, displays the motto given by Whitefield, — *Christo Duce*, — in letters red as blood. But the tide is now ebbing; and the general makes his adieus to the governor, and enters the boat: it bounds swiftly over the waves, the holy banner fluttering in the bows: a huzza from the fleet comes riotously to the shore; and the people thunder back their many-voiced reply.

When the expedition sailed, the projectors could not reasonably rely on assistance from the mother-country. At Canso, however, the fleet was strengthened by a

squadron of British ships-of-the-line and frigates, under Commodore Warren; and this circumstance undoubtedly prevented a discomfiture, although the active business, and all the dangers of the siege, fell to the share of the provincials. If we had any confidence that it could be done with half so much pleasure to the reader as to ourself, we would present a whole gallery of pictures from these rich and fresh historic scenes. Never, certainly, since man first indulged his instinctive appetite for war, did a queerer and less manageable host sit down before a hostile city. The officers, drawn from the same class of citizens with the rank and file, had neither the power to institute an awful discipline, nor enough of the trained soldier's spirit to attempt it. Of headlong valor, when occasion offered, there was no lack, nor of a readiness to encounter severe fatigue; but, with few intermissions, the provincial army made the siege one long day of frolic and disorder. Conscious that no military virtues of their own deserved the prosperous result which followed, they insisted that Heaven had fought as manifestly on their side as ever on that of Israel in the battles of the Old Testament. We, however, if we consider the events of after-years, and confine our view to a period short of the Revolution, might doubt whether the victory was granted to our fathers as a blessing or as a judgment. Most of the young men who had left their paternal firesides, sound in constitution, and pure in morals, if they returned at all, returned with ruined health, and with minds so broken up by the interval of riot, that they never after could resume the habits of good citizenship. A lust for military glory was also

awakened in the country; and France and England gratified it with enough of slaughter; the former seeking to recover what she had lost, the latter to complete the conquest which the colonists had begun. There was a brief season of repose, and then a fiercer contest, raging almost from end to end of North America. Some went forth, and met the red men of the wilderness; and when years had rolled, and the settler came in peace where they had come in war, there he found their unburied bones among the fallen boughs and withered leaves of many autumns. Others were foremost in the battles of the Canadas, till, in the day that saw the downfall of the French dominion, they poured their blood with Wolfe on the Heights of Abraham. Through all this troubled time, the flower of the youth were cut down by the sword, or died of physical diseases, or became unprofitable citizens by moral ones contracted in the camp and field. Dr. Douglass, a shrewd Scotch physician of the last century, who died before war had gathered in half its harvest, computes that many thousand blooming damsels, capable and well inclined to serve the state as wives and mothers, were compelled to lead lives of barren celibacy by the consequences of the successful siege of Louisburg. But we will not sadden ourselves with these doleful thoughts, when we are to witness the triumphal entry of the victors into the surrendered town.

The thundering of drums, irregularly beaten, grows more and more distinct, and the shattered strength of the western wall of Louisburg stretches out before the eye, forty feet in height, and far overtopped by a rock-built citadel. In yonder breach the broken timber, frac-

tured stones, and crumbling earth prove the effect of the provincial cannon. The drawbridge is down over the wide moat; the gate is open; and the general and British commodore are received by the French authorities beneath the dark and lofty portal arch. Through the massive gloom of this deep avenue there is a vista of the main street, bordered by high peaked houses, in the fashion of old France; the view is terminated by the centre square of the city, in the midst of which rises a stone cross; and shaven monks, and women with their children, are kneeling at its foot. A confused sobbing and half-stifled shrieks are heard, as the tumultuous advance of the conquering army becomes audible to those within the walls. By the light which falls through the archway, we perceive that a few months have somewhat changed the general's mien, giving it the freedom of one acquainted with peril, and accustomed to command; nor, amid hopes of more solid reward, does he appear insensible to the thought that posterity will remember his name among those renowned in arms. Sir Peter Warren, who receives with him the enemy's submission, is a rough and haughty English seaman, greedy of fame, but despising those who have won it for him. Pressing forward to the portal, sword in hand, comes a comical figure in a brown suit, and blue yarn stockings, with a huge frill sticking forth from his bosom, to which the whole man seems an appendage: this is that famous worthy of Plymouth County, who went to the war with two plain shirts and a ruffled one, and is now about to solicit the post of governor in Louisburg. In close vicinity stands Vaughan, worn

down with toil and exposure, the effect of which has fallen upon him at once in the moment of accomplished hope. The group is filled up by several British officers, who fold their arms, and look with scornful merriment at the provincial army, as it stretches far behind in garments of every hue, resembling an immense strip of patchwork carpeting thrown down over the uneven ground. In the nearer ranks we may discern the variety of ingredients that compose the mass. Here advance a row of stern, unmitigable fanatics, each of whom clinches his teeth, and grasps his weapon with a fist of iron, at sight of the temples of the ancient faith, with the sunlight glittering on their cross-crowned spires. Others examine the surrounding country, and send scrutinizing glances through the gateway, anxious to select a spot, whither the good woman and her little ones in the Bay Province may be advantageously transported. Some, who drag their diseased limbs forward in weariness and pain, have made the wretched exchange of health or life for what share of fleeting glory may fall to them among four thousand men. But these are all exceptions, and the exulting feelings of the general host combine in an expression like that of a broad laugh on an honest countenance. They roll onward riotously, flourishing their muskets above their heads, shuffling their heavy heels into an instinctive dance, and roaring out some holy verse from the New England Psalmody, or those harsh old warlike stanzas which tell the story of "Lovell's Fight." Thus they pour along, till the battered town and the rabble of its conquerors, and the shouts, the drums, the singing, and the laughter, grow dim, and die away from Fancy's eye and ear.

The arms of Great Britain were not crowned by a more brilliant achievement during that unprosperous war; and, in adjusting the terms of a subsequent peace, Louisburg was an equivalent for many losses nearer home. The English, with very pardonable vanity, attributed the conquest chiefly to the valor of the naval force. On the continent of Europe, our fathers met with greater justice, and Voltaire has ranked this enterprise of the husbandmen of New England among the most remarkable events in the reign of Louis XV. The ostensible leaders did not fail of reward. Shirley, originally a lawyer, was commissioned in the regular army, and rose to the supreme military command in America. Warren, also, received honors and professional rank, and arrogated to himself, without scruple, the whole crop of laurels gathered at Louisburg. Pepperell was placed at the head of a royal regiment, and, first of his countrymen, was distinguished by the title of baronet. Vaughan alone, who had been soul of the deed from its adventurous conception till the triumphant close, and in every danger and every hardship had exhibited a rare union of ardor and perseverance, — Vaughan was entirely neglected, and died in London, whither he had gone to make known his claims. After the great era of his life, Sir William Pepperell did not distinguish himself either as a warrior or a statesman. He spent the remainder of his days in all the pomp of a colonial grandee, and laid down his aristocratic head among the humbler ashes of his fathers, just before the commencement of the earliest troubles between England and America.



THOMAS GREEN FESSENDEN.

THOMAS GREEN FESSENDEN was the eldest of nine children of the Rev. Thomas Fessenden. He was born on the 22d of April, 1771, at Walpole, in New Hampshire, where his father, a man of learning and talent, was long settled in the ministry. On the maternal side, likewise, he was of clerical extraction; his mother, whose piety and amiable qualities are remembered by her descendants, being the daughter of the Rev. Samuel Kendal of New Salem. The early education of Thomas Green was chiefly at the common school of his native place, under the tuition of students from the college at Hanover; and such was his progress, that he became himself the instructor of a school in New Salem at the age of sixteen. He spent most of his youthful days, however, in bodily labor upon the farm, thus contributing to the support of a numerous family; and the practical knowledge of agriculture which he then obtained was long afterwards applied to the service of the public. Opportunities for cultivating his mind were afforded him, not only in his father's library, but by the more miscellaneous contents of a large bookstore. He had passed the age of twenty-one when his inclination for

mental pursuits determined him to become a student at Dartmouth College. His father being able to give but little assistance, his chief resources at college consisted in his wages as teacher of a village school during the vacations. At times, also, he gave instruction to an evening class in psalmody.

From his childhood upward, Mr. Fessenden had shown symptoms of that humorous turn which afterwards so strongly marked his writings; but his first effort in verse, as he himself told me, was made during his residence at college. The themes, or exercises, of his fellow-students in English composition, whether prose or rhyme, were well characterized by the lack of native thought and feeling, the cold pedantry, the mimicry of classic models, common to all such productions. Mr. Fessenden had the good taste to disapprove of these vapid and spiritless performances, and resolved to strike out a new course for himself. On one occasion, when his classmates had gone through with their customary round of verbiage and threadbare sentiment, he electrified them and their instructor, President Wheelock, by reading "Jonathan's Courtship." There has never, to this day, been produced by any of our countrymen a more original and truly Yankee effusion. He had caught the rare art of sketching familiar manners, and of throwing into verse the very spirit of society as it existed around him; and he had imbued each line with a peculiar yet perfectly natural and homely humor. This excellent ballad compels me to regret, that, instead of becoming a satirist in politics and science, and wasting his strength on temporary and evanescent topics, he had not continued to be a

rural poet. A volume of such sketches as "Jonathan's Courtship," describing various aspects of life among the yeomanry of New England, could not have failed to gain a permanent place in American literature. The effort in question met with unexampled success: it ran through the newspapers of the day, reappeared on the other side of the Atlantic, and was warmly applauded by the English critics; nor has it yet lost its popularity. New editions may be found every year at the ballad-stalls; and I saw last summer, on the veteran author's table, a broadside copy of his maiden poem, which he had himself bought in the street.

Mr. Fessenden passed through college with a fair reputation for scholarship, and took his degree in 1796. It had been his father's wish that he should imitate the example of some of his ancestors on both sides, by devoting himself to the ministry. He, however, preferred the law, and commenced the study of that profession at Rutland, in Vermont, with Nathaniel Chipman, then the most eminent practitioner in the State. After his admission to the bar, Mr. Chipman received him into partnership. But Mr. Fessenden was ill qualified to succeed in the profession of law, by his simplicity of character, and his utter inability to acquire an ordinary share of shrewdness and worldly wisdom. Moreover, the success of "Jonathan's Courtship," and other poetical effusions, had turned his thoughts from law to literature, and had procured him the acquaintance of several literary luminaries of those days; none of whose names, probably, have survived to our own generation, save that of Joseph Dennie, once esteemed the finest writer in America. His

intercourse with these people tempted Mr. Fessenden to spend much time in writing for newspapers and periodicals. A taste for scientific pursuits still further diverted him from his legal studies, and soon engaged him in an affair which influenced the complexion of all his after-life.

A Mr. Langdon had brought forward a newly invented hydraulic machine, which was supposed to possess the power of raising water to a greater height than had hitherto been considered possible. A company of mechanics and others became interested in this machine, and appointed Mr. Fessenden their agent for the purpose of obtaining a patent in London. He was, likewise, a member of the company. Mr. Fessenden was urged to hasten his departure, in consequence of a report that certain persons had acquired the secret of the invention, and were determined to anticipate the proprietors in securing a patent. Scarcely time was allowed for testing the efficacy of the machine by a few hasty experiments, which, however, appeared satisfactory. Taking passage immediately, Mr. Fessenden arrived in London on the 4th of July, 1801, and waited on Mr. King, then our minister, by whom he was introduced to Mr. Nicholson, a gentleman of eminent scientific reputation. After thoroughly examining the invention, Mr. Nicholson gave an opinion unfavorable to its merits; and the question was soon settled by a letter from one of the Vermont proprietors to Mr. Fessenden, informing him that the apparent advantages of the machine had been found altogether deceptive. In short, Mr. Fessenden had been lured from his profession and country by as empty a bubble as that of the perpetual motion. Yet it is creditable both to

his ability and energy, that, laying hold of what was really valuable in Langdon's contrivance, he constructed the model of a machine for raising water from coal-mines, and other great depths, by means of what he termed the "renovated pressure of the atmosphere." On communicating this invention to Mr. Nicholson and other eminent mechanics, they acknowledged its originality and ingenuity, and thought that, in some situations, it might be useful. But the expenses of a patent in England, the difficulty of obtaining patronage for such a project, and the uncertainty of the result, were obstacles too weighty to be overcome. Mr. Fessenden threw aside the scheme, and, after a two months' residence in London, was preparing to return home, when a new and characteristic adventure arrested him.

He received a visit, at his lodging in the Strand, from a person whom he had never before seen, but who introduced himself to his good-will as being likewise an American. His business was of a nature well calculated to excite Mr. Fessenden's interest. He produced the model of an ingenious contrivance for grinding corn. A patent had already been obtained; and a company, with the lord-mayor of London at its head, was associated for the construction of mills upon this new principle. The inventor, according to his own story, had disposed of one-fourth part of his patent for five hundred pounds, and was willing to accommodate his countryman with another fourth. After some inquiry into the stranger's character and the accuracy of his statements, Mr. Fessenden became a purchaser of the share that was offered him; on what terms is not stated, but probably such as to involve his

whole property in the adventure. The result was disastrous. The lord-mayor soon withdrew his countenance from the project. It ultimately appeared that Mr. Fessenden was the only real purchaser of any part of the patent; and, as the original patentee shortly afterwards quitted the concern, the former was left to manage the business as he best could. With a perseverance not less characteristic than his credulity, he associated himself with four partners, and undertook to superintend the construction of one of these patent-mills upon the Thames. But his associates, who were men of no respectability, thwarted his plans; and after much toil of body, as well as distress of mind, he found himself utterly ruined, friendless and penniless, in the midst of London. No other event could have been anticipated, when a man so devoid of guile was thrown among a set of crafty adventurers.

Being now in the situation in which many a literary man before him had been, he remembered the success of his fugitive poems, and betook himself to the pen as his most natural resource. A subject was offered him, in which no other poet would have found a theme for the Muse. It seemed to be his fatality to form connections with schemers of all sorts; and he had become acquainted with Benjamin Douglas Perkins, the patentee of the famous metallic tractors. These implements were then in great vogue for the cure of inflammatory diseases, by removing the superfluous electricity. Perkinism, as the doctrine of metallic tractors was styled, had some converts among scientific men, and many among the people, but was violently opposed by the regular corps of phy-

sicians and surgeons. Mr. Fessenden, as might be expected, was a believer in the efficacy of the tractors, and, at the request of Perkins, consented to make them the subject of a poem in Hudibrastic verse, the satire of which was to be levelled against their opponents. "Terrible Tractoration" was the result. It professes to be a poetical petition from Dr. Christopher Caustic, a medical gentleman who has been ruined by the success of the metallic tractors, and who applies to the Royal College of Physicians for relief and redress. The wits of the poor doctor have been somewhat shattered by his misfortunes; and, with crazy ingenuity, he contrives to heap ridicule on his medical brethren, under pretence of railing against Perkinism. The poem is in four cantos, the first of which is the best, and the most characteristic of the author. It is occupied with Dr. Caustic's description of his mechanical and scientific contrivances, embracing all sorts of possible and impossible projects; every one of which, however, has a ridiculous plausibility. The inexhaustible variety in which they flow forth proves the author's invention unrivalled in its way. It shows what had been the nature of Mr. Fessenden's mental toil during his residence in London, continually brooding over the miracles of mechanism and science, his enthusiasm for which had cost him so dear. Long afterwards, speaking of the first conception of this poem, the author told me that he had shaped it out during a solitary day's ramble in the outskirts of London; and the character of Dr. Caustic so strongly impressed itself on his mind, that, as he walked homeward through the crowded streets, he burst into frequent fits of laughter.

The truth is, that, in the sketch of this wild projector, Mr. Fessenden had caricatured some of his own features ; and, when he laughed so heartily, it was at the perception of the resemblance.

“Terrible Tractoration” is a work of strange and grotesque ideas aptly expressed: its rhymes are of a most singular character, yet fitting each to each as accurately as echoes. As in all Mr. Fessenden’s productions, there is great exactness in the language; the author’s thoughts being thrown off as distinctly as impressions from a type. In regard to the pleasure to be derived from reading this poem, there is room for diversity of taste; but, that it is an original and remarkable work, no person competent to pass judgment on a literary question will deny. It was first published early in the year 1803, in an octavo pamphlet of above fifty pages. Being highly applauded by the principal reviews, and eagerly purchased by the public, a new edition appeared at the end of two months, in a volume of nearly two hundred pages, illustrated with engravings. It received the praise of Gifford, the severest of English critics. Its continued success encouraged the author to publish a volume of “Original Poems,” consisting chiefly of his fugitive pieces from the American newspapers. This, also, was favorably received. He was now, what so few of his countrymen have ever been, a popular author in London; and, in the midst of his triumphs, he bethought himself of his native land.

Mr. Fessenden returned to America in 1804. He came back poorer than he went, but with an honorable reputation, and with unstained integrity, although his

evil fortune had connected him with men far unlike himself. His fame had preceded him across the Atlantic. Shortly before his arrival, an edition of "Terrible Tractoration" had been published at Philadelphia, with a prefatory memoir of the author, the tone of which proves that the American people felt themselves honored in the literary success of their countryman. Another edition appeared in New York, in 1806, considerably enlarged, with a new satire on the topics of the day. It is symptomatic of the course which the author had now adopted, that much of this new satire was directed against Democratic principles and the prominent upholders of them. This was soon followed by "Democracy Unveiled," a more elaborate attack on the same political party.

In "Democracy Unveiled," our friend Dr. Caustic appears as a citizen of the United States, and pours out six cantos of vituperative verse, with copious notes of the same tenor, on the heads of President Jefferson and his supporters. Much of the satire is unpardonably coarse. The literary merits of the work are inferior to those of "Terrible Tractoration"; but it is no less original and peculiar. Even where the matter is a mere versification of newspaper slander, Dr. Caustic's manner gives it an individuality not to be mistaken. The book passed through three editions in the course of a few months. Its most pungent portions were copied into all the opposition prints; its strange, jog-trot stanzas were familiar to every ear; and Mr. Fessenden may fairly be allowed the credit of having given expression to the feelings of the great Federal party.

On the 30th of August, 1806, Mr. Fessenden com-

meuced the publication, at New York, of "The Weekly Inspector," a paper at first of eight, and afterwards of sixteen, octavo pages. It appeared every Saturday. The character of this journal was mainly political; but there are also a few flowers and sweet-scented twigs of literature intermixed among the nettles and burs, which alone flourish in the arena of party strife. Its columns are profusely enriched with scraps of satirical verse in which Dr. Caustic, in his capacity of ballad-maker to the Federal faction, spared not to celebrate every man or measure of government that was anywise susceptible of ridicule. Many of his prose articles are carefully and ably written, attacking not men so much as principles and measures; and his deeply felt anxiety for the welfare of his country sometimes gives an impressive dignity to his thoughts and style. The dread of French domination seems to have haunted him like a nightmare. But, in spite of the editor's satirical reputation, "The Weekly Inspector" was too conscientious a paper, too sparingly spiced with the red pepper of personal abuse, to succeed in those outrageous times. The publication continued but for a single year, at the end of which we find Mr. Fessenden's valedictory to his readers. Its tone is despondent both as to the prospects of the country and his own private fortunes. The next token of his labors that has come under my notice is a small volume of verse, published at Philadelphia in 1809, and alliteratively entitled "Pills, Poetical, Political, and Philosophical; prescribed for the Purpose of purging the Public of Piddling Philosophers, Penny Poetasters, of Paltry Politicians, and Petty Partisans. By Peter

Pepper-Box, Poet and Physician." This satire had been written during the embargo, but, not making its appearance till after the repeal of that measure, met with less success than "Democracy Unveiled."

Everybody who has known Mr. Fessenden must have wondered how the kindest hearted man in all the world could have likewise been the most noted satirist of his day. For my part, I have tried in vain to form a conception of my venerable and peaceful friend as a champion in the stormy strife of party, flinging mud full in the faces of his foes, and shouting forth the bitter laughter that rang from border to border of the land; and I can hardly believe, though well assured of it, that his antagonists should ever have meditated personal violence against the gentlest of human creatures. I am sure, at least, that Nature never meant him for a satirist. On careful examination of his works, I do not find in any of them the ferocity of the true bloodhound of literature, — such as Swift, or Churchill, or Cobbett, — which fastens upon the throat of its victim, and would fain drink his life-blood. In my opinion, Mr. Fessenden never felt the slightest personal ill-will against the objects of his satire, except, indeed, they had endeavored to detract from his literary reputation, — an offence which he resented with a poet's sensibility, and seldom failed to punish. With such exceptions, his works are not properly satirical, but the offspring of a mind inexhaustibly fertile in ludicrous ideas, which it appended to any topic in hand. At times, doubtless, the all-pervading frenzy of the times inspired him with a bitterness not his own. But, in the least defensible of his writings, he was influenced by an honest

zeal for the public good. There was nothing mercenary in his connection with politics. To an antagonist who had taunted him with being poor, he calmly replied, that he "need not have been accused of the crime of poverty, could he have prostituted his principles to party purposes, and become the hireling assassin of the dominant faction." Nor can there be a doubt that the administration would gladly have purchased the pen of so popular a writer.

I have gained hardly any information of Mr. Fessenden's life between the years 1807 and 1812; at which latter period, and probably some time previous, he was settled at the village of Bellows Falls, on Connecticut River, in the practice of the law. In May of that year, he had the good fortune to become acquainted with Miss Lydia Tuttle, daughter of Mr. John Tuttle, an independent and intelligent farmer at Littleton, Mass. She was then on a visit in Vermont. After her return home, a correspondence ensued between this lady and Mr. Fessenden, and was continued till their marriage, in September, 1813. She was considerably younger than himself, but endowed with the qualities most desirable in the wife of such a man; and it would not be easy to overestimate how much his prosperity and happiness were increased by this union. Mrs. Fessenden could appreciate what was excellent in her husband, and supply what was deficient. In her affectionate good sense he found a substitute for the worldly sagacity which he did not possess, and could not learn. To her he intrusted the pecuniary cares, always so burdensome to a literary man. Her influence restrained him from such

imprudent enterprises as had caused the misfortunes of his earlier years. She smoothed his path of life, and made it pleasant to him, and lengthened it; for, as he once told me (I believe it was while advising me to take, betimes, a similar treasure to myself), he would have been in his grave long ago, but for her care.

Mr. Fessenden continued to practise law at Bellows Falls till 1815, when he removed to Brattleborough, and assumed the editorship of "The Brattleborough Reporter," a political newspaper. The following year, in compliance with a pressing invitation from the inhabitants, he returned to Bellows Falls, and edited, with much success, a literary and political paper, called "The Intelligencer." He held this employment till the year 1822, at the same time practising law, and composing a volume of poetry, "The Ladies' Monitor," besides compiling several works in law, the arts, and agriculture. During this part of his life, he usually spent sixteen hours of the twenty-four in study. In 1822 he came to Boston as editor of "The New England Farmer," a weekly journal, the first established, and devoted principally to the diffusion of agricultural knowledge.

His management of the Farmer met unreserved approbation. Having been bred upon a farm, and passed much of his later life in the country, and being thoroughly conversant with the writers on rural economy, he was admirably qualified to conduct such a journal. It was extensively circulated throughout New England, and may be said to have fertilized the soil like rain from heaven. Numerous papers on the same plan sprung up in various parts of the country; but none attained the

standard of their prototype. Besides his editorial labors, Mr. Fessenden published, from time to time, various compilations on agricultural subjects, or adaptations of English treatises to the use of the American husbandman. Verse he no longer wrote, except, now and then, an ode or song for some agricultural festivity. His poems, being connected with topics of temporary interest, ceased to be read, now that the metallic tractors were thrown aside, and that the blending and merging of parties had created an entire change of political aspects, since the days of "Democracy Unveiled." The poetic laurel withered among his gray hairs, and dropped away, leaf by leaf. His name, once the most familiar, was forgotten in the list of American bards. I know not that this oblivion was to be regretted. Mr. Fessenden, if my observation of his temperament be correct, was peculiarly sensitive and nervous in regard to the trials of authorship: a little censure did him more harm than much praise could do him good; and methinks the repose of total neglect was better for him than a feverish notoriety. Were it worth while to imagine any other course for the latter part of his life, which he made so useful and so honorable, it might be wished that he could have devoted himself entirely to scientific research. He had a strong taste for studies of that kind, and sometimes used to lament that his daily drudgery afforded him no leisure to compose a work on caloric, which subject he had thoroughly investigated.

In January, 1836, I became, and continued for a few months, an inmate of Mr. Fessenden's family. It was my first acquaintance with him. His image is before my

mind's eye at this moment ; slowly approaching me with a lamp in his hand, his hair gray, his face solemn and pale, his tall and portly figure bent with heavier infirmity than befitted his years. His dress, though he had improved in this particular since middle life, was marked by a truly scholastic negligence. He greeted me kindly, and with plain, old-fashioned courtesy ; though I fancied that he somewhat regretted the interruption of his evening studies. After a few moments' talk, he invited me to accompany him to his study, and give my opinion on some passages of satirical verse, which were to be inserted in a new edition of "Terrible Tractation." Years before, I had lighted on an illustrated copy of this poem, bestrewn with venerable dust, in a corner of a college library ; and it seemed strange and whimsical that I should find it still in progress of composition, and be consulted about it by Dr. Caustic himself. While Mr. Fessenden read, I had leisure to glance around at his study, which was very characteristic of the man and his occupations. The table, and great part of the floor, were covered with books and pamphlets on agricultural subjects, newspapers from all quarters, manuscript articles for "The New England Farmer," and manuscript stanzas for "Terrible Tractation." There was such a litter as always gathers around a literary man. It bespoke, at once, Mr. Fessenden's amiable temper and his abstracted habits, that several members of the family, old and young, were sitting in the room, and engaged in conversation, apparently without giving him the least disturbance. A specimen of Dr. Caustic's inventive genius was seen in the "Patent Steam and Hot-Water

Stove," which heated the apartment, and kept up a pleasant singing sound, like that of a teakettle, thereby making the fireside more cheerful. It appears to me, that, having no children of flesh and blood, Mr. Fessenden had contracted a fatherly fondness for this stove, as being his mental progeny; and it must be owned that the stove well deserved his affection, and repaid it with much warmth.

The new edition of "Tractation" came out not long afterwards. It was noticed with great kindness by the press, but was not warmly received by the public. Mr. Fessenden imputed the failure, in part, to the illiberality of the "trade," and avenged himself by a little poem, in his best style, entitled "Wooden Booksellers"; so that the last blow of his satirical scourge was given in the good old cause of authors against publishers.

Notwithstanding a wide difference of age, and many more points of dissimilarity than of resemblance, Mr. Fessenden and myself soon became friends. His partiality seemed not to be the result of any nice discrimination of my good and evil qualities (for he had no acuteness in that way), but to be given instinctively, like the affection of a child. On my part, I loved the old man because his heart was as transparent as a fountain; and I could see nothing in it but integrity and purity, and simple faith in his fellow-men, and good-will towards all the world. His character was so open, that I did not need to correct my original conception of it. He never seemed to me like a new acquaintance, but as one with whom I had been familiar from my infancy. Yet he was a rare man, such as few meet with in the course of a lifetime.

It is remarkable, that, with such kindly affections, Mr. Fessenden was so deeply absorbed in thought and study as scarcely to allow himself time for domestic and social enjoyment. During the winter when I first knew him, his mental drudgery was almost continual. Besides "The New England Farmer," he had the editorial charge of two other journals, — "The Horticultural Register," and "The Silk Manual"; in addition to which employment, he was a member of the State legislature, and took some share in the debates. The new matter of "Terrible Tractation" likewise cost him intense thought. Sometimes I used to meet him in the street, making his way onward apparently by a sort of instinct; while his eyes took note of nothing, and would, perhaps, pass over my face without sign of recognition. He confessed to me that he was apt to go astray when intent on rhyme. With so much to abstract him from outward life, he could hardly be said to live in the world that was bustling around him. Almost the only relaxation that he allowed himself was an occasional performance on a bass-viol which stood in the corner of his study, and from which he loved to elicit some old-fashioned tune of soothing potency. At meal-times, however, dragged down and harassed as his spirits were, he brightened up, and generally gladdened the whole table with a flash of Dr. Caustic's humor.

Had I anticipated being Mr. Fessenden's biographer, I might have drawn from him many details that would have been well worth remembering. But he had not the tendency of most men in advanced life, to be copious in personal reminiscences; nor did he often speak of the

noted writers and politicians with whom the chances of earlier years had associated him. Indeed, lacking a turn for observation of character, his former companions had passed before him like images in a mirror, giving him little knowledge of their inner nature. Moreover, till his latest day, he was more inclined to form prospects for the future than to dwell upon the past. I remember — the last time, save one, that we ever met — I found him on the bed, suffering with a dizziness of the brain. He roused himself, however, and grew very cheerful; talking, with a youthful glow of fancy, about emigrating to Illinois, where he possessed a farm, and picturing a new life for both of us in that Western region. It has since come to my memory, that, while he spoke, there was a purple flush across his brow, — the harbinger of death.

I saw him but once more alive. On the thirteenth day of November last, while on my way to Boston, expecting shortly to take him by the hand, a letter met me with an invitation to his funeral. He had been struck with apoplexy on Friday evening, three days before, and had lain insensible till Saturday night, when he expired. The burial took place at Mount Auburn on the ensuing Tuesday. It was a gloomy day; for the first snow-storm of the season had been drifting through the air since morning; and the "Garden of Graves" looked the dreariest spot on earth. The snow came down so fast, that it covered the coffin in its passage from the hearse to the sepulchre. The few male friends who had followed to the cemetery descended into the tomb; and it was there that I took my last glance at the features of

a man who will hold a place in my remembrance apart from other men. He was like no other. In his long pathway through life, from his cradle to the place where we had now laid him, he had come, a man indeed in intellect and achievement, but, in guileless simplicity, a child. Dark would have been the hour, if, when we closed the door of the tomb upon his perishing mortality, we had believed that our friend was there.

It is contemplated to erect a monument, by subscription, to Mr. Fessenden's memory. It is right that he should be thus honored. Mount Auburn will long remain a desert, barren of consecrated marbles, if worth like his be yielded to oblivion. Let his grave be marked out, that the yeomen of New England may know where he sleeps; for he was their familiar friend, and has visited them at all their firesides. He has toiled for them at seed-time and harvest: he has scattered the good grain in every field; and they have garnered the increase. Mark out his grave as that of one worthy to be remembered both in the literary and political annals of our country, and let the laurel be carved on his memorial stone; for it will cover the ashes of a man of genius.





JONATHAN CILLEY.

THE subject of this brief memorial had barely begun to be an actor in the great scenes where his part could not have failed to be a prominent one. The nation did not have time to recognize him. His death, aside from the shock with which the manner of it has thrilled every bosom, is looked upon merely as causing a vacancy in the delegation of his State, which a new member may fill as creditably as the departed. It will, perhaps, be deemed praise enough to say of Cilley, that he would have proved himself an active and efficient partisan. But those who knew him longest and most intimately, conscious of his high talents and rare qualities, his energy of mind and force of character, must claim much more than such a meed for their lost friend. They feel that not merely a party nor a section, but our collective country, has lost a man who had the heart and the ability to serve her well. It would be doing injustice to the hopes which lie withered upon his untimely grave, if, in paying a farewell tribute to his memory, we were to ask a narrower sympathy than that of the people at large. May no bitterness of party prejudices influence him who writes, nor those, of whatever political opinions, who may read!

Jonathan Cilley was born at Nottingham, N. H., on the 2d of July, 1802. His grandfather, Colonel Joseph Cilley, commanded a New Hampshire regiment during the Revolutionary War, and established a character for energy and intrepidity, of which more than one of his descendants have proved themselves the inheritors. Greenleaf Cilley, son of the preceding, died in 1808, leaving a family of four sons and three daughters. The aged mother of this family, and the three daughters, are still living. Of the sons, the only survivor is Joseph Cilley, who was an officer in the late war, and served with great distinction on the Canadian frontier. Jonathan, being desirous of a liberal education, commenced his studies at Atkinson Academy, at about the age of seventeen, and became a member of the freshman class of Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Me., in 1821. Inheriting but little property from his father, he adopted the usual expedient of a young New-Englander in similar circumstances, and gained a small income by teaching a country school during the winter months both before and after his entrance at college.

Cilley's character and standing at college afforded high promise of usefulness and distinction in after-life. Though not the foremost scholar of his class, he stood in the front rank, and probably derived all the real benefit from the prescribed course of study that it could bestow on so practical a mind. His true education consisted in the exercise of those faculties which fitted him to be a popular leader. His influence among his fellow-students was probably greater than that of any other individual; and he had already made himself powerful in that limited

sphere, by a free and natural eloquence, a flow of pertinent ideas in language of unstudied appropriateness, which seemed always to accomplish precisely the result on which he had calculated. This gift was sometimes displayed in class meetings, when measures important to those concerned were under discussion; sometimes in mock trials at law, when judge, jury, lawyers, prisoner, and witnesses were personated by the students, and Cilley played the part of a fervid and successful advocate; and, besides these exhibitions of power, he regularly trained himself in the forensic debates of a literary society, of which he afterwards became president. Nothing could be less artificial than his style of oratory. After filling his mind with the necessary information, he trusted everything else to his mental warmth and the inspiration of the moment, and poured himself out with an earnest and irresistible simplicity. There was a singular contrast between the flow of thought from his lips, and the coldness and restraint with which he wrote; and though, in maturer life, he acquired a considerable facility in exercising the pen, he always felt the tongue to be his peculiar instrument.

In private intercourse, Cilley possessed a remarkable fascination. It was impossible not to regard him with the kindest feelings, because his companions were intuitively certain of a like kindness on his part. He had a power of sympathy which enabled him to understand every character, and hold communion with human nature in all its varieties. He never shrank from the intercourse of man with man; and it was to his freedom in this particular that he owed much of his subsequent

popularity among a people who are accustomed to take a personal interest in the men whom they elevate to office. In few words, let us characterize him at the outset of life as a young man of quick and powerful intellect, endowed with sagacity and tact, yet frank and free in his mode of action, ambitious of good influence, earnest, active, and persevering, with an elasticity and cheerful strength of mind which made difficulties easy, and the struggle with them a pleasure. Mingled with the amiable qualities that were like sunshine to his friends, there were harsher and sterner traits, which fitted him to make head against an adverse world; but it was only at the moment of need that the iron framework of his character became perceptible.

Immediately on quitting college, Mr. Cilley took up his residence in Thomaston, and began the study of law in the office of John Ruggles, Esq., now a senator in Congress. Mr. Ruggles being then a prominent member of the Democratic party, it was natural that the pupil should lend his aid to promote the political views of his instructor, especially as he would thus uphold the principles which he had cherished from boyhood. From year to year, the election of Mr. Ruggles to the State legislature was strongly opposed. Cilley's services in overcoming this opposition were too valuable to be dispensed with; and thus, at a period when most young men still stand aloof from the world, he had already taken his post as a leading politician. He afterwards found cause to regret that so much time had been abstracted from his professional studies; nor did the absorbing and exciting nature of his political career afford him any subsequent

opportunity to supply the defects of his legal education. He was admitted an attorney-at-law in 1829, and in April of the same year was married to Miss Deborah Prince, daughter of Hon. Hezekiah Prince of Thomaston, where Mr. Cilley continued to reside, and entered upon the practice of his profession.

In 1831, Mr. Ruggles having been appointed a judge of the court of common pleas, it became necessary to send a new representative from Thomaston to the legislature of the State. Mr. Cilley was brought forward as the Democratic candidate, obtained his election, and took his seat in January, 1832. But in the course of this year the friendly relations between Judge Ruggles and Mr. Cilley were broken off. The former gentleman, it appears, had imbibed the idea that his political aspirations (which were then directed towards a seat in the Senate of the United States) did not receive all the aid which he was disposed to claim from the influence of his late pupil. When, therefore, Mr. Cilley was held up as a candidate for re-election to the legislature, the whole strength of Judge Ruggles and his adherents was exerted against him. This was the first act and declaration of a political hostility, which was too warm and earnest not to become, in some degree, personal, and which rendered Mr. Cilley's subsequent career a continual struggle with those to whom he might naturally have looked for friendship and support. It sets his abilities and force of character in the strongest light, to view him, at the very outset of public life, without the aid of powerful connections, an isolated young man, forced into a position of hostility, not merely with the enemies of his party, but

likewise with a large body of its adherents, even accused of treachery to its principles, yet gaining triumph after triumph, and making his way steadily onward. Surely his was a mental and moral energy which death alone could have laid prostrate.

We have the testimony of those who knew Mr. Cilley well, that his own feelings were never so embittered by those conflicts as to prevent him from interchanging the courtesies of society with his most violent opponents. While their resentments rendered his very presence intolerable to them, he could address them with as much ease and composure as if their mutual relations had been those of perfect harmony. There was no affectation in this : it was the good-natured consciousness of his own strength that enabled him to keep his temper : it was the same chivalrous sentiment which impels hostile warriors to shake hands in the intervals of battle. Mr. Cilley was slow to withdraw his confidence from any man whom he deemed a friend ; and it has been mentioned as almost his only weak point, that he was too apt to suffer himself to be betrayed before he would condescend to suspect. His prejudices, however, when once adopted, partook of the depth and strength of his character, and could not be readily overcome. He loved to subdue his foes ; but no man could use a triumph more generously than he.

Let us resume our narrative. In spite of the opposition of Judge Ruggles and his friends, combined with that of the Whigs, Mr. Cilley was re-elected to the legislature of 1833, and was equally successful in each of the succeeding years, until his election to Congress. He was

five successive years the representative of Thomaston. In 1834, when Mr. Dunlap was nominated as the Democratic candidate for governor, Mr. Cilley gave his support to Governor Smith, in the belief that the substitution of a new candidate had been unfairly effected. He considered it a stratagem intended to promote the election of Judge Ruggles to the Senate of the United States. Early in the legislative session of the same year, the Ruggles party obtained a temporary triumph over Mr. Cilley, effected his expulsion from the Democratic caucuses, and attempted to stigmatize him as a traitor to his political friends. But Mr. Cilley's high and honorable course was ere long understood and appreciated by his party and the people. He told them, openly and boldly, that they might undertake to expel him from their caucuses; but they could not expel him from the Democratic party: they might stigmatize him with any appellation they might choose; but they could not reach the height on which he stood, nor shake his position with the people. But a few weeks had elapsed, and Mr. Cilley was the acknowledged head and leader of that party in the legislature. During the same session, Mr. Speaker Clifford (one of the friends of Judge Ruggles) being appointed attorney-general, the Ruggles party were desirous of securing the election of another of their adherents to the chair; but, as it was obvious that Mr. Cilley's popularity would gain him the place, the incumbent was induced to delay his resignation till the end of the term. At the session of 1835, Messrs. Cilley, Davee, and McCrote being candidates for the chair, Mr. Cilley withdrew in favor of Mr. Davee. That gentleman was

accordingly elected; but, being soon afterwards appointed sheriff of Somerset County, Mr. Cilley succeeded him as speaker, and filled the same office during the session of 1836. All parties awarded him the praise of being the best presiding officer that the house ever had.

In 1836, he was nominated by a large portion of the Democratic electors of the Lincoln Congressional District as their candidate for Congress. That district has recently shown itself to possess a decided Whig majority; and this would have been equally the case in 1836, had any other man than Mr. Cilley appeared on the Democratic side. He had likewise to contend, as in all the former scenes of his political life, with that portion of his own party which adhered to Mr. Ruggles. There was still another formidable obstacle, in the high character of Judge Bailey, who then represented the district, and was a candidate for re-election. All these difficulties, however, served only to protract the contest, but could not snatch the victory from Mr. Cilley, who obtained a majority of votes at the third trial. It was a fatal triumph.

In the summer of 1837, a few months after his election to Congress, I met Mr. Cilley for the first time since early youth, when he had been to me almost as an elder brother. The two or three days which I spent in his neighborhood enabled us to renew our former intimacy. In his person there was very little change, and that little was for the better. He had an impending brow, deep-set eyes, and a thin and thoughtful countenance, which, in his abstracted moments, seemed

almost stern ; but, in the intercourse of society, it was brightened with a kindly smile, that will live in the recollection of all who knew him. His manners had not a fastidious polish, but were characterized by the simplicity of one who had dwelt remote from cities, holding free companionship with the yeomen of the land. I thought him as true a representative of the people as ever theory could portray. His earlier and later habits of life, his feelings, partialities, and prejudices, were those of the people : the strong and shrewd sense which constituted so marked a feature of his mind was but a higher degree of the popular intellect. He loved the people and respected them, and was prouder of nothing than of his brotherhood with those who had intrusted their public interests to his care. His continual struggles in the political arena had strengthened his bones and sinews : opposition had kept him ardent ; while success had cherished the generous warmth of his nature, and assisted the growth both of his powers and sympathies. Disappointment might have soured and contracted him ; but it appeared to me that his triumphant warfare had been no less beneficial to his heart than to his mind. I was aware, indeed, that his harsher traits had grown apace with his milder ones ; that he possessed iron resolution, indomitable perseverance, and an almost terrible energy ; but these features had imparted no hardness to his character in private intercourse. In the hour of public need, these strong qualities would have shown themselves the most prominent ones, and would have encouraged his countrymen to rally round him as one of their natural leaders.

In his private and domestic relations, Mr. Cilley was most exemplary; and he enjoyed no less happiness than he conferred. He had been the father of four children, two of whom were in the grave, leaving, I thought, a more abiding impression of tenderness and regret than the death of infants usually makes on the masculine mind. Two boys — the elder, seven or eight years of age; and the younger, two — still remained to him; and the fondness of these children for their father, their evident enjoyment of his society, was proof enough of his gentle and amiable character within the precincts of his family. In that bereaved household, there is now another child, whom the father never saw. Mr. Cilley's domestic habits were simple and primitive to a degree unusual, in most parts of our country, among men of so eminent a station as he had attained. It made me smile, though with anything but scorn, in contrast to the aristocratic stateliness which I have witnessed elsewhere, to see him driving home his own cow after a long search for her through the village. That trait alone would have marked him as a man whose greatness lay within himself. He appeared to take much interest in the cultivation of his garden, and was very fond of flowers. He kept bees, and told me that he loved to sit for whole hours by the hives, watching the labors of the insects, and soothed by the hum with which they filled the air. I glance at these minute particulars of his daily life, because they form so strange a contrast with the circumstances of his death. Who could have believed, that, with his thoroughly New England character, in so short a time after I had seen him in that peaceful and

happy home, among those simple occupations and pure enjoyments, he would be stretched in his own blood, — slain for an almost impalpable punctilio!

It is not my purpose to dwell upon Mr. Cilley's brief career in Congress. Brief as it was, his character and talents had more than begun to be felt, and would soon have linked his name with the history of every important measure, and have borne it onward with the progress of the principles which he supported. He was not eager to seize opportunities of thrusting himself into notice; but, when time and the occasion summoned him, he came forward, and poured forth his ready and natural eloquence with as much effect in the councils of the nation as he had done in those of his own State. With every effort that he made, the hopes of his party rested more decidedly upon him, as one who would hereafter be found in the vanguard of many a Democratic victory. Let me spare myself the details of the awful catastrophe by which all those proud hopes perished; for I write with a blunted pen and a head benumbed, and am the less able to express my feelings as they lie deep at heart, and inexhaustible.

On the 23d of February last, Mr. Cilley received a challenge from Mr. Graves of Kentucky, through the hands of Mr. Wise of Virginia. This measure, as is declared in the challenge itself, was grounded on Mr. Cilley's refusal to receive a message, of which Mr. Graves had been the bearer, from a person of disputed respectability; although no exception to that person's character had been expressed by Mr. Cilley; nor need such inference have been drawn, unless Mr. Graves were

conscious that public opinion held his friend in a doubtful light. The challenge was accepted, and the parties met on the following day. They exchanged two shots with rifles. After each shot, a conference was held between the friends of both parties, and the most generous avowals of respect and kindly feeling were made on the part of Cilley towards his antagonist, but without avail. A third shot was exchanged; and Mr. Cilley fell dead into the arms of one of his friends. While I write, a Committee of Investigation is sitting upon this affair: but the public has not waited for its award; and the writer, in accordance with the public, has formed his opinion on the official statement of Messrs. Wise and Jones. A challenge was never given on a more shadowy pretext; a duel was never pressed to a fatal close in the face of such open kindness as was expressed by Mr. Cilley: and the conclusion is inevitable, that Mr. Graves and his principal second, Mr. Wise, have gone further than their own dreadful code will warrant them, and overstepped the imaginary distinction, which, on their own principles, separates manslaughter from murder.

Alas that over the grave of a dear friend, my sorrow for the bereavement must be mingled with another grief, — that he threw away such a life in so miserable a cause! Why, as he was true to the Northern character in all things else, did he swerve from his Northern principles in this final scene? But his error was a generous one, since he fought for what he deemed the honor of New England; and, now that death has paid the forfeit, the most rigid may forgive him. If that dark pitfall — that

bloody grave — had not lain in the midst of his path, whither, whither might it not have led him! It has ended there: yet so strong was my conception of his energies, so like destiny did it appear that he should achieve everything at which he aimed, that even now my fancy will not dwell upon his grave, but pictures him still amid the struggles and triumphs of the present and the future.*

1838.

* A very subtle and searching description of Cilley's mental and moral qualities is given in Hawthorne's *American Note-Books*, Vol. I. p. 64.



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THE HOUSE



THE HOUSE



THE

Dolliver Romance,

AND OTHER PIECES.

BY

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.



BOSTON:

HOUGHTON, OSGOOD, AND COMPANY.

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THE DOLLIVER ROMANCE.







THE DOLLIVER ROMANCE.

A SCENE FROM THE DOLLIVER ROMANCE.

DR. DOLLIVER, a worthy personage of extreme antiquity, was aroused rather prematurely, one summer morning, by the shouts of the child Pansie, in an adjoining chamber, summoning old Martha (who performed the duties of nurse, housekeeper, and kitchen-maid, in the Doctor's establishment) to take up her little ladyship and dress her. The old gentleman woke with more than his customary alacrity, and, after taking a moment to gather his wits about him, pulled aside the faded moreen curtains of his ancient bed, and thrust his head into a beam of sunshine that caused him to wink and withdraw it again. This transitory glimpse of good Dr. Dolliver showed a flannel nightcap, fringed round with stray locks of silvery white hair, and surmounting a meagre and dusky yellow visage, which was crossed and criss-crossed with a record of his long life in wrinkles, faithfully written, no doubt, but with such

cramped chirography of Father Time that the purport was illegible. It seemed hardly worth while for the patriarch to get out of bed any more, and bring his forlorn shadow into the summer day that was made for younger folks. The Doctor, however, was by no means of that opinion, being considerably encouraged towards the toil of living twenty-four hours longer by the comparative ease with which he found himself going through the usually painful process of bestirring his rusty joints (stiffened by the very rest and sleep that should have made them pliable) and putting them in a condition to bear his weight upon the floor. Nor was he absolutely disheartened by the idea of those tonsorial, ablutionary, and personally decorative labors which are apt to become so intolerably irksome to an old gentleman, after performing them daily and daily for fifty, sixty, or seventy years, and finding them still as immitigably recurrent as at first. Dr. Dolliver could nowise account for this happy condition of his spirits and physical energies, until he remembered taking an experimental sip of a certain cordial which was long ago prepared by his grandson, and carefully sealed up in a bottle, and had been repositied in a dark closet among a parcel of effete medicines ever since that gifted young man's death.

"It may have wrought effect upon me," thought the doctor, shaking his head as he lifted it again from the pillow. "It may be so; for poor Edward oftentimes instilled a strange efficacy into his perilous drugs. But I will rather believe it to be the operation of God's mercy, which may have temporarily invigorated my feeble age for little Pansie's sake."

A twinge of his familiar rheumatism, as he put his foot out of bed, taught him that he must not reckon too confidently upon even a day's respite from the intrusive family of aches and infirmities, which, with their proverbial fidelity to attachments once formed, had long been the closest acquaintances that the poor old gentleman had in the world. Nevertheless, he fancied the twinge a little less poignant than those of yesterday; and moreover, after stinging him pretty smartly, it passed gradually off with a thrill, which, in its latter stages, grew to be almost agreeable. Pain is but pleasure too strongly emphasized. With cautious movements, and only a groan or two, the good Doctor transferred himself from the bed to the floor, where he stood awhile, gazing from one piece of quaint furniture to another (such as stiff-backed Mayflower chairs, an oaken chest-of-drawers carved cunningly with shapes of animals and wreaths of foliage, a table with multitudinous legs, a family record in faded embroidery, a shelf of black-bound books, a dirty heap of gallipots and phials in a dim corner), — gazing at these things, and steadying himself by the bedpost, while his inert brain, still partially benumbed with sleep, came slowly into accord with the realities about him. The object which most helped to bring Dr. Dolliver completely to his waking perceptions was one that common observers might suppose to have been snatched bodily out of his dreams. The same sunbeam that had dazzled the doctor between the bed-curtains gleamed on the weather-beaten gilding which had once adorned this mysterious symbol, and showed it to be an enormous serpent, twining round a wooden post, and reaching quite from the floor of the chamber to its ceiling.

It was evidently a thing that could boast of considerable antiquity, the dry-rot having eaten out its eyes and gnawed away the tip of its tail; and it must have stood long exposed to the atmosphere, for a kind of gray moss had partially overspread its tarnished gilt surface, and a swallow, or other familiar little bird, in some bygone summer, seemed to have built its nest in the yawning and exaggerated mouth. It looked like a kind of Manichean idol, which might have been elevated on a pedestal for a century or so, enjoying the worship of its votaries in the open air, until the impious sect perished from among men, — all save old Dr. Dolliver, who had set up the monster in his bedchamber for the convenience of private devotion. But we are unpardonable in suggesting such a fantasy to the prejudice of our venerable friend, knowing him to have been as pious and upright a Christian, and with as little of the serpent in his character, as ever came of Puritan lineage. Not to make a further mystery about a very simple matter, this bedimmed and rotten reptile was once the medical emblem or apothecary's sign of the famous Dr. Swinnerton, who practised physic in the earlier days of New England, when a head of *Æsculapius* or *Hippocrates* would have vexed the souls of the righteous as savoring of heathendom. The ancient dispenser of drugs had therefore set up an image of the Brazen Serpent, and followed his business for many years, with great credit, under this Scriptural device; and Dr. Dolliver, being the apprentice, pupil, and humble friend of the learned Swinnerton's old age, had inherited the symbolic snake, and much other valuable property, by his bequest.

While the patriarch was putting on his small-clothes, he took care to stand in the parallelogram of bright sunshine that fell upon the uncarpeted floor. The summer warmth was very genial to his system, and yet made him shiver; his wintry veins rejoiced at it, though the reviving blood tingled through them with a half-painful and only half-pleasurable titillation. For the first few moments after creeping out of bed, he kept his back to the sunny window, and seemed mysteriously shy of glancing thitherward; but, as the June fervor pervaded him more and more thoroughly, he turned bravely about, and looked forth at a burial-ground on the corner of which he dwelt. There lay many an old acquaintance, who had gone to sleep with the flavor of Dr. Dolliver's tinctures and powders upon his tongue; it was the patient's final bitter taste of this world, and perhaps doomed to be a recollected nauseousness in the next. Yesterday, in the chill of his forlorn old age, the Doctor expected soon to stretch out his weary bones among that quiet community, and might scarcely have shrunk from the prospect on his own account, except, indeed, that he dreamily mixed up the infirmities of his present condition with the repose of the approaching one, being haunted by a notion that the damp earth, under the grass and dandelions, must needs be pernicious for his cough and his rheumatism. But, this morning, the cheerful sunbeams, or the mere taste of his grandson's cordial that he had taken at bedtime, or the fitful vigor that often sports irreverently with aged people, had caused an unfrozen drop of youthfulness, somewhere within him, to expand.

"Hem! ahem!" quoth the Doctor, hoping with one

effort to clear his throat of the dregs of a ten-years' cough. "Matters are not so far gone with me as I thought. I have known mighty sensible men, when only a little age-stricken or otherwise out of sorts, to die of mere faint-heartedness, a great deal sooner than they need."

He shook his silvery head at his own image in the looking-glass, as if to impress the apothegm on that shadowy representative of himself; and, for his part, he determined to pluck up a spirit and live as long as he possibly could, if it were only for the sake of little Pansie, who stood as close to one extremity of human life as her great-grandfather to the other. This child of three years old occupied all the unfossilized portion of good Dr. Dolliver's heart. Every other interest that he formerly had, and the entire confraternity of persons whom he once loved, had long ago departed; and the poor Doctor could not follow them, because the grasp of Pansie's baby-fingers held him back.

So he crammed a great silver watch into his fob, and drew on a patchwork morning-gown of an ancient fashion. Its original material was said to have been the embroidered front of his own wedding-waistcoat and the silken skirt of his wife's bridal attire, which his eldest granddaughter had taken from the carved chest-of-drawers, after poor Bessie, the beloved of his youth, had been half a century in the grave. Throughout many of the intervening years, as the garment got ragged, the spinsters of the old man's family had quilted their duty and affection into it in the shape of patches upon patches, rose-color, crimson, blue, violet, and green, and then (as their hopes faded, and

their life kept growing shadier, and their attire took a sombre hue) sober gray and great fragments of funereal black, until the Doctor could revive the memory of most things that had befallen him by looking at his patchwork-gown, as it hung upon a chair. And now it was ragged again, and all the fingers that should have mended it were cold. It had an Eastern fragrance, too, a smell of drugs, strong-scented herbs, and spicy gums, gathered from the many potent infusions that had from time to time been spilt over it; so that, snuffing him afar off, you might have taken Dr. Dolliver for a mummy, and could hardly have been undeceived by his shrunken and torpid aspect, as he crept nearer.

Wrapt in his odorous and many-colored robe, he took staff in hand, and moved pretty vigorously to the head of the staircase. As it was somewhat steep, and but dimly lighted, he began cautiously to descend, putting his left hand on the banister, and poking down his long stick to assist him in making sure of the successive steps; and thus he became a living illustration of the accuracy of Scripture, where it describes the aged as being "afraid of that which is high," — a truth that is often found to have a sadder purport than its external one. Half-way to the bottom, however, the Doctor heard the impatient and authoritative tones of little Pansie, — Queen Pansie, as she might fairly have been styled, in reference to her position in the household, — calling amain for grand-papa and breakfast. He was startled into such perilous activity by the summons, that his heels slid on the stairs, the slippers were shuffled off his feet, and he saved himself from a tumble only by quickening his pace, and coming down at almost a run.

“Mercy on my poor old bones!” mentally exclaimed the Doctor, fancying himself fractured in fifty places. “Some of them are broken, surely, and methinks my heart has leaped out of my mouth! What! all right? Well, well! but Providence is kinder to me than I deserve, prancing down this steep staircase like a kid of three months old!”

He bent stiffly to gather up his slippers and fallen staff; and meanwhile Pansie had heard the tumult of her great-grandfather's descent, and was pounding against the door of the breakfast-room in her haste to come at him. The Doctor opened it, and there she stood, a rather pale and large-eyed little thing, quaint in her aspect, as might well be the case with a motherless child, dwelling in an uncheerful house, with no other playmates than a decrepit old man and a kitten, and no better atmosphere within-doors than the odor of decayed apothecary's stuff, nor gayer neighborhood than that of the adjacent burial-ground, where all her relatives, from her great-grandmother downward, lay calling to her, “Pansie, Pansie, it is bedtime!” even in the prime of the summer morning. For those dead women-folk, especially her mother and the whole row of maiden aunts and grand-aunts, could not but be anxious about the child, knowing that little Pansie would be far safer under a tuft of dandelions than if left alone, as she soon must be, in this difficult and deceitful world.

Yet, in spite of the lack of damask roses in her cheeks, she seemed a healthy child, and certainly showed great capacity of energetic movement in the impulsive capers with which she welcomed her venerable progenitor. She

shouted out her satisfaction, moreover (as her custom was, having never had any over-sensitive auditors about her to tame down her voice), till even the Doctor's dull ears were full of the clamor.

"Pansie, darling," said Dr. Dolliver, cheerily, patting her brown hair with his tremulous fingers, "thou hast put some of thine own friskiness into poor old grand-father, this fine morning! Dost know, child, that he came near breaking his neck down-stairs at the sound of thy voice? What wouldst thou have done then, little Pansie?"

"Kiss poor grandpapa and make him well!" answered the child, remembering the Doctor's own mode of cure in similar mishaps to herself. "It shall do poor grand-papa good!" she added, putting up her mouth to apply the remedy.

"Ah, little one, thou hast greater faith in thy medicines than ever I had in my drugs," replied the patriarch, with a giggle, surprised and delighted at his own readiness of response. "But the kiss is good for my feeble old heart, Pansie, though it might do little to mend a broken neck; so give grandpapa another dose, and let us to breakfast."

In this merry humor they sat down to the table, great-grandpapa and Pansie side by side, and the kitten, as soon appeared, making a third in the party. First, she showed her mottled head out of Pansie's lap, delicately sipping milk from the child's basin without rebuke; then she took post on the old gentleman's shoulder, purring like a spinning-wheel, trying her claws in the wadding of his dressing-gown, and still more impressively reminding

him of her presence by putting out a paw to intercept a warmed-over morsel of yesterday's chicken on its way to the Doctor's mouth. After skilfully achieving this feat, she scrambled down upon the breakfast-table and began to wash her face and hands. Evidently, these companions were all three on intimate terms, as was natural enough, since a great many childish impulses were softly creeping back on the simple-minded old man; inso-much that, if no worldly necessities nor painful infirmity had disturbed him, his remnant of life might have been as cheaply and cheerily enjoyed as the early playtime of the kitten and the child. Old Dr. Dolliver and his great-granddaughter (a ponderous title, which seemed quite to overwhelm the tiny figure of Pansie) had met one another at the two extremities of the life-circle: her sunrise served him for a sunset, illuminating his locks of silver and hers of golden brown with a homogeneous shimmer of twinkling light.

Little Pansie was the one earthly creature that inherited a drop of the Dolliver blood. The Doctor's only child, poor Bessie's offspring, had died the better part of a hundred years before, and his grandchildren, a numerous and dimly remembered brood, had vanished along his weary track in their youth, maturity, or incipient age, till, hardly knowing how it had all happened, he found himself tottering onward with an infant's small fingers in his nerveless grasp. So mistily did his dead progeny come and go in the patriarch's decayed recollection, that this solitary child represented for him the successive babyhoods of the many that had gone before. The emotions of his early paternity came back to him. She

seemed the baby of a past age oftener than she seemed Pansie. A whole family of grand-aunts (one of whom had perished in her cradle, never so mature as Pansie now, another in her virgin bloom, another in autumnal maidenhood, yellow and shrivelled, with vinegar in her blood, and still another, a forlorn widow, whose grief outlasted even its vitality, and grew to be merely a torpid habit, and was saddest then), — all their hitherto forgotten features peeped through the face of the great-grandchild, and their long-inaudible voices sobbed, shouted, or laughed, in her familiar tones. But it often happened to Dr. Dolliver, while frolicking amid this throng of ghosts, where the one reality looked no more vivid than its shadowy sisters, — it often happened that his eyes filled with tears at a sudden perception of what a sad and poverty-stricken old man he was, already remote from his own generation, and bound to stray further onward as the sole playmate and protector of a child!

As Dr. Dolliver, in spite of his advanced epoch of life, is likely to remain a considerable time longer upon our hands, we deem it expedient to give a brief sketch of his position, in order that the story may get onward with the greater freedom when he rises from the breakfast-table. Deeming it a matter of courtesy, we have allowed him the honorary title of Doctor, as did all his townspeople and contemporaries, except, perhaps, one or two formal old physicians, stingy of civil phrases and over-jealous of their own professional dignity. Nevertheless, these crusty graduates were technically right in excluding Dr. Dolliver from their fraternity. He had never received the degree of any medical school, nor (save it

might be for the cure of a toothache, or a child's rash, or a whitlow on a seamstress's finger, or some such trifling malady) had he ever been even a practitioner of the awful science with which his popular designation connected him. Our old friend, in short, even at his highest social elevation, claimed to be nothing more than an apothecary, and, in these later and far less prosperous days, scarcely so much. Since the death of his last surviving grandson (Pansie's father, whom he had instructed in all the mysteries of his science, and who, being distinguished by an experimental and inventive tendency, was generally believed to have poisoned himself with an infallible panacea of his own distillation), — since that final bereavement, Dr. Dolliver's once pretty flourishing business had lamentably declined. After a few months of unavailing struggle, he found it expedient to take down the Brazen Serpent from the position to which Dr. Swinnerton had originally elevated it, in front of his shop in the main street, and to retire to his private dwelling, situated in a by-lane and on the edge of a burial-ground.

This house, as well as the Brazen Serpent, some old medical books, and a drawer full of manuscripts, had come to him by the legacy of Dr. Swinnerton. The dreariness of the locality had been of small importance to our friend in his young manhood, when he first led his fair wife over the threshold, and so long as neither of them had any kinship with the human dust that rose into little hillocks, and still kept accumulating beneath their window. But, too soon afterwards, when poor Bessie herself had gone early to rest there, it is probable that

an influence from her grave may have prematurely calmed and depressed her widowed husband, taking away much of the energy from what should have been the most active portion of his life. Thus he never grew rich. His thrifty townsmen used to tell him, that, in any other man's hands, Dr. Swinnerton's Brazen Serpent (meaning, I presume, the inherited credit and good-will of that old worthy's trade) would need but ten years' time to transmute its brass into gold. In Dr. Dolliver's keeping, as we have seen, the inauspicious symbol lost the greater part of what superficial gilding it originally had. Matters had not mended with him in more advanced life, after he had deposited a further and further portion of his heart and its affections in each successive one of a long row of kindred graves; and as he stood over the last of them, holding Pansie by the hand and looking down upon the coffin of his grandson, it is no wonder that the old man wept, partly for those gone before, but not so bitterly as for the little one that stayed behind. Why had not God taken her with the rest? And then, so hopeless as he was, so destitute of possibilities of good, his weary frame, his decrepit bones, his dried-up heart, might have crumbled into dust at once, and have been scattered by the next wind over all the heaps of earth that were akin to him.

This intensity of desolation, however, was of too positive a character to be long sustained by a person of Dr. Dolliver's original gentleness and simplicity, and now so completely tamed by age and misfortune. Even before he turned away from the grave, he grew conscious of a slightly cheering and invigorating effect from the tight

grasp of the child's warm little hand. Feeble as he was, she seemed to adopt him willingly for her protector. And the Doctor never afterwards shrank from his duty nor quailed beneath it, but bore himself like a man, striving, amid the sloth of age and the breaking-up of intellect, to earn the competency which he had failed to accumulate even in his most vigorous days.

To the extent of securing a present subsistence for Pansie and himself, he was successful. After his son's death, when the Brazen Serpent fell into popular disrepute, a small share of tenacious patronage followed the old man into his retirement. In his prime, he had been allowed to possess more skill than usually fell to the share of a Colonial apothecary, having been regularly apprenticed to Dr. Swinnerton, who, throughout his long practice, was accustomed personally to concoct the medicines which he prescribed and dispensed. It was believed, indeed, that the ancient physician had learned the art at the world-famous drug-manufactory of Apothecary's Hall, in London, and, as some people half-malignly whispered, had perfected himself under masters more subtle than were to be found even there. Unquestionably, in many critical cases he was known to have employed remedies of mysterious composition and dangerous potency, which in less skilful hands would have been more likely to kill than cure. He would willingly, it is said, have taught his apprentice the secrets of these prescriptions, but the latter, being of a timid character and delicate conscience, had shrunk from acquaintance with them. It was probably as the result of the same scrupulosity that Dr. Dolliver had always declined to enter the medi-

cal profession, in which his old instructor had set him such heroic examples of adventurous dealing with matters of life and death. Nevertheless, the aromatic fragrance, so to speak, of the learned Swinnerton's reputation, had clung to our friend through life; and there were elaborate preparations in the pharmacopœia of that day, requiring such minute skill and conscientious fidelity in the concocter that the physicians were still glad to confide them to one in whom these qualities were so evident.

Moreover, the grandmothers of the community were kind to him, and mindful of his perfumes, his rose-water, his cosmetics, tooth-powders, pomanders, and pomades, the scented memory of which lingered about their toilet-tables, or came faintly back from the days when they were beautiful. Among this class of customers there was still a demand for certain comfortable little nostrums (delicately sweet and pungent to the taste, cheering to the spirits, and fragrant in the breath), the proper distillation of which was the airiest secret that the mystic Swinnerton had left behind him. And, besides, these old ladies had always liked the manners of Dr. Dolliver, and used to speak of his gentle courtesy behind the counter as having positively been something to admire; though, of later years, an unrefined, and almost rustic simplicity, such as belonged to his humble ancestors, appeared to have taken possession of him, as it often does of prettily mannered men in their late decay.

But it resulted from all these favorable circumstances that the Doctor's marble mortar, though worn with long service and considerably damaged by a crack that per-

vaded it, continued to keep up an occasional intimacy with the pestle; and he still weighed drachms and scruples in his delicate scales, though it seemed impossible, dealing with such minute quantities, that his tremulous fingers should not put in too little or too much, leaving out life with the deficiency or spilling in death with the surplus. To say the truth, his staunchest friends were beginning to think that Dr. Dolliver's fits of absence (when his mind appeared absolutely to depart from him, while his frail old body worked on mechanically) rendered him not quite trustworthy without a close supervision of his proceedings. It was impossible, however, to convince the aged apothecary of the necessity for such vigilance; and if anything could stir up his gentle temper to wrath, or, as oftener happened, to tears, it was the attempt (which he was marvellously quick to detect) thus to interfere with his long-familiar business.

The public, meanwhile, ceasing to regard Dr. Dolliver in his professional aspect, had begun to take an interest in him as perhaps their oldest fellow-citizen. It was he that remembered the Great Fire and the Great Snow, and that had been a grown-up stripling at the terrible epoch of Witch-Times, and a child just breeched at the breaking out of King Philip's Indian War. He, too, in his school-boy days, had received a benediction from the patriarchal Governor Bradstreet, and thus could boast (somewhat as Bishops do of their unbroken succession from the Apostles) of a transmitted blessing from the whole company of sainted Pilgrims among whom the venerable magistrate had been an honored companion. Viewing their townsmen in this aspect, the people re-

voked the courteous Doctorate with which they had heretofore decorated him, and now knew him most familiarly as Grandsir Dolliver. His white head, his Puritan band, his threadbare garb (the fashion of which he had ceased to change, half a century ago), his gold-headed staff, that had been Dr. Swinnerton's, his shrunken, frosty figure, and its feeble movement, — all these characteristics had a wholeness and permanence in the public recognition, like the meeting-house steeple or the town-pump. All the younger portion of the inhabitants unconsciously ascribed a sort of aged immortality to Grandsir Dolliver's infirm and reverend presence. They fancied that he had been born old (at least, I remember entertaining some such notions about age-stricken people, when I myself was young), and that he could the better tolerate his aches and incommodities, his dull ears and dim eyes, his remoteness from human intercourse within the crust of indurated years, the cold temperature that kept him always shivering and sad, the heavy burden that invisibly bent down his shoulders, — that all these intolerable things might bring a kind of enjoyment to Grandsir Dolliver, as the lifelong conditions of his peculiar existence.

But, alas! it was a terrible mistake. This weight of years had a perennial novelty for the poor sufferer. He never grew accustomed to it, but, long as he had now borne the fretful torpor of his waning life, and patient as he seemed, he still retained an inward consciousness that these stiffened shoulders, these quailing knees, this cloudiness of sight and brain, this confused forgetfulness of men and affairs, were troublesome accidents that did not really

belong to him. He possibly cherished a half-recognized idea that they might pass away. Youth, however eclipsed for a season, is undoubtedly the proper, permanent, and genuine condition of man; and if we look closely into this dreary delusion of growing old, we shall find that it never absolutely succeeds in laying hold of our innermost convictions. A sombre garment, woven of life's unrealities, has muffled us from our true self, but within it smiles the young man whom we knew; the ashes of many perishable things have fallen upon our youthful fire, but beneath them lurk the seeds of inextinguishable flame. So powerful is this instinctive faith, that men of simple modes of character are prone to antedate its consummation. And thus it happened with poor Grandsir Dolliver, who often awoke from an old man's fitful sleep with a sense that his senile predicament was but a dream of the past night; and hobbling hastily across the cold floor to the looking-glass, he would be grievously disappointed at beholding the white hair, the wrinkles and furrows, the ashen visage and bent form, the melancholy mask of Age, in which, as he now remembered, some strange and sad enchantment had involved him for years gone by!

To other eyes than his own, however, the shrivelled old gentleman looked as if there were little hope of his throwing off this too artfully wrought disguise, until, at no distant day, his stooping figure should be straightened out, his hoary locks be smoothed over his brows, and his much-enduring bones be laid safely away, with a green coverlet spread over them, beside his Bessie, who doubtless would recognize her youthful companion in

spite of his ugly garniture of decay. He longed to be gazed at by the loving eyes now closed ; he shrank from the hard stare of them that loved him not. Walking the streets seldom and reluctantly, he felt a dreary impulse to elude the people's observation, as if with a sense that he had gone irrevocably out of fashion, and broken his connecting links with the network of human life ; or else it was that nightmare-feeling which we sometimes have in dreams, when we seem to find ourselves wandering through a crowded avenue, with the noonday sun upon us, in some wild extravagance of dress or nudity. He was conscious of estrangement from his townspeople, but did not always know how nor wherefore, nor why he should be thus groping through the twilight mist in solitude. If they spoke loudly to him, with cheery voices, the greeting translated itself faintly and mournfully to his ears ; if they shook him by the hand, it was as if a thick, insensible glove absorbed the kindly pressure and the warmth. When little Pansie was the companion of his walk, her childish gayety and freedom did not avail to bring him into closer relationship with men, but seemed to follow him into that region of indefinable remoteness, that dismal Fairy-Land of aged fancy, into which old Grandsir Dolliver had so strangely crept away.

Yet there were moments, as many persons had noticed, when the great-grandpapa would suddenly take stronger hues of life. It was as if his faded figure had been colored over anew, or at least, as he and Pansie moved along the street, as if a sunbeam had fallen across him, instead of the gray gloom of an instant before. His

chilled sensibilities had probably been touched and quickened by the warm contiguity of his little companion through the medium of her hand, as it stirred within his own, or some inflection of her voice that set his memory ringing and chiming with forgotten sounds. While that music lasted, the old man was alive and happy. And there were seasons, it might be, happier than even these, when Pansie had been kissed and put to bed, and Grandsir Dolliver sat by his fireside gazing in among the massive coals, and absorbing their glow into those cavernous abysses with which all men communicate. Hence come angels or fiends into our twilight musings, according as we may have peopled them in bygone years. Over our friend's face, in the rosy flicker of the fire-gleam, stole an expression of repose and perfect trust that made him as beautiful to look at, in his high-backed chair, as the child Pansie on her pillow; and sometimes the spirits that were watching him beheld a calm surprise draw slowly over his features and brighten into joy, yet not so vividly as to break his evening quietude. The gate of heaven had been kindly left ajar, that this forlorn old creature might catch a glimpse within. All the night afterwards, he would be semi-conscious of an intangible bliss diffused through the fitful lapses of an old man's slumber, and would awake, at early dawn, with a faint thrilling of the heart-strings, as if there had been music just now wandering over them.



ANOTHER SCENE FROM THE DOLLIVER ROMANCE.*

WE may now suppose Grandsir Dolliver to have finished his breakfast, with a better appetite and sharper perception of the qualities of his food than he has generally felt of late years, whether it were due to old Martha's cookery or to the cordial of the night before. Little Pansie had also made an end of her bread and milk with entire satisfaction, and afterwards nibbled a crust, greatly enjoying its resistance to her little white teeth.

How this child came by the odd name of Pansie, and whether it was really her baptismal name, I have not ascertained. More probably it was one of those pet appellations that grow out of a child's character, or out of some keen thrill of affection in the parents, an unsought-for and unconscious felicity, a kind of revelation, teaching them the true name by which the child's guardian angel would know it, — a name with playfulness and love in it, that we often observe to supersede, in the practice of those who love the child best, the name that they carefully selected, and caused the clergyman to

* This scene was not revised by the author, but is printed from his first draught.

plaster indelibly on the poor little forehead at the font, — the love-name, whereby, if the child lives, the parents know it in their hearts, or by which, if it dies, God seems to have called it away, leaving the sound lingering faintly and sweetly through the house. In Pansie's case, it may have been a certain pensiveness which was sometimes seen under her childish frolic, and so translated itself into French (*pensée*), her mother having been of Acadian kin; or, quite as probably, it alluded merely to the color of her eyes, which, in some lights, were very like the dark petals of a tuft of pansies in the Doctor's garden. It might well be, indeed, on account of the suggested pensiveness; for the child's gayety had no example to sustain it, no sympathy of other children or grown people, — and her melancholy, had it been so dark a feeling, was but the shadow of the house and of the old man. If brighter sunshine came, she would brighten with it. This morning, surely, as the three companions, Pansie, puss, and Grandsir Dolliver, emerged from the shadow of the house into the small adjoining enclosure, they seemed all frolicksome alike.

The Doctor, however, was intent over something that had reference to his lifelong business of drugs. This little spot was the place where he was wont to cultivate a variety of herbs supposed to be endowed with medicinal virtue. Some of them had been long known in the pharmacopœia of the Old World; and others, in the early days of the country, had been adopted by the first settlers from the Indian medicine-men, though with fear and even contrition, because these wild doctors were supposed to draw their pharmaceutic knowledge from

no gracious source, the Black Man himself being the principal professor in their medical school. From his own experience, however, Dr. Dolliver had long since doubted, though he was not bold enough quite to come to the conclusion, that Indian shrubs, and the remedies prepared from them, were much less perilous than those so freely used in European practice, and singularly apt to be followed by results quite as propitious. Into such heterodoxy our friend was the more liable to fall because it had been taught him early in life by his old master, Dr. Swinnerton, who, at those not infrequent times when he indulged a certain unhappy predilection for strong waters, had been accustomed to inveigh in terms of the most cynical contempt and coarsest ridicule against the practice by which he lived, and, as he affirmed, inflicted death on his fellow-men. Our old apothecary, though too loyal to the learned profession with which he was connected fully to believe this bitter judgment, even when pronounced by his revered master, was still so far influenced that his conscience was possibly a little easier when making a preparation from forest herbs and roots than in the concoction of half a score of nauseous poisons into a single elaborate drug, as the fashion of that day was.

But there were shrubs in the garden of which he had never ventured to make a medical use, nor, indeed, did he know their virtue, although from year to year he had tended and fertilized, weeded and pruned them, with something like religious care. They were of the rarest character, and had been planted by the learned and famous Dr. Swinnerton, who on his death-bed, when he

left his dwelling and all his abstruse manuscripts to his favorite pupil, had particularly directed his attention to this row of shrubs. They had been collected by himself from remote countries, and had the poignancy of torrid climes in them; and he told him, that, properly used, they would be worth all the rest of the legacy a hundred-fold. As the apothecary, however, found the manuscripts, in which he conjectured there was a treatise on the subject of these shrubs, mostly illegible, and quite beyond his comprehension in such passages as he succeeded in puzzling out (partly, perhaps, owing to his very imperfect knowledge of Latin, in which language they were written), he had never derived from them any of the promised benefit. And to say the truth, remembering that Dr. Swinnerton himself never appeared to triturate or decoct or do anything else with the mysterious herbs, our old friend was inclined to imagine the weighty commendation of their virtues to have been the idly solemn utterance of mental acerration at the hour of death. So, with the integrity that belonged to his character, he had nurtured them as tenderly as was possible in the ungenial climate and soil of New England, putting some of them into pots for the winter; but they had rather dwindled than flourished, and he had reaped no harvests from them, nor observed them with any degree of scientific interest.

His grandson, however, while yet a school-boy, had listened to the old man's legend of the miraculous virtues of these plants; and it took so firm a hold of his mind, that the row of outlandish vegetables seemed rooted in it, and certainly flourished there with richer

luxuriance than in the soil where they actually grew. The story, acting thus early upon his imagination, may be said to have influenced his brief career in life, and, perchance, brought about its early close. The young man, in the opinion of competent judges, was endowed with remarkable abilities, and according to the rumor of the people had wonderful gifts, which were proved by the cures he had wrought with remedies of his own invention. His talents lay in the direction of scientific analysis and inventive combination of chemical powers. While under the pupilage of his grandfather, his progress had rapidly gone quite beyond his instructor's hope, — leaving him even to tremble at the audacity with which he overturned and invented theories, and to wonder at the depth at which he wrought beneath the superficialness and mock-mystery of the medical science of those days, like a miner sinking his shaft and running a hideous peril of the earth caving in above him. Especially did he devote himself to these plants; and under his care they had thriven beyond all former precedent, bursting into luxuriance of bloom, and most of them bearing beautiful flowers, which, however, in two or three instances, had the sort of natural repulsiveness that the serpent has in its beauty, compelled against its will, as it were, to warn the beholder of an unrevealed danger. The young man had long ago, it must be added, demanded of his grandfather the documents included in the legacy of Professor Swinnerton, and had spent days and nights upon them, growing pale over their mystic lore, which seemed the fruit not merely of the Professor's own labors, but of those of more ancient sages than

he ; and often a whole volume seemed to be compressed within the limits of a few lines of crabbed manuscript, judging from the time which it cost even the quick-minded student to decipher them.

Meantime these abstruse investigations had not wrought such disastrous effects as might have been feared, in causing Edward Dolliver to neglect the humble trade, the conduct of which his grandfather had now relinquished almost entirely into his hands. On the contrary, with the mere side results of his study, or what may be called the chips and shavings of his real work, he created a prosperity quite beyond anything that his simple-minded predecessor had ever hoped for, even at the most sanguine epoch of his life. The young man's adventurous endowments were miraculously alive, and connecting themselves with his remarkable ability for solid research, and perhaps his conscience being as yet imperfectly developed (as it sometimes lies dormant in the young), he spared not to produce compounds which, if the names were anywise to be trusted, would supersede all other remedies, and speedily render any medicine a needless thing, making the trade of apothecary an untenable one, and the title of Doctor obsolete. Whether there was real efficacy in these nostrums, and whether their author himself had faith in them, is more than can safely be said ; but at all events, the public believed in them, and thronged to the old and dim sign of the Brazen Serpent, which, though hitherto familiar to them and their forefathers, now seemed to shine with auspicious lustre, as if its old Scriptural virtues were renewed. If any faith was to be put in human testimony, many marvellous

cures were really performed, the fame of which spread far and wide, and caused demands for these medicines to come in from places far beyond the precincts of the little town. Our old apothecary, now degraded by the overshadowing influence of his grandson's character to a position not much above that of a shop-boy, stood behind the counter with a face sad and distrustful, and yet with an odd kind of fitful excitement in it, as if he would have liked to enjoy this new prosperity, had he dared. Then his venerable figure was to be seen dispensing these questionable compounds by the single bottle and by the dozen, wronging his simple conscience as he dealt out what he feared was trash or worse, shrinking from the reproachful eyes of every ancient physician who might chance to be passing by, but withal examining closely the silver or the New England coarsely printed bills which he took in payment, as if apprehensive that the delusive character of the commodity which he sold might be balanced by equal counterfeiting in the money received, or as if his faith in all things were shaken.

Is it not possible that this gifted young man had indeed found out those remedies which Nature has provided and laid away for the cure of every ill?

The disastrous termination of the most brilliant epoch that ever came to the Brazen Serpent must be told in a few words. One night, Edward Dolliver's young wife awoke, and, seeing the gray dawn creeping into the chamber, while her husband, it should seem, was still engaged in his laboratory, arose in her night-dress, and went to the door of the room to put in her gentle remonstrance against such labor. There she found him

dead, — sunk down out of his chair upon the hearth, where were some ashes, apparently of burnt manuscripts, which appeared to comprise most of those included in Dr. Swinnerton's legacy, though one or two had fallen near the heap, and lay merely scorched beside it. It seemed as if he had thrown them into the fire, under a sudden impulse, in a great hurry and passion. It may be that he had come to the perception of something fatally false and deceptive in the successes which he had appeared to win, and was too proud and too conscientious to survive it. Doctors were called in, but had no power to revive him. An inquest was held, at which the jury, under the instruction, perhaps, of those same revengeful doctors, expressed the opinion that the poor young man, being given to strange contrivances with poisonous drugs, had died by incautiously tasting them himself. This verdict, and the terrible event itself, at once deprived the medicines of all their popularity; and the poor old apothecary was no longer under any necessity of disturbing his conscience by selling them. They at once lost their repute, and ceased to be in any demand. In the few instances in which they were tried the experiment was followed by no good results; and even those individuals who had fancied themselves cured, and had been loudest in spreading the praises of these beneficent compounds, now, as if for the utter demolition of the poor youth's credit, suffered under a recurrence of the worst symptoms, and, in more than one case, perished miserably: insomuch (for the days of witchcraft were still within the memory of living men and women) it was the general opinion that Satan had been person-

ally concerned in this affliction, and that the Brazen Serpent, so long honored among them, was really the type of his subtle malevolence and perfect iniquity. It was rumored even that all preparations that came from the shop were harmful, — that teeth decayed that had been made pearly white by the use of the young chemist's dentifrice, — that cheeks were freckled that had been changed to damask roses by his cosmetics, — that hair turned gray or fell off that had become black, glossy, and luxuriant from the application of his mixtures, — that breath which his drugs had sweetened had now a sulphurous smell. Moreover, all the money heretofore amassed by the sale of them had been exhausted by Edward Dolliver in his lavish expenditure for the processes of his study; and nothing was left for Pansie, except a few valueless and unsalable bottles of medicine, and one or two others, perhaps more recondite than their inventor had seen fit to offer to the public. Little Pansie's mother lived but a short time after the shock of the terrible catastrophe; and, as we began our story with saying, she was left with no better guardianship or support than might be found in the efforts of a long superannuated man.

Nothing short of the simplicity, integrity, and piety of Grandsir Dolliver's character, known and acknowledged as far back as the oldest inhabitants remembered anything, and inevitably discoverable by the dullest and most prejudiced observers, in all its natural manifestations, could have protected him in still creeping about the streets. So far as he was personally concerned, however, all bitterness and suspicion had speedily passed

away; and there remained still the careless and neglectful good-will, and the prescriptive reverence, not altogether reverential, which the world heedlessly awards to the unfortunate individual who outlives his generation.

And now that we have shown the reader sufficiently, or at least to the best of our knowledge, and perhaps at tedious length, what was the present position of Grandsir Dolliver, we may let our story pass onward, though at such a pace as suits the feeble gait of an old man.

The peculiarly brisk sensation of this morning, to which we have more than once alluded, enabled the Doctor to toil pretty vigorously at his medicinal herbs, — his catnip, his vervain, and the like; but he did not turn his attention to the row of mystic plants, with which so much of trouble and sorrow either was, or appeared to be, connected. In truth, his old soul was sick of them, and their very fragrance, which the warm sunshine made strongly perceptible, was odious to his nostrils. But the spicy, homelike scent of his other herbs, the English simples, was grateful to him, and so was the earth-smell, as he turned up the soil about their roots, and eagerly snuffed it in. Little Pansie, on the other hand, perhaps scandalized at great-grandpapa's neglect of the prettiest plants in his garden, resolved to do her small utmost towards balancing his injustice; so, with an old shingle, fallen from the roof, which she had appropriated as her agricultural tool, she began to dig about them, pulling up the weeds, as she saw grandpapa doing. The kitten, too, with a look of elfish sagacity, lent her assistance, plying her paws with vast haste

and efficiency at the roots of one of the shrubs. This particular one was much smaller than the rest, perhaps because it was a native of the torrid zone, and required greater care than the others to make it flourish; so that, shrivelled, cankered, and scarcely showing a green leaf, both Pansie and the kitten probably mistook it for a weed. After their joint efforts had made a pretty big trench about it, the little girl seized the shrub with both hands, bestriding it with her plump little legs, and giving so vigorous a pull, that, long accustomed to be transplanted annually, it came up by the roots, and little Pansie came down in a sitting posture, making a broad impress on the soft earth. "See, see, Doctor!" cries Pansie, comically enough giving him his title of courtesy, — "look, grandpapa, the big, naughty weed!"

Now the Doctor had at once a peculiar dread and a peculiar value for this identical shrub, both because his grandson's investigations had been applied more ardently to it than to all the rest, and because it was associated in his mind with an ancient and sad recollection. For he had never forgotten that his wife, the early lost, had once taken a fancy to wear its flowers, day after day, through the whole season of their bloom, in her bosom, where they glowed like a gem, and deepened her somewhat pallid beauty with a richness never before seen in it. At least such was the effect which this tropical flower imparted to the beloved form in his memory, and thus it somehow both brightened and wronged her. This had happened not long before her death; and whenever, in the subsequent years, this plant had brought its annual flower, it had proved a kind of talisman to bring

up the image of Bessie, radiant with this glow that did not really belong to her naturally passive beauty, quickly interchanging with another image of her form, with the snow of death on cheek and forehead. This reminiscence had remained among the things of which the Doctor was always conscious, but had never breathed a word, through the whole of his long life, — a sprig of sensibility that perhaps helped to keep him tenderer and purer than other men, who entertain no such follies. And the sight of the shrub often brought back the faint, golden gleam of her hair, as if her spirit were in the sunlights of the garden, quivering into view and out of it. And therefore, when he saw what Pansie had done, he sent forth a strange, inarticulate, hoarse, tremulous exclamation, a sort of aged and decrepit cry of mingled emotion. “Naughty Pansie, to pull up grandpapa’s flower!” said he, as soon as he could speak. “Poison, Pansie, poison! Fling it away, child!”

And dropping his spade, the old gentleman scrambled towards the little girl as quickly as his rusty joints would let him, — while Pansie, as apprehensive and quick of motion as a fawn, started up with a shriek of mirth and fear to escape him. It so happened that the garden-gate was ajar; and a puff of wind blowing it wide open, she escaped through this fortuitous avenue, followed by great-grandpapa and the kitten.

“Stop, naughty Pansie, stop!” shouted our old friend. “You will tumble into the grave!” The kitten, with the singular sensitiveness that seems to affect it at every kind of excitement, was now on her back.

And, indeed, this portentous warning was better

grounded and had a more literal meaning than might be supposed ; for the swinging gate communicated with the burial-ground, and almost directly in little Pansie's track there was a newly dug grave, ready to receive its tenant that afternoon. Pansie, however, fled onward with outstretched arms, half in fear, half in fun, plying her round little legs with wonderful promptitude, as if to escape Time or Death, in the person of Grandsir Dolliver, and happily avoiding the ominous pitfall that lies in every person's path, till, hearing a groan from her pursuer, she looked over her shoulder, and saw that poor grandpapa had stumbled over one of the many hillocks. She then suddenly wrinkled up her little visage, and sent forth a full-breathed roar of sympathy and alarm.

"Grandpapa has broken his neck now!" cried little Pansie, amid her sobs.

"Kiss grandpapa, and make it well, then," said the old gentleman, recollecting her remedy, and scrambling up more readily than could be expected. "Well," he murmured to himself, "a hair's-breadth more, and I should have been tumbled into yonder grave. Poor little Pansie! what wouldst thou have done then?"

"Make the grass grow over grandpapa," answered Pansie, laughing up in his face.

"Poh, poh, child, that is not a pretty thing to say," said grandpapa, pettishly and disappointed, as people are apt to be when they try to calculate on the fitful sympathies of childhood. "Come, you must go in to old Martha now."

The poor old gentleman was in the more haste to leave the spot because he found himself standing right in

front of his own peculiar row of gravestones, consisting of eight or nine slabs of slate, adorned with carved borders rather rudely cut, and the earliest one, that of his Bessie, bending aslant, because the frost of so many winters had slowly undermined it. Over one grave of the row, that of his gifted grandson, there was no memorial. He felt a strange repugnance, stronger than he had ever felt before, to linger by these graves, and had none of the tender sorrow mingled with high and tender hopes that had sometimes made it seem good to him to be there. Such moods, perhaps, often come to the aged, when the hardened earth-crust over their souls shuts them out from spiritual influences.

Taking the child by the hand, — her little effervescence of infantile fun having passed into a downcast humor, though not well knowing as yet what a dusky cloud of disheartening fancies arose from these green hillocks, — he went heavily toward the garden-gate. Close to its threshold, so that one who was issuing forth or entering must needs step upon it or over it, lay a small flat stone, deeply embedded in the ground, and partly covered with grass, inscribed with the name of “Dr. John Swinnerton, Physician.”

“Ay,” said the old man, as the well-remembered figure of his ancient instructor seemed to rise before him in his grave-apparel, with beard and gold-headed cane, black velvet doublet and cloak, “here lies a man who, as people have thought, had it in his power to avoid the grave! He had no little grandchild to tease him. He had the choice to die, and chose it.”

So the old gentleman led Pansie over the stone, and

carefully closed the gate ; and, as it happened, he forgot the uprooted shrub, which Pansie, as she ran, had flung away, and which had fallen into the open grave ; and when the funeral came that afternoon, the coffin was let down upon it, so that its bright, inauspicious flower never bloomed again.





ANOTHER FRAGMENT OF THE
DOLLIVER ROMANCE.*

BE secret!" and he kept his stern eye fixed upon him, as the coach began to move.

"Be secret!" repeated the apothecary. "I know not any secret that he has confided to me thus far, and as for his nonsense (as I will be bold to style it now he is gone), about a medicine of long life, it is a thing I forget in spite of myself, so very empty and trashy it is. I wonder, by the by, that it never came into my head to give the Colonel a dose of the cordial whereof I partook last night. I have no faith that it is a valuable medicine — little or none — and yet there has been an unwonted briskness in me all the morning."

Then a simple joy broke over his face — a flickering sunbeam among his wrinkles — as he heard the laughter of the little girl, who was running rampant with a kitten in the kitchen.

"Pansie! Pansie!" cackled he, "grandpapa has sent away the ugly man now. Come, let us have a frolic in the garden."

And he whispered to himself again, "That is a cordial

* Never before printed.

yonder, and I will take it according to the prescription, knowing all the ingredients." Then, after a moment's thought, he added, "All, save one."

So, as he had declared to himself his intention, that night, when little Pansie had long been asleep, and his small household was in bed, and most of the quiet, old-fashioned townsfolk likewise, this good apothecary went into his laboratory, and took out of a cupboard in the wall a certain ancient-looking bottle, which was cased over with a network of what seemed to be woven silver, like the wicker-woven bottles of our days. He had previously provided a goblet of pure water. Before opening the bottle, however, he seemed to hesitate, and pondered and babbled to himself; having long since come to that period of life, when the bodily frame, having lost much of its value, is more tenderly cared for, than when it was a perfect and inestimable machine.

"I triturated, I infused, I distilled it myself in these very rooms, and know it — know it all — all the ingredients, save one. They are common things enough — comfortable things — some of them a little queer — one or two that folks have a prejudice against — and then there is that one thing that I don't know. It is foolish in me to be dallying with such a mess, which I thought was a piece of quackery, while that strange visitor bade me do it, — and yet, what a strength has come from it! He said it was a rare cordial, and methinks it has brightened up my weary life all day, so that Pansie has found me the fitter playmate. And then the dose — it is so absurdly small! I will try it again."

He took the silver stopple from the bottle, and with a

practised hand, tremulous as it was with age, so that one would have thought it must have shaken the liquor into a perfect shower of misapplied drops, he dropped — I have heard it said — only one single drop into the goblet of water. It fell into it with a dazzling brightness, like a spark of ruby flame, and subtly diffusing itself through the whole body of water, turned it to a rosy hue of great brilliancy. He held it up between his eyes and the light, and seemed to admire and wonder at it.

“It is very odd,” said he, “that such a pure, bright liquor should have come out of a parcel of weeds that mingled their juices here. The thing is a folly, — it is one of those compositions in which the chemists — the cabalists, perhaps — used to combine what they thought the virtues of many plants, thinking that something would result in the whole, which was not in either of them, and a new efficacy be created. Whereas, it has been the teaching of my experience, that one virtue counteracts another, and is the enemy of it. I never believed the former theory, even when that strange madman bade me do it. And what a thick, turbid matter it was, until that last ingredient, — that powder which he put in with his own hand! Had he let me see it, I would first have analyzed it, and discovered its component parts. The man was mad, undoubtedly, and this may have been poison. But its effect is good. Poh! I will taste again, because of this weak, agued, miserable state of mine; though it is a shame in me, a man of decent skill in my way, to believe in a quack’s nostrum. But it is a comfortable kind of thing.”

Meantime, that single drop (for good Dr. Dolliver had

immediately put a stopper into the bottle) diffused a sweet odor through the chamber, so that the ordinary fragrances and scents of apothecaries' stuff seemed to be controlled and influenced by it, and its bright potency also dispelled a certain dimness of the antiquated room.

The Doctor, at the pressure of a great need, had given incredible pains to the manufacture of this medicine; so that, reckoning the pains rather than the ingredients (all except one, of which he was not able to estimate the cost nor value), it was really worth its weight in gold. And, as it happened, he had bestowed upon it the hard labor of his poor life, and the time that was necessary for the support of his family, without return; for the customers, after playing off this cruel joke upon the old man, had never come back; and now, for seven years, the bottle had stood in a corner of the cupboard. To be sure, the silver-cased bottle was worth a trifle for its silver, and still more, perhaps, as an antiquarian knick-knack. But, all things considered, the honest and simple apothecary thought that he might make free with the liquid to such small extent as was necessary for himself. And there had been something in the concoction that had struck him; and he had been fast breaking lately; and so, in the dreary fantasy and lonely recklessness of his old age, he had suddenly bethought himself of this medicine (cordial, — as the strange man called it, which had come to him by long inheritance in his family) and he had determined to try it. And again, as the night before, he took out the receipt — a roll of antique parchment, out of which, provokingly, one fold had been lost — and put on his spectacles to puzzle out the passage.

Guttam unicum in aquam puram, two gills. "If the Colonel should hear of this," said Dr. Dolliver, "he might fancy it his nostrum of long life, and insist on having the bottle for his own use. The foolish, fierce old gentleman! He has grown very earthly, of late, else he would not desire such a thing. And a strong desire it must be to make him feel it desirable. For my part, I only wish for something that, for a short time, may clear my eyes, so that I may see little Pansie's beauty, and quicken my ears, that I may hear her sweet voice, and give me nerve, while God keeps me here, that I may live longer to earn bread for dear Pansie. She provided for, I would gladly lie down yonder with Bessie and our children. Ah! the vanity of desiring lengthened days! — There! — I have drunk it, and methinks its final, subtle flavor hath strange potency in it."

The old man shivered a little, as those shiver who have just swallowed good liquor, while it is permeating their vitals. Yet he seemed to be in a pleasant state of feeling, and, as was frequently the case with this simple soul, in a devout frame of mind. He read a chapter in the Bible, and said his prayers for Pansie and himself, before he went to bed, and had much better sleep than usually comes to people of his advanced age; for, at that period, sleep is diffused through their wakefulness, and a dim and tiresome half-perception through their sleep, so that the only result is weariness.

Nothing very extraordinary happened to Dr. Dolliver or his small household for some time afterwards. He was favored with a comfortable winter, and thanked Heaven for it, and put it to a good use (at least he intended

it so) by concocting drugs; which perhaps did a little towards peopling the graveyard, into which his windows looked; but that was neither his purpose nor his fault. None of the sleepers, at all events, interrupted their slumbers to upbraid him. He had done according to his own artless conscience and the recipes of licensed physicians, and he looked no further, but pounded, triturated, infused, made electuaries, boluses, juleps, or whatever he termed his productions, with skill and diligence, thanking Heaven that he was spared to do so, when his contemporaries generally were getting incapable of similar efforts. It struck him with some surprise, but much gratitude to Providence, that his sight seemed to be growing rather better than worse. He certainly could read the crabbed handwriting and hieroglyphics of the physicians with more readiness than he could a year earlier. But he had been originally near-sighted, with large, projecting eyes; and near-sighted eyes always seem to get a new lease of light, as the years go on. One thing was perceptible about the Doctor's eyes, not only to himself in the glass, but to everybody else; namely, that they had an unaccustomed gleaming brightness in them; not so very bright either, but yet so much so, that little Pansie noticed it, and sometimes, in her playful, roguish way, climbed up into his lap, and put both her small palms over them; telling Grandpapa that he had stolen somebody else's eyes, and given away his own, and that she liked his old ones better. The poor old Doctor did his best to smile through his eyes, and so to reconcile Pansie to their brightness: but still she continually made the same silly remonstrance, so that he was fain to put on a pair

of green spectacles, when he was going to play with Pansie, or took her on his knee. Nay, if he looked at her, as had always been his custom, after she was asleep, in order to see that all was well with her, the little child would put up her hands, as if he held a light that was flashing on her eyeballs; and unless he turned away his gaze quickly, she would wake up in a fit of crying.

On the whole, the apothecary had as comfortable a time as a man of his years could expect. The air of the house and of the old graveyard seemed to suit him. What so seldom happens in man's advancing age, his night's rest did him good, whereas, generally, an old man wakes up ten times as nervous and dispirited as he went to bed, just as if, during his sleep he had been working harder than ever he did in the daytime. It had been so with the Doctor himself till within a few months. To be sure, he had latterly begun to practise various rules of diet and exercise, which commended themselves to his approbation. He sawed some of his own fire-wood, and fancied that, as was reasonable, it fatigued him less day by day. He took walks with Pansie, and though, of course, her little footsteps, treading on the elastic air of childhood, far outstripped his own, still the old man knew that he was not beyond the recuperative period of life, and that exercise out of doors and proper food can do somewhat towards retarding the approach of age. He was inclined, also, to impute much good effect to a daily dose of Santa Cruz rum (a liquor much in vogue in that day), which he was now in the habit of quaffing at the meridian hour. All through the Doctor's life he had

eschewed strong spirits; "But after seventy," quoth old Dr. Dolliver, "a man is all the better in head and stomach for a little stimulus"; and it certainly seemed so in his case. Likewise, I know not precisely how often, but complying punctiliously with the recipe, as an apothecary naturally would, he took his drop of the mysterious cordial.

He was inclined, however, to impute little or no efficacy to this, and to laugh at himself for having ever thought otherwise. The dose was so very minute! and he had never been sensible of any remarkable effect on taking it, after all. A genial warmth, he sometimes fancied, diffused itself throughout him, and perhaps continued during the next day. A quiet and refreshing night's rest followed, and alacritous waking in the morning; but all this was far more probably owing, as has been already hinted, to excellent and well-considered habits of diet and exercise. Nevertheless he still continued the cordial with tolerable regularity, — the more, because on one or two occasions, happening to omit it, it so chanced that he slept wretchedly, and awoke in strange aches and pains, torpors, nervousness, shaking of the hands, blearedness of sight, lowness of spirits and other ills, as is the misfortune of some old men; who are often threatened by a thousand evil symptoms that come to nothing, foreboding no particular disorder, and passing away as unsatisfactorily as they come. At another time, he took two or three drops at once, and was alarmingly feverish in consequence. Yet it was very true, that the feverish symptoms were pretty sure to disappear on his renewal of the medicine. "Still it could not be that," thought the old

man, a hater of empiricism (in which, however, is contained all hope for man), and disinclined to believe in anything that was not according to rule and art. And then, as aforesaid, the dose was so ridiculously small!

Sometimes, however, he took, half laughingly, another view of it, and felt disposed to think that chance might really have thrown in his way a very remarkable mixture, by which, if it had happened to him earlier in life, he might have amassed a larger fortune, and might even have raked together such a competency as would have prevented his feeling much uneasiness about the future of little Pansie. Feeling as strong as he did nowadays, he might reasonably count upon ten years more of life, and in that time the precious liquor might be exchanged for much gold. "Let us see!" quoth he, "by what attractive name shall it be advertised? 'The old man's cordial?' That promises too little. Poh, poh! I would stain my honesty, my fair reputation, the accumulation of a lifetime, and befool my neighbor and the public, by any name that would make them imagine I had found that ridiculous talisman that the alchemists have sought. The old man's cordial, — that is best. And five shillings sterling the bottle. That surely were not too costly, and would give the medicine a better reputation and higher vogue (so foolish is the world), than if I were to put it lower. I will think further of this. But pshaw, pshaw!"

"What is the matter, Grandpapa," said little Pansie, who had stood by him, wishing to speak to him at least a minute, but had been deterred by his absorption, "Why do you say 'Pshaw'?"

“ Pshaw ! ” repeated Grandpapa, “ there is one ingredient that I don't know.”

So this very hopeful design was necessarily given up, but that it had occurred to Dr. Dolliver, was perhaps a token that his mind was in a very vigorous state ; for it had been noted of him through life, that he had little enterprise, little activity, and that for the want of these things, his very considerable skill in his art had been almost thrown away, as regarded his private affairs, when it might easily have led him to fortune. Whereas, here in his extreme age, he had first bethought himself of a way to grow rich. Sometimes this latter spring causes — as blossoms come on the autumnal tree — a spurt of vigor, or untimely greenness, when Nature laughs at her old child, half in kindness and half in scorn. It is observable, however, I fancy, that after such a spurt, age comes on with redoubled speed, and that the old man has only run forward with a show of force, in order to fall into his grave the sooner.

Sometimes, as he was walking briskly along the street, with little Pansie clasping his hand, and perhaps frisking rather more than became a person of his venerable years, he had met the grim old wreck of Colonel Dabney, moving goutily, and gathering wrath anew with every touch of his painful foot to the ground ; or driving by in his carriage, showing an ashen, angry, wrinkled face at the window, and frowning at him — the apothecary thought — with a peculiar fury, as if he took umbrage at his audacity in being less broken by age than a gentleman like himself. The apothecary could not help feeling as if there were some unsettled quarrel or dispute

between himself and the Colonel, he could not tell what or why. The Colonel always gave him a haughty nod of half-recognition; and the people in the street, to whom he was a familiar object, would say, "The worshipful Colonel begins to find himself mortal like the rest of us. He feels his years." "He 'd be glad, I warrant," said one, "to change with you, Doctor. It shows what difference a good life makes in men, to look at him and you. You are half a score of years his elder, methinks, and yet look what temperance can do for a man. By my credit, neighbor, seeing how brisk you have been lately, I told my wife you seemed to be growing younger. It does me good to see it. We are about of an age, I think, and I like to notice how we old men keep young and keep one another in heart. I myself — ahem — ahem — feel younger this season than for these five years past."

"It rejoices me that you feel so," quoth the apothecary, who had just been thinking that this neighbor of his had lost a great deal, both in mind and body, within a short period, and rather scorned him for it. "Indeed, I find old age less uncomfortable than I supposed. Little Pansie and I make excellent companions for one another."

And then, dragged along by Pansie's little hand, and also impelled by a certain alacrity that rose with him in the morning, and lasted till his healthy rest at night, he bade farewell to his contemporary, and hastened on; while the latter, left behind, was somewhat irritated as he looked at the vigorous movement of the apothecary's legs.

“He need not make such a show of briskness neither,” muttered he to himself. “This touch of rheumatism troubles me a bit just now, but try it on a good day, and I’d walk with him for a shilling. Pshaw! I’ll walk to his funeral yet.”

One day, while the Doctor, with the activity that bestirred itself in him nowadays, was mixing and manufacturing certain medicaments that came in frequent demand, a carriage stopped at his door, and he recognized the voice of Colonel Dabney, talking in his customary stern tone to the woman who served him. And, a moment afterwards, the coach drove away, and he actually heard the old dignitary lumbering up stairs, and bestowing a curse upon each particular step, as if that were the method to make them soften and become easier when he should come down again. “Pray, your worship,” said the Doctor from above, “let me attend you below stairs.”

“No,” growled the Colonel, “I’ll meet you on your own ground. I can climb a stair yet, and be hanged to you.”

So saying, he painfully finished the ascent, and came into the laboratory, where he let himself fall into the Doctor’s easy-chair, with an anathema on the chair, the Doctor and himself; and staring round through the dusk, he met the wide-open, startled eyes of little Pansie, who had been reading a gilt picture-book in the corner.

“Send away that child, Dolliver,” cried the Colonel, angrily. “Confound her, she makes my bones ache. I hate everything young.”

"Lord, Colonel," the poor apothecary ventured to say, "there must be young people in the world as well as old ones. 'Tis my mind, a man's grandchildren keep him warm round about him."

"I have none, and want none," sharply responded the Colonel; "and as for young people, let me be one of them, and they may exist, otherwise not. It is a cursed bad arrangement of the world, that there are young and old here together."

When Pansie had gone away, which she did with anything but reluctance, having a natural antipathy to this monster of a Colonel, the latter personage tapped with his crutch-handled cane on a chair that stood near, and nodded in an authoritative way to the apothecary to sit down in it. Dr. Dolliver complied submissively, and the Colonel, with dull, unkindly eyes, looked at him sternly, and with a kind of intelligence amid the aged stolidity of his aspect, that somewhat puzzled the Doctor. In this way he surveyed him all over, like a judge, when he means to hang a man, and for some reason or none, the apothecary felt his nerves shake, beneath this steadfast look.

"Aha! Doctor!" said the Colonel at last, with a doltish sneer, "you bear your years well."

"Decently well, Colonel; I thank Providence for it," answered the meek apothecary.

"I should say," quoth the Colonel, "you are younger at this moment than when we spoke together two or three years ago. I noted then that your eyebrows were a handsome snow-white, such as befits a man who has passed beyond his threescore years and ten, and five

years more. Why, they are getting dark again, Mr. Apothecary."

"Nay, your worship must needs be mistaken there," said the Doctor, with a timorous chuckle. "It is many a year since I have taken a deliberate note of my wretched old visage in a glass, but I remember they were white when I looked last."

"Come, Doctor, I know a thing or two," said the Colonel, with a bitter scoff; "and what's this, you old rogue? Why, you've rubbed away a wrinkle since we met. Take off those infernal spectacles, and look me in the face. Ha! I see the devil in your eye. How dare you let it shine upon me so?"

"On my conscience, Colonel," said the apothecary, strangely struck with the coincidence of this accusation with little Pansie's complaint, "I know not what you mean. My sight is pretty well for a man of my age. We near-sighted people begin to know our best eyesight, when other people have lost theirs."

"Ah! ah! old rogue," repeated the insufferable Colonel, gnashing his ruined teeth at him, as if, for some incomprehensible reason, he wished to tear him to pieces and devour him. "I know you. You are taking the life away from me, villain! and I told you it was my inheritance. And I told you there was a Bloody Footstep, bearing its track down through my race."

"I remember nothing of it," said the Doctor, in a quake, sure that the Colonel was in one of his mad fits. "And on the word of an honest man, I never wronged you in my life, Colonel."

"We shall see," said the Colonel, whose wrinkled vis-

age grew absolutely terrible with its hardness; and his dull eyes, without losing their dulness, seemed to look through him.

“Listen to me, sir. Some ten years ago, there came to you a man on a secret business. He had an old, musty bit of parchment, on which were written some words, hardly legible, in an antique hand, — an old deed, it might have been, — some family document, and here and there the letters were faded away. But this man had spent his life over it, and he had made out the meaning, and he interpreted it to you, and left it with you, only there was one gap, — one torn or obliterated place. Well, sir, — and he bade you, with your poor little skill at the mortar, and for a certain sum, — ample repayment for such a service, — to manufacture this medicine, — this cordial. It was an affair of mouths. And just when you thought it finished, the man came again, and stood over your cursed beverage, and shook a powder, or dropped a lump into it, or put in some ingredient, in which was all the hidden virtue, — or, at least, it drew out all the hidden virtue of the mean and common herbs, and married them into a wondrous efficacy. This done, the man bade you do certain other things with the potation, and went away” — the Colonel hesitated a moment — “and never came back again.”

“Surely, Colonel, you are correct,” said the apothecary; much startled, however, at the Colonel’s showing himself so well acquainted with an incident which he had supposed a secret with himself alone. Yet he had a little reluctance in owning it, although he did not exactly understand why, since the Colonel had, apparently, no rightful claim to it, at all events.

“That medicine, that receipt,” continued his visitor, “is my hereditary property, and I challenge you, on your peril, to give it up.”

“But what if the original owner should call upon me for it,” objected Dr. Dolliver.

“I’ll warrant you against that,” said the Colonel; and the apothecary thought there was something ghastly in his look and tone. “Why, ’t is ten year, you old fool; and do you think a man with a treasure like that in his possession would have waited so long?”

“Seven years it was ago,” said the apothecary, “*Septem annis passatis*: so says the Latin.”

“Curse your Latin,” answers the Colonel. “Produce the stuff. You have been violating the first rule of your trade, — taking your own drugs, — your own, in one sense; mine by the right of three hundred years. Bring it forth, I say!”

“Pray excuse me, worthy Colonel,” pleaded the apothecary; for though convinced that the old gentleman was only in one of his insane fits, when he talked of the value of this concoction, yet he really did not like to give up the cordial, which perhaps had wrought him some benefit. Besides, he had at least a claim upon it for much trouble and skill expended in its composition. This he suggested to the Colonel, who scornfully took out of his pocket a net-work purse, with more golden guineas in it than the apothecary had seen in the whole seven years, and was rude enough to fling it in his face. “Take that,” thundered he, “and give up the thing, or I will have you in prison before you are an hour older. Nay,” he continued, growing pale, which was his mode of

showing terrible wrath; since all through life, till extreme age quenched it, his ordinary face had been a blazing red, "I'll put you to death, you villain, as I've a right!" And thrusting his hand into his waistcoat-pocket, lo! the madman took a small pistol from it, which he cocked, and presented at the poor apothecary. The old fellow quaked and cowered in his chair, and would indeed have given his whole shopful of better concocted medicines than this, to be out of this danger. Besides, there were the guineas; the Colonel had paid him a princely sum for what was probably worth nothing.

"Hold! hold!" cried he as the Colonel, with stern eye pointed the pistol at his head. "You shall have it."

So he rose all trembling, and crept to that secret cupboard, where the precious bottle — since precious it seemed to be — was repositied. In all his life, long as it had been, the apothecary had never before been threatened by a deadly weapon; though many as deadly a thing had he seen poured into a glass, without winking. And so it seemed to take his heart and life away, and he brought the cordial forth feebly, and stood tremulously before the Colonel, ashy pale, and looking ten years older than his real age, instead of five years younger, as he had seemed just before this disastrous interview with the Colonel.

"You look as if you needed a drop of it yourself," said Colonel Dabney, with great scorn. "But not a drop shall you have. Already have you stolen too much," said he, lifting up the bottle, and marking the space to which the liquor had subsided in it in consequence of the minute doses with which the apothecary

had made free. "Fool, had you taken your glass like a man, you might have been young again. Now, creep on, the few months you have left, poor, torpid knave, and die! Come — a goblet! quick!"

He clutched the bottle meanwhile voraciously, miserly, eagerly, furiously, as if it were his life that he held in his grasp; angry, impatient, as if something long sought were within his reach, and not yet secure, — with longing thirst and desire; suspicious of the world and of fate; feeling as if an iron hand were over him, and a crowd of violent robbers round about him, struggling for it. At last, unable to wait longer, just as the apothecary was tottering away in quest of a drinking-glass, the Colonel took out the stopple, and lifted the flask itself to his lips.

"For Heaven's sake, no!" cried the Doctor. "The dose is one single drop! — one drop, Colonel, one drop!"

"Not a drop to save your wretched old soul," responded the Colonel; probably thinking that the apothecary was pleading for a small share of the precious liquor. He put it to his lips, and, as if quenching a lifelong thirst, swallowed deep draughts, sucking it in with desperation, till void of breath, he set it down upon the table. The rich, poignant perfume spread itself through the air.

The apothecary, with an instinctive carefulness that was rather ludicrous under the circumstances, caught up the stopper, which the Colonel had let fall, and forced it into the bottle to prevent any farther escape of virtue. He then fearfully watched the result of the madman's potation.

The Colonel sat a moment in his chair, panting for breath; then started to his feet with a prompt vigor that contrasted widely with the infirm and rheumatic movements that had heretofore characterized him. He struck his forehead violently with one hand, and smote his chest with the other: he stamped his foot thunderously on the ground; then he leaped up to the ceiling, and came down with an elastic bound. Then he laughed, a wild, exulting ha! ha! with a strange triumphant roar that filled the house and re-echoed through it; a sound full of fierce, animal rapture, — enjoyment of sensual life mixed up with a sort of horror. After all, real as it was, it was like the sounds a man makes in a dream. And this, while the potent draught seemed still to be making its way through his system; and the frightened apothecary thought that he intended a revengeful onslaught upon himself. Finally, he uttered a loud, unearthly screech, in the midst of which his voice broke, as if some unseen hand were throttling him, and, starting forward, he fought frantically, as if he would clutch the life that was being rent away, — and fell forward with a dead thump upon the floor.

“Colonel! Colonel!” cried the terrified Doctor.

The feeble old man, with difficulty, turned over the heavy frame, and saw at once, with practised eye, that he was dead. He set him up, and the corpse looked at him with angry reproach. He was so startled, that his subsequent recollections of the moment were neither distinct nor steadfast; but he fancied, though he told the strange impression to no one, that on his first glimpse of the face, with a dark flush of what looked like rage

still upon it, it was a young man's face that he saw, — a face with all the passionate energy of early manhood ; — the capacity for furious anger which the man had lost half a century ago, crammed to the brim with vigor till it became agony. But the next moment, if it were so (which it could not have been), the face grew ashen, withered, shrunken, more aged than in life, though still the murderous fierceness remained, and seemed to be petrified forever upon it.

After a moment's bewilderment, Dolliver ran to the window, looking to the street, threw it open, and called loudly for assistance. He opened also another window, for the air to blow through, for he was almost stifled with the rich odor of the cordial which filled the room, and was now exuded from the corpse.

He heard the voice of Pansie, crying at the door, which was locked, and, turning the key, he caught her in his arms, and hastened with her below stairs, to give her into the charge of Martha, who seemed half stupefied with a sense of something awful that had occurred.

Meanwhile, there was a rattling and a banging at the street portal, to which several people had been attracted both by the Doctor's outcry from the window, and by the awful screech, in which the Colonel's spirit (if, indeed, he had that divine part), had just previously taken its flight.

He let them in, and, pale and shivering, ushered them up to the death-chamber, where one or two, with a more delicate sense of smelling than the rest, snuffed the atmosphere, as if sensible of an unknown fragrance, yet appeared afraid to breathe, when they saw the terrific

countenance, leaning back against the chair, and eying them so truculently.

I would fain quit the scene and have done with the Colonel, who, I am glad, has happened to die at so early a period of the narrative. I therefore hasten to say that a coroner's inquest was held on the spot, though everybody felt that it was merely ceremonial, and that the testimony of their good and ancient townsman, Dr. Dolliver, was amply sufficient to settle the matter. The verdict was, "Death by the visitation of God."

The apothecary gave evidence that the Colonel, without asking leave, and positively against his advice, had drunk a quantity of distilled spirits; and one or two servants, or members of the Colonel's family, testified that he had been in a very uncomfortable state of mind for some days past, so that they fancied he was insane. Therefore nobody thought of blaming Dr. Dolliver for what had happened; and if the plain truth must be told, everybody who saw the wretch was too well content to be rid of him, to trouble themselves more than was quite necessary about the way in which the incumbrance had been removed.

The corpse was taken to the mansion in order to receive a magnificent funeral; and Dr. Dolliver was left outwardly in quiet, but much disturbed and indeed almost overwhelmed inwardly by what had happened. Yet it is to be observed, that he had accounted for the death with a singular dexterity of expression, when he attributed it to a dose of distilled spirits. What kind of distilled spirits were those, Doctor? and will you venture to take any more of them?



TALES AND SKETCHES.





SKETCHES FROM MEMORY.*

I.

THE INLAND PORT.

IT was a bright forenoon, when I set foot on the beach at Burlington, and took leave of the two boatmen in whose little skiff I had voyaged since daylight from Peru. Not that we had come that morning from South America, but only from the New York shore of Lake Champlain. The highlands of the coast behind us stretched north and south, in a double range of bold, blue peaks, gazing over each other's shoulders at the Green Mountains of Vermont.

The latter are far the loftiest, and, from the opposite side of the lake, had displayed a more striking outline. We were now almost at their feet, and could see only a sandy beach sweeping beneath a woody bank, around the semicircular Bay of Burlington.

* Second series. The first series was added to the revised edition of the Mosses from an Old Manse.

The painted lighthouse on a small green island, the wharves and warehouses, with sloops and schooners moored alongside, or at anchor, or spreading their canvas to the wind, and boats rowing from point to point, reminded me of some fishing-town on the sea-coast.

But I had no need of tasting the water to convince myself that Lake Champlain was not an arm of the sea; its quality was evident, both by its silvery surface, when unruffled, and a faint but unpleasant and sickly smell, forever steaming up in the sunshine. One breeze of the Atlantic with its briny fragrance would be worth more to these inland people than all the perfumes of Arabia. On closer inspection the vessels at the wharves looked hardly seaworthy, — there being a great lack of tar about the seams and rigging, and perhaps other deficiencies, quite as much to the purpose.

I observed not a single sailor in the port. There were men, indeed, in blue jackets and trousers, but not of the true nautical fashion, such as dangle before slop-shops; others wore tight pantaloons and coats preponderously long-tailed, — cutting very queer figures at the masthead; and, in short, these fresh-water fellows had about the same analogy to the real “old salt” with his tarpaulin, pea-jacket, and sailor-cloth trousers, as a lake fish to a Newfoundland cod.

Nothing struck me more in Burlington, than the great number of Irish emigrants. They have filled the British Provinces to the brim, and still continue to ascend the St. Lawrence in infinite tribes overflowing by every outlet into the States. At Burlington, they swarm in huts and mean dwellings near the lake, lounge about the

wharves, and elbow the native citizens entirely out of competition in their own line. Every species of mere bodily labor is the prerogative of these Irish. Such is their multitude in comparison with any possible demand for their services, that it is difficult to conceive how a third part of them should earn even a daily glass of whiskey, which is doubtless their first necessary of life, — daily bread being only the second.

Some were angling in the lake, but had caught only a few perch, which little fishes, without a miracle, would be nothing among so many. A miracle there certainly must have been, and a daily one, for the subsistence of these wandering hordes. The men exhibit a lazy strength and careless merriment, as if they had fed well hitherto, and meant to feed better hereafter; the women strode about, uncovered in the open air, with far plumper waists and brawnier limbs as well as bolder faces, than our shy and slender females; and their progeny, which was innumerable, had the reddest and the roundest cheeks of any children in America.

While we stood at the wharf, the bell of a steamboat gave two preliminary peals, and she dashed away for Plattsburgh, leaving a trail of smoky breath behind, and breaking the glassy surface of the lake before her. Our next movement brought us into a handsome and busy square, the sides of which were filled up with white houses, brick stores, a church, a court-house, and a bank. Some of these edifices had roofs of tin, in the fashion of Montreal, and glittered in the sun with cheerful splendor, imparting a lively effect to the whole square. One brick building, designated in large letters as the custom-house,

reminded us that this inland village is a port of entry, largely concerned in foreign trade and holding daily intercourse with the British empire. In this border country the Canadian bank-notes circulate as freely as our own, and British and American coin are jumbled into the same pocket, the effigies of the King of England being made to kiss those of the Goddess of Liberty.

Perhaps there was an emblem in the involuntary contact. There was a pleasant mixture of people in the square of Burlington, such as cannot be seen elsewhere, at one view ; merchants from Montreal, British officers from the frontier garrisons, French Canadians, wandering Irish, Scotchmen of a better class, gentlemen of the South on a pleasure tour, country squires on business ; and a great throng of Green Mountain boys, with their horse-wagons and ox-teams, true Yankees in aspect, and looking more superlatively so, by contrast with such a variety of foreigners.





II.

ROCHESTER.

THE gray but transparent evening rather shaded than obscured the scene, leaving its stronger features visible, and even improved by the medium through which I beheld them. The volume of water is not very great, nor the roar deep enough to be termed grand, though such praise might have been appropriate before the good people of Rochester had abstracted a part of the unprofitable sublimity of the cascade. The Genesee has contributed so bountifully to their canals and mill-dams, that it approaches the precipice with diminished pomp, and rushes over it in foamy streams of various width, leaving a broad face of the rock insulated and unwashed, between the two main branches of the falling river. Still it was an impressive sight, to one who had not seen Niagara. I confess, however, that my chief interest arose from a legend, connected with these falls, which will become poetical in the lapse of years, and was already so to me as I pictured the catastrophe out of dusk and solitude. It was from a platform, raised over the naked island of the cliff, in the middle of the cataract

that Sam Patch took his last leap, and alighted in the other world. Strange as it may appear, — that any uncertainty should rest upon his fate which was consummated in the sight of thousands, — many will tell you that the illustrious Patch concealed himself in a cave under the falls, and has continued to enjoy posthumous renown, without foregoing the comforts of this present life. But the poor fellow prized the shout of the multitude too much not to have claimed it at the instant, had he survived. He will not be seen again, unless his ghost, in such a twilight as when I was there, should emerge from the foam, and vanish among the shadows that fall from cliff to cliff.

How stern a moral may be drawn from the story of poor Sam Patch! Why do we call him a madman or a fool, when he has left his memory around the falls of the Genesee, more permanently than if the letters of his name had been hewn into the forehead of the precipice?

Was the leaper of cataracts more mad or foolish than other men who throw away life, or misspend it in pursuit of empty fame, and seldom so triumphantly as he? That which he won is as invaluable as any except the unsought glory, spreading like the rich perfume of richer fruit from various and useful deeds.

Thus musing, wise in theory, but practically as great a fool as Sam, I lifted my eyes and beheld the spires, warehouses, and dwellings of Rochester, half a mile distant on both sides of the river, indistinctly cheerful, with the twinkling of many lights amid the fall of the evening. . . .

The town had sprung up like a mushroom, but no

presage of decay could be drawn from its hasty growth. Its edifices are of dusky brick, and of stone that will not be grayer in a hundred years than now; its churches are Gothic; it is impossible to look at its worn pavements and conceive how lately the forest leaves have been swept away. The most ancient town in Massachusetts appears quite like an affair of yesterday, compared with Rochester. Its attributes of youth are the activity and eager life with which it is redundant. The whole street, sidewalks and centre, was crowded with pedestrians, horsemen, stage-coaches, gigs, light wagons, and heavy ox-teams, all hurrying, trotting, rattling, and rumbling, in a throng that passed continually, but never passed away. Here, a country wife was selecting a churn from several gayly painted ones on the sunny sidewalk; there, a farmer was bartering his produce; and, in two or three places, a crowd of people were showering bids on a vociferous auctioneer. I saw a great wagon and an ox-chain knocked off to a very pretty woman. Numerous were the lottery offices, — those true temples of Mammon, — where red and yellow bills offered splendid fortunes to the world at large, and banners of painted cloth gave notice that the “lottery draws next Wednesday.” At the ringing of a bell, judges, jurymen, lawyers, and clients, elbowed each other to the court-house, to busy themselves with cases that would doubtless illustrate the state of society, had I the means of reporting them. The number of public houses benefited the flow of temporary population; some were farmer’s taverns, — cheap, homely, and comfortable; others were magnificent hotels, with negro waiters, gentlemanly landlords in black broad-

cloth, and foppish bar-keepers in Broadway coats, with chased gold watches in their waistcoat-pockets. I caught one of these fellows quizzing me through an eye-glass. The porters were lumbering up the steps with baggage from the packet boats, while waiters plied the brush on dusty travellers, who, meanwhile, glanced over the innumerable advertisements in the daily papers.

In short, everybody seemed to be there, and all had something to do, and were doing it with all their might, except a party of drunken recruits for the Western military posts, principally Irish and Scotch, though they wore Uncle Sam's gray jacket and trousers. I noticed one other idle man. He carried a rifle on his shoulder and a powder-horn across his breast, and appeared to stare about him with confused wonder, as if, while he was listening to the wind among the forest boughs, the hum and bustle of an instantaneous city had surrounded him. . . .





III.

A NIGHT SCENE.

THE steamboat in which I was passenger for Detroit had put into the mouth of a small river, where the greater part of the night would be spent in repairing some damages of the machinery.

As the evening was warm, though cloudy and very dark, I stood on deck, watching a scene that would not have attracted a second glance in the daytime, but became picturesque by the magic of strong light and deep shade.

Some wild Irishmen were replenishing our stock of wood, and had kindled a great fire on the bank to illuminate their labors. It was composed of large logs and dry brushwood, heaped together with careless profusion, blazing fiercely, spouting showers of sparks into the darkness, and gleaming wide over Lake Erie, — a beacon for perplexed voyagers leagues from land.

All around and above the furnace, there was total obscurity. No trees or other objects caught and reflected any portion of the brightness, which thus wasted itself in the immense void of night, as if it quivered from

the expiring embers of the world, after the final conflagration. But the Irishmen were continually emerging from the dense gloom, passing through the lurid glow, and vanishing into the gloom on the other side. Sometimes a whole figure would be made visible, by the shirt-sleeves and light-colored dress ; others were but half seen, like imperfect creatures ; many flitted, shadow-like, along the skirts of darkness, tempting fancy to a vain pursuit ; and often, a face alone was reddened by the fire, and stared strangely distinct, with no traces of a body. In short these wild Irish, distorted and exaggerated by the blaze, now lost in deep shadow, now bursting into sudden splendor, and now struggling between light and darkness, formed a picture which might have been transferred, almost unaltered, to a tale of the supernatural. As they all carried lanterns of wood, and often flung sticks upon the fire, the least imaginative spectator would at once compare them to devils condemned to keep alive the flames of their own torments.





FRAGMENTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF A
SOLITARY MAN.

I.

MY poor friend "Oberon"* — for let me be allowed to distinguish him by so quaint a name — sleeps with the silent ages. He died calmly. Though his disease was pulmonary, his life did not flicker out like a wasted lamp, sometimes shooting up into a strange temporary brightness; but the tide of being ebbed away, and the noon of his existence waned till, in the simple phraseology of Scripture, "he was not." The last words he said to me were, "Burn my papers, — all that you can find in yonder escritoire; for I fear there are some there which you may be betrayed into publishing. I have published enough; as for the old disconnected journal in your possession —" But here my poor friend was checked in his utterance by that same hollow cough which would never let him alone. So he coughed himself tired, and sank to slumber. I watched

* See the sketch or story entitled "The Devil in Manuscript," in "The Snow-Image, and other Twice-Told Tales."

from that midnight hour till high noon on the morrow for his waking. The chamber was dark; till, longing for light, I opened the window-shutter, and the broad day looked in on the marble features of the dead.

I religiously obeyed his instructions with regard to the papers in the escritoire, and burned them in a heap without looking into one, though sorely tempted. But the old journal I kept. Perhaps in strict conscience I ought also to have burned that; but casting my eye over some half-torn leaves the other day, I could not resist an impulse to give some fragments of it to the public. To do this satisfactorily, I am obliged to twist this thread, so as to string together into a semblance of order my Oberon's "random pearls."

If anybody that holds any commerce with his fellow-men can be called solitary, Oberon was a "solitary man." He lived in a small village at some distance from the metropolis, and never came up to the city except once in three months for the purpose of looking into a bookstore, and of spending two hours and a half with me. In that space of time I would tell him all that I could remember of interest which had occurred in the interim of his visits. He would join very heartily in the conversation; but as soon as the time of his usual tarrying had elapsed, he would take up his hat and depart. He was unequivocally the most original person I ever knew. His style of composition was very charming. No tales that have ever appeared in our popular journals have been so generally admired as his. But a sadness was on his spirit; and this, added to the shrinking sensitiveness of his nature, rendered him not misanthropic,

but singularly averse to social intercourse. Of the disease, which was slowly sapping the springs of his life, he first became fully conscious after one of those long abstractions in which he was wont to indulge. It is remarkable, however, that his first idea of this sort, instead of deepening his spirit with a more melancholy hue, restored him to a more natural state of mind.

He had evidently cherished a secret hope that some impulse would at length be given him, or that he would muster sufficient energy of will to return into the world, and act a wiser and happier part than his former one. But life never called the dreamer forth; it was Death that whispered him. It is to be regretted that this portion of his old journal contains so few passages relative to this interesting period; since the little which he has recorded, though melancholy enough, breathes the gentleness of a spirit newly restored to communion with its kind. If there be anything bitter in the following reflections, its source is in human sympathy, and its sole object is himself.

“It is hard to die without one’s happiness; to none more so than myself, whose early resolution it had been to partake largely of the joys of life, but never to be burdened with its cares. Vain philosophy! The very hardships of the poorest laborer, whose whole existence seems one long toil, has something preferable to my best pleasures.

“Merely skimming the surface of life, I know nothing, by my own experience, of its deep and warm realities. I have achieved none of those objects which the instinct of mankind especially prompts them to pursue, and the

accomplishment of which must therefore beget a native satisfaction. The truly wise, after all their speculations, will be led into the common path, and, in homage to the human nature that pervades them, will gather gold, and till the earth, and set out trees, and build a house. But I have scorned such wisdom. I have rejected, also, the settled, sober, careful gladness of a man by his own fire-side, with those around him whose welfare is committed to his trust and all their guidance to his fond authority. Without influence among serious affairs, my footsteps were not imprinted on the earth, but lost in air; and I shall leave no son to inherit my share of life, with a better sense of its privileges and duties, when his father should vanish like a bubble; so that few mortals, even the humblest and the weakest, have been such ineffectual shadows in the world, or die so utterly as I must. Even a young man's bliss has not been mine. With a thousand vagrant fantasies, I have never truly loved, and perhaps shall be doomed to loneliness throughout the eternal future, because, here on earth, my soul has never married itself to the soul of woman.

“Such are the repinings of one who feels, too late, that the sympathies of his nature have avenged themselves upon him. They have prostrated, with a joyless life and the prospect of a reluctant death, my selfish purpose to keep aloof from mortal disquietudes, and be a pleasant idler among care-stricken and laborious men. I have other regrets, too, savoring more of my old spirit. The time has been when I meant to visit every region of the earth, except the poles and Central Africa. I had a strange longing to see the Pyramids. To Persia and

Arabia, and all the gorgeous East, I owed a pilgrimage for the sake of their magic tales. And England, the land of my ancestors! Once I had fancied that my sleep would not be quiet in the grave unless I should return, as it were, to my home of past ages, and see the very cities, and castles, and battle-fields of history, and stand within the holy gloom of its cathedrals, and kneel at the shrines of its immortal poets, there asserting myself their hereditary countryman. This feeling lay among the deepest in my heart. Yet, with this homesickness for the father-land, and all these plans of remote travel, — which I yet believe that my peculiar instinct impelled me to form, and upbraided me for not accomplishing, — the utmost limit of my wanderings has been little more than six hundred miles from my native village. Thus, in whatever way I consider my life, or what must be termed such, I cannot feel as if I had lived at all.

“I am possessed, also, with the thought that I have never yet discovered the real secret of my powers; that there has been a mighty treasure within my reach, a mine of gold beneath my feet, worthless because I have never known how to seek for it; and for want of perhaps one fortunate idea, I am to die

‘Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.’

“Once, amid the troubled and tumultuous enjoyment of my life, there was a dreamy thought that haunted me, — the terrible necessity imposed on mortals to grow old, or die. I could not bear the idea of losing one youthful grace. True, I saw other men, who had once been young and now were old, enduring their age with equa-

nimity, because each year reconciled them to its own added weight. But for myself, I felt that age would be not less miserable, creeping upon me slowly, than if it fell at once. I sometimes looked in the glass, and endeavored to fancy my cheeks yellow and interlaced with furrows, my forehead wrinkled deeply across, the top of my head bald and polished, my eyebrows and side-locks iron gray, and a grisly beard sprouting on my chin. Shuddering at the picture, I changed it for the dead face of a young man, with dark locks clustering heavily round its pale beauty, which would decay, indeed, but not with years, nor in the sight of men. The latter visage shocked me least.

“Such a repugnance to the hard conditions of long life is common to all sensitive and thoughtful men, who minister to the luxury, the refinements, the gayety and lightsomeness, to anything, in short, but the real necessities of their fellow-creatures. He who has a part in the serious business of life, though it be only as a shoemaker, feels himself equally respectable in youth and in age, and therefore is content to live and look forward to wrinkles and decrepitude in their due season. It is far otherwise with the busy idlers of the world. I was particularly liable to this torment, being a meditative person in spite of my levity. The truth could not be concealed, nor the contemplation of it avoided. With deep inquietude I became aware that what was graceful now, and seemed appropriate enough to my age of flowers, would be ridiculous in middle life; and that the world, so indulgent to the fantastic youth, would scorn the bearded man, still telling love-tales, loftily ambitious of

a maiden's tears, and squeezing out, as it were, with his brawny strength, the essence of roses. And in his old age the sweet lyrics of Anacreon made the girls laugh at his white hairs the more. With such sentiments, conscious that my part in the drama of life was fit only for a youthful performer, I nourished a regretful desire to be summoned early from the scene. I set a limit to myself, the age of twenty-five, few years indeed, but too many to be thrown away. Scarcely had I thus fixed the term of my mortal pilgrimage, than the thought grew into a presentiment that, when the space should be completed, the world would have one butterfly the less, by my far flight.

“O, how fond I was of life, even while allotting, as my proper destiny, an early death! I loved the world, its cities, its villages, its grassy roadsides, its wild forests, its quiet scenes, its gay, warm, enlivening bustle; in every aspect, I loved the world so long as I could behold it with young eyes and dance through it with a young heart. The earth had been made so beautiful, that I longed for no brighter sphere, but only an ever-youthful eternity in this. I clung to earth as if my beginning and ending were to be there, unable to imagine any but an earthly happiness, and choosing such, with all its imperfections, rather than perfect bliss which might be alien from it. Alas! I had not yet known that weariness by which the soul proves itself ethereal.”

Turning over the old journal, I open, by chance, upon a passage which affords a signal instance of the morbid fancies to which Oberon frequently yielded himself. Dreams like the following were probably engendered by

the deep gloom sometimes thrown over his mind by his reflections on death.

“ I dreamed that one bright forenoon I was walking through Broadway, and seeking to cheer myself with the warm and busy life of that far-famed promenade. Here a coach thundered over the pavement, and there an unwieldy omnibus, with spruce gigs rattling past, and horsemen prancing through all the bustle. On the sidewalk people were looking at the rich display of goods, the plate and jewelry, or the latest caricature in the bookseller’s windows; while fair ladies and whiskered gentlemen tripped gayly along, nodding mutual recognitions, or shrinking from some rough countryman or sturdy laborer whose contact might have ruffled their finery. I found myself in this animated scene, with a dim and misty idea that it was not my proper place, or that I had ventured into the crowd with some singularity of dress or aspect which made me ridiculous. Walking in the sunshine, I was yet cold as death. By degrees, too, I perceived myself the object of universal attention, and, as it seemed, of horror and affright. Every face grew pale; the laugh was hushed, and the voices died away in broken syllables; the people in the shops crowded to the doors with a ghastly stare, and the passengers on all sides fled as from an embodied pestilence. The horses reared and snorted. An old beggar-woman sat before St. Paul’s Church, with her withered palm stretched out to all, but drew it back from me, and pointed to the graves and monuments in that populous churchyard. Three lovely girls whom I had formerly known, ran shrieking across the street. A personage in black, whom

I was about to overtake, suddenly turned his head and showed the features of a long-lost friend. He gave me a look of horror and was gone.

“I passed not one step farther, but threw my eyes on a looking-glass which stood deep within the nearest shop. At first glimpse of my own figure I awoke, with a horrible sensation of self-terror and self-loathing. No wonder that the affrighted city fled! I had been promenading Broadway in my shroud!”

I should be doing injustice to my friend's memory, were I to publish other extracts even nearer to insanity than this, from the scarcely legible papers before me. I gather from them — for I do not remember that he ever related to me the circumstances — that he once made a journey, chiefly on foot, to Niagara. Some conduct of the friends among whom he resided in his native village was constructed by him into oppression. These were the friends to whose care he had been committed by his parents, who died when Oberon was about twelve years of age. Though he had always been treated by them with the most uniform kindness, and though a favorite among the people of the village rather on account of the sympathy which they felt in his situation than from any merit of his own, such was the waywardness of his temper, that on a slight provocation he ran away from the home that sheltered him, expressing openly his determination to die sooner than return to the detested spot. A severe illness overtook him after he had been absent about four months. While ill, he felt how unsoothing were the kindest looks and tones of strangers. He rose from his sick-bed a better man, and determined upon a

speedy self-atonement by returning to his native town. There he lived, solitary and sad, but forgiven and cherished by his friends, till the day he died. That part of the journal which contained a description of this journey is mostly destroyed. Here and there is a fragment. I cannot select, for the pages are very scanty; but I do not withhold the following fragments, because they indicate a better and more cheerful frame of mind than the foregoing.

“On reaching the ferry-house, a rude structure of boards at the foot of the cliff, I found several of those wretches devoid of poetry, and lost some of my own poetry by contact with them. The hut was crowded by a party of provincials, — a simple and merry set, who had spent the afternoon fishing near the Falls, and were bartering black and white bass and eels for the ferryman’s whiskey. A greyhound and three spaniels, brutes of much more grace and decorous demeanor than their masters, sat at the door. A few yards off, yet wholly unnoticed by the dogs, was a beautiful fox, whose countenance betokened all the sagacity attributed to him in ancient fable. He had a comfortable bed of straw in an old barrel, whither he retreated, flourishing his bushy tail as I made a step towards him, but soon came forth and surveyed me with a keen and intelligent eye. The Canadians bartered their fish and drank their whiskey, and were loquacious on trifling subjects, and merry at simple jests, with as little regard to the scenery as they could have to the flattest part of the Grand Canal. Nor

was I entitled to despise them; for I amused myself with all those foolish matters of fishermen, and dogs, and fox, just as if Sublimity and Beauty were not married at that place and moment; as if their nuptial band were not the brightest of all rainbows on the opposite shore; as if the gray precipice were not frowning above my head and Niagara thundering around me.

“The grim ferryman, a black-whiskered giant, half drunk withal, now thrust the Canadians by main force out of his door, launched a boat, and bade me sit in the stern-sheets. Where we crossed the river was white with foam, yet did not offer much resistance to a straight passage, which brought us close to the outer edge of the American falls. The rainbow vanished as we neared its misty base, and when I leaped ashore, the sun had left all Niagara in shadow.”

“A sound of merriment, sweet voices and girlish laughter, came dancing through the solemn roar of waters. In old times, when the French, and afterwards the English, held garrisons near Niagara, it used to be deemed a feat worthy of a soldier, a frontier man, or an Indian, to cross the rapids to Goat Island. As the country became less rude and warlike, a long space intervened, in which it was but half believed, by a faint and doubtful tradition, that mortal foot had never trod this wild spot of precipice and forest clinging between two cataracts. The island is no longer a tangled forest, but a grove of stately trees, with grassy intervals about their roots and woodland paths among their trunks.

There was neither soldier nor Indian here now, but a vision of three lovely girls, running brief races through the broken sunshine of the grove, hiding behind the trees, and pelting each other with the cones of the pine. When their sport had brought them near me, it so happened that one of the party ran up and shook me by the hand, — a greeting which I heartily returned, and would have done the same had it been tenderer. I had known this wild little black-eyed lass in my youth and her childhood, before I had commenced my rambles.

“ We met on terms of freedom and kindness, which elder ladies might have thought unsuitable with a gentleman of my description. When I alluded to the two fair strangers, she shouted after them by their Christian names, at which summons, with grave dignity, they drew near, and honored me with a distant courtesy. They were from the upper part of Vermont. Whether sisters, or cousins, or at all related to each other, I cannot tell; but they are planted in my memory like ‘two twin roses on one stem,’ with the fresh dew in both their bosoms; and when I would have pure and pleasant thoughts, I think of them. Neither of them could have seen seventeen years. They both were of a height, and that a moderate one. The rose-bloom of their cheeks could hardly be called bright in her who was the rosiest, nor faint, though a shade less deep, in her companion. Both had delicate eyebrows, not strongly defined, yet somewhat darker than their hair; both had small sweet mouths, maiden mouths, of not so warm and deep a tint as ruby, but only red as the reddest rose; each had those gems, the rarest, the most precious, a pair of clear,

soft bright blue eyes. Their style of dress was similar; one had on a black silk gown, with a stomacher of velvet, and scalloped cuffs of the same from the wrist to the elbow; the other wore cuffs and stomacher of the like pattern and material, over a gown of crimson silk. The dress was rather heavy for their slight figures, but suited to September. They and the darker beauty all carried their straw bonnets in their hands."

I cannot better conclude these fragments than with poor Oberon's description of his return to his native village after his slow recovery from his illness. How beautifully does he express his penitential emotions! A beautiful moral may be indeed drawn from the early death of a sensitive recluse, who had shunned the ordinary avenues of distinction, and with splendid abilities sank to rest into an early grave, almost unknown to mankind, and without any record save what my pen hastily leaves upon these tear-blotted pages.





II.

MY HOME RETURN.

WHEN the stage-coach had gained the summit of the hill, I alighted to perform the small remainder of my journey on foot. There had not been a more delicious afternoon than this in all the train of summer, the air being a sunny perfume, made up of balm and warmth, and gentle brightness. The oak and walnut trees over my head retained their deep masses of foliage, and the grass, though for months the pasturage of stray cattle, had been revived with the freshness of early June by the autumnal rains of the preceding week. The garb of autumn, indeed, resembled that of spring. Dandelions and butterflies were sprinkled along the roadside like drops of brightest gold in greenest grass, and a star-shaped little flower of blue, with a golden centre. In a rocky spot, and rooted under the stone walk, there was one wild rose-bush bearing three roses very faintly tinted, but blessed with a spicy fragrance. The same tokens would have announced that the year was brightening into the glow of summer. There were violets too, though few and pale ones. But the breath of September

was diffused through the mild air, and became perceptible, too thrillingly for my enfeebled frame, whenever a little breeze shook out the latent coolness.

“I was standing on the hill at the entrance of my native village, whence I had looked back to bid farewell, and forward to the pale mist-bow that overarched my path, and was the omen of my fortunes. How I had misinterpreted that augury, the ghost of hope, with none of hope’s bright hues! Nor could I deem that all its portents were yet accomplished, though from the same western sky the declining sun shone brightly in my face. But I was calm and not depressed. Turning to the village, so dim and dream-like at my last view, I saw the white houses and brick stores, the intermingled trees, the foot-paths with their wide borders of grass, and the dusty road between; all a picture of peaceful gladness in the sunshine.

“‘Why have I never loved my home before?’ thought I, as my spirit reposed itself on the quiet beauty of the scene.

“On the side of the opposite hill was the graveyard, sloping towards the farther extremity of the village. The sun shone as cheerfully there as on the abodes of the living, and showed all the little hillocks and the burial-stones, white marble or slate, and here and there a tomb, with the pleasant grass about them all. A single tree was tinged with glory from the west, and threw a pensive shade behind. Not far from where it fell was the tomb of my parents, whom I had hardly thought of in bidding adieu to the village, but had remembered them more faithfully among the feelings that drew me home-

ward. At my departure their tomb had been hidden in the morning mist. Beholding it in the sunshine now, I felt a sensation through my frame as if a breeze had thrown the coolness of September over me, though not a leaf was stirred, nor did the thistle-down take flight. Was I to roam no more through this beautiful world, but only to the other end of the village? Then let me lie down near my parents, but not with them, because I love a green grave better than a tomb.

“Moving slowly forward, I heard shouts and laughter, and perceived a considerable throng of people, who came from behind the meeting-house and made a stand in front of it. Thither all the idlers in the village were congregated to witness the exercises of the engine company, this being the afternoon of their monthly practice. They deluged the roof of the meeting-house, till the water fell from the eaves in a broad cascade; then the stream beat against the dusty windows like a thunder-storm; and sometimes they flung it up beside the steeple, sparkling in an ascending shower about the weathercock. For variety’s sake the engineer made it undulate horizontally, like a great serpent flying over the earth. As his last effort, being roguishly inclined, he seemed to take aim at the sky, falling short rather of which, down came the fluid, transformed to drops of silver, on the thickest crowd of the spectators. Then ensued a prodigious rout and mirthful uproar, with no little wrath of the surly ones, whom this is an infallible method of distinguishing. The joke afforded infinite amusement to the ladies at the windows and some old people under the hay-scales. I also laughed at a distance, and was glad to find myself

susceptible, as of old, to the simple mirth of such a scene.

“But the thoughts that it excited were not all mirthful. I had witnessed hundreds of such spectacles in my youth, and one precisely similar only a few days before my departure. And now, the aspect of the village being the same, and the crowd composed of my old acquaintances, I could hardly realize that years had passed, or even months, or that the very drops of water were not falling at this moment, which had been flung up then. But I pressed the conviction home, that, brief as the time appeared, it had been long enough for me to wander away and return again, with my fate accomplished, and little more hope in this world. The last throb of an adventurous and wayward spirit kept me from repining. I felt as if it were better, or not worse, to have compressed my enjoyments and sufferings into a few wild years, and then to rest myself in an early grave, than to have chosen the untroubled and ungladdened course of the crowd before me, whose days were all alike, and a long lifetime like each day. But the sentiment startled me. For a moment I doubted whether my dear-bought wisdom were anything but the incapacity to pursue fresh follies, and whether, if health and strength could be restored that night, I should be found in the village after to-morrow’s dawn.

“Among other novelties, I had noticed that the tavern was now designated as a Temperance House, in letters extending across the whole front, with a smaller sign promising Hot Coffee at all hours, and Spruce Beer to lodgers gratis. There were few new buildings, except a

Methodist chapel and a printing-office, with a bookstore in the lower story. The golden mortar still ornamented the apothecary's door, nor had the Indian Chief, with his gilded tobacco stalk, been relieved from doing sentinel's duty before Dominicus Pike's grocery. The gorgeous silks, though of later patterns, were still flaunting like a banner in front of Mr. Nightingale's dry-goods store. Some of the signs introduced me to strangers, whose predecessors had failed, or emigrated to the West, or removed merely to the other end of the village, transferring their names from the sign-boards to slabs of marble or slate. But, on the whole, death and vicissitude had done very little. There were old men, scattered about the street, who had been old in my earliest reminiscences; and, as if their venerable forms were permanent parts of the creation, they appeared to be hale and hearty old men yet. The less elderly were more altered, having generally contracted a stoop, with hair wofully thinned and whitened. Some I could hardly recognize; at my last glance they had been boys and girls, but were young men and women when I looked again; and there were happy little things too, rolling about on the grass, whom God had made since my departure.

“But now, in my lingering course I had descended the hill, and began to consider, painfully enough, how I should meet my townspeople, and what reception they would give me. Of many an evil prophecy, doubtless, had I been the subject. And would they salute me with a roar of triumph or a low hiss of scorn, on beholding their worst anticipations more than accomplished?”

“‘No,’ said I, ‘they will not triumph over me. And should they ask the cause of my return, I will tell them that a man may go far and tarry long away, if his health be good and his hopes high; but that when flesh and spirit begin to fail, he remembers his birthplace and the old burial-ground, and hears a voice calling him to come home to his father and mother. They will know, by my wasted frame and feeble step, that I have heard the summons and obeyed. And, the first greetings over, they will let me walk among them unnoticed, and linger in the sunshine while I may, and steal into my grave in peace.’

“With these reflections I looked kindly at the crowd, and drew off my glove, ready to give my hand to the first that should put forth his. It occurred to me, also, that some youth among them, now at the crisis of his fate, might have felt his bosom thrill at my example, and be emulous of my wild life and worthless fame. But I would save him.

“‘He shall be taught,’ said I, ‘by my life, and by my death, that the world is a sad one for him who shrinks from its sober duties. My experience shall warn him to adopt some great and serious aim, such as manhood will cling to, that he may not feel himself, too late, a cumberer of this overladen earth, but a man among men. I will beseech him not to follow an eccentric path, nor, by stepping aside from the highway of human affairs, to relinquish his claim upon human sympathy. And often, as a text of deep and varied meaning, I will remind him that he is an American.’

“By this time I had drawn near the meeting-house, and perceived that the crowd were beginning to recognize me.”

These are the last words traced by his hand. Has not so chastened a spirit found true communion with the pure in Heaven? "Until of late, I never could believe that I was seriously ill: the past, I thought, could not extend its misery beyond itself; life was restored to me, and should not be missed again. I had day-dreams even of wedded happiness. Still, as the days wear on, a faintness creeps through my frame and spirit, recalling the consciousness that a very old man might as well nourish hope and young desire as I at twenty-four. Yet the consciousness of my situation does not always make me sad. Sometimes I look upon the world with a quiet interest, because it cannot concern me personally, and a loving one for the same reason, because nothing selfish can interfere with the sense of brotherhood. Soon to be all spirit, I have already a spiritual sense of human nature, and see deeply into the hearts of mankind, discovering what is hidden from the wisest. The loves of young men and virgins are known to me, before the first kiss, before the whispered word, with the birth of the first sigh. My glance comprehends the crowd, and penetrates the breast of the solitary man. I think better of the world than formerly, more generously of its virtues, more mercifully of its faults, with a higher estimate of its present happiness, and brighter hopes of its destiny. My mind has put forth a second crop of blossoms, as the trees do in the Indian summer. No winter will destroy their beauty, for they are fanned by the breeze and freshened by the shower that breathes and falls in the gardens of Paradise!"



MY VISIT TO NIAGARA.

NEVER did a pilgrim approach Niagara with deeper enthusiasm than mine. I had lingered away from it, and wandered to other scenes, because my treasury of anticipated enjoyments, comprising all the wonders of the world, had nothing else so magnificent, and I was loath to exchange the pleasures of hope for those of memory so soon. At length the day came. The stage-coach, with a Frenchman and myself on the back seat, had already left Lewiston, and in less than an hour would set us down in Manchester. I began to listen for the roar of the cataract, and trembled with a sensation like dread, as the moment drew nigh, when its voice of ages must roll, for the first time, on my ear. The French gentleman stretched himself from the window, and expressed loud admiration, while, by a sudden impulse, I threw myself back and closed my eyes. When the scene shut in, I was glad to think, that for me the whole burst of Niagara was yet in futurity. We rolled on, and entered the village of Manchester, bordering on the falls.

I am quite ashamed of myself here. Not that I ran, like a madman to the falls, and plunged into the thickest

of the spray, — never stopping to breathe, till breathing was impossible : not that I committed this, or any other suitable extravagance. On the contrary, I alighted with perfect decency and composure, gave my cloak to the black waiter, pointed out my baggage, and inquired, not the nearest way to the cataract, but about the dinner-hour. The interval was spent in arranging my dress. Within the last fifteen minutes, my mind had grown strangely benumbed, and my spirits apathetic, with a slight depression, not decided enough to be termed sadness. My enthusiasm was in a deathlike slumber. Without aspiring to immortality, as he did, I could have imitated that English traveller, who turned back from the point where he first heard the thunder of Niagara, after crossing the ocean to behold it. Many a Western trader, by the by, has performed a similar act of heroism with more heroic simplicity, deeming it no such wonderful feat to dine at the hotel and resume his route to Buffalo or Lewiston, while the cataract was roaring unseen.

Such has often been my apathy, when objects, long sought, and earnestly desired, were placed within my reach. After dinner — at which an unwonted and perverse epicurism detained me longer than usual — I lighted a cigar and paced the piazza, minutely attentive to the aspect and business of a very ordinary village. Finally, with reluctant step, and the feeling of an intruder, I walked towards Goat Island. At the toll-house, there were further excuses for delaying the inevitable moment. My signature was required in a huge ledger, containing similar records innumerable, many of

which I read. The skin of a great sturgeon, and other fishes, beasts, and reptiles; a collection of minerals, such as lie in heaps near the falls; some Indian moccasins, and other trifles, made of deer-skin and embroidered with beads; several newspapers from Montreal, New York, and Boston; — all attracted me in turn. Out of a number of twisted sticks, the manufacture of a Tuscarora Indian, I selected one of curled maple, curiously convoluted, and adorned with the carved images of a snake and a fish. Using this as my pilgrim's staff, I crossed the bridge. Above and below me were the rapids, a river of impetuous snow, with here and there a dark rock amid its whiteness, resisting all the physical fury, as any cold spirit did the moral influences of the scene. On reaching Goat Island, which separates the two great segments of the falls, I chose the right-hand path, and followed it to the edge of the American cascade. There, while the falling sheet was yet invisible, I saw the vapor that never vanishes, and the Eternal Rainbow of Niagara.

It was an afternoon of glorious sunshine, without a cloud, save those of the cataracts. I gained an insulated rock, and beheld a broad sheet of brilliant and unbroken foam, not shooting in a curved line from the top of the precipice, but falling headlong down from height to depth. A narrow stream diverged from the main branch, and hurried over the crag by a channel of its own, leaving a little pine-clad island and a streak of precipice, between itself and the larger sheet. Below arose the mist, on which was painted a dazzling sun-bow with two concentric shadows, — one, almost as perfect as the origi-

nal brightness; and the other, drawn faintly round the broken edge of the cloud.

Still I had not half seen Niagara. Following the verge of the island, the path led me to the Horseshoe, where the real, broad St. Lawrence, rushing along on a level with its banks, pours its whole breadth over a concave line of precipice, and thence pursues its course between lofty crags towards Ontario. A sort of bridge, two or three feet wide, stretches out along the edge of the descending sheet, and hangs upon the rising mist, as if that were the foundation of the frail structure. Here I stationed myself in the blast of wind, which the rushing river bore along with it. The bridge was tremulous beneath me, and marked the tremor of the solid earth. I looked along the whitening rapids, and endeavored to distinguish a mass of water far above the falls, to follow it to their verge, and go down with it, in fancy, to the abyss of clouds and storm. Casting my eyes across the river, and every side, I took in the whole scene at a glance, and tried to comprehend it in one vast idea. After an hour thus spent, I left the bridge, and, by a staircase, winding almost interminably round a post, descended to the base of the precipice. From that point, my path lay over slippery stones, and among great fragments of the cliff, to the edge of the cataract, where the wind at once enveloped me in spray, and perhaps dashed the rainbow round me. Were my long desires fulfilled? And had I seen Niagara?

O that I had never heard of Niagara till I beheld it! Blessed were the wanderers of old, who heard its deep roar, sounding through the woods, as the summons to

an unknown wonder, and approached its awful brink, in all the freshness of native feeling. Had its own mysterious voice been the first to warn me of its existence, then, indeed, I might have knelt down and worshipped. But I had come thither, haunted with a vision of foam and fury, and dizzy cliffs, and an ocean tumbling down out of the sky, — a scene, in short, which nature had too much good taste and calm simplicity to realize. My mind had struggled to adapt these false conceptions to the reality, and finding the effort vain, a wretched sense of disappointment weighed me down. I climbed the precipice, and threw myself on the earth, feeling that I was unworthy to look at the Great Falls, and careless about beholding them again. . . .

All that night, as there has been and will be, for ages past and to come, a rushing sound was heard, as if a great tempest were sweeping through the air. It mingled with my dreams, and made them full of storm and whirlwind. Whenever I awoke, and heard this dread sound in the air, and the windows rattling as with a mighty blast, I could not rest again, till looking forth, I saw how bright the stars were, and that every leaf in the garden was motionless. Never was a summer night more calm to the eye, nor a gale of autumn louder to the ear. The rushing sound proceeds from the rapids, and the rattling of the casements is but an effect of the vibration of the whole house, shaken by the jar of the cataract. The noise of the rapids draws the attention from the true voice of Niagara, which is a dull, muffled thunder, resounding between the cliffs. I spent a wakeful hour at midnight, in distinguishing its reverberations,

and rejoiced to find that my former awe and enthusiasm were reviving.

Gradually, and after much contemplation, I came to know, by my own feelings, that Niagara is indeed a wonder of the world, and not the less wonderful, because time and thought must be employed in comprehending it. Casting aside all preconceived notions, and preparation to be dire-struck or delighted, the beholder must stand beside it in the simplicity of his heart, suffering the mighty scene to work its own impression. Night after night, I dreamed of it, and was gladdened every morning by the consciousness of a growing capacity to enjoy it. Yet I will not pretend to the all-absorbing enthusiasm of some more fortunate spectators, nor deny that very trifling causes would draw my eyes and thoughts from the cataract.

The last day that I was to spend at Niagara, before my departure for the Far West, I sat upon the Table Rock. This celebrated station did not now, as of old, project fifty feet beyond the line of the precipice, but was shattered by the fall of an immense fragment, which lay distant on the shore below. Still, on the utmost verge of the rock, with my feet hanging over it, I felt as if suspended in the open air. Never before had my mind been in such perfect unison with the scene. There were intervals, when I was conscious of nothing but the great river, rolling calmly into the abyss, rather descending than precipitating itself, and acquiring tenfold majesty from its unhurried motion. It came like the march of Destiny. It was not taken by surprise, but seemed to have anticipated, in all its course through the broad

lakes, that it must pour their collected waters down this height. The perfect foam of the river, after its descent, and the ever-varying shapes of mist, rising up, to become clouds in the sky, would be the very picture of confusion, were it merely transient, like the rage of a tempest. But when the beholder has stood awhile, and perceives no lull in the storm, and considers that the vapor and the foam are as everlasting as the rocks which produce them, all this turmoil assumes a sort of calmness. It soothes, while it awes the mind.

Leaning over the cliff, I saw the guide conducting two adventurers behind the falls. It was pleasant, from that high seat in the sunshine, to observe them struggling against the eternal storm of the lower regions, with heads bent down, now faltering, now pressing forward, and finally swallowed up in their victory. After their disappearance, a blast rushed out with an old hat, which it had swept from one of their heads. The rock, to which they were directing their unseen course, is marked, at a fearful distance on the exterior of the sheet, by a jet of foam. The attempt to reach it appears both poetical and perilous to a looker-on, but may be accomplished without much more difficulty or hazard, than in stemming a violent northeaster. In a few moments, forth came the children of the mist. Dripping and breathless, they crept along the base of the cliff, ascended to the guide's cottage, and received, I presume, a certificate of their achievement, with three verses of sublime poetry on the back.

My contemplations were often interrupted by strangers, who came down from Forsyth's to take their first view

of the falls. A short, ruddy, middle-aged gentleman, fresh from Old England, peeped over the rock, and evinced his approbation by a broad grin. His spouse, a very robust lady, afforded a sweet example of maternal solicitude, being so intent on the safety of her little boy that she did not even glance at Niagara. As for the child, he gave himself wholly to the enjoyment of a stick of candy. Another traveller, a native American, and no rare character among us, produced a volume of Captain Hall's tour, and labored earnestly to adjust Niagara to the captain's description, departing, at last, without one new idea or sensation of his own. The next comer was provided, not with a printed book, but with a blank sheet of foolscap, from top to bottom of which, by means of an ever-pointed pencil, the cataract was made to thunder. In a little talk, which we had together, he awarded his approbation to the general view, but censured the position of Goat Island, observing that it should have been thrown farther to the right, so as to widen the American falls, and contract those of the Horseshoe. Next appeared two traders of Michigan, who declared, that, upon the whole, the sight was worth looking at; there certainly was an immense water-power here; but that, after all, they would go twice as far to see the noble stone-works of Lockport, where the Grand Canal is locked down a descent of sixty feet. They were succeeded by a young fellow, in a homespun cotton dress, with a staff in his hand, and a pack over his shoulders. He advanced close to the edge of the rock, where his attention, at first wavering among the different components of the scene, finally became fixed in the angle of the Horse-

shoe falls, which is, indeed, the central point of interest. His whole soul seemed to go forth and be transported thither, till the staff slipped from his relaxed grasp, and falling down — down — down — struck upon the fragment of the Table Rock.

In this manner I spent some hours, watching the varied impression, made by the cataract, on those who disturbed me, and returning to unwearied contemplation, when left alone. At length my time came to depart. There is a grassy footpath, through the woods, along the summit of the bank, to a point whence a causeway, hewn in the side of the precipice, goes winding down to the Ferry, about half a mile below the Table Rock. The sun was near setting, when I emerged from the shadow of the trees, and began the descent. The indirectness of my downward road continually changed the point of view, and showed me, in rich and repeated succession, now, the whitening rapids and majestic leap of the main river, which appeared more deeply massive as the light departed; now, the lovelier picture, yet still sublime, of Goat Island, with its rocks and grove, and the lesser falls, tumbling over the right bank of the St. Lawrence, like a tributary stream; now, the long vista of the river, as it eddied and whirled between the cliffs, to pass through Ontario toward the sea, and everywhere to be wondered at, for this one unrivalled scene. The golden sunshine tinged the sheet of the American cascade, and painted on its heaving spray the broken semicircle of a rainbow, heaven's own beauty crowning earth's sublimity. My steps were slow, and I paused long at every turn of the descent, as one lingers and pauses, who discerns a

brighter and brightening excellence in what he must soon behold no more. The solitude of the old wilderness now reigned over the whole vicinity of the falls. My enjoyment became the more rapturous, because no poet shared it, nor wretch devoid of poetry profaned it; but the spot so famous through the world was all my own!





THE ANTIQUE RING.

YES, indeed : the gem is as bright as a star, and curiously set," said Clara Pemberton, examining an antique ring, which her betrothed lover had just presented to her, with a very pretty speech. "It needs only one thing to make it perfect."

"And what is that?" asked Mr. Edward Caryl, secretly anxious for the credit of his gift. "A modern setting, perhaps?"

"O, no! That would destroy the charm at once," replied Clara. "It needs nothing but a story. I long to know how many times it has been the pledge of faith between two lovers, and whether the vows, of which it was the symbol, were always kept or often broken. Not that I should be too scrupulous about facts. If you happen to be unacquainted with its authentic history, so much the better. May it not have sparkled upon a queen's finger? Or who knows but it is the very ring which Posthumus received from Imogen? In short, you must kindle your imagination at the lustre of this diamond, and make a legend for it."

Now such a task — and doubtless Clara knew it — was

the most acceptable that could have been imposed on Edward Caryl. He was one of that multitude of young gentlemen — limbs, or rather twigs of the law — whose names appear in gilt letters on the front of Tudor's Buildings, and other places in the vicinity of the Court House, which seem to be the haunt of the gentler as well as the severer Muses. Edward, in the dearth of clients, was accustomed to employ his much leisure in assisting the growth of American Literature, to which good cause he had contributed not a few quires of the finest letter-paper, containing some thought, some fancy, some depth of feeling, together with a young writer's abundance of conceits. Sonnets, stanzas of Tennysonian sweetness, tales imbued with German mysticism, versions from Jean Paul, criticisms of the old English poets, and essays smacking of Dialistic philosophy, were among his multifarious productions. The editors of the fashionable periodicals were familiar with his autography, and inscribed his name in those brilliant bead-rolls of ink-stained celebrity, which illustrate the first page of their covers. Nor did fame withhold her laurel. Hillard had included him among the lights of the New England metropolis, in his Boston Book; Bryant had found room for some of his stanzas, in the Selections from American Poetry; and Mr. Griswold, in his recent assemblage of the sons and daughters of song, had introduced Edward Caryl into the inner court of the temple, among his four-score choicest bards. There was a prospect, indeed, of his assuming a still higher and more independent position. Interviews had been held with Ticknor, and a correspondence with the Harpers, respecting a proposed

volume, chiefly to consist of Mr. Caryl's fugitive pieces in the Magazines, but to be accompanied with a poem of some length, never before published. Not improbably, the public may yet be gratified with this collection.

Meanwhile, we sum up our sketch of Edward Caryl, by pronouncing him, though somewhat of a carpet knight in literature, yet no unfavorable specimen of a generation of rising writers, whose spirit is such that we may reasonably expect creditable attempts from all, and good and beautiful results from some. And, it will be observed, Edward was the very man to write pretty legends, at a lady's instance, for an old-fashioned diamond ring. He took the jewel in his hand, and turned it so as to catch its scintillating radiance, as if hoping, in accordance with Clara's suggestion, to light up his fancy with that star-like gleam.

"Shall it be a ballad? — a tale in verse?" he inquired. "Enchanted rings often glisten in old English poetry, I think something may be done with the subject; but it is fitter for rhyme than prose."

"No, no," said Miss Pemberton, "we will have no more rhyme than just enough for a posy to the ring. You must tell the legend in simple prose; and when it is finished, I will make a little party to hear it read."

The young gentleman promised obedience; and going to his pillow, with his head full of the familiar spirits that used to be worn in rings, watches, and sword-hilts, he had the good fortune to possess himself of an available idea in a dream. Connecting this with what he himself chanced to know of the ring's real history, his task was done. Clara Pemberton invited a select few of her

friends, all holding the stanchest faith in Edward's genius, and therefore the most genial auditors, if not altogether the fairest critics, that a writer could possibly desire. Blessed be woman for her faculty of admiration, and especially for her tendency to admire with her heart, when man, at most, grants merely a cold approval with his mind!

Drawing his chair beneath the blaze of a solar lamp, Edward Caryl untied a roll of glossy paper, and began as follows: —

THE LEGEND.

After the death-warrant had been read to the Earl of Essex, and on the evening before his appointed execution, the Countess of Shrewsbury paid his lordship a visit, and found him, as it appeared, toying childishly with a ring. The diamond, that enriched it, glittered like a little star, but with a singular tinge of red. The gloomy prison-chamber in the Tower, with its deep and narrow windows piercing the walls of stone, was now all that the earl possessed of worldly prospect; so that there was the less wonder that he should look steadfastly into the gem, and moralize upon earth's deceitful splendor, as men in darkness and ruin seldom fail to do. But the shrewd observations of the countess, — an artful and unprincipled woman, — the pretended friend of Essex, but who had come to glut her revenge for a deed of scorn which he himself had forgotten, — her keen eye detected a deeper interest attached to this jewel. Even while expressing his gratitude for her remembrance of a

ruined favorite, and condemned criminal, the earl's glance reverted to the ring, as if all that remained of time and its affairs were collected within that small golden circlet.

"My dear lord," observed the countess, "there is surely some matter of great moment wherewith this ring is connected, since it so absorbs your mind. A token, it may be, of some fair lady's love, — alas, poor lady, once richest in possessing such a heart! Would you that the jewel be returned to her?"

"The queen! the queen! It was her Majesty's own gift," replied the earl, still gazing into the depths of the gem. "She took it from her finger, and told me, with a smile, that it was an heirloom from her Tudor ancestors, and had once been the property of Merlin, the British wizard, who gave it to the lady of his love. His art had made this diamond the abiding-place of a spirit, which, though of fiendish nature, was bound to work only good, so long as the ring was an unviolated pledge of love and faith, both with the giver and receiver. But should love prove false, and faith be broken, then the evil spirit would work his own devilish will, until the ring were purified by becoming the medium of some good and holy act, and again the pledge of faithful love. The gem soon lost its virtue; for the wizard was murdered by the very lady to whom he gave it."

"An idle legend!" said the countess.

"It is so," answered Essex, with a melancholy smile. "Yet the queen's favor, of which this ring was the symbol, has proved my ruin. When death is nigh, men converse with dreams and shadows. I have been gazing into the diamond, and fancying — but you will laugh at

me—that I might catch a glimpse of the evil spirit there. Do you observe this red glow,—dusky, too, amid all the brightness? It is the token of his presence; and even now, methinks, it grows redder and duskier, like an angry sunset.”

Nevertheless, the earl’s manner testified how slight was his credence in the enchanted properties of the ring. But there is a kind of playfulness that comes in moments of despair, when the reality of misfortune, if entirely felt, would crush the soul at once. He now, for a brief space, was lost in thought, while the countess contemplated him with malignant satisfaction.

“This ring,” he resumed, in another tone, “alone remains, of all that my royal mistress’s favor lavished upon her servant. My fortune once shone as brightly as the gem. And now, such a darkness has fallen around me, methinks it would be no marvel if its gleam—the sole light of my prison-house—were to be forthwith extinguished; inasmuch as my last earthly hope depends upon it.”

“How say you, my lord?” asked the Countess of Shrewsbury. “The stone is bright; but there should be strange magic in it, if it can keep your hopes alive, at this sad hour. Alas! these iron bars and ramparts of the Tower are unlike to yield to such a spell.”

Essex raised his head involuntarily; for there was something in the countess’s tone that disturbed him, although he could not suspect that an enemy had intruded upon the sacred privacy of a prisoner’s dungeon, to exult over so dark a ruin of such once brilliant fortunes. He looked her in the face, but saw nothing to

awaken his distrust. It would have required a keener eye than even Cecil's to read the secret of a countenance, which had been worn so long in the false light of a court, that it was now little better than a mask, telling any story save the true one. The condemned nobleman again bent over the ring, and proceeded:—

“It once had power in it,—this bright gem,—the magic that appertains to the talisman of a great queen's favor. She bade me, if hereafter I should fall into her disgrace,—how deep soever, and whatever might be the crime,—to convey this jewel to her sight, and it should plead for me. Doubtless, with her piercing judgment, she had even then detected the rashness of my nature, and foreboded some such deed as has now brought destruction upon my head. And knowing, too, her own hereditary rigor, she designed, it may be, that the memory of gentler and kindlier hours should soften her heart in my behalf, when my need should be the greatest. I have doubted,—I have distrusted,—yet who can tell, even now, what happy influence this ring might have?”

“You have delayed full long to show the ring, and plead her Majesty's gracious promise,” remarked the countess,—“your state being what it is.”

“True,” replied the earl: “but for my honor's sake, I was loath to entreat the queen's mercy, while I might hope for life, at least, from the justice of the laws. If, on a trial by my peers, I had been acquitted of meditating violence against her sacred life, then would I have fallen at her feet, and presenting the jewel, have prayed no other favor than that my love and zeal should be put to the severest test. But now—it were confessing too

much — it were cringing too low — to beg the miserable gift of life, on no other score than the tenderness which her Majesty deems me to have forfeited !”

“ Yet it is your only hope,” said the countess.

“ And besides,” continued Essex, pursuing his own reflections, “ of what avail will be this token of womanly feeling, when, on the other hand, are arrayed the all-prevailing motives of state policy, and the artifices and intrigues of courtiers, to consummate my downfall? Will Cecil or Raleigh suffer her heart to act for itself, even if the spirit of her father were not in her? It is in vain to hope it.”

But still Essex gazed at the ring with an absorbed attention, that proved how much hope his sanguine temperament had concentrated here, when there was none else for him in the wide world, save what lay in the compass of that hoop of gold. The spark of brightness within the diamond, which gleamed like an intenser than earthly fire, was the memorial of his dazzling career. It had not paled with the waning sunshine of his mistress’s favor; on the contrary, in spite of its remarkable tinge of dusky red, he fancied that it never shone so brightly. The glow of festal torches, — the blaze of perfumed lamps, — bonfires that had been kindled for him, when he was the darling of the people, — the splendor of the royal court, where he had been the peculiar star, — all seemed to have collected their moral or material glory into the gem, and to burn with a radiance caught from the future, as well as gathered from the past. That radiance might break forth again. Bursting from the diamond, into which it was now narrowed;

it might beam first upon the gloomy walls of the Tower, — then wider, wider, wider, — till all England, and the seas around her cliffs, should be gladdened with the light. It was such an ecstasy as often ensues after long depression, and has been supposed to precede the circumstances of darkest fate that may befall mortal man. The earl pressed the ring to his heart as if it were indeed a talisman, the habitation of a spirit, as the queen had playfully assured him, — but a spirit of happier influences than her legend spake of.

“O, could I but make my way to her footstool!” cried he, waving his hand aloft, while he paced the stone pavement of his prison-chamber with an impetuous step. “I might kneel down, indeed, a ruined man, condemned to the block, but how should I rise again? Once more the favorite of Elizabeth! — England’s proudest noble! — with such prospects as ambition never aimed at! Why have I tarried so long in this weary dungeon? The ring has power to set me free! The palace wants me! Ho, jailer, unbar the door!”

But then occurred the recollection of the impossibility of obtaining an interview with his fatally estranged mistress, and testing the influence over her affections, which he still flattered himself with possessing. Could he step beyond the limits of his prison, the world would be all sunshine; but here was only gloom and death.

“Alas!” said he, slowly and sadly, letting his head fall upon his hands. “I die for the lack of one blessed word.”

The Countess of Shrewsbury, herself forgotten amid the earl’s gorgeous visions, had watched him with an

aspect that could have betrayed nothing to the most suspicious observer; unless that it was too calm for humanity, while witnessing the flutterings, as it were, of a generous heart in the death-agony. She now approached him.

“My good lord,” she said, “what mean you to do?”

“Nothing, — my deeds are done!” replied he, despondingly; “yet, had a fallen favorite any friends, I would entreat one of them to lay this ring at her Majesty’s feet; albeit with little hope, save that, hereafter, it might remind her that poor Essex, once far too highly favored, was at last too severely dealt with.”

“I will be that friend,” said the countess. “There is no time to be lost. Trust this precious ring with me. This very night the queen’s eye shall rest upon it; nor shall the efficacy of my poor words be wanting, to strengthen the impression which it will doubtless make.”

The earl’s first impulse was to hold out the ring. But looking at the countess, as she bent forward to receive it, he fancied that the red glow of the gem tinged all her face, and gave it an ominous expression. Many passages of past times recurred to his memory. A preternatural insight, perchance caught from approaching death, threw its momentary gleam, as from a meteor, all round his position.

“Countess,” he said, “I know not wherefore I hesitate, being in a plight so desperate, and having so little choice of friends. But have you looked into your own heart? Can you perform this office with the truth —

the earnestness — the zeal, even to tears, and agony of spirit — wherewith the holy gift of human life should be pleaded for? Woe be unto you, should you undertake this task, and deal towards me otherwise than with utmost faith! For your own soul's sake, and as you would have peace at your death-hour, consider well in what spirit you receive this ring!”

The countess did not shrink.

“My lord! — my good lord!” she exclaimed, “wrong not a woman's heart by these suspicious. You might choose another messenger; but who, save a lady of her bedchamber, can obtain access to the queen at this untimely hour? It is for your life, — for your life, — else I would not renew my offer.”

“Take the ring,” said the earl.

“Believe that it shall be in the queen's hands before the lapse of another hour,” replied the countess, as she received this sacred trust of life and death. “To-morrow morning look for the result of my intercession.”

She departed. Again the earl's hopes rose high. Dreams visited his slumber, not of the sable-decked scaffold in the Tower-yard, but of canopies of state, obsequious courtiers, pomp, splendor, the smile of the once more gracious queen, and a light beaming from the magic gem, which illuminated his whole future.

History records how foully the Countess of Shrewsbury betrayed the trust, which Essex, in his utmost need, confided to her. She kept the ring, and stood in the presence of Elizabeth, that night, without one attempt to soften her stern hereditary temper in behalf of the former favorite. The next day the earl's noble head

rolled upon the scaffold. On her death-bed, tortured, at last, with a sense of the dreadful guilt which she had taken upon her soul, the wicked countess sent for Elizabeth, revealed the story of the ring, and besought forgiveness for her treachery. But the queen, still obdurate, even while remorse for past obduracy was tugging at her heart-strings, shook the dying woman in her bed, as if struggling with death for the privilege of wreaking her revenge and spite. The spirit of the countess passed away, to undergo the justice, or receive the mercy, of a higher tribunal; and tradition says, that the fatal ring was found upon her breast, where it had imprinted a dark red circle, resembling the effect of the intensest heat. The attendants, who prepared the body for burial, shuddered, whispering one to another, that the ring must have derived its heat from the glow of infernal fire. They left it on her breast, in the coffin, and it went with that guilty woman to the tomb.

Many years afterward, when the church, that contained the monuments of the Shrewsbury family, was desecrated by Cromwell's soldiers, they broke open the ancestral vaults, and stole whatever was valuable from the noble personages who reposed there. Merlin's antique ring passed into the possession of a stout sergeant of the Ironsides, who thus became subject to the influences of the evil spirit that still kept his abode within the gem's enchanted depths. The sergeant was soon slain in battle, thus transmitting the ring, though without any legal form of testament, to a gay cavalier, who forthwith pawned it, and expended the money in liquor, which speedily brought him to the grave. We next catch the

sparkle of the magic diamond at various epochs of the merry reign of Charles the Second. But its sinister fortune still attended it. From whatever hand this ring of portent came, and whatever finger it encircled, ever it was the pledge of deceit between man and man, or man and woman, of faithless vows, and unhallowed passion; and whether to lords and ladies, or to village-maids, — for sometimes it found its way so low, — still it brought nothing but sorrow and disgrace. No purifying deed was done, to drive the fiend from his bright home in this little star. Again, we hear of it at a later period, when Sir Robert Walpole bestowed the ring, among far richer jewels, on the lady of a British legislator, whose political honor he wished to undermine. Many a dismal and unhappy tale might be wrought out of its other adventures. All this while, its ominous tinge of dusky red had been deepening and darkening, until, if laid upon white paper, it cast the mingled hue of night and blood, strangely illuminated with scintillating light, in a circle round about. But this peculiarity only made it the more valuable.

Alas, the fatal ring! When shall its dark secret be discovered, and the doom of ill, inherited from one possessor to another, be finally revoked?

The legend now crosses the Atlantic, and comes down to our own immediate time. In a certain church of our city, not many evenings ago, there was a contribution for a charitable object. A fervid preacher had poured out his whole soul in a rich and tender discourse, which had at least excited the tears, and perhaps the more effectual sympathy, of a numerous audience. While the choristers sang sweetly, and the organ poured forth its melodious

thunder, the deacons passed up and down the aisles, and along the galleries, presenting their mahogany boxes, in which each person deposited whatever sum he deemed it safe to lend to the Lord, in aid of human wretchedness. Charity became audible, — chink, chink, chink, — as it fell, drop by drop, into the common receptacle. There was a hum, — a stir, — the subdued bustle of people putting their hands into their pockets; while, ever and anon, a vagrant coin fell upon the floor, and rolled away, with long reverberation, into some inscrutable corner.

At length, all having been favored with an opportunity to be generous, the two deacons placed their boxes on the communion-table, and thence, at the conclusion of the services, removed them into the vestry. Here these good old gentlemen sat down together, to reckon the accumulated treasure.

“Fie, fie, Brother Tilton,” said Deacon Trott, peeping into Deacon Tilton’s box, “what a heap of copper you have picked up! Really, for an old man, you must have had a heavy job to lug it along. Copper! copper! copper! Do people expect to get admittance into heaven at the price of a few coppers?”

“Don’t wrong them, brother,” answered Deacon Tilton, a simple and kindly old man. “Copper may do more for one person, than gold will for another. In the galleries, where I present my box, we must not expect such a harvest as you gather among the gentry in the broad-aisle, and all over the floor of the church. My people are chiefly poor mechanics and laborers, sailors, seamstresses, and servant-maids, with a most uncomfortable intermixture of roguish school-boys.”

“Well, well,” said Deacon Trott; “but there is a great deal, Brother Tilton, in the method of presenting a contribution-box. It is a knack that comes by nature, or not at all.”

They now proceeded to sum up the avails of the evening, beginning with the receipts of Deacon Trott. In good sooth, that worthy personage had reaped an abundant harvest, in which he prided himself no less, apparently, than if every dollar had been contributed from his own individual pocket. Had the good deacon been meditating a jaunt to Texas, the treasures of the mahogany box might have sent him on his way rejoicing. There were bank-notes, mostly, it is true, of the smallest denominations in the giver's pocket-book, yet making a goodly average upon the whole. The most splendid contribution was a check for a hundred dollars, bearing the name of a distinguished merchant, whose liberality was duly celebrated in the newspapers of the next day. No less than seven half-eagles, together with an English sovereign, glittered amidst an indiscriminate heap of silver; the box being polluted with nothing of the copper kind, except a single bright new cent, wherewith a little boy had performed his first charitable act.

“Very well! very well indeed!” said Deacon Trott, self-approvingly. “A handsome evening's work! And now, Brother Tilton, let's see whether you can match it.” Here was a sad contrast! They poured forth Deacon Tilton's treasure upon the table, and it really seemed as if the whole copper coinage of the country, together with an amazing quantity of shop-keeper's tokens, and English and Irish half-pence, mostly of base metal, had been

congregated into the box. There was a very substantial pencil-case, and the semblance of a shilling; but the latter proved to be made of tin, and the former of German-silver. A gilded brass button was doing duty as a gold coin, and a folded shopbill had assumed the character of a bank-note. But Deacon Tilton's feelings were much revived by the aspect of another bank-note, new and crisp, adorned with beautiful engravings, and stamped with the indubitable word, TWENTY, in large black letters. Alas! it was a counterfeit. In short, the poor old Deacon was no less unfortunate than those who trade with fairies, and whose gains are sure to be transformed into dried leaves, pebbles, and other valuables of that kind.

"I believe the Evil One is in the box," said he, with some vexation.

"Well done, Deacon Tilton!" cried his Brother Trott, with a hearty laugh. "You ought to have a statue in copper."

"Never mind, brother," replied the good Deacon, recovering his temper. "I'll bestow ten dollars from my own pocket, and may heaven's blessing go along with it. But look! what do you call this?"

Under the copper mountain, which it had cost them so much toil to remove, lay an antique ring! It was enriched with a diamond, which, so soon as it caught the light, began to twinkle and glimmer, emitting the whitest and purest lustre that could possibly be conceived. It was as brilliant as if some magician had condensed the brightest star in heaven into a compass fit to be set in a ring, for a lady's delicate finger.

"How is this?" said Deacon Trott, examining it care-

fully, in the expectation of finding it as worthless as the rest of his colleague's treasure. "Why, upon my word, this seems to be a real diamond, and of the purest water. Whence could it have come?"

"Really, I cannot tell," quoth Deacon Tilton, "for my spectacles were so misty that all faces looked alike. But now I remember, there was a flash of light came from the box, at one moment; but it seemed a dusky red, instead of a pure white, like the sparkle of this gem. Well; the ring will make up for the copper; but I wish the giver had thrown its history into the box along with it."

It has been our good luck to recover a portion of that history. After transmitting misfortune from one possessor to another, ever since the days of British Merlin, the identical ring which Queen Elizabeth gave to the Earl of Essex was finally thrown into the contribution-box of a New England church. The two deacons deposited it in the glass case of a fashionable jeweller, of whom it was purchased by the humble rehearser of this legend, in the hope that it may be allowed to sparkle on a fair lady's finger. Purified from the foul fiend, so long its inhabitant, by a deed of unostentatious charity, and now made the symbol of faithful and devoted love, the gentle bosom of its new possessor need fear no sorrow from its influence.

"Very pretty! — Beautiful! — How original! — How sweetly written! — What nature! — What imagination! — What power! — What pathos! — What exquisite humor!" — were the exclamations of Edward Caryl's

kind and generous auditors, at the conclusion of the legend.

“It is a pretty tale,” said Miss Pemberton, who, conscious that her praise was to that of all others as a diamond to a pebble, was therefore the less liberal in awarding it. “It is really a pretty tale, and very proper for any of the Annuals. But, Edward, your moral does not satisfy me. What thought did you embody in the ring?”

“O Clara, this is too bad!” replied Edward, with a half-reproachful smile. “You know that I can never separate the idea from the symbol in which it manifests itself. However, we may suppose the Gem to be the human heart, and the Evil Spirit to be Falsehood, which, in one guise or another, is the fiend that causes all the sorrow and trouble in the world. I beseech you to let this suffice.”

“It shall,” said Clara, kindly. “And, believe me, whatever the world may say of the story, I prize it far above the diamond which enkindled your imagination.”





GRAVES AND GOBLINS.

NOW talk we of graves and goblins! Fit themes, — start not! gentle reader, — fit for a ghost like me. Yes; though an earth-clogged fancy is laboring with these conceptions, and an earthly hand will write them down, for mortal eyes to read, still their essence flows from as airy a ghost as ever basked in the pale starlight, at twelve o'clock. Judge them not by the gross and heavy form in which they now appear. They may be gross, indeed, with the earthly pollution contracted from the brain, through which they pass; and heavy with the burden of mortal language, that crushes all the finer intelligences of the soul. This is no fault of mine. But should aught of ethereal spirit be perceptible, yet scarcely so, glimmering along the dull train of words, — should a faint perfume breathe from the mass of clay, — then, gentle reader, thank the ghost, who thus embodies himself for your sake! Will you believe me, if I say that all true and noble thoughts, and elevated imaginations, are but partly the offspring of the intellect which seems to produce them? Sprites, that were poets once, and are now all poetry, hover round the dreaming bard, and become his inspiration; buried statesmen lend their

wisdom, gathered on earth and mellowed in the grave, to the historian; and when the preacher rises nearest to the level of his mighty subject, it is because the prophets of old days have communed with him. Who has not been conscious of mysteries within his mind, mysteries of truth and reality, which will not wear the chains of language? Mortal, then the dead were with you! And thus shall the earth-dulled soul, whom I inspire, be conscious of a misty brightness among his thoughts, and strive to make it gleam upon the page, — but all in vain. Poor author! How will he despise what he can grasp, for the sake of the dim glory that eludes him!

So talk we of graves and goblins. But, what have ghosts to do with graves? Mortal man, wearing the dust which shall require a sepulchre, might deem it more a home and resting-place than a spirit can, whose earthly clod has returned to earth. Thus philosophers have reasoned. Yet wiser they who adhere to the ancient sentiment, that a phantom haunts and hallows the marble tomb or grassy hillock where its material form was laid. Till purified from each stain of clay; till the passions of the living world are all forgotten; till it have less brotherhood with the wayfarers of earth, than with spirits that never wore mortality, — the ghost must linger round the grave. O, it is a long and dreary watch to some of us!

Even in early childhood, I had selected a sweet spot, of shade and glimmering sunshine, for my grave. It was no burial-ground, but a secluded nook of virgin earth, where I used to sit, whole summer afternoons, dreaming about life and death. My fancy ripened prematurely,

and taught me secrets which I could not otherwise have known. I pictured the coming years, — they never came to me, indeed; but I pictured them like life, and made this spot the scene of all that should be brightest, in youth, manhood, and old age. There, in a little while, it would be time for me to breathe the bashful and burning vows of first-love; thither, after gathering fame abroad, I would return to enjoy the loud plaudit of the world, a vast but unobtrusive sound, like the booming of a distant sea; and thither, at the far-off close of life, an aged man would come, to dream, as the boy was dreaming, and be as happy in the past as he was in futurity. Finally, when all should be finished, in that spot so hallowed, in that soil so impregnated with the most precious of my bliss, there was to be my grave. Methought it would be the sweetest grave that ever a mortal frame reposed in, or an ethereal spirit haunted. There, too, in future times, drawn thither by the spell which I had breathed around the place, boyhood would sport and dream, and youth would love, and manhood would enjoy, and age would dream again, and my ghost would watch but never frighten them. Alas, the vanity of mortal projects, even when they centre in the grave! I died in my first youth, before I had been a lover; at a distance, also, from the grave which fancy had dug for me; and they buried me in the thronged cemetery of a town, where my marble slab stands unnoticed amid a hundred others. And there are coffins on each side of mine!

“Alas, poor ghost!” will the reader say. Yet I am a happy ghost enough, and disposed to be contented

with my grave, if the sexton will but let it be my own, and bring no other dead man to dispute my title. Earth has left few stains upon me, and it will be but a short time that I need haunt the place. It is good to die in early youth. Had I lived out threescore years and ten, or half of them, my spirit would have been so earth-incrusted, that centuries might not have purified it for a better home than the dark precincts of the grave. Meantime, there is good choice of company amongst us. From twilight till near sunrise, we are gliding to and fro, some in the graveyard, others miles away; and would we speak with any friend, we do but knock against his tombstone, and pronounce the name engraved on it: in an instant, there the shadow stands!

Some are ghosts of considerable antiquity. There is an old man, hereabout; he never had a tombstone, and is often puzzled to distinguish his own grave; but hereabouts he haunts, and long is doomed to haunt. He was a miser in his lifetime, and buried a strong box of ill-gotten gold, almost fresh from the mint, in the coinage of William and Mary. Scarcely was it safe, when the sexton buried the old man and his secret with him. I could point out the place where the treasure lies; it was at the bottom of the miser's garden; but a paved thoroughfare now passes beside the spot, and the cornerstone of a market-house presses right down upon it. Had the workmen dug six inches deeper, they would have found the hoard. Now thither must this poor old miser go, whether in starlight, moonshine, or pitch darkness, and brood above his worthless treasure, recalling all the petty crimes by which he gained it. Not a coin must

he fail to reckon in his memory, nor forget a pennyworth of the sin that made up the sum, though his agony is such as if the pieces of gold, red-hot, were stamped into his naked soul. Often, while he is in torment there, he hears the steps of living men, who love the dross of earth as well as he did. May they never groan over their miserable wealth like him! Night after night, for above a hundred years, hath he done this penance, and still must he do it, till the iron box be brought to light, and each separate coin be cleansed by grateful tears of a widow or an orphan. My spirit sighs for his long vigil at the corner of the market-house!

There are ghosts whom I tremble to meet, and cannot think of without a shudder. One has the guilt of blood upon him. The soul which he thrust untimely forth has long since been summoned from our gloomy graveyard, and dwells among the stars of heaven, too far and too high for even the recollection of mortal anguish to ascend thither. Not so the murderer's ghost! It is his doom to spend all the hours of darkness in the spot which he stained with innocent blood, and to feel the hot stream — hot as when it first gushed upon his hand — incorporating itself with his spiritual substance. Thus his horrible crime is ever fresh within him. Two other wretches are condemned to walk arm in arm. They were guilty lovers in their lives, and still, in death, must wear the guise of love, though hatred and loathing have become their very nature and existence. The pollution of their mutual sin remains with them, and makes their souls sick continually. O, that I might forget all the dark shadows which haunt about these graves! This passing thought

of them has left a stain, and will weigh me down among dust and sorrow, beyond the time that my own transgressions would have kept me here.

There is one shade among us, whose high nature it is good to meditate upon. He lived a patriot, and is a patriot still. Posterity has forgotten him. The simple slab, of red freestone, that bore his name, was broken long ago, and is now covered by the gradual accumulation of the soil. A tuft of thistles is his only monument. This upright spirit came to his grave, after a lengthened life, with so little stain of earth, that he might, almost immediately, have trodden the pathway of the sky. But his strong love of country chained him down, to share its vicissitudes of weal or woe. With such deep yearning in his soul, he was unfit for heaven. That noblest virtue has the effect of sin, and keeps his pure and lofty spirit in a penance, which may not terminate till America be again a wilderness. Not that there is no joy for the dead patriot. Can he fail to experience it, while he contemplates the mighty and increasing power of the land, which he protected in its infancy? No; there is much to gladden him. But sometimes I dread to meet him, as he returns from the bedchambers of rulers and politicians, after diving into their secret motives, and searching out their aims. He looks round him with a stern and awful sadness, and vanishes into his neglected grave. Let nothing sordid or selfish defile your deeds or thoughts, ye great men of the day, lest ye grieve the noble dead.

Few ghosts take such an endearing interest as this, even in their own private affairs. It made me rather sad, at first, to find how soon the flame of love expires

amid the chill damps of the tomb; so much the sooner, the more fiercely it may have burned. Forget your dead mistress, youth! She has already forgotten you. Maiden, cease to weep for your buried lover! He will know nothing of your tears, nor value them if he did. Yet it were blasphemy to say that true love is other than immortal. It is an earthly passion, of which I speak, mingled with little that is spiritual, and must therefore perish with the perishing clay. When souls have loved, there is no falsehood or forgetfulness. Maternal affection, too, is strong as adamant. There are mothers here, among us, who might have been in heaven fifty years ago, if they could forbear to cherish earthly joy and sorrow, reflected from the bosoms of their children. Husbands and wives have a comfortable gift of oblivion, especially when secure of the faith of their living halves. Jealousy, it is true, will play the devil with a ghost, driving him to the bedside of secondary wedlock, there to scowl, unseen, and gibber inaudible remonstrances. Dead wives, however jealous in their lifetime, seldom feel this posthumous torment so acutely.

Many, many things, that appear most important while we walk the busy street, lose all their interest the moment we are borne into the quiet graveyard which borders it. For my own part, my spirit had not become so mixed up with earthly existence, as to be now held in an unnatural combination, or tortured much with retrospective cares. I still love my parents and a younger sister, who remain among the living, and often grieve me by their patient sorrow for the dead. Each separate tear of theirs is an added weight upon my soul, and lengthens

my stay among the graves. As to other matters, it exceedingly rejoices me, that my summons came before I had time to write a projected poem, which was highly imaginative in conception, and could not have failed to give me a triumphant rank in the choir of our native bards. Nothing is so much to be deprecated as posthumous renown. It keeps the immortal spirit from the proper bliss of his celestial state, and causes him to feed upon the impure breath of mortal man, till sometimes he forgets that there are starry realms above him. Few poets — infatuated that they are! — soar upward while the least whisper of their name is heard on earth. On Sabbath evenings, my sisters sit by the fireside, between our father and mother, and repeat some hymns of mine, which they have often heard from my own lips, ere the tremulous voice left them forever. Little do they think, those dear ones, that the dead stands listening in the glimmer of the firelight, and is almost gifted with a visible shape by the fond intensity of their remembrance.

Now shall the reader know a grief of the poor ghost that speaks to him; a grief, but not a helpless one. Since I have dwelt among the graves, they bore the corpse of a young maiden hither, and laid her in the old ancestral vault, which is hollowed in the side of a grassy bank. It has a door of stone, with rusty iron hinges, and above it, a rude sculpture of the family arms, and inscriptions of all their names who have been buried there, including sire and son, mother and daughter, of an ancient colonial race. All of her lineage had gone before, and when the young maiden followed, the portal was closed forever. The night after her burial, when the

other ghosts were flitting about their graves, forth came the pale virgin's shadow, with the rest, but knew not whither to go, nor whom to haunt, so lonesome had she been on earth. She stood by the ancient sepulchre, looking upward to the bright stars, as if she would, even then, begin her flight. Her sadness made me sad. That night and the next, I stood near her, in the moonshine, but dared not speak, because she seemed purer than all the ghosts, and fitter to converse with angels than with men. But the third bright eve, still gazing upward to the glory of the heavens, she sighed, and said, "When will my mother come for me?" Her low, sweet voice emboldened me to speak, and she was kind and gentle, though so pure, and answered me again. From that time, always at the ghostly hour, I sought the old tomb of her fathers, and either found her standing by the door, or knocked, and she appeared. Blessed creature, that she was; her chaste spirit hallowed mine, and imparted such a celestial buoyancy, that I longed to grasp her hand, and fly, — upward, aloft, aloft! I thought, too, that she only lingered here, till my earthlier soul should be purified for heaven. One night, when the stars threw down the light that shadows love, I stole forth to the accustomed spot, and knocked, with my airy fingers, at her door. She answered not. Again I knocked, and breathed her name. Where was she? At once, the truth fell on my miserable spirit, and crushed it to the earth, among dead men's bones and mouldering dust, groaning in cold and desolate agony. Her penance was over! She had taken her trackless flight, and had found a home in the purest radiance of the upper stars, leaving

me to knock at the stone portal of the darksome sepulchre. But I know — I know, that angels hurried her away, or surely she would have whispered ere she fled!

She is gone! How could the grave imprison that unspotted one! But her pure, ethereal spirit will not quite forget me, nor soar too high in bliss, till I ascend to join her. Soon, soon be that hour! I am weary of the earth-damps; they burden me; they choke me! Already, I can float in the moonshine; the faint starlight will almost bear up my footsteps; the perfume of flowers, which grosser spirits love, is now too earthly a luxury for me. Grave! Grave! thou art not my home. I must flit a little longer in thy night gloom, and then be gone, — far from the dust of the living and the dead, — far from the corruption that is around me, but no more within!

A few times, I have visited the chamber of one who walks, obscure and lonely, on his mortal pilgrimage. He will leave not many living friends, when he goes to join the dead, where his thoughts often stray, and he might better be. I steal into his sleep, and play my part among the figures of his dreams. I glide through the moonlight of his waking fancy, and whisper conceptions, which, with a strange thrill of fear, he writes down as his own. I stand beside him now, at midnight, telling these dreamy truths with a voice so dream-like, that he mistakes them for fictions of a brain too prone to such. Yet he glances behind him and shivers, while the lamp burns pale. Farewell, dreamer, — waking or sleeping! Your brightest dreams are fled; your mind grows too hard and cold for a spiritual guest to enter; you are

earthly, too, and have all the sins of earth. The ghost will visit you no more.

But where is the maiden, holy and pure, though wearing a form of clay, that would have me bend over her pillow at midnight, and leave a blessing there? With a silent invocation, let her summon me. Shrink not, maiden, when I come! In life, I was a high-souled youth, meditative, yet seldom sad, full of chaste fancies, and stainless from all grosser sin. And now, in death, I bring no loathsome smell of the grave, nor ghostly terrors, — but gentle, and soothing, and sweetly pensive influences. Perhaps, just fluttering for the skies, my visit may hallow the wellsprings of thy thought, and make thee heavenly here on earth. Then shall pure dreams and holy meditations bless thy life; nor thy sainted spirit linger round the grave, but seek the upper stars, and meet me there!





DR. BULLIVANT.

THIS person was not eminent enough, either by nature or circumstance, to deserve a public memorial simply for his own sake, after the lapse of a century and a half from the era in which he flourished. His character, in the view which we propose to take of it, may give a species of distinctness and point to some remarks on the tone and composition of New England society, modified as it became by new ingredients from the eastern world, and by the attrition of sixty or seventy years over the rugged peculiarities of the original settlers. We are perhaps accustomed to employ too sombre a pencil in picturing the earlier times among the Puritans, because at our cold distance, we form our ideas almost wholly from their severest features. It is like gazing on some scenes in the land which we inherit from them; we see the mountains, rising sternly and with frozen summits up to heaven, and the forests, waving in massy depths where sunshine seems a profanation, and we see the gray mist, like the duski-ness of years, shedding a chill obscurity over the whole; but the green and pleasant spots in the hollow of the hills, the warm places in the heart of what looks deso-

late, are hidden from our eyes. Still, however, a prevailing characteristic of the age was gloom, or something which cannot be more accurately expressed than by that term, and its long shadow, falling over all the intervening years, is visible, though not too distinctly, upon ourselves. Without material detriment to a deep and solid happiness, the frolic of the mind was so habitually chastened, that persons have gained a nook in history by the mere possession of animal spirits, too exuberant to be confined within the established bounds. Every vain jest and unprofitable word was deemed an item in the account of criminality, and whatever wit, or semblance thereof, came into existence, its birthplace was generally the pulpit, and its parent some sour old Genevan divine. The specimens of humor and satire, preserved in the sermons and controversial tracts of those days, are occasionally the apt expressions of pungent thoughts; but oftener they are cruel torturings and twistings of trite ideas, disgusting by the wearisome ingenuity which constitutes their only merit. Among a people where so few possessed, or were allowed to exercise, the art of extracting the mirth which lies hidden like latent caloric in almost everything, a gay apothecary, such as Dr. Bullivant, must have been a phenomenon.

We will suppose ourselves standing in Cornhill, on a pleasant morning of the year 1670, about the hour when the shutters are unclosed, and the dust swept from the doorsteps, and when Business rubs its eyes, and begins to plod sleepily through the town. The street, instead of running between lofty and continuous piles of brick,

is but partially lined with wooden buildings of various heights and architecture, in each of which the mercantile department is connected with the domicile, like the gingerbread and candy shops of an after-date. The signs have a singular appearance to a stranger's eye. These are not a barren record of names and occupations yellow letters on black boards, but images and hieroglyphics, sometimes typifying the principal commodity offered for sale, though generally intended to give an arbitrary designation to the establishment. Overlooking the bearded Saracens, the Indian Queens, and the wooden Bibles, let us direct our attention to the white post newly erected at the corner of the street, and surmounted by a gilded countenance which flashes in the early sunbeams like veritable gold. It is a bust of *Æsculapius*, evidently of the latest London manufacture; and from the door behind it steams forth a mingled smell of musk and assafœtida and other drugs of potent perfume, as if an appropriate sacrifice were just laid upon the altar of the medical deity. Five or six idle people are already collected, peeping curiously in at the glittering array of gallipots and phials, and deciphering the labels which tell their contents in the mysterious and imposing nomenclature of ancient physic. They are next attracted by the printed advertisement of a Panacea, promising life but one day short of eternity, and youth and health commensurate. An old man, his head as white as snow, totters in with a hasty clattering of his staff, and becomes the earliest purchaser, hoping that his wrinkles will disappear more swiftly than they gathered. The Doctor (so styled by courtesy) shows the upper

half of his person behind the counter, and appears to be a slender and rather tall man; his features are difficult to describe, possessing nothing peculiar, except a flexibility to assume all characters in turn, while his eye, shrewd, quick, and saucy, remains the same throughout. Whenever a customer enters the shop, if he desire a box of pills, he receives with them an equal number of hard, round, dry jokes, — or if a dose of salts, it is mingled with a portion of the salt of Attica, — or if some hot, Oriental drug, it is accompanied by a raucous word or two that tingle on the mental palate, — all without the least additional cost. Then there are twistings of mouths which never lost their gravity before. As each purchaser retires, the spectators see a resemblance of his visage pass over that of the apothecary, in which all the ludicrous points are made most prominent, as if a magic looking-glass had caught the reflection, and were making sport with it. Unwonted titterings arise and strengthen into bashful laughter, but are suddenly hushed as some minister, heavy-eyed from his last night's vigil, or magistrate, armed with the terror of the whipping-post and pillory, or perhaps the governor himself, goes by like a dark cloud intercepting the sunshine.

About this period, many causes began to produce an important change on and beneath the surface of colonial society. The early settlers were able to keep within the narrowest limits of their rigid principles, because they had adopted them in mature life, and from their own deep conviction, and were strengthened in them by that species of enthusiasm, which is as sober and as enduring as reason itself. But if their immediate successors fol-

lowed the same line of conduct, they were confined to it, in a great degree, by habits forced upon them, and by the severe rule under which they were educated, and in short more by restraint than by the free exercise of the imagination and understanding. When therefore the old original stock, the men who looked heavenward without a wandering glance to earth, had lost a part of their domestic and public influence, yielding to infirmity or death, a relaxation naturally ensued in their theory and practice of morals and religion, and became more evident with the daily decay of its most strenuous opponents. This gradual but sure operation was assisted by the increasing commercial importance of the colonies, whither a new set of emigrants followed unworthily in the track of the pure-hearted Pilgrims. Gain being now the allure-ment, and almost the only one, since dissenters no longer dreaded persecution at home, the people of New England could not remain entirely uncontaminated by an extensive intermixture with worldly men. The trade carried on by the colonists (in the face of several inefficient acts of Parliament) with the whole maritime world, must have had a similar tendency; nor are the desperate and dissolute visitants of the country to be forgotten among the agents of a moral revolution. Freebooters from the West Indies and the Spanish Main, — state criminals, implicated in the numerous plots and conspiracies of the period, — felons, loaded with private guilt, — numbers of these took refuge in the provinces, where the authority of the English King was obstructed by a zealous spirit of independence, and where a boundless wilderness enabled them to defy pursuit. Thus the

new population, temporary and permanent, was exceedingly unlike the old, and far more apt to disseminate their own principles than to imbibe those of the Puritans. All circumstances unfavorable to virtue acquired double strength by the licentious reign of Charles II.; though perhaps the example of the monarch and nobility was less likely to recommend vice to the people of New England than to those of any other part of the British Empire.

The clergy and the elder magistrates manifested a quick sensibility to the decline of godliness, their apprehensions being sharpened in this particular no less by a holy zeal than because their credit and influence were intimately connected with the primitive character of the country. A Synod, convened in the year 1679, gave its opinion that the iniquity of the times had drawn down judgments from Heaven, and proposed methods to assuage the Divine wrath by a renewal of former sanctity. But neither the increased numbers nor the altered spirit of the people, nor the just sense of a freedom to do wrong, within certain limits, would now have permitted the exercise of that inquisitorial strictness, which had been wont to penetrate to men's firesides and watch their domestic life, recognizing no distinction between private ill conduct and crimes that endanger the community. Accordingly, the tide of worldly principles encroached more and more upon the ancient landmarks, hitherto esteemed the outer boundaries of virtue. Society arranged itself into two classes, marked by strong shades of difference, though separated by an uncertain line; in one were included the small and feeble rem-

nant of the first settlers, many of their immediate descendants, the whole body of the clergy, and all whom a gloomy temperament, or tenderness of conscience, or timidity of thought, kept up to the strictness of their fathers; the other comprehended the new emigrants, the gay and thoughtless natives, the favorers of Episcopacy, and a various mixture of liberal and enlightened men with most of the evil-doers and unprincipled adventurers in the country. A vivid and rather a pleasant idea of New England manners, when this change had become decided, is given in the journal of John Dunton, a cockney bookseller, who visited Boston and other towns of Massachusetts with a cargo of pious publications, suited to the Puritan market. Making due allowance for the flippancy of the writer, which may have given a livelier tone to his descriptions than truth precisely warrants, and also for his character, which led him chiefly among the gayer inhabitants, there still seems to have been many who loved the winecup and the song, and all sorts of delightful naughtiness. But the degeneracy of the times had made far less progress in the interior of the country than in the seaports, and until the people lost the elective privilege, they continued the government in the hands of those upright old men who had so long possessed their confidence. Uncontrollable events, alone, gave a temporary ascendancy to persons of another stamp. James II., during the four years of his despotic reign, revoked the charters of the American colonies, arrogated the appointment of their magistrates, and annulled all those legal and proscriptive rights which had hitherto constituted them nearly independent states.

Among the foremost advocates of the royal usurpations was Dr. Bullivant. Gifted with a smart and ready intellect, busy and bold, he acquired great influence in the new government, and assisted Sir Edmund Andros, Edward Randolph, and five or six others, to browbeat the council, and misrule the Northern provinces according to their pleasure. The strength of the popular hatred against this administration, the actual tyranny that was exercised, and the innumerable fears and jealousies, well grounded and fantastic, which harassed the country, may be best learned from a work of Increase Mather, the "Remarkable Providences of the Earlier Days of American Colonization." The good divine (though writing when a lapse of nearly forty years should have tamed the fierceness of party animosity) speaks with the most bitter and angry scorn of "Potheecary Bullivant," who probably indulged his satirical propensities, from the seat of power, in a manner which rendered him an especial object of public dislike. But the people were about to play off a piece of practical fun on the Doctor and the whole of his coadjutors, and have the laugh all to themselves. By the first faint rumor of the attempt of the Prince of Orange on the throne, the power of James was annihilated in the colonies, and long before the abduction of the latter became known, Sir Edmund Andros, Governor-General of New England and New York, and fifty of the most obnoxious leaders of the court party, were tenants of a prison. We will visit our old acquaintance in his adversity.

The scene now represents a room of ten feet square, the floor of which is sunk a yard or two below the level

of the ground; the walls are covered with a dirty and crumbling plaster, on which appear a crowd of ill-favored and lugubrious faces done in charcoal, and the autographs and poetical attempts of a long succession of debtors and petty criminals. Other features of the apartment are a deep fireplace (superfluous in the sultriness of the summer's day), a door of hard-hearted oak, and a narrow window high in the wall, where the glass has long been broken, while the iron bars retain all their original strength. Through this opening come the sound of passing footsteps in the public street, and the voices of children at play. The furniture consists of a bed, or rather an old sack of barley straw, thrown down in the corner farthest from the door, and a chair and table, both aged and infirm, and leaning against the side of the room, besides lending a friendly support to each other. The atmosphere is stifled and of an ill smell, as if it had been kept close prisoner for half a century, and had lost all its pure and elastic nature by feeding the tainted breath of the vicious and the sighs of the unfortunate. Such is the present abode of the man of medicine and politics, and his own appearance forms no contrast to the accompaniments. His wig is unpowdered, out of curl, and put on awry; the dust of many weeks has worked its way into the web of his coat and small-clothes, and his knees and elbows peep forth to ask why they are so ill clad; his stockings are ungartered, his shoes down at the heel, his waistcoat is without a button, and discloses a shirt as dingy as the remnant of snow in a showery April day. His shoulders have become rounder, and his whole person is more bent and drawn together, since we last saw

him, and his face has exchanged the glory of wit and humor for a sheepish dulness. At intervals, the Doctor walks the room, with an irregular and shuffling pace; anon, he throws himself flat on the sack of barley straw, muttering very reprehensible expressions between his teeth; then again he starts to his feet, and journeying from corner to corner, finally sinks into the chair, forgetful of its three-legged infirmity till it lets him down upon the floor. The grated window, his only medium of intercourse with the world, serves but to admit additional vexations. Every few moments the steps of the passengers are heard to pause, and some well-known face appears in the free sunshine behind the iron bars, brimful of mirth and drollery, the owner whereof stands on tiptoe to tickle poor Dr. Bullivant with a stinging sarcasm. Then laugh the little boys around the prison door, and the wag goes chuckling away. The apothecary would fain retaliate, but all his quips and repartees, and sharp and facetious fancies, once so abundant, seem to have been transferred from himself to the sluggish brains of his enemies. While endeavoring to condense his whole intellect into one venomous point, in readiness for the next assailant, he is interrupted by the entrance of the turnkey with the prison fare of Indian bread and water. With these dainties we leave him.

When the turmoil of the Revolution had subsided, and the authority of William and Mary was fixed on a quiet basis throughout the colonies, the deposed governor and some of his partisans were sent home to the new court, and the others released from imprisonment. The New-Englanders, as a people, are not apt to retain a revenge-

ful sense of injury, and nowhere, perhaps, could a politician, however odious in his power, live more peacefully in his nakedness and disgrace. Dr. Bullivant returned to his former occupation, and spent rather a desirable old age. Though he sometimes hit hard with a jest, yet few thought of taking offence; for whenever a man habitually indulges his tongue at the expense of all his associates, they provide against the common annoyance by tacitly agreeing to consider his sarcasms as null and void. Thus for many years, a gray old man with a stoop in his gait, he continued to sweep out his shop at eight o'clock in summer mornings, and nine in the winter, and to waste whole hours in idle talk and irreverent merriment, making it his glory to raise the laughter of silly people, and his delight to sneer at them in his sleeve. At length, one pleasant day, the door and shutters of his establishment kept closed from sunrise till sunset, and his cronies marvelled a moment, and passed on; a week after, the rector of King's Chapel said the death-rite over Dr. Bullivant; and within the month a new apothecary, and a new stock of drugs and medicines, made their appearance at the gilded Head of *Æsculapius*.





A BOOK OF AUTOGRAPHS.

WE have before us a volume of autograph letters, chiefly of soldiers and statesmen of the Revolution, and addressed to a good and brave man, General Palmer, who himself drew his sword in the cause. They are profitable reading in a quiet afternoon, and in a mood withdrawn from too intimate relation with the present time ; so that we can glide backward some three quarters of a century, and surround ourselves with the ominous sublimity of circumstances that then frowned upon the writers. To give them their full effect, we should imagine that these letters have this moment been brought to town by the splashed and way-worn post-rider, or perhaps by an orderly dragoon, who has ridden in a perilous hurry to deliver his despatches. They are magic scrolls, if read in the right spirit. The roll of the drum and the fanfare of the trumpet is latent in some of them ; and in others, an echo of the oratory that resounded in the old halls of the Continental Congress, at Philadelphia ; or the words may come to us as with the living utterance of one of those illustrious men, speaking face to face, in friendly communion. Strange, that the mere identity of paper and ink should be so powerful. The

same thoughts might look cold and ineffectual, in a printed book. Human nature craves a certain materialism, and clings pertinaciously to what is tangible, as if that were of more importance than the spirit accidentally involved in it. And, in truth, the original manuscript has always something which print itself must inevitably lose. An erasure, even a blot, a casual irregularity of hand, and all such little imperfections of mechanical execution, bring us close to the writer, and perhaps convey some of those subtle intimations for which language has no shape.

There are several letters from John Adams, written in a small, hasty, ungraceful hand, but earnest, and with no unnecessary flourish. The earliest is dated at Philadelphia, September 26, 1774, about twenty days after the first opening of the Continental Congress. We look at this old yellow document, scribbled on half a sheet of foolscap, and ask of it many questions for which words have no response. We would fain know what were their mutual impressions, when all those venerable faces, that have since been traced on steel, or chiselled out of marble, and thus made familiar to posterity, first met one another's gaze! Did one spirit harmonize them, in spite of the dissimilitude of manners between the North and the South, which were now for the first time brought into political relations? Could the Virginian descendant of the Cavaliers, and the New-Englander with his hereditary Puritanism, — the aristocratic Southern planter, and the self-made man from Massachusetts or Connecticut, — at once feel that they were countrymen and brothers? What did John Adams think of Jefferson? — and Samuel

Adams of Patrick Henry? Did not North and South combine in their deference for the sage Franklin, so long the defender of the colonies in England, and whose scientific renown was already world-wide? And was there yet any whispered prophecy, any vague conjecture, circulating among the delegates, as to the destiny which might be in reserve for one stately man, who sat, for the most part, silent among them? — what station he was to assume in the world's history? — and how many statues would repeat his form and countenance, and successively crumble beneath his immortality?

The letter before us does not answer these inquiries. Its main feature is the strong expression of the uncertainty and awe that pervaded even the firm hearts of the Old Congress, while anticipating the struggle which was to ensue. "The commencement of hostilities," it says, "is exceedingly dreaded here. It is thought that an attack upon the troops, even should it prove successful, would certainly involve the whole continent in a war. It is generally thought that the Ministry would rejoice at a rupture in Boston, because it would furnish an excuse to the people *at home*" [this was the last time, we suspect, that John Adams spoke of England thus affectionately], "and unite them in an opinion of the necessity of pushing hostilities against us."

His next letter bears on the superscription, "Favored by General Washington." The date is June 20, 1775, three days after the battle of Bunker Hill, the news of which could not yet have arrived at Philadelphia. But the war, so much dreaded, had begun, on the quiet banks of Concord River; an army of twenty thousand men was

beleaguering Boston ; and here was Washington journeying northward to take the command. It seems to place us in a nearer relation with the hero, to find him performing the little courtesy of bearing a letter between friend and friend, and to hold in our hands the very document intrusted to such a messenger. John Adams says simply, "We send you Generals Washington and Lee for your comfort"; but adds nothing in regard to the character of the Commander-in-Chief. This letter displays much of the writer's ardent temperament ; if he had been anywhere but in the hall of Congress, it would have been in the intrenchment before Boston.

"I hope," he writes, "a good account will be given of Gage, Haldiman, Burgoyne, Clinton, and Howe, before winter. Such a wretch as Howe, with a statue in honor of his family in Westminster Abbey, erected by the Massachusetts, to come over with the design to cut the throats of the Massachusetts people, is too much. I most sincerely, coolly, and devoutly wish that a lucky ball or bayonet may make a signal example of him, in warning to all such unprincipled, unsentimental miscreants for the future!"

He goes on in a strain that smacks somewhat of aristocratic feeling: "Our camp will be an illustrious school of military virtue, and will be resorted to and frequented, as such, by gentlemen in great numbers from the other colonies." The term "gentleman" has seldom been used in this sense subsequently to the Revolution. Another letter introduces us to two of these gentlemen, Messrs. Aquilla Hall and Josias Carvill, volunteers, who are recommended as "of the first families in Maryland, and possessing independent fortunes."

After the British had been driven out of Boston, Adams cries out, "Fortify, fortify; and never let them get in again!" It is agreeable enough to perceive the filial affection with which John Adams, and the other delegates from the North, regard New England, and especially the good old capital of the Puritans. Their love of country was hardly yet so diluted as to extend over the whole thirteen colonies, which were rather looked upon as allies than as composing one nation. In truth, the patriotism of a citizen of the United States is a sentiment by itself of a peculiar nature, and requiring a lifetime, or at least the custom of many years, to naturalize it among the other possessions of the heart.

The collection is enriched by a letter — dated "Cambridge, August 26, 1775" — from Washington himself. He wrote it in that house, — now so venerable with his memory, — in that very room, where his bust now stands upon a poet's table; from this sheet of paper passed the hand that held the leading-staff! Nothing can be more perfectly in keeping with all other manifestations of Washington than the whole visible aspect and embodiment of this letter. The manuscript is as clear as daylight; the punctuation exact, to a comma. There is a calm accuracy throughout, which seems the production of a species of intelligence that cannot err, and which, if we may so speak, would affect us with a more human warmth, if we could conceive it capable of some slight human error. The chirography is characterized by a plain and easy grace, which, in the signature, is somewhat elaborated, and becomes a type of the personal manner of a gentleman of the old school, but without

detriment to the truth and clearness that distinguish the rest of the manuscript. The lines are as straight and equidistant as if ruled; and from beginning to end, there is no physical symptom — as how should there be? — of a varying mood, of jets of emotion, or any of those fluctuating feelings that pass from the hearts into the fingers of common men. The paper itself (like most of those Revolutionary letters, which are written on fabrics fit to endure the burden of ponderous and earnest thought) is stout, and of excellent quality, and bears the water-mark of Britannia, surmounted by the Crown. The subject of the letter is a statement of reasons for not taking possession of Point Alderton; a position commanding the entrance of Boston Harbor. After explaining the difficulties of the case, arising from his want of men and munitions for the adequate defence of the lines which he already occupies, Washington proceeds: “To you, sir, who are a well-wisher to the cause, and can reason upon the effects of such conduct, I may open myself with freedom, because no improper disclosures will be made of our situation. But I cannot expose my weakness to the enemy (though I believe they are pretty well informed of everything that passes), by telling this and that man, who are daily pointing out this, and that, and t’other place, of all the motives that govern my actions; notwithstanding I know what will be the consequence of not doing it, — namely, that I shall be accused of inattention to the public service, and perhaps of want of spirit to prosecute it. But this shall have no effect upon my conduct. I will steadily (as far as my judgment will assist me) pursue such measures as I think

conducive to the interest of the cause, and rest satisfied under any obloquy that shall be thrown, conscious of having discharged my duty to the best of my abilities."

The above passage, like every other passage that could be quoted from his pen, is characteristic of Washington, and entirely in keeping with the calm elevation of his soul. Yet how imperfect a glimpse do we obtain of him, through the medium of this, or any of his letters! We imagine him writing calmly, with a hand that never falters; his majestic face neither darkens nor gleams with any momentary ebullition of feeling, or irregularity of thought; and thus flows forth an expression precisely to the extent of his purpose, no more, no less. Thus much we may conceive. But still we have not grasped the man; we have caught no glimpse of his interior; we have not detected his personality. It is the same with all the recorded traits of his daily life. The collection of them, by different observers, seems sufficiently abundant, and strictly harmonizes with itself, yet never brings us into intimate relationship with the hero, nor makes us feel the warmth and the human throb of his heart. What can be the reason? Is it, that his great nature was adapted to stand in relation to his country, as man stands towards man, but could not individualize itself in brotherhood to an individual?

There are two from Franklin, the earliest dated, "London, August 8, 1767," and addressed to "Mrs. Franklin, at Philadelphia." He was then in England, as agent for the colonies in their resistance to the oppressive policy of Mr. Grenville's administration. The letter, however, makes no reference to political or other

business. It contains only ten or twelve lines, beginning, "My dear child," and conveying an impression of long and venerable matrimony which has lost all its romance, but retained a familiar and quiet tenderness. He speaks of making a little excursion into the country for his health; mentions a larger letter, despatched by another vessel; alludes with homely affability to "Mrs. Stevenson," "Sally," and "our dear Polly"; desires to be remembered to "all inquiring friends"; and signs himself, "Your ever loving husband." In this conjugal epistle, brief and unimportant as it is, there are the elements that summon up the past, and enable us to create anew the man, his connections and circumstances. We can see the sage in his London lodgings, — with his wig cast aside, and replaced by a velvet cap, — penning this very letter; and then can step across the Atlantic, and behold its reception by the elderly, but still comely Madam Franklin, who breaks the seal and begins to read, first remembering to put on her spectacles. The seal, by the way, is a pompous one of armorial bearings, rather symbolical of the dignity of the Colonial Agent, and Postmaster General of America, than of the humble origin of the Newburyport printer. The writing is in the free, quick style of a man with great practice of the pen, and is particularly agreeable to the reader.

Another letter from the same famous hand is addressed to General Palmer, and dated, "Passy, October 27, 1779." By an indorsement on the outside it appears to have been transmitted to the United States through the medium of Lafayette. Franklin was now the ambassador of his country at the Court of Versailles, enjoy-

ing an immense celebrity, caressed by the French ladies, and idolized alike by the fashionable and the learned, who saw something sublime and philosophic even in his blue yarn stockings. Still, as before, he writes with the homeliness and simplicity that cause a human face to look forth from the old, yellow sheet of paper, and in words that make our ears re-echo, as with the sound of his long-extinct utterance. Yet this brief epistle, like the former, has so little of tangible matter that we are ashamed to copy it.

Next, we come to the fragment of a letter by Samuel Adams; an autograph more utterly devoid of ornament or flourish than any other in the collection. It would not have been characteristic, had his pen traced so much as a hair-line in tribute to grace, beauty, or the elaborateness of manner; for this earnest-hearted man had been produced out of the past elements of his native land, a real Puritan, with the religion of his forefathers, and likewise with their principles of government, taking the aspect of Revolutionary politics. At heart, Samuel Adams was never so much a citizen of the United States, as he was a New-Englander, and a son of the old Bay Province. The following passage has much of the man in it: "I heartily congratulate you," he writes from Philadelphia, after the British have left Boston, "upon the sudden and important change in our affairs, in the removal of the barbarians from the capital. We owe our grateful acknowledgments to Him who is, as he is frequently styled in Sacred Writ, 'The Lord of Hosts.' We have not yet been informed with certainty what course the enemy have steered. I hope we shall be on

our guard against future attempts. Will not care be taken to fortify the harbor, and thereby prevent the entrance of ships-of-war hereafter?"

From Hancock, we have only the envelope of a document "on public service," directed to "The Hon. the Assembly, or Council of Safety of New Hampshire," and with the autograph affixed, that stands out so prominently in the Declaration of Independence. As seen in the engraving of that instrument, the signature looks precisely what we should expect and desire in the handwriting of a princely merchant, whose penmanship had been practised in the ledger which he is represented as holding, in Copley's brilliant picture, but to whom his native ability, and the circumstances and customs of his country, had given a place among its rulers. But, on the coarse and dingy paper before us, the effect is very much inferior; the direction, all except the signature, is a scrawl, large and heavy, but not forcible; and even the name itself, while almost identical in its strokes with that of the Declaration, has a strangely different and more vulgar aspect. Perhaps it is all right, and typical of the truth. If we may trust tradition, and unpublished letters, and a few witnesses in print, there was quite as much difference between the actual man, and his historical aspect, as between the manuscript signature and the engraved one. One of his associates, both in political life and permanent renown, is said to have characterized him as a "man without a head or heart." We, of an after generation, should hardly be entitled, on whatever evidence, to assume such ungracious liberty with a name that has occupied a lofty position until it has grown

almost sacred, and which is associated with memories more sacred than itself, and has thus become a valuable reality to our countrymen, by the aged reverence that clusters round about it. Nevertheless, it may be no impiety to regard Hancock not precisely as a real personage, but as a majestic figure, useful and necessary in its way, but producing its effect far more by an ornamental outside than by any intrinsic force or virtue. The page of all history would be half unpeopled if all such characters were banished from it.

From General Warren we have a letter dated January 14, 1775, only a few months before he attested the sincerity of his patriotism, in his own blood, on Bunker Hill. His handwriting has many ungraceful flourishes. All the small d's spout upward in parabolic curves, and descend at a considerable distance. His pen seems to have had nothing but hair-lines in it; and the whole letter, though perfectly legible, has a look of thin and unpleasant irregularity. The subject is a plan for securing to the colonial party the services of Colonel Gridley the engineer, by an appeal to his private interests. Though writing to General Palmer, an intimate friend, Warren signs himself, most ceremoniously, "Your obedient servant." Indeed, these stately formulas in winding up a letter were scarcely laid aside, whatever might be the familiarity of intercourse: husband and wife were occasionally, on paper at least, the "obedient servants" of one another; and not improbably, among well-bred people, there was a corresponding ceremonial of bows and courtesies, even in the deepest interior of domestic life. With all the reality that filled men's hearts, and which

has stamped its impress on so many of these letters, it was a far more formal age than the present.

It may be remarked, that Warren was almost the only man eminently distinguished in the intellectual phase of the Revolution, previous to the breaking out of the war, who actually uplifted his arm to do battle. The legislative patriots were a distinct class from the patriots of the camp, and never laid aside the gown for the sword. It was very different in the great civil war of England, where the leading minds of the age, when argument had done its office, or left it undone, put on their steel breast-plates and appeared as leaders in the field. Educated young men, members of the old colonial families, — gentlemen, as John Adams terms them, — seem not to have sought employment in the Revolutionary army, in such numbers as might have been expected. Respectable as the officers generally were, and great as were the abilities sometimes elicited, the intellect and cultivation of the country was inadequately represented in them, as a body.

Turning another page, we find the frank of a letter from Henry Laurens, President of Congress, — him whose destiny it was, like so many noblemen of old, to pass beneath the Traitor's Gate of the Tower of London, — him whose chivalrous son sacrificed as brilliant a future as any young American could have looked forward to, in an obscure skirmish. Likewise, we have the address of a letter to Messrs. Leroy and Bayard, in the handwriting of Jefferson; too slender a material to serve as a talisman for summoning up the writer; a most unsatisfactory fragment, affecting us like a glimpse of the retreating

form of the sage of Monticello, turning the distant corner of a street. There is a scrap from Robert Morris, the financier; a letter or two from Judge Jay; and one from General Lincoln, written, apparently, on the gallop, but without any of those characteristic sparks that sometimes fly out in a hurry, when all the leisure in the world would fail to elicit them. Lincoln was the type of a New England soldier; a man of fair abilities, not especially of a warlike cast, without much chivalry, but faithful and bold, and carrying a kind of decency and restraint into the wild and ruthless business of arms.

From good old Baron Steuben, we find, not a manuscript essay on the method of arranging a battle, but a commercial draft, in a small, neat hand, as plain as print, elegant without flourish, except a very complicated one on the signature. On the whole, the specimen is sufficiently characteristic, as well of the Baron's soldierlike and German simplicity, as of the polish of the Great Frederick's aide-de-camp, a man of courts and of the world. How singular and picturesque an effect is produced, in the array of our Revolutionary army, by the intermingling of these titled personages from the Continent of Europe, with feudal associations clinging about them, — Steuben, De Kalb, Pulaski, Lafayette! — the German veteran, who had written from one famous battle-field to another for thirty years; and the young French noble, who had come hither, though yet unconscious of his high office, to light the torch that should set fire to the antiquated trumpery of his native institutions. Among these autographs, there is one from Lafayette, written long after our Revolution, but while that of his own

country was in full progress. The note is merely as follows: "Enclosed you will find, my dear Sir, two tickets for the sittings of this day. One part of the debate will be on the Honors of the Pantheon, agreeably to what has been decreed by the Constitutional Assembly."

It is a pleasant and comfortable thought, that we have no such classic folly as is here indicated, to lay to the charge of our Revolutionary fathers. Both in their acts, and in the drapery of those acts, they were true to their several and simple selves, and thus left nothing *behind* them for a fastidious taste to sneer at. But it must be considered that our Revolution did not, like that of France, go so deep as to disturb the common-sense of the country.

General Schuyler writes a letter, under date of February 22, 1780, relating not to military affairs, from which the prejudices of his countrymen had almost disconnected him, but to the Salt Springs of Onondaga. The expression is peculiarly direct, and the hand that of a man of business, free and flowing. The uncertainty, the vague, hearsay evidence respecting these springs, then gushing into dim daylight beneath the shadow of a remote wilderness, is such as might now be quoted in reference to the quality of the water that supplies the fountains of the Nile. The following sentence shows us an Indian woman and her son, practising their simple process in the manufacture of salt, at a fire of wind-strewn boughs, the flame of which gleams duskily through the arches of the forest: "From a variety of information, I find the smallest quantity made by a squaw, with the assistance of one

boy, with a kettle of about ten gallons' capacity, is half a bushel per day; the greatest with the same kettle, about two bushels." It is particularly interesting to find out anything as to the embryo, yet stationary arts of life among the red people, their manufactures, their agriculture, their domestic labors. It is partly the lack of this knowledge — the possession of which would establish a ground of sympathy on the part of civilized men — that makes the Indian race so shadow-like and unreal to our conception.

We could not select a greater contrast to the upright and unselfish patriot whom we have just spoken of, than the traitor Arnold, from whom there is a brief note, dated, "Crown Point, January 19, 1775," addressed to an officer under his command. The three lines of which it consists can prove bad spelling, erroneous grammar, and misplaced and superfluous punctuation; but, with all this complication of iniquity, the ruffian General contrives to express his meaning as briefly and clearly as if the rules of correct composition had been ever so scrupulously observed. This autograph, impressed with the foulest name in our history, has somewhat of the interest that would attach to a document on which a fiend-devoted wretch had signed away his salvation. But there was not substance enough in the man — a mere cross between the bull-dog and the fox — to justify much feeling of any sort about him personally. The interest, such as it is, attaches but little to the man, and far more to the circumstances amid which he acted, rendering the villany almost sublime, which, exercised in petty affairs, would only have been vulgar.

We turn another leaf, and find a memorial of Hamilton. It is but a letter of introduction, addressed to Governor Jay in favor of Mr. Davies, of Kentucky; but it gives an impression of high breeding and courtesy, as little to be mistaken as if we could see the writer's manner and hear his cultivated accents, while personally making one gentleman known to another. There is likewise a rare vigor of expression and pregnancy of meaning, such as only a man of habitual energy of thought could have conveyed into so commonplace a thing as an introductory letter. This autograph is a graceful *one*, with an easy and picturesque flourish beneath the signature, symbolical of a courteous bow at the conclusion of the social ceremony so admirably performed. Hamilton might well be the leader and idol of the Federalists; for he was pre-eminent in all the high qualities that characterized the great men of that party, and which should make even a Democrat feel proud that his country had produced such a noble old band of aristocrats; and he shared all the distrust of the people, which so inevitably and so righteously brought about their ruin. With his autograph we associate that of another Federalist, his friend in life; a man far narrower than Hamilton, but endowed with a native vigor, that caused many partisans to grapple to him for support; upright, sternly inflexible, and of a simplicity of manner that might have befitted the sturdiest republican among us. In our boyhood we used to see a thin, severe figure of an ancient man, time-worn, but apparently indestructible, moving with a step of vigorous decay along the street, and knew him as "Old Tim Pickering."

Side by side, too, with the autograph of Hamilton, we would place one from the hand that shed his blood. It is a few lines of Aaron Burr, written in 1823; when all his ambitious schemes, whatever they once were, had been so long shattered that even the fragments had crumbled away, leaving him to exert his withered energies on petty law cases, to one of which the present note refers. The hand is a little tremulous with age, yet small and fastidiously elegant, as became a man who was in the habit of writing billet-doux on scented note-paper, as well as documents of war and state. This is to us a deeply interesting autograph. Remembering what has been said of the power of Burr's personal influence, his art to tempt men, his might to subdue them, and the fascination that enabled him, though cold at heart, to win the love of woman, we gaze at this production of his pen as into his own inscrutable eyes, seeking for the mystery of his nature. How singular that a character imperfect, ruined, blasted, as this man's was, excites a stronger interest than if it had reached the highest earthly perfection of which its original elements would admit! It is by the diabolical part of Burr's character that he produces his effect on the imagination. Had he been a better man, we doubt, after all, whether the present age would not already have suffered him to wax dusty, and fade out of sight, among the mere respectable mediocrities of his own epoch. But, certainly, he was a strange, wild offshoot to have sprung from the united stock of those two singular Christians, President Burr of Princeton College, and Jonathan Edwards!

Omitting many, we have come almost to the end of

these memorials of historical men. We observe one other autograph of a distinguished soldier of the Revolution, Henry Knox, but written in 1791, when he was Secretary of War. In its physical aspect, it is well worthy to be a soldier's letter. The hand is large, round, and legible at a glance; the lines far apart, and accurately equidistant; and the whole affair looks not unlike a company of regular troops in marching order. The signature has a point-like firmness and simplicity. It is a curious observation, sustained by these autographs, though we know not how generally correct, that Southern gentlemen are more addicted to a flourish of the pen beneath their names, than those of the North.

And now we come to the men of a later generation, whose active life reaches almost within the verge of present affairs; people of dignity, no doubt, but whose characters have not acquired, either from time or circumstances, the interest that can make their autographs valuable to any but the collector. Those whom we have hitherto noticed were the men of an heroic age. They are departed, and now so utterly departed, as not even to touch upon the passing generation through the medium of persons still in life, who can claim to have known them familiarly. Their letters, therefore, come to us like material things out of the hands of mighty shadows, long historical, and traditionary, and fit companions for the sages and warriors of a thousand years ago. In spite of the proverb, it is not in a single day, or in a very few years, that a man can be reckoned "as dead as Julius Cæsar." We feel little interest in scraps from the pens of old gentlemen, ambassadors, governors, senators, heads of

departments, even presidents though they were, who lived lives of praiseworthy respectability, and whose powdered heads and black knee-breeches have but just vanished out of the drawing-room. Still less do we value the blotted paper of those whose reputations are dusty, not with oblivious time, but with present political turmoil and newspaper vogue. Really great men, however, seem, as to their effect on the imagination, to take their place amongst past worthies, even while walking in the very sunshine that illuminates the autumnal day in which we write. We look, not without curiosity, at the small, neat hand of Henry Clay, who, as he remarks with his habitual deference to the wishes of the fair, responds to a young lady's request for his seal; and we dwell longer over the torn-off conclusion of a note from Mr. Calhoun, whose words are strangely dashed off without letters, and whose name, were it less illustrious, would be unrecognizable in his own autograph. But of all hands that can still grasp a pen, we know not the one, belonging to a soldier or a statesman, which could interest us more than the hand that wrote the following: "Sir, your note of the 6th inst. is received. I hasten to answer that there was no man 'in the station of colonel, by the name of J. T. Smith,' under my command, at the battle of New Orleans; and am, respectfully,

Yours,

ANDREW JACKSON.

Oct. 19th, 1833."

The old general, we suspect, has been insnared by a pardonable little stratagem on the part of the autograph collector. The battle of New Orleans would hardly have

been won, without better aid than this problematical Colonel J. T. Smith.

Intermixed with and appended to these historical autographs, there are a few literary ones. Timothy Dwight — the “old Timotheus” who sang the Conquest of Canaan, instead of choosing a more popular subject, in the British Conquest of Canada — is of eldest date. Colonel Trumbull, whose hand, at various epochs of his life, was familiar with sword, pen, and pencil, contributes two letters, which lack the picturesqueness of execution that should distinguish the chirography of an artist. The value of Trumbull’s pictures is of the same nature with that of daguerreotypes, depending not upon the ideal but the actual. The beautiful signature of Washington Irving appears as the indorsement of a draft, dated in 1814, when, if we may take this document as evidence, his individuality seems to have been merged into the firm of “P. E. Irving & Co.” Never was anything less mercantile than this autograph, though as legible as the writing of a bank-clerk. Without apparently aiming at artistic beauty, it has all the Sketch Book in it. We find the signature and seal of Pierpont, the latter stamped with the poet’s almost living countenance. What a pleasant device for a seal is one’s own face, which he may thus multiply at pleasure, and send letters to his friends, — the Head without, and the Heart within! There are a few lines in the school-girl hand of Margaret Davidson, at nine years old; and a scrap of a letter from Washington Allston, a gentle and delicate autograph, in which we catch a glimpse of thanks to his correspondent for the loan of a volume of poetry. Nothing remains,

save a letter from Noah Webster, whose early toils were manifested in a spelling-book, and those of his later age in a ponderous dictionary. Under date of February 10, 1843, he writes in a sturdy, awkward hand, very fit for a lexicographer, an epistle of old man's reminiscences, from which we extract the following anecdote of Washington, presenting the patriot in a festive light: —

“When I was travelling to the South, in the year 1785, I called on General Washington at Mount Vernon. At dinner, the last course of dishes was a species of pancakes, which were handed round to each guest, accompanied with a bowl of sugar and another of molasses for seasoning them, that each guest might suit himself. When the dish came to me, I pushed by me the bowl of molasses, observing to the gentlemen present, that I had enough of *that* in my own country. The General burst out with a *loud laugh*, a thing very unusual with him. ‘Ah,’ said he, ‘there is nothing in that story about your eating molasses in New England.’ There was a gentleman from Maryland at the table; and the General immediately told a story, stating that, during the Revolution, a hogshead of molasses was stove in, in West Chester, by the oversetting of a wagon; and a body of Maryland troops being near, the soldiers ran hastily, and saved all they could by filling their hats or caps with molasses.”

There are said to be temperaments endowed with sympathies so exquisite, that, by merely handling an autograph, they can detect the writer's character with unerring accuracy, and read his inmost heart as easily as a less-gifted eye would peruse the written page. Our faith

in this power, be it a spiritual one, or only a refinement of the physical nature, is not unlimited, in spite of evidence. God has imparted to the human soul a marvellous strength in guarding its secrets, and he keeps at least the deepest and most inward record for his own perusal. But if there be such sympathies as we have alluded to, in how many instances would History be put to the blush by a volume of autograph letters, like this which we now close !





AN OLD WOMAN'S TALE.

IN the house where I was born, there used to be an old woman crouching all day long over the kitchen fire, with her elbows on her knees and her feet in the ashes. Once in a while she took a turn at the spit, and she never lacked a coarse gray stocking in her lap, the foot about half finished ; it tapered away with her own waning life, and she knit the toe-stitch on the day of her death. She made it her serious business and sole amusement to tell me stories at any time from morning till night, in a mumbling, toothless voice, as I sat on a log of wood, grasping her check-apron in both my hands. Her personal memory included the better part of a hundred years, and she had strangely jumbled her own experience and observation with those of many old people who died in her young days ; so that she might have been taken for a contemporary of Queen Elizabeth, or of John Rogers in the Primer. There are a thousand of her traditions lurking in the corners and by-places of my mind, some more marvellous than what is to follow, some less so, and a few not marvellous in the least, all of which I should like to repeat, if I were as happy as she in having a listener. But I am humble

enough to own, that I do not deserve a listener half so well as that old toothless woman, whose narratives possessed an excellence attributable neither to herself, nor to any single individual. Her ground-plots, seldom within the widest scope of probability, were filled up with homely and natural incidents, the gradual accretions of a long course of years, and fiction hid its grotesque extravagance in this garb of truth, like the Devil (an appropriate simile, for the old woman supplies it) disguising himself, cloven-foot and all, in mortal attire. These tales generally referred to her birthplace, a village in the valley of the Connecticut, the aspect of which she impressed with great vividness on my fancy. The houses in that tract of country, long a wild and dangerous frontier, were rendered defensible by a strength of architecture that has preserved many of them till our own times, and I cannot describe the sort of pleasure with which, two summers since, I rode through the little town in question, while one object after another rose familiarly to my eye, like successive portions of a dream becoming realized. Among other things equally probable, she was wont to assert that all the inhabitants of this village (at certain intervals, but whether of twenty-five or fifty years, or a whole century, remained a disputable point) were subject to a simultaneous slumber, continuing one hour's space. When that mysterious time arrived, the parson snored over his half-written sermon, though it were Saturday night and no provision made for the morrow, — the mother's eyelids closed as she bent over her infant, and no childish cry awakened, — the watcher at the bed of mortal sickness slumbered upon the death-pillow, ~

and the dying man anticipated his sleep of ages by one as deep and dreamless. To speak emphatically, there was a soporific influence throughout the village, stronger than if every mother's son and daughter were reading a dull story; notwithstanding which the old woman professed to hold the substance of the ensuing account from one of those principally concerned in it.

One moonlight summer evening, a young man and a girl sat down together in the open air. They were distant relatives, sprung from a stock once wealthy, but of late years so poverty-stricken, that David had not a penny to pay the marriage fee, if Esther should consent to wed. The seat they had chosen was in an open grove of elm and walnut trees, at a right angle of the road; a spring of diamond water just bubbled into the moonlight beside them, and then whimpered away through the bushes and long grass, in search of a neighboring mill-stream. The nearest house (situate within twenty yards of them, and the residence of their great-grandfather in his lifetime) was a venerable old edifice, crowned with many high and narrow peaks, all overrun by innumerable creeping plants, which hung curling about the roof like a nice young wig on an elderly gentleman's head. Opposite to this establishment was a tavern, with a well and horse-trough before it, and a low green bank running along the left side of the door. Thence, the road went onward, curving scarce perceptibly, through the village, divided in the midst by a narrow lane of verdure, and bounded on each side by a grassy strip of twice its own breadth. The houses had generally an odd look. Here, the moonlight tried to get a glimpse of one, a

rough old heap of ponderous timber, which, ashamed of its dilapidated aspect, was hiding behind a great thick tree; the lower story of the next had sunk almost under ground, as if the poor little house were a-weary of the world, and retiring into the seclusion of its own cellar; farther on stood one of the few recent structures, thrusting its painted face conspicuously into the street, with an evident idea that it was the fairest thing there. About midway in the village was a grist-mill, partly concealed by the descent of the ground towards the stream which turned its wheel. At the southern extremity, just so far distant that the window-panes dazzled into each other, rose the meeting-house, a dingy old barnlike building, with an enormously disproportioned steeple sticking up straight into heaven, as high as the Tower of Babel, and the cause of nearly as much confusion in its day. This steeple, it must be understood, was an afterthought, and its addition to the main edifice, when the latter had already begun to decay, had excited a vehement quarrel, and almost a schism in the church, some fifty years before. Here the road wound down a hill and was seen no more, the remotest object in view being the graveyard gate, beyond the meeting-house. The youthful pair sat hand in hand beneath the trees, and for several moments they had not spoken, because the breeze was hushed, the brook scarce tinkled, the leaves had ceased their rustling, and everything lay motionless and silent as if Nature were composing herself to slumber.

“What a beautiful night it is, Esther!” remarked David, somewhat drowsily.

"Very beautiful," answered the girl, in the same tone.

"But how still!" continued David.

"Ah, too still!" said Esther, with a faint shudder, like a modest leaf when the wind kisses it.

Perhaps they fell asleep together, and, united as their spirits were by close and tender sympathies, the same strange dream might have wrapped them in its shadowy arms. But they conceived, at the time, that they still remained wakeful by the spring of bubbling water, looking down through the village, and all along the moon-lighted road, and at the queer old houses, and at the trees which thrust their great twisted branches almost into the windows. There was only a sort of mistiness over their minds like the smoky air of an early autumn night. At length, without any vivid astonishment, they became conscious that a great many people were either entering the village or already in the street, but whether they came from the meeting-house, or from a little beyond it, or where the devil they came from, was more than could be determined. Certainly, a crowd of people seemed to be there, men, women, and children, all of whom were yawning and rubbing their eyes, stretching their limbs, and staggering from side to side of the road, as if but partially awakened from a sound slumber. Sometimes they stood stock-still, with their hands over their brows to shade their sight from the moonbeams. As they drew near, most of their countenances appeared familiar to Esther and David, possessing the peculiar features of families in the village, and that general air and aspect by which a person would recognize his own townsmen in the remotest ends of the earth. But though

the whole multitude might have been taken, in the mass, for neighbors and acquaintances, there was not a single individual whose exact likeness they had ever before seen. It was a noticeable circumstance, also, that the newest fashioned garment on the backs of these people might have been worn by the great-grandparents of the existing generation. There was one figure behind all the rest, and not yet near enough to be perfectly distinguished.

“Where on earth, David, do all these odd people come from?” said Esther, with a lazy inclination to laugh.

“Nowhere on earth, Esther,” replied David, unknowing why he said so.

As they spoke, the strangers showed some symptoms of disquietude, and looked towards the fountain for an instant, but immediately appeared to assume their own trains of thought and previous purposes. They now separated to different parts of the village, with a readiness that implied intimate local knowledge, and it may be worthy of remark, that, though they were evidently loquacious among themselves, neither their footsteps nor their voices reached the ears of the beholders. Wherever there was a venerable old house, of fifty years' standing and upwards, surrounded by its elm or walnut trees, with its dark and weather-beaten barn, its well, its orchard and stone-walls, all ancient and all in good repair around it, there a little group of these people assembled. Such parties were mostly composed of an aged man and woman, with the younger members of a family; their faces were full of joy, so deep that it as-

sumed the shade of melancholy; they pointed to each other the minutest objects about the homesteads, things in their hearts, and were now comparing them with the originals. But where hollow places by the wayside, grass-grown and uneven, with unsightly chimneys rising ruinous in the midst, gave indications of a fallen dwelling and of hearths long cold, there did a few of the strangers sit them down on the mouldering beams, and on the yellow moss that had overspread the door-stone. The men folded their arms, sad and speechless; the women wrung their hands with a more vivid expression of grief; and the little children tottered to their knees, shrinking away from the open grave of domestic love. And wherever a recent edifice reared its white and flashy front on the foundation of an old one, there a gray-haired man might be seen to shake his staff in anger at it, while his aged dame and their offspring appeared to join in their maledictions, forming a fearful picture in the ghostly moonlight. While these scenes were passing, the one figure in the rear of all the rest was descending the hollow towards the mill, and the eyes of David and Esther were drawn thence to a pair with whom they could fully sympathize. It was a youth in a sailor's dress and a pale slender maiden, who met each other with a sweet embrace in the middle of the street.

"How long it must be since they parted," observed David.

"Fifty years at least," said Esther.

They continued to gaze with unwondering calmness and quiet interest, as the dream (if such it were) unrolled its quaint and motley semblance before them, and

their notice was now attracted by several little knots of people apparently engaged in conversation. Of these one of the earliest collected and most characteristic was near the tavern, the persons who composed it being seated on the low green bank along the left side of the door. A conspicuous figure here was a fine corpulent old fellow in his shirt-sleeves and flame-colored breeches, and with a stained white apron over his paunch, beneath which he held his hands and wherewith at times he wiped his ruddy face. The stately decrepitude of one of his companions, the scar of an Indian tomahawk on his crown, and especially his worn buff-coat, were appropriate marks of a veteran belonging to an old Provincial garrison, now deaf to the roll-call. Another showed his rough face under a tarry hat and wore a pair of wide trousers, like an ancient mariner who had tossed away his youth upon the sea, and was returned, hoary and weather-beaten, to his inland home. There was also a thin young man, carelessly dressed, who ever and anon cast a sad look towards the pale maiden above mentioned. With these there sat a hunter, and one or two others, and they were soon joined by a miller, who came upward from the dusty mill, his coat as white as if besprinkled with powdered starlight. All these (by the aid of jests, which might indeed be old, but had not been recently repeated) waxed very merry, and it was rather strange, that just as their sides shook with the heartiest laughter, they appeared greatly like a group of shadows flickering in the moonshine. Four personages, very different from these, stood in front of the large house with its periwig of creeping plants. One was a little elderly figure, dis-

tinguished by the gold on his three-cornered hat and sky-blue coat, and by the seal of arms annexed to his great gold watch-chain; his air and aspect befitted a Justice of Peace and County Major, and all earth's pride and pomposity were squeezed into this small gentleman of five feet high. The next in importance was a grave person of sixty or seventy years, whose black suit and band sufficiently indicated his character, and the polished baldness of whose head was worthy of a famous preacher in the village, half a century before, who had made wigs a subject of pulpit denunciation. The two other figures, both clad in dark gray, showed the sobriety of Deacons; one was ridiculously tall and thin, like a man of ordinary bulk infinitely produced, as the mathematicians say; while the brevity and thickness of his colleague seemed a compression of the same man. These four talked with great earnestness, and their gestures intimated that they had revived the ancient dispute about the meeting-house steeple. The grave person in black spoke with composed solemnity, as if he were addressing a Synod; the short deacon grunted out occasional sentences, as brief as himself; his tall brother drew the long thread of his argument through the whole discussion, and (reasoning from analogy) his voice must indubitably have been small and squeaking. But the little old man in gold-lace was evidently scorched by his own red-hot eloquence; he bounced from one to another, shook his cane at the steeple, at the two deacons, and almost in the parson's face, stamping with his foot fiercely enough to break a hole through the very earth; though, indeed, it could not exactly be said that the green grass bent beneath

him. The figure, noticed as coming behind all the rest, had now surmounted the ascent from the mill, and proved to be an elderly lady with something in her hand.

“Why does she walk so slow?” asked David.

“Don’t you see she is lame?” said Esther.

This gentlewoman, whose infirmity had kept her so far in the rear of the crowd, now came hobbling on, glided unobserved by the polemic group, and paused on the left brink of the fountain, within a few feet of the two spectators. She was a magnificent old dame, as ever mortal eye beheld. Her spangled shoes and gold-clocked stockings shone gloriously within the spacious circle of a red hoop-petticoat, which swelled to the very point of explosion, and was bedecked all over with embroidery a little tarnished. Above the petticoat, and parting in front so as to display it to the best advantage, was a figured blue damask gown. A wide and stiff ruff encircled her neck, a cap of the finest muslin, though rather dingy, covered her head, and her nose was bestridden by a pair of gold-bowed spectacles with enormous glasses. But the old lady’s face was pinched, sharp and sallow, wearing a niggardly and avaricious expression, and forming an odd contrast to the splendor of her attire, as did likewise the implement which she held in her hand. It was a sort of iron shovel (by housewives termed a “slice”), such as is used in clearing the oven, and with this, selecting a spot between a walnut-tree and the fountain, the good dame made an earnest attempt to dig. The tender sods, however, possessed a strange impenetrability. They resisted her

efforts like a quarry of living granite, and losing her breath, she cast down the shovel and seemed to bemoan herself most piteously, gnashing her teeth (what few she had) and wringing her thin yellow hands. Then, apparently with new hope, she resumed her toil, which still had the same result, — a circumstance the less surprising to David and Esther, because at times they would catch the moonlight shining through the old woman, and dancing in the fountain beyond. The little man in gold-lace now happened to see her, and made his approach on tiptoe.

“How hard this elderly lady works!” remarked David.

“Go and help her, David,” said Esther, compassionately.

As their drowsy voices spoke, both the old woman and the pompous little figure behind her lifted their eyes, and for a moment they regarded the youth and damsel with something like kindness and affection; which, however, were dim and uncertain, and passed away almost immediately. The old woman again betook herself to the shovel, but was startled by a hand suddenly laid upon her shoulder; she turned round in great trepidation, and beheld the dignitary in the blue coat; then followed an embrace of such closeness as would indicate no remoter connection than matrimony between these two decorous persons. The gentleman next pointed to the shovel, appearing to inquire the purpose of his lady's occupation; while she as evidently parried his interrogatories, maintaining a demure and sanctified visage as every good woman ought, in similar cases. Howbeit, she could not

forbear looking askew, behind her spectacles, towards the spot of stubborn turf. All the while, their figures had a strangeness in them, and it seemed as if some cunning jeweller had made their golden ornaments of the yellowest of the setting sunbeams, and that the blue of their garments was brought from the dark sky near the moon, and that the gentleman's silk waistcoat was the bright side of a fiery cloud, and the lady's scarlet petticoat a remnant of the blush of morning, — and that they both were two unrealities of colored air. But now there was a sudden movement throughout the multitude. *The Squire* drew forth a watch as large as the dial on the famous steeple, looked at the warning hands and got him gone, nor could his lady tarry; the party at the tavern door took to their heels, headed by the fat man in the flaming breeches; the tall deacon stalked away immediately, and the short deacon waddled after, making four steps to the yard; the mothers called their children about them and set forth, with a gentle and sad glance behind. Like cloudy fantasies that hurry by a viewless impulse from the sky, they all were fled, and the wind rose up and followed them with a strange moaning down the lonely street. Now whither these people went, is more than may be told; only David and Esther seemed to see the shadowy splendor of the ancient dame, as she lingered in the moonshine at the graveyard gate, gazing backward to the fountain.

“O Esther! I have had such a dream!” cried David, starting up, and rubbing his eyes.

“And I such another!” answered Esther, gaping till her pretty red lips formed a circle.

“About an old woman with gold-bowed spectacles,” continued David.

“And a scarlet hoop-petticoat,” added Esther. They now stared in each other’s eyes, with great astonishment and some little fear. After a thoughtful moment or two, David drew a long breath and stood upright.

“If I live till to-morrow morning,” said he, “I’ll see what may be buried between that tree and the spring of water.”

“And why not to-night, David?” asked Esther; for she was a sensible little girl, and bethought herself that the matter might as well be done in secrecy.

David felt the propriety of the remark and looked round for the means of following her advice. The moon shone brightly on something that rested against the side of the old house, and, on a nearer view, it proved to be an iron shovel, bearing a singular resemblance to that which they had seen in their dreams. He used it with better success than the old woman, the soil giving way so freely to his efforts, that he had soon scooped a hole as large as the basin of the spring. Suddenly, he poked his head down to the very bottom of this cavity. “Oho! — what have we here?” cried David.





TIME'S PORTRAITURE.

Being the Carrier's Address to the Patrons of "The Salem Gazette" for the 1st of January, 1838.

ADDRESS.

KIND PATRONS: — We newspaper carriers are Time's errand-boys; and all the year round, the old gentleman sends us from one of your doors to another, to let you know what he is talking about and what he is doing. We are a strange set of urchins; for, punctually on New Year's morning, one and all of us are seized with a fit of rhyme, and break forth in such hideous strains, that it would be no wonder if the infant Year, with her step upon the threshold, were frightened away by the discord with which we strive to welcome her. On these occasions, most generous patrons, you never fail to give us a taste of your bounty; but whether as a reward for our verses, or to purchase a respite from further infliction of them, is best known to your worshipful selves. Moreover, we, Time's errand-boys as aforesaid, feel it incumbent upon us, on the first day of every year, to present a sort of summary of our master's dealings with the world, throughout the

whole of the preceding twelvemonth. Now it has so chanced by a misfortune heretofore unheard of, that I, your present petitioner, have been altogether forgotten by the Muse. Instead of being able (as I naturally expected) to measure my ideas into six-foot lines, and tack a rhyme at each of their tails, I find myself, this blessed morning, the same simple proser that I was yesterday, and shall probably be to-morrow. And to my further mortification, being a humble-minded little sinner, I feel nowise capable of talking to your worships with the customary wisdom of my brethren, and giving sage opinions as to what Time has done right, and what he has done wrong, and what of right or wrong he means to do hereafter. Such being my unhappy predicament, it is with no small confusion of face, that I make bold to present myself at your doors. Yet it were surely a pity that my non-appearance should defeat your bountiful designs for the replenishing of my pockets. Wherefore I have bethought me, that it might not displease your worships to hear a few particulars about the person and habits of Father Time, with whom, as being one of his errand-boys, I have more acquaintance than most lads of my years.

For a great many years past, there has been a wood-cut on the cover of the "Farmer's Almanac," pretending to be a portrait of Father Time. It represents that respectable personage as almost in a state of nudity, with a single lock of hair on his forehead, wings on his shoulders, and accoutred with a scythe and an hour-glass. These two latter symbols appear to betoken that the old fellow works in haying time, by the hour. But, within my recollection, Time has never carried a scythe and an

hour-glass, nor worn a pair of wings, nor shown himself in the half-naked condition that the almanac would make us believe. Nowadays, he is the most fashionably dressed figure about town; and I take it to be his natural disposition, old as he is, to adopt every fashion of the day and of the hour. Just at the present period, you may meet him in a furred surtout, with pantaloons strapped under his narrow-toed boots; on his head, instead of a single forelock, he wears a smart auburn wig, with bushy whiskers of the same hue, the whole surmounted by a German-lustre hat. He has *exchanged* his hour-glass for a gold patent-lever watch, which he carries in his vest-pocket; and as for his scythe, he has either thrown it aside altogether, or converted its handle into a cane not much stouter than a riding-switch. If you stare him full in the face, you will perhaps detect a few wrinkles; but, on a hasty glance, you might suppose him to be in the very heyday of life, as fresh as he was in the garden of Eden. So much for the present aspect of Time; but I by no means insure that the description shall suit him a month hence, or even at this hour to-morrow.

It is another very common mistake, to suppose that Time wanders among old ruins, and sits on mouldering walls and moss-grown stones, meditating about matters which everybody else has forgotten. Some people, perhaps, would expect to find him at the burial-ground in Broad Street, poring over the half-illegible inscriptions on the tombs of the Higginsons, the Hathornes,* the

* Not "Hawthorne," as one of the present representatives of the family has seen fit to transmogrify a good old name.

Holyokes, the Brownes, the Olivers, the Pickmans, the Pickerings, and other worthies, with whom he kept company of old. Some would look for him on the ridge of Gallows Hill, where, in one of his darkest moods, he and Cotton Mather hung the witches. But they need not seek him there. Time is invariably the first to forget his own deeds, his own history, and his own former associates. His place is in the busiest bustle of the world. If you would meet Time face to face, you have only to promenade in Essex Street, between the hours of twelve and one; and there, among beaux and belles, you will see old Father Time, apparently the gayest of the gay. He walks arm in arm with the young men, talking about balls and theatres, and afternoon rides, and midnight merry-makings; he recommends such and such a fashionable tailor, and sneers at every garment of six months' antiquity; and, generally, before parting, he invites his friends to drink champagne, — a wine in which Time delights, on account of its rapid effervescence. And Time treads lightly beside the fair girls, whispering to them (the old deceiver!) that they are the sweetest angels he ever was acquainted with. He tells them that they have nothing to do but dance and sing, and twine roses in their hair, and gather a train of lovers, and that the world will always be like an illuminated ball-room. And Time goes to the Commercial News-Room, and visits the insurance-offices, and stands at the corner of Essex and St. Peter's Streets, talking with the merchants

However, Time seldom has occasion to mention the gentleman's name, so that it is no great matter how he spells or pronounces it.

about the arrival of ships, the rise and fall of stocks, the price of cotton and breadstuffs, the prospects of the whaling-business, and the cod-fishery, and all other news of the day. And the young gentlemen, and the pretty girls, and the merchants, and all others with whom he makes acquaintance, are apt to think that there is nobody like Time, and that Time is all in all.

But Time is not near so good a fellow as they take him for. He is continually on the watch for mischief, and often seizes a sly opportunity to lay his cane over the shoulders of some middle-aged gentleman; and lo and behold! the poor man's back is bent, his hair turns gray, and his face looks like a shrivelled apple. This is what is meant by being "time-stricken." It is the worst feature in Time's character, that he always inflicts the greatest injuries on his oldest friends. Yet, shamefully as he treats them, they evince no desire to cut his acquaintance, and can seldom bear to think of a final separation.

Again, there is a very prevalent idea, that Time loves to sit by the fireside, telling stories of the Puritans, the witch persecutors, and the heroes of the old French war and the Revolution; and that he has no memory for anything more recent than the days of the first President Adams. This is another great mistake. Time is so eager to talk of novelties, that he never fails to give circulation to the most incredible rumors of the day, though at the hazard of being compelled to eat his own words to-morrow. He shows numberless instances of this propensity while the national elections are in progress. A month ago, his mouth was full of the wonder-

ful Whig victories ; and to do him justice, he really seems to have told the truth for once. Whether the same story will hold good another year, we must leave Time himself to show. He has a good deal to say, at the present juncture, concerning the revolutionary movements in Canada ; he blusters a little about the northeastern boundary question ; he expresses great impatience at the sluggishness of our commanders in the Florida war ; he gets considerably excited whenever the subject of abolition is brought forward, and so much the more, as he appears hardly to have made up his mind on one side or the other. Whenever this happens to be the case, — as it often does, — Time works himself into such a rage, that you would think he were going to tear the universe to pieces ; but I never yet knew him to proceed, in good earnest, to such terrible extremities. During the last six or seven months, he has been seized with intolerable sulkiness at the slightest mention of the currency ; for nothing vexes Time so much as to be refused cash upon the nail. The above are the chief topics of general interest which Time is just now in the habit of discussing. For his more private gossip, he has rumors of new matches, of old ones broken off, with now and then a whisper of good-natured scandal ; sometimes, too, he condescends to criticise a sermon, or a lyceum lecture, or performance of the glee-club ; and, to be brief, catch the volatile essence of present talk and transitory opinions, and you will have Time's gossip, word for word. I may as well add, that he expresses great approbation of Mr. Russell's vocal abilities, and means to be present from beginning to end of his next concert. It is not

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every singer that could *keep Time* with his voice and instrument, for a whole evening.

Perhaps you will inquire, "What are Time's literary tastes?" And here again there is a general mistake. It is conceived by many, that Time spends his leisure hours at the Athenæum, turning over the musty leaves of those large worm-eaten folios, which nobody else has disturbed since the death of the venerable Dr. Oliver. So far from this being the case, Time's profoundest studies are the new novels from Messrs. Ives and Jewett's Circulating Library. He skims over the lighter articles in the periodicals of the day, glances at the newspapers, and then throws them aside forever, all except "The Salem Gazette," of which he preserves a file, for his amusement a century or two hence.

We will now consider Time as a man of business. In this capacity, our citizens are in the habit of complaining, not wholly without reason, that Time is sluggish and dull. You may see him occasionally at the end of Derby Wharf, leaning against a post, or sitting on the brecch of an iron cannon, staring listlessly at an unrigged East-Indiaman. Or, if you look through the windows of the Union Marine Insurance Office, you may get a glimpse of him there, nodding over a newspaper, among the old weather-beaten sea-captains who recollect when Time was quite a different sort of fellow. If you enter any of the dry-goods stores along Essex Street, you will be likely to find him with his elbows on the counter, bargaining for a yard of tape or a paper of pins. To catch him in his idlest mood, you must visit the office of some young lawyer. Still, however, Time does contrive to do

a little business among us, and should not be denied the credit of it. During the past season, he has worked pretty diligently upon the railroad, and promises to start the cars by the middle of next summer. Then we may fly from Essex Street to State Street, and be back again before Time misses us. In conjunction with our worthy mayor (with whose ancestor, the Lord Mayor of London, Time was well acquainted more than two hundred years ago) he has laid the corner-stone of a new city hall, the granite front of which is already an ornament to Court Street. But besides these public affairs, Time busies himself a good deal in private. Just at this season of the year, he is engaged in collecting bills, and may be seen at almost any hour peregrinating from street to street, and knocking at half the doors in town, with a great bundle of these infernal documents. On such errands he appears in the likeness of an undersized, portly old gentleman, with gray hair, a bluff red face, and a loud tone of voice; and many people mistake him for the penny-post.

Never does a marriage take place, but Time is present among the wedding-guests; for marriage is an affair in which Time takes more interest than in almost any other. He generally gives away the bride, and leads the bridegroom by the hand to the threshold of the bridal chamber. Although Time pretends to be very merry on these occasions, yet, if you watch him well, you may often detect a sigh. Whenever a babe is born into this weary world, Time is in attendance, and receives the wailing infant in his arms. And the poor babe shudders instinctively at his embrace, and sets up a feeble cry.

Then again, from the birth-chamber, he must hurry to the bedside of some old acquaintance, whose business with Time is ended forever, though their accounts remain to be settled at a future day. It is terrible, sometimes, to perceive the lingering reluctance, the shivering agony, with which the poor souls bid Time farewell, if they have gained no other friend to supply the gray deceiver's place. How do they cling to Time, and steal another and yet another glance at his familiar aspect! But Time, the hard-hearted old fellow! goes through such scenes with infinite composure, and dismisses his best friends from memory the moment they are out of sight. Others, who have not been too intimate with Time, as knowing him to be a dangerous character, and apt to ruin his associates, — these take leave of him with joy, and pass away with a look of triumph on their features. They know, that, in spite of all his flattering promises, he could not make them happy, but that now they shall be so, long after Time is dead and buried.

For Time is not immortal. Time must die, and be buried in the deep grave of eternity. And let him die. From the hour when he passed forth through the gate of Eden, till this very moment, he has gone to and fro about the earth, staining his hands with blood, committing crimes innumerable, and bringing misery on himself and all mankind. Sometimes he has been a pagan; sometimes a persecutor. Sometimes he has spent centuries in darkness, where he could neither read nor write. These were called the Dark Ages. There has hardly been a single year, when he has not stirred up strife among the nations. Sometimes, as in France less than

fifty years ago, he has been seized with fits of frenzy, and murdered thousands of innocent people at noonday. He pretends, indeed, that he has grown wiser and better now. Trust him who will; for my part, I rejoice that Time shall not live forever. He hath an appointed office to perform. Let him do his task, and die. Fresh and young as he would make himself appear, he is already hoary with age; and the very garments that he wears about the town were put on thousands of years ago, and have been patched and pieced to suit the present fashion. There is nothing new in him nor about him. Were he to die while I am speaking, we could not pronounce it an untimely death. Methinks, with his heavy heart and weary brain, Time should himself be glad to die.

Meanwhile, gentle patrons, as Time has brought round another New Year, pray remember your poor petitioner. For so small a lad, you will agree that I talk pretty passably well, and have fairly earned whatever spare specie Time has left in your pockets. Be kind to me; and I have good hope that Time will be kind to you. After all the hard things which I have said about him, he is really, — that is, if you take him for neither more nor less than he is worth, and use him as not abusing him, — Time is really a very tolerable old fellow, and may be endured for a little while that we are to keep him company. Be generous, kind patrons, to Time's errand-boy. So may he bring to the merchant his ship safe from the Indies; to the lawyer, a goodly number of new suits; to the doctor, a crowd of patients with the dyspepsia and fat purses; to the farmer, a golden crop and a ready market; to the mechanic, steady employment and good wages;

to the idle gentleman, some honest business; to the rich, kind hearts and liberal hands; to the poor, warm firesides and food enough, patient spirits, and the hope of better days; to our country, a return of specie payments; and to you, sweet maid, the youth who stole into your dream last night! And next New Year's Day (if I find nothing better to do in the mean while) may Time again bring to your doors your loving little friend,

THE CARRIER.





“BROWNE’S FOLLY.”

The Wayside, August 28, 1860.

MY DEAR COUSIN: — I should be very glad to write a story, as you request, for the benefit of the Essex Institute, or for any other purpose that might be deemed desirable by my native townspeople. But it is now many years since the epoch of the “Twice-Told Tales,” and the “Mosses from an Old Manse”; and my mind seems to have lost the plan and measure of those little narratives, in which it was once so unprofitably fertile. I can write no story, therefore; but (rather than be entirely wanting to the occasion) I will endeavor to describe a spot near Salem, on which it was once my purpose to locate such a dreamy fiction as you now demand of me.

It is no other than that conspicuous hill (I really know not whether it lies in Salem, Danvers, or Beverly) which used in my younger days to be known by the name of “Browne’s Folly.” This eminence is a long ridge rising out of the level country around, like a whale’s back out of a calm sea, with the head and tail beneath the surface. Along its base ran a green and seldom-trodden lane, with which I was very familiar in

my boyhood; and there was a little brook, which I remember to have dammed up till its overflow made a mimic ocean. When I last looked for this tiny streamlet, which was still rippling freshly through my memory, I found it strangely shrunken; a mere ditch indeed, and almost a dry one. But the green lane was still there, precisely as I remembered it; two wheel-tracks, and the beaten path of the horses' feet, and grassy strips between; the whole overshadowed by tall locust-trees, and the prevalent barberry-bushes, which are rooted so fondly into the recollections of every Essex man.

From this lane there is a steep ascent up the side of the hill, the ridge of which affords two views of very wide extent and variety. On one side is the ocean, and Salem and Beverly on its shores; on the other a rural scene, almost perfectly level, so that each man's metes and bounds can be traced out as on a map. The beholder takes in at a glance the estates on which different families have long been situated, and the houses where they have dwelt, and cherished their various interests, intermarrying, agreeing together, or quarrelling, going to live, annexing little bits of real estate, acting out their petty parts in life, and sleeping quietly under the sod at last. A man's individual affairs look not so very important, when we can climb high enough to get the idea of a complicated neighborhood.

But what made the hill particularly interesting to me, were the traces of an old and long-vanished edifice, midway on the curving ridge, and at its highest point. A pre-revolutionary magnate, the representative of a famous old Salem family, had here built himself a pleasure-

house, on a scale of magnificence, which, combined with its airy site and difficult approach, obtained for it and for the entire hill on which it stood, the traditional title of "Browne's Folly." Whether a folly or no, the house was certainly an unfortunate one. While still in its glory, it was so tremendously shaken by the earthquake of 1755 that the owner dared no longer reside in it; and practically acknowledging that its ambitious site rendered it indeed a Folly, he proceeded to locate it on humbler ground. The great house actually took up its march along the declining ridge of the hill, and came safely to the bottom, where it stood till within the memory of men now alive.

The proprietor, meanwhile, had adhered to the Royalist side, and fled to England during the Revolution. The mansion was left under the care of Richard Derby (an ancestor of the present Derby family), who had a claim to the Browne property through his wife, but seems to have held the premises precisely as the refugee left them, for a long term of years, in the expectation of his eventual return. The house remained, with all its furniture in its spacious rooms and chambers, ready for the exile's occupancy, as soon as he should reappear. As time went on, however, it began to be neglected, and was accessible to whatever vagrant, or idle school-boy, or berrying party might choose to enter through its ill-secured windows.

But there was one closet in the house, which everybody was afraid to enter, it being supposed that an evil spirit — perhaps a domestic Demon of the Browne family — was confined in it. One day, three or four score

years ago, some school-boys happened to be playing in the deserted chambers, and took it into their heads to develop the secrets of this mysterious closet. With great difficulty and tremor they succeeded in forcing the door. As it flew open, there was a vision of people in garments of antique magnificence, — gentlemen in curled wigs and tarnished gold-lace, and ladies in brocade and quaint head-dresses, rushing tumultuously forth and tumbling upon the floor. The urchins took to their heels, in huge dismay, but crept back, after a while, and discovered that the apparition was composed of a mighty pile of family portraits. I had the story, the better part of a hundred years afterwards, from the very school-boy who pried open the closet door.

After standing many years at the foot of the hill, the house was again removed in three portions, and was fashioned into three separate dwellings, which, for aught I know, are yet extant in Danvers.

The ancient site of this proud mansion may still be traced (or could have been ten years ago) upon the summit of the hill. It consisted of two spacious wings, connected by an intermediate hall of entrance, which fronted lengthwise upon the ridge. Two shallow and grass-grown cavities remain, of what were once the deep and richly stored cellars under the two wings; and between them is the outline of the connecting hall, about as deep as a plough furrow, and somewhat greener than the surrounding sod. The two cellars are still deep enough to shelter a visitor from the fresh breezes that haunt the summit of the hill; and barberry-bushes clustering within them offer the harsh acidity of their fruits, instead of

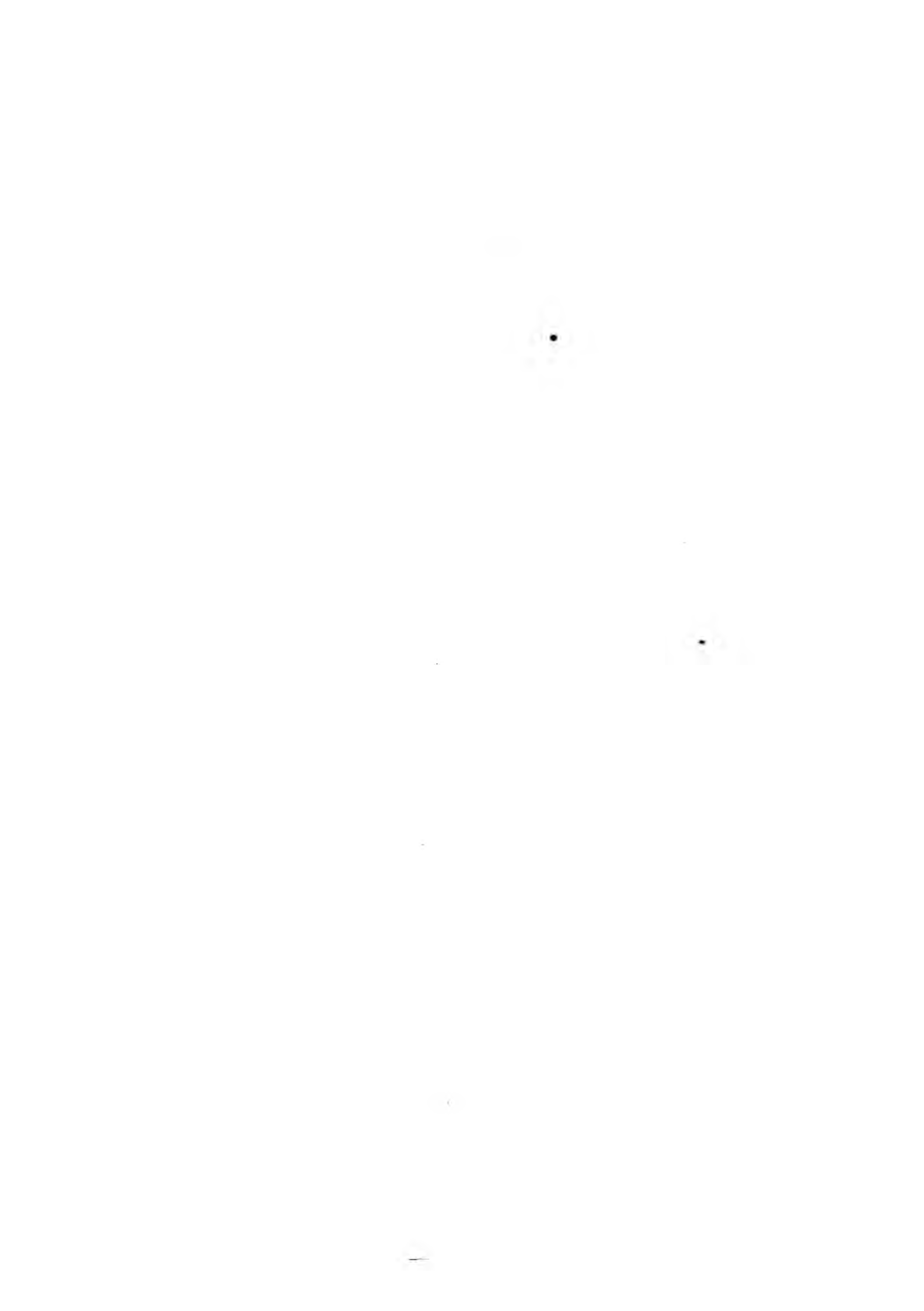
the rich wines which the colonial magnate was wont to store there for his guests. There I have sometimes sat and tried to rebuild, in my imagination, the stately house, or to fancy what a splendid show it must have made even so far off as in the streets of Salem, when the old proprietor illuminated his many windows to celebrate the King’s birthday.

I have quite forgotten what story I once purposed writing about “Browne’s Folly,” and I freely offer the theme and site to any of my young townsmen, who may be afflicted with the same tendency towards fanciful narratives which haunted me in my youth and long afterwards.

Truly yours,

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.





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