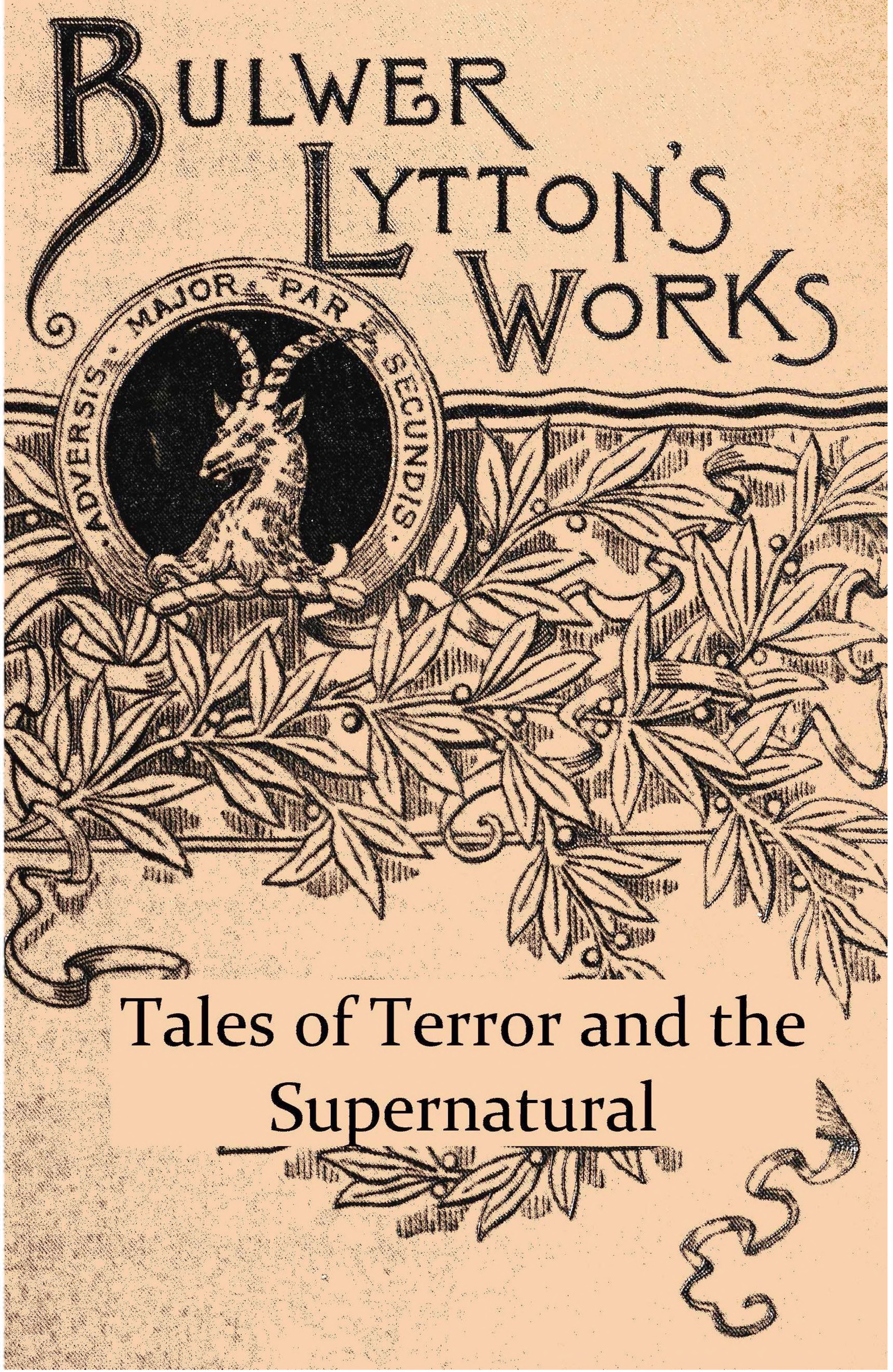
BULWER LYTTON'S WORKS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Tales of Terror and the Supernatural

Tales of Terror and the Supernatural by Edward Bulwer (later Lord Lytton)

Glenallan 1826
Falkland 1827
A Manuscript Found in a Madhouse - The Literary Souvenir 1829
Monos and Daimonos - New Monthly Magazine May 1830
Monos and Daimonos (revised version) - The Student 1835
The Tale of Kosem Kesamim the Magician [from Asmodeus at Large] -
    New Monthly Magazine January 1832-February 1833
The Nymph of the Lurlei Berg - New Monthly Magazine Nov 1832
The Pilgrims of the Rhine 1834
    ch 4 The Maid of Malines
    ch 6 The Tour of the Virtues
    ch 8 The Soul in Purgatory
    ch 12 The Wooing of Master Fox
    ch 19 The Fallen Star
    ch 23 The Life of Dreams
    ch 24 The Brothers
Arasmanes the Seeker - The Amulet 1834
The Choice of Phylias - Heath's Book of Beauty 1834
Chairolas - Heath's Book of Beauty - 1836
A Dream of the Dead - Blackwood's -September 1859

GLENALLAN

Lord Lytton

(1803-1873)

"The story of *terror, with all it faults, had seldom been guilty of demanding intellectual strain or overburdening itself with erudition. It was the dignified task of Lord Lytton to rationalise and elevate the novel of terror, to evolve the 'man of reason' from the 'child of nature'." (Edith Birkhead,* The Tale of Terror.)

Although today the work of Edward George Lytton Bulwer, Lord Lytton, is almost completely unknown—the possible exception being his short story, The Haunted and the Haunters *which by contrast is endlessly reprinted in macabre anthologies—there is little dispute among authorities that he was one of the most important literary figures of his age. Montague Summers considered him with W. Harrison Ainsworth and G. P. R. James "the greatest romanticist of the last Golden Age of Literature, the palmier days of good Queen Victoria". Indeed from his accomplished pen came essays, translations, verse, plays and novels—all of which were attuned to the tastes of their time and displayed a resourceful, agile mind.*

Bulwer Lytton came early into contact with the world of the supernatural in a haunted chamber at Knebworth House where he "peeped with bristling hair into the shadowy abysses of hell". He also had an ancestor who had reputedly dabbled in Black Magic and this is said to have inspired him to make a number of magical experiments himself. His first compositions, however, were some heroic poems written while at Cambridge and in fact his serious writing did not begin until after an unhappy marriage had thrown him completely on his own resources. His most popular novels were probably Eugene Aram (*1832*), The Last Days of Pompeii (*1834*) *and* Zanoni (*1842*) *a superlative occult tale, while his poem,* King Arthur (*1849*) *is a classic. In later life he served as a member of Parliament and was for a time Colonial Secretary.*

The story here is an early example of Lord Lytton's work (1826) and according to his son (writing in a posthumous collection of his father's miscellaneous writings) is notable for "the traces it contains of that love of the supernatural which is conspicuous in so many of the later creations of his fancy". The narrator of the tale has some of Lytton's own temperament and disposition and indeed the whole story may well be founded on memories of his maternal grandfather. I am sure all readers who only know Bulwer Lytton through one or two stories will welcome the opportunity of reading this long unobtainable novella.

I

I was born in the county of ——. After my mother's death, my father, who deeply lamented her loss, resolved to spend the remainder of his life in Ireland. He was the representative, and, with the exception of an only brother, the last of a long line of ancestry; and, unlike most ancient families still existing, the wealth of my father's family was equal to its antiquity. At an early period of life he had established a high reputation in that public career which is the proper sphere of distinction to the rich and the highborn. Men of eager minds, however, should not enter too soon into the world. The more it charms them at first, the more it wearies them at last; hope is chilled by disappointment, magnanimity depressed by a social perspective which artifically lessens even great characters and objects, tedium succeeds to energy, and delight is followed by disgust. At least so thought, and so found, my father before he was thirty; when, at the very zenith of his popular esteem, he retired from public life, to one of his estates in the West of England. It was there, at a neighbouring gentleman's, that he first saw and loved my mother, and it was there that all the latent softness of his nature was called forth.

Men of powerful passions who have passed the spring-time of youth without the excitement of that passion which is the most powerful of all, feel love perhaps with greater tenderness and force when at last it comes upon them. My father and mother had been married for several years; their happiness was only equalled by their affection, and, if anything could weaken the warmth of the thanksgiving my father daily offered to Heaven for the blessings he enjoyed, it was the reflection that there had been born no pledge to their attachment, and no heir to the name and honours of his forefathers. Justly proud of his descent from some of the most illustrious warriors and statesmen of his country, such a reflection might well cast a shade on the otherwise unbroken brightness of his married life. At last, however, in the eighth year of that life, my mother found herself pregnant, and the measure of my father's felicity was complete, as the time of her confinement approached. But on the day when I came into this world to continue the race of the Glenallans, my mother left it, for ever. This stroke fell the heavier on my father, because in the natural buoyancy of his character, he had never contemplated the possibility of such a calamity. He left England for six years, and travelled over the greater part of Europe. At the end of that time he returned, with the determination to withdraw himself completely from society, and devote all his time and intellect to the education of the son he had so dearly acquired. But as it was impossible for one so distinguished to maintain in his own country the rigid seclusion on which he was resolved, my father decided to fix his future abode in Ireland, upon the estate where his mother was born, and which in her right he inherited.

Though so young at the time of our departure from England, I can well remember many of the incidents of the journey, and never can I forget the evening when our travelling carriage stopped before those moss-grown and gigantic ruins which were the only remnants of the ancient power of the Tyrones.

It needed but a slight portion of my father's wealth to repair the ravages made by time and neglect in this ruined but still massive structure, and my future home soon assumed a more lively appearance. Although my father civilly but coldly declined all intercourse with the neighbouring gentry, the lower orders were always sure of finding a warm hearth and a bounteous board in the princely halls he had restored. His beneficence secured to him the affection of his peasantry, even amidst the perpetual disorders of one of the wildest parts of that unhappy country, and notwithstanding the abhorrence with which the existing Government was regarded by the surrounding population. My father's sole occupation was the management of my education. It was both the employment of his severer hours and the recreation of his lighter moments. He was not satisfied with making me a thorough classical scholar, but was particularly anxious to give me a perfect knowledge of the history and literature of my own country; to enlarge my views by habitual meditation; to make me familiar with the sciences of philosophy and political economy; and, in short, to bring me, as nearly as my abilities would permit, upon a par with himself.

Perhaps in his ardour to make me great, he forgot how necessary it was for my happiness to make me amiable. He suffered me to pay too little attention to the courtesies of society; and, thinking that it was impossible for a gentleman to be anything but a gentleman, he remembered not how many trifles, small in themselves but large in the aggregate, were required to lay a just claim to that distinction.

From the lessons of my father I used to turn to my private and lonely amusements. I in some degree inherited his aristocratic pride, and preferred even solitude to the intrusive familiarity of the servants and dependents, who were accustomed to join in the rural sports for which I felt no inclination. It was in solitary wanderings over wide and dreary plains, by rapid streams, amongst the ruins of ancient power, beneath the lofty cliffs, and beside the green and solemn waters of the Atlantic, that my mind insensibly assumed its habitual bias, and that my character was first coloured by the sombre hues which ever afterwards imbued it. As there were none to associate with me, my loneliness became my natural companion; my father I seldom saw, except at meals and during the time I was engaged with him in the studies he had appointed for me.

The effect of one great misfortune upon a mind so powerful as his was indeed extraordinary. Although during my mother's life he had given up all political activity, and lived in comparative retirement, yet he was then proud of preserving the ancient and splendid hospitality of the family, and whilst his house was the magnificent resort of all who were distinguished by their rank, their talents or their virtues, I have been told by those who then frequented it, that his own convivial qualities, his wit, his urbanity, his graceful and winning charm of manner were no less admired by his friends than his intellectual powers were respected by his rivals. But during the whole time that I can remember him, his habits were so reserved and unsocial that, but for his unbounded benevolence, he might have passed for an inveterate misanthropist. Although his love for me was certainly the strongest feeling of his heart, yet he never evinced it by an affectionate word or look. His manner was uniformly cold, and somewhat stern, but never harsh. From my earliest infancy I never received from him an unkind word or a reproach; nor did I ever receive from him a caress. In his gifts to me he was liberal to profusion, and as I grew up to manhood a separate suite of rooms and servants were allotted to me, far more numerous and splendid than those with which he himself was contented.

The only servant I ever admitted to familiar intercourse with me was an old man whose character was of a kind to deepen the gloom of those impressions I had already derived from other sources. He was a sort of living chronicle of horrors. He knew about every species of apparition and every kind of supernatural being, whether of Irish, English, or Scottish origin. The wildest tales constructed by the luxuriant genius of German romancers would have been tame in comparison with those of old Phelim. But of all the fictions he used to narrate, and I to revere as sacred and incontrovertible truths, none delighted me so much as those relating to my own ancestor, Morshed Tyrone, a wizard of such awful power that the spirits of earth, air, and ocean ministered to him as his slaves, and the dead walked restless rounds to perform his bidding. I can remember well how the long winter evenings were spent, by the flickering light of the turf fire, in descriptions of the midnight orgies and revels, held perhaps in the very room where Phelim and I were then sitting. I can remember well the thrilling delight with which I used to watch for the hour when I laid aside what seemed to me the cold and airy beauties of Virgil, or the dry and magisterial philosophy of Seneca (the two books my father at this time most wished me to study), that I might listen to those terrific legends. Well, too, can I remember the not all undelightful fear which crept upon me when they were over, and I was left to the dreary magnificence of my solitary apartment.

As I grew up, so far from discarding or wearing out these impressions, so inconsistent with the ideas of the eighteenth century, they grew with my growth, and strengthened with my strength. In the old library I discovered many treatises on the existence of witchcraft. Some of them went so far as to hint at the means of acquiring that dreadful art without the penalties which superstition has attached to it; others were filled with astrological speculations, and to these treasures, which I carefully removed to my own rooms, I was continually adding every work I could procure upon the subject of my favourite pursuits. Still as I read, the ardour of penetrating further into the mysteries hidden from human eyes so powerfully increased, that at last I used to steal forth on certain nights to the lonesome abodes of the dead; and, amidst the corruption of mortality and the horrors of the charnel, I have sometimes watched till morning for the attainment of frightful secrets from which my mind in its ordinary healthful condition would have shrunk with repugnance.

This unnatural state of mind, however, could not last when nothing sustained it but the chimeras of a disordered imagination; and what perhaps conduced more than anything else to restore me to my senses was a long and violent illness, caused by a severe cold caught in one of my midnight expeditions. During several weeks I was confined to my bed, and then the long dormant kindness of my father's nature seemed to revive. A mother's fondest care could not have surpassed the unceasing vigilance, the anxious tenderness, with which he watched and soothed me. He poured forth, for my amusement, the varied stores of a mind rich in the knowledge of men as well as books; and the astonishing fund of information thus lavished for my enjoyment made me conscious of my own mental defects, and anxious to recover the time I had squandered in eccentric reverie. As soon as I was convalescent I fell into a more regular and instructive course of reading: I discarded old Phelim from my confidence, cleared my shelves of their unhallowed lumber, and seemed in a fair way to flow on with the rest of the world's stream in the calm current of ordinary life. Alas, it was not to be!

I have been thus diffuse in the narrative of my earliest years, because it is in that period of life that the character is stamped. It is then we sow the seeds we are to reap hereafter.

II

I had attained my eighteenth year, and was beginning to think it time to mix somewhat more with my equals, when my father sent for me one morning at an hour which was not the usual time for our daily meeting. Since my recovery he had gradually relapsed into his former habits of reserve, although when we were alone his manner was warmer and his conversation more familiar. I was somewhat surprised at the message, but more surprised by the extraordinary agitation in which I found him when I entered his study.

"Redmond," said he, "I believe you have never heard me mention my brother. Perhaps you did not know that I had so near a relation. I have learnt today that he is dead." Here my father paused, evidently much affected, and I gained time to recover from my surprise at hearing in the same breath of the existence and death of so close a connection.

"In very early youth," continued my father, "an unfortunate quarrel arose between us, partly caused by my brother's change of political party for reasons which I thought either frivolous or mercenary The breach was widened, however, by a very imprudent marriage on his part, at which my family pride revolted; and he, disgusted at what he deemed (not perhaps unjustly, as I have since imagined) my heartless arrogance, resented so warmly some expressions I had used in the first moment of mortification that he forswore for ever my friendship and alliance. Thus we parted, never to meet again. He withdrew to France; and from that time to this my information respecting him has been slight and trivial. Today I received an official letter informing me of his death and enclosing one from himself, in which, after lamenting our long separation, he recommends (and in terms I dare not refuse to comply with) his only son to my care and affection. I shall therefore write at once to this young man, inviting him to Castle Tyrone, and assuring him of my future solicitude. I have sent for you, Redmond, to acquaint you with this decision and to prepare you for a companion about your own age, who will, I trust, relieve the tedium you must often have felt in the unbroken solitude of our lonely life here." With these words my father dismissed me.

I will pass over my reflections and anticipations, my fears and hopes, in reference to the prospect of this addition to our home life. During the whole morning of the day when our guest was expected, my father was in a state of silent agitation, as unusual to him as it was surprising to me, although I largely shared it. At length the carriage was seen at a distance; it approached, and a young man leapt lightly down from it. My father received him with a warmth quite foreign to the usual coldness of his manner, and entered into a long conversation with him about his own father. During this conversation I employed myself in taking a minute survey of my new acquaintance.

Ruthven Glenallan was in person small, but the proportions of his figure were perfectly symmetrical. He could scarcely be called handsome, but in his dark and dazzling eye, and in his brilliant smile, there was a power greater perhaps than that of beauty. He had been brought up from childhood in the most polished societies of Italy, and the winning grace of Continental manners was visible in all his gestures and expressions. Except my father, I have never known any person with such varied powers of conversation, or so able to charm and dazzle without apparent effort. Yet at times there was in his countenance a strange and sinister expression, which assumed a more suspicious appearance from the sudden and sparkling smiles immediately succeeding it if he thought himself observed. This peculiarity, however, I did not immediately perceive. For the next week we were inseparable. We walked and talked together, we accommodated our dissimilar habits to each other's inclinations, and we seemed to be laying the foundation of a lasting intimacy. Little as my father was accustomed to observe how those around him passed their time, he was evidently pleased with our friendship; and one morning, when I went to ask his advice about a course of reading on the commerce and politics of America, he said to me: "I am much gratified by the affection which you and Ruthven feel for each other; the more so, as I am now convinced of what I have always hoped, that you would be but little affected by the loss of a part of that overflowing wealth which will be yours when I am gone. You are aware that a very small portion of my estate is entailed, and I can therefore, without injury to you, bequeath to Ruthven enough for his future independence. Though his father's fortune was not large, his expenditure almost rivalled that of the foreign princes with whom he associated, and at his death little or nothing could be saved from the wreck of his fortune. The least I can do, therefore, to compensate for any fault I have committed towards my brother will be to give to his son a small moiety from the superfluous riches of my own." I need not say what was my answer; it was, I hope, what it ought to have been.

III

After the first novelty of companionship was over, I began to find in my cousin's character much that widely differed from my own ideas of excellence. If I spoke of superior worth, If I praised a lofty thought or a noble action, his usual reply was a smile of contempt, or a cold calculation of its probable motives, which he invariably sought to prove selfish or unworthy. Sometimes he laughed at my notions, as the inexperienced absurdities of a romantic visionary; at other times he startled me with a bold avowal of his own, and they were mostly those I had been taught to abhor in the most cynical literature of France and Italy. I must own, moreover, that I had sometimes the meanness to feel jealous of him. My own character was not formed to be popular. Naturally proud and reserved, and cold in my manners though warm in my feelings, there was in me something repellent, which chilled affection and repressed confidence. But Ruthven was precisely the reverse. Really wrapped in himself, yet by the perpetual courtesy of his manners always appearing to think only of others, he was loved as soon as seen. The largest part of my munificent allowance I gave away in charity; but my charity was always silently and oftenest secretly bestowed, nor did my manner of giving it ever heighten the value of the gift. Ruthven seldom or never gave, but when he did give, he so managed it that his gift was sure to be known, and the value of it exaggerated, set off as it was by that winning grace so peculiarly his own, and so particularly seductive to our Irish neighbours. His habits also, both of reading and of recreation, widely differed from my own. He was devoted to politics, which to me seemed neither interesting nor amiable, and his amusements were either the sports of the field or the society of the promiscuous admirers, mostly his social inferiors, whom his conviviality of spirit perpetually gathered round him.

I have said that I was jealous of my cousin. Yes, I was jealous of him; but this was perhaps not altogether so unworthy a feeling as it might appear. I could have recognised without irritation the solid superiority of another; I could have admired such superiority even in a declared rival, with feelings, not of jealousy, but of generous emulation; but I could not acknowledge Ruthven as my superior in any quality my character had been trained to admire. I could not but feel that in personal advantages, in depth of information, in abilities natural and acquired, and above all in that region of character which is governed by the heart, any just comparison between us would have been greatly in my favour. Yet he was loved and admired; I was disliked and feared. To a mind ardent in all its emotions, and hearty in all its thoughts, such a reflection could not be but bitterly mortifying. It was a reflection constantly and painfully renewed by the most ordinary events of every day; and the pain of it, which was not wholly selfish, may palliate perhaps, though it cannot condone, the fault I have confessed.

The gradual separation which now began to take place in our pursuits was hastened by Ruthven's adoption of a profession. My father had given him his choice, and promised him assistance in any career he might select; and after a short wavering between a commission in the army and a seat in Parliament, he finally decided upon the latter. My father had three boroughs at his disposal: two of them had been lately given to men of high reputation, and at this time, all of them were filled; but the member for one of them was very old, and labouring under all the infirmities of advanced age. There was therefore every probability that it would soon be vacant, and the expected vacancy was promised to my cousin. After this decision, Ruthven applied himself more ardently than ever to the study of politics. Every branch of law and history connected with this great object he pursued with an unwearied attention which scarcely left him an hour at leisure. This intense desire of distinction was decidedly the highest point in his character. In youth, to desire honours is to gain them.

IV

I resumed my former habits of solitude. I had always been more fond of walking than of any other kind of exercise. Accustomed to it from my earliest childhood, and blest by nature with a more than common activity and strength, I would often wander forth, in all varieties of weather, over those dreary and almost uninhabited wastes which tell so sad a tale of the internal condition of Ireland. Unhappy country! whose sons have in all ages, and more especially in ours, been among the brightest ornaments and best supporters of other lands, whilst their own, formed by nature to be so prosperous, has remained in a condition mourned even by the stranger who beholds it.

One morning, tempted by an unusual flow of animal spirits and the beauty of the advancing spring, I prolonged my excursion far beyond its customary limits. I was greatly attracted by the novelty of the scenery which opened around me, and finding myself at the foot of a small hill, I climbed it, for the pleasure of a wider prospect. There was one object in the foreground of the landscape on which I then looked down which immediately and strangely impressed me; but little did I then anticipate the influence it was destined to exert over my future life. This object was a rather large and very ruinous building, which stood utterly alone, upon a dull and shrubless plain. The oasis of desert, islanded in the loveliness of a landscape with which it had no visible relation, looked as though a wicked enchanter had stolen it by night from another and more dismal land, and dropped it where I saw it, to sadden and deform the beauty of the scenery around it; so foreign did it look to the character of the neighbouring country, and so coldly did it seem to cower in the desolation of its own sterility. My imagination tempted me to approach it.

I found the house in a state of even greater dilapidation than had been apparent to my first and more distant view of it. There was no wall or fence to protect it from the encroachment of man or beast. The rank ivy rioted in its broken windows, and troops of wild thistles crowded its doorless thresholds. At first it seemed to me impossible that such a place could have a human tenant, but presently I perceived a faint smoke rising from a rickety chimney in the shattered roof; and soon afterwards a woman, whose dress and air were evidently not those of a peasant or a pauper, emerged from the crumbling aperture which served as main doorway to the interior of the ruin. She slowly approached the place where I was standing. As she walked, her head was stooped apparently in deep thought, and we were close to each other before she noticed my intrusion. With a respectful gesture I stepped aside to let her pass. She heard my footstep and looked up. Our eyes immediately and involuntarily met.

Could I devote the unremitting labour of a hundred years to the description of the feelings which that momentary look awakened within me, I should fail to express them. Philosophers may deride, and pedants dispute, the magic of those rare moments which reveal to the heart the capacity and the destiny of emotions it has never felt before; but from the first glance of that woman's eye my soul drank inspirations of passion which have influenced my whole life.

The stranger blushed deeply beneath my riveted and ardent gaze; and, slightly returning the involuntary bow which my ignorance of modern etiquette could alone excuse, she passed on with a quickened step. How often have the most momentous events of our future life originated in the most casual and trifling incidents of the passing moment! Ruthven's favourite dog had that day accompanied me in my lonely excursion. He was one of the fiercest of the fierce breed of English terriers; and his indignation being kindled by some mark of disrespect in the behaviour of a small spaniel which was the lady's only companion, he suddenly flew upon the little creature with a force and ferocity from which it was wholly unable to defend itself. My interference with this unequal combat was successfully exerted at the most opportune moment; and I had the happiness of being rewarded for it by a smile, and a voice, of which the memory almost repays me even now for the terrible sufferings I have since undergone.

To those who read the history of my eventful life, I would fain describe, if I could, the surpassing loveliness of that face which has been the star of its fairest hopes, and even in its darkest moments a guiding light, a glory, and a blessing. But the best part of beauty is what no picture can ever express; and if I attempted to portray the beauty of Ellen St. Aubyn, the attempt would be as eternal as my love.

V

I took advantage of an opportunity so favourable, to enter into conversation with the fair stranger: a conversation embarrassed only by my habitual reserve. She was too high bred, and too genuinely modest, to repulse my respectful advances. Half an hour's walk brought us to the entrance of a large modern mansion, so completely embosomed in the surrounding woodlands that till then I had not perceived it. By this time I had learned that my fair acquaintance was the daughter of Lord St. Aubyn; that her father was dead; that since his death her mother had settled almost entirely in Ireland, which was her native country; and that Lady St. Aubyn was accustomed to pass half the year in Dublin, and the rest of it at Rose Cliff, the beautiful retreat which then burst into view from the depth of the embowering foliage around it, bright in all the sweetness of the noontide sun. Here I received from my companion a slight but graceful invitation to accompany her into the house, and I gladly accepted it. "I have brought you," said Miss St. Aubyn to her mother, "a treasure from an unknown shore. Let me introduce Mr. Glenallan." Lady St. Aubyn received me with a charming courtesy which was a pleasant combination of

English dignity and Irish cordiality; and in a few moments I found myself in animated conversation with her on the state of the neighbouring country. When at last I rose to take my leave, I was so warmly pressed to stay for dinner, that I felt too pleased and flattered to refuse. Shortly afterwards, some friends who were staying at the house returned from their morning walk, and I was formally introduced to Mrs. M——, Lord and Lady C——, Miss P—— and Lady L——. In the manner of all these new acquaintances I noticed how instantaneously their first scrutinising and somewhat supercilious look at me was changed, on the mention of my name, to one of respectful politeness: so great is the magic of a name, when that name is associated with the importance which society accords to birth and wealth. At dinner I was seated between Miss P—— and Lady C——. To me these ladies then appeared the most uncommon, though I have since discovered that they were the most common, specimens of womankind. Miss P—— was an enthusiastic musician and admirer of poetry, especially the poetry of Scott and Moore. It is a pity that Byron had not then become famous. How she would have adored him! What her family and fortune were, I cannot exactly say. Both were, I believe, respectable. As for her personal and natural qualities, she was rather pretty, if blue eyes, good teeth, a perpetual smile, and a never-varying red and white, could make her so, in spite of red hair, a short clumsy figure, a broad hand, and a voice which had not a single tone free from affectation. Lady C—— was a fine large woman, highly rouged, and dressed rather more *à la Grecque* than ladies of fifty generally think correct. She spoke with remarkable self-possession; and whether compliments or sarcasm, wit or wisdom, politics or poetry, it was with a voice perfectly unchanging, accompanied by a fixed stare, which, according to the subject discussed, appeared sometimes indecent, sometimes supercilious, always displeasing, and always unfeminine.

These two ladies, however, were just the sort of women best fitted to diminish the embarrassment of a shy and inexperienced young man. They were eternal talkers and loose observers, and my little blunders in established etiquette escaped unheeded. They were not very serious blunders. Although no guests ever joined our family meals at home, the refinement of my father's tastes and habits scrupulously maintained, even in the most careless privacy, all those little forms and customs which exist in well-bred families.

Moreover, I was a most miscellaneous reader, and not less familiar with all that class of fiction which paints the manners and habits of society than with the more serious literature of ethics. A good novel should be, and generally is, a magnifying or diminishing glass of life. It may lessen or enlarge what it reflects, but the general features of society are faithfully reproduced by it. If a man reads such works with intelligent interest, he may learn almost as much of the world from his library as from the clubs and drawing-rooms of St. James's.

How often during dinner my eyes wandered to that part of the table where Ellen St. Aubyn was sitting! How intently were they riveted upon her, when her bright cheek was turned away from me, and yet how swiftly were my looks averted when they encountered hers! After the ladies had withdrawn, the conversation was as uninteresting as after-dinner conversation generally is. I took an early opportunity of retreating to the drawing-room to make my adieux, but, with a hospitality truly Irish, I was again pressed to prolong my stay, at least for that night, and to send a servant to Castle Tyrone, with a message informing my father of the cause of my absence.

"Do pray stay," said Miss P——, "for I have a great favour to ask of you."

"Why should you go?" cried Lady C——.

"What's the matter?" added Lady L——, who was somewhat deaf. "Surely Mr. Glenallan is not going; the evening is setting in, and see how hard it rains."

"It will be quite an insult to Rose Cliff," chimed in Lady St. Aubyn.

To this I could answer nothing, but I looked at Ellen, who blushed as my gaze met hers, and I bowed a delighted assent. The servant was sent, and I remained. The whole of that evening I sat by Ellen, and that evening was therefore one of the happiest of my life.

In the course of our conversation, I asked her who lived in that deserted and ruinous building which had so fortunately attracted my attention.

"It is," said Ellen, "the last descendant of one of the oldest and once most powerful families in Ireland; and that house, the only one left of all her ancestral possessions, gives you a good idea of its inmate. She is very old, and apparently very poor; yet she never appears to want, and with all the noble but mistaken pride of high lineage, she would starve rather than accept assistance from anyone not of her own kindred. Her age, her poverty, her loneliness, and something certainly mysterious in her manners and habits, have gained her the reputation of a witch throughout the neighbourhood. When I was quite a child, I found her one morning stretched in a fit, by a well near her house, where I suppose she had gone to draw water. I was fortunate enough to procure assistance in removing her to her own home, where she soon recovered, and ever since that time she has regarded me as an acquaintance, though she is averse to frequent visits, and will never permit me to contribute to her scanty comforts. Today I visited her for the first time since many weeks, but every time I see her she leaves upon my mind a remarkable and I may almost say a fearful impression."

I was just going to ask some further questions, for I felt deeply interested in what I had just heard from Miss St. Aubyn, when to my vexation that provoking Miss P—— came up to us and said, "Dear Mr. Glenallan, now it was so good to stay, because I wished it. Don't be vain at my wishing it, for I am going to tell you why I did. You have read, of course, Scott's beautiful poem of 'Rokeby.' Well, I am making some drawings descriptive of the most striking scenes in it, but I never can draw figures out of my own head. I must have a model, and I want to paint Bertram and Redmond. Well, I have been everywhere and looked at everybody to find an appropriate model, and all to no purpose, but when I first saw you, I said to myself, 'Oh, he will just do for Bertram,' and so, . . . la, thank you, that look is just the thing. Pray keep so. Now don't move a muscle till I get my pencil. Dear, how provoking, if you ain't laughing! Well now, since I saw you talking and laughing so cheerfully with Miss St. Aubyn, I thought you would do for Redmond too, so will you let me have your profile for Bertram, and your front face for Redmond? Thank you! I knew you would. I feared at first it might be rude to ask you, but—

'Despair
Made us dare,'

and I have tried everywhere. First I thought Lord C—— would do, but he is so very pale and thin, and then I thought of Mr.

M——, but he is so very red and fat, and then I looked at Colonel B.-E——, but he wears his collars so high that I could see nothing but his nose and eyes, and if I was to take them with that immensity of black hair round them, people would think I had drawn an owl in an ivy bush. Well, you will do very well. With a little management, that is. You must throw your hair off your forehead, and take off your neckcloth for Redmond, and . . . la, if here ain't Lady St. Aubyn coming to ask me to sing. What *shall* I sing? 'Young Lochinvar' or 'When in death I shall calm recline?' "

I stayed a week at "Rose Cliff," and that time was sufficient to attach my heart to Ellen St. Aubyn by the finest and firmest ties of love. She was, indeed, all that was fitted to command the worship of a youthful and ardent enthusiast. Her face, her figure, her temper, her heart,—all were formed in the perfect purity of female loveliness.

VI

It was in the middle of the day that I took leave of "Rose Cliff."

The morning had been wet, but the weather had cleared up by noon, though dark clouds in the distant horizon foreboded a return of storm before night. One of my servants had come with my horses from Castle Tyrone, but I had sent him on before me. Lovers know how sweet is the charm of a solitary ride when solitude is peopled with delicious hopes and remembrances that convert it into a paradise. I had not ridden more than three or four miles upon my way when a very heavy shower coming on drove me for refuge to a neighbouring farmhouse. Here I stayed so long that the evening was already far advanced before I recommenced my journey; but the rain had ceased, and the way was too short to make the lateness of the hour a cause of any inconvenience. I was little more than seven miles from home, when my course was crossed and again stopped by a stream which the recent rain had so swollen as to render it perfectly impassable. I knew of a different road, but it was much longer and rather intricate, and the increasing darkness made me very doubtful whether I should succeed in tracing it out. However, there was no alternative. I must proceed or recede, and of course I chose the former. I had gone some distance when the road branched off in three directions, and I left the choice between them to the discretion of my horse. The event proved how mistaken is the notion entertained by some people about the superior sagacity of those animals. Although I put my horse to his fastest speed, the night came upon me, still completely ignorant of my course, and evidently no nearer home than before. Suddenly I heard a noise behind me, and two horsemen dashed by me, without heeding or answering my loud inquiries as to time and place. I felt all my Irish blood boiling in a moment, and resolving to have some more courteous response from these strangers I galloped after them as fast as my horse's weariness would permit.

They had not gone above a hundred yards before they abruptly turned down a narrow lane, the winding of which completely hid them from sight; and while I was deliberating whether I should follow them, down a road evidently out of my way home, I saw a light which, from its bright and steady beam, appeared to proceed from some house, about a mile distant. There I am sure, thought I, of finding either a guide or a lodging, with perhaps the chance of catching those ungallant gentry into the bargain. So, keeping my eye upon the light, and my horse still at a rapid pace, I reached in about ten minutes the door of a small house. The sign-board, hanging over it, indicated that the place was meant for the entertainment of man and beast. I had a faint idea of having seen it before, in my rides and walks, but I took short time to examine its exterior. The door was fast. I could, however, distinctly hear low voices within, but my loud knock was only answered by an instantaneous and profound silence. I twice repeated it without any other result. My third effort was answered by a voice which asked, "Who is there?"

"I want," said I, "a guide and a lodging; open the door immediately."

Another silence was followed by a gruff command to go away, and not to disturb honest men, at that time of night.

"Hark you," said I, "this house is a public one, for the reception of strangers, and I know there are some in it at this moment. Open the door therefore, or refuse at your peril."

Another voice now replied with a deep curse, and a third added,

"Let him come in and take the consequences."

"No," cried the one who had first spoken, "he shall not come in."

Then I cried, "I will break open the door." And suiting the action to the word, I placed my shoulder against it with some force.

It immediately gave way. There was a narrow passage between the threshold and the room whence the voices had proceeded.

Immediately on my entrance, a man strode out before the door of this room, and eyed me with a menacing attitude.

"Are you," said I, quietly, "the master of the house? If so, I will trouble you to take care of my horse."

There was an appearance of surprise in the man's countenance. Of this I immediately took advantage, and gently putting him aside, I walked into the room.

I must own that I repented of my temerity on the first view of its interior. In the centre of the apartment there was a large oaken table, around which were seated about twelve or fourteen men. The greater number of them were wrapped up in large cloaks, which, with the addition of slouched hats and muffling handkerchiefs, effectually concealed each man's person. At the head of the table stood, in an angry attitude, one man more closely disguised than the rest, for he wore a black mask; and by his right side sat a woman of advanced age. Her features were the most strikingly commanding I ever saw, and her style of dress, which was somewhat in the Moorish fashion, enhanced their imposing effect. The table was spread with papers, which appeared to have been thrown together in great haste and disorder, probably at the moment of my unexpected intrusion; and before each man was placed a brace of pistols, ready cocked, and a drawn sword.

There was a momentary pause. But the dark disguises of the forms around me, the weapons before them, and the lateness of the hour fully proclaimed the unlawful character of their meeting. I felt a strong inclination to retreat from a house where I was evidently no welcome comer. Whether this design appeared in my looks or motion, I cannot say; but, on a sign from him who appeared to be the chief in this unhallowed assembly, a man rose from the table, advanced to the door, bolted and locked it, and quietly returning to his place, laid the key beside his pistols. This I looked upon as a very unfavourable omen; but, resolved, if possible, not to betray my alarm, I turned to the large turf fire, and made some remark on the coldness of the night.

"Was the weather," said the man at the head of the table, "the only cause of your trespass upon our society?"

"Sir," said I, "if I have intruded upon you and the company of these gentlemen, you will, I trust, excuse me, and believe that my motive was really and solely the wish I expressed before I entered, to obtain a guide to the nearest town. If I am not mistaken, this house is intended to receive all who seek its shelter, but as I cannot conceive that anyone among you is the landlord, will you allow me to look for him, and accept my repeated apologies for having so unintentionally disturbed you? Sir," I added (turning to the man who had secured the door), "will you have the goodness to let me through?" And so saying, I walked, with a sort of despair, to the entrance.

"Stay," cried the chief in a voice of thunder, and pointing one of his pistols towards me, "If you move one foot further, your blood be on your own head."

I felt my indignation rise, and not caring to suppress it, "By what right," I cried, "will you or any man detain me? If, as you say, I have intruded on your company, can you with any reason object to my withdrawing from it?"

Before the chief could reply another man rose suddenly from the table. "Stranger," said he, "look around you. Is not one glance sufficient to convince you that you are among those to whom concealment is necessary, and do you think that we will permit you, not only to endanger our lives, but also imperil the salvation of our country? No! I repeat it, no; it is not our lives that we regard, and as for myself, I scorn this vain meanness, of meeting in darkness and disguise, to concert and execute schemes for so noble a purpose as the liberation of our country. Know us for men in whose ears the groans of Ireland have not fallen in vain. In silence we have seen our constitution insidiously attacked and betrayed. In silence we have submitted to the laws and commands of a tyrannical Government, which grinds us to the dust, while it mocks us with the pretence of friendship and union. In silence we have heard our religion traduced, and seen our nobles robbed of their rights, whilst yet meanly crouching at the court of their conqueror. In the senate of a land not ours, we have no voice to complain, no force to cry for justice. Whilst our rulers boast of tolerance, we are crushed beneath the weight of their bigotry. More than victorious Rome ever imposed upon our tyrants they have inflicted upon us, and all this we have borne, writhing but unresisting. But endurance is exhausted; we can no longer sit helpless in our ruined homes, whilst our dependents, our parents, our wives, our children, are daily and hourly sinking around us, beneath the horrors of famine. They ask us for bread and we have it not to give them; yet though they are perishing beneath our eyes, we will no longer uplift, in the vanity of supplication to our oppressors, hands to which the sword can alone restore the liberties we have lost, and the lives we are losing. There is not one of us here assembled who has not sworn an oath which, if maintained, will liberate his land, but if broken turn against the bosom of its betrayer the swords of his comrades. There is not one of us whose life is not consecrated to the freedom of his country, not one of us who is not ready to shed his blood in that sacred cause. But think not, stranger, that our strength is but the frenzied paroxysm of despair. It is a deeply established and elaborately organised power. At the slightest sign from each one of the men before you, as many thousands are prepared to flock to the standard of Ireland, and when that standard is unfurled, there is not throughout the whole people of this land an honest man whose name will not be enrolled in the ranks that follow it. Our councils are secret, but our cause is sacred. It is sacred because God is the God of mercy and justice, and for justice and for mercy we contend. Yes, although now we assemble in darkness and disguise, ere long the sun of a reviving nation will rise upon the hosts that are gathering in the watches of the night, and the clouds that still obscure its brightness shall be scattered upon the wings of the morning. Such, stranger, are the men in whose presence you stand, and with their fate is linked the fate of Ireland. Judge, then, whether we can suffer you to leave us at the risk of our destruction."

"No, let him die," shouted the chief. "Let him die" echoed the voice of every man in the room, and their swords gleamed in the dim light of it.

"Hear me," I cried, "hear me first, and then murder me if you will, for I am in your power."

"Hear him," said the man, who a few moments before had turned their wrath against me. And at his word every sound died away into silence.

(End of the manuscript of *Glenallan*—Editor's note.)

FALKLAND.

R. Vous comptez sur peu d'imitateurs
N. Vel duo vel nemo!
Preface de la Nouvelle Heloise

PREFACE.

I TRUST that I shall not be considered to despise, when I disclaim for this publication, the title of a novel. I feel, on the contrary, that to most readers it will be less, and can scarcely flatter myself that to a few it will be more. For one class, my work will be too frivolous; for another too dull. The cold will be displeased, and the sanguine disappointed; the former with descriptions of feelings they cannot recognise as true; the latter with reflections upon life inimical to the philosophy they adopt. Whatever has been my motive for publishing, it was not the anticipation of success; and probably no one, in making a similar experiment, has ever claimed more sincerely the merit of diffidence as to the result.

Perhaps, however altered for publication, the first idea of this history had its foundation in fact; perhaps, among the letters now given to the world in the hope that they may "point a moral," there are some not originally written to "adorn a tale;" but this would be matter of idle affirmation in me, and unavailing inquiry in others. Nor would it be any answer to those who may find the characters unnatural, and the sentiments exaggerated, could I assert that the characters had existed, and the sentiments had been felt. In a state of society, where all things are artificial, nothing seems so false as that which is really true.

I have some apprehensions lest, by those readers who judge of the whole only by a part, the end of this work should be censured, because misunderstood. I have some apprehensions lest occasional descriptions be considered too vividly colored, or sketches of feeling too faithfully portrayed; but let it be remembered, before I am condemned, that no mistake has been so great (though so common) in morals, as to lay down a penalty without particularizing the offence: and if I have copied truth in showing the punishment, it was necessary also to study the same model in recording the annals of the passions. But though I confess I have aimed at a resemblance, I have carefully avoided an embellishment: never once in the picture of guilt have I attempted to varnish its misery, or to gloss over its shame. If my story has been founded on the errors of the heart, it is because the most useful to morals may be gathered from the consequences they bring.

In the character of Falkland I have wished to show that all virtue is weak, and that all wisdom is unavailing, where there is no pervading and fixed principle to become at once our criterion for every new variation of conduct, and our pledge for pursuing, if we have once resolved to adopt it. Nor is it only in the general plot, but in the scattered reflections it embraces, that I have attempted to realize what ought to be the great object of all human compositions.

If it be the good fortune of this volume to meet with some to whom the passions have been the tutors of reflection, who deem that observations on our nature, even if erroneous in themselves, are always beneficial to truth, and who think that more knowledge of the secret heart may often be condensed into a single thought than scattered over a thousand events; if it be the good fortune of this volume to meet with such, it is to them that I fearlessly intrust it, — not, indeed, to be approved in its execution, but at least to be acquitted in its design.

It now only remains to be added, that in entering a career with no motive and ambition in common with those of his competitors, the author earnestly trusts that he shall be exonerated from the charge of presumption, if he cannot adopt the language of hope or apprehension which is customary with others: men who pretend to experience, not to genius, are less likely to miscalculate the bounds of their merits, or be susceptible to general opinion as to their extent. If the author has reflected erroneously, it is because events have led him rather to imbody his own than to borrow the conclusions of another: if he has offended in his delineation of the feelings, it is because he has wrought from no model but remembrance; and if he cannot now feel much eagerness of interest in the success of his attempt, it is because, from his acquaintance with mankind, he has shaped out an empire for himself, which their praise cannot widen, and which their censure is unable to destroy.

LONDON, March 7, 1827.

FALKLAND.

BOOK I.

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ. TO THE HON. FREDERICK MONKTON.

L——, *May* —, 1822.

You are mistaken, my dear Monkton! Your description of the gayety of "the season" gives me no emotion. You speak of pleasure; I remember no labor so wearisome; you enlarge upon its changes; no sameness appears to me so monotonous. Keep, then, your pity for those who require it. From the height of my philosophy I compassionate *you.* No one is so vain as a recluse, and your jests at my hermitship and hermitage cannot penetrate the folds of a self-conceit which does not envy you in your suppers at D—— House, nor even in your waltzes with Eleanor ——.

It is a ruin rather than a house which I inhabit. I have not been at L—— since my return from abroad, and during those years the place has gone rapidly to decay; perhaps, for that reason, it suits me better, *tel maître telle maison.*

Of all my possessions this is the least valuable in itself, and derives the least interest from the associations of childhood, for it was not at L—— that any part of that period was spent. I have, however, chosen it for my present retreat, because here only I am personally unknown, and therefore little likely to be disturbed. I do not, indeed, wish for the interruptions designed as civilities; I rather gather around myself, link after link, the chains that connected me with the world; I find among my own thoughts that variety and occupation which you only experience in your intercourse with others; and I make, like the Chinese, my map of the universe consist of a circle in a square, — the circle is my own empire of thought and *self;* and it is to the scanty corners which it leaves without, that I banish whatever belongs to the remainder of mankind.

About a mile from L—— is Mr. Mandeville's beautiful villa of E——, in the midst of grounds which form a delightful contrast to the savage and wild scenery by which they are surrounded. As the house is at present quite deserted, I have obtained, through the gardener, a free admittance into his domains, and I pass there whole hours indulging, like the hero of the *Lutrin,* "*une sainte oisiveté,*" listening to a little noisy brook, and letting my thoughts be almost as vague and idle as the birds which wander among the trees that surround me. I could wish, indeed, that this simile were in all things correct, — that those thoughts, if as free, were also as happy as the objects of my comparison; and could, like them, after the rovings of the day, turn at evening to a resting-place, and be still. We are the dupes and the victims of our senses: while we use them to gather from external things the hoards that we store within, we cannot foresee the punishments we prepare for ourselves. The remembrance which stings, and the hope which deceives, the passions which promise us rapture, which reward us with despair, and the thoughts which, if they constitute the healthful action, make also the feverish excitement of our mind. What sick man has not dreamed in his delirium every thing that our philosophers have said?* But I am growing into my old habit of gloomy reflection, and it is time that I should conclude. I meant to have written you a letter as light as your own; if I have failed, it is no wonder. — "Notre cœur est un instrument incomplet, — une lyre où il manque des cordes, et où nous sommes forcés de rendre les accens de la joie, sur le ton consacré aux soupirs."

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

You ask me to give you some sketch of my life, and of that *bel mondo* which wearied me so soon. Men seldom reject an opportunity to talk of themselves: and I am not unwilling to reëxamine the past, to reconnect it with the present, and to gather from a consideration of each, what hopes and expectations are still left to me for the future.

But my detail must be rather of thought than of action: most of those whose fate has been connected with mine are now living, and I would not, even to you, break that tacit confidence which much of my history would require. After all, you will have no loss. The actions of another may interest, — but, for the most part, it is only his reflections which come home to us; for few have acted, nearly all of us have thought.

My own vanity too would be unwilling to enter upon incidents which had their origin either in folly or in error. It is true that those follies and errors have ceased, but their effects remain. With years our *faults* diminish, but our *vices* increase.

You know that my mother was Spanish, and that my father was one of that old race of which so few scions remain, who, living in a distant country, have been little influenced by the changes of fashion, and, priding themselves on the antiquity of their names, have looked with contempt upon the modern distinctions and the mushroom noblesse which have sprung up to discountenance and eclipse the plainness of more venerable and solid respectability. In his youth my father had served in the army. He had known much of men, and more of books; but his knowledge, instead of rooting out, had rather ingrafted on, his prejudices. He was one of that class (and I say it with a private reverence, though a public regret) who, with the best intentions, have made the worst citizens, and who think it a duty to perpetuate whatever is pernicious, by having learned to consider it as sacred. He was a great country gentleman, a great sportsman, and a great Tory; perhaps the three worst enemies which a country can have. Though beneficent to the poor, he gave but a cold reception to the rich; for he was too refined to associate with his inferiors, and too proud to like the competition of his equals. One ball and two dinners a year constituted all the aristocratic portion of our hospitality; and at the age of twelve, the noblest and youngest companions that I possessed, were a large Danish dog and a wild mountain pony, as unbroken and as lawless as myself. It is only in later years that we can perceive the immeasurable importance of the early scenes and circumstances which surround us. It was in the loneliness of my unchecked wanderings that my early affection for my own thoughts was conceived. In the seclusion of nature, — in whatever court she presided, — the education of my mind was begun; and, even at that early age, I rejoiced (like the wild hart the Grecian poet* has described) in the stillness of the great woods, and the solitudes unbroken by human footstep.

The first change in my life was under melancholy auspices: my father fell suddenly ill, and died; my mother, whose very existence seemed only held in his presence, followed him in three months. I remember that, a few hours before her death, she called me to her: she reminded me that, through her, I was of Spanish extraction; that in her country I received my birth, and that, not the less for its degradation and distress, I might hereafter find in the relations which I held to it a remembrance to value, or even a duty to fulfil. On her tenderness to me at that hour, on the impression it made upon my mind, and on the keen and enduring sorrow which I felt for months after her death, it would be useless to dwell.

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* Quid ægrotus unquam somniavit quod philosophorum aliquis non dixerit? — *Lactantius.*

* Eurip. Bacchæ, l. 874.

My uncle became my guardian. He is, you know, a member of Parliament of some reputation; very sensible and very dull; very much respected by men; very much disliked by women; and inspiring all children, of either sex, with the same unmitigated aversion which he feels for them himself.

I did not remain long under his immediate care. I was soon sent to school, — that preparatory world, where the great primal principles of human nature, in the aggression of the strong, and the meanness of the weak, constitute the earliest lesson of importance that we are taught; and where the forced *primitiæ* of that less universal knowledge which is useless to the many who, in after-life, neglect, and bitter to the few who improve it, are the first motives for which our minds are to be broken into terror, and our hearts initiated into tears.

Bold and resolute by temper, I soon carved myself a sort of career among my associates. A hatred to all oppression, and a haughty and unyielding character, made me at once the fear and aversion of the greater powers and principalities of the school; while my agility at all boyish games, and my ready assistance or protection to every one who required it, made me proportionally popular with, and courted by, the humbler multitude of the subordinate classes. I was constantly surrounded by the most lawless and mischievous followers whom the school could afford; all eager for my commands, and all pledged to their execution.

In good truth, I was a worthy Roland of such a gang: though I excelled in, I cared little for, the ordinary amusements of the school: I was fonder of engaging in marauding expeditions, contrary to our legislative restrictions, and I valued myself equally upon my boldness in planning our exploits, and my dexterity in eluding their discovery. But exactly in proportion as our school terms connected me with those of my own years, did our vacations unfit me for any intimate companionship but that which I already began to discover in myself.

Twice in the year, when I went home, it was to that wild and romantic part of the country where my former childhood had been spent. There, alone and unchecked, I was thrown utterly upon my own resources. I wandered, by day, over the rude scenes which surrounded us; and at evening I pored, with an unwearied delight, over the ancient legends which made those scenes sacred to my imagination. I grew by degrees of a more thoughtful and visionary nature. My temper imbibed the romance of my studies; and whether, in winter, basking by the large hearth of our old hall, or stretched, in the indolent voluptuousness of summer, by the rushing streams which formed the chief characteristic of the country around us, my hours were equally wasted in those dim and luxurious dreams, which constituted, perhaps, the essence of that poetry I had not the genius to imbody. It was then, by that alternate restlessness of action and idleness of reflection, into which my young years were divided, that the impress of my character was stamped: that fitfulness of temper, that affection for extremes, has accompanied me through life Hence, not only all intermediums of emotion appear to me as tame, but even the most overwrought excitation can bring neither novelty nor zest. I have, as it were, feasted upon the passions; I have made that my daily food, which, in its strength and excess, would have been poison to others; I have rendered my mind unable to enjoy the ordinary aliments of nature; and I have wasted by a premature indulgence, my resources and my powers, till I have left my heart, without a remedy or a hope, to whatever disorders its own intemperance has engendered.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

When I left Dr. ——'s, I was sent to a private tutor in D——e. Here I continued for about two years. It was during that time that, — but what *then* befell me is for no living ear! The characters of that history are engraven on my heart in letters of fire; but it is a language that none but myself have the authority to read. It is enough for the purpose of my confessions that the events of that period were connected with the first awakening of the most powerful of human passions, and that, whatever their commencement, their end was despair! and *she*, — the only object of that love, — the only being in the world who ever possessed the secret and the spell of my nature, — *her* life was the bitterness and the fever of a troubled heart, — her rest is the grave, —

> Non la conobbe il mondo mentre l'ebbe
> Con ibill 'io, ch 'a pianger qui rimasi.

That attachment was not so much a single event as the first link in a long chain which was coiled around my heart. I were a tedious and bitter history, even were it permitted, to tell you of all the sins and misfortunes to which in after life that passion was connected. I will only speak of the more hidden but general effect it had upon my mind; though, indeed, naturally inclined to a morbid and melancholy philosophy, it is more than probable, but for that occurrence, it would never have found matter for excitement. Thrown early among mankind, I should early have imbibed their feelings, and grown like them by the influence of custom. I should not have carried within me one unceasing remembrance, which was to teach me, like Faustus, to find nothing in knowledge but its inutility, or in hope but its deceit; and to bear like him, through the blessings of youth and the allurements of pleasure, the curse and the presence of a fiend.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

It was after the first violent grief produced by that train of circumstances to which I must necessarily so darkly allude, that I began to apply with earnestness to books. Night and day I devoted myself unceasingly to study, and from this fit I was only recovered by the long and dangerous illness it produced. Alas! there is no fool like him who wishes for knowledge! It is only through woe that we are taught to reflect, and we gather the honey of worldly wisdom, not from flowers, but thorns.

"Une grande passion malheureuse est un grand moyen de sagesse." From the moment in which the buoyancy of my spirit was first broken by real anguish, the losses of the *heart* were repaired by the experience of the *mind*. I passed at once, like Melmoth, from youth to age. What were any longer to me the ordinary avocations of my cotemporaries? I had exhausted years in moments; I had wasted, like the Eastern queen, my richest jewel in a draught. I ceased to hope, to feel, to act, to burn: such are the impulses of the young! I learned to doubt, to reason, to analyze: such are the habits of the old! From that time, if I have not avoided the pleasures of life, I have not enjoyed them. Women, wine, the society of the gay, the commune of the wise, the lonely pursuit of knowledge, the daring visions of ambition, all have occupied me in turn, and all alike have deceived me; but, like the widow in the story of Voltaire, I have built at last a temple to "time the comforter:" I have grown calm and unrepining with years; and, if I am now shrinking from men, I have derived at least this advantage from the loneliness first made habitual by regret; — that while I feel increased benevolence to others, I have learned to look for happiness only in myself.

They alone are independent of fortune who have made themselves a separate existence from the world.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

I went to the university with a great fund of general reading, and habits of constant application. My uncle who, having no children of his own, began to be ambitious for me, formed great expectations of my career at Oxford I stayed there three years, and did nothing! I did not gain a single prize, nor did I attempt any thing above the most ordinary degree. The fact is, that nothing seemed to me worthy the labor of success. I conversed with those who had obtained the highest academical reputation, and I smiled with a consciousness of superiority at the boundlessness of their vanity, and the narrowness of their views. The limits of the distinction they had gained seemed to them as wide as the most extended renown; and the little knowledge their youth had acquired only appeared to them an excuse for the ignorance and the indolence of maturer years. Was it to equal these that I was to labor? I felt that I already surpassed them! Was it to gain *their* good opinion, or still worse, that of their admirers? Alas! I had too long learned to live for myself to find any happiness in the respect of the idlers I despised.

I left Oxford at the age of twenty-one. I succeeded to the large estates of my inheritance, and for the first time I felt the vanity so natural to youth, when I went up to London to enjoy the resources of the capital, and to display the powers I possessed to revel in whatever those resources could yield. I found society like the Jewish temple; any one is admitted into its threshold; none but the chiefs of the institution into its recesses.

Young, rich, of an ancient and honorable name, pursuing pleasure rather as a necessary excitement than an occasional occupation, and agreeable to the associates I drew around me because my profusion contributed to their enjoyment, and my temper to their amusement, — I found myself courted by many, and avoided by none. I soon discovered that all civility is but the mask of design. I smiled at the kindness of the fathers, who, hearing that I was talented, and knowing that I was rich, looked to my support in whatever political side they had espoused. I saw in the notes of the mothers their anxiety for the establishment of their daughters, and their respect for my acres; and in the cordiality of the sons who had horses to sell, and rouge-et-noir debts to pay, I detected all that veneration for my money which implied such contempt for its possessor. By nature observant, and by misfortune sarcastic, I looked upon the various colorings of society with a searching and philosophic eye: I unravelled the intricacies which knit servility with arrogance, and meanness with ostentation; and I traced to its sources that universal vulgarity of inward sentiment and external manner, which in all classes appears to me to constitute the only unvarying characteristic of our countrymen. In proportion as I increased my knowledge of others, I shrunk with a deeper disappointment and dejection into my own resources. The first moment of real happiness which I experienced for a whole year, was when I found myself about to seek, beneath the influence of other skies, that more extended acquaintance with my species which might either draw me to them with a closer connexion, or at least reconcile me to the ties which already existed.

I will not dwell upon my adventures abroad; there is little to interest others in a recital which awakens no interest in one's self. I sought for wisdom, and I acquired but knowledge. I thirsted for the truth, the tenderness of love, and I found but its fever and its falsehood. Like the two Florimels of Spenser, I mistook, in my delirium, the delusive fabrication of the senses for the divine reality of the heart; and I only awoke from my deceit when the phantom I had worshipped melted into snow. Whatever I pursued partook of the energy, yet fitfulness of my nature; mingling to-day in the tumults of the city, and to-morrow alone with my own heart in the solitude of unpeopled nature; now revelling in the wildest excesses, and now tracing, with a painful and unwearied search, the intricacies of science; alternately governing others, and subdued by the tyranny which my own passions imposed, I passed through the ordeal unshrinking, yet not unscathed. "The education of life," says De Staël, "perfects the thinking mind, but depraves the frivolous." I do not inquire, Monkton, to which of these classes I belong; but I feel too well that though my mind has not been depraved, it has found no perfection but in misfortune; and that whatever be the acquirements of later years, they have nothing which can compensate for the losses of our youth.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

I RETURNED to England. I entered again upon the theatre of its world; but I mixed now more in its greater than its less pursuits. I looked rather at the mass than the leaven of mankind; and while I felt aversion for the few whom I knew, I glowed with philanthropy for the crowd which I knew not.

It is in contemplating man at a distance that we become benevolent. When we mix with them, we suffer by the contact, and grow, if not malicious from the injury, at least selfish from the circumspection which our safety imposes: but when, while we feel our relationship, we are not galled by the tie; when neither jealousy, nor envy, nor resentment are excited, we have nothing to interfere with those more complacent and kindly sentiments which our earliest impressions have rendered natural to our hearts. We may fly men in hatred because they have galled us, but the feeling ceases with the cause: none will willingly feed long upon bitter thoughts. It is thus that, while in the narrow circle in which we move, we suffer daily from those who approach us, we can, in spite of our resentment to *them*, glow with a general benevolence to the wider relations from which we are remote; that while smarting beneath the treachery of friendship, the sting of ingratitude, the faithlessness of love, we would almost sacrifice our lives to realize some idolized theory of legislation; and that, distrustful, calculating, selfish in private, there are thousands who would, with a credulous fanaticism, fling themselves as victims before that unrecompensing Moloch which they term the public.

Living, then, much by myself, but reflecting much upon the world, I learned to love mankind. Philanthropy brought ambition; for I was ambitious, not for my own aggrandizement, but for the service of others, — for the poor, — the toiling, — the degraded: these constituted that part of my fellow-beings which I the most loved, for these were bound to me by the most engaging of all human ties, — misfortune! I began to enter into the intrigues of the state; I extended my observation and inquiry from individuals to nations; I examined into the mysteries of the science which has arisen in these later days to give the lie to the wisdom of the past, to reduce into the simplicity of problems the intricacies of political knowledge, to teach us the fallacy of the system which had governed by restriction, and imagined that the happiness of nations depended upon the perpetual interference of its rulers; and to prove to us that the only unerring policy of art is to leave a free and unobstructed progress to the hidden energies and providence of nature. But it was not only the *theoretical* investigation of the state which employed me. I mixed, though in secret, with the agents of its springs. While I seemed only intent upon pleasure, I locked in my heart the consciousness and vanity of power. In the levity of the lip I disguised the workings and the knowledge of the brain; and I looked, as with a gifted eye, upon the mysteries of the hidden depths, while I seemed to float, an idler, with the herd, only on the surface of the stream.

Why was I disgusted, when I had but to put forth my hand and grasp whatever object my ambition might desire? Alas! there was in my heart always something too soft for the aims and cravings of my mind. I felt that I was wasting the young years of my life in a barren and wearisome pursuit. What to me, who had outlived vanity, would have been the admiration of the crowd? I sighed for the sympathy of *the one!* and I shrunk in sadness from the prospect of renown, to ask my heart for the reality of love. For what purpose, too, had I devoted myself to the service of men? As I grew more sensible of the labor of pursuing, I saw more of the inutility of accomplishing individual measures. There is one great and moving order of events which we may retard, but we cannot arrest, and to which, if we endeavour to hasten them, we only give a dangerous and unnatural impetus. Often, when in the fever of the midnight, I have paused from my unshared and unsoftened studies, to listen to the deadly pulsation of my heart,* when I have felt in its painful and tumultuous beating the very life waning and wasting within me, I have sickened to my inmost soul to remember that, among all those whom I was exhausting the health and enjoyment of youth to benefit, there was not one for whom my life had an interest, or by whom my death would be honored by a tear. There is a beautiful passage in Chalmers on the want of sympathy we experience in the world. From my earliest childhood I had one deep, engrossing, yearning desire, — and that was to love and to be loved. I found, too young, the realization of that dream, — it passed! and I have never known it again. The experience of long and bitter years teaches me to look with suspicion on that far recollection of the past, and to doubt if this earth could indeed produce a living form to satisfy the visions of one who has dwelt among the boyish creations of fancy, — who has shaped out in his heart an imaginary idol, arrayed it in whatever is most beautiful in nature, and breathed into the image the pure but burning spirit of that innate love from which it sprung! It is true that my manhood has been the undeceiver of my youth, and that the meditation upon facts has disenthralled me from the visionary broodings over fiction; but what remuneration have I found in reality? If the line of the satirist be not true, "Souvent de tous nos maux la raison est le pire,"† — at least like the madman of whom he speaks, I owe but little gratitude to the act which, "in drawing me from my error, has robbed me also of a paradise."

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* Falkland suffered much, from very early youth, from a complaint in his heart.

† Boileau

I am approaching the conclusion of my confessions. Men who have no ties in the world, and who have been accustomed to solitude, find, with every disappointment in the former, a greater yearning for the enjoyments which the latter can afford. Day by day I relapsed more into myself; "man delighteth me not, nor woman either." In my ambition, it was not in means, but the end, that I was disappointed. In my friends, I complained, not of treachery, but insipidity; and it was not because I was deserted, but wearied by more tender connexions, that I ceased to find either excitement in seeking, or triumph in obtaining their love. It was not, then, in a momentary disgust, but rather in the calm of satiety, that I formed that resolution of retirement which I have adopted now.

Shrinking from my kind, but too young to live wholly for myself, I have made a new tie with nature; I have come to cement it here. I am like a bird which has wandered afar, but has returned home to its nest at last. But there is one feeling which had its origin in the world, and which accompanies me still; which consecrates my recollections of the past; which contributes to take its gloom from the solitude of the present: — Do you ask me its nature, Monkton? — It is my friendship for you.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

I WISH that I could convey to you, dear Monkton, the faintest idea of the pleasures of indolence. You belong to that class which is of all the most busy, though the least active. Men of pleasure never have time for any thing. No lawyer, no statesman, no bustling, hurrying, restless underling of the counter or the exchange, is so eternally occupied as a lounger "about town." He is linked to labor by a series of undefinable nothings. His independence and idleness only serve to fetter and engross him, and his leisure seems held upon the condition of never having a moment to himself. Would that you could see me at this instant in the luxury of my summer retreat, surrounded by the trees, the waters, the wild birds, and the hum, the glow, the exultation which teem visibly and audibly through creation in the noon of a summer's day! I am undisturbed by a single intruder. I am unoccupied by a single pursuit. I suffer one moment to glide into another, without the remembrance that the next must be filled up by some laborious pleasure, or some wearisome enjoyment. It is here that I feel all the powers, and gather together all the resources, of my mind. I recall my recollections of men; and, unbiassed by the passions and prejudices which we do not experience *alone*, because their very existence depends upon others. I endeavour to perfect my knowledge of the human heart. He who would acquire that better science must arrange and analyze in private the experience he has collected in the crowd. Alas, Monkton, when you have expressed surprise at the gloom which is so habitual to my temper, did it never occur to you that my acquaintance with the world would alone be sufficient to account for it? — that knowledge is neither for the good nor the happy. Who can touch pitch, and not be defiled? Who can look upon the workings of grief and rejoice, or associate with guilt and be pure?

It has been by mingling with men, not only in their *haunts* but their *emotions*, that I have learned to know them. I have descended into the receptacles of vice; I have taken lessons from the brothel and the hell; I have watched feeling in its unguarded sallies, and drawn from the impulse of the moment conclusions which gave the lie to the previous conduct of years. But all knowledge brings us disappointment, and *this* knowledge the most, — the satiety of good, the suspicion of evil, the decay of our young dreams, the premature iciness of age, the reckless, aimless, joyless indifference which follows an overwrought and feverish excitation, — *these* constitute the lot of men who have renounced *hope* in the acquisition of *thought*, and who, in learning the motives of human actions, learn oddly to despise the persons and the things which enchanted them like divinities before.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

I TOLD you, dear Monkton, in my first letter, of my favorite retreat in Mr. Mandeville's grounds. I have grown so attached to it, that I spend the greater part of the day there. I am not one of those persons who always perambulate with a book in their hands, as if neither nature nor their own reflections could afford them any rational amusement. I go there more frequently *en paresseux* than *en savant*: a small brooklet, which runs through the grounds, broadens at last into a deep, clear, transparent lake. Here fir, and elm, and oak fling their branches over the margin; and beneath their shade I pass all the hours of noonday in the luxuries of a dreamer's reverie. It is true, however, that I am never less idle than when I appear the most so. I am like Prospero in his desert island, and surround myself with spirits. A spell trembles upon the leaves; every wave comes fraught to me with its peculiar music; and an Ariel seems to whisper the secret of every breeze, which comes to my forehead laden with the perfumes of the west. But do not think, Monkton, that it is only good spirits which haunt the recesses of my solitude To push the metaphor to exaggeration, — memory is my Sycorax, and gloom is the Caliban she conceives. But let me digress from myself to my less idle occupations: — I have of late diverted my thoughts in some measure by a recurrence to a study to which I once was particularly devoted, — history. Have you ever remarked, that people who live the most by themselves, reflect the most upon others: and that he who lives surrounded by the million, never thinks of any but the one individual, — himself? Philosophers, — moralists, — historians, whose thoughts, labors, lives, have been devoted to the consideration of mankind, or the analysis of public events, have usually been remarkably attached to solitude and seclusion. We are indeed so linked to our fellow beings, that, were we not chained to them by action, we are carried to and connected with them by thought.

I have just quitted the observations of my favorite Bolingbroke upon history. I cannot agree with him as to its utility. The more I consider, the more I am convinced that its study has been upon the whole pernicious to mankind. It is by those details which are always as unfair in their inference as they must evidently be doubtful in their facts, that party animosity and general prejudice are supported and sustained. There is not one abuse, — one intolerance, — one remnant of ancient barbarity and ignorance existing at the present day, which is not advocated, and actually confirmed by some vague deduction from the bigotry of an illiterate chronicler, or the obscurity of an uncertain legend. It is through the constant appeal to our ancestors that we transmit wretchedness and wrong to our posterity; we should require, to corroborate an evil originating in the present day, the clearest and most satisfactory proof; but the minutest defence is sufficient for an evil handed down to us by the barbarism of antiquity. We reason from what even in old times was dubious, as if we were adducing what was certain in those in which we live. And thus we have made no sanction to abuses so powerful as history, and no enemy to the present like the past.

FROM THE LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE TO MRS. ST JOHN.

AT last, my dear Julia, I am settled in my beautiful retreat. Mrs. Dalton and Lady Margaret Leslie are all whom I could prevail upon to accompany me. Mr. Mandeville is full of the corn-laws. He is chosen chairman to a select committee in the House. He is murmuring agricultural distresses in his sleep; and when I asked him occasionally to come down here to see me, he started from a reverie, and exclaimed, — "Never, Mr. Speaker, as a landed proprietor, never will I consent to my own ruin."

My boy, my own, my beautiful companion, is with me. I wish you could see how fast he can run, and how sensibly he can talk. "What a fine figure he has for his age" said I to Mr. Mandeville the other day: "Figure? age!" said his father; "in the House of Commons he shall make a figure to every age." I know that in writing to you, you will not be contented if I do not say a great deal about myself. I shall therefore proceed to tell you that I feel already much better from the air and exercise of the journey, from the conversation of my two guests, and, above all, from the constant society of my dear boy. He was three last birth-day. I think that at the age of twenty-one I am the least childish of the two. Pray remember me to all in town who have not quite forgotten me Beg Lady —— to send Elizabeth a subscription ticket for Almack's and, — oh talking of Almack's, I think my boy's eyes are even more blue and beautiful than Lady C——'s.

Adieu, my dear Julia, Ever, &c. E. M

Lady Emily Mandeville was the daughter of the Duke of Lindvale. She married, at the age of sixteen, a man of large fortune, and some parliamentary reputation. Neither in person nor in character was he much beneath or above the ordinary standard of men. He was one of nature's MacAdamized achievements. His great fault was his equality; and you longed for a hill though it were to climb, or a stone though it were in your way. Love attaches itself to something prominent, even if that something be what others would hate. One can scarcely feel extremes for mediocrity. The few years Lady Emily had been married had but little altered her character. Quick in feeling, though regulated in temper; gay, less from levity, than from that first *spring-tide* of a heart which has never yet known occasion to be sad: beautiful and pure, as an enthusiast's dream of heaven, yet bearing within the latent and powerful passion and tenderness of earth; she mixed with all a simplicity and innocence which the extreme earliness of her marriage, and the ascetic temper of her husband, had tended less to diminish than increase. She had much of what is termed genius, — its warmth of emotion, — its vividness of conception, — its admiration for the grand, — its affection for the good, and that dangerous contempt for whatever is mean and worthless, the very indulgence of which is an offence against the habits of the world. Her tastes, were, however, too feminine and chaste ever to render her eccentric: they were rather calculated to conceal, than to publish the deeper recesses of her nature; and it was beneath that polished surface of manner common to those with whom she mixed, that she hid the treasures of a mine which no human eye had beheld.

Her health, naturally delicate, had lately suffered much from the dissipation of London, and it was by the advice of her physicians that she had now come to spend the summer at E——. Lady Margaret Leslie, who was old enough to be tired with the caprices of society, and Mrs. Dalton, who, having just lost her husband, was forbidden at present to partake of its amusements, had agreed to accompany her to her retreat. Neither of them was perhaps much suited to Emily's temper, but youth and spirits make almost any one congenial to us: it is from the years which confirm our habits, and the reflections which refine our taste, that it becomes easy to revolt us, and difficult to please.

On the third day after Emily's arrival at E——, she was sitting after breakfast with Lady Margaret and Mrs. Dalton. "Pray," said the former," did you ever meet my relation, Mr. Falkland? he is in your immediate neighbourhood." "Never; though I have a great curiosity: that fine old ruin beyond the village belongs to him, I believe." "It does: you ought to know him: you would like him so!" "Like him?" repeated Mrs. Dalton, who was one of those persons of *ton* who, though every thing collectively, are nothing individually; — "Like him? impossible!" "Why," said Lady Margaret, indignantly, "he has every requisite to please, — youth, talent, fascination of manner, and great knowledge of the world." "Well," said Mrs. Dalton, "I cannot say I discovered his perfections. He seemed to me conceited and satirical, and, — and, — in short, very disagreeable; *but then to be sure, I have only seen him once.*" "I have heard many accounts of him," said Emily, "all differing from each other: I think, however, that the generality of people rather incline to Mrs. Dalton's opinion than to yours, Lady Margaret." "I can easily believe it. It is very seldom that he takes the trouble to please; but when he does, he is irresistible. Very little, however, is generally known respecting him. Since he came of age, he has been much abroad; and when in England, he never entered with eagerness into society. He is supposed to possess very extraordinary powers, which, added to his large fortune and ancient name, have procured him a consideration and rank rarely enjoyed by one so young. He has refused repeated offers to enter into public life; but he is very intimate with one of the ministers, who, it is said, has had the address to profit much by his abilities. All other particulars concerning him are extremely uncertain. Of his person and manners you had better judge yourself; for I am sure, Emily, that my petition for inviting him here is already granted." "By all means," said Emily: "you cannot be more anxious to see him than I am." And so the conversation dropped. Lady Margaret went to the library; Mrs. Dalton seated herself on the ottoman, dividing her attention between the last novel and her Italian greyhound; and Emily left the room in order to revisit her former and favorite haunts. Her young son was her companion, and she was not sorry that he was her only one. To be the instructress of an infant, a mother should be its playmate; and Emily was, perhaps, wiser than she imagined, when she ran with a laughing eye and a light foot over the grass, occupying herself almost with the same earnestness as her child in the same infantile amusements. As they passed the wood which led to the lake at the bottom of the grounds, the boy, who was before Emily, suddenly stopped. She came hastily up to him; and scarcely two paces before, though half hid by the steep bank of the lake beneath which he reclined, she saw a man apparently asleep. A volume of Shakspeare lay beside him: the child had seized it. As she took it from him in order to replace it, her eye rested upon the passage the boy had accidentally opened. How often in after-days was that passage recalled as an omen! it was the following. —

> Ah me! for aught that ever I could read,
> Could ever hear by tale or history, —
> The course of true love never did run smooth!
> *Midsummer Night's Dream.*

As she laid the book gently down, she caught a glimpse of the countenance of the sleeper: never did she forget the expression which it wore, — stern, proud, mournful even in repose!

She did not wait for him to awake. She hurried home through the trees. All that day she was silent and abstracted; the face haunted her like a dream. Strange as it may seem, she spoke neither to Lady Margaret nor to Mrs. Dalton of her adventure. *Why?* Is there in our hearts any prescience of their misfortunes?

On the next day, Falkland, who had received and accepted Lady Margaret's invitation, was expected to dinner. Emily felt a strong yet excusable curiosity to see one of whom she had heard so many and such contradictory reports. She was alone in the saloon when he entered. At the first glance she recognised the person she had met by the lake on the day before, and she blushed deeply as she replied to his salutation. To her great relief Lady Margaret and Mrs. Dalton entered in a few minutes, and the conversation grew general.

Falkland had but little of what is called animation in manner; but his wit, though it rarely led to mirth, was sarcastic yet refined, and the vividness of his imagination threw a brilliancy and originality over remarks which in others might have been commonplace and tame.

The conversation turned chiefly upon society; and though Lady Margaret had told her he had entered but little into its ordinary routine, Emily was struck alike by his accurate acquaintance with men, and the justice of his reflections upon manners. There also mingled with his satire an occasional melancholy of feeling, which appeared to Emily the more touching because it was always unexpected and unassumed. It was after one of these remarks, that for the first time she ventured to examine into the charm and peculiarity of the countenance of the speaker. There was spread over it that expression of mingled energy and languor, which betokens that much, whether of thought, sorrow, passion, or action, has been undergone, but resisted; has wearied, but not subdued. In the broad and noble brow, in the chiselled lip, and the melancholy depths of the calm and thoughtful eye, there sat a resolution and a power, which, though mournful, were not without their pride; which, if they had borne the worst, had also defied it. Notwithstanding his mother's country, his complexion was fair and pale; and his hair of a light chestnut, fell in large *antique* curls over his forehead. That forehead indeed, constituted the principal feature of his countenance. It was neither in its height nor expansion alone that its remarkable beauty consisted; but if ever thought to conceive, and courage to execute, high designs were imbodied and visible, they were imprinted *there*.

Falkland did not stay long after dinner; but to Lady Margaret he promised all that she required of future length and frequency in his visits. When he left the room, Lady Emily went instinctively to the window to watch him depart: and all that night his low, soft voice rung in her ear, like the music of an indistinct and half-remembered dream.

FROM MR. MANDEVILLE TO LADY EMILY.

Dear Emily, — Business of great importance to the country has prevented my writing to you before. I hope you have continued well since I heard from you last, and that you do all you can to preserve that retrenchment of unnecessary expenses, and observe that attention to a prudent economy, which is no less incumbent upon individuals than nations.

Thinking that you must be dull at E——, and ever anxious both to entertain and to improve you, I send you an excellent publication by Mr. Tooke,* together with my own last two speeches, corrected by myself.

Trusting to hear from you soon, I am, with best love to Henry, very affectionately yours,

John Mandeville.

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ. TO THE HON. FREDERICK MONKTON. †

Well, Monkton, I have been to E——; that important event in my monastic life has been concluded. Lady Margaret was as talkative as usual; and a Mrs. Dalton, who I find is an acquaintance of yours, asked very tenderly after your poodle and yourself. But Lady Emily? Ay, Monkton, I know not well how to describe *her* to you. Her beauty interests not less than it dazzles. There is that deep and eloquent softness in her every word and action, which, of all charms, is the most dangerous. Yet she is rather of a playful than of the melancholy and pensive nature which generally accompanies such gentleness of manner; but there is no levity in her character; nor is that playfulness of spirit ever carried into the exhilaration of what we call "mirth." She seems, if I may use the antithesis, at once too feeling to be gay and too innocent to be sad. I remember having frequently met her husband. Cold and pompous, without any thing to interest the imagination, or engage the affections, I am not able to conceive a person less congenial to his beautiful and romantic wife. But she must have been exceedingly young when she married him; and she, probably, knows not yet that she is to be pitied because she has not yet learned that she can love.

> Le veggio in fronte amor come in suo seggio
> Sul crin, negli occhi, — su le labra amore
> Sol d'intorno al suo cuore amor non veggio.

I have been twice to her house since my first admission there. I love to listen to that soft and enchanting voice, and to escape from the gloom of my own reflections to the brightness, yet simplicity, of hers. In my earlier days this comfort would have been attended with danger; but we grow callous from the excess of feeling. We cannot re-illumine ashes! I can gaze upon her dreamlike beauty, and not experience a single desire which can sully the purity of my worship. I listen to her voice when it melts in endearment over her birds, her flowers, or, in a deeper devotion, over her child; but my heart does not thrill at the tenderness of the sound. I touch her hand, and the pulses of my own are as calm as before. Satiety of the past is our best safeguard from the temptations of the future; and the perils of youth are over when it has acquired that dulness and apathy of affection which should belong only to the insensibility of age.

Such were Falkland's opinions at the time he wrote. Ah! what is so delusive as our affections? Our security is our danger, — our defiance our defeat! Day after day he went to E——. He passed the mornings in making excursions with Emily over that wild and romantic country by which they were surrounded; and in the dangerous but delicious stillness of the summer twilights, they listened to the first whispers of their hearts.

In his relationship to Lady Margaret, Falkland found his excuse for the frequency of his visits; and even Mrs. Dalton was so charmed with the fascination of his manner, that (in spite of her previous dislike) she forgot to inquire how far his intimacy at E—— was at variance with the proprieties of the world she worshipped, or in what proportion it was connected with herself.

It is needless for me to trace through all its windings the formation of that affection, the subsequent records of which I am about to relate. What is so unearthly, so beautiful, as the first birth of a woman's love? The air of heaven is not purer in its wanderings, — its sunshine not more holy in its warmth. Oh! why should it deteriorate in its nature, even while it increases in its degree? Why should the step which *prints*, *sully* also the snow? How often, when Falkland met that guiltless yet thrilling eye, which revealed to him those internal secrets that Emily was yet a while too happy to discover; when, like a fountain among flowers, the goodness of her heart flowed over the softness of her manner to those around her, and the benevolence of her actions to those beneath; how often he turned away with a veneration too deep for the selfishness of human passion, and a tenderness too sacred for its desires! It was in this temper (the earliest and the most fruitless prognostic of real love) that the following letter was written: —

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ. TO THE HON FREDERICK MONKTON.

I have had two or three admonitory letters from my uncle. "The summer (he says) is advancing, yet you remain stationary in your indolence. There is still a great part of Europe which you have not seen; and since you will neither enter society for a wife, nor the House of Commons for fame, spend your life, at least while it is yet free and unshackled, in those active pursuits which will render idleness hereafter more sweet; or in that observation and enjoyment among others, which will increase your resources in yourself." All this sounds well; but I have already acquired more knowledge than will be of use either to others or myself, and I am not willing to lose *tranquillity* here for the chance of obtaining *pleasure* elsewhere. Pleasure is indeed a holyday sensation which does not occur in ordinary life. We lose the peace of years when we hunt after the rapture of moments.

I do not know if you ever felt that existence was ebbing away, without being put to its full value: as for me, I am never conscious of life without being also conscious that it is not enjoyed to the utmost. This is a bitter feeling, and its worst bitterness is our ignorance how to remove it. My indolence I neither seek nor wish to defend, yet it is rather from necessity than choice: it seems to me that there is nothing in the world to arouse me. I only ask for action, but I can find no motive sufficient to excite it: let me then, in my indolence, not, like the world, be idle, yet dependent on others; but at least dignify the failing by some appearance of that freedom which retirement only can bestow.

My seclusion is no longer solitude; yet I do not value it the less. I spend a great portion of my time at E——. Loneliness is attractive to men of reflection, not so much because they like their own thoughts, as because they dislike the thoughts of others. Solitude ceases to charm the moment we can find a single being whose ideas are more agreeable to us than our own. I have not, I think, yet described to you the person of Lady Emily. She is tall, and slightly, yet beautifully, formed. The ill health which obliged her to leave London for E——, in the height of the season, has given her cheek a more delicate hue than I should think it naturally wore. Her eyes are light, but their lashes are long and dark; her hair is black and luxuriant, and worn in a fashion peculiar to herself; but her manners, Monkton! how can I convey to you their fascination? so simple, and therefore so faultless, — so modest, and yet so tender, — she seems, in acquiring the intelligence of the woman, to have only perfected the purity of the child: and now, after all that I have said, I am only more deeply sensible of the truth of Bacon's observation, that "the best part of beauty is that which no picture can express." I am loath to finish this description, because it seems to me scarcely begun; I am unwilling to continue it, because every word seems to show me more clearly those recesses of my heart, which I would have hidden even from myself. I do not *yet* love, it is true, for the time is past when I was lightly moved to passion; but I will not incur that danger, the probability of which I am seer enough to foresee. Never shall that pure and innocent heart be sullied by one who would die to shield it from the lightest misfortune. I find in myself a powerful seconder to my uncle's wishes. I shall be in London next week; till then, farewell. E. F.

When the proverb said, that "Jove laughs at lovers' vows," it meant not (as in the ordinary construction) a sarcasm on their insincerity, but *inconsistency*. We deceive others far less than we deceive ourselves. What to Falkland were resolutions which a word, a glance, could overthrow? In the world he might have dissipated his thoughts: in loneliness he concentred them; for the passions are like the sounds of nature, only heard in her solitude! He lulled his soul to the reproaches of his conscience; he surrendered himself to the intoxication of so golden a dream; and amid those beautiful scenes there arose, as an offering to the summer heaven, the incense of two hearts which had, through those very fires, so guilty in themselves, purified and ennobled every other emotion they had conceived.

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* The Political Economist.

† A letter from Falkland, mentioning Lady Margaret's invitation has been omitted.

"God made the country, and man made the town,"

says the hackneyed quotation; and the feelings awakened in each differ with the genius of the place. Who can compare the frittered and divided affections formed in cities with that which crowds cannot distract by opposing temptations, or dissipation infect with its frivolities?

I have often thought that had the execution of Atala equalled its design, no human work could have surpassed it in its grandeur. What picture is more simple, though more sublime, than the vast solitude of an unpeopled wilderness, the woods, the mountains, the face of nature, cast in the fresh yet giant mould of a new and unpolluted world; and amid those most silent and mighty temples of THE GREAT GOD, the lone spirit of love reigning and brightening over all!

BOOK II.

It is dangerous for women, however wise it be for men, "to commune with their own hearts, and to be still!" Continuing to pursue the follies of the world had been to Emily more prudent than to fly them; to pause, to separate herself from the herd, was to discover, to feel, to murmur at the vacuum of her being; and to occupy it with the feelings which it craved, could in her be but the hoarding a provision for despair.

Married, before she had begun the bitter knowledge of *herself*, to a man whom it was impossible to love, yet deriving from nature a tenderness of soul which shed itself over every thing around, her only escape from misery had been in the dormancy of feeling. The birth of her son had opened to her a new field of sensations, and she drew the best charm of her own existence from the life she had given to another. Had she not met Falkland, all the deeper sources of affection would have flowed into one only and legitimate channel; but those whom *he* wished to fascinate had never resisted his power, and the attachment he inspired was in proportion to the strength and ardor of his own nature.

It was not for Emily Mandeville to love such as Falkland without feeling that from that moment a separate and selfish existence had ceased *to be*. Our senses may captivate us with beauty; but in absence we forget, or by reason we can conquer, so superficial an impression. Our vanity may enamour us with rank; but the affections of vanity are traced in sand: but who can love *genius*, and not feel that the sentiments it excites partake of its own intenseness and its own immortality! It arouses, concentrates, engrosses all our emotions, even in the most subtle and concealed. Love what is common, and ordinary objects can replace or destroy a sentiment which an ordinary object has awakened. Love what we shall not meet again amid the littleness and insipidity which surround us, and where can we turn for a new object to replace that which has no parallel upon earth? The recovery from such delirium is like the return from a fairy land; and still fresh in the recollections of a bright and immortal clime, how can we endure the dulness of that human existence to which, for the future, we are condemned?

It was some weeks since Emily had written to Mrs. St. John; and her last letter, in mentioning Falkland, had spoken of him with a reserve which rather alarmed than deceived her friend. Mrs. St. John had indeed a strong and secret reason for fear. Falkland had been the object of her own and her earliest attachment, and she knew well the singular and mysterious power which he exercised at will over the mind. He had, it is true, never returned, nor even known of, her feelings toward him; and during the years which had elapsed since she last saw him, and in the new scenes which her marriage with Mr. St. John had opened, she had almost forgotten her early attachment, when Lady Emily's letter renewed its remembrance. She wrote in answer an impassioned and affectionate caution to her friend. She spoke much (after complaining of Emily's late silence) in condemnation of the character of Falkland, and in warning of its fascinations; and she attempted to arouse alike the virtue and the pride which so often triumph in alliance, when separately they would so easily fail. In this Mrs. St. John probably imagined she was actuated solely by friendship; but in the best actions there is always some latent evil in the motive; and the selfishness of a jealousy, though hopeless, not conquered, perhaps predominated over the less interested feelings which were all that she acknowledged to herself.

In this work, it has been my object to portray the progress of the passions; to chronicle a history rather by thoughts and feelings than by incidents and events; and to lay open those minuter and more subtle mazes and secrets of the human heart, which in modern writings have been so sparingly exposed. It is with this view that I have from time to time broken the thread of narration, in order to bring forward more vividly the characters it contains; and in laying no claim to the ordinary ambition of tale-writers, I have deemed myself at liberty to deviate from the ordinary courses they pursue. Hence the motive and the excuse for the insertion of the following extracts, and of occasional letters. They portray the interior struggle, when narration would look only to the external event, and trace the lightning "home to its cloud," when history would only mark the spot where it scorches or destroyed.

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

Tuesday. — More than seven years have passed since I began this journal! I have just been looking over it from the commencement. Many and various are the feelings which it attempts to describe, — anger, pique, joy, sorrow, hope, pleasure, weariness, ennui; but never, never once humiliation or remorse! — these were not doomed to be my portion in the bright years of my earliest youth. How shall I describe them now? I have received, — I have read, as well as my tears would let me, a long letter from Julia. It is true that I have not dared to write to her: when shall I answer this? She has shown me the state of my heart; I more than suspected it before. Could I have dreamed two months, — six weeks since, — that I should have a single feeling of which I could be ashamed? *He* has just been here, — *he*, — the only one in the world, for all the world seems concentred in him. He observed my distress, for I looked on him; and my lips quivered, and my eyes were full of tears. He came to me, — he sat next to me, — he whispered his interest, his anxiety, — and was this all? Have I loved before I ever knew that I was beloved? No, no: the tongue was silent, but the eye, the cheek, the manner, — alas? *these* have been but too eloquent!

Wednesday. — It was so sweet to listen to his low and tender voice; to watch the expression of his countenance, — even to breathe the air he inhaled. But now that I know its cause, I feel that this pleasure is a crime, and I am miserable even when he is with me. He has not been here to-day. It is past three. Will he come? I rise from my seat,—I go to the window for breath,—I am restless, agitated, disturbed. Lady Margaret speaks to me,—I scarcely answer her. My boy,—yes, my dear, dear Henry comes, and I feel that I am again a mother. Never will I betray that duty, though I have forgotten one as sacred, though less dear! Never shall my son have cause to blush for his parent! I will fly hence,—I will see *him* no more!

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND TO THE HON. FREDERICK MONKTON.

WRITE to me, Monkton,—exhort me, admonish me, or forsake me for ever. I am happy, yet wretched; I wander in the delirium of a fatal fever, in which I see dreams of a brighter life, but every one of them only brings me nearer to death. Day after day I have lingered here, until weeks have flown,—and for what? Emily is not like the women of the world,—virtue, honor, faith are not to her the mere *convenances* of society. "There is no crime," said Lady A , "where there is concealment." Such can never be the creed of Emily Mandeville. She will not disguise guilt either in the levity of the world, or in the affectations of sentiments. She will be wretched, and for ever. *I* hold the destinies of her future life, and yet I am base enough to hesitate whether to save or destroy her. Oh! how fearful, how selfish, how degrading is unlawful love!

You know my theoretical benevolence for every thing that lives; you have often smiled at its vanity. I see now that you were right; for it seems to me almost superhuman virtue not to destroy the person who is dearest to me on earth.

I remember writing to you some weeks since that I would come to London. Little did I know of the weakness of my own mind: I told her that I intended to depart. She turned pale,—she trembled,—but she did not speak. Those signs, which should have hastened my departure, have taken away the strength even to think of it.

I am here still! I go to E—— every day. Sometimes we sit in silence; I dare not trust myself to speak. How dangerous are such moments! *Ammutiscon lingue parlen l'alme.*

Yesterday they left us alone. We had been conversing with Lady Margaret on different subjects. There was a pause for some minutes. I looked up; Lady Margaret had left the room. The blood rushed into my cheek,—my eyes met Emily's. I would have given worlds to have repeated with my lips what those eyes expressed. I could not even speak,—I felt choked with contending emotions. There was not a breath stirring; I heard my very heart beat. A thunderbolt would have been a relief. O God! if there be a curse, it is to burn, swell, madden with feelings which you are doomed to conceal! This is, indeed, to be "a cannibal of one's own heart." *

It was sunset. Emily was alone upon the lawn which sloped toward the lake, and the blue still waters beneath broke, at bright intervals, through the scattered and illuminated trees. She stood watching the sun sink with wistful and tearful eyes. Her soul was sad within her. The ivy which love first wreathes around his work had already faded away, and she now only saw the desolation of the ruin it concealed. Never more for her was that freshness of unawakened feeling which invests all things with a perpetual daybreak of sunshine and incense and dew. The heart may survive the decay or rupture of an innocent and lawful affection,—"la marque reste, mais la blessure guérit,"—but the love of darkness and guilt is branded in a character ineffaceable,—eternal! The one is like lightning, more likely to dazzle than to destroy, and, divine even in its danger, it *makes holy what it sears;* † but the other is like that sure and deadly fire which fell upon the cities of old, graving in the barrenness of the desert it had wrought the record and perpetuation of a curse. A low and thrilling voice stole upon Emily's ear. She turned,—Falkland stood beside her. "I felt restless and unhappy," he said, "and I came to seek you. If (writes one of the fathers) a guilty and wretched man could behold, though only for a few minutes, the countenance of an angel, the calm and glory which it wears would so sink into his heart, that he would pass at once over the gulf of gone years into his first unsullied state of purity and hope: perhaps I thought of that sentence when I came to you." "I know not," said Emily, with a deep blush at this address, which formed her only answer to the compliment it conveyed; "I know not why it is, but to me there is always something melancholy in this hour,—something mournful in seeing the beautiful day die, with all its pomp and music, its sunshine and songs of birds."

"And yet," replied Falkland, "if I remember the time when my feelings were more in unison with yours, (for at present external objects have lost for me much of their influence and attraction,) the melancholy you perceive has in it a vague and ineffable sweetness not to be exchanged for more exhilarated spirits. The melancholy which arises from no cause within ourselves is like music,—it enchants us in proportion to its effect upon our feelings. Perhaps its chief charm (though this requires the contamination of after-years before we can fathom and define) is in the purity of the sources it springs from. Our feelings can be but little sullied and worn while they can yet respond to the passionless and primal sympathies of nature; and the sadness you speak of is so void of bitterness, so allied to the best and most delicious sensations we enjoy, that I should imagine the *very happiness of heaven partook rather of melancholy than mirth.*"

There was a pause of some moments. It was rarely that Falkland alluded even so slightly to the futurity of another world; and when he did, it was never in a careless and commonplace manner, but in a tone which sank deep into Emily's heart. "Look," she said, at length. "at that beautiful star! the first and brightest! I have often thought it was like the promise of life beyond the tomb,—a pledge to us that, even in the depths of midnight, the earth shall have a light, unquenched and unquenchable, from heaven!"

Emily turned to Falkland as she said this, and her countenance sparkled with the enthusiasm she felt. But *his* face was deadly pale. There went over it, like a cloud, an expression of changeful and unutterable thought; and then passing suddenly away, it left his features calm and bright in all their noble and intellectual beauty. Her soul yearned to him, as she looked, with the tenderness of a sister.

They walked slowly toward the house. "I have frequently," said Emily, with some hesitation, "been surprised at the little enthusiasm you appear to possess even upon subjects where your conviction must be strong." "*I have thought enthusiasm away!*" replied Falkland: "it was the loss of hope which brought me reflection, and in reflection I forgot to feel. Would that I had not found it so easy to recall what I thought I had lost for ever!"

Falkland's cheek changed as he said this, and Emily sighed faintly, for she felt his meaning. In him, that allusion to his love had aroused a whole train of dangerous recollections; for passion is the avalanche of the human heart,—*a single breath can dissolve it from its repose.*

They remained silent; for Falkland would not trust himself to speak, till, when they reached the house, he faltered out his excuses for not entering, and departed. He turned toward his solitary home. The grounds at E——— had been laid out in a classical and costly manner, which contrasted forcibly with the wild and simple nature of the surrounding scenery. Even the short distance between Mr. Mandeville's house and L—— wrought as distinct a change in the character of the country as any length of space could have effected. Falkland's ancient and ruinous abode, with its shattered arches and moss-grown parapets, was situated on a gentle declivity, and surrounded by dark elm and larch trees. It still retained some traces both of its former consequence, and of the perils to which that consequence had exposed it. A broad ditch, overgrown with weeds, indicated the remains of what once had been a moat; and huge rough stones scattered around it, spoke of the outworks the fortification had anciently possessed, and the stout resistance they had made in "the Parliament wars" to the sturdy followers of Ireton and Fairfax. The moon, that flatterer of decay, shed its rich and softening beauty over a spot which else had, indeed, been desolate and cheerless, and kissed into light the long and unwaving herbage which rose at intervals from the ruins, like the false parasites of fallen greatness. But for Falkland the scene had no interest or charm, and he turned with a careless and unheeding eye to his customary apartment. It was the only one in the house furnished with luxury, or even comfort. Large bookcases inlaid with curious carvings in ivory; busts of the few public characters the world had ever produced worthy, in Falkland's estimation, of the homage of posterity; elaborately wrought hangings from Flemish looms; and French fauteuils and sofas of rich damask, and massy gilding, (relics of the magnificent day of Louis Quatorze,) — bespoke a costliness of design suited rather to Falkland's wealth than to the ordinary simplicity of his tastes.

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* Bacon.

† According to the ancient superstition.

A large writing table was overspread with books in various languages, and upon the most opposite subjects. Letters and papers were scattered among them; Falkland turned carelessly over the latter. One of the epistolary communications was from Lord —— the ——. He smiled bitterly as he read the exaggerated compliments it contained, and saw to the bottom of the shallow artifice they were meant to conceal. He tossed the letter from him, and opened the scattered volumes one after another with that languid and sated feeling common to all men who have read deeply enough to feel how much they have learned, and how little they know. "We pass our lives," thought he, "in sowing what we are never to reap! We endeavour to erect a tower, which shall reach the heavens, in order to escape *one* curse, and lo! we are smitten by *another!* We would soar from a common evil, and from that moment *we are divided by a separate language from our race!* Learning, science, philosophy, the world of men and of imagination I ransacked, — and for what? I centred my happiness in wisdom. I looked upon the aims of others with a scornful and loathing eye. I held commune with those who have gone before me; I dwelt among the monuments of their minds, and made their records familiar to me as friends: I penetrated the womb of Nature, and went with the secret elements to their home: I arranged the stars before me, and learned the method and the mystery of their courses: I asked the tempest its bourn, and questioned the winds of their path. This was not sufficient to satisfy my thirst for knowledge, and I searched in this lower world for new sources to content it. Unseen and unsuspected, I saw and agitated the springs of the automaton that we call 'the mind.' I found a clew for the labyrinth of human motives, and I surveyed the hearts of those around me as through a glass. Vanity of vanities! What have I acquired? I have separated myself from my kind, but not from those worst enemies, my passions! I have made a solitude of my soul, but I have not mocked it with the appellation of peace.* In flying the herd, I have not escaped from myself; like the wounded deer, the barb was within me, and *that* I could not fly!" With these thoughts he turned from his reverie, and once more endeavoured to charm his own reflections by those which ought to speak to us of quiet, for they are graven on the pages of the dead; but his attempts were as idle as before. His thoughts were still wandering and confused, and could neither be quieted nor collected: he read, but he scarcely distinguished one page from another: he wrote, — the ideas refused to flow at his call; and the only effort at connecting his feelings which even partially succeeded, was in the verses which I am about to place before the reader. It is a common property of poetry, however imperfectly the gift be possessed, to speak to the hearts of others in proportion as the sentiments it would express are felt in our own; and I subjoin the lines which bear the date of that evening, in the hope that, more than many pages, they will show the morbid yet original character of the writer, and the particular sources of feeling from which they took the bitterness that pervades them: —

KNOWLEDGE

Ergo hominum genus incassum frustraque laboret,
Semper, et in curis consummit inanibus ævum. — *Lucret.*

'Tis midnight! Round the lamp which o'er
  My chamber sheds its lowly beam,
Is widely spread the varied lore
  Which feeds in youth our feverish dream, —

The dream, — the thirst, — the wild desire,
  Delirious, yet divine, — *to know;*
Around to roam, — above aspire, —
  And drink the breath of heaven below!

From ocean, — earth, — the stars, — the sky
  To lift mysterious Nature's pall;
And bare before the kindling eye
  In MAN the darkest mist of all!

Alas! what boots the midnight oil?
  The madness of the struggling mind?
Oh, vague the hope, and vain the toil,
  Which only leaves us doubly blind?

What learn we from the past? — the same
  Dull course of glory, guilt, and gloom:
I asked the future, and there came
  No voice from its unfathomed womb.

The sun was silent, and the wave;
  The air but answered with its breath;
But earth was kind; and from the grave
  Arose the eternal answer, — *Death!*

And *this* was all! We need no sage
  To teach us Nature's only truth;
Oh fools! o'er wisdom's idle page
  To waste the hours of golden youth!

In science wildly do we seek
  What only withering years should bring, —
The languid pulse, — the feverish cheek, —
  The spirits drooping on their wing!

To think, — is but to learn to groan, —
  To scorn what all besides adore, —
To feel amid the world alone,
  An alien on a desert shore;

To lose the only ties which seem
  To idle gaze in mercy given!
To find love, faith, and hope a dream,
  And turn to dark despair from heaven!

I pass on to a wilder period of my history. The passion, as yet only revealed by the eye, was now to be recorded by the lip; and the scene, which witnessed the first confession of the lovers, was worthy of the last conclusion of their loves!

E—— was about twelve miles from a celebrated cliff on the seashore, and Lady Margaret had long proposed an excursion to a spot, curious alike for its natural scenery and the legends attached to it. A day was at length fixed for accomplishing this plan. Falkland was of the party. In searching for something in the pockets of the carriage, his hand met Emily's, and involuntarily pressed it. She withdrew it hastily, but he felt it tremble. He did not dare to look up: that single contact had given him a new life: intoxicated with the most delicious sensations, he leaned back in silence. A fever had entered his veins, — the thrill of the touch had gone like fire into his system, — all his frame seemed one nerve.

Lady Margaret talked of the weather and the prospect, wondered how far they had got, and animadverted on the roads, till at last, like a child, she talked herself to rest. Mrs. Dalton read "Guy Mannering;" but neither Emily nor her lover had any occupation or thought in common with their companions; silent and absorbed, they were only alive to the vivid existence of the present. Constantly engaged as we are in looking behind us or before, if there be one hour in which we feel only the time being, — in which we feel sensibly that we live, and that those moments of the present are full of the enjoyment, the rapture of existence, — it is when we are with the *one* person whose life and spirits have become the great part and principle of our own. They reached their destination, a small inn close by the shore. They rested there a short time, and then strolled along the sands toward the cliff. Since Falkland had known Emily, her character was much altered. Six weeks before the time I write of, and in playfulness and lightness of spirits, she was almost a child; now those indications of an unawakened heart had mellowed into a tenderness full of that melancholy so touching and holy, even amid the voluptuous softness which it breathes and inspires. But this day, whether from that coquetry so common to all women, or from some cause more natural to *her*, she seemed gayer than Falkland ever remembered to have seen her. She ran over the sands, picking up shells, and tempting the waves with her small and fairy feet, not daring to look at him, and yet speaking to him at times with a quick tone of levity which hurt and offended him, even though he knew the depth of those feelings she could not disguise either from him or from herself. By degrees his answers and remarks grew cold and sarcastic. Emily affected pique; and when it was discovered that the cliff was still nearly two miles off, she refused to proceed any further. Lady Margaret talked her at last into consent, and they walked on as sullenly as an English party of pleasure possibly could do, till they were within three quarters of a mile of the place, when Emily declared she was so tired that she really could not go on. Falkland looked at her, perhaps, with no very amiable expression of countenance, when he perceived that she seemed really pale and fatigued; and when she caught his eyes, tears rushed into her own.

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* "Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant." — *Tacitus.*
"They make a solitude, and call it peace." — *Byron.*

"Indeed, indeed, Mr. Falkland," said she, eagerly, "this is *not* affectation. I am very tired; but rather than prevent your amusement, I will endeavour to go on." "Nonsense, child," said Lady Margaret, "you *do* seem tired. Mrs. Dalton and Falkland shall go to the rock, and I will stay here with you." This proposition, however, Lady Emily (who knew Lady Margaret's wish to see the rock) would not hear of; she insisted upon staying by herself. "Nobody will run away with me; and I can very easily amuse myself with picking up shells till you come back." After a long remonstrance, which produced no effect, this plan was at last acceded to. With great reluctance Falkland set off with his two companions; but after the first step, he turned to look back. He caught her eye, and felt from that moment that their reconciliation was sealed. They arrived, at last, at the cliff. Its height, its excavations, the romantic interest which the traditions respecting it had inspired, fully repaid the two women for the fatigue of their walk. As for Falkland, he was unconscious of every thing around him; he was full of "sweet and bitter thoughts." In vain the man whom they found loitering there, in order to serve as a guide, kept dinning in his ear stories of the marvellous, and exclamations of the sublime. The first words which aroused him were these, — "It 's lucky, please your honor, that you have just saved the tide. It is but last week that three poor people were drowned in attempting to come here; as it is, you will have to go home round the cliff." Falkland started: he felt his heart stand still. "Good God!" cried Lady Margaret, "what will become of Emily?"

They were at that instant in one of the caverns, where they had already been loitering too long. Falkland rushed out to the sands. The tide was hurrying in with a deep sound, which came on his soul like a knell. He looked back toward the way they had come: not one hundred yards distant, and the waters had already covered the path! An eternity would scarcely atone for the horror of that moment! One great characteristic of Falkland was his presence of mind. He turned to the man who stood beside him, — he gave him a cool and exact description of the spot where he had left Emily. He told him to repair with all possible speed to his home, — to launch his boat, — to row it to the place he had described. "Be quick," he added, "and you *must* be in time: if you are, you shall never know poverty again." The next moment he was already several yards from the spot. He run, or rather flew, till he was stopped by the waters. He rushed in; they were over a hollow between two rocks, — they were already up to his chest. "There is yet hope," thought he, when he had passed the spot, and saw the smooth sand before him. For some minutes he was scarcely sensible of existence; and then he found himself breathless at *her* feet. Beyond, towards T——, (the small inn I spoke of,) the waves had already reached the foot of the rocks, and precluded all hope of return. Their only chance was the possibility that the waters had not yet rendered impassable the hollow through which Falkland had just waded. He scarcely spoke; at least, he was totally unconscious of what he said. He hurried her on breathless and trembling, with the sound of the booming waters ringing in his ear, and their billows advancing to his very feet. They arrived at the hollow: a single glance sufficed to show him that their solitary hope was past! The waters, before up to his chest, had swelled considerably: he could not swim. He saw in that instant that they were girt with a hastening and terrible death. Can it be believed that with that certainty ceased his fear? He looked in the pale but calm countenance of her who clung to him, and a strange tranquillity, even mingled with joy, possessed him. Her breath was on his cheek, — her form was reclining on his own, — his hand clasped hers: if they were to die, it was thus. What could life afford to him more dear? "It is in this moment," said he, and he knelt as he spoke, "that I dare tell you what otherwise my lips never should have revealed. I love, — I adore you! Turn not away from me thus. In life our persons were severed; if our hearts are united in death, then death will be sweet." She turned, — *her cheek was no longer pale!* He rose, — he clasped her to his bosom: his lips pressed hers. Oh! that long, deep, burning pressure! youth, love, life, soul, all concentrated in that one kiss! Yet the same cause which occasioned the avowal, hallowed also the madness of his heart. What had the passion, declared only at the approach of death, with the more earthly desires of life? They looked to heaven, — it was calm and unclouded: the evening lay there in its balm and perfume, and the air was less agitated than their sighs. They turned towards the beautiful sea which was to be their grave: the wild birds flew over it exultingly; the far vessels seemed "rejoicing to run their course." All was full of the breath, the glory, the life of nature; and in how many minutes was all to be as *nothing!* Their existence would resemble the ships that have gone down at sea in the very smile of the element that destroyed them. They looked into each others' eyes, and they drew still nearer together. Their hearts, in safety apart, mingled in peril, and became one. Minutes rolled on, and the great waves came dashing round them. They stood on the loftiest eminence they could reach. The spray broke over their feet: the billows rose, — rose, — they were speechless. He thought he heard her heart beat, but her lip trembled not. A speck, — a boat! "Look up, Emily! look up! See how it cuts the waters! Nearer! nearer! but a little longer, and we are safe. It is but a few yards off, — it approaches, — it touches the rock!" Ah! what to them henceforth was the value of life, when the moment of discovering its charm became also the date of its misfortunes, and when the death they had escaped was the only method of cementing their union without consummating their guilt?

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ. TO THE HON FREDERICK MONKTON.

I WILL write to you at length to-morrow. Events have occurred to alter, perhaps, the whole complexion of the future. I am now going to Emily to propose to her to fly. We are not *les gens du monde*, who are ruined by the loss of public opinion. She has felt that I can be to her far more than the world; and as for me, what would I not forfeit for one touch of her hand?

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

Friday. — Since I wrote yesterday in these pages the narrative of our escape, I have done nothing but think over those moments, too dangerous because too dear; but at last I have steeled my heart, — I have yielded to my own weakness too long, — I shudder at the abyss from which I have escaped. I can yet fly. He will come here to-day, — he shall receive my farewell.

Saturday morning, four o'clock. — I have sat in this room alone since eleven o'clock. I cannot give vent to my feelings; they seem as if crushed by some load from which it is impossible to rise. "*He is gone, and for ever!*" I sit repeating those words to myself, scarcely conscious of their meaning. Alas! when to-morrow comes, and the next day, and the next, and yet I see him not, I shall awaken, indeed, to all the agony of my loss! He came here, — he saw me alone, — he implored me to fly. I did not dare to meet his eyes. I hardened my heart against his voice. I knew the part I was to take, — I have adopted it; but what struggles, what misery has it not occasioned me! Who could have thought it had been so hard to be virtuous! His eloquence drove me from one defence to another, and then I had none but *his* mercy. I opened my heart, — I showed him its weakness, — I implored his forbearance My tears, my anguish convinced him of my sincerity. We have parted in bitterness, but, thank heaven, not in guilt! He has entreated permission to write to me. How could I refuse him? Yet I may not, cannot write to him again! How *could* I, indeed, suffer my heart to pour forth one of its feelings in reply? For would there be one word of regret, or one term of endearment, which my inmost sou would not echo?

Sunday. — Yes, *that day,* — but I must not think of this; my very religion I dare not indulge. Oh God! how wretched I am! His visit was always the great era in the day; it employed all my hopes till he came, and all *my memory* when he was gone. I sit now and look at the place he used to fill, till I feel the tears rolling silently down my cheek; they come without an effort, they depart without relief.

Monday. — Henry asked me where Mr. Falkland was gone; I stooped down to hide my confusion. When shall I hear from him? To-morrow? Oh that it were come! I have placed the clock before me, and I actually count the minutes. He left a book here; it is a volume of "Melmoth." I have read over every word of it; and whenever I have come to a pencil-mark by him, I have paused to dream over that varying and eloquent countenance, the soft, low tone of that tender voice, till the book has fallen from my hands, and I have started to find the utterness of my desolation!

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ. TO LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

—— *Hotel, London.*

For the first time in my life I write to you! How my hand trembles, — how my cheek flushes! a thousand thousand thoughts rush upon me, and almost suffocate me with the variety and confusion of the emotions they awaken! I am agitated alike with the rapture of writing to you, and with the impossibility of expressing the feelings which I cannot distinctly unravel even to myself. You love me, Emily, and yet I have fled from you, and at your command; but the thought that, though absent, I am not forgotten, supports me through all.

It was with a feverish sense of weariness and pain that I found myself entering this vast reservoir of human vices. I became at once sensible of the sterility of that polluted soil so incapable of nurturing affection, and I clasped your image the closer to my heart. It is you, who, when I was most weary of existence, gifted me with a new life. You breathed into me a part of your own spirit; my soul feels that influence, and becomes more sacred. I have shut myself from the idlers who would molest me: I have built a temple in my heart: I have set within it a divinity; and the vanities of the world shall not profane the spot which has been consecrated to *you*. Our parting, Emily, — do you recall it? Your hand clasped in mine; your cheek resting, though but for an instant, on my bosom; and the tears which love called forth, but which virtue purified even at their source. Never were hearts so near, yet so divided; never was there an hour so tender, yet so unaccompanied with danger. Passion, grief, madness, all sank beneath your voice, and lay hushed like a deep sea within my soul! "Tu abbia veduto il leone ammansarsi alla sola tua voce." *

I tore myself from you; I hurried through the wood; I stood by the lake, on whose banks I had so often wandered with you; I bared my breast to the winds; I bathed my temples with the waters. Fool that I was! the fever, the fever was within! But it is not thus, my adored and beautiful friend, that I should console and support you. Even as I write, passion melts into tenderness, and pours itself in softness over your remembrance. The virtue so gentle, yet so strong; the feelings so kind, yet so holy; the tears which wept over the decision your lips proclaimed, — these are the recollections which come over me like dew. Let your own heart, my Emily, be your reward; and know that your lover only forgets that he *adores*, to remember that he *respects* you!

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

—— *Park.*

I could not bear the tumult and noise of London. I sighed for solitude, that I might muse over your remembrance undisturbed. I came here yesterday. It is the home of my childhood. I am surrounded on all sides by the scenes and images consecrated by the fresh recollections of my unsullied years. *They* are not changed. The seasons which come and depart renew in them the havoc which they make. If the December destroys, the April revives; but man has but one spring, and the desolation of the heart but one winter! In this very room have I sat and brooded over dreams and hopes which, — but no matter, — those dreams could never show me a vision to equal *you*, or those hopes hold out to me a blessing so precious as your love.

Do you remember, or rather can you ever forget, that moment in which the great depths of our souls were revealed? Ah! not in the scene in which such vows should have been whispered to your ear, and your tenderness have blushed its reply. The passion concealed in darkness was revealed in danger; and the love which in life was forbidden, was our comfort amid the terrors of death! And that long and holy kiss, the first, the only moment in which our lips shared the union of our souls! — do not tell me that it is wrong to recall it! — do not tell me that I sin, when own to you the hours I sit alone, and nurse the delirium of that voluptuous remembrance. The feelings you have excited may render me wretched, but not guilty; for the love of *you* can only *hallow* the heart, — it is a fire which consecrates the altar on which it burns. I feel even from the hour that I loved, that my soul has become more pure I could not have believed that I was capable of so unearthly an affection, or that the love of woman could possess that divinity of virtue which I worship in yours. The world is no fosterer of our young visions of purity and passion: embarked in its pursuits, and acquainted with its pleasures, while the latter sated me with what is evil, the former made me incredulous to what is pure. I considered your sex as a problem which my experience had already solved. Like the French philosophers, who lose truth by endeavouring to condense it, and who forfeit the *moral* from their regard to the *maxim*, I concentrated my knowledge of women into aphorisms and antitheses; and I did not dream of the exceptions, if I did not find myself deceived in the general conclusion. I confess that I erred: I renounce from this moment the colder reflections of my manhood, — the fruits of a bitter experience, — the wisdom of an inquiring, yet agitated life. I return with transport to my earliest visions of beauty and love; and I dedicate them upon the altar of my soul to you, who have imbodied, and concentrated, and breathed them into life!

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

Monday. — This is the most joyless day in the whole week, for it can bring me no letters from him. I rise listlessly, and read over again and again the last letter received from him, — useless task! it is graven in my heart! I long only for the day to be over, because to-morrow I may, perhaps, hear from him again. When I wake at night from my disturbed and broken sleep, I look if the morning is near; not because it gives light and life, but because it may bring tidings of him. When his letter is brought to me, I keep it for minutes unopened, — I feed my eyes on the handwriting, — I examine the seal, — I press it with my kisses, before I indulge myself in the luxury of reading it. I then place it in my bosom, and take it thence only to read it again and again, — to moisten it with my tears of gratitude and love, and, alas! of penitence and remorse! What can be the end of this affection? I dare neither to hope that it may continue, or that it may cease; in either case I am wretched for ever!

Monday night, twelve o'clock. — They observe my paleness; the tears which tremble in my eyes; the listlessness and dejection of my manner. I think Mrs. Dalton guesses the cause. Humbled and debased in my own mind, I fly, Falkland, for refuge, to you! Your affection cannot raise me to my former state, but it can reconcile, — no, — not reconcile, but support me in my present. This dear letter, I kiss it again, — oh! that to-morrow were come!

Tuesday.—Another letter,—so kind, so tender, so encouraging: would that I deserved his praises! alas! I sin even in reading them. I know that I ought to struggle more against my feelings, — *once* I attempted it; I prayed to heaven to support me; I put away from me every thing that could recall him to my mind, —for three days I would not open his letters. I could then resist no longer, and my weakness became the more confirmed from the feebleness of the struggle. I remember one day that he told us of a beautiful passage in one of the ancients, in which the bitterest curse against the wicked is, that they may see virtue, but not be able to obtain it! * — *that* punishment is mine!

Wednesday. — My boy has been with me; I see him now from the windows gathering the field-flowers, and running after every butterfly which comes across him. Formerly he made all my delight and occupation; now he is even dearer to me than ever; but he no longer engrosses all my thoughts. I turn over the leaves of this journal once it noted down the little occurrences of the day; it marks nothing now but the monotony of sadness. *He* is not here, — *he* cannot come. What event then *could* I notice?

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* Ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis

* Persius.

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ. TO LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE. *

—— *Park.*

If you knew how I long, how I thirst for one word from you, — one word to say you are well, and have not forgotten me! — but I will not distress you. You will guess my feelings, and do justice to the restraint I impose on them, when I make no effort to alter your resolution not to write. I know that it is just, and I bow to my sentence; but can you blame me if I am restless, and if I repine? It is past twelve. I always write to you at night. It is then, my own love, that my imagination can the more readily transport me to you: it is then that my spirit holds with you a more tender and undivided commune. In the day the world can force itself upon my thoughts, and its trifles usurp the place which "I love to keep for only thee and heaven;" but in the night all things recall you the more vividly: the stillness of the gentle skies, — the blandness of the unbroken air, — the stars so holy in their loveliness, — all speak and breathe to me of you. I think your hand is clasped in mine; that I again drink the low music of your voice, and imbibe again in the air the breath which has been perfumed by your lips. You seem to stand in my lonely chamber in the light and stillness of a spirit, who has wandered on earth to teach us the love which is felt in heaven.

I cannot, believe me, I cannot endure this separation long; it must be more or less. You must be mine for ever, or our parting must be without a mitigation, which is rather a cruelty than a relief. If you will not accompany me, I will leave this country alone. I must not wean myself from your image by degrees, but break from the enchantment at once. And when, Emily, I am once more upon the world, when no tidings of my fate shall reach your ear, and all its power of alienation be left to the progress of time, — then, when you will at last have forgotten me, when your peace of mind will be restored, and having no struggles of conscience to undergo, you will have no remorse to endure; — then, Emily, when we are indeed divided, let the scene which had witnessed our passion, the letters which have recorded my vow, the evil which we have suffered, and the temptation we have overcome; let these, in our old age, be remembered, and in declaring to heaven that we were innocent, add also, — *that we loved.*

FROM DON ALPHONZO D'AGUILAR TO DON —— ——

London.

Our cause gains ground daily. The great, indeed the only ostensible, object of my mission is nearly fulfilled; but I have another charge and attraction which I am now about to explain to you. You know that my acquaintance with the English language and country arose from my sister's marriage with Mr. Falkland. After the birth of their only child I accompanied them to England: I remained with them for three years, and I still consider those days among the whitest in my restless and agitated career. I returned to Spain; I became engaged in the troubles and dissensions which distracted my unhappy country. — Years rolled on, *how* I need not mention to *you.* One night they put a letter in my hands; it was from my sister; it was written on her death-bed. Her husband had died suddenly. She loved him as a Spanish woman loves, and she could not survive his loss. Her letter to me spoke of her country and her son. Amid the new ties she had formed in England, she had never forgotten the land of her fathers. "I have already," she said, "taught my boy to remember that he has two countries; that the one, prosperous and free, may afford him his pleasures; that the other, struggling and debased, demands from him his duties. If, when he has attained the age in which you can judge of his character, he is respectable only from his rank, and valuable only from his wealth; if neither his head nor his heart will make him useful to *our* cause, suffer him to remain undisturbed in his prosperity *here;* but if, as I presage, he becomes worthy of the blood which he bears in his veins, then I conjure you, my brother, to remind him that he has been sworn to me on my death-bed to the most sacred of earthly altars."

Some months since, when I arrived in England, before I ventured to find him out in person, I resolved to inquire into his character. Had he been as the young and rich generally are, — had dissipation become habitual to him, and frivolity grown around him as a second nature, then I should have acquiesced in the former injunction of my sister much more willingly than I shall now obey the latter I find that he is perfectly acquainted with our language, that he has placed a large sum in our funds, and that from the general liberality of his sentiments, he is as likely to espouse, as (in that case) he would be certain, from his high reputation for talent, to serve our cause. I am, therefore, upon the eve of seeking him out. I understand that he is living in perfect retirement, in the county of ——, in the immediate neighbourhood of Mr. Mandeville, an Englishman of considerable fortune, and warmly attached to our cause.

Mr. Mandeville has invited me to accompany him down to his estate for some days, and I am too anxious to see my nephew not to accept eagerly of the invitation. If I can persuade Falkland to aid us, it will be by the influence of his name, his talents, and his wealth. It is not of him that we can ask the stern and laborious devotion to which we have consecrated ourselves. The perfidy of friends, the vigilance of foes, the rashness of the bold, the cowardice of the wavering; strife in the closet, treachery in the senate, death in the field; *these* constitute the fate we have pledged ourselves to bear. Little can any, wh. do not endure it, imagine of the life to which those who share the contests of an agitated and distracted country are doomed; but if they know not our grief, neither can they dream of our consolation. We move like the delineation of faith, over a barren and desert soil; the rock, and the thorn, and the stings of the adder are round our feet; but we clasp a crucifix to our hearts for our comfort, and we fix our eyes upon the heavens for our hope!

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE

Wednesday. — His letters have taken a different tone. instead of soothing, they add to my distress; but I deserve all, — all that can be inflicted upon me. I have had a letter from Mr. Mandeville. He is coming down here for a few days, and intends bringing some friends with him: he mentions particularly a Spaniard, — *the uncle of Mr. Falkland, whom he asks me if I have seen.* The Spaniard is particularly anxious to meet his nephew, — he does not then know that Falkland is gone. It will be some relief to see Mr. Mandeville alone; but even then how shall I meet him? What shall I say when he observes my paleness and alteration? I feel bowed to the very dust.

Thursday evening. — Mr. Mandeville has arrived: fortunately it was late in the evening before he came, and the darkness prevented his observing my confusion and alteration. He was kinder than usual. Oh! how bitterly my heart avenged him! He brought with him the Spaniard, Don Alphonso d'Aguilar; I think there is a faint family likeness between him and Falkland. Mr. Mandeville brought also a letter from Julia. She will be here the day after to-morrow. The letter is short, but kind: she does not allude to *him:* it is some days since I heard from him.

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ. TO THE HON. FREDERICK MONKTON.

I have resolved, Monkton, to go to her again! I am sure that it will be better for both of us to meet once more; perhaps, to unite for ever! None who have once loved me can easily forget me. I do not say this from vanity, because I owe it not by being *superior* to, but *different* from, others. I am sure that the remorse and affliction she feels now are far greater than she would experience, even were she more guilty, and with me. *Then,* at least, she would have some one to soothe and sympathize in whatever she might endure. To one so pure as Emily, the full crime is already incurred. It is not the innocent who insist upon that nice line of morality between the thought and the action: such distinctions require reflection, experience, deliberation, prudence of head, or coldness of heart ; these are the traits not of the guileless, but the worldly. It is the *affections*, not the *person*, of a virtuous woman, which it is difficult to obtain: that difficulty is the safeguard to her chastity: that difficulty I have, in this instance, overcome. I have endeavoured to live without Emily, but in vain. Every moment of absence only taught me the impossibility. In twenty-four hours I shall see her again. I feel my pulse rise into fever at the very thought.

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* Most of the letters from Falkland to Lady E. Mandeville I have thought expedient to suppress.

Farewell, Monkton. My next letter, I hope, will record my triumph.

BOOK III.

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

Friday. — JULIA is here, and so kind ! She has not mentioned *his* name, but she sighed so deeply, when she saw my pale and sunken countenance, that I threw myself into her arms and cried like a child. We had no need of other explanation ; those tears spoke at once my confession and my repentance. No letter from him for several days ! Surely he is not ill ! how miserable that thought makes me !

Saturday. — A note has just been brought me from him. He is come back, — *here !* Good heavens ! how very imprudent ! I am so agitated that I can write no more.

Sunday. — I have seen him ! Let me repeat that sentence, — *I have seen him.* Oh, that moment ! did it not atone for all that I have suffered ? I dare not write every thing he said, but he wished me to fly with him, — *him*, — what happiness, yet what guilt, in the very thought ! Oh ! this foolish heart, — would that it might break ! I feel too well the sophistry of his arguments, and yet I cannot resist them. He seems to have thrown a spell over me, which precludes even the effort to escape.

Monday. — Mr. Mandeville has asked several people in the country to dine here to-morrow, and there is to be a ball in the evening. Falkland is of course invited. We shall meet then, and *how ?* I have been so little accustomed to disguise my feelings that I quite tremble to meet him with so many witnesses around. Mr. Mandeville has been so harsh to me to-day ; if Falkland ever looked at me so, or ever said one such word, my heart would indeed break. What is it Alfieri says about the two demons to whom he is for ever a prey ? " *La mente e il cor in perpetua lite.*" Alas ! at times I start from my reveries with such a keen sense of agony and shame ! How, how am I fallen !

Tuesday. — He is to come here to-day, and I shall see him !

Wednesday morning. — The night is over, thank heaven ! Falkland came late to dinner : every one else was assembled. How gracefully he entered ! how superior he seemed to all the crowd that stood around him ! He appeared as if he were resolved to exert powers which he had disdained before. He entered into the conversation not only with such brilliancy, but with such a blandness and courtesy of manner ! There was no scorn on his lip, no haughtiness on his forehead, — nothing which showed him for a moment conscious of his immeasurable superiority over every one present. After dinner, as we retired, I caught his eyes. What volumes they told ! — and then I had to listen to his praises, *and say nothing.* I felt angry even in my pleasure. Who but I had a right to speak of him so well ?

The ball came on : I felt languid and dispirited. Falkland did not dance. He sat himself by me, — he urged me to ——— O God ! O God ! would that I were dead !

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ. TO LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

How are you this morning, my adored friend ? You seemed pale and ill when we parted last night, and I shall be *so* unhappy till I hear something of you. Oh Emily, when you listened to me with those tearful and downcast looks, when I saw your bosom heave at every word which I whispered in your ear ; when, as I accidentally touched your hand, I felt it tremble beneath my own ; oh ! was there nothing in those moments at your heart which pleaded for me more eloquently than words ? Pure and holy as you are, you know not, it is true, the feelings which burn and madden in me. When you are beside me, your hand, if it trembles, is not on fire : your voice, if it is more subdued, does not falter with the emotions it dares not express : your heart is not, like mine, devoured by a parching and wasting flame : your sleep is not turned by restless and turbulent dreams from the healthful renewal, into the very consumer, of life. No, Emily ! God forbid that you *should* feel the guilt, the agony which preys upon me : but, at least, in the fond and gentle tenderness of your heart, there must be a voice you find it difficult to silence. Amid all the fictitious ties and fascinations of art, you cannot dismiss from your bosom the unconquerable impulses of nature. What is it you fear ? — you will answer *disgrace !* But *can* you feel it, Emily, when you share it with me ? Believe me, that the love which is nursed through shame and sorrow is of a deeper and holier nature than that which is reared in pride, and fostered in joy. But if not shame, it is guilt, perhaps, which you dread ? Are you then so innocent *now ?* The adultery of the heart is no less a crime than that of the deed ; and, — yet I will not deceive you, — it *is* guilt to which I tempt you ! — *it is* a fall from the proud eminence you hold now. I grant this, and I offer you nothing in recompense but my love. If you loved like me, you would feel that it was something of pride, — of triumph, — to dare all things, even crime, for the one to whom all things are as naught ! As for me, I know that if a voice from heaven told me to desert you, I would only clasp you the closer to my heart !

I tell you, my own love, that when your hand is in mine, when your head rests upon my bosom, when those soft and thrilling eyes shall be fixed upon my own, when every sigh shall be mingled with my breath, and every tear be kissed away at the very instant it rises from its source, — I tell you that then you shall only feel that every pang of the past, and every fear for the future, shall be but a new link to bind us the firmer to each other. Emily, my life, my love, you cannot, if you would, desert me. Who can separate the waters which are once united, or divide the hearts which have met and mingled into one ?

Since they had once more met, it will be perceived that Falkland had adopted a new tone in expressing his passion for Emily. In the book of guilt another page, branded in a deeper and more burning character, had been turned. He lost no opportunity of summoning the earthlier emotions to the support of his cause. He wooed her fancy with the golden language of poetry, and strove to arouse the latent feelings of her sex by the soft magic of his voice, and the passionate meaning it conveyed. But at times there came over him a deep and keen sentiment of remorse ; and even, as his experienced and practised eye saw the moment of his triumph approach, he felt that the success he was hazarding his own soul and hers to obtain, might bring him a momentary transport, but not a permanent happiness. There is always this difference in the love of women and of men ; that in the former, when once admitted, it engrosses all the sources of thought, and excludes every object but itself ; but in the latter, it is shared with all the former reflections and feelings which the past yet bequeaths us, and can neither (however powerful be its nature) constitute the *whole* of our happiness or woe. The love of man in his maturer years is not indeed so much a new emotion, as a revival and concentration of all his departed affections to others ; and the deep and intense nature of Falkland's passion for Emily was linked with the recollections of whatever he had formerly cherished as tender or dear ; it touched, — it awoke a long chain of young and enthusiastic feelings, which arose, perhaps, the fresher from their slumber. Who, when he turns to recall his first and fondest associations; when he throws off, one by one, the layers of earth and stone which have grown and hardened over the records of the past; who has not been surprised to discover how fresh and unimpaired those buried treasures rise again upon his heart? They have been lain up in the storehouse of time; they have not perished; their very concealment has preserved them! *We remove the lava, and the world of a gone day is before us!*

The evening of the day on which Falkland had written the above letter was rude and stormy. The various streams with which the country abounded were swelled by late rains into an unwonted rapidity and breadth; and their voices blended with the rushing sound of the winds, and the distant roll of the thunder, which began at last sullenly to subside. The whole of the scene around L—— was of that savage yet sublime character, which suited well with the wrath of the aroused elements. Dark woods, large tracts of uninclosed heath, abrupt variations of hill and vale, and a dim and broken outline beyond of uninterrupted mountains, formed the great features of that romantic country.

It was filled with the recollections of his youth, and of the wild delight which he took then in the convulsions and varieties of nature, that Falkland roamed abroad that evening The dim shadows of years, crowded with concealed events and corroding reflections, all gathered around his mind, and the gloom and tempest of the night came over him like the sympathy of a friend.

He passed a group of terrified peasants; they were cowering under a tree. The oldest hid his head and shuddered; but the youngest looked steadily at the lightning which played at fitful intervals over the mountain stream that rushed rapidly by their feet. Falkland stood beside them unnoticed and silent, with folded arms and a scornful lip. To him, nature, heaven, earth had nothing for fear, and every thing for reflection. In youth, thought he, (as he contrasted the fear felt at one period of life with the indifference at another,) there are so many objects to divide and distract life, that we are scarcely sensible of the collected conviction that we live. We lose the sense of what *is*, by thinking rather of what is *to be*. But the old, who have no future to expect, are more vividly alive to the present, and they feel death more, because they have a more settled and perfect impression of existence.

He left the group, and went on alone by the margin of the winding and swelling stream. "It is (said a certain philosopher) in the conflicts of nature that man most feels his littleness." Like all general maxims, this is only partially true. The mind, which takes its first ideas from perception, must take also its tone from the character of the objects perceived. In mingling our spirits with the great elements, we partake of their sublimity; we awaken thought from the secret depths where it had lain concealed; our feelings are too excited to remain riveted to ourselves; they blend with the mighty powers which are abroad; and, as in the agitations of men, the individual arouses from himself to become a part of the crowd, so in the convulsions of nature we are equally awakened from the littleness of self, to be lost in the grandeur of the conflict by which we are surrounded.

Falkland still continued to track the stream; it wound its way through Mandeville's grounds, and broadened at last into the lake which was so consecrated to his recollections. He paused at that spot for some moments, looking carelessly over the wide expanse of waters, now dark as night, and now flashing into one mighty plain of fire beneath the coruscations of the lightning. The clouds swept on in massy columns, dark and aspiring, — veiling, while they rolled up to the great heavens, like the shadows of human doubt. Oh! weak, weak was that dogma of the philosopher! There is a *pride* in the storm which, according to his doctrine, would debase us; a stirring music in its roar; even a savage joy in its destruction: for we can exult in a defiance of its power, even while we share in its triumphs, in a consciousness of a superior spirit within us to that which is around. We can mock at the fury of the elements, for they are less terrible than the passions of the heart; at the devastations of the awful skies, for they are less desolating than the wrath of man; at the convulsions of that surrounding nature which has no peril, no terror to the soul, which is more indestructible and eternal than itself. Falkland turned toward the house which contained *his* world; and as the lightning revealed at intervals the white columns of the porch, and wrapped in sheets of fire, like a spectral throng, the tall and waving trees by which it was encircled, and then as suddenly ceased, and "the jaws of darkness" devoured up the scene; he compared, with that bitter alchymy of feeling which resolves all into one crucible of thought, those alternations of light and shadow to the history of his own guilty love, — that passion whose birth was of the womb of night; shrouded in darkness, surrounded by storms, and receiving only from the angry heavens a momentary brilliance, more terrible than its customary gloom.

As he entered the saloon, Lady Margaret advanced toward him. "My dear Falkland," said she, "how good it is in you to come in such a night! We have been watching the skies till Emily grew terrified at the lightning; *formerly* it did not alarm her." And Lady Margaret turned, utterly unconscious of the reproach she had conveyed, towards Emily.

Did not Falkland's look turn also to that spot? Lady Emily was sitting by the harp which Mrs. St. John appeared to be most seriously employed in tuning; her countenance was bent downward, and burning beneath the blushes called forth by the gaze which she *felt* was upon her.

There was in Falkland's character a peculiar dislike to all outward display of less worldly emotions. He had none of the vanity most men have in conquest; he would not have had any human being know that he was loved. He was right! no altar should be so unseen and inviolable as the human heart! He saw at once and relieved the embarrassment he had caused. With the remarkable fascination and grace of manners so peculiarly his own, he made his excuses to Lady Margaret for his disordered dress; he charmed his uncle, Don Alphonso, with a quotation from Lopez de Vega; he inquired tenderly of Mrs. Dalton touching the health of her Italian greyhound; and then, — nor till then, — he ventured to approach Emily, and speak to her in that soft tone, which, like a fairy language, is understood only by the person it addresses. Mrs. St. John rose and left the harp; Falkland took her seat. He bent down to whisper Emily. His long hair touched her cheek; it was still wet with the night dew. She looked up as she felt it, and met his gaze: better had it been to have lost earth than to have drunk the soul's poison from that eye when it tempted to sin.

Mrs. St. John stood at some distance: Don Alphonso was speaking to her of his nephew, and of his hopes of ultimately gaining him to the cause of his mother's country. "See you not," said Mrs. St. John, and her color went and came, "that while he has such attractions to detain him, your hopes are in vain?" "What mean you?" replied the Spaniard; but his eye had followed the direction she had given it, and the question came only from his lips. Mrs. St. John drew him to a still remoter corner of the room, and it was in the conversation that then ensued between them that they agreed to unite for the purpose of separating Emily from her lover, — "I to save my friend," said Mrs. St. John, "and you your kinsman." Thus is it with human virtue, — the fair show and the good deed without, — one eternal motive of selfishness within. During the Spaniard's visit at E——, he had seen enough of Falkland to perceive the great consequence he might, from his perfect knowledge of the Spanish language, from his singular powers, and above all, from his command of wealth, be to the cause of that party he himself had adopted. His aim, therefore, was now no longer confined to procuring Falkland's good-will and aid at home: he hoped to secure his personal assistance in Spain; and he willingly coincided with Mrs. St. John in detaching his nephew from a tie so likely to detain him from that service to which Alphonso wished he should be pledged.

Mandeville had left E—— that morning: he suspected nothing of Emily's attachment. This, on his part, was less confidence than indifference. He was one of those persons who have no existence separate from their own: his senses all turned inward, they reproduced selfishness. Even the House of Commons was only an object of interest, because he imagined it *a part of him, not he of it*. He said, with the insect on the wheel, "Admire *our* rapidity."

But did the defects of his character remove Lady Emily's guilt ? No ! and this, at times, was her bitterest conviction. Whoever turns to these pages for an apology for sin will be mistaken. They contain the burning records of its sufferings, its repentance, and its doom. If there be one crime in the history of woman worse than another, it is adultery. It is, in fact, the only crime to which, in ordinary life, she is exposed. Man has a thousand temptations to sin, — woman has but one ; if she cannot resist it, she has no claim upon our mercy. The heavens are just ! her own guilt is her punishment ! Should these pages, at this moment, meet the eyes of one who has become the centre of a circle of disgrace, — the contaminator of her house, — the dishonorer of her children, — no matter what the excuse for crime, — no matter what the exchange of her station, — in the very arms of her lover, in the very cincture of the new ties which she has chosen, — I call upon her to answer me, if the fondest moments of rapture are free from humiliation, though they have forgotten remorse; and if the passion itself of her lover has not become no less the penalty than the recompense of her guilt? But at that hour of which I now write, there was neither in Emily's heart, nor in that of her seducer, any recollection of their sin. Those hearts were too full for thought, — they had forgotten every thing but each other. Their love was their creation : beyond, all was night, — chaos, — nothing !

Lady Margaret approached them. "You will sing to us, Emily, to-night ? it is *so* long since we have heard you ! " It was in vain that Emily tried, — her voice failed. She looked at Falkland, and could scarcely restrain her tears. She had not yet learned the latest art which sin teaches us, — *its concealment !* " I will supply Lady Emily's place," said Falkland. *His* voice was calm, and *his* brow serene; the world had left nothing for him to learn. "Will you play the air," he said to Mrs. St. John, " that you gave us some nights ago ? I will furnish the words." Mrs. St. John's hand trembled as she obeyed.

SONG.

I.

Ah, let us love while yet we may .
  Our summer is decaying :
And woe to hearts, which in their gray
  December, go a Maying.

II.

Ah, let us love, while of the fire
  Time hath not yet bereft us :
With years our warmer thoughts expire
  Till only ice is left us !

III.

We 'll fly the bleak world's bitter air, —
  A brighter home shall win us ;
And if our hearts grow weary there,
  We 'll find a world within us.

IV.

They preach that passion fades each hour,
  That naught will pall like pleasure :
My bee, if love's so frail a flower,
  Oh, haste to hive its treasure !

V.

Wait not the hour, when all the mind
  Shall to the crowd be given ;
For links which to the *million* bind,
  Shall from the *one* be riven.

VI.

But let us love while yet we may,
  Our summer is decaying ;
And woe to hearts, which in their gray
  December, go a Maying.

The next day Emily rose ill and feverish. In the absence of Falkland, her mind always awoke to the full sense of the guilt she had incurred. She had been brought up in the strictest, even the most fastidious principles ; and her nature was so pure, that merely to err appeared like a change in existence, — like an entrance into some new and unknown world, from which she shrank back, in terror, to herself.

Judge, then, if she easily habituated her mind to its present degradation. She sat, that morning, pale and listless : her book lay unopen before her ; her eyes were fixed upon the ground, heavy with suppressed tears. Mrs. St. John entered : no one else was in the room. She sat by her, and took her hand. Her countenance was scarcely less colorless than Emily's, but its expression was more calm and composed. " It is not too late, Emily," she said : " you have done much that you should repent, — nothing to render repentance unavailing. Forgive me, if I speak to you on this subject. It is time, — in a few days, your fate will be decided. I have looked on, though hitherto I have been silent : I have witnessed that eye when it dwelt upon you ; I have heard that voice when it spoke to your heart. None ever resisted their influence long : do you imagine that you are the first who have found the power ? Pardon me, pardon me, I beseech you, my dearest friend, if I pain you. I have known you from your childhood, and I only wish to preserve you spotless to your old age."

Emily wept, without replying. Mrs. St. John continued to argue and expostulate. What is so wavering as passion? When, at last, Mrs. St. John ceased, and Emily shed upon her bosom the hot tears of her anguish and repentance, she imagined that her resolution was taken, and that she could almost have vowed an eternal separation from her lover : — Falkland came that evening, and she loved him more madly than before.

Mrs. St. John was not in the saloon when Falkland entered. Lady Margaret was reading the well-known story of Lady T—— and the Duchess of M—— , in which an agreement had been made and *kept*, that the one who died first should return once more to the survivor. As Lady Margaret spoke laughingly of the anecdote, Emily, who was watching Falkland's countenance, was struck with the dark and sudden shade which fell over it. He moved in silence toward the window where Emily was sitting. " Do you believe," she said, with a faint smile, " in the possibility of such an event ? " " I believe, — though I reject, — nothing ? " replied Falkland, " but I would give worlds for such a proof that death does not destroy." " Surely," said Emily, " you do not deny that evidence of our immortality which we gather from the Scriptures ? — are *they* not all that a voice from the dead could be ? " Falkland was silent for a few moments : he did not seem to hear the question ; his eyes dwelt upon vacancy ; and when he at last spoke, it was rather in commune with himself than in answer to her. " I have watched," said he, in a low, internal voice, " over the tomb ; I have called, in the agony of my heart, unto her who slept beneath ; I would have *dissolved my very soul* into a spell, could it have summoned before me for one, one moment, the being who had once been the spirit of my life ! I have been, as it were, *entranced* with the intensity of my own adjuration ; I have gazed upon the empty air, and worked upon my mind to fill it with imaginings ; I have called aloud unto the winds, and tasked my soul to waken their silence to reply. All was a waste, — a stillness, — an infinity, — without a wanderer or a voice ! The dead answered me not, when I invoked them ; and in the vigils of the still night I looked from the rank grass and the mouldering stones to the eternal heavens, as man looks from decay to immortality ! Oh ! that awful magnificence of repose, — that living sleep, — that breathing, yet unrevealing divinity, spread over those still worlds ! To *them* also I poured my thoughts, — *but in a whisper*. I did not dare to breathe *aloud* the unhallowed anguish of my mind to the majesty of the unsympathizing stars ! In the vast order of creation, — in the midst of the stupendous system of universal life, — my doubt and inquiry were murmured forth, — *a voice crying in the wilderness, and returning without an echo unanswered unto myself !* "

The deep light of the summer moon shone over Falkland's countenance, which Emily gazed on, as she listened, almost tremblingly, to his words. His brow was knit and hueless, and the large drops gathered slowly over it, as if wrung from the strained yet impotent tension of the thoughts within. Emily drew nearer to him, — she laid her hand upon his own. " Listen to me," she said : " if a herald from the grave could satisfy your doubt, *I would gladly die that I might return to you !* " " Beware," said Falkland, with an agitated but solemn voice ; " *the words now so lightly spoken, may be registered on high.*" " *Be it so !* " replied Emily, firmly, and she felt what she said. *Her* love penetrated beyond the tomb, and she would have forfeited all here for their union hereafter.

" In my earliest youth, said Falkland, more calmly than he had yet spoken, " I found in the present and the past of this world enough to direct my attention to the futurity of another: if I did not credit all with the enthusiast, I had no sympathies with the scorner: I sat myself down to examine and to reflect: I pored alike over the pages of the philosopher and the theologian; I was neither baffled by the subtleties, nor deterred by the contradictions of either. As men first ascertain the geography of the earth by observing the signs of the heavens, I did homage to the unknown God, and sought from that worship to inquire into the reasonings of mankind. I did not confine myself to books, — all things breathing or inanimate constituted my study. From death itself I endeavoured to extract its secret; and whole nights I have sat in the crowded asylums of the dying, watching the last spark flutter and decay. Men die away as in sleep, without effort, or struggle, or emotion. I have looked on their countenances a moment before death, and the serenity of repose was upon them, waxing only more deep as it approached that slumber *which is never broken:* the breath grew gentler and gentler, till the lips it came from fell from each other, and all was hushed; the light had departed from the cloud, but the cloud itself, gray, cold, altered as it seemed, was as before. *They died, and made no sign.* They had left the labyrinth without bequeathing us its clew. It is in vain that I have sent my spirit into the land of shadows, — it has borne back no witness of its inquiry. As Newton said of himself, 'I picked up a few shells by the seashore, but the great ocean of truth lay undiscovered before me.'"

There was a long pause. Lady Margaret had sat down to chess with the Spaniard. No look was upon the lovers: their eyes met, and with that one glance the whole current of their thoughts was changed. The blood which a moment before had left Falkland's cheek so colorless, rushed back to it again. The love which had so penetrated and pervaded his whole system, and which abstruser and colder reflection had just calmed, thrilled through his frame with redoubled power. As if by an involuntary and mutual impulse, their lips met: he threw his arm around her; he strained her to his bosom. "Dark as my thoughts are," he whispered, "evil as has been my life, will you not yet soothe the one and guide the other? My Emily! my love! the *heaven to the tumultuous ocean of my heart,* — will you not be mine, — mine only, — wholly, — and for ever?" She did not answer, — she did not turn from his embrace. Her cheek flushed as his breath stole over it, and her bosom heaved beneath the arm which encircled that empire so devoted to him. "Speak one word, one only word," he continued to whisper: "will you not be mine? Are you not mine at heart even at this moment?" Her head sank upon his bosom. Those deep and eloquent eyes looked up to his through their dark lashes. "I *will* be yours," she murmured: "I am at your mercy; I have no longer any existence but in you. My only fear is, that I shall cease to be worthy of your love."

Falkland pressed his lips once more to her own: it was his only answer, and the last seal to their compact. As they stood before the open lattice, the still and unconscious moon looked down upon that record of guilt. There was not a cloud in the heavens to dim *her* purity: the very winds of night had hushed themselves to do her homage: all was silent but *their* hearts. They stood beneath the calm and holy skies, a guilty and devoted pair, — a fearful contrast of the sin and turbulence of this unquiet earth to the passionless serenity of the eternal heaven. The same stars, that for thousands of unfathomed years had looked upon the changes of this nether world, gleamed pale, and pure, and steadfast upon their burning but transitory vow. In a few years what of the condemnation or the recorders of that vow would remain? From other lips, on that spot, other oaths might be plighted; new pledges of unchangeable fidelity exchanged; and, year after year, in each succession of scene and time, the stars will look from the mystery of their untracked and impenetrable home, to mock, as now, with their immutability, the variations and shadows of mankind!

* * * * *

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ. TO LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

At length, then, you are to be mine, — you have consented to fly with me. In three days we shall leave this country, and have no home, — no world but in each other. We will go, my Emily, to those golden lands where nature, the only companion we will suffer, woos us, like a mother, to find our asylum in her breast; where the breezes are languid beneath the passion of the voluptuous skies; and where the purple light that invests all things with its glory, is only less tender and consecrating than the spirit which we bring. Is there not, my Emily, in the external nature which reigns over creation, and that human nature centred in ourselves, some secret and undefinable intelligence and attraction! Are not the impressions of the former as spells over the passions of the latter? and, in gazing upon the loveliness around us, do we not gather, as it were, and store within our hearts, an increase of the yearning and desire of love? What can we demand from earth but its solitudes, — what from heaven but its unpolluted air? All that others would ask from either, we can find in ourselves. Wealth, honor, happiness, — every object of ambition or desire, exist not for us without the circle of our arms! But the bower that surrounds us shall not be unworthy of your beauty or our love. Amid the myrtle, and the vine, and the valleys where the summer sleeps, and the rivers that murmur the memories and the legends of old; amid the hills and the glossy glades, and the silver fountains, still all as beautiful as if the nymph and spirit yet held and decorated an earthly home; amid these we will make the couch of our bridals, and the moon of Italian skies shall keep watch on our repose.

Emily! — Emily! — how I love to repeat and to linger over that beautiful name! If to see, to address, and, more than all, to touch you, has been a rapture, what word can I find in the vocabulary of happiness to express the realization of that hope which now burns within me, — to mingle our youth together into one stream, wheresoever it flows; to respire the same breath; to be almost blended in the same existence; to grow, as it were, on one stem, and knit into a *single* life the feelings, the wishes, the *being* of both.

To-night I shall see you again; let one day more intervene, and —— I cannot conclude the sentence! As I have written, the tumultuous happiness of hope has come over me to confuse and overwhelm every thing else. At this moment my pulse riots with fever; the room swims before my eyes; every thing is indistinct and jarring, — a chaos of emotions. Oh that happiness should ever have such excess!

When Emily received and laid this letter to her heart, she felt nothing in common with the spirit which it breathed. With that quick transition and inconstancy of feeling so common in women, and which is as frequently their safety as their peril, her mind had already repented of the weakness of the last evening, and relapsed into the irresolution and bitterness of her former remorse. Never had there been in the human breast a stronger contest between conscience and passion; — if, indeed, the extreme softness (notwithstanding its power) of Emily's attachment could be called passion: it was rather a love that had refined by the increase of its own strength; it contained nothing but the primary guilt of conceiving it, which that order of angels, *whose nature is love,* would have sought to purify away. To see him, to live with him, to count the variations of his countenance and voice, to touch his hand at moments when waking, and watch over his slumbers when he slept, — this was the essence of her wishes, and constituted the limit to her desires. Against the temptations of the present was opposed the whole history of the past. Her mind wandered from each to each, wavering and wretched, as the impulse of the moment impelled it. Hers was not, indeed, a strong character; her education and habits had weakened, while they rendered more feminine and delicate, a nature originally too soft. Every recollection of former purity called to her with the loud voice of duty, as a warning from the great guilt she was about to incur; and whenever she thought of her child, — that centre of fond and sinless sensations, where once she had so wholly garnered up her heart, — her feelings melted at once from the object which had so wildly held them riveted as by a spell, to dissolve and lose themselves in the great and sacred fountain of a mother's love.

When Falkland came that evening, she was sitting at a corner of the saloon, apparently occupied in reading, but her eyes were fixed upon her boy, whom Mrs. St. John was endeavouring at the opposite end of the room to amuse. The child, who was fond of Falkland, came up to him as he entered: Falkland stooped to kiss him; and Mrs. S

John said, in a low voice, which just reached his ear, "Judas, too, kissed before he betrayed." Falkland's color changed: he felt the sting the words were intended to convey. On that child, now so innocently caressing him, he was indeed about to inflict a disgrace and injury the most sensible and irremediable in his power. But who ever indulges reflection in passion? He banished the remorse from his mind as instantaneously as it arose; and, seating himself by Emily, endeavoured to inspire her with a portion of the joy and hope which animated himself. Mrs. St. John watched them with a jealous and anxious eye: she had already seen how useless had been her former attempt to arm Emily's conscience effectually against her lover; but she resolved at least to renew the impression she had then made. The danger was imminent, and any remedy must be prompt; and it was something to protract, even if she could not finally break off, a union against which were arrayed all the angry feelings of jealousy, as well as the better affections of the friend. Emily's eye was already brightening beneath the words that Falkland whispered in her ear, when Mrs. St. John approached her. She placed herself on a chair beside them, and, unmindful of Falkland's bent and angry brow, attempted to create a general and commonplace conversation. Lady Margaret had invited two or three people in the neighbourhood; and when these came in, music and cards were resorted to immediately, with that English *politesse*, which takes the earliest opportunity to show that the conversation of our friends is the last thing for which we have invited them. But Mrs. St. John never left the lovers; and, at last, when Falkland, in despair at her obstinacy, arose to join the card-table, she said, "Pray, Mr. Falkland, were you not intimate at one time with * * * *, who eloped with Lady * * *?" "I knew him but slightly," said Falkland; and then added, with a sneer, "the only times I ever met him were at your house." Mrs. St. John, without noticing the sarcasm, continued: — "What an unfortunate affair that proved! They were very much attached to one another in early life, — the *only* excuse, perhaps, for a woman's breaking her subsequent vows. They eloped. The remainder of their history is briefly told: it is that of all who forfeit every thing for passion, and forget that of every thing it is the briefest in duration. He who had sacrificed his honor for her, sacrificed her also as lightly for another. She could not bear his infidelity; but how could she reproach him? In the very act of yielding to, she had become unworthy of, his love. She *did not* reproach him, — she died of a broken heart! I saw her just before her death, for I was distantly related to her, and I could not forsake her utterly even in her sin. She then spoke to me only of the child by her former marriage, whom she had left in the years when it most needed her care: she questioned me of its health, — its education, — its very growth: the minutest thing was not beneath her inquiry. His tidings were all that brought back to her mind 'the redolence of joy and spring.' I brought that child to her one day: *he* at least, had never forgotten her. How bitterly both wept when they were separated! and she, — poor, poor Ellen, — an hour after their separation was no more!" There was a pause for a few minutes. Emily was deeply affected. Mrs. St. John had anticipated the effect she had produced, and concerted the method to increase it. "It is singular," she resumed, "that the evening before her elopement, some verses were sent to her anonymously. I do not think, Emily, that you have ever seen them. Shall I sing them to you now?" and without waiting for a reply, she placed herself at the piano; and with a low but sweet voice, greatly aided in effect by the extreme feeling of her manner, she sang the following verses: —

TO * * *.

I.

And wilt thou leave that happy-home,
Where once it was so sweet to live?
Ah! think, before thou seek'st to roam,
What safer shelter guilt can give!

II.

The bird may rove, and still regain
With spotless wings her wonted rest;
But home, once lost, is ne'er again
Restored to woman's erring breast!

III.

If wandering o'er a world of flowers,
The heart at times would ask repose;
But *thou* wouldst lose the only bower
Of rest amid a world of woes.

IV

Recall thy youth's unsullied vow, —
The past which on thee smiled so fair;
Then turn from thence to picture now
The frowns thy future fate must wear!

V.

No hour, no hope, can bring relief
To her who hides a blighted name;
For hearts unbowed by stormiest *grief*
Will break beneath one breeze of *shame!*

VI.

And when thy child's deserted years
Amid life's early woes are thrown,
Shall menial bosoms soothe the tears
That should be shed on thine alone?

VII.

When on thy name his lips shall call,
(That tender name, the earliest taught!)
Thou wouldst not shame and sin were all
The memories linked around its thought.

VIII.

If sickness haunt his infant bed,
Ah! what could then replace thy care?
Could hireling steps as gently tread
As if a mother's soul was there?

IX.

Enough! 't is not too late to shun
The bitter draught thyself wouldst fill;
The latest link is not undone; —
Thy bark is in the haven still

X.

If doomed to grief through life thou art,
'T is thine at least unstained to die!
Oh! better break at once thy heart,
Than rend it from its holiest tie!

It were vain to attempt describing Emily's feelings when the song ceased. The scene floated before her eyes indistinct and dark. The violence of the emotions she attempted to conceal pressed upon her almost to choking. She rose, looked at Falkland with one look of such anguish and despair that it froze his very heart, and left the room without uttering a word. A moment more, — they heard a noise, — a fall. They rushed out, — Emily was stretched on the ground, apparently lifeless. *She had broken a blood-vessel!*

BOOK IV.

FROM MRS. ST. JOHN TO ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ.

AT last I can give a more favorable answer to your letters. Emily is now *quite* out of danger. Since the day you forced yourself, with such a disinterested regard for her health and reputation, into her room, she grew (no thanks to your forbearance) gradually better. I trust that she will be able to see you in a few days. I hope this the more, because she now feels and decides that it will be for the last time. You have, it is true, injured her happiness for life: her virtue, thank heaven, is yet spared; and though you have made her wretched, you will never, I trust, succeed in making her despised.

You ask me, with some menacing and more complaint, why I am so bitter against you. I will tell you. I not only know Emily, and feel confident, from that knowledge, that nothing can recompense her for the reproaches of conscience, but I know *you*, and am convinced that you are the last man to render her happy. I set aside, for the moment, all rules of religion and morality in general, and speak to you (to use the cant and abused phrase) "without prejudice," as to the particular instance. Emily's nature is soft and susceptible, yours fickle and wayward in the extreme. The smallest change or caprice in you, which would not be noticed by a mind less delicate, would wound *her* to the heart. You know that the very softness of her character arises from its want of strength. Consider, for a moment, if she could bear the humiliation and disgrace which visit so heavily the offences of an English wife? She has been brought up in the strictest notions of morality; and, in a mind not naturally strong, nothing can efface the first impressions of education. She is not,—indeed she is not,—fit for a life of sorrow or degradation. In another character, another line of conduct might be desirable; but with regard to *her*, pause, Falkland, I beseech you, before you attempt again to destroy her for ever. I have said all. Farewell.

Your, and, above all, Emily's friend,

J. S.

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ. TO LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

YOU will see me, Emily, now that you are recovered sufficiently to do so, without danger. I do not ask this as a favor. If my love has deserved any thing from yours, if past recollections give me any claim over you, if my nature has not forfeited the spell which it formerly possessed upon your own, I demand it as a right.

The bearer waits for your answer.

E. F.

FROM LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE TO ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ.

SEE you, Falkland! Can you doubt it? Can you think for a moment that your commands can ever cease to become a law to me? Come here whenever you please. If, during my illness, they have prevented it, it was without my knowledge. I await you; but I own that this interview will be the last, if I can claim any thing from your mercy.

EMILY MANDEVILLE.

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ. TO LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

I HAVE seen you, Emily, and for the last time. My eyes are dry,—my hand does not tremble. I live, move, breathe as before,—and yet I have seen you for the last time! You told me,—even while you leaned on my bosom, even while your lip pressed mine,—you told me (and I saw your sincerity) to spare you, and to see you no more. You told me you had no longer any will, any fate of your own; that you would, if I still continued to desire it, leave friends, home, honor, for me; but you did not disguise from me that you would, in so doing, leave happiness also. You did not conceal from me that I was not sufficient to constitute all your world: you threw yourself, as you had done once before, upon what you called my generosity: you did not deceive yourself then; you have not deceived yourself now. In two weeks I shall leave England, probably for ever. I have another country still more dear to me, from its afflictions and humiliation. Public ties differ but little in their nature from private; and this confession of preference of what is debased to what is exalted, will be an answer to Mrs. St. John's assertion, that we cannot love in disgrace as we can in honor. Enough of this. In the choice, my poor Emily, that you have made, I cannot reproach you. You have done wisely, rightly, virtuously. You said that this separation must rest rather with me than with yourself; that you would be mine the moment I demanded it. I will not now or ever accept this promise. No one, much less one whom I love so intensely, so truly as I do you, shall ever receive disgrace at my hands, unless she can feel that that disgrace would be dearer to her than glory elsewhere; that the simple fate of being mine was not so much a recompense as a reward; and that, in spite of wordly depreciation and shame, it would constitute and concentrate all her visions of happiness and pride. I am now going to bid you farewell. May you,—I say this disinterestedly, and from my very heart,—may you soon forget how much you have loved and yet love me! For this purpose, you cannot have a better companion than Mrs. St. John. Her opinion of me is loudly expressed, and probably true; at all events, you will do wisely to believe it. You will hear me attacked and reproached by many. I do not deny the charges; you know best what I have deserved from *you*. God bless you, Emily. Wherever I go, I shall never cease to love you as I do now. May you be happy in your child, and in your conscience. Once more, God bless you, and fare well!

ERASMUS FALKLAND.

FROM LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE TO ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ.

O FALKLAND! you have conquered! I am yours,—*yours only,—wholly and for ever.* When your letter came my hand trembled so that I could not open it for several minutes; and when I did, I felt as if the very earth had passed from my feet. You were going from your country; you were about to be lost to me for ever. I could restrain myself no longer; all my virtue, my pride, forsook me at once. Yes, yes, you are indeed my world. I will fly with you anywhere,—everywhere. Nothing can be dreadful, but not seeing you; I would be a servant,—a slave,—a dog, as long as I could be with you; hear one tone of your voice, catch one glance of your eye. I scarcely see the paper before me, my thoughts are so straggling and confused. Write to me one word, Falkland,—one word, and I will lay it to my heart, and be happy.

FROM ERASMUS FALKLAND, ESQ. TO LADY EMILY MANDEVILLE.

—— *Hotel, London*

I HASTEN to you, Emily,—my own and only love. Your letter has restored me to life. To-morrow we shall meet.

E. F

It was with mingled feelings, alloyed and embittered, in spite of the burning hope which predominated over all, that Falkland returned to E——. He knew that he was near the completion of his most ardent wishes; that he was within the grasp of a prize which included all the thousand objects of ambition, into which, among other men, the desires are divided: the only dreams he had ventured to form for years were about to kindle into life He had every reason to be happy ; — such is the inconsistency of human nature, that he was almost wretched. The morbid melancholy habitual to him threw its colorings over every emotion and idea. He knew the character of the woman whose affections he had seduced ; and he trembled to think of the doom to which he was about to condemn her. With this, there came over his mind a long train of dark and remorseful recollections. Emily was not the only one whose destruction he had prepared. All who had loved him, he had repaid with ruin ; and *one*, — the first, — the fairest, — and the most loved, with death.

That last remembrance, more bitterly than all, possessed him. It will be recollected that Falkland, in the letters which begin this work, speaking of the ties he had formed after the loss of his first love, says, that it was the senses, not the affections, that were engaged. Never, indeed, since her death, till he met Emily, had his *heart* been unfaithful to her memory. Alas ! none but those who have cherished in their souls an image of the dead ; who have watched over it for long and bitter years in secrecy and gloom ; who have felt that it was to them as a holy and fairy spot which no eye but theirs could profane ; who have filled all things with *recollections* as with a spell, and made the universe one wide mausoleum of the lost, — none but those can understand the mysteries of that regret which is shed over every after-passion, though it be more burning and intense ; — that sense of sacrilege with which we fill up the haunted recesses of the spirit with a new and a living idol, and perpetuate the last act of infidelity to that buried love, which the heavens that now receive her, the earth where we beheld her, tell us, with the unnumbered voices of nature, to worship with the incense of our faith.

His carriage stopped at the lodge. The woman who opened the gates gave him the following note : —

" Mr. Mandeville is returned ; I almost fear that he suspects our attachment. Julia says, that if you come again to E——, she will inform him. I dare not, dearest Falkland, see you here. What is to be done ? I am very ill and feverish : my brain burns so, that I can think, feel, remember nothing, but the one thought, feeling, and remembrance, — that through shame, and despite of guilt, in life, and till death I am yours. " E. M."

As Falkland read this note, his extreme and engrossing love for Emily doubled with each word : an instant before, and the certainty of seeing her had suffered his mind to be divided into a thousand objects ; now, doubt united them once more into one.

He altered his route to L——, and despatched from thence a short note to Emily, imploring her to meet him that evening by the lake, in order to arrange their ultimate flight. Her answer was brief, and blotted with her tears ; but it was assent.

During the whole of that day, at least from the moment she received Falkland's letter, Emily was scarcely sensible of a single idea ; she sat still and motionless, gazing on vacancy, and seeing nothing within her mind, or in the objects which surrounded her, but one dreary blank. Sense, thought, feeling, even remorse, were congealed and frozen ; and the tides of emotion were still, *but they were ice !*

As Falkland's servant had waited without to deliver the note to Emily, Mrs. St. John had observed him : her alarm and surprise only served to quicken her presence of mind. She intercepted Emily's answer under pretence of giving it herself to Falkland's servant. She read it, and her resolution was formed. After carefully resealing and delivering it to the servant, she went at once to Mr. Mandeville, and revealed Lady Emily's attachment to Falkland. In this act of treachery, she was solely instigated by her passions ; and when Mandeville, roused from his wonted apathy to a paroxysm of indignation, thanked her again and again for the generosity of friendship which he imagined was all that actuated her communication, he dreamed not of the fierce and ungovernable jealousy which envied the very disgrace that her confession was intended to award. Well said the French enthusiast, " that the heart, the most serene to appearance, resembles that calm and glassy fountain which cherishes the monster of the Nile in the bosom of its waters." Whatever reward Mrs. St. John proposed to herself in this action, verily she has had the recompense that was her due. Those consequences of her treachery, which I hasten to relate, have ceased to others, — *to her* they remain Amid the pleasures of dissipation, one reflection has rankled at her mind ; one dark cloud has rested between the sunshine and her soul : like the murderer in Shakspeare, the revel where she fled for forgetfulness has teemed to her with the spectres of remembrance. O thou untameable conscience ! thou that never flatterest, — thou that watchest over the human heart never to slumber or to sleep, — it is thou that takest from us the present, barrest to us the future, and knittest the eternal chain that binds us to the rock and the vulture of the past !

The evening came on still and dark ; a breathless and heavy oppression seemed gathered over the air ; the full large clouds lay without motion in the dull sky, from between which, at long and scattered intervals, the wan stars looked out ; a double shadow seemed to invest the grouped and gloomy trees that stood unwavering in the melancholy horizon. The waters of the lake lay heavy and unagitated, as the sleep of death ; and the broken reflections of the abrupt and winding banks rested upon their bosoms, like the dream-like remembrance of a former existence.

The hour of the appointment was arrived. Falkland stood by the spot, gazing upon the lake before him ; his cheek was flushed, his hand was parched and dry with the consuming fire within him. His pulse beat thick and rapidly ; the demon of evil passions was upon his soul. He stood so lost in his own reflections, that he did not for some moments perceive the fond and tearful eye which was fixed upon him : on that brow and lip, thought seemed always so beautiful, so divine, that to disturb its repose was like a profanation of something holy ; and though Emily came toward him with a light and hurried step, she paused involuntarily to gaze upon that noble countenance which realized her earliest visions of the beauty and majesty of love. He turned slowly, and perceived her ; he came to her with his own peculiar smile ; he drew her to his bosom in silence ; he pressed his lips to her forehead : she leaned upon his bosom, and forgot all but him. Oh ! if there be one feeling which makes love, even guilty love, a god, it is the knowledge that in the midst of this breathing world he reigns aloof and alone ; and that those who are occupied with his worship, know nothing of the pettiness, the strife, the bustle, which pollute and agitate the ordinary inhabitants of earth ! What was now to them, as they stood alone in the deep stillness of nature, every thing that had engrossed them before they had met and loved ? Even in her the recollections of guilt and grief subsided : she was only sensible of one thought, — the presence of the being who stood beside her, —

" That ocean to the rivers of her soul."

They sat down beneath an oak ; Falkland stooped to kiss the cold and pale cheek that still rested upon his breast. His kisses were like lava ; the turbulent and stormy elements of sin and desire were aroused even to madness within him. He clasped her still nearer to his bosom ; her lips answered to his own ; they caught perhaps something of the spirit which they received : her eyes were half closed ; the bosom heaved wildly that was pressed to his beating and burning heart. The skies grew darker and darker as the night stole over them : one low roll of thunder broke upon the curtained and heavy air, — *they* did not hear it ; and yet it was the knell of peace, — virtue, — hope, — lost, lost for ever to their souls !

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They separated as they had never done before.. In Emily's bosom there was a dreary void, — a vast blank, — over which there went a low, deep voice, like a spirit's, — a sound indistinct and strange, that spoke a language she knew not ; but felt that it told of woe, — guilt, — doom. Her senses were stunned ; the vitality of her feelings was numbed and torpid : the first herald of despair is insensibility. " To-morrow, then," said Falkland, — and his voice for the first time seemed strange and harsh to her, — " we will fly hence for ever : meet me at daybreak, — the carriage shall be in attendance, — we cannot now unite too soon, — would that at this very moment we were prepared ! " — " To-morrow ! " repeated Emily, " at daybreak ! " and as she clung to him, he felt her shudder : — " to-morrow, — ay, — to-morrow ! — " one kiss, — one embrace, — one word, *farewell*, — and they parted.

Falkland returned to L——— : a gloomy foreboding rested upon his mind ; that dim and indescribable fear which no earthly or human cause can explain, — that shrinking within self, — that vague terror of the future, — that grappling, as it were, with some unknown shade, — that wandering of the spirit, — whither ? — that cold, cold creeping dread, - of what ? As he entered the house, he met his confidential servant. He gave him orders respecting the flight of the morrow, and then retired into the chamber where he slept. It was an antique and large room : the wainscot was of oak ; and one broad and high window looked over the expanse of country which stretched beneath. He sat himself by the casement in silence, — he opened it : the dull air came over his forehead, not with a sense of freshness, but like the parching atmosphere of the east, charged with a weight and fever that sank heavy into his soul. He turned : — he threw himself upon the bed, and placed his hands over his face. His thoughts were scattered into a thousand indistinct forms, but over all there was one rapturous remembrance ; and that was, that the morrow was to unite him for ever to her whose possession had only rendered her more dear. Meanwhile, the hours rolled on ; and as he lay thus silent and still, the clock of the distant church struck with a distinct and solemn sound upon his ear. It was the half-hour after midnight. At that moment an icy thrill ran, slow and curdling, through his veins. His heart, as if with a presentiment of what was to follow, beat violently, and then stopped ; life itself seemed ebbing away ; cold drops stood upon his forehead ; his eyelids trembled, and the balls reeled and glazed, like those of a dying man ; a deadly fear gathered over him, so that his flesh quivered, and every hair on his head seemed instinct with a separate life : the very marrow of his bones crept, and his blood waxed thick and thick, as if stagnating into an ebbless and frozen substance. He started in a wild and unutterable terror. There stood, at the far end of the room, a dim and thin shape, like moonlight, without outline or form ; still, and indistinct, and shadowy. He gazed on, speechless and motionless ; his faculties and senses seemed locked in an unnatural trance. By degrees the shape became clearer and clearer to his fixed and dilating eye. He saw, as through a floating and mistlike veil, the features of Emily ; but how changed ! — sunken and hueless, and set in death. The dropping lip, from which there seemed to trickle a deep red stain like blood ; the leadlike and lifeless eye ; the calm, awful, mysterious repose which broods over the aspect of the dead ; — all grew, as it were, from the hazy cloud that encircled them for one, one brief, agonizing moment, and then as suddenly faded away. The spell passed from his senses. He sprang from the bed with a loud cry. All was quiet ! There was not a trace of what he had witnessed. The feeble light of the skies rested upon the spot where the apparition had stood ; upon that spot he stood also. He stamped upon the floor, — it was firm beneath his footing. He passed his hands over his body, — he was awake, — he was unchanged : earth, air, heaven, were around him as before. What had thus gone over his soul to awe and overcome it to such weakness ? To these questions his reason could return no answer. Bold by nature and skeptical by philosophy, his mind gradually recovered its original tone ; he did not give way to conjecture ; he endeavoured to discard it : he sought by natural causes to account for the apparition he had seen or imagined ; and as he felt the blood again circulating in its accustomed courses, and the night air coming chill over his feverish frame, he smiled with a stern and scornful bitterness at the terror which had so shaken, and the fancy which had so deluded, his mind.

Are there not " more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy ? " A spirit may hover in the air that we breathe : the depth of our most secret solitudes may be peopled by the invisible : our up-risings and our down-sittings may be marked by a witness from the grave. In our walks the dead may be behind us ; in our banquets they may sit at the board ; and the chill breath of the night wind that stirs the curtains of our bed may bear a message our senses receive not, from lips that once have pressed kisses on our own ! Why is it that at moments there creeps over us an awe, a terror, overpowering, but undefined ? Why is it that we shudder without a cause, and feel the warm life-blood stand still in its courses ? *Are the dead too near ?* Do unearthly wings touch us as they flit around ? Has our soul any intercourse which the body shares not, though it feels, with the supernatural world, — mysterious revealings, — unimaginable communion, — a language of dread and power, shaking to its centre the fleshy barrier that divides the spirit from its race ?

How fearful is the very life which we hold ! We have our being beneath a cloud, and are a marvel even to ourselves. There is not a single thought which has its affixed limits. Like circles in the water, our researches weaken as they extend, and vanish at last into the immeasurable and unfathomable space of the vast unknown. We are like children in the dark ; we tremble in a shadowy and terrible void, peopled with our fancies ! Life is our real night, and the first gleam of the morning, which brings us certainty, *is death.*

Falkland sat the remainder of that night by the window, watching the clouds become gray as the dawn rose, and its earliest breeze awoke. He heard the trampling of the horses beneath ; he drew his cloak around him, and descended. It was on a turning of the road beyond the lodge that he directed the carriage to wait, and he then proceeded to the place appointed. Emily was not yet there. He walked to and fro with an agitated and hurried step. The impression of the night had in a great measure been effaced from his mind, and he gave himself up without reserve to the warm and sanguine hopes which he had so much reason to conceive. He thought, too, at moments, of those bright climates, beneath which he designed their asylum, where the very air is music, and the light is like the colorings of love ; and he associated the sighs of a mutual rapture with the fragrance of myrtles, and the breath of a Tuscan heaven. Time glided on. The hour was long past, yet Emily came not ! The sun rose, and Falkland turned in dark and angry discontent from its beams. With every moment his impatience increased, and at last he could restrain himself no longer. He proceeded towards the house. He stood for some time at a distance ; but as all seemed still hushed in repose, he drew nearer and nearer till he reached the door. To his astonishment it was open. He saw forms passing rapidly through the hall : he heard a confused and indistinct murmur At length he caught a glimpse of Mrs. St. John. He could command himself no more. He sprang forward, — entered the door, — the hall — and caught her by a part of her dress. He could not speak, but his countenance said all which his lips refused. Mrs. St. John burst into tears when she saw him. " Good God ! " she said, why are you here ? Is it possible you have not yet learned —— ? " Her voice failed her. Falkland had by this time recovered himself. He turned to the servants who gathered around him. " Speak," he said, " what has occurred ? " " My lady, — my lady ! " burst at once from several tongues. " What of her ? " said Falkland, with a blanched cheek, but unchanging voice. There was a pause. At that instant, a man, whom Falkland recognised as the physician of the neighbourhood, passed at the opposite end of the hall. A light, a scorching and intolerable light, broke upon him. " She is dying, — she is dead, perhaps," he said, in a low, sepulchral tone, turning his eye around till it rested upon every one present. *Not one answered.* He paused a moment, as if stunned by a sudden shock, and then sprang up the stairs. He passed the boudoir, and entered the room where Emily slept. The shutters were only partially closed : a faint light broke through and rested on the bed ; beside it bent two women. Them he neither heeded nor saw. He drew aside the curtains. He beheld, the same as he had seen it in his vision of the night before, — the changed and lifeless countenance of Emily Mandeville ! That face, still so tenderly beautiful, was partially turned towards him. Some dark stains upon the lip and neck told how she had died, — the blood-vessel she had broken before had burst again. The bland and soft eyes, which for him never had but *one* expression, were closed : and the long and dishevelled tresses half hid, while they contrasted, that bosom, which had the night before first learned to thrill beneath his own. Happier in her fate than she deserved, she passed from this bitter life ere the punishment of her guilt had begun. She was not doomed to wither beneath the blight of shame, nor the coldness of estranged affection. From him, whom she had so worshipped, she was not condemned to bear wrong nor change. She died while his passion was yet in its spring, — before a blossom, a leaf had faded ; and she sank to repose while his kiss was yet warm upon her lip, and her last breath almost mingled with his sigh. For the woman who has erred, life has no exchange for such a death. Falkland stood mute and motionless ; not one word of grief or horror escaped his lips. At length he bent down. He took the hand which lay outside the bed; he pressed it; it replied not to the pressure, but fell cold and heavy from his own. He put his cheek to her lips; not the faintest breath came from them; and then for the first time a change passed over his countenance. He pressed upon those lips one long and last kiss, and without word, or sign, or tear, he turned from the chamber. Two hours afterward, he was found senseless upon the ground: it was upon the spot where he had met Emily the night before.

For weeks he knew nothing of this earth, — he was encompassed with the spectres of a terrible dream. All was confusion, darkness, horror, — a series and a change of torture! At one time he was hurried through the heavens in the womb of a fiery star, girt above and below and around with unextinguishable but unconsuming flames. Wherever he trod, as he wandered through his vast and blazing prison, the molten fire was his footing, and the breath of fire was his air. Flowers, and trees, and hills, were in that world as in ours, but wrought from one lurid and intolerable light; and, scattered around, rose gigantic palaces and domes of the living flame, like the mansions of the city of hell. With every moment, there passed to and fro shadowy forms, on whose countenances was engraven unutterable anguish; but not a shriek, not a groan rung through the red air; for the doomed, who fed and inhabited the flames, were forbidden the consolation of voice. Above there sat, fixed and black, a solid and impenetrable cloud, — night frozen into substance! and from the midst there hung a banner of a pale and sickly flame, on which was written "For ever." A river rushed rapidly beside him. He stooped to slake the agony of his thirst, — the waves were waves of fire! and, as he started from the burning draught, he longed to shriek aloud, and could not! Then he cast his despairing eyes above for mercy, and saw, on the livid and motionless banner, "For ever."

"A change came o'er the spirit of his dream."

He was suddenly borne upon the winds and storms to the oceans of an eternal winter. He fell stunned and unstruggling upon the ebbless and sluggish waves. Slowly and heavily they rose over him as he sank: then came the lengthened and suffocating torture of that drowning death, — the impotent and convulsive contest with the closing waters, — the gurgle, the choking, the bursting of the pent breath, — the flutter of the heart, its agony, and its stillness! He recovered. He was a thousand fathoms beneath the sea, chained in a rock round which the heavy waters rose as a wall. He felt his own flesh rot and decay, perishing from his limbs piece by piece; and he saw the coral banks, which it requires a thousand ages to form, rise slowly from their slimy bed, and spread, atom by atom, till they became a shelter for the leviathan: their growth was his only record of eternity: and ever and ever, around and above him, came vast and misshapen things, — the wonders of the secret deeps; and the sea-serpent, the huge chimera of the north, made its resting-place by his side, glaring upon him with a livid and deathlike eye, wan, yet burning as an expiring sun. But over all, in every change, in every moment of that immortality, there was present one pale and motionless countenance, never turning from his own. The fiends of hell, the monsters of the hidden ocean, had no horror so awful as the human face of the dead whom he had loved!

The word of his sentence was gone forth. Alike through that delirium and its more fearful awakening, through the past, through the future, through the vigils of the joyless day, and the broken dreams of the night, there was a charm upon his soul, — a hell within himself; and the curse of his sentence was — *never to forget!*

When Lady Emily returned home on that guilty and eventful night, she stole at once to her room: she dismissed her servant, and threw herself upon the ground in that deep despair which on this earth can never again know hope. She lay there without the power to weep, or the courage to pray, — how long, she knew not. Like the period before creation, her mind was a chaos of jarring elements, and knew neither the method of reflection nor the division of time.

As she rose, she heard a slight knock at the door, and her husband entered. Her heart misgave her; and when she saw him close the door carefully before he approached her, she felt as if she could have sunk into the earth, alike from her internal shame and her fear of his detection.

Mr. Mandeville was a weak, commonplace character, indifferent in ordinary matters, but, like most imbecile minds, violent and furious when aroused. "Is this, madam, addressed to you?" he cried, in a voice of thunder, as he placed a letter before her; (it was one of Falkland's;) "and this, and this, madam?" said he, in a still louder tone, as he flung them out one after another from her own escritoire, which he had broken open.

Emily sank back, and gasped for breath. Mandeville rose, and laughing fiercely, seized her by the arm. He grasped it with all his force. She uttered a faint scream of terror; he did not heed it; he flung her from him, and as she fell upon the ground, the blood gushed in torrents from her lips. In the sudden change of feeling which alarm created, he raised her in his arms. *She was a corpse!* At that instant the clock struck upon his ear with a startling and solemn sound: *it was the half-hour after midnight!*

The grave is now closed upon that soft and erring heart, with its guiltiest secret unrevealed. She went to that last home with a blest and unblighted name; for her guilt was unknown, and her virtues are yet recorded in the memories of the poor. * * * *

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They laid her in the stately vaults of her ancient line, and her bier was honored with tears from hearts not less stricken, because their sorrow, if violent, was brief. For the dead there are many mourners, but only one monument, — the bosom which loved them *best*. The spot where the hearse rested, the green turf beneath, the surrounding trees, the gray tower of the village church, and the proud halls rising beyond, — all had witnessed the childhood, the youth, the bridal-day, of the being whose last rites and solemnities they were to witness now. The very bell which rang for her birth had rung also for the marriage peal: it *now* tolled for her death. But a little while, and she had gone forth from that home of her young and unclouded years, amid the acclamations and blessings of all, a bride, with the insignia of bridal pomp, — in the first bloom of her girlish beauty, — in the first innocence of her unawakened heart, weeping, not for the future she was entering, but for the past she was about to leave, and smiling through her tears, as if innocence had no business with grief. On the same spot, where he had then waved his farewell, stood the father now. On the grass which they had then covered, flocked the peasants whose wants her childhood had relieved; by the same priest who had blessed her bridals, bent the bridegroom who had plighted its vow. There was not a tree nor a blade of grass withered. The day itself was bright and glorious; such was it when it smiled upon her nuptials. And *she*, — *she*, — but four little years, and all youth's innocence darkened, and earth's beauty come to dust. Alas! not for her, but the mourner whom she left! In death even love is forgotten; but in life there is no bitterness so utter as to feel every thing is unchanged except the one being who was the soul of all, — to know *the world* is the same, but that *its sunshine* is departed.

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The noon was still and sultry. Along the narrow street of the small village of Iodar poured the wearied, but yet unconquered band, which imbodied in that district of Spain the last hope and energy of freedom. The countenances of the soldiers were haggard and dejected; they displayed even less of the vanity than their accoutrements exhibited of the pomp and circumstance of war. Yet their garments were such as even the peasants had disdained: covered with blood and dust, and tattered into a thousand rags, they betokened nothing of chivalry but its endurance of hardship; even the rent and sullied banners drooped sullenly along their staves, as if the winds themselves had become the minions of fortune, and disdained to swell the insignia of those whom she had deserted. The glorious music of battle was still. An air of dispirited and defeated enterprise hung over the whole array. "Thank heaven," said the chief, who closed the last file as it marched on to its scanty refreshment and brief repose; "thank heaven, we are at least out of the reach of pursuit; and the mountains, those last retreats of liberty, are before us!" "True, Don Rafael," replied the youngest of two officers who rode by the side of the commander; "and if we can cut our passage to Mina, we may yet plant the standard of the constitution in Madrid." "Ay," added the elder officer, "and sing Riego's hymn in the place of the Escurial!" "Our sons may," said the chief, who was indeed Riego himself, "but for us, — all hope is over! Were we united, we could scarcely make head against the armies of France; and divided as we are, the wonder is that we have escaped so long. Hemmed in by invasion, our great enemy has been ourselves. Such has been the hostility faction has created between Spaniard and Spaniard, that we seem to have none left to waste upon Frenchmen. We cannot establish freedom, if men are willing to be slaves. We have no hope, Don Alphonso, — no hope, — but that of death!" As Riego concluded this desponding answer, so contrary to his general enthusiasm, the younger officer rode on among the soldiers, cheering them with words of congratulation and comfort; ordering their several divisions; cautioning them to be prepared at a moment's notice; and impressing on their remembrance those small but essential points of discipline, which a Spanish troop might well be supposed to disregard. When Riego and his companion entered the small and miserable hovel which constituted the head-quarters of the place, this man still remained without; and it was not till he had slackened the girths of his Andalusian horse, and placed before it the undainty provender which the *écurie* afforded, that he thought of rebinding more firmly the bandages wound round a deep and painful sabre cut in the left arm, which for several hours had been wholly neglected. The officer, whom Riego had addressed by the name of Alphonso, came out of the hut just as his comrade was vainly endeavouring, with his teeth and one hand, to replace the ligature. As he assisted him, he said, "You know not, my dear Falkland, how bitterly I reproach myself for having ever persuaded you to a cause where contest seems to have no hope, and danger no glory." Falkland smiled, bitterly. "Do not deceive yourself, my dear uncle," said he; "your persuasions would have been unavailing but for the suggestions of my own wishes. I am not one of those enthusiasts who entered on your cause with high hopes and chivalrous designs: I asked but forgetfulness and excitement, — I have found them! I would not exchange a single pain I have endured for what would have constituted the pleasures of other men: — but enough of this. What time, think you, have we for repose?" "Till the evening," answered Alphonso: "our route will then most probably be directed to the Sierra Morena. The general is extremely weak and exhausted, and needs a longer rest than we shall gain. It is singular that with such weak health he should endure so great an excess of hardship and fatigue." During this conversation they entered the hut. Riego was already asleep. As they seated themselves to the wretched provision of the place, a distant and indistinct noise was heard. It came first on their ears like the birth of the mountain wind, — low, and hoarse, and deep; gradually, it grew loud and louder, and mingled with other sounds which they defined too well, — the hum, the murmur, the trampling of steeds, the ringing echoes of the rapid march of armed men! They heard, and knew the foe was upon them! — a moment more, and the drum beat to arms. "By St. Pelagio," cried Riego, who had sprung from his light sleep at the first sound of the approaching danger, unwilling to believe his fears, "it cannot be: the French are far behind:" and then, as the drum beat, his voice suddenly changed, — "the enemy! the enemy! D'Aguilar, to horse!" and with those words he rushed out of the hut. The soldiers, who had scarcely begun to disperse, were soon re-collected. In the mean while, the French commander, D'Argout, taking advantage of the surprise he had occasioned, poured on his troops, which consisted solely of cavalry, undaunted and undelayed by the fire of the posts. On, on they drove, like a swift cloud charged with thunder, and gathering wrath as it hurried by, before it burst in tempest on the beholders. They did not pause till they reached the farther extremity of the village: there the Spanish infantry were already formed into two squares. "Halt!" cried the French commander: the troop suddenly stopped, confronting the nearer square. There was one brief pause, — the moment before the storm. "Charge!" said D'Argout, and the word rang throughout the line up to the clear and placid sky. Up flashed the steel like lightning: on went the troop like the dash of a thousand waves when the storm is upon them; and before the breath of the riders was thrice drawn, came the crash, — the shock, — the slaughter of battle. The Spaniards made but a faint resistance to the impetuosity of the onset: they broke on every side beneath the force of the charge, like the weak barriers of a rapid and swollen stream; and the French troops, after a brief but bloody victory, (joined by a second squadron from the rear,) advanced immediately upon the Spanish cavalry. Falkland was by the side of Riego. As the troop advanced, it would have been curious to notice the contrast of expression in the face of each; the Spaniard's features, lighted up with the daring enthusiasm of his nature, every trace of their usual languor and exhaustion vanished beneath the unconquerable soul that blazed out the brighter for the debility of the frame; the brow knit; the eye flashing; the lip quivering: — and close beside, the calm, stern, passionless repose that brooded over the severe yet noble beauty of Falkland's countenance. To him danger brought scorn, not enthusiasm: he rather despised than defied it. "The dastards! they waver," said Riego, in an accent of despair, as his troop faltered beneath the charge of the French; and so saying, he spurred his steed on to the foremost line. The contest was longer, but not less decisive than the one just concluded. The Spaniards, thrown into confusion by the first shock, never recovered themselves. Falkland, who, in his anxiety to rally and inspirit the soldiers, had advanced with two other officers beyond the ranks, was soon surrounded by a detachment of dragoons; the wound in his left arm scarcely suffered him to guide his horse; he was in the most imminent danger. At that moment D'Aguilar, at the head of his own immediate followers, cut his way into the circle and covered Falkland's retreat; another detachment of the enemy came up, and they were a second time surrounded. In the mean while, the main body of the Spanish cavalry were flying in all directions, and Riego's deep voice was heard at intervals, through the columns of smoke and dust, calling and exhorting them in vain. D'Aguilar and his scanty troop, after a desperate skirmish, broke again through the enemy's line drawn up against their retreat. The rank closed after them, like waters when the object that pierced them has sunk: Falkland and his two companions were again environed: he saw his comrades cut to the earth before him. He pulled up his horse for one moment, clove down with one desperate blow the dragoon with whom he was engaged, and then setting his spurs to the very rowels into his horse, dashed at once through the circle of his foes. His remarkable presence of mind, and the strength and sagacity of his horse, befriended him. Three sabres flashed before him, and glanced harmless from his raised sword, like lightning on the water. The circle was passed! As he galloped toward Riego, his horse started from a dead body that lay across his path. He reined up for one instant, for the countenance, which looked upward, struck him as familiar. What was his horror, when, in that livid and distorted face, he recognised his uncle! The thin grizzled hairs were besprent with gore and brains, and the blood yet oozed from the spot where the ball had passed through his temple. Falkland had but a brief interval for grief; the pursuers were close behind: he heard the snort of the foremost horse before he again put spurs into his own. Riego was holding a hasty consultation with his principal officers. As Falkland rode breathless up to them, they had decided on the conduct expedient to adopt. They led the remaining square of infantry toward the chain of mountains against which the village, as it were, leaned: and there the men dispersed in all directions. "For us," said Riego to the followers on horseback, who gathered around him, "for us the mountains still promise a shelter. We must ride, gentlemen, for our lives, — Spain will want them yet."

Wearied and exhausted as they were, that small and devoted troop fled on into the recesses of the mountains for the remainder of that day, — twenty men out of the two thousand who had halted at Iodar. As the evening stole over them, they entered into a narrow defile: the tall hills rose on every side, covered with the glory of the setting sun, as if Nature rejoiced to grant her bulwarks as a protection to liberty. A small clear stream ran through the valley, sparkling with the last smile of the departing day;

and ever and anon, from the scattered shrubs and the fragrant herbage, came the vesper music of the birds, and the hum of the wild bee.

Parched with thirst, and drooping with fatigue, the wanderers sprang forward with one simultaneous cry of joy to the glassy and refreshing wave which burst so unexpectedly upon them; and it was resolved that they should remain for some hours in a spot where all things invited them to the repose they so imperiously required. They flung themselves at once upon the grass; and such was their exhaustion, that rest was almost synonymous with sleep. Falkland alone could not immediately forget himself in repose: the face of his uncle, ghastly and disfigured, glared upon his eyes whenever he closed them. Just, however, as he was sinking into an unquiet and fitful doze, he heard steps approaching: he started up, and perceived two men, one a peasant, the other in the dress of a hermit. They were the first human beings the wanderers had met; and when Falkland gave the alarm to Riego, who slept beside him, it was immediately proposed to detain them as guides to the town of Carolina, where Riego had hopes of finding effectual assistance, or the means of ultimate escape. The hermit and his companion refused, with much vehemence, the office imposed upon them; but Riego ordered them to be forcibly detained. He had afterward reason bitterly to regret this compulsion.

Midnight came on in all the gorgeous beauty of a southern heaven, and beneath its stars they renewed their march.

As Falkland rode by the side of Riego, the latter said to him, in a low voice, "There is yet escape for you and my followers; none for me; they have set a price on my head, and the moment I leave these mountains, I enter upon my own destruction." "No, Rafael!" replied Falkland; "you can yet fly to England, that asylum of the free, though ally of the despotic; the abettor of tyranny, but the shelter of its victims!" Riego answered, with the same faint and dejected tone, "I care not now what becomes of me! I have lived solely for freedom: I have made her my mistress, my hope, my dream: I have no existence but in her. With the last effort of my country let me perish also! I have lived to view liberty not only defeated, but derided: I have seen its efforts not aided, but mocked. In my own country, those only who wore it have been respected who used it as a covering to ambition. In other nations, the free stood aloof when the charter of their own rights was violated in the invasion of ours. I cannot forget that the senate of that England, where you promise me a home, rang with insulting plaudits when her statesman breathed his ridicule on our weakness, not his sympathy for our cause: and I, — I, — fanatic, — dreamer, — enthusiast as I may be called, whose whole life has been one unremitting struggle for the opinion I have adopted, am at least not so blinded by my infatuation but I can see the mockery it incurs. If I die on the scaffold to-morrow, I shall have nothing of martyrdom but its doom; not the triumph, — the incense, the immortality of popular applause: I should have no hope to support me at such a moment, gleaned from the glories of the future, — nothing but one stern and prophetic conviction of the vanity of that tyranny by which my sentence would be pronounced." Riego paused for a moment before he resumed, and his pale and deathlike countenance received an awful and unnatural light from the intensity of the feeling that swelled and burned within him. His figure was drawn up to its full height, and his voice rang through the lonely hills with a deep and hollow sound, that had in it a tone of prophecy, as he resumed: "It is in vain that they oppose OPINION; any thing else they may subdue. They may conquer wind, water, nature itself; but to the progress of that secret, subtle, pervading spirit, their imagination can devise, their strength can accomplish, no bar; *its votaries* they may seize, they may destroy; *itself* they cannot touch. If they check it in one place, it invades them in another. They cannot build a wall across the whole earth; and even if they could, it would pass over its summit! Chains cannot bind it, for it is immaterial, — dungeons inclose it, for it is universal. Over the fagot and the scaffold, — over the bleeding bodies of its defenders which they pile against its path, it sweeps on with a noiseless but unceasing march. Do they levy armies against it, it presents to them no palpable object to oppose. Its camp is the universe; its asylum is the bosoms of their own soldiers. Let them depopulate, destroy as they please, to each extremity of the earth; but as long as they have a single supporter themselves, — as long as they leave a single individual into whom that spirit can enter, — so long they will have the same labors to encounter, and the same enemy to subdue."

As Riego's voice ceased, Falkland gazed upon him with a mingled pity and admiration. Sour and ascetic as was the mind of that hopeless and disappointed man, he felt somewhat of a kindred glow at the pervading and holy enthusiasm of the patriot to whom he had listened; and though it was the character of his own philosophy to question the purity of human motives, and to smile at the more vivid emotions he had ceased to feel, he bowed his soul in homage to those principles whose sanctity he acknowledged, and to that devotion of zeal and fervor with which their defender cherished and enforced them. Falkland had joined the Constitutionalists with respect, but not ardor, for their cause. He demanded excitation; he cared little where he found it. He stood in this world a being who mixed in all its changes, performed all its offices, took, as if by the force of superior mechanical power, a leading share in its events; but whose thoughts and soul were as offsprings of another planet, imprisoned in a human form, and longing for their home.

As they rode on, Riego continued to converse with that imprudent unreserve which the openness and warmth of his nature made natural to him: not one word escaped the hermit and the peasant, (whose name was Lopez Lara,) as they rode on two mules behind Falkland and Riego. "Remember," whispered the hermit to his comrade, "the reward!" "I do," muttered the peasant.

Throughout the whole of that long and dreary night the wanderers rode on incessantly, and found themselves at daybreak near a farm-house: this was Lara's own home. They made the peasant Lara knock: his own brother opened the door. Fearful as they were of the detection to which so numerous a party might conduce, only Riego, another officer, (Don Luis de Sylva,) and Falkland entered the house. The latter, whom nothing ever seemed to render weary or forgetful, fixed his cold, stern eye upon the two brothers, and, seeing some signs pass between them, locked the door, and so prevented their escape. For a few hours they reposed in the stables with their horses, their drawn swords by their sides. On waking, Riego found it absolutely necessary that his horse should be shod. Lopez started up, and offered to lead it to Arguillas for that purpose. "No," said Riego, who, though naturally imprudent, partook in this instance of Falkland's habitual caution; "your brother shall go and bring hither the farrier." Accordingly, the brother went: he soon returned. "The farrier," he said, "was already on the road." Riego and his companions, who were absolutely fainting with hunger, sat down to breakfast; but Falkland, who had finished first, and who had eyed the man since his return with the most scrutinizing attention, withdrew toward the window, looking out from time to time with a telescope which they had carried about them, and urging them impatiently to finish. "Why?" said Riego, "famished men are good for nothing, either to fight or fly, — and we *must* wait for the farrier." "True," said Falkland, "but ——" he stopped abruptly. Sylva had his eyes on his face at that moment. Falkland's color suddenly changed: he turned round with a loud cry. "Up! up! Riego! Sylva! We are undone, — the soldiers are upon us!" "Arm!" cried Riego, starting up. At that moment Lopez and his brother seized their own carbines, and levelled them at the betrayed Constitutionalists. "The first who moves," cried the former, "is a dead man!" "Fools!" said Falkland, with a calm bitterness, advancing deliberately toward them. He moved only three steps, — Lopez fired. Falkland staggered a few paces, recovered himself, sprang toward Lara, clove him at one blow from the skull to the jaw, and fell, with his victim, lifeless upon the floor. "Enough!" said Riego to the remaining peasant: "we are your prisoners; bind us!" In two minutes more the soldiers entered, and they were conducted to Carolina. Fortunately, Falkland was known, when at Paris, to a French officer of high rank then at Carolina. He was removed to the Frenchman's quarters. Medical aid was instantly procured. The first examination of his wound was decisive; recovery was hopeless!

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Night came on again with her pomp of light and shade, — the night that for Falkland had no morrow. One solitary lamp burned in the chamber where he lay alone with God and his own heart. He had desired his couch to be placed by the window, and requested his attendants to withdraw. The gentle and balmy air stole over him, as free and bland as if it were to breathe for him for ever; and the silver moonlight came gleaming through the lattice, and played upon his wan brow, like the tenderness of a bride that sought to kiss him to repose. "In a few hours," thought he, as he lay gazing on the high stars which seemed such silent witnesses of an eternal and unfathomed mystery, "in a few hours either this feverish and wayward spirit will be at rest for ever, or it will have commenced a new career in an untried and unimaginable existence! In a few hours I may be among the very heavens that I survey, — a part of their own glory, — a new link in a new order of being, — breathing amid the elements of a more gorgeous world, — arrayed myself in the attributes of a purer and diviner nature, — a wanderer among the planets, — an associate of angels, — the beholder of the arcana of the great God, — redeemed, regenerate, immortal, or, — *dust!*

"There is no Œdipus to solve the enigma of life. We are, — whence came we? We are *not*, — and whither do we go? All things *in* our existence have their object; existence has none. We live, move, beget our species, perish, — and *for what?* We ask the past its moral; we question the gone years of the reason of our being, and from the clouds of a thousand ages there goes forth no answer. Is it merely to pant beneath this weary load; to sicken of the sun; to grow old; to drop like leaves into the grave; and to bequeath to our heirs the worn garments of toil and labor that we leave behind? Is it to sail for ever on the same sea, ploughing the ocean of time with new furrows, and feeding its billows with new wrecks, or ——" and his thoughts paused, blinded and bewildered.

No man, in whom the mind has not been broken by the decay of the body, has approached death in full consciousness, as Falkland did that moment, and not thought intensely on the change he was about to undergo; and yet what new discoveries upon that subject has any one bequeathed us? There the wildest imaginations are driven from originality into triteness; there all minds, the frivolous and the strong, the busy and the idle, are compelled into the same path and limit of reflection. Upon that unknown and voiceless gulf of inquiry broods an eternal and impenetrable gloom: — no wind breathes over it, — no wave agitates its stillness: over the dead and solemn calm there is no change propitious to adventure, — there goes forth no vessel of research, which is not driven, baffled and broken, again upon the shore.

The moon waxed high in her career. Midnight was gathering slowly over the earth: the beautiful, the mystic hour, blent with a thousand memories, hallowed by a thousand dreams, made tender to remembrance by the vows our youth breathed beneath its star, and solemn by the olden legends which are linked to its majesty and peace, — *the hour in which men should die;* the isthmus between two worlds: the climax of the past day; the verge of that which is to come; wrapping us in sleep after a weary travail, and promising us a morrow *which since the first birth of creation has never failed.* As the minutes glided on, Falkland felt himself grow gradually weaker and weaker. The pain of his wound had ceased, but a deadly sickness gathered over his heart: the room reeled before his eyes, and the damp chill mounted from his feet up, — up to the breast in which the life-blood waxed dull and thick.

As the hand of the clock pointed *to the half-hour after midnight*, the attendants who waited in the adjoining room heard a faint cry. They rushed hastily into Falkland's chamber; they found him stretched half out of the bed. His hand was raised toward the opposite wall; it dropped gradually as they approached him; and his brow, which was at first stern and bent, softened, shade by shade, into its usual serenity. But the dim film gathered fast over his eye, and the last coldness upon his limbs. He strove to raise himself as if to speak; the effort failed, and he fell motionless on his face. They stood by the bed for some moments in silence: at length they raised him gently Placed against his heart was an open locket of dark hair, which one hand still pressed convulsively. They looked upon his countenance, — (a single glance was sufficient,) — it was hushed, — proud, — passionless, — the sea of death was upon it!

THE END OF FALKLAND.

A MANUSCRIPT FOUND IN A MAD-HOUSE.

I AM the eldest son of a numerous family,—noble in birth, and eminent for wealth. My brothers are a vigorous and comely race,—my sisters are more beautiful than dreams. By what fatality was it that I alone was thrust into this glorious world distorted, and dwarf-like, and hideous,—my limbs a mockery, my countenance a horror, myself a blackness on the surface of creation,—a discord in the harmony of nature, a living misery, an animated curse? I am shut out from the aims and objects of my race;—with the deepest sources of affection in my heart, I am doomed to find no living thing on which to pour them. Love!—out upon the world—I am its very loathing and abhorrence: friendship turns from me in disgust; pity beholds me, and withers to aversion. Wheresoever I wander, I am encompassed with hatred as with an atmosphere. Whatever I attempt, I am in the impassable circle of a dreadful and accursed doom. Ambition—pleasure—philanthropy—fame—the common blessing of social intercourse—are all as *other* circles, which *mine* can touch but in *one* point, and that point is torture. I have knowledge to which the wisdom of ordinary sages is as dust to gold;—I have energies to which relaxation is pain;—I have benevolence which sheds itself in charity and love over a worm! For what—merciful God!—for what are these blessings of nature or of learning?—The instant I employ them, I must enter among men: the moment I enter among men, my being blackens into an agony. Laughter grins upon me—terror dogs my steps;—I exist upon poisons, and my nourishment is scorn!

At my birth the nurse refused me suck; my mother saw me and became delirious; my father ordered that I should be stifled as a monster. The physicians saved my life—accursed be they for the act! One woman—she was old and childless—took compassion upon me; she reared and fed me. I grew up—I asked for something to love; I loved every thing: the common earth—the fresh grass—the living insect—the household brute;—from the dead stone I trod on, to the sublime countenance of man, made to behold the stars, and to scorn *me*;—from the noblest thing to the prettiest—the fairest to the foulest—*I* loved them *all!* I knelt to my mother, and besought her to love me—she shuddered. I fled to my father,—and he spurned me! The lowest minion of the human race, that had its limbs shapen and its countenance formed, refused to consort with me;—the very dog (I only dared to seek out one that seemed more rugged and hideous than its fellows), the very dog dreaded me, and slunk away!—I grew up lonely and wretched; I was like the reptile whose prison is the stone's heart,—immured in the eternal penthouse of a solitude to which the breath of fellowship never came;—girded with a wall of barrenness, and flint, and doomed to vegetate and batten on my own suffocating and poisoned meditations. But while this was my *heart's* dungeon, they could not take from the *external* senses the sweet face of the Universal Nature;—they could not bar me from commune with the voices of the mighty Dead. Earth opened to me her marvels, and the volumes of the wise their stores. I read—I mused—I examined—I descended into the deep wells of Truth—and mirrored in my soul the holiness of her divine beauty. The past lay before me like a scroll; the mysteries of this breathing world rose from the present like clouds;—even of the dark future, experience shadowed forth something of a token and a sign; and over the wonders of the world I hung the intoxicating and mingled spells of poesy and of knowledge. But I could not without a struggle live in a world of love, and be the only thing doomed to hatred. "I will travel," said I, "to other quarters of the globe. All earth's tribes have not the proud stamp of angels and of gods, and among its infinite variety I may find a being who will not sicken at myself." I took leave of the only one who had not loathed me—the woman who had given me food, and reared me up to life. She had now become imbecile, and doting, and blind;—so she did not disdain to lay her hand upon my distorted head, and to bless me. "But better," she said, even as she blessed me, and in despite of her dotage,—"better that you had perished in the womb!" And I laughed with a loud laugh when I heard her, and rushed from the house.

One evening, in my wanderings, as I issued from a wood, I came abruptly upon the house of a village priest. Around it, from a thick and lofty fence of shrubs which the twilight of summer bathed in dew, the honeysuckle, and the sweetbriar, and the wild rose sent forth those gifts of fragrance and delight which were not denied even unto me. As I walked slowly behind the hedge, I heard voices on the opposite side; they were the voices of women, and I paused to listen. They spoke of love, and of the qualities which should create it.

"No," said one, and the words, couched in a tone of music, thrilled to my heart,—"no, it is not beauty which I require in a lover; it is the mind which can command others, and the passion which would bow that mind unto me. I ask for genius and affection. I ask for nothing else."

"But," said the other voice, "you could not love a monster in person, even if he were a miracle of intellect and of love!"

"I could," answered the first speaker, fervently; "if I know my own heart, I could. You remember the fable of a girl whom a monster loved! *I* could have loved *that* monster."

And with these words they passed from my hearing; but I stole round, and through a small crevice in the fence, beheld the face and form of the speaker, whose words had opened, as it were, a glimpse of Heaven to my heart. Her eyes were soft and deep,—her hair, parting from her girlish and smooth brow, was of the hue of gold,—her aspect was pensive and melancholy,—and over the delicate and transparent paleness of her cheek, hung the wanness, but also the eloquence, of thought. To other eyes she might not have been beautiful,—to mine, her face was as an angel's. Oh! lovelier far than the visions of the Carian, or the shapes that floated before the eyes of the daughters of Delos, is the countenance of one that bringeth to the dark breast the first glimmerings of hope! From that hour my resolution was taken; I concealed myself in the wood that bordered her house; I made my home with the wild fox in the cavern and the shade; the daylight passed in dreams and passionate delirium,—and at evening I wandered forth, to watch afar off her footstep; or creep through the copse, unseen, to listen to her voice; or through the long and lone night to lie beneath the shadow of her house, and fix my soul, watchful as a star, upon the windows of the chamber where she slept. I strewed her walks with the leaves of poetry, and at midnight I made the air audible with the breath of music. In my writings and my songs, whatever in the smooth accents of praise, or the burning language of passion, or the liquid melodies of verse, could awaken her fancy or excite her interest, I attempted. Curses on the attempt! May the hand wither!—may the brain burn! May the heart shrivel, and parch like a leaf that a flame devours—from which the cravings of my ghastly and unnatural love found a channel, or an aid!

I told her in my verses, in my letters, that I had overheard her confession. I told her that I was more hideous than the demons which the imagination of a Northern savage had ever bodied forth;—I told her that I was a thing which the daylight loathed to look upon; —but I told her, also, that I adored her: and I breathed both my story and my love in the numbers of song, and sung them to the silver chords of my lute, with a voice which belied my form, and was not out of harmony with nature. She answered me,—and her answer filled the air, that had hitherto been to me a breathing torture, with enchantment and rapture. She repeated, that beauty was as nothing in her estimation—that to her all loveliness was in the soul. She told me that one who wrote as I wrote—who felt as I felt—could not be loathsome in her eyes. She told me that she could love me, be my form even more monstrous than I had portrayed it. Fool!—miserable fool that I was, to believe her! So, then, shrouded among the trees, and wrapped from head to foot in a mantle, and safe in the oath by which I had bound her not to seek to penetrate my secret, or to behold my form before the hour I myself should appoint arrived—I held commune with her in the deep nights of summer, and beneath the unconscious stars; and while I unrolled to her earnest spirit the marvels of the mystic world, and the glories of wisdom, I mingled with my instruction the pathos and the passion of love!

"Go," said she, one night, as we conferred together, and through the matted trees I saw—though she beheld me not—that her cheek blushed as she spoke; "Go,—and win from others the wonder that you have won from me. Go, pour forth your knowledge to the crowd; go, gain the glory of fame—the glory which makes man immortal—and then come back, and claim me,—I will be yours!"

"Swear it!" cried I.

"I swear!" she said; and as she spoke the moonlight streamed upon her face, flushed as it was with the ardour of the moment and the strangeness of the scene; her eye burned with a steady and deep fire—her lip was firm—and her figure, round which the light fell like the glory of a halo, seemed indistinct and swelling, as it were, with the determinate energy of the soul. I gazed—and my heart leaped within me;—I answered not—but I stole silently away: for months she heard of me no more.

I fled to a lonely and far spot,—I surrounded myself once more with books. I explored once more the arcana of science; I ransacked once more the starry regions of poetry; and then upon the mute page I poured the thoughts and the treasures which I had stored within me! I sent the product, without a name, upon the world: the world received it; approved it; and it became fame. Philosophers bowed in wonder before my discoveries; the pale student in cell and cloister pored over the mines of learning which I had dragged into day; the maidens in their bowers blushed and sighed, as they drank in the burning pathos of my verse. The old and the young,—all sects and all countries, united in applause and enthusiasm for the unknown being who held, as they averred, the Genii of wisdom and the Spirits of verse in mighty and wizard spells, which few had ever won, and none had ever blended before.

I returned to *her*,—I sought a meeting under the same mystery and conditions as of old,—I proved myself that unknown whose fame filled all ears and occupied all tongues. Her heart had foreboded it already! I claimed my reward! And in the depth and deadness of night, when not a star crept through the curtain of cloud and gloom—when not a gleam struggled against the blackness—not a breath stirred the heavy torpor around us—that reward was yielded. The dense woods and the eternal hills were the sole witnesses of our bridal;—and girt with darkness as with a robe, she leaned upon my bosom, and shuddered not at the place of her repose!

Thus only we met,—but for months we *did* meet, and I was blessed. At last, the fruit of our ominous love could no longer be concealed. It became necessary, either that I should fly with her, or wed her with the rites and ceremonies of man—as I had done amid the more sacred solemnities of nature. In either case, disclosure was imperious and unavoidable;—I took therefore that which gratitude ordained. Beguiled by her assurances—touched by her trust and tenderness—maddened by her tears—duped by my own heart—I agreed to meet her, and for the first time openly reveal myself—at the foot of the altar!

The appointed day came. At our mutual wish, only two witnesses were present, besides the priest and the aged and broken-hearted father, who consented solely to our singular marriage because mystery was less terrible to him than disgrace. *She* had prepared them to see a distorted and fearful abortion,—but—ha! ha! ha!—she had not prepared them to see *me!* I entered:—all eyes but *hers* were turned to me,—a unanimous cry was uttered—the priest involuntarily closed the book, and muttered the exorcism for a fiend—the father covered his face with his hands, and sunk upon the ground—the other witnesses—ha! ha! ha! (it was rare mirth) rushed screaming from the chapel! It was twilight—the tapers burned dim and faint—I approached my bride—who, trembling and weeping beneath her long veil, had not dared to look at me. "Behold me!"—said I—"my bride, my beloved!—behold thy husband!"—I raised her veil—she saw my countenance glare full upon her—uttered one shriek, and fell senseless on the floor. I raised her not—I stirred not—I spoke not. I saw my doom was fixed, my curse complete;—and my heart lay mute, and cold, and dead within me, like a stone! Others entered, they bore away the bride. By little and little, the crowd assembled, to gaze upon the monster in mingled derision and dread;—*then* I recollected myself and arose. I scattered them in terror before me, and uttering a single and piercing cry, I rushed forth, and hid myself in the wood.

But at night, at the hour in which I had been accustomed to meet her, I stole forth again. I approached the house, I climbed the wall, I entered the window; I was in her chamber. All was still and solitary; I saw not a living thing there; but the lights burned bright and clear. I drew near to the bed; I beheld a figure stretched upon it—a taper at the feet, and a taper at the head,—so there was plenty of light for me to see my bride. She was a corpse! I did not speak—nor faint—nor groan;—but I laughed aloud. Verily, it is a glorious mirth, to behold the only thing one loves, stiff, and white, and shrunken, and food for the red, playful, creeping worm! I raised my eyes, and saw upon a table near the bed something covered with a black cloth. I lifted the cloth, and beheld—ha! ha! ha!—by the foul fiend—a dead—but beautiful likeness of myself! A little infant monster! The ghastly mouth, and the laidley features—and the delicate, green, corpse-like hue—and the black shaggy hair—and the horrible limbs, and the unnatural shape—there—ha! ha!—there they were—my wife and my child! I took them both in my arms—I hurried from the house—I carried them into the wood. I concealed them in a cavern—I watched over them—and lay beside them,—and played with the worms—that played with them—ha! ha! ha!—it was a jovial time that, in the old cavern!

And so, when they were all gone but the bones, I buried them quietly, and took my way to my home. My father was dead, and my brothers hoped that I was dead also. But I turned them out of the house, and took possession of the titles and the wealth. And then I went to see the doting old woman who had nursed me; and they showed me where she slept—a little green mound in the churchyard—and I wept—oh, so bitterly! I never shed a tear for my wife—or—ha! ha! ha!—for my beautiful child!

And so I lived *happily* enough for a short time; but at last they discovered that I was the unknown philosopher—the divine poet whom the world rung of. And the crowd came—and the mob beset me—and my rooms were filled with eyes—large, staring eyes, all surveying me from head to foot—and peals of laughter and shrieks wandered about the air, like disimbodied and damned spirits——and I was never alone again!

THE END.

MONOS AND DAIMONOS.

A LEGEND.

I AM English by birth, and my early years were passed in * * * * *. I had neither brothers nor sisters; my mother died when I was in the cradle; and I found my sole companion, tutor, and playmate in my father. He was a younger brother of a noble and ancient house: what induced him to forsake his country and his friends, to abjure all society, and to live on a rock, is a story in itself, which has nothing to do with mine.

As the Lord liveth, I believe the tale that I shall tell you will have sufficient claim on your attention, without calling in the history of another to preface its most exquisite details, or to give interest to its most amusing events. I said my father lived on a rock—the whole country round seemed nothing but rock!—wastes, bleak, blank, dreary; trees stunted, herbage blasted; caverns, through which some black and wild stream (that never knew star or sunlight, but through rare and hideous chasms of the huge stones above it) went dashing and howling on its *blessed* course; vast cliffs, covered with eternal snows, where the birds of prey lived, and sent, in screams and discordance, a grateful and meet music to the heavens, which seemed too cold and barren to wear even clouds upon their wan, gray, comfortless expanse: these made the character of that country where the spring of my life sickened itself away. The climate which, in the milder parts of

* * * * * relieves the nine months of winter with three months of an abrupt and autumnless summer, never seemed to vary in the gentle and sweet region in which my home was placed. Perhaps, for a brief interval, the snow in the valleys melted, and the streams swelled, and a blue, ghastly, unnatural kind of vegetation seemed here and there to mix with the rude lichen, or scatter a grim smile over minute particles of the universal rock; but to these witnesses of the changing season were the summers of my boyhood confined. My father was addicted to the sciences—the physical sciences—and possessed but a moderate share of learning in any thing else; he taught me all he knew; and the rest of my education, Nature, in a savage and stern guise, instilled in my heart by silent but deep lessons. She taught my feet to bound, and my arm to smite; she breathed life into my passions, and shed darkness over my temper; she taught me to cling to her, even in her most rugged and unalluring form, and to shrink from all else—from the companionship of man, and the soft smiles of woman, and the shrill voice of childhood; and the ties, and hopes, and socialities, and objects of human existence, as from a torture and a curse. Even in that sullen rock, and beneath that ungenial sky, I had luxuries unknown to the palled tastes of cities, or to those who woo delight in an air of odours and in a land of roses! What were those luxuries? They had a myriad of varieties and shades of enjoyment—they had but a common name. What were those luxuries? *Solitude!*

My father died when I was eighteen: I was transferred to my uncle's protection, and I repaired to London. I arrived there, gaunt and stern, a giant in limbs and strength, and to the tastes of those about me, a savage in bearing and in mood. They would have laughed, but I awed them; they would have altered *me*, but I changed *them;* I threw a damp over their enjoyment, and a cloud over their meetings. Though I said little, though I sat with them, estranged, and silent, and passive, they seemed to wither beneath my presence. Nobody could live with me and be happy, or at ease! I felt it, and I hated them that they could not love me. Three years passed—I was of age—I demanded my fortune—and scorning social life, and pining once more for loneliness, I resolved to journey into those unpeopled and far lands, which if any have pierced, none have returned to describe. So I took my leave of them all, cousin and aunt—and when I came to my old uncle, who had liked me less than any, I grasped his hand with so friendly a gripe, that, well I ween, the dainty and nice member was but little inclined to its ordinary functions in future.

I commenced my pilgrimage—I pierced the burning sands—I traversed the vast deserts—I came into the enormous woods of Africa, where human step never trod, nor human voice ever startled the thrilling and intense solemnity that broods over the great solitudes, as it brooded over chaos before the world was! There the primeval nature springs and perishes, undisturbed and unvaried by the convulsions of the surrounding world; the leaf becomes the tree, lives through its uncounted ages, falls and moulders, and rots and vanishes, unwitnessed in its mighty and mute changes, save by the wandering lion, or the wild ostrich, or that huge serpent—a hundred times more vast than the puny boa that the cold limners of Europe have painted, and whose bones the vain student has preserved, as a miracle and marvel. There, too, as beneath the heavy and dense shade I couched in the scorching noon, I heard the trampling as of an army, and the crush and fall of the strong trees, and beheld through the matted boughs the behemoth pass on its terrible way, with its eyes burning as a sun, and its white teeth arched and glistening in the rabid jaw, as pillars of spar glitter in a cavern; the monster to whom only those waters are a home, and who never, since the waters rolled from the

Dædal earth, has been given to human gaze and wonder but my own! Seasons glided on, but I counted them not; they were not doled to me by the tokens of man, nor made sick to me by the changes of his base life, and the evidence of his sordid labour. Seasons glided on, and my youth ripened into manhood, and manhood grew gray with the first rose of age; and then a vague and restless spirit fell upon me, and I said in my foolish heart, "I will look upon the countenances of my race once more!" I retraced my steps—I recrossed the wastes—I re-entered the cities—I took again the garb of man; for I had been hitherto naked in the wilderness, and hair had grown over me as a garment. I repaired to a seaport, and took ship for England.

In the vessel there was one man, and only one, who neither avoided my companionship nor recoiled at my frown. He was an idle and curious being, full of the frivolities, and egotisms, and importance of them to whom towns are homes, and talk has become a mental aliment. He was one pervading, irritating, offensive tissue of little and low thoughts. The only meanness he had not was fear. It was impossible to awe, to silence, or to shun him. He sought me for ever; he was as a blister to me, which no force could tear away; my soul grew faint when my eyes met his. He was to my sight as those creatures which from their very loathsomeness are fearful as well as despicable to us. I longed and yearned to strangle him when he addressed me! Often I would have laid my hand on him, and hurled him into the sea to the sharks, which, lynx-eyed and eager-jawed, swam night and day around our ship; but the gaze of many was on us, and I curbed myself, and turned away, and shut my eyes in very sickness; and when I opened them again, lo! he was by my side, and his sharp, quick voice grated, in its prying, and asking, and torturing accents, on my loathing and repugnant ear! One night I was roused from my sleep by the screams and oaths of men, and I hastened on deck: we had struck upon a rock. It was a ghastly, but, oh Christ! how glorious a sight! Moonlight still and calm—the sea sleeping in sapphires; and in the midst of the silent and soft repose of all things, three hundred and fifty souls were to perish from the world! I sat apart, and looked on, and aided not. A voice crept like an adder's hiss upon my ear; I turned, and saw my tormentor; the moonlight fell on his face, and it grinned with the maudlin grin of intoxication, and his pale blue eye glistened, and he said, "We will not part even here!" My blood ran coldly through my veins, and I would have thrown him into the sea, which now came fast and fast upon us; *but the moonlight was on him, and I did not dare to kill him.* But I would not stay to perish with the herd, and I threw myself alone from the vessel and swam towards a rock. I saw a shark dart after me, but I shunned him, and the moment after he had plenty to sate his maw. I heard a crash, and mingled with a wild burst of anguish, the anguish of three hundred and fifty hearts that a minute afterward were stilled, and I said in my *own* heart, with a deep joy, "*His* voice is with the rest, and we *have* parted!" I gained the shore, and lay down to sleep.

The next morning my eyes opened upon a land more beautiful than a Grecian's dreams. The sun had just risen, and laughed over streams of silver, and trees bending with golden and purple fruits, and the diamond dew sparkled from a sod covered with flowers, whose faintest breath was a delight. Ten thousand birds with all the hues of a northern rainbow blended in their glorious and growing wings, rose from turf and tree, and loaded the air with melody and gladness; the sea, without a vestige of the past destruction upon its glassy brow, murmured at my feet; the heavens without a cloud, and bathed in a liquid and radiant light, sent their breezes as a blessing to my cheek. I rose with a refreshed and light heart; I traversed the new home I had found; I climbed upon a high mountain, and saw that I was in a small island—it had no trace of man—and my heart swelled as I gazed around and cried aloud in my exultation, "I shall be alone again!" I descended the hill: I had not yet reached its foot, when I saw the figure of a man approaching towards me. I looked at him, and my heart misgave me. He drew nearer, and I saw that my despicable persecutor had escaped the waters, and now stood before me. He came up with a hideous grin and his twinkling eye; and he flung his arms round me,—I would sooner have felt the slimy folds of the serpent,—and said, with his grating and harsh voice, "Ha! ha! my friend, we shall be together still!" I looked at him with a grim brow, but I said not a word. There was a great cave by the shore, and I walked down and entered it, and the man followed me. "We shall live so happily here," said he, "we will never separate!" And my lip trembled, and my hand clenched of its own accord. It was now noon, and hunger came upon me; I went forth and killed a deer, and I brought it home and broiled part of it on a fire of fragrant wood; and the man eat, and crunched, and laughed, and I wished that the bones had choked him; and he said, when we had done, "We shall have rare cheer here!" But I still held my peace. At last he stretched himself in a corner of the cave and slept. I looked at him, and saw that the slumber was heavy, and I went out and rolled a huge stone to the mouth of the cavern, and took my way to the opposite part of the island; it was my turn to laugh then! I found out another cavern; and I made a bed of moss and leaves, and I wrought a table of wood, and I looked out from the mouth of the cavern and saw the wide seas before me, and said "Now I shall be alone!"

When the next day came, I again went out and caught a kid, and brought it in, and prepared it as before; but I was not hungered, and I could not eat; so I roamed forth and wandered over the island: the sun d nearly set when I returned. I entered the cavern, and sitting on my bed and by my table was that man whom I thought I had left buried alive in the other cave. He laughed when he saw me, and laid down the bone he was gnawing.

"Ha! ha!" said he, "you would have served me a rare trick; but there was a hole in the cave which you did not see, and I got out to seek you. It was not a difficult matter, for the island is so small; and now we *have* met, and we will part no more!"

I said to the man, "Rise, and follow me!" So he rose, and I saw that of all my food he had left only the bones. "Shall this thing reap and I sow?" thought I, and my heart felt to me like iron.

I ascended a tall cliff: "Look round," said I; "you see that stream which divides the island; you shall dwell on one side, and I on the other; but the same spot shall not hold us, nor the same feast supply!"

"That may never be!" quoth the man; "for I cannot catch the deer, nor spring upon the mountain kid; and if you feed me not, I shall starve!"

"Are there not fruits," said I, "and birds that you may snare, and fishes which the sea throws up?"

"But I like them not," quoth the man, and laughed, "so well as the flesh of kids and deer!"

"Look, then," said I, "look: by that gray stone, upon the opposite side of the stream, I will lay a deer or a kid dayly, so that you may have the food you covet; but if ever you cross the stream and come into my kingdom, so sure as the sea murmurs, and the bird flies, I will kill you!"

I descended the cliff, and led the man to the side of the stream. "I cannot swim," said he; so I took him on my shoulders and crossed the brook, and I found him out a cave, and I made him a bed and a table like my own, and left him. When I was on my own side of the stream again, I bounded with joy, and lifted up my voice; "I shall be alone *now!*" said I.

So two days passed, and I *was* alone. On the third

I went after my prey; the noon was hot, and I was wearied when I returned. I entered my cavern, and behold the man lay stretched upon my bed. "Ha! ha!" said he, "here I am; I was so lonely at home that I have come to live with you again!"

I frowned on the man with a dark brow, and I said, "So sure as the sea murmurs, and the bird flies, I will kill you!" I seized him in my arms: I plucked him from my bed; I took him out into the open air, and we stood together on the smooth sand, and by the great sea. A fear came suddenly upon me; I was struck with the awe of the still Spirit which reigns over solitude. Had a thousand been round us, I would have slain him before them all. I feared now because we were alone in the desert, with silence and God! I relaxed my hold. "Swear," I said, "never to molest me again; swear to preserve unpassed the boundary of our several homes, and I will not kill you!" "I cannot swear," answered the man; "I would sooner die than forswear the blessed human face—even though that face be my enemy's!"

At these words my rage returned; I dashed the man to the ground, and I put my foot upon his breast, and my hand upon his neck; and he struggled for a moment—and was dead! I was startled: and as I looked upon his face I thought it seemed to revive; I thought the cold blue eye fixed upon me, and the vile grin returned to the livid mouth, and the hands which in the death-pang had grasped the sand, stretched themselves out to me. So I stamped on the breast again, and I dug a hole in the shore, and I buried the body. "And now," said I, "I am alone at last!" And then *the sense of loneliness*, the vague, vast, comfortless, objectless sense of desolation passed into me. And I shook—shook in every limb of my giant frame, as if I had been a child that trembles in the dark; and my hair rose, and my blood crept, and I would not have staid in that spot a moment more if I had been made young again for it. I turned away and fled—fled round the whole island; and gnashed my teeth when I came to the sea, and longed to be cast into some illimitable desert, that I might flee on for ever. At sunset I returned to my cave—I sat myself down on one corner of the bed, and covered my face with my hands—I thought I heard a noise: I raised my eyes, and, as I live, I saw on the other end of the bed the man whom I had slain and buried. There he sat, six feet from me, and nodded to me, and looked at me with his wan eyes and laughed. I rushed from the cave—I entered a wood—I threw myself down—there opposite to me, six feet from my face, was the face of that man again! And my courage rose, and I spoke, but he answered not. I attempted to seize him, he glided from my grasp, and was still opposite, six feet from me as before. I flung myself on the ground, and pressed my face to the sod, and would not look up till the night came on and darkness was over the earth. I then rose and returned to the cave: I laid down on my bed, and the man lay down by me; and I frowned and tried to seize him as before, but I could not, and I closed my eyes, *and the man lay by me.* Day passed on day, and it was the same. At board, at bed, at home and abroad, in my up-rising and down-sitting, by day and at night, there, by my bedside, six feet from me, and no more, was that ghastly and dead thing. And I said, as I looked upon the beautiful land and the still heavens, and then turned to that fearful comrade, "I shall never be alone again!" And the man laughed.

At last a ship came, and I hailed it—it took me up, and I thought, as I put my foot on the deck, "I shall escape from my tormentor!" As I thought so, I saw him climb the deck too, and I strove to push him down into the sea, but in vain; he was by my side, *and he fed and slept with me as before!* I came home to my native land! I forced myself into crowds—I went to the feast, and I heard music—and I made thirty men sit with me, and watch by day and by night. So I had thirty-*one* companions, and one was more social than all the rest.

At last I said to myself, " This is a delusion, and a cheat of the external senses, and the thing is *not*, save in my mind. I will consult those skilled in such disorders, and I will be *alone again !*"

I summoned one celebrated in purging from the mind's eye its films and deceits—I bound him by an oath to secrecy—and I told him my tale. He was a bold man and a learned, and he promised me relief and release.

" Where is the figure now ?" said he, smiling ; " I see it not."

And I answered, " It is six feet from us !"

" I see it not," said he again ; " and if it were real, my senses would not receive the image less palpably than yours." And he spoke to me as schoolmen speak. I did not argue nor reply, but I ordered my servants to prepare a room, and to cover the floor with a thick layer of sand. When it was done, I bade the Leech follow me into the room, and I barred the door. " Where is the figure now ?" repeated he ; and I said, " Six feet from us as before !" And the Leech smiled. " Look on the floor," said I, and I pointed to the spot ; " what see you ?" And the Leech shuddered, and clung to me that he might not fall. " The sand," said he, " was smooth when we entered, and now I see on that spot the print of human feet !"

And I laughed, and dragged my *living* companion on ; " See," said I, " where we move what follows us !"

The Leech gasped for breath ; " The print," said he, " of those human feet !"

" Can you not minister to me then ?" cried I, in a sudden fierce agony ; " and must I never be alone again ?"

And I saw the feet of the dead thing trace one word upon the sand ; and the word was—NEVER.

MONOS AND DAIMONOS.

I AM English by birth, but my early years were passed in a foreign and more northern land. I had neither brothers nor sisters; my mother died when I was in the cradle; and I found my sole companion, tutor, and playmate in my father. He was a younger brother of a noble and ancient house: what induced him to forsake his country and his friends, to abjure all society, and to live on a rock, is a story in itself, which has nothing to do with mine.

I said my father lived on a rock—the whole country round seemed nothing but rock:—wastes, bleak, blank, dreary; trees stunted, herbage blighted; caverns, through which some black and wild stream (that never knew star nor sunlight, but through rare and hideous chasms amidst the huge stones above it) went dashing and howling along its stormy course; vast cliffs, covered with eternal snows, where the birds of prey lived, and sent, in harsh screams, a music suited to skies which seemed too barren to wear even clouds upon their wan, grey, comfortless expanse: these made the character of that country where the spring of my life sickened itself away. The climate which, in the milder parts of * * * *, relieves the nine months of winter with three months of an abrupt and autumnless summer, little varied the desolate aspect of the landscape immediately around my home. Perhaps, for a brief interval, the snow in the valleys melted, and the streams swelled, and a ghastly, unnatural kind of vegetation, seemed here and there to scatter a grim smile over minute particles of the universal rock; but to these scanty witnesses of the changing season the summers of my boyhood were confined. My father was addicted to the sciences—the physical sciences—and possessed but a moderate share of learning in anything else; he taught me all he knew; and the rest of my education, Nature, in a savage and stern guise, instilled into my heart by silent but deep lessons. She taught my feet to bound, and my arm to smite; she breathed life into my passions, and shed darkness over my temper; she taught me to cling to her, even in her most rugged and unalluring form, and to shrink from all else—from the companionship of man, and the soft smiles of woman, and the shrill voice of childhood, and the ties, and hopes, and social gaieties of existence, as from a torture and a curse. Even in that sullen rock, and beneath that ungenial sky, I had luxuries unknown to the palled tastes of cities, or to those who woo delight in an air of odours and in a land of roses! What were those luxuries? They had a myriad varieties and shades of enjoyment—they had but a common name. What were those luxuries?—*Solitude!*

My father died when I was eighteen; I was transferred to my uncle's protection, and I repaired to London. I arrived there, gaunt and stern, a giant in limbs and strength, and, to the judgment of those about me, a savage in mood and bearing. They would have laughed, but I awed them; they would have altered *me*, but I changed *them*; I threw a damp over their enjoyments. Though I said little, though I sat with them estranged, and silent, and passive, they seemed to wither beneath my presence. None could live with me and be happy, or at ease! I felt it, and I hated them that they could not love me. Three years passed—I was of age—I demanded my fortune—and scorning social life, and pining once more for loneliness, I resolved to travel to those unpeopled and far lands, which if any have pierced, none have returned to describe. So I took my leave of them all—cousins, and aunt, and uncle.

I commenced my pilgrimage—I pierced the burning sands—I traversed the vast deserts—I came into the enormous woods of Africa, where human step never trod, nor human voice ever startled the thrilling and intense solemnity that broods over the great solitudes, as it brooded over chaos before the world was! There the primeval nature springs and perishes, undisturbed and unvaried by the convulsions of the surrounding world; the seed becomes the tree, lives through its uncounted ages, falls and moulders, and rots and vanishes; there the slow Time moves on, unwitnessed in its mighty and mute changes, save by the wandering lion, or that huge serpent—a hundred times more vast than the puny boa which travellers have boasted to behold. There, too, as beneath the heavy and dense shade I couched in the scorching noon, I heard the trampling as of an army, and the crash and fall of the strong trees, and saw through the matted boughs the Behemoth pass on its terrible way, with its eyes burning as a sun, and its white teeth arched and glistening in the rabid jaw, as pillars of spar glitter in a cavern; the monster to whom those wastes alone are a home, and who never, since the waters rolled from an earth transformed, has been given to human gaze and wonder but my own! Seasons glided on, but I counted them not; they were not doled out to me by the tokens of man, nor made sick to me by the changes of his base life, and the evidence of his sordid labour. Seasons glided on, and my youth ripened into manhood, and manhood grew grey with the first frost of age; and then a vague and restless spirit fell upon me, and I said in my foolish heart, "I will look upon the countenances of my race once more!" I retraced my steps—I recrossed the wastes—I re-entered the cities—I resumed the garb of civilized man; for hitherto I had been naked in the wilderness. I repaired to a seaport, and took ship for England.

In the vessel there was one man, and only one, who neither avoided my companionship nor recoiled from my frown. He was an idle and curious being, full of the frivolities, and egotisms, and self-importance of those to whom towns are homes, and talk has become a mental aliment. He was one pervading, irritating, offensive tissue of little and low thoughts. The only meanness he had not was fear. It was impossible to awe, to silence, or to shun him. He sought me for ever; he was as a blister to me, which no force could tear away; my soul grew faint when my eyes met him. He was to my sight as those creatures which, from their very loathsomeness, are fearful to us, though we call them despicable. I longed to strangle him when he addressed me! Often I would have laid my hand on him, and hurled him into the sea to the sharks, which, quick-eyed and eager-jawed, swam night and day around our ship; but the gaze of many was on us, and I curbed myself, and turned away, and shut my eyes in very sickness; and when I opened them again, lo! he was by my side, and his sharp voice grated on my loathing ear! One night I was roused from my sleep by the screams and oaths of men, and I hastened on deck; we had struck upon a rock. It was a fearful, but a glorious sight! Moonlight still and calm—the sea sleeping in sapphires; and in the midst of the silent and soft repose of all things, three hundred and fifty souls were to perish from the world! I sat apart, and looked on, and aided not. A voice crept like an adder's hiss into my ear; I turned, and saw my tormentor; the moonlight fell on his face, and it grinned with the maudlin grin of intoxication, and his pale blue eye glistened, and he said, "We will not part even here!" My blood ran coldly through my veins, and I would have thrown him into the sea, which now came upon us fast and faster; but the moon seemed to gaze on me as the eye of heaven, and I did not dare to kill him. But I would not stay to perish with the crew. I threw myself alone from the vessel and swam towards a rock. I saw a shark dart after me, but I shunned him, and the moment after he had plenty to sate his maw. I heard a crash, and a mingled and wild burst of anguish,—the anguish of three hundred and fifty hearts that a minute afterwards were stilled, and I said in my own heart, with a deep joy, "*His* voice is with the rest, and we have parted!" I gained the shore, and lay down to sleep.

The next morning my eyes opened upon a land more beautiful than a young man's dreams. The sun had just risen, and laughed over streams of silver, and trees bending with golden and purple fruits, and the diamond dew sparkled from a sod covered with flowers, whose faintest breath was a delight. Ten thousand birds, with all the hues of a northern rainbow blended in their glancing wings, rose from turf and tree, and filled the air with the melodies of their gladness; the sea, without a vestige of the past destruction upon its glassy brow, murmured at my feet; the heavens, without a cloud, warmed my veins with its golden light. I rose refreshed and buoyant; I traversed the new home I had found; I climbed a hill, and saw that I was in a small island; it had no trace of man, and my heart swelled as I gazed around and cried aloud in my exultation, "I shall be alone again!" I descended the hill: I had not yet reached its foot, when I beheld the figure of a man approaching towards me. I looked at him, and my heart misgave me. He drew nearer, and I saw that my despicable persecutor had escaped the waters, and now stood before me. He came up with his hideous grin and his twinkling eye; and he flung his arms round me—I would sooner have felt the slimy folds of the serpent—and said, with his grating and harsh voice, "Ha! ha! my friend, we shall be together still!" I looked at him with a grim brow, but I said not a word. There was a great cave by the shore, and I walked down and entered it, and the man followed me. "We shall live so happily here," said he; "we will never separate!" And my lip trembled, and my hand clenched of its own accord. It was now noon, and hunger came upon me; I went forth and killed a deer, and I brought it home and broiled part of it on a fire of fragrant wood; and the man ate, and crunched, and laughed, and I wished that the bones had choked him; and he said, when we had done, "We shall have rare cheer here!" But I still held my peace. At last he stretched himself in a corner of the cave and slept. I looked at him, and saw that the slumber was heavy: and I went out and rolled a huge stone to the mouth of the cavern, and took my way to the opposite part of the island;—it was my turn to laugh then! I found out another cavern; and I made a bed of moss and of leaves, and I wrought a table of wood, and I looked out from the mouth of the cavern and saw the wide seas before me, and I said, "Now I shall be alone!"

When the next day came, I again went out and caught a kid, and brought it in, and prepared it as before; but I was not hungered and I could not eat, so I roamed forth and wandered over the island: the sun had nearly set when I returned. I entered the cavern, and sitting on my bed and by my table was that man whom I thought I had left buried alive in the other cave. He laughed when he saw me, and laid down the bone he was gnawing.

"Ha, ha!" said he, "thou wouldst have served me a rare trick; but there was a hole in the cave which thou didst not see, and I got out to seek thee. It was not a difficult matter, for the island is so small; and now we *have* met, and we will part no more!"

I said to the man, "Rise, and follow me!" So he rose, and the food he quitted was loathsome in my eyes, for he had touched it. "Shall this thing reap and I sow?" thought I; and my heart felt to me like iron.

I ascended a tall cliff. "Look round," said I;

"behold that stream which divides the island; thou shalt dwell on one side, and I on the other: but the same spot shall not hold us, nor the same feast supply!"

"That may never be!" quoth the man; "for I cannot catch the deer, nor spring upon the mountain kid; and if thou feedest me not, I shall starve!"

"Are there not fruits," said I, "and birds that thou mayest snare, and fishes which the sea throws up?"

"But I like them not," quoth the man, and laughed, "so well as the flesh of kids and deer!"

"Look then," said I, "look! by that grey stone, upon the opposite side of the stream, I will lay a deer or a kid daily, so that thou mayest have the food thou covetest; but if ever thou cross the stream and come into my kingdom, so sure as the sea murmurs, and the bird flies, I will slay thee!"

I descended the cliff, and led the man to the side of the stream. "I cannot swim," said he; so I took him on my shoulders and crossed the brook, and I found him out a cave, and I made him a bed and a table like my own, and left him. When I was on my own side of the stream again, I bounded with joy, and lifted up my voice; "I shall be alone now," said I.

So two days passed, and I was alone. On the third I went after my prey; the noon was hot, and I was wearied when I returned. I entered my cavern, and, behold, the man lay stretched upon my bed. "Ha, ha!" said he, "here I am; I was so lonely at home that I have come to live with thee again!"

I frowned on the man with a dark brow, and I said, "So sure as the sea murmurs, and the bird flies, I will slay thee!" I seized him in my arms; I plucked him from my bed; I took him out into the open air, and we stood together on the smooth sand and by the great sea. A fear came suddenly upon me: I was struck with the awe of the still Spirit which reigns over solitude. Had a thousand been round us, I would have slain him before them all. I feared now because we were alone in the desert, with Silence and GOD! I relaxed my hold. "Swear," I said, "never to molest me again; swear to preserve unpassed the boundary of our several homes, and I will not kill thee!" "I cannot swear," answered the man: "I would sooner die than forswear the blessed human face,—even though that face be my enemy's!"

At those words my rage returned; I dashed the man to the ground, and I put my foot upon his breast, and my hand upon his neck, and he struggled for a moment—and was dead! I was startled; and as I looked upon his face I thought he seemed to revive; I thought the cold blue eye fixed upon me, and the vile grin returned to the livid mouth, and the hands which in the death-pang had grasped the sand, stretched themselves out to me. So I stamped on the breast again, and I dug a hole in the shore, and I buried the body. "And now," said I, "I am alone at last!" And then the *true* sense of loneliness, the vague, comfortless, objectless sense of desolation passed into me. And I shook—shook in every limb of my giant frame, as if I had been a child that trembles in the dark; and my hair rose, and my flesh crept, and I would not have stayed in that spot a moment more if I had been made young again for it. I turned away and fled—fled round the whole island; and gnashed my teeth when I came to the sea, and longed to be cast into some illimitable desert, that I might flee on for ever. At sunset I returned to my cave; I sat myself down on one corner of the bed, and covered my face with my hands; I thought I heard a noise; I raised my eyes, and, as I live, I saw on the other end of the bed the man whom I had slain and buried. There he sat, six feet from me, and nodded to me, and looked at me with his wan eyes, and laughed. I rushed from the cave—I entered a wood—I threw myself down—there, opposite to me, six feet from my face, was the face of that man again! And my courage rose, and I spoke, but he answered not. I attempted to seize him, he glided from my grasp, and was still opposite, six feet from me as before. I flung myself on the ground, and pressed my face to the sod, and would not look up till the night came on, and darkness was over the earth. I then rose and returned to the cave; I lay down on my bed, and the man lay down by me; and I frowned and tried to seize him as before, but I could not, and I closed my eyes, and the man lay by me. Day followed day and it was the same. At board, at bed, at home and abroad, in my uprising and my downsitting, by day and at night,—there, by my bedside, six feet from me, and no more, was that ghastly and dead thing. And I said, as I looked upon the beautiful land and the still heavens, and then turned to that fearful comrade, "I shall never be alone again!" And the man laughed.

At last a ship came, and I hailed it; it took me up, and I thought, as I put my foot upon the deck, "I shall escape from my tormentor!" As I thought so, I saw him climb the deck too, and I strove to push him down into the sea, but in vain; he was by my side, and he fed and slept with me as before! I came home to my native land. I forced myself into crowds—I went to the feast, and I heard music; and I made thirty men sit with me, and watch by day and by night. So I had thirty-*one* companions, and one was more social than all the rest.

At last I said to myself, "This is a delusion, and a cheat of the external senses, and the thing is *not*, save in my mind. I will consult those skilled in such disorders, and I will be alone again!"

I summoned one celebrated in purging from the mind's eye its films and deceits—I bound him by an oath to secrecy—and I told him my tale. He was a bold man and a learned, and promised me relief and release.

"Where is the figure now?" asked he, smiling; "I see it not."

And I answered, "It is six feet from us!"

"I see it not," said he again; "and if it were real, my senses would not receive the image less palpably than thine." And he spoke to me as schoolmen speak. I did not argue nor reply, but I ordered the servants to prepare a room, and to cover the floor with a thick layer of sand. When it was done, I bade the leech follow me into the room, and I barred the door. "Where is the figure now?" repeated he; and I said, "Six feet from us as before!" And the leech smiled. "Look on the floor!" said I, and I pointed to the spot; "what seest thou?" And the leech shuddered, and clung to me that he might not fall. "The sand there," said he, "was smooth when we entered; and now I see on that spot the print of human feet!"

And I laughed, and dragged my *living* companion on. "See," said I, "where we move what follows us!"

The leech gasped for breath: "The print," said he, "of those human feet!"

"Canst thou not minister to me, then?" cried I, in a sudden and fierce agony; "and must I *never* be alone again?"

And I saw the foot of the dead thing trace these words upon the sand:—

"SOLITUDE IS ONLY FOR THE GUILTLESS—EVIL THOUGHTS ARE COMPANIONS FOR A TIME—EVIL DEEDS ARE COMPANIONS THROUGH ETERNITY—THY HATRED MADE ME BREAK UPON THY LONELINESS—THY CRIME DESTROYS LONELINESS FOR EVER!"

THE TALE OF KOSEM KESAMIM,

THE MAGICIAN.*

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It was deep night, and the Magician suddenly stood before me. "Arise," said he, "and let us go forth upon the surface of the world." † I rose, and followed the sorcerer until we arrived at the entrance of a cavern. Pursuing its subterranean course for some minutes,—with the rushing sound of imprisoned waters loud and wild upon the ear, we came at length into a colder and fresher atmosphere; and presently, through a fissure in the rock, the sudden whiteness of the moon broke in, and partially lit up walls radiant with spars, and washed by a deep stream that wound its mysterious way to the upper air. And now, gliding through the chasm, we stood in a broad cell, with its lofty arch open to the sea. Column and spire, brilliant with various crystallizations—spars of all hues, sprang lightly up on either side of this cavern; and with a leap and a mighty voice, the stream, whose course we had been tracking, rushed into the arms of the great sea. Upon that sea, star after star mirrored its solemn lustre; and the moon, clad in a fuller splendour than I had ever before seen gathered round her melancholy orb, filled the cavern with a light, which was to the light of day what the life of a spirit is to that of a mortal. Passionless, yet tender—steadfast—mystic—unwavering—she shone upon the glittering spars; and in a long line, from the cavern to the verge of heaven, her sweet face breathed a quiet joy into the rippling billows—'smiles of the sea.' A few thin and fleecy clouds alone varied the clear expanse of the heavens. And,

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* This tale, complete in itself, is extracted from an unfinished romance, which, however, furnished the groundwork for 'Zanoni.' I may add that I find the outline of this tale in some papers written in my schooldays.

† The Narrator is supposed to have been with the Magician amidst the caverns of the interior of the Earth.

"Beautiful," said I, "is this outward world!—your dim realms beneath have nothing to compare with it. There are no stars in the temples of the hidden earth—and one glimpse from the lovely moon is worth all the witchfires and meteors of the giant palaces below."

"Young mortal," said the Wizard in his mournful voice, "thou beholdest my native shore. Beside that sea stood my ancestral halls—and beneath that moon first swelled within my bosom the deep tides of human emotion—and in this cavern, whence we now look forth on the seas and heavens, my youth passed some of its earnest hours in contemplations never known to your lesser race clogged with the mire of ages: for that epoch lies remote in primeval times, which even tradition scarcely pierces. Your first fathers—what of their knowledge know ye?—what of their secrets have ye retained? Their vast and solemn minds were never fathomed by the plummet of your researches. The waves of the black Night have swept over the ancient world; and you can only guess of its buried glories by the shivered fragments which, ever and anon, Chance casts upon the shores of the modern Time."

"Do we sink, then," said I, "by comparison with the men of those distant dates? Is not our lore deeper and more certain? Was not their knowledge the imperfect offspring of confused conjecture? Did they not live among dreams and shadows, and make Truth herself the creature of fantastic Fable?"

"Nay," replied the shrouded and uncertain form beside me, "their knowledge pierced into the heart of things. They consulted the stars—but it was to measure the dooms of earth; and could we recall from the dust their perished scrolls, you would behold the mirror of the living times. Their prophecies, wrung from the toil and rapture of those powers which ye suffer to sleep, quenched, within the soul, traversed the wilds of ages, and pointed out among savage hordes the cities and laws of empires yet to be. Ten thousand arts have mouldered from the earth, and Science is the shadow of what it was. Young mortal, thou hast set thine heart upon Wisdom—thou hast wasted the radiant hours of opening life amidst the wearisome thoughts of doting sages: thou hast laboured after Knowledge, and in that labour the healthful hues have left thy cheek, and the worm of decay creeps into the core of thy youth while the dew is yet upon its leaf:—and for this labour—and in the transport and the vision that the soul's labour nurtures—thy spirit is now rapt from its fleshly career on earth,—wandering at will among the chasms and mines wombed within the world—breathing a vital air among the dead,—comraded by Spirits and the Powers that are not of flesh,—and catching, by imperfect glimpse and shadowy type, some knowledge of the arch mysteries of Creation;—and thou beholdest in me and in my science that which thy learning and thy fancy tracked not before. No legend ever chanced upon my strange and solemn being: nor does aught of my nature resemble the tales of wizard or sorcerer that the vulgar fantasies of superstition have embodied. Thou hast journeyed over a land without a chart, and in which even fable has hackneyed not the truth. Thou wouldst learn something of the Being thus permitted to thy wonder;—be it so. Under these sparkling arches—and before my ancestral sea—and beneath the listening ear of the halting moon—thou shalt learn a history of the antique world."

"THE TALE OF KOSEM KESAMIM.

"Along the shores which for thirty centuries no human foot has trod, and upon plains where now not one stone stands upon another, telling even of decay

—was once the city and the empire of the Wise Kings; for so termed by their neighbours were the monarchs that ruled this country. Generation after generation they had toiled to earn and preserve that name. Amidst the gloom of mysterious temples and the oracular learning of the star-read priests, the youth of each succeeding king was reared into a grave and brooding manhood. Their whole lives were mystery. Wrapped in the sepulchral grandeur of the imperial palace; seen rarely, like gods, they sent forth, as from a cloud, the light of their dread but benignant laws: the courses of their life were tracked not—but they were believed to possess a power over the seasons and elements, and to summon, at their will, the large-winged spirits that flit to and fro across the earth, governing, like dreams, with a vague and unpenetrated power the destiny of nations and the career of kings.

There was born to this imperial race a son, to whom seer and king alike foretold a strange and preternatural fate. His childhood itself was of a silent, stern, and contemplative nature. And his learning, even in his boyish youth, had ransacked all that the grey priests could teach him.

But when wind encounters wind the meeting is warfare—the warfare is storm. Wind meets with wind when the mind of youth soars from earth to seek wisdom and the heart of youth ranges heaven to find love."

The Magician paused for a moment, and then, in a voice far different from the cold and solemn tone in which his accents were usually clothed, he broke forth:—

"O, beautiful, beyond the beauty of these sicklied and hoary times, was the beauty of Woman in the young world! The glory of Eden had not yet departed from her face, and the lustre of unwearied Nature glowed alike upon earth and earth's majestic daughters. Age after age Man invents and deserts some worship of idols in his yearning for symbols of a Power beyond the reach of his vision and the guess of his reason. But never yet has he forsaken the oldest idolatry of all—the adoration of earthly beauty as the fairest image of celestial good. Yet to me, for I am that prince of whose throne and whose people no record in Time remains,—to me even the love of Beauty was a passion less ardent than the desire of Knowledge! My mind launched itself into the depth of things—I loved step after step to trace effect to its first cause. Reason was a chain from heaven to earth, and every link led me to aspire to the stars themselves. And the wisdom of my wise fathers was mine; I knew the secret of the elements, and could charm them into slumber, or arouse them into war. The mysteries of that dread chemistry which is now among the sciences that sleep—by which we can command the air and walk on its viewless paths, by which we can wake the thunder, and summon the cloud, and rive the earth; the exercise of that high faculty — the Imagining Power — by which Fancy itself creates what it wills, and which, trained and exercised, can wake the spectres of the dead—and bring visible to the carnal eye the Genii that walk the world;—the watchful, straining, sleepless science, that can make a sage's volume of the stars;—these were mine, and yet I murmured—I repined!—what higher mysteries were yet left to learn! The acquisition of to-day was but the disappointment of the morrow, and the dispensation of my ambition was—to *desire!*

It was evening, and I went from the groves of the sacred temple to visit one whom I loved. The way spread over black and rugged masses of rock, amidst which the wild shrub and dark weed sprung rife and verdant; for the waste as yet was eloquent of some great revolution in the earlier epochs of the world—when change often trod the heels of change; and Earth was scarcely reconciled to the sameness of her calm career. And I stood beneath the tree where SHE was to meet me; my heart leaped within me as I saw her footsteps bounding along—she came with her sweet lips breathing the welcome of human love, and I laid my head on her bosom and was content.

And, "Oh," said she, "art thou proud of thy dawning fame? The seers speak of thee with wonder, and the priests bow their heads before thy name."

Then the passion of my soul broke forth, and I answered,—"What is this petty power that I possess, and what this barren knowledge? The great arch secret of all, I have toiled night after night to conquer, and I cannot attain it. What is it to command even the dark Spirits at war with Heaven—if we know not the nature of those whom we command? What I desire is not knowledge, but the source of knowledge. I wish that my eye should penetrate at once into the germ and cause of things: that when I look upon the outward beauty of the world, my sight should pierce within, and see the mechanism which causes and generates the beauty working beneath. Enough of my art have I learned to know that there is a film over human eyes which prevents their penetrating beyond the surface; it is to remove that film, and dart into the essence, and survey the One Great Productive Spirit of all Things, that I labour and yearn in vain. All other knowledge is a cheat; this is the high prerogative which mocks at conjecture and equals us with a God!"

Then Lyciah saw that I was moved, and she soothed me into rest with the coo of her sweet songs.

Midnight had crept over the earth as I returned homeward across that savage scene. Rock heaped on rock bordered and broke upon the lonely valley that I crossed: and the moon was still, and shining, as at this hour, when its life is four thousand years nearer to its doom. Then suddenly I saw moving before me, with a tremulous motion, a meteoric Fire of an exceeding brightness. Ever as it moved above the seared and sterile soil, it soared and darted restlessly to and fro; and I thought, as it danced and quivered, that I heard it laugh from its burning centre with a wild and frantic joy. I fancied, as I gazed upon the Fire, that in that shape sported one of the children of the Elementary Genii; and, addressing it in their language, I bade it assume a palpable form. But the Fire darted on unheedingly, save that now the laugh from amidst the flame came distinctly and fearfully on my ear. Then my hair stood erect, and my veins curdled, and my knees knocked together; I was under the influence of an awe; for I felt that the Power was not of this world, nor of any world of which the knowledge ye call magic had yet obtained a glimpse. My voice faltered, and thrice I strove to speak to the Light—but in vain: and when at length I addressed it in the solemn adjuration by which the sternest of the Fiends are bound, the Fire sprang up from the soil—towering aloft—with a livid but glorious lustre, bathing the whole atmosphere in its glare,—quenching, with an intenser ray, the splendours of the moon,—and losing its giant crest in the far Invisible of Heaven!

And a voice came forth, saying—"Thou callest upon inferior Spirits; I am that which thou hast pined to behold—I am The Living Principle of the World!"

I bowed my face, and covered it with my hands, and my voice left me; when again I looked round, behold, the Fire had shrunk from its momentary height, and was (now dwarfed and humble) creeping before me in its wavering and snake-like course. But fear was on me, and I fled, and fast fled the Fire by my side; and oft, but faint, from its ghastly heart came the laugh that thrilled the marrow of my bones. The waste was past, and the giant temple of the One God rose before me; I rushed forward, and fell breathless by its silent altar. And there sat the

High Priest; for night and day some one of the sacred host watched by the altar; he was of great age, and the tide of human emotion had ebbed from his veins; but even he was struck with my fear, and gazed upon me with his rayless eyes, and bade me be of cheer, for the place was holy. I looked round; the Fire was not visible, and I breathed freely; but I answered not the Priest, for years had dulled him into stone, and when I rose his eye followed me not. I gained the purple halls set apart for the king's son. And the pillars were of ivory inlaid with gold; the gems and perfumes of the East gave light and fragrance to the air; the gorgeous banquet was spread; and music from unseen hands swelled from floor to roof as I passed along. But lo! by the throne, crouching beneath the purple canopy, I saw the laughing Fire; and it seemed, lowly and paled, to implore protection. I paused, and took the courtiers aside, and asked them to mark the flame; but they saw it not—only for me did it gleam and burn. Then knew I that it was indeed a Spirit of that high race, which, even when they take visible form, are *not* visible save to the students of the Dread Science! And I trembled but revered.

And the Fire stayed by me night and day, and I grew accustomed to its light. But never, by charm nor spell, could I draw further word from it; and it followed my steps with a silent and patient homage. By degrees there came over me a vain and proud delight to think that I was so honoured; and I looked upon the changeful face of the Fire as upon the face of a friend.

There was a man who had told years beyond the memory of the living—a revered and famous soothsayer—to whom, in times of dread and omen, our priests and monarchs themselves repaired for warning and advice. I sought his abode. The Seer was not of our race—he came from the distant waters of the Nile, banished by the hierophants of Egypt for solutions more clear than their own of the mysteries of Osiris and Naith. It was in the very cavern in which we now stand that the Seer held his glittering home—lamp upon lamp then lighted up, from an unfailing naphtha, these dazzling spars, hailed as a beacon by the seamen who brought the merchandize of the world into yonder bay, then so loud and swarming, now so desolate and still. Hither had my feet often turned in boyhood, and from the shrivelled lips of the old Egyptian had much of my loftiest learning been gleaned; for he loved me; and seeing with a prophet eye far down the lengths of Time, he foretold the dates at which Nations should be no more; and yet, far as he could look, beheld me living still; me, the infant he had cradled on his lap.

It was on that night, when the new moon scatters its rank and noxious influence over the foliage and life of earth, that I sought the Egyptian. The Fire burned with a fiercer and redder light than its wont, as it played and darted by my side. And when, winding by the silver sands, I passed into the entrance of the cave, I saw the old man sitting on a stone. As I entered, the Seer started from his seat in fear and terror—his eyes rolled—his thin grey hairs stood erect—a cold sweat broke from his brow—and the dread master stood before his pupil in agony and awe.

"Thou comest," muttered he with white lips. "What is by thy side? Hast thou dared to seek knowledge with the Soul of all Horror—with the ghastly Leper of ——? Avaunt! bid the fiend begone!"

His voice seemed to leave the old man, and with a shriek he fell upon his face on the ground.

"Is it," said I, appalled by his terror—"is it the Fire that haunts my steps at which thou tremblest? Behold, it is harmless as a dog; it burns not while it shines: if a fiend, it is a merry fiend, for I hear it laugh while I speak. But it is for this, dread sire, that I have sought thee. Canst thou tell me the nature of the Spirit? for a Spirit it surely is. Canst thou tell me its end and aim?"

I lifted the old man from the earth, and his kingly heart returned to him: he took the wizard crown from the wall, and he placed it on his brows; for he was as a monarch among the Things that are not of clay. And he said to the Fire—"Approach!" The Fire glided to his knees. And he said, "Art thou the Spirit of the Element, and was thy cradle in the Flint's heart?"

And a voice from the flame answered "No."

And again the Egyptian trembled.

"What art thou, then?" said he.

And the Fire answered, "Thy Lord."

And the limbs of the Egyptian shook as if in the grasp of death.

And he said, "Art thou a Demon of *this* world?"

And the Fire answered, "I am the Life of this world—and I am *not* of other worlds."

"I know thee—I fear thee—I acknowledge thee!" said the Egyptian; "and in thy soft lap shall this crowned head soon be laid."

And the Fire laughed.

"But tell me," said I,—for, though my blood stood still, my soul was brave and stern—"Tell me, O seer! what hath this Thing with me?"

"It is the Great Ancestor of us all!" said the Egyptian, groaning.

"And knows it the secrets of the Past?"

"The secrets of the Past are locked within it."

"Can it teach me that which I pine to know? Can it teach me the essence of things—the nature of all I see? Can it raise the film from the human gaze?"

"Hush, rash prince!" cried the Egyptian,—"Seek not to know that which will curse thee with the knowledge. Ask not a power that would turn life into a living grave. All the lore that man ever knew is mine; but that secret have I shunned, and that power have I cast from me, as the shepherd casts the viper from his hand. Be moderate and be wise. And bid me exorcise the Spirit that accosts thee from the Fire!"

"Can it teach me the arch mystery? When I gaze upon the herb or flower, can it gift my gaze with the power to pierce into the cause and workings of its life?"

"I can teach thee this," said the Fire; and it rose higher, and burned more fiercely, as it spoke, till the lamps of naphtha paled before it.

"Then abide by me, O Spirit!" said I; "and let us not be severed."

"Miserable boy!" cried the Egyptian; "was this, then, the strange and preternatural doom which my Art foresaw was to be thine, though it deciphered not its nature? Knowest thou that this Fire, so clear—so pure—so beautiful—is——"

"Beware!" cried the voice from the Fire; and the crest of the flame rose, as the crest of a serpent about to spring upon its prey.

"Thou awest me not," said the Egyptian, though the blood fled from his shrivelled and tawny cheeks. "Thou art——"

"The Principle of the Living World," interrupted the voice.

"And thine other name?" cried the Egyptian.

"Thy Conqueror!" answered the voice; and straight as the answer went forth, the Egyptian fell, blasted as by lightning, a corpse at my feet. The light of the Fire played with a blue and tremulous lustre upon the carcase, and presently I beheld by that light that the corpse was already passed into the loathsomeness of decay—the flesh was rotting from the bones—and the worm and the creeping thing which the rottenness generates, twined in the very jaws and temples of the Sage.

I sickened and gasped for breath.—"Is this thy work, oh fearful fiend?" said I, shuddering. And the Fire, passing from the corpse, crept humbly to my feet; and its voice answered—"Whatever my power, it is thy slave!"

"Was that death thy work?" repeated my quivering lips.

"Thou knowest," answered the Fire, "that death is not the will of any Power—save One. The death came from His will, and I but exulted over the blow!"

I left the cavern; my art, subtle as it was, gave me no glimpse into the causes of the Egyptian's death. I looked upon the Fire, as it crept along the herbage, with an inquisitive, yet timorous eye. I felt an awe of the Demon's power; and yet the proud transport I had known in the subjection of that power was increased, and I walked with a lofty step at the thought that I should have so magnificent a slave. But the words of the mysterious Egyptian still rang in my ear – still I shuddered and recoiled before his denunciation of the secret I desired to know. And, as I passed along the starry solitude, the voice of the Fire addressed me with a sweet and persuasive tone. "Shrink not, young Sage," it said, or rather sang, "from a power beyond that of which thy wisest ancestors ever dreamed; lose not thy valour at the drivelling whispers of age: when did age ever approve what youth desires? Thou art formed for the destiny which belongs to royal hearts—the destiny courts thee. Why dost thou play the laggard?"

"Knowledge," said I, musingly, "can never be productive of woe. If it be knowledge thou canst give me, I will not shrink. Lo! I accept thy gift!"

The Fire played cheerily to and fro. And from the midst of it there stepped forth a pale and shadowy form, of female shape and of exceeding beauty; her face was indeed of no living wanness, and the limbs were indistinct, and no roundness swelled from their vapoury robes; but the features were lovely as a dream, and long yellow hair—glowing as sunlight—fell adown her neck. "Thou wouldst pierce," said she, "to the Principle of the World. Thou wouldst that thine eye should penetrate into my fair and mystic dominion. But not yet; there is an ordeal to pass. To the Whole Knowledge thou must glide through the Imperfect!" Then the female kissed my eyes, and vanished, and with it vanished also the Fire.

Oh, beautiful!—Oh, wondrous!—Oh, divine! A scale had fallen from my sight—and a marvellous glory was called forth upon the face of earth. I saw millions and millions of spirits shooting to and fro athwart the air—spirits that my magic had never yet invoked—spirits of rainbow hues, and quivering with the joy which made their nature. Wherever I turned my gaze, life upon life was visible. Every blade of grass swarmed with myriads invisible to the common eye—but performing with mimic regularity all the courses of the human race; every grain of dust, every drop of water, was a world—mapped into countless tribes, all fulfilling mortal destinies through the agency of mortal instincts,—hunger and love and hate and contest. There was no void in space, no solitude in creation. Bending my eyes below, I saw emerging from the tiny hollows of the earth those fantastic and elfin shapes that have been chiefly consecrated by your Northern Bards: forth they came merrily, merrily—now circling in choral dances, now chasing gossamers whose airy substance eludes the glass of science. If all around was life, it was the life of enchantment and harmony—a subtle, pervading element of delight. Speech left me for very joy, and I gazed, thrilled and breathless, around me—entered, as it were, into the innermost temple of the great system of the universe.

I looked round for the Fire—it was gone. I was alone amidst this new and populous creation, and I stretched myself voluptuously beneath a tree, to sate my soul with wonder. As a Poet in the height of his delirium was my rapture—my veins were filled with Poesy, which is intoxication—and my eyes had been touched with Poesy, which is the creative power—and the miracles before me were the things of Poesy, which is the enchanter's wand.

Days passed, and the bright Demon which had so gifted me appeared not, nor yet did the spell cease; but every hour, every moment, new marvels rose. I could not touch stone nor herb without coming into a new realm utterly different from those I had yet seen, but equally filled with life—so that there was never a want of novelty; and had I been doomed to pass my whole existence upon three feet of earth, I might have spent that existence in perpetual variety—in unsatisfied and eternally new research. But most of all, when I sought Lyciah I rejoiced in the gift I possessed; for in conversing with her my sense penetrated to her heart, and I felt, as with a magnetic sympathy, moving through its transparent purity, the thoughts and emotions which were all my own.

By degrees I longed indeed to make her a sharer in my discovered realms; for I now slowly began to feel the weariness of a conqueror who reigns alone—none to share my power or partake the magnificence in which I dwelt.

One day, even in the midst of angelic things that floated blissfully round me—so that I heard the low melodies they hymned as they wheeled aloft—one day this pining, this sense of solitude in life—of satiety in glory—came on me with intense increase of force. And I said, "But this is the Imperfect state; why not achieve the Whole? Why not ascend to that high and empyreal Knowledge which admits of no dissatisfaction, because in itself complete? Bright Spirit," cried I aloud, "to whom I already owe so great a benefit, come to me now—why hast thou left me? Come and complete thy gifts. I see yet only the wonders of the secret portions of the world—

touch mine eyes that I may see *the cause* of the wonders. I am surrounded with an air of life; let me pierce into the principle of that life. Bright Spirit, minister to thy servant!" Then I heard the sweet voice that had spoken in the Fire—but I saw not the Fire itself. And the voice said unto me—

"Son of the Wise Kings, I am here!"

"I see thee not," said I. "Why hidest thou thy lustre?"

"Thou seest the Half, and that very sight blinds thee to the Whole. This redundant flow of life gushes from me as from its source. When the mid-course of the river is seen, who sees also its distant spring? In thee, not myself, is the cause that thou beholdest me not. I am as I was when I bowed my crest to thy feet; but thine eyes are not what then they were!"

"Thou tellest me strange things, O Demon!" said I; "for why, when admitted to a clearer sight of things, should my eyes be only darkened when they turn to thee?"

"Does not all knowledge, save the one right knowledge, only lead men from the discovery of the primal cause? As Imagination may soar aloft, and find new worlds, yet lose the solid truths of this one—so thou mayest rise into the regions of a preternatural lore, yet recede darklier and darklier from the clue to Nature herself."

I mused over the words of the Spirit, but their sense seemed dim.

"Canst thou not appear to me in thine old, wan, and undulating brightness?" said I after a pause.

"Not until thine eyes receive power to behold me."

"And when may I be worthy that power?"

"When thou art thoroughly dissatisfied with thy present gifts."

"Dread Demon, I am so now!"

"Wilt thou pass from this pleasant state at a hazard—not knowing that which may ensue? Behold, all around thee is full of glory, and musical with joy! Wilt thou abandon that state for a dark and perilous Unknown?"

"The Unknown is the passion of him who aspires to know."

"Pause; for there is terror in thy choice," said the Invisible.

"My heart beats steadily.—I brave whatsoever be the penalty that attends on my desire!"

"Thy wish is granted," said the Spirit.

Then straightway a pang, quick, sharp, agonising, shot through my heart. I felt the stream in my veins stand still, hardening into a congealed substance—my throat rattled, I struggled against the grasp of some iron power. A terrible sense of my own impotence seized me—my muscles refused my will, my voice fled—I was in the possession of some authority that had entered, and claimed, and usurped the citadel of my own self. Then came a creeping of the flesh, a numbing sensation of ice and utter coldness; and lastly, a blackness, deep and solid as a mass of rock, fell over the whole earth — I had entered DEATH!

From this state I was roused by the voice of the Demon. "Awake, look forth!—Thou hast thy desire! —Abide the penalty!" The darkness broke from the earth; the ice thawed from my veins; once more my senses were my servants.

I looked, and behold, I stood in the same spot, but how changed! The earth was one crawling mass of putridity; its rich verdure, its lofty trees, its sublime mountains, its glancing waters, had all been the deceit of my previous blindness; the very green of the grass and the trees was rottenness, and the leaves (not each leaf one and inanimate as they seemed to the common eye) were composed of myriads of insects and puny reptiles, battened on the corruption from which they sprang. The waters swarmed with a leprous life—those beautiful shapes that I had seen in my late delusion were corrupt in their several parts, and from that corruption other creatures were generated living upon them. Every breath of air was *not* air, a thin and healthful fluid, but a wave of animalculæ, poisonous and fœtid; for the Air is the Arch Corrupter, hence all who breathe die; it is the slow, sure venom of Nature, pervading and rotting all things; the light of the heavens was the sickly, loathsome glare that steamed from the universal Death in Life. The World was one dead carcase, from which everything the World bore took its being. There was not such a thing as beauty!—there was not such a thing as life that did not generate from its own corruption a loathsome life for others! I looked down upon myself, and saw that my very veins swarmed with a motelike creation of shapes, springing into hideous existence from mine own disease, and mocking the Human Destiny with the same career of life, love, and death. Methought it must be a spell, which change of scene would annul. I shut my eyes with a frantic horror, and I fled, fast, fast, but blinded; and ever as I fled a laugh rang in my ears. I stopped not till I was at the feet of Lyciah, for she was my first involuntary thought. Whenever a care or fear possessed me, I had been wont to fly to her bosom, and charm my heart by the magic of her sweet voice. I was at the feet of Lyciah—I clasped her knees—I looked up imploringly into her face—God of my Fathers! the same curse attended me still! Her beauty was gone. There was no whole,—no one life in that Being whom I had so adored. Her life was composed of a million lives; her stately shape, of atoms crumbling from each other, and so bringing about the ghastly state of corruption which reigned in all else around. Her delicate hues, her raven hair, her fragrant lips——Pah! What, what was my agony! I turned from her again, — I shrank in loathing from her embrace, — I fled once more, — on — on. I ascended a mountain, and looked down on the various leprosies of Earth. Sternly I forced myself to the task; sternly I inhaled the knowledge I had sought; sternly I drank in the horrible penalty I had dared.

"Demon!" I cried, "appear, and receive my curse!"

"Lo, I am by thy side evermore," said the voice. Then I gazed, and, behold, the Fire was by my side; and I saw that it was the livid light which the jaws of Rottenness emits; and in the midst of the light, which was as its shroud and garment, stood a Giant shape — which was the shape of a Corpse that had been for months buried. I gazed upon the Demon with an appalled yet unquailing eye, and, as I gazed, I recognised in those ghastly lineaments a resemblance to the Female Spirit that had granted me the first fatal gift. But exaggerated, enlarged, dead, — Beauty rotted into Horror.

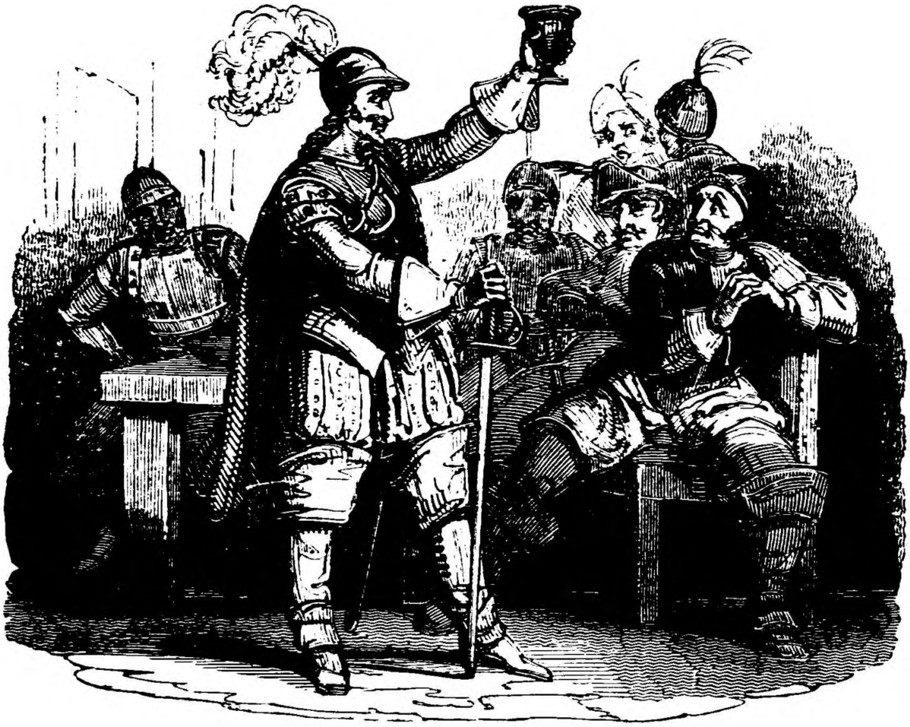
"I am that which thou didst ask to see face to face. — I am the Principle of Life."

"Of Life! Out, horrible mocker! — hast thou no other name?"

"I have! and that name — CORRUPTION!"

"Bright Lamps of Heaven!" I cried, lifting my eyes in anguish from the loathly charnel of the universal earth; "and is this, which men call Nature, — is this the sole Principle of the World?"

As I spoke, the huge carcase beneath my feet trembled. And over the face of the corpse beside me there fell a fear. — And lo! the heavens were lit up with a pure and glorious light, and from the midst of them there came forth a Voice which rolled slowly over the charnel earth as the voice of thunder above the valley of the shepherd. "SUCH," said the Voice, "IS NATURE, IF THOU ACCEPTEST NATURE AS THE FIRST CAUSE — SUCH IS THE UNIVERSE WITHOUT A GOD!"



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THE NYMPH OF THE LURLEI BERG.

O syrens, beware of a fair young knight,
He loves and he rides away.

A GROUP of armed men were sitting cheerlessly round a naked and ill-furnished board, in one of those rugged castles that overhang the Rhine—they looked at the empty bowl, and they looked at the untempting platter—then they shrugged their shoulders, and looked foolishly at each other. A young knight, of a better presence than the rest, stalked gloomily into the hall.

"Well, comrades," said he, pausing in the centre of the room, and leaning on his sword, "I grieve to entertain ye no better—my father's gold is long gone—it bought your services while it lasted, and with these services, I, Rupert the Fearnought, won this castle from its lord—levied tolls on the river—plundered the burgesses of Bingen—and played the chieftain as nobly as a robber may. But, alas! wealth flies—luck deserts us—we can no longer extract a doit from traveller or citizen. We must separate."

The armed men muttered something unintelligible—then they looked again at the dishes—then they shook their heads very dismally, and Rupert the Fearnought continued—

"For my part, I love every thing that wealth purchases—I cannot live in poverty—and when you have all gone, I propose to drown myself in the Rhine."

The armed men shouted out very noisily their notions on the folly of such a project of relief; but Rupert sunk on a stone seat, folded his arms, and scarcely listened to them.

"Ah, if one could get some of the wealth that lies in the Rhine!" said an old marauder; "that would be worth diving for!"

"There cannot be much gold among the fishes, I fancy," growled out another marauder, as he played with his dagger.

"Thou art a fool," quoth the old man; "gold there is, for I heard my father say so; and it may be won, too, by a handsome man, if he be brave enough."

Rupert lifted his head—"And how?" said he.

"The water spirits have the key of the

treasure, and he who wins their love may perhaps win their gold."

Rupert rose and took the old robber aside; they conversed long and secretly, and Rupert, returning to the hall, called for the last hogshead of wine the cellar contained.

"Comrades," said he, as he quaffed off a bumper—"Comrades, pledge to my safe return: I shall leave ye for a single month, since one element can yield no more, to try the beings of another; I may perish—I may return not. Tarry for me, therefore, but the time I have mentioned; if ye then see me not, depart in peace. Meanwhile, ye may manage to starve on; and if the worst come to the worst, ye can eat one another."

So saying, the young spendthrift (by birth a knight, by necessity a robber, and by name and nature Rupert the Fearnought) threw down the cup, and, walking forth from the hall, left his companions to digest his last words with what appetite they might.

Among the spirits of the water, none were like Lurline; she was gentle as the gentlest breeze that floats from the realms of spring over the bosom of the Rhine, and wherever at night she glided along the waves, there the beams of the love-star lingered, and lit up her path with their tenderest ray. Her eyes were of the softest azure of a southern heaven, and her hair like its setting sun. But above all her charms was the melody of her voice; and often, when she sat upon the Lurlei Rock by the lonely moonlight, and sent her wild song above the silent waters, the nightingale paused from her wail to listen, and the winds crept humbled round her feet, as at a sorcerer's spell.

One night, as she thus sat, and poured forth her charmed strains, she saw a boat put from the opposite shore, and, as it approached nearer and nearer towards her, she perceived it was guided by one solitary mariner; the moonlight rested upon his upward face, and it was the face of manhood's first dawn—beautiful, yet stern, and daring in its beauty—the light curls, surmounted by a plumed semi-casque, danced above a brow that was already marked by thought; and something keen and proud in the mien and air of the stranger, designated one who had learnt to act no less than to meditate. The water spirit paused as he approached, and gazed admiringly upon the fairest form that had ever yet chanced upon her solitude; she noted that the stranger, too, kept his eyes fixed upon her, and steered his boat to the rock on which she sat. And the shoals then, as now, were fraught with danger, but she laid her spell upon the wave and upon the rock, and the boat glided securely over them,—and the bold stranger was within but a few paces of her seat, when she forbade the waters to admit his nearer approach. The stranger stood erect in the boat, as it rocked tremulously to and fro, and still gazing upon the water nymph, he said—

"Who art thou, O beautiful maiden! and whence is thine art? Night after night I have kept watch among the wild rocks that tenanted the sacred Goar, and listened enamoured to thy lay. Never before on earth was such minstrelsy heard. Art thou a daughter of the river? and dost thou—as the grey-beards say—lure us to destruction? Behold, I render myself up to thee! Sweet is death, if it cradle me in thine arms! Welcome the whirlpool, if it entomb me in thy home!"

"Thou art bold, young mortal," said the water spirit, with trembling tones, for she felt already the power of love. "And wherefore say thy tribe such harsh legends of my song? Who ever perished by my art? Do I not rather allay the wind, and smooth the mirror of the waves? Return to thine home safely and in peace, and vindicate, when thou hearest it maligned, the name of the water spirit of the Rhine."

"Return!" said the stranger, haughtily, "never, until I have touched thee—knelt to thee—felt that thy beauty is not a dream. Even now my heart bounds as I gaze on thee! Even now I feel that thou *shalt* be mine! Behold! I trust myself to thine element! I fear nothing but the loss of thee!"

So saying, the young man leapt into the water, and in a minute more he knelt by the side of Lurline.

It was the stillest hour of night; the stars were motionless in the heavens: the moonlight lay hushed on the rippling tide: from cliff to vale, no living thing was visible save them, the spirit and her human wooer.

"Oh!" said he, passionately, "never did I believe that thy voice was aught but some bodily music from another world;

in madness, and without hope, I tracked its sound homeward, and I have found *thee*. I touch thee!—thou livest!—the blood flows in thy form!—thou art as woman, but more lovely! Take me to thy blue caverns and be my bride!"

As a dream from the sleeper, as a vapour from the valley, Lurline glided from the arms of the stranger, and sunk into the waters; the wave closed over her, but, beneath its surface, he saw her form gliding along to the more shadowy depths; he saw, and plunged into the waves!

The morning came, and the boat still tossed by the Lurlei Berg, without a hand to steer it. The Rhine rolled bright to the dewy sun, but the stranger had returned not to its shores.

The cavern of the Water Spirit stretches in many chambers beneath the courses of the river, and in its inmost recess, several days after the stranger's disappearance, Lurline sat during the summer noon; but not alone. Love lighted up those everlasting spars, and even beneath the waters and beneath the earth, held his temple and his throne.

"And tell me, my stranger bridegroom," said Lurline, as the stranger lay at her feet, listening to the dash of the waters against the cavern, "tell me of what country and parentage art thou? Art thou one of the many chiefs whose castles frown from the opposite cliffs? —or a wanderer from some distant land? What is thy mortal name?"

"Men call me Rupert the Fearnought," answered the stranger. "A penniless chief am I, and a cheerless castle do I hold; my sword is my heritage; and as for gold, the gold which my sire bequeathed me, alas! on the land, beautiful Lurline, there are many more ways of getting rid of such dross than in thy peaceful dominions beneath the river. Yet, Lurline," and the countenance of Rupert became more anxious and more earnest—"is it not true that the spirits of thy race hoard vast treasures of gems and buried gold within their caves? Do ye not gather all the wind and tempest have sunk beneath the waves in your rocky coffers? And have ye not the power to endow a mortal with the forgotten wealth of ages?"

"Ah, yes!" answered the enamoured Water Spirit. "These chambers contain enough of such idle treasures, dull and useless, my beloved, to those who love."

"Eh, em!" quoth the mortal, "what thou sayest has certainly a great deal of truth in it; but, but just to pass away the next hour or two, suppose thou showest me, dearest Lurline, some of these curiosities of thine. Certes I am childishly fond of looking at coins and jewels."

"As thou wilt, my stranger," answered Lurline, and, rising, she led the way through the basalt arches that swept in long defiles through her palace, singing with the light heart of contented love to the waves that dashed around. The stranger followed, wondering, but not fearing, with his hand every now and then, as they made some abrupt turning, mechanically wandering to his sword, and his long plume waving lightly to the rushing air that at times, with a hollow roar, swept through their mighty prison. At length the Water Spirit came to a door, before which lay an enormous shell, and, as the stranger looked admiringly upon its gigantic size, a monstrous face gradually rose from the aperture of the shell, and with glaring eyes and glistening teeth gloated out upon the mortal.

Three steps backward did Rupert the Fearnought make, and three times did he cross himself with unwonted devotion, and very irreverently, and not in exact keeping with the ceremony, blurted he forth a northern seafarer's oath. Then outflashed his sword; and he asked Lurline if he were to prepare against a foe. The Water Spirit smiled, and murmuring some words in a language unknown to Rupert, the monster slowly wound itself from the cavities of the shell and, carrying the shell itself upon its back, crept with a long hiss and a trailing slime from the door, circuitously approaching Rupert the Fearnought by the rear. "*Christe beate!*" ejaculated the lover, veering round with extreme celerity, and presenting the point of his sword to the monster; "what singular shell fish there are at the bottom of the Rhine!" Then gazing more attentively on the monster, he perceived that it was in the shape of a dragon, substituting only the shell for wings.

"The dragon race," said the Water

Spirit, "are the guardians of all treasure, whether in the water or in the land. And deep in the very centre of the earth, the hugest of the tribe lies coiled around the loadstone of the world."

The door now opened. They entered a vast vault. Heavens! how wondrous was the treasure that greeted the Fearnought's eyes! All the various wrecks that from the earliest ages of the world had enriched the Rhine or its tributary streams, contributed their burthen to this mighty treasury; there was the first rude coin ever known in the north, cumbrous and massive, teaching betimes the moral that money is inseparable from the embarrassment of taking care of it. There were Roman vases and jewels in abundance; rings, and chains, and great necklaces of pearl: there, too, were immense fragments of silver that from time to time had been washed into the river, and hurried down into this universal recipient. And, looking up, the Fearnought saw that the only roof above was the waters, which rolled black and sullenly overhead, but were prevented by a magic charm, or the wonderful resistance of the pent air, from penetrating farther. But wild, and loud, and hoarse was the roar above, and the Water Spirit told him that they were then below the Gewirre or Whirlpool which howls along the bank opposite to the Lurlei Berg.

"I see," quoth the bold stranger, as he grasped at a heap of jewels, "that wherever there is treasure below the surface, there is peril above!"

"Rather say," answered the Water Spirit, "that the whirlpool betokens the vexation and strife which are the guardians and parents of riches."

The Fearnought made no answer; but he filled his garments with the most costly gems he could find, in order, doubtless, to examine them more attentively at his leisure.

And that evening, as his head lay upon the lap of the Water Spirit, and she played with his wreathy hair, Rupert said, "Ah, Lurline! ah, that thou wouldst accompany me to the land. Thou knowest not in these caves (certainly pretty in their way, but, thou must confess, placed in a prodigiously dull neighbourhood)—thou knowest not, dear Lurline, how charming a life it is to live in a beautiful castle on the land;" and with that Rupert began to paint, in the most eloquent terms, the modes of existence then most approvedly in fashion. He dwelt with a singular flow of words on the pleasures of the chace; he dressed the water-nymph in green—mounted her on a snow-white courser—supposed her the admiration of all who flocked through the green wood to behold her. Then he painted the gorgeous banquet, the lords and dames that, glittering in jewels and cloth of gold, would fill the halls over which Lurline should preside—all confessing her beauty, and obedient to her sway; harps were for ever to sound her praises; minstrels to sing and knights to contest for it; and, above all, he, Rupert himself, was to be eternally at her feet—"Not, dearest love, (added he, gently rubbing his knees,) "on these rocky stones, but upon the softest velvets or, at least, upon the greenest mosses."

The Water Spirit was moved, for the love of change and the dream of ambition can pierce even below the deepest beds of the stream; and the voice of flattery is more persuasive than were the melodies of the syren herself.

By degrees, she allowed herself to participate in Rupert's desire for land; and, as she most tenderly loved him, his evident and growing ennui, his long silences, and his frequent yawns, made her anxious to meet his wishes, and fearful lest otherwise he should grow utterly wearied of her society. It was settled then that they should go to the land.

"But, oh, my beloved," said Rupert the Fearnought, "I am but a poor and mortgaged knight, and in my hall the winds whistle through dismantled casements, and over a wineless board. Shall I not go first to the shore, and with some of the baubles thou keepest all uselessly below, refit my castle among yonder vine-clad mountains, so that it shall be a worthy tenement for the daughter of the Rhine? Then I shall hasten back for thee, and we will be wedded with all the pomp that befits thy station."

The poor Water Spirit, having lived at the bottom of the Rhine all her life, was not so well read in the world as might have been expected from a singer of her celebrity. She yielded to the proposition of Rupert; and that very night the moon beheld the beautiful Lurline assisting Rupert to fill his boat (that lay still by the feet of the Lurlei Berg) with all the largest jewels in her treasury. Rupert filled and filled, till he began to fear the boat would hold no more without sinking; and then, reluctantly ceasing, he seized the oars, and every now and then kissing his hand at Lurline with a melancholy expression of fondness, he rowed away to the town of St. Goar.

As soon as he had moored his boat in a little creek, overshadowed at that time by thick brambles, he sprang lightly on land; and seizing a hunting horn that he wore round his neck, sounded a long blast. Five times was that blast echoed from the rock of the Lurlei Berg by the sympathising dwarf who dwelt there, and who, wiser than Lurline, knew that her mortal lover had parted from her for ever. Rupert started in dismay, but soon recovered his native daring. "Come fiend, sprite, or dragon," said he, "I will not give back the treasure I have won!" He looked defyingly to the stream, but no shape rose from its depths—the moonlight slept on the water—all was still, and without sign of life, as the echo died mournfully away. He looked wistfully to the land, and now crashing through the boughs came the armed tread of men—plumes waved—corslets glittered, and Rupert the Fearnought was surrounded by his marauding comrades. He stood with one foot on his boat, and pointed exultingly to the treasure. "Behold," he cried, to the old robber who had suggested the emprize, "I have redeemed my pledge, and plundered the coffer of the spirits of the deep!"

Then loud broke the robbers' voices over the still stream, and mailed hands grasped the heavy gems, and fierce eyes gloated on their splendour.

"And how didst thou win the treasure? With thy good sword, we'll warrant," cried the robbers.

"Nay," answered Rupert, "there is a weapon more dangerous to female, whether spirit or flesh, than the sword—a soft tongue and flattering words!—Away; take each what he can carry—and away, I say, to our castle!"

Days and weeks rolled on, but the mortal returned not to the maiden of the waters; and night after night Lurline sat alone on the moonlight rock, and mourned for her love in such wild and melancholy strains, as now at times the fisherman starts to hear. The dwarf of the Lurlei Berg sometimes put forth his shaggy head, from the little door in his rock, and sought to solace her with wise aphorisms on human inconstancy: but the soft Lurline was not the more consoled by his wisdom, and still not the less she clung to the vain hope that Rupert the Flatterer would return.

And Rupert said to his comrades, as they quaffed the wine, and carved the meat at his castle board—

"I hear there is a maiden in the castle of Lorchausen, amidst the valleys, on the other side of the Rhine, fair to see, and rich to wed. She shall be the bride of the Fearnought."

The robbers shouted at the proposal, and the next day, in their sheenest armour, they accompanied their beautiful chief in his wooing to the lady of Lorchausen. But Rupert took care not to cross by the Lurlei Berg; for Fearnought as he was, he thought a defrauded dragon and a betrayed spirit were hard odds for mortal chief. They arrived at the castle, and Rupert wooed with the same flattery and the same success as before. But as one female generally avenges the wrongs of another, so Rupert was caught by the arts he practised, and loved no less ardently than he was loved. The chief of Lorchausen consented to the wedding, and the next week he promised to bring the bride and her dowry to the Fearnought's castle.

"But, ah! dearest Unna," said Rupert to his betrothed, "take heed, as you pass the river, that your bark steer not by the Lurlei Berg, for *there* lurks a dragon ever athirst for beauty and for gold; and he lashes with his tail the waters when such voyagers as thou pass, and whirls the vessel down into his cave below."

The beautiful Unna was terrified, and promised assent to so reasonable a request.

Rupert and his companions returned home, the castle was set in order for the reception of his bride, and festivities on a grand scale were projected. Rupert, however, was not permitted to enjoy his ill-gotten gains; for, in attempting to pass the Lurlei Berg with his consort, the waters became dreadfully agitated, the efforts of the boatmen were in vain, and the whole party fell a sacrifice to the vengeance of Lurline, the Spirit of the Waters.

THE PILGRIMS OF THE RHINE.

" Wilt thou forget the happy hours
Which we buried in love's sweet bowers,
Heaping over their corpses cold
Blossoms and leaves, instead of mould ? "— SHELLEY.

" Thou passest in review before me the whole series of animated things; and teachest me to know my brothers in the still wood, in the air, and in the water." — HAYWARD'S FAUST.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Could I prescribe to the critic and to the public, I would wish that this work might be tried by the rules rather of poetry than prose, for according to those rules have been both its conception and its execution; and I feel that something of sympathy with the author's design is requisite to win indulgence for the superstitions he has incorporated with his tale, — for the floridity of his style, and the redundance of his descriptions. Perhaps, indeed, it would be impossible, in attempting to paint the scenery and imbody some of the Legends of the Rhine, not to give (it may be too loosely) the reins to the imagination, or to escape the imbuing influence of that wild German spirit which I have sought to transfer to a colder tongue.

I have made the experiment of selecting for the main interest of my work the simplest materials, and weaving upon them the ornaments given chiefly to subjects of a more fanciful and ideal nature. I know not how far I have succeeded, but various reasons have conspired to make this the work, above all others that I have written, which has given me the most delight (though not unmixed with melancholy) in producing, and in which my mind, for the time, has been the most completely absorbed. But the ardor of composition is often disproportioned to the merit of the work; and the public sometimes, nor unjustly, avenges itself for that forgetfulness of its existence which makes the chief charm of an author's solitude, and the happiest, if not the wisest inspiration of its dreams.

THE

PILGRIMS OF THE RHINE.

CHAPTER I.

In which the reader is introduced to Queen Nymphalin.

In one of those green woods which belong so peculiarly to our island, (for the continent has its forests, but England its woods,) there lived, a short time ago, a charming little fairy, called Nymphalin; I believe she is descended from a younger branch of the house of Mab, but perhaps that may be only a genealogical fable, for your fairies are very susceptible to the pride of ancestry, and it is impossible to deny that they fall somewhat reluctantly into the liberal opinions so much *à-la-mode* at the present day.

However that may be, it is quite certain that all the courtiers in Nymphalin's domain (for she was a queen fairy) made a point of asserting her right to this illustrious descent; and accordingly she quartered the Mab arms with her own, — three acorns vert, with a grasshopper rampant. It was as merry a little court as could possibly be conceived, and on a fine midsummer night it would have been worth while attending the queen's balls, — that is to say if you could have got a ticket; a favor not obtained without great interest.

But, unhappily, until both men and fairies adopt the excellent Mr. Owen's proposition, and live in parallelograms, they will always be the victims of *ennui*. And Nymphalin, who had been disappointed in love, and was still unmarried, had for the last five or six months been exceedingly tired even of giving balls. She yawned very frequently, and consequently yawning became a fashion.

"But why don't we have some new dances, my Pipalee?" said Nymphalin, to her favorite maid of honor; "these waltzes are very old-fashioned?"

"Very old-fashioned," said Pipalee.

The queen gaped, — and Pipalee did the same.

It was a gala night; — the court was held in a lone and beautiful hollow, with the wild brake closing round it on every side, so that no human step could easily gain the spot. Wherever the shadows fell upon the brake, a glow-worm made a point of exhibiting himself, and the bright August moon sailed slowly above, pleased to look down upon so charming a scene of merriment: for they wrong the moon who assert that she has an objection to mirth; with the mirth of fairies she has all possible sympathy. Here and there in the thicket the scarce honeysuckles, — in August, honeysuckles are getting out of season, — hung their rich festoons, and at that moment they were crowded with the elderly fairies, who had given up dancing and taken to scandal. Besides the honeysuckle you might see the hawkweed and the white convolvulus, varying the soft verdure of the thicket; and mushrooms in abundance had sprung up in the circle, glittering in the silver moonlight, and acceptable beyond measure to the dancers; every one knows how agreeable a thing tents are in a *fête champêtre!* I was mistaken in saying that the brake closed the circle *entirely* round; for there was one gap, scarcely apparent to mortals, through which a fairy at least might catch a view of a brook that was close at hand, rippling in the stars, checkered at intervals by the rich weeds floating on the surface, interspersed with the delicate arrow-head and the silver water-lily Then the trees themselves, dight in their prodigal variety of hues; the blue, — the purple, — the yellowing tint, — the tender and silvery verdure, and the deep mass of shade frowning into black the willow, — the elm, — the ash, — the fir, — the lime — "and, best of all, old England's haunted oak:" these hues broke again into a thousand minor and subtler shades as the twinkling stars pierced the foliage, or the moon slept with a richer light upon some favored glade.

It was a gala night; the elderly fairies, as I said before, were chatting among the honeysuckles; the young were flirting, dancing, and making love; the middle-aged talked politics under the mushrooms; and the queen herself, and half a dozen of her favorites, were yawning their pleasure from a little mound, covered with the thickest moss.

"It has been very dull, madam, ever since Prince Fayzenheim left us," said the fairy Nip.

The queen sighed.

"How handsome the prince was!" said Pipalee.

The queen blushed.

"He wore the prettiest dress in the world, — and what a mustache!" cried Pipalee, fanning herself with her left wing.

"He was a coxcomb," said the lord-treasurer, sourly The lord-treasurer was the honestest and most disagreeable fairy at court; he was an admirable husband, brother, son, cousin, uncle, and godfather; it was these virtues that had made him a lord-treasurer. Unfortunately, they had not made him a sensible man. He was like Charles the Second in one respect; for he never did a wise thing; but he was not like him in another,— for he very often said a foolish one

The queen frowned.

"A young prince is not the worse for that," retorted Pipalee. "Heigho! does your majesty think his highness likely to return?"

"Don't tease me," said Nymphalin, pettishly.

The lord-treasurer, by way of giving the conversation an agreeable turn, reminded her majesty that there was a prodigious accumulation of business to see to, especially that difficult affair about the emmet-wasp loan. Her majesty rose, and leaning on Pipalee's arm, walked down to the supper tent.

"Pray," said the fairy Trip to the fairy Nip, "what is all this talk about Prince Fayzenheim? Excuse my ignorance, I am only just out, you know."

"Why," answered Nip, a young courtier, not a marrying fairy, but very seductive, "the story runs thus: — Last summer a foreigner visited us, calling himself Prince Fayzenheim, one of your German fairies, I fancy; no great things, but an excellent waltzer. He wore long spurs, made out of the stings of the horse-flies in the Black Forest; his cap sat on one side, and his mustaches curled like the lip of the dragon-flower. He was on his travels, and amused himself by making love to the queen. You can't fancy, dear Trip, how fond she was of hearing him tell stories about the strange creatures of Germany, — about wild huntsmen, — water-spirits, — and a pack of such stuff," added Nip, contemptuously; for Nip was a free-thinker.

"In short," said Trip.

"In short, she loved," cried Nip, with a theatrical air

"And the prince?"

"Packed up his clothes and sent on his travelling-carriage, in order that he might go at his ease, on the top o a stage pigeon, — in short, — as you say, — in short, he deserted the queen, and ever since she has set the fashion of yawning."

"It was very naughty in him," said the gentle Trip.

"Ah, my dear creature," cried Nip, "if it had been *you* he had paid his addresses to!"

Trip simpered, and the old fairies from their seats in the honeysuckles observed she was "sadly conducted," but the Trips had never been *too* respectable.

Meanwhile the queen, leaning on Pipalee, said, after a short pause, "Do you know I have formed a plan?"

"How delightful," cried Pipalee. "Another gala!"

"Pooh, surely even you must be tired with these levities; the spirit of the age is no longer frivolous; and I dare say as the march of gravity proceeds, we shall get rid of these galas altogether." The queen said this with an air of inconceivable wisdom, for the "Society for the Diffusion of general Stupefaction" had been recently established among the fairies, and its tracts had driven all the light reading out of the market. The "Penny Proser" had contributed greatly to the increase of knowledge and yawning, so visibly progressive among the courtiers.

"No," continued Nymphalin; "I have thought of something better than galas, — let us travel!"

Pipalee clasped her hands in ecstasy.

"Where shall we travel?"

"Let us go up the Rhine," said the queen, turning away her head. "We shall be amazingly welcomed; there are fairies without number, all the way by its banks; and various distant connexions of ours, whose nature and properties will afford interest and instruction to a philosophical mind."

"Number Nip, for instance," cried the gay Pipalee.

"The red man!" said the graver Nymphalin.

"Oh, my queen, what an excellent scheme!" and Pipalee was so lively during the rest of the night that the old fairies in the honeysuckle insinuated that the lady of honor had drunk a buttercup too much of the May dew.

CHAPTER II.

The lovers.

I WISH only for such readers as give themselves heart and soul up to me, — if they begin to cavil I have done with them; their fancy should put itself entirely under my management; and, after all, ought they not to be too glad to get out of this hackneyed and melancholy world, to be run away with by an author who promises them something new?

From the heights of BRUGES, a mortal and his betrothed gazed upon the scene below. They saw the sun set slowly among purple masses of cloud, and the lover turned to his mistress and sighed deeply; for her cheek was delicate in its blended roses, beyond the beauty that belongs to the hues of health; and when he saw the sun sinking from the world, the thought came upon him that *she* was his sun, and the glory that she shed over his life might soon pass away into the bosom of the "everduring dark." But against the clouds rose one of the many spires that characterize the town of Bruges; and on that spire, melting into heaven, rested the eyes of Gertrude Vane. The different objects that caught the gaze of each was emblematic both of the different channel of their thoughts, and the different elements of their nature: he thought of the sorrow, she of the consolation: his heart prophesied of the passing away from earth, — hers of the ascension into heaven. The lower part of the landscape was wrapt in shade; but, just where the bank curved round in a mimic bay, the waters caught the sun's parting smile, and rippled against the herbage that clothed the shore with a scarcely noticeable wave. There were two of the numerous mills which were so picturesque a feature of that country, standing at a distance from each other on the rising banks, their sails perfectly still in the cool silence of the evening, and adding to the rustic tranquillity which breathed around. For to me there is something in the stilled sails of one of those inventions of man's industry peculiarly eloquent of repose; the rest seems typical of the repose of our own passions, — short and uncertain, contrary to their natural ordination; and doubly impressive from the feeling which admonishes us how precarious is the stillness, — how utterly dependent on every wind rising at any moment and from any quarter of the heavens! They saw before them no living forms, save one or two peasants yet lingering by the water-side.

Trevylyan drew closer to his Gertrude; for his love was inexpressively tender, and his vigilant anxiety for her made his stern frame feel the first coolness of the evening, even before she felt it herself.

"Dearest, let me draw your mantle closer round you"

Gertrude smiled her thanks.

"I feel better than I have done for weeks," said she; "and when once we get into the Rhine you will see me grow so strong as to shock all your interest for me."

"Ah, would to heaven my interest for you may be put to such an ordeal!" said Trevylyan; and they turned slowly to the inn, where Gertrude's father already awaited them.

Trevylyan was of a wild, a resolute, and an active nature. Thrown on the world at the age of sixteen, he had passed his youth in alternate pleasure, travel, and solitary study. At the age in which manhood is least susceptible to caprice, and most perhaps to passion, he fell in love with the loveliest person that ever dawned upon a poet's vision. I say this without exaggeration, for Gertrude Vane's was indeed the beauty, but the perishable beauty, of a dream. It happened most singularly to Trevylyan, (but he was a singular man,) that being naturally one whose affections it was very difficult to excite, he should have fallen in love at first sight with a person whose disease, already declared, would have deterred any other heart from risking its treasures on a bark so utterly unfitted for the voyage of life. Consumption, but consumption in its most beautiful shape, had set its seal upon Gertrude Vane, when Trevylyan first saw her, and at once loved. He knew the danger of the disease; he did not, except at intervals, deceive himself; he wrestled against the new passion; but, stern as his nature was, he could not conquer it. He loved, he confessed his love, and Gertrude returned it.

In a love like this, there is something ineffably beautiful, — it is essentially the poetry of passion. Desire grows hallowed by fear, and scarce permitted to indulge its vent in the common channel of the senses, breaks forth into those vague yearnings, — those lofty aspirations, which pine for the bright — the far — the unattained. It is "the desire of the moth for the star," — it is the love of the soul!

Gertrude was advised by the faculty to try a southern climate; but Gertrude was the daughter of a German mother, and her young fancy had been nursed in all the wild legends, and the alluring visions that belong to the children of the Rhine. Her imagination, more romantic than classic, yearned for the vine-clad hills and haunted forests, which are so fertile of their spells to those who have once drunk, even sparingly, of the literature of the north. Her desire strongly expressed her declared conviction that if any change of scene could yet arrest the progress of her malady, it would be the shores of the river she had so longed to visit, prevailed with her physicians and her father, and they consented to that pilgrimage along the Rhine, on which Gertrude, her father, and her lover were now bound.

It was by the green curve of the banks which the lovers saw from the heights of Bruges, that our fairy travellers met. They were reclining on the water-side, playing at dominos with eye-bright, and the black specks of the trefoil; viz. Pipalee, Nip, Trip, and the lord-treasurer, (for that was all the party selected by the queen for her travelling *cortége*,) and waiting for her majesty, who, being a curious little elf, had gone round the town to reconnoitre.

"Bless me!" said the lord-treasurer, "what a mad freak is this! Crossing that immense pond of water, — and was there ever such bad grass as this? — One may see that the fairies thrive ill here."

"You are always discontented, my lord," said Pipalee; "but then you are somewhat too old to travel, — at least, unless you go in your nut-shell and four."

The lord-treasurer did not like this remark, so he muttered a peevish pshaw, and took a pinch of honeysuckle dust to console himself for being forced to put up with so much frivolity.

At this moment, ere the moon was at her middest height, Nymphalin joined her subjects.

"I have just returned," said she with a melancholy expression on her countenance, "from a scene that has almost renewed in me that sympathy with human beings, which of late years our race has wellnigh relinquished.

"I hurried through the town without noticing much food for adventure. I paused for a moment on a fat citizen's pillow, and bade him dream of love. He woke in a fright, and ran down to see that his cheeses were safe. I swept with a light wing over a politician's eyes, and straightway he dreamed of theatres and music. I caught an undertaker in his first nap, and I have left him whirled in a waltz For what would be sleep if it did not contrast life! Then

I came to a solitary chamber, in which a girl, in her tenderest youth, knelt by the bedside in prayer, and I saw that the death-spirit had passed over her, and the blight was on the leaves of the rose. The room was still and hushed, — the angel of purity kept watch there. Her heart was full of love, and yet of holy thoughts, and I bade her dream of the long life denied to her, — of a happy home, — of the kisses of her young lover, — of eternal faith, and unwaning tenderness. Let her at least enjoy in dreams what fate has refused to truth! — and, passing from the room, I found her lover stretched in his cloak beside the door; for he reads with a feverish and desperate prophecy the doom that waits her; and so loves he the very air she breathes, the very ground she treads, that when she has left his sight he creeps, silently and unknown to her, to the nearest spot hallowed by her presence, anxious that, while she is on earth, not an hour, not a moment should be wasted upon other thoughts than those that belong to her; and feeling a security, a fearful joy, in lessening the distance that *now* only momentarily divides them. And that love seemed to me not as the love of the common world, and I stayed my wings and looked upon it, as a thing that centuries might pass and bring no parallel to, in its beauty and its melancholy truth. But I kept away the sleep from the lover's eyes, for well I knew that sleep was a tyrant that shortened the brief time of waking tenderness for the living, yet spared him; and one sad, anxious thought of her was sweeter, in spite of its sorrow, than the brightest of fairy dreams. So I left him awake, and watching there through the long night, and felt that the children of earth have still something that unites them to the spirits of a finer race, so long as they retain among them the presence of real love!"

And oh! is there not a truth also in our fictions of the unseen world? Are there not yet bright lingerers by the forest and the stream! Do the moon and the soft stars look out on no delicate and winged forms bathing in their light? Are the fairies and the invisible hosts but the children of our dreams, and not their inspiration? Is that all a delusion which speaks from the golden page? And is the world only given to harsh and anxious travailers, that walk to and fro in pursuit of no gentle shadows? Are the chimeras of the passions the sole spirits of the universe? No! while my remembrance treasures in its deepest cell the image of one no more, — one who was "not of the earth, earthy," — one in whom love was the essence of thoughts divine, — one whose shape and mould, whose heart and genius would, had poesy never before have dreamed it, have called forth the first notion of spirits resembling mortals, but not of them; no, Gertrude, while I remember you, the faith, — the trust in brighter shapes and fairer natures than the world knows of, comes clinging to my heart; and still will I think that fairies might have watched over your sleep, and spirits have ministered to your dreams!

CHAPTER III.

Feelings.

GERTRUDE and her companions proceeded, by slow, and, to her, delightful stages, to Rotterdam. Trevylyan sat by her side, and her hand was ever in his; and when her delicate frame became sensible of fatigue, her head drooped on his shoulder as its natural resting-place. Her father was a man who had lived long enough to have encountered many reverses of fortune, and they had left him, as I am apt to believe long adversity usually *does* leave its prey, somewhat chilled and somewhat hardened to affection; passive and quiet of hope, resigned to the worst as to the common order of events, and expecting little from the best, as an unlooked-for incident in the regularity of human afflictions. He was insensible of his daughter's danger, for he was not one whom the fear of love endows with prophetic vision; and he lived tranquilly in the present, without asking what new misfortune awaited him in the future. Yet he loved his child, his only child, with all the warmth of attachment left him by the many shocks his heart had received; and in her approaching connexion with one rich and noble as Trevylyan, he felt even something bordering upon pleasure. Lapped in the apathetic indifference of his nature, he leaned forth from the carriage, enjoying the bright weather that attended their journey, and sensible, — for he was one of fine and cultivated taste, — to whatever beauties of nature or remains of art varied their course. A companion of this sort was the most agreeable that two persons never needing a third could desire; he left them undisturbed to the intoxication of their mutual presence; he marked not the interchange of glances; he listened not to the whisper, the low delicious whisper, with which the heart speaks its sympathy to heart. He broke not that charmed silence which falls over us when the thoughts are full, and words leave nothing to explain; that repose of feeling; that certainty that we are understood without the effort of words, which makes the real luxury of intercourse, and the true enchantment of travel. What a memory hours like these bequeath, after we have settled down into the calm occupations of common life! — how beautiful, through the vista of years, seems that brief moonlight track upon the waters of our youth!

And Trevylyan's nature, which, as I have said before, was naturally hard and stern, which was hot, irritable, ambitious, and early tinctured with the policy and lesson of the world, seemed utterly changed by the peculiarities of his love; every hour, every moment was full of incident to him; every look of Gertrude's was entered on the tablets of his heart, so that his love knew no languor, i required no change; he was absorbed in it; *it was himself!* And he was soft and watchful as the step of a mother by the couch of her sick child: the lion within him was tamed by indomitable love; the sadness, the presentiment that was mixed with all his passion for Gertrude filled him too with that poetry of feeling, which is the result of thoughts weighing upon us, and not to be expressed by ordinary language. In this part of their journey, as I find by the date, were the following lines written; they are to be judged as the lines of one in whom emotion and truth were the only inspiration.

I.

"As leaves left darkling in the flush of day,
When glints the glad sun checkering o'er the tree,
I see the green earth brightening in the ray,
Which only casts a shadow upon me!

II.

"What are the beams, the flowers, the glory, all
Life's glow and gloss, — the music and the bloom,
When every sun but speeds the eternal pall,
And time is death that dallies with the tomb?

III.

"And yet, — oh yet, so young, so pure! — the while
Fresh laugh the rose-hues round youth's morning sky,
That voice, — those eyes, — the deep love of that smile,
Are they not soul, — *all* soul, — and *can* they die?

IV.

"Are there the words 'NO MORE' for thoughts like ours?
Must the bark sink upon so soft a wave?
Hath the short summer of thy life no flowers,
But those which bloom above thine early grave?

V.

"O God! and what is life, that I should live,
(Hath not the world enow of common clay?)
And she, — the rose, — whose life a soul could give
To the void desert, sigh its sweets away!

VI.

"And I that love thee thus, to whom the air,
Blest by thy breath, makes heaven where'er it be,
Watch thy cheek wane, and smile away despair, —
Lest it should dim one hour yet left to thee

VII

"Still let me conquer self, — oh, still conceal,
By the smooth brow, the snake that coils below;
Break, break my heart, it comforts yet to feel
That *she* dreams on, unwakened by my woe!

VIII.

"Hushed, where the star's soft angel loves to keep
Watch o'er their tide, the morning waters roll;
So glides my spirit, — darkness, in the deep,
But o'er the wave the presence of thy soul!"

Gertrude herself had not as yet the presentiments that filled the soul of Trevylyan. She thought too little of herself to know her danger, and those hours to her were hours of unmingled sweetness. Sometimes, indeed, the exhaustion of her disease tinged her spirits with a vague sadness, an abstraction came over, and a languor she vainly struggled against. These fits of dejection and gloom touched Trevylyan to the quick; his eye never ceased to watch them, nor his heart to soothe. Often when he marked them, he sought to attract her attention from what he fancied, though erringly, a sympathy with his own forebodings, and to lead her young and romantic imagination through the temporary beguilements of fiction; for Gertrude was yet in the first bloom of youth, and all the dews of beautiful childhood sparkled freshly from the virgin blossoms of her mind. And Trevylyan, who had passed some of his earlier years among the students of Leipzic, and was deeply versed in the various world of legendary lore, ransacked his memory for such tales as seemed to him most likely to win her interest; and often with false smiles entered into the playful tale, or oftener, with more playful interest, into the graver legend of trials that warned yet beguiled them from their own. Of such tales I have selected but a few; I know not that they are the least unworthy of repetition; they are those which many recollections induce me to repeat the most willingly. Gertrude loved these stories, for she had not yet lost, by the coldness of the world, one leaf from that soft and wild romance which belonged to her beautiful mind. And, more than all, she loved the sounds of a voice which every day became more and more musical to her ear. "Shall I tell you," said he, one morning, as he observed her gloomier mood stealing over the face of Gertrude, "shall I tell you, ere yet we pass into the dull land of Holland, a story of Malines, whose spires we shall shortly see?" Gertrude's face brightened at once, and, as she leaned back in the carriage as it whirled rapidly along, and fixed her deep blue eyes on Trevylyan, he began the following tale.

CHAPTER IV.

The Maid of Malines.

It was noonday in the town of Malines, or Mechlin, as the English usually term it; the Sabbath bell had summoned the inhabitants to divine worship; and the crowd that had loitered round the CHURCH OF ST. REMBAULD had gradually emptied itself within the spacious aisles of the sacred edifice.

A young man was standing in the street, with his eyes bent on the ground, and apparently listening for some sound; for, without raising his looks from the rude pavement, he turned to every corner of it with an intent and anxious expression of countenance; he held in one hand a staff, in the other a long slender cord, the end of which trailed on the ground; every now and then he called, with a plaintive voice, "Fido, Fido, come back! Why hast thou deserted me?" Fido returned not; the dog, wearied of confinement, had slipped from the string, and was at play with his kind in a distant quarter of the town, leaving the blind man to seek his way as he might to his solitary inn.

By and by a light step passed through the street, and the young stranger's face brightened —

"Pardon me," said he, turning to the spot where his quick ear had caught the sound, "and direct me, if you are not by chance much pressed for a few moments' time, to the hotel *Montier d'or*."

It was a young woman, whose dress betokened that she belonged to the middling classes of life, whom he thus addressed. "It is some distance hence, sir," said she; "but if you continue your way straight on for about a hundred yards, and then take the second turn to your right hand —"

"Alas!" interrupted the stranger, with a melancholy smile, "your direction will avail me little; my dog has deserted me, — and I am blind!"

There was something in these words, and in the stranger's voice, which went irresistibly to the heart of the young woman. "Pray forgive me," she said, almost with tears in her eyes, "I did not perceive your —" misfortune, she was about to say, but she checked herself with an instinctive delicacy. "Lean upon me, I will conduct you to the door; nay, sir," observing that he hesitated, "I have time enough to spare, I assure you."

The stranger placed his hand on the young woman's arm, and though Lucille was naturally so bashful that even her mother would laughingly reproach her for the excess of a maiden virtue, she felt not the least pang of shame, as she found herself thus suddenly walking through the streets of Malines alone with a young stranger, whose dress and air betokened him of rank superior to her own.

"Your voice is very gentle," said he, after a pause "and that," he added, with a slight sigh, "is the criterion by which I only know the young and the beautiful." Lucille now blushed, and with a slight mixture of pain in the blush, for she knew well that to beauty she had no pretension. "Are you a native of this town?" continued he. "Yes, sir; my father holds a small office in the customs, and my mother and I eke out his salary by making lace. We are called poor, but we do not feel it, sir."

"You are fortunate: there is no wealth like the heart's wealth, content," answered the blind man, mournfully.

"And monsieur," said Lucille, feeling angry with herself that she had awakened a natural envy in the stranger's mind, and anxious to change the subject, — "and monsieur, has he been long at Malines?"

"But yesterday. I am passing through the Low Countries on a tour; perhaps you smile at the tour of a blind man, — but it is wearisome even to the blind to rest always in the same place. I thought during church time, when the streets were empty, that I might, by the help of my dog, enjoy safely at least the air, if not the sight of the town; but there are some persons, methinks, who cannot even have a dog for a friend."

The blind man spoke bitterly, — the desertion of his dog had touched him to the core. Lucille wiped her eyes. "And does monsieur travel then alone?" said she; and looking at his face more attentively than she had yet ventured to do, she saw that he was scarcely above two-and-twenty. "His father, his *mother*," she added, with an emphasis on the last word, "are they not with him?"

"I am an orphan," answered the stranger; "and I have neither brother nor sister."

The desolate condition of the blind man quite melted Lucille; never had she been so strongly affected. She felt a strange flutter at the heart, — a secret and earnest sympathy, that attracted her at once toward him. She wished that heaven had suffered her to be his sister.

The contrast between the youth and the form of the stranger, and the affliction which took hope from the one, and activity from the other, increased the compassion he excited. His features were remarkably regular, and had a certain nobleness in their outline; and his frame was gracefully and firmly knit, though he moved cautiously and with no cheerful step.

They had now passed into a narrow street leading toward the hotel, when they heard behind them the clatter of hoofs; and Lucille, looking hastily back, saw that a troop of the Belgian horse was passing through the town.

She drew her charge close by the wall, and trembling with fear for him, she stationed herself by his side. The troop passed at a full trot through the street; and at the sound of their clanging arms, and the ringing hoofs of their heavy chargers, Lucille might have seen, had she looked at the blind man's face, that its sad features kindled with enthusiasm, and his head was raised proudly from its wonted and melancholy bend. "Thank heaven," she said, as the troop had nearly passed them, "the danger is over!" Not so. One of the last two soldiers who rode abreast, was unfortunately mounted on a young and unmanageable horse. The rider's oaths and digging spur only increased the fire and impatience of the charger; he plunged from side to side of the narrow street

"*Gardez vous*," cried the horseman, as he was borne on to the place where Lucille and the stranger stood against the wall; "are ye mad, — why do you not run?"

"For heaven's sake, for mercy's sake, he is blind!" cried Lucille, clinging to the stranger's side.

"Save yourself, my kind guide!" said the stranger. But Lucille dreamed not of such desertion. The trooper wrested the horse's head from the spot where they stood; with a snort, as he felt the spur, the enraged animal lashed out with its hind-legs; and Lucille, unable to save *both*, threw herself before the blind man, and received the shock directed against him; her slight and delicate arm fell shattered by her side, — the horseman was borne onward. "Thank God, *you* are saved!" was poor Lucille's exclamation; and she fell, overcome with pain and terror into the arms which the stranger mechanically opened to receive her.

"My guide, my friend!" cried he, "you are hurt, you—"

"No, sir," interrupted Lucille, faintly, "I am better,—I am well. *This* arm, if you please,—we are not far from your hotel now."

But the stranger's ear, tutored to every inflection of voice, told him at once of the pain she suffered; he drew from her by degrees the confession of the injury she had sustained; but the generous girl did not tell him it had been incurred solely in his protection. He now insisted on reversing their duties, and accompanying *her* to her home; and Lucille, almost fainting with pain, and hardly able to move, was forced to consent. But a few steps down the next turning stood the humble mansion of her father,—they reached it,—and Lucille scarcely crossed the threshold, before she sank down, and for some minutes was insensible to pain. It was left to the stranger to explain, and to beseech them immediately to send for a surgeon, "the most skilful,—the most practised in the town," said he. "See, I am rich, and this is the least I can do to atone to your generous daughter for not forsaking even a stranger in peril."

He held out his purse as he spoke, but the father refused the offer; and it saved the blind man some shame that he could not see the blush of honest resentment with which so poor a species of remuneration was put aside.

The young man stayed till the surgeon arrived, till the arm was set; nor did he depart until he had obtained a promise from the mother, that he should learn the next morning how the sufferer had passed the night.

The next morning, indeed, he had intended to quit a town that offers but little temptation to the traveller; but he tarried day after day, until Lucille herself accompanied her mother to assure him of her recovery.

You know, or at least I do, dearest Gertrude, that there *is* such a thing as love at the first meeting,—a secret, an unaccountable affinity between persons (strangers before) which draws them irresistibly together. If there were truth in Plato's beautiful fantasy, that our souls were a portion of the stars, it might be that spirits, thus attracted to each other, have drawn their original light from the same orb; and they thus but yearn for a renewal of their former union. Yet, without recurring to such ideal solutions of a daily mystery, it was but natural that one in the forlorn and desolate condition of Eugene St. Amand, should have felt a certain tenderness for a person who had so generously suffered for his sake.

The darkness to which he was condemned did not shut from his mind's eye the haunting images of ideal beauty; rather, on the contrary, in his perpetual and unoccupied solitude, he fed the reveries of an imagination naturally warm, and a heart eager for sympathy and commune.

He had said rightly that his only test of beauty was in the melody of voice; and never had a softer or a more thrilling tone than that of the young maiden touched upon his ear. Her exclamation, so beautifully denying self, so devoted in its charity, "Thank God, *you* are saved!" uttered, too, in the moment of her own suffering, rang constantly upon his soul, and he yielded, without precisely defining their nature, to vague and delicious sentiments, that his youth had never awakened to till then. And Lucille,—the very accident that had happened to her on his behalf, only deepened the interest she had already conceived for one who, in the first flush of youth, was thus cut off from the glad objects of life, and left to a night of years, desolate and alone. There is, to your beautiful and kindly sex, a perpetual and gushing *lovingness* to *protect*. This makes them the angels of sickness, the comforters of age, the fosterers of childhood; and this feeling, in Lucille peculiarly developed, had already inexpressibly linked her compassionate nature to the lot of the unfortunate traveller With ardent affections, and with thoughts beyond her station and her years, she was not without that modest vanity which made her painfully susceptible to her own deficiencies in beauty. Instinctively conscious of how deeply she herself could love, she believed it impossible that she could ever be so loved in return. This stranger, so superior in her eyes to all she had yet seen, was the first out of her own household who had ever addressed her in that voice which by tones, not words, speaks that admiration most dear to a woman's heart. To *him* she was beautiful, and her lovely mind spoke out undimmed by the imperfections of her face. Not, indeed, that Lucille was wholly without personal attraction; her light step and graceful form were elastic with the freshness of youth, and her mouth and smile had so gentle and tender an expression, that there were moments when it would not have been the blind only who would have mistaken her to be beautiful. Her early childhood had indeed given the promise of attractions, which the small-pox, that then fearful malady, had inexorably marred. It had not only seared the smooth skin and the brilliant hues, but utterly changed even the character of the features. It so happened that Lucille's family were celebrated for beauty, and vain of that celebrity; and so bitterly had her parents deplored the effects of the cruel malady, that poor Lucille had been early taught to consider them far more grievous than they really were, and to exaggerate the advantages of that beauty, the loss of which was considered by her parents so heavy a misfortune. Lucille, too, had a cousin named Julie, who was the wonder of all Malines for her personal perfections; and as the cousins were much together, the contrast was too striking not to occasion frequent mortification to Lucille. But every misfortune has something of a counterpoise; and the consciousness of personal inferiority had meekened, without souring, her temper, had given gentleness to a spirit that otherwise might have been too high, and humility to a mind that was naturally strong, impassioned, and energetic.

And yet Lucille had long conquered the one disadvantage she most dreaded in the want of beauty. Lucille was never known but to be loved. Wherever came her presence, her bright and soft mind diffused a certain inexpressible charm; and where she was not, a something was missing from the scene which not even Julie's beauty could replace.

"I propose," said St. Amand to Madame le Tisseur, Lucille's mother, as he sat in her little *salon*,—for he had already contracted that acquaintance with the family which permitted him to be led to their house, to return the visits Madame le Tisseur had made him, and his dog, once more returned a penitent to his master, always conducted his steps to the humble abode, and stopped instinctively at the door,—"I propose," said St. Amand, after a pause, and with some embarrassment, "to stay a little while longer at Malines; the air agrees with me, and I like the quiet of the place; but you are aware, madame, that at a hotel among strangers, I feel my situation somewhat cheerless. I have been thinking,"—St. Amand paused again,—"I have been thinking that if I could persuade some agreeable family to receive me as a lodger, I would fix myself here for some weeks. I am easily pleased."

"Doubtless there are many in Malines who would be too happy to receive such a lodger."

"Will you receive me?" said St. Amand, abruptly. "It was of your family I thought."

"Of us? Monsieur is too flattering, but we have scarcely a room good enough for you."

"What difference between one room and another can there be to me? That is the best apartment to my choice in which the human voice sounds most kindly."

The arrangement was made, and St. Amand came now to reside beneath the same roof as Lucille. And was she not happy that *he* wanted so constant an attendance? was she not happy that she was ever of use? St. Amand was passionately fond of music: he played himself with a skill that was only surpassed by the exquisite melody of his voice; and was not Lucille happy when she sat mute and listening to such sounds as at Malines were never heard before? Was she not happy in gazing on a face to whose melancholy aspect her voice instantly summoned the smile? Was she not happy when the music ceased and St. Amand called "Lucille?" Did not her own name uttered by that voice seem to her even sweeter than the music? Was she not happy when they walked out in the still evenings of summer, and her arm thrilled beneath the light touch of one to whom she was so necessary? Was she not proud in her happiness, and was there not something like worship in the gratitude she felt to him, for raising her humble spirit to the luxury of feeling herself loved?

St. Amand's parents were French; they had resided in the neighbourhood of Amiens, where they had inherited a competent property, to which he had succeeded about two years previous to the date of my story.

He had been blind from the age of three years. "I know not," said he, as he related these particulars to

Lucille one evening when they were alone; "I know not what the earth may be like, or the heaven, or the rivers whose voice at least I can hear, for I have no recollection beyond that of a confused, but delicious blending of a thousand glorious colors, — a bright and quick sense of joy, — A VISIBLE MUSIC. But it is only since my childhood closed that I have mourned, as I now unceasingly mourn, for the light of day. My boyhood passed in a quiet cheerfulness; the least trifle then could please and occupy the vacancies of my mind; but it was as I took delight in being read to, — as I listened to the vivid descriptions of poetry, as I glowed at the recital of great deeds, as I was made acquainted by books, with the energy, the action, the heat, the fervor, the pomp, the enthusiasm of life, that I gradually opened to the sense of all I was for ever denied. I felt that I existed, not lived; and that, in the midst of the universal liberty, I was sentenced to a prison, from whose blank walls there was no escape. Still, however, while my parents lived, I had something of consolation; at least I was not alone. They died, and a sudden and dread solitude, a vast and empty dreariness settled upon my dungeon. One old servant only, who had nursed me from my childhood, who had known me in my short privilege of light, by whose recollections my mind could grope back its way through the dark and narrow passages of memory to faint glimpses of the sun, was all that remained to me of human sympathies. It did not suffice, however, to content me with a home where my father and my mother's kind voice were *not*. A restless impatience, an anxiety to move, possessed me, and I set out from my home, journeying whither I cared not, so that at least I could change an air that weighed upon me like a palpable burden. I took only this old attendant as my companion; he too died three months since at Bruxelles, worn out with years. Alas! I had forgotten that he was old, for I saw not his progress to decay; and now, save my faithless dog, I was utterly alone, till I came hither and found *thee*."

Lucille stooped down to caress the dog; she blessed the desertion that had led to a friend who never could desert.

But however much, and however gratefully St. Amand loved Lucille, her power availed not to chase the melancholy from his brow, and to reconcile him to his forlorn condition.

"Ah, would that I could see thee! Would that I could look upon a face that my heart vainly endeavours to delineate."

"If thou couldst," sighed Lucille, "thou wouldst cease to love me."

"Impossible!" cried St. Amand, passionately; "however the world may find thee, *thou* wouldst become my standard of beauty, and I should judge not of thee by others, but of others by thee."

He loved to hear Lucille read to him, and mostly he loved the descriptions of war, of travel, of wild adventure, and yet they occasioned him the most pain. Often she paused from the page as she heard him sigh, and felt that she would even have renounced the bliss of being loved by him, if she could have restored to him that blessing, the desire for which haunted him as a spectre.

Lucille's family were Catholic, and, like most in their station, they possessed the superstitions, as well as the devotion of the faith. Sometimes they amused themselves of an evening by the various legends and imaginary miracles of their calendar: and once, as they were thus conversing with two or three of their neighbours, "The Tomb of the three Kings of Cologne" became the main topic of their wandering recitals. However strong was the sense of Lucille, she was, as you will readily conceive, naturally influenced by the belief of those with whom she had been brought up from her cradle, and she listened to tale after tale of the miracles wrought at the consecrated tomb, as earnestly and undoubtingly as the rest.

And the kings of the East were no ordinary saints; to the relics of the Three Magi, who followed the star of Bethlehem, and were the first potentates of the earth who adored its Saviour, well might the pious Catholic suppose that a peculiar power and a healing sanctity would belong. Each of the circle, — (St. Amand, who had been more than usually silent, and even gloomy during the day, had retired to his apartment, for there were some moments when, in the sadness of his thoughts, he sought that solitude which he so impatiently fled from at others,) — each of the circle had some story to relate, equally veracious and indisputable, of an infirmity cured, or a prayer accorded, or a sin atoned for at the foot of the holy tomb. One story peculiarly affected Lucille; the narrator, a venerable old man with gray locks, solemnly declared himself a witness of its truth.

A woman at Anvers had given birth to a son, the offspring of an illicit connexion, who came into the world deaf and dumb. The unfortunate mother believed the calamity a punishment for her own sin. "Ah! would," said she, "that the affliction had fallen only upon me! Wretch that I am, my innocent child is punished for my offence!" This idea haunted her night and day: she pined and could not be comforted. As the child grew up, and wound himself more and more round her heart, its caresses added new pangs to her remorse; and at length (continued the narrator) hearing perpetually of the holy fame of the tomb of Cologne, she resolved upon a pilgrimage barefoot to the shrine. "God is merciful," said she, "and He who called Magdalene his sister, may take the mother's curse from the child." She then went to Cologne; she poured her tears, her penitence, and her prayers at the sacred tomb. When she returned to her native town, what was her dismay as she approached her cottage to behold it a heap of ruins! — its blackened rafters and yawning casements betokened the ravages of fire. The poor woman sunk upon the ground utterly overpowered. Had her son perished? At that moment she heard the cry of a child's voice, and, lo! her child rushed to her arms, and called her "Mother!"

He had been saved from the fire, which had broken out seven days before; but in the terror he had suffered, the string that tied his tongue had been loosened; he had uttered articulate sounds of distress; the curse was removed, and one word at least the kind neighbours had already taught him, to welcome his mother's return. What cared she now that her substance was gone, that her roof was ashes? She bowed in grateful submission to so mild a stroke; her prayer had been heard, and the sin of the mother was visited no longer on her child.

I have said, dear Gertrude, that this story made a deep impression upon Lucille. A misfortune so nearly akin to that of St. Amand, removed by the prayer of another, filled her with devoted thoughts, and a beautiful hope. "Is not the tomb still standing?" thought she; "is not God still in heaven? — He who heard the guilty, may He not hear the guiltless? Is He not the God of love? Are not the affections, the offerings that please Him best? and what though the child's mediator was his mother, can even a mother love her child more tenderly than I love Eugene? But if, Lucille, thy prayer be granted, if he recover his sight, *thy* charm is gone, he will love thee no longer. No matter! be it so, — I shall at least have made him happy!"

Such were the thoughts that filled the mind of Lucille; she cherished them till they settled into resolution, and she secretly vowed to perform her pilgrimage of love. She told neither St. Amand nor her parents of her intention; she knew the obstacles such an annunciation would create. Fortunately she had an aunt settled at Bruxelles, to whom she had been accustomed, once in every year, to pay a month's visit, and at that time she generally took with her the work of a twelvemonth's industry, which found a readier sale at Bruxelles than Malines. Lucille and St. Amand were already betrothed; their wedding was shortly to take place; and the custom of the country leading parents, however poor, to nourish the honorable ambition of giving some dowry with their daughters, Lucille found it easy to hide the object of her departure, under the pretence of taking the lace to Bruxelles, which had been the year's labor of her mother and herself, — it would sell for sufficient, at least, to defray the preparations for the wedding.

"Thou art ever right, child," said Madame le Tisseur; "the richer St. Amand is, why the less oughtest thou to go a beggar to his house."

In fact, the honest ambition of the good people was excited; their pride had been hurt by the envy of the town and the current congratulations on so advantageous a marriage; and they employed themselves in counting up the fortune they should be able to give to their only child, and flattering their pardonable vanity with the notion that there would be no such great disproportion in the connexion after all. They were right, but not in their own view of the estimate; the wealth that Lucille brought was what fate could not lessen, — reverse could not reach, — the ungracious seasons could not blight its sweet harvest.

imprudence could not dissipate,— fraud could not steal one grain from its abundant coffers! Like the purse in the fairy tale, its use was hourly, its treasure inexhaustible.

St. Amand alone was not to be won to her departure; he chafed at the notion of a dowry: he was not appeased even by Lucille's representation, that it was only to gratify and not to impoverish her parents. "And *thou*, too, canst leave me!" he said, in that plaintive voice which had made his first charm to Lucille's heart. "It is a second blindness."

"But for a few days; a fortnight at most, dearest Eugene"

"A fortnight! you do not reckon time as the blind do," said St. Amand, bitterly.

"But listen, listen, dear Eugene," said Lucille, weeping. The sound of her sobs restored him to a sense of his ingratitude. Alas! he knew not how much he had to be grateful for. He held out his arms to her; "Forgive me," said he. "Those who can see Nature know not how terrible it is to be alone."

"But my mother will not leave you."

"She is not you!"

"And Julie," said Lucille, hesitatingly.

"What is Julie to me?"

"Ah, you are the only one, save my parents, who could think of me in her presence."

"And why, Lucille?"

"Why! She is more beautiful than a dream."

"Say not so. Would I could see, that I might prove to the world how much more beautiful thou art. There is no music in *her* voice."

The evening before Lucille departed, she sat up late with St. Amand and her mother. They conversed on the future; they made plans; in the wide sterility of the world they laid out the garden of household love, and filled it with flowers, forgetful of the wind that scatters, and the frost that kills. And when, leaning on Lucille's arm, St. Amand sought his chamber, and they parted at his door, which closed upon her, she fell down on her knees at the threshold, and poured out the fulness of her heart in a prayer for his safety, and the fulfilment of her timid hope.

At daybreak she was consigned to the conveyance that performed the short journey from Malines to Bruxelles. When she entered the town, instead of seeking her aunt, she rested at an auberge in the suburbs, and confiding her little basket of lace to the care of its hostess, she set out alone, and on foot, upon the errand of her heart's lovely superstition. And erring though it was, her faith redeemed its weakness,— her affection made it even sacred. And well may we believe, that the eye which reads all secrets scarce looked reprovingly on that fanaticism, whose only infirmity was love.

So fearful was she, lest, by rendering the task too easy, she might impair the effect, that she scarcely allowed herself rest or food. Sometimes, in the heat of noon, she wandered a little from the road-side, and under the spreading lime-tree surrendered her mind to its sweet and bitter thoughts; but ever the restlessness of her enterprise urged her on, and faint, weary, and with bleeding feet, she started up and continued her way. At length she reached the ancient city, where a holier age has scarce worn from the habits and aspects of men the Roman trace. She prostrated herself at the tomb of the Magi: she proffered her ardent but humble prayer to Him before whose Son those fleshless heads (yet to faith at least preserved) had, nearly eighteen centuries ago, bowed in adoration. Twice every day, for a whole week, she sought the same spot, and poured forth the same prayer. The last day an old priest, who, hovering in the church, had observed her constantly at devotion, with that fatherly interest which the better ministers of the Catholic sect (that sect which has covered the earth with the mansions of charity) feel for the unhappy, approached her as she was retiring with moist and downcast eyes, and saluting her, assumed the privilege of his order, to inquire if there was aught in which his advice or aid could serve. There was something in the venerable air of the old man which encouraged Lucille; she opened her heart to him; she told him all. The good priest was much moved by her simplicity and earnestness. He questioned her minutely as to the peculiar species of blindness with which St. Amand was afflicted; and after musing a little while, he said, "Daughter, God is great and merciful; we must trust in his power, but we must not forget that He mostly works by mortal agents. As you pass through Louvain in your way home, fail not to see there a certain physician, named Le Kain. He is celebrated through Flanders for the cures he has wrought among the blind and his advice is sought by all classes from far and near He lives hard by the Hôtel de Ville, but any one will inform you of his residence. Stay, my child, you shall take him a note from me; he is a benevolent and kindly man and you shall tell him exactly the same story (and with the same voice) you have told to me."

So saying the priest made Lucille accompany him to his home, and forcing her to refresh herself less sparingly than she had yet done since she had left Malines, he gave her his blessing, and a letter to Le Kain, which he rightly judged would insure her a patient hearing from the physician. Well known among all men of science was the name of the priest, and a word of recommendation from him went farther, where virtue and wisdom were honored, than the longest letter from the haughtiest sieur in Flanders

With a patient and hopeful spirit, the young pilgrim turned her back on the Roman Cologne, and now about to rejoin St. Amand, she felt neither the heat of the sun nor the weariness of the road. It was one day at noon that she again passed through Louvain, and she soon found herself by the noble edifice of the Hôtel de Ville. Proud rose its Gothic spires against the sky, and the sun shone bright on its rich tracery and Gothic casements; the broad open street was crowded with persons of all classes, and it was with some modest alarm that Lucille lowered her veil and mingled with the throng. It was easy, as the priest had said, to find the house of Le Kain; she bade the servant take the priest's letter to his master, and she was not long kept waiting before she was admitted to the physician's presence. He was a spare, tall man, with a bald front, and a calm and friendly countenance. He was not less touched than the priest had been by the manner in which she narrated her story, described the affliction of her betrothed, and the hope that had inspired the pilgrimage she had just made.

"Well," said he, encouragingly, "we must see our patient. You can bring him hither to me."

"Ah, sir, I had hoped—" Lucille stopped suddenly.

"What, my young friend?"

"That I might have had the triumph of bringing you to Malines. I know, sir, what you are about to say; and I know, sir, your time must be very valuable; but I am not so poor as I seem, and Eugene, that is Monsieur St. Amand, is very rich, and,—and I have at Bruxelles what I am sure is a large sum; it was to have provided for the wedding, but it is most heartily at your service, sir."

Le Kain smiled; he was one of those men who love to read the human heart when its leaves are fair and undefiled; and, in the benevolence of science, he would have gone a longer journey than from Louvain to Malines to give sight to the blind, even had St. Amand been a beggar

"Well, well," said he, "but you forget that Monsieur St. Amand is not the only one in the world who wants me I must look at my note-book, and see if I can be spared for a day or two."

So saying he glanced at his memoranda; every thing smiled on Lucille: he had no engagements that his partner could not fulfil, for some days; he consented to accompany Lucille to Malines.

Meanwhile, cheerless and dull had passed the time to St. Amand; he was perpetually asking Madame le Tisseur what hour it was; it was almost his only question. There seemed to him no sun in the heavens, no freshness in the air, and he even forbore his favorite music; the instrument had lost its sweetness since Lucille was not by to listen.

It was natural that the gossips of Malines should feel some envy at the marriage Lucille was about to make with one whose competence report had exaggerated into prodigal wealth, whose birth had been elevated from the respectable to the noble, and whose handsome person was clothed, by the interest excited by his misfortune, with the beauty of Antinoüs. Even that misfortune, which ought to have levelled all distinctions, was not sufficient to check the general envy; perhaps to some of the dames of Malines blindness in a husband was indeed not the least agreeable of all qualifications! But there was one in whom this envy rankled with a peculiar sting; it was the beautiful, the all-conquering Julie. That the humble, the neglected Lucille should be preferred to her, that Lucille, whose existence was wellnigh forgot beside Julie's, should become thus suddenly of importance; that there should be one person in the world, and that person young, rich, handsome, to whom she was less than nothing, when weighed in the balance with Lucille, mortified to the quick a vanity that had never till then received a wound. "It is well," she would say, with a bitter jest, "that Lucille's lover is blind. To be the one, it is necessary to be the other!"

During Lucille's absence she had been constantly in Madame le Tisseur's house, — indeed Lucille had prayed her to be so. She had sought, with an industry that astonished herself, to supply Lucille's place, and, among the strange contradictions of human nature, she had learned, during her efforts to please, to love the object of those efforts, — as much at least as she was capable of loving.

She conceived a positive hatred to Lucille; she persisted in imagining that nothing but the accident of first acquaintance had deprived her of a conquest with which she persuaded herself her happiness had become connected. Had St. Amand never loved Lucille, and proposed to Julie, his misfortune would have made her reject him, despite his wealth and his youth; but to be Lucille's lover, and a conquest to be won from Lucille, raised him instantly to an importance not his own. Safe, however in his affliction, the arts and beauty of Julie fell harmless on the fidelity of St. Amand. Nay, he liked her less than ever, for it seemed an impertinence in any one to counterfeit the anxiety and watchfulness of Lucille.

"It is time, surely it is time, Madame le Tisseur, that Lucille should return. She might have sold all the lace in Malines by this time," said St. Amand one day, peevishly.

"Patience, my dear friend; patience, perhaps she may return to-morrow."

"To-morrow! let me see, it is only six o'clock; only six, you are sure?"

"Just five, dear Eugene, shall I read to you? This is a new book from Paris, it has made a great noise," said Julie.

"You are very kind, but I will not trouble you."

"It is any thing but trouble."

"In a word, then, I would rather not."

"Oh! that he could see!" thought Julie; "would I not punish him for this?"

"I hear carriage-wheels; who can be passing this way? Surely it is the voiturier from Bruxelles," said St. Amand, starting up, "it is his day, his hour, too. No, no, it is a lighter vehicle," and he sank down listlessly on his seat.

Nearer and nearer rolled the wheels; they turned the corner; they stopped at the lowly door; and, — overcome, — overjoyed, Lucille was clasped to the bosom of Amand.

"Stay," said she, blushing, as she recovered her self-possession, and turned to Le Kain, "pray pardon me, sir. Dear Eugene, I have brought with me one who, by God's blessing, may yet restore you to sight."

"We must not be sanguine, my child," said Le Kain; "any thing is better than disappointment."

To close this part of my story, dear Gertrude, Le Kain examined St. Amand, and the result of the examination was a confident belief in the probability of a cure. St. Amand gladly consented to the experiment of an operation; it succeeded, — the blind man saw! Oh! what were Lucille's feelings, what her emotion, what her joy, when she found the object of her pilgrimage, — of her prayers, fulfilled! That joy was so intense, that in the eternal alternations of human life she might have foretold from its excess how bitter the sorrows fated to ensue.

As soon as by degrees the patient's new sense became reconciled to the light, his first, his only demand was for Lucille. "No, let me not see her alone, let me see her in the midst of you all, that I may convince you that the heart never is mistaken in its instincts." With a fearful, a sinking presentiment, Lucille yielded to the request to which the impetuous St. Amand would hear indeed no denial. The father, the mother, Julie, Lucille, Julie's younger sisters assembled in the little parlour; the door opened, and St. Amand stood hesitating on the threshold. One look around sufficed to him; his face brightened, he uttered a cry of joy. "Lucille! Lucille!" he exclaimed, "it is you, I know it, *you* only!" He sprang forward, *and fell at the feet of Julie!*

Flushed, elated, triumphant, Julie bent upon him her sparkling eyes; *she* did not undeceive him.

"You are wrong, you mistake," said Madame le Tisseur, in confusion; "that is her cousin Julie, this is you Lucille."

St. Amand rose, turned, saw Lucille, and at that moment she wished herself in her grave. Surprise, mortification, disappointment, almost dismay, were depicted in his gaze. He had been haunting his prison-house with dreams, and, now set free, he felt how unlike they were to the truth. Too new to observation to read the woe, the despair, the lapse and shrinking of the whole frame, that his look occasioned Lucille, he yet felt, when the first shock of his surprise was over, that it was not thus he should thank her who had restored him to sight. He hastened to redeem his error; ah! how could it be redeemed?

From that hour all Lucille's happiness was at an end; her fairy palace was shattered in the dust; the magician's wand was broken up; the Ariel was given to the winds; and the bright enchantment no longer distinguished the land she lived in from the rest of the barren world. It was true that St. Amand's words were kind; it is true that he remembered with the deepest gratitude all she had done in his behalf; it is true that he forced himself again and again to say, "She is my betrothed, — my benefactress!" and he cursed himself to think that the feelings he had entertained for her were fled. Where was the passion of his words? where the ardor of his tone? where that play and light of countenance which her step, *her* voice could formerly call forth? When they were alone he was embarrassed and constrained, and almost cold; his hand no longer sought hers; his soul no longer missed her if she was absent a moment from his side. When in their household circle, he seemed visibly more at ease; but did his eyes fasten upon her who had opened them to the day? did they not wander at every interval with a too eloquent admiration to the blushing and radiant face of the exulting Julie? This was not, you will believe, suddenly perceptible in one day or one week, but every day it was perceptible more and more. Yet still, — bewitched, ensnared as St. Amand was, — he never perhaps would have been guilty of an infidelity that he strove with the keenest remorse to wrestle against, had it not been for the fatal contrast, at the first moment of his gushing enthusiasm, which Julie had presented to Lucille; but for that he would have formed no previous idea of real and living beauty to aid the disappointment of his imaginings and his dreams. He would have seen Lucille young and graceful, and with eyes beaming affection, contrasted only by the wrinkled countenance and bended frame of her parents, and she would have completed her conquest over him before he had discovered that she was less beautiful than others; nay, more, — that infidelity never could have lasted above the first few days, if the vain and heartless object of it had not exerted every art, all the power and witchery of her beauty, to cement and continue it. The unfortunate Lucille, — so susceptible to the slightest change in those she loved, so diffident of herself, so proud too in that diffidence, — no longer necessary, no longer missed, no longer loved, — could not bear to endure the galling comparison of the past and present. She fled uncomplainingly to her chamber to indulge her tears, and thus, unhappily, absent as her father generally was during the day, and busied as her mother was either at work or in household matters, she left Julie a thousand opportunities to complete the power she had begun to wield over, — no, not the heart! — the *senses* of St. Amand! Yet, still not suspecting, in the open generosity of her mind, the whole extent of her affliction, poor Lucille buoyed herself at times with the hope that when once married, when once in that intimacy of friendship, the unspeakable love she felt for him could disclose itself with less restraint than at present, — she should perhaps regain a heart which had been so devotedly hers, that she could not think that without a fault it was irrevocably gone; on that hope she anchored all the little happiness that remained to her. And still St. Amand pressed their marriage, but in what different tones! In fact, he wished to preclude from himself the possibility of a deeper ingratitude than that which he had incurred already. He vainly thought that the broken reed of love might be bound up and strengthened by the ties of duty; and at least he was anxious that his hand, his fortune, his esteem, his gratitude, should give to Lucille the only recompense it was now in his power to bestow. Mean while, left alone so often with Julie, and Julie bent on achieving the last triumph over his heart, St Amand was gradually preparing a far different reward, a far different return for her to whom he owed so incalculable a debt.

There was a garden behind the house, in which there was a small arbour, where often in the summer evenings Eugene and Lucille had sat together, — hours never to return! One day she heard from her own chamber, where she sat mourning, the sound of St. Amand's flute swelling gently from that beloved and consecrated bower. She wept as she heard it, and the memories that the music bore softening and endearing his image, she began to reproach herself that she had yielded so often to the impulse of her wounded feelings; that, chilled by *his* coldness, she had left him so often to himself, and had not sufficiently dared to tell him of that affection which, in her modest self-depreciation, constituted her only pretension to his love. "Perhaps he is alone now," she thought; "the tune too is one which he knew that I loved:" and with her heart on her step, she stole from the house and sought the arbour. She had scarce turned from her chamber when the flute ceased; as she neared the arbour she heard voices, — Julie's voice in grief, St. Amand's in consolation. A dread foreboding seized her; her feet clung rooted to the earth.

"Yes, marry her, — forget me," said Julie; "in a few days you will be another's, and I, I, — forgive me, Eugene, forgive me that I have disturbed your happiness. I am punished sufficiently, — my heart will break, but it will break loving you," — sobs choked Julie's voice.

"Oh, speak not thus," said St. Amand. "I, — *I* only am to blame; I, false to both, to both ungrateful. Oh, from the hour that these eyes opened upon you I drank in a new life; the sun itself to me was less wonderful than your beauty. But, — but, — let me forget that hour. What do I not owe to Lucille? I shall be wretched, — I shall deserve to be so; for shall I not think, Julie, that I have imbittered your life with our ill-fated love? But all that I can give, — my hand, — my home, — my plighted faith, — must be hers. Nay, Julie, nay, — why that look? could I act otherwise? can I dream otherwise? Whatever the sacrifice, *must* I not render it? Ah, what do I owe to Lucille, were it only for the thought that but for her I might never have seen thee!"

Lucille stayed to hear no more; with the same soft step as that which had borne her within hearing of these fatal words, she turned back once more to her desolate chamber.

That evening, as St. Amand was sitting alone in his apartment, he heard a gentle knock at the door. "Come in," he said, and Lucille entered. He started, in some confusion, and would have taken her hand, but she gently repulsed him. She took a seat opposite to him, and looking down, thus addressed him: —

"My dear Eugene, that is, Monsieur St. Amand, I have something on my mind that I think it better to speak at once; and if I do not exactly express what I would wish to say, you must not be offended at Lucille; it is not an easy matter to put into words what one feels deeply." Coloring, and suspecting something of the truth, St. Amand would have broken in upon her here; but she, with a gentle impatience, waved him to be silent, and continued: —

"You know that when you once loved me, I used to tell you that you would cease to do so, could you see how undeserving I was of your attachment. I did not deceive myself, Eugene; I always felt assured that such would be the case, that your love for me necessarily rested on your affliction: but, for all that, I never at least had a dream, or a desire, but for your happiness; and God knows, that if again, by walking barefooted, not to Cologne, but to Rome, — to the end of the world, I could save you from a much less misfortune than that of blindness, I would cheerfully do it; yes, even though I might foretell all the while that, on my return, you would speak to me coldly, think of me lightly, and that the penalty to me would — would be — what it has been." Here Lucille wiped a few natural tears from her eyes; St. Amand, struck to the heart, covered his face with his hands, without the courage to interrupt her. Lucille continued: —

"That which I foresaw has come to pass; I am no longer to you what I once was, when you could clothe this poor form and this homely face with a beauty they did not possess; you would wed me still, it is true; but I am proud, Eugene, and cannot stoop to gratitude where I once had love. I am not so unjust as to blame you; the change was natural, was inevitable. I should have steeled myself more against it; but I am now resigned. We must part: you love Julie, — that too is natural, — and *she* loves you; ah! what also more probable in the course of events? Julie loves you not yet, perhaps, so much as I did, but then she has not known you as I have, and she, whose whole life has been triumph cannot feel the gratitude I felt at fancying myself loved; but this will come; God grant it! Farewell, then, for ever, dear Eugene; I leave you when you no longer want me; you are now independent of Lucille; wherever you go, a thousand hereafter can supply my place; — farewell!"

She rose, as she said this, to leave the room; but St. Amand, seizing her hand, which she in vain endeavoured to withdraw from his clasp, poured forth incoherently, passionately, his reproaches on himself, his eloquent persuasions against her resolution.

"I confess," said he, "that I have been allured for a moment; I confess that Julie's beauty made me less sensible to your stronger, your holier, oh! far, far holier title to my love! But forgive me, dearest Lucille; already I return to you, to all I once felt for you; make me not curse the blessing of sight that I owe to you. You must not leave me; never can we two part; try me, only try me, and if ever, hereafter, my heart wander from you, *then*, Lucille, leave me to my remorse!"

Even at that moment Lucille did not yield; she felt that his prayer was but the enthusiasm of the hour; she felt that there was a virtue in her pride; that to leave him was a duty to herself. In vain he pleaded; in vain were his embraces, his prayers; in vain he reminded her of her plighted truth, of her aged parents, whose happiness had become wrapped in her union with him; "How, even were it as you wrongly believe, how in honor to them can I desert you, can I wed another?"

"Trust that, trust all to me," answered Lucille; "your honor shall be my care, none shall blame *you;* only do not let your marriage with Julie be celebrated here before their eyes; that is all I ask, all they can expect. God bless you! Do not fancy I shall be unhappy; for whatever happiness the world gives you, shall I not have contributed to bestow it? — and with that thought I am above compassion"

She glided from his arms, and left him to a solitude more bitter even than that of blindness; that very night Lucille sought her mother; to her she confided all. I pass over the reasons she urged, the arguments she overcame; she conquered rather than convinced, and leaving to Madame le Tisseur the painful task of breaking to her father her unalterable resolution, she quitted Malines the next morning, and with a heart too honest to be utterly without comfort, paid that visit to her aunt which had been so long deferred.

The pride of Lucille's parents prevented them from reproaching St. Amand. He did not bear, however, their cold and altered looks; he left their house; and though for several days he would not even see Julie, yet her beauty and her art gradually resumed their empire over him. They were married at Courtroi, and, to the joy of the vain Julie, departed to the gay metropolis of France. But before their departure, before his marriage, St. Amand endeavoured to appease his conscience, by purchasing for Monsieur le Tisseur, a much more lucrative and honorable office than that he now held. Rightly judging that Malines could no longer be a pleasant residence for them, and much less for Lucille, the duties of the post were to be fulfilled in another town; and knowing that Monsieur le Tisseur's delicacy would revolt at receiving such a favor from his hands, he kept the nature of his negotiation a close secret, and suffered the honest citizen to believe that his own merits alone had entitled him to so unexpected a promotion.

Time went on. This quiet and simple history of humble affections took its date in a stormy epoch of the world, — the dawning revolution of France. The family of Lucille had been little more than a year settled in their new residence, when Dumouriez led his army into the Netherlands. But how meanwhile had that year passed for Lucille? I have said that her spirit was naturally high; that, though so tender, she was not weak; her very pilgrimage to Cologne alone, and at the timid age of seventeen, proved that there was a strength in her nature no less than a devotion in her love. The sacrifice she had made brought its own reward. She believed St. Amand was happy, and she would not give way to the selfishness of grief; she had still duties to perform; she could still comfort her parents, and cheer their age; she could still be all the world to them; she felt this, and was consoled. Only once during the year had she heard of Julie; she had been seen by a mutual friend at Paris, gay, brilliant, courted, and admired; of St. Amand she heard nothing.

My tale, dear Gertrude, does not lead me through the harsh scenes of war. I do not tell you of the slaughter and the siege, and the blood that inundated those fair lands, the great battle-field of Europe. The people of the Netherlands in general were with the cause of Dumouriez, but the town in which Le Tisseur dwelt offered some faint resistance to his arms. Le Tisseur himself, despite his age, girded on his sword; the town was carried, and the fierce and licentious troops of the conqueror poured, flushed with their easy victory, through its streets. Le Tisseur's house was filled with drunken and rude troopers; Lucille herself trembled in the fierce gripe of one of those dissolute soldiers, more bandit than soldier, whom the subtle Dumouriez had united to his army, and by whose blood he so often saved that of his nobler band; her shrieks, her cries were vain, when suddenly the reeking troopers gave way; "the captain! brave captain!" was shouted forth; the insolent soldier, felled by a powerful arm, sank senseless at the feet of Lucille; and a glorious form, towering above its fellows, even through its glittering garb, even in that dreadful hour remembered at a glance by Lucille, stood at her side; her protector, — her guardian! — thus once more she beheld St. Amand!

The house was cleared in an instant, — the door barred. Shouts, groans, wild snatches of exulting song; the clang of arms, the tramp of horses, the hurrying footsteps, the deep music, sounded loud and blended terribly without; Lucille heard them not, — she was on that breast which never should have deserted her.

Effectually to protect his friends, St. Amand took up his quarters at their house; and for two days he was once more under the same roof as Lucille. He never recurred voluntarily to Julie; he answered Lucille's timid inquiry after her health briefly, and with coldness, but he spoke with all the enthusiasm of a long-pent and ardent spirit, of the new profession he had embraced. Glory seemed now to be his only mistress, and the vivid delusion of the first bright dreams of the revolution filled his mind, broke from his tongue, and lighted up those dark eyes which Lucille had redeemed to day.

She saw him depart at the head of his troop; she saw his proud crest glancing in the sun; she saw his steed winding through the narrow street; she saw that his last glance reverted to her, where she stood at the door; and as he waved his adieu, she fancied that there was on his face that look of deep and grateful tenderness which reminded her of the one bright epoch of her life.

She was right; St. Amand had long since in bitterness repented of a transient infatuation, had long since discovered the true Florimel from the false, and felt that, in Julie, Lucille's wrongs were avenged. But in the hurry and heat of war he plunged that regret, — the keenest of all, — which imbodies the bitter words, "TOO LATE!"

Years passed away, and in the resumed tranquillity of Lucille's life the brilliant apparition of St. Amand appeared as something dreamed of, not seen. The star of Napoleon had risen above the horizon; the romance of his early career had commenced; and the campaign of Egypt had been the herald of those brilliant and meteoric successes which flashed forth from the gloom of the revolution of France.

You are aware, dear Gertrude, how many in the French as well as the English troops returned home from Egypt, blinded with the ophthalmia of that arid soil. Some of the young men in Lucille's town, who had joined Napoleon's army, came back, darkened by that fearful affliction, and Lucille's alms, and Lucille's aid, and Lucille's sweet voice were ever at hand for those poor sufferers, whose common misfortune touched so thrilling a chord of her heart.

Her father was now dead, and she had only her mother to cheer amid the ills of age. As one evening they sat at work together, Madame le Tisseur said, after a pause —

"I wish, dear Lucille, thou couldst be persuaded to marry Justin; he loves thee well, and now that thou art yet young, and hast many years before thee, thou shouldst remember that when I die thou wilt be alone."

"Ah, cease, dearest mother! I never can marry now; and as for love, — once taught in the bitter school in which I have learned the knowledge of myself, — I cannot be deceived again."

"My Lucille, you do not know yourself; never was woman loved, if Justin does not love you; and never did lover feel with more real warmth how worthily he loved."

And this was true; and not of Justin alone, for Lucille's modest virtues, her kindly temper, and a certain undulating and feminine grace, which accompanied all her movements, had secured her as many conquests as if she had been beautiful. She had rejected all offers of marriage with a shudder; without even the throb of a flattered vanity. One memory, sadder, was also dearer to her than all things; and something sacred in its recollections made her deem it even a crime to think of effacing the past by a new affection.

"I believe," continued Madame le Tisseur, angrily, "that thou still thinkest fondly of him from whom only in the world thou couldst have experienced ingratitude."

"Nay, mother," said Lucille, with a blush and a slight sigh, "Eugene is married to another."

While thus conversing, they heard a gentle and timid knock at the door, — the latch was lifted. "This," said the rough voice of a commissaire of the town, — "this, monsieur, is the house of *Madame le Tisseur*, and, — *voila mademoiselle!*" A tall figure, with a shade over his eyes, and wrapped in a long military cloak, stood in the room. A thrill shot across Lucille's heart. He stretched out his arms; "Lucille," said that melancholy voice, which had made the music of her first youth, — "where art thou, Lucille? Alas! she does not recognise St. Amand."

Thus was it, indeed. By a singular fatality, the burning suns and the sharp dust of the plains of Egypt had smitten the young soldier, in the flush of his career, with a second, — and this time, with an irremediable, — blindness! He had returned to France to find his hearth lonely: Julie was no more, — a sudden fever had cut her off in the midst of youth; and he had sought his way to Lucille's house, to see if one hope yet remained to him in the world!

And when, days afterward, humbly and sadly he reurged a former suit, did Lucille shut her heart to its prayer? Did her pride remember its wound, — did she revert to his desertion, did she say to the whisper of her yearning love, — "*Thou hast been before forsaken?*" That voice and those darkened eyes pleaded to her with a pathos not to be resisted; "I am once more necessary to him," was all her thought; "if I reject him, who will tend him?" In that thought was the motive of her conduct; in that thought gushed back upon her soul all the springs of checked, but unconquered, unconquerable love! In that thought she stood beside him at the altar, and pledged, with a yet holier devotion than she might have felt of yore, the vow of her imperishable truth.

And Lucille found, in the future, a reward which the common world could never comprehend. With his blindness returned all the feelings she had first awakened in St. Amand's solitary heart; again he yearned for her step, — again he missed even a moment's absence from his side, — again her voice chased the shadow from his brow, — and in her presence was a sense of shelter and of sunshine. He no longer sighed for the blessing he had lost; he reconciled himself to fate, and entered into that serenity of mood which mostly characterizes the blind. Perhaps, after we have seen the actual world, and experienced its hollow pleasures, we can resign ourselves the better to its exclusion; and as the cloister which repels the ardor of our hope is sweet to our remembrance, so the darkness loses its terror when experience has wearied us with the glare and travail of the day. It was something, too, as they advanced in life, to feel the chains that bound him to Lucille strengthening daily, and to cherish in his overflowing heart the sweetness of increasing gratitude; it was something that he could not see years wrinkle that open brow, or dim the tenderness of that touching smile; it was something that to him she was beyond the reach of time, and preserved to the verge of a grave, (which received them both within a few days of each other,) in all the bloom of her unwithering affection, — in all the freshness of a heart that never could grow old!

Gertrude, who had broken in upon Trevylyan's story by a thousand anxious interruptions, and a thousand pretty apologies for interrupting, was charmed with a tale in which true love was made happy at last, although she did not forgive St. Amand his ingratitude, and although she declared, with a critical shake of the head, that "it was very unnatural that the mere beauty of Julie, or the mere want of it in Lucille, should have produced such an effect upon him, if he had ever *really* loved Lucille in his blindness."

As they passed through Malines, the town assumed an interest in Gertrude's eyes to which it scarcely of itself was entitled. She looked wistfully at the broad market-place; at a corner of which was one of those out-of-door groups of quiet and noiseless revellers which Dutch art has raised from the familiar to the picturesque; and then glancing to the tower of St. Rembauld, she fancied, amid the silence of noon, that she yet heard the plaintive cry of the blind orphan, — "Fido, Fido, why hast thou deserted me?"

CHAPTER V.

Rotterdam. — The character of the Dutch. — Their resemblance to the Germans. — A dispute between Vane and Trevylyan, after the manner of the ancient novelists, as to which is preferable, the life of action or the life of repose. — Trevylyan's contrast between literary ambition and the ambition of public life. — A chapter to be forgiven only by those who find Rasselas amusing.

OUR travellers arrived at Rotterdam on a bright and sunny day. There is a cheerfulness about the operations of commerce, — a life, — a bustle, — an action which always exhilarates the spirits at the first glance. Afterward they fatigue us; we get too soon behind the scenes, and find the base and troublous passions which move the puppets and conduct the drama.

But Gertrude, in whom ill health had not destroyed the vividness of impression that belongs to the inexperienced, was delighted at the cheeriness of all around her. As she leaned lightly on Trevylyan's arm, he listened with a forgetful joy to her questions and exclamations at the stir and liveliness of a city from which was to commence their pilgrimage along the Rhine. And indeed the scene was rife with the spirit of that people at once so active and so patient, — so daring on the sea, — so cautious on the land. Industry was visible everywhere; the vessels in the harbour, — the crowded boat, putting off to land, — the throng on the quay, all looked bustling and spoke of commerce. The city itself, on which the skies shone fairly through light and fleecy clouds, wore a cheerful aspect. The church of St. Lawrence rising above the clean, neat houses, and on one side trees thickly grouped, gayly contrasted at once the waters and the city.

"I like this place," said Gertrude's father, quietly, "it has an air of comfort."

"And an absence of grandeur," said Trevylyan.

"A commercial people are one great middle class in their habits and train of mind," replied Vane; "and grandeur belongs to the extremes, — an impoverished people, and a wealthy despot."

They went to see the statue of Erasmus, and the house in which he was born. Vane had a certain admiration for Erasmus which his companions did not share; he liked the quiet irony of the sage, and his knowledge of the world; and, besides, Vane was of that time of life when philosophers become objects of interest. At first they are teachers, secondly friends; and it is only a few who arrive at the third stage, and find them deceivers. The Dutch are a singular people; their literature is neglected, but it has some of the German vein in its strata, — the patience, the learning, the homely delineation, and even some traces of the mixture of the humorous and the terrible, which form that genius for the grotesque so markedly German, — you find this in their legions and ghost stories. But in Holland activity destroys, in Germany indolence nourishes, romance.

They stayed a day or two at Rotterdam, and then proceeded up the Rhine to Gorcum. The banks were flat and tame, and nothing could be less impressive of its native majesty than this part of the course of the great river.

"I never felt before," whispered Gertrude, tenderly, "how much there was of consolation in your presence, for here I am at last on the Rhine, — the blue Rhine, and how disappointed I should be if you were not by my side."

"But, my Gertrude, you must wait till we have passed Cologne, before *the glories* of the Rhine burst upon you."

"It reverses life, my child," said the moralizing Vane, "and the stream flows through dulness at first, reserving its poetry for our perseverance."

"I will not allow your doctrine, said Trevylyan, as the ambitious ardor of his native disposition stirred within him "Life has always action; it is our own fault if it ever be dull; youth has its enterprise, manhood its schemes; and even if infirmity creep upon age, the mind, the mind still triumphs over the mortal clay, and in the quiet hermitage, among books, and from thoughts, keeps the great wheel within everlastingly in motion. No, the better class of spirits have always an antidote to the insipidity of a common career; they have ever energy at will — "

"And never happiness!" answered Vane, after a pause, as he gazed on the proud countenance of Trevylyan, with that kind of calm, half-pitying interest which belonged to a character deeply imbued with the philosophy of a sad experience, acting upon an unimpassioned heart: "and in truth, Trevylyan, it would please me if I could but teach you the folly of preferring the exercise of that energy of which you speak, to the golden luxury of REST. What ambition can ever bring an adequate reward? Not surely the ambition of letters,—the desire of intellectual renown."

"True," said Trevylyan, quietly; "that dream I have long renounced; there is nothing palpable in literary fame, — it scarcely soothes the vain, perhaps, — it assuredly chafes the proud. In my earlier years I attempted some works, which gained what the world, perhaps rightly, deemed a sufficient meed of reputation; yet was it not sufficient to recompense myself for the fresh hours I had consumed, for the sacrifices of pleasure I had made. The subtle aims that had inspired me were not perceived; the thoughts that had seemed new and beautiful to me fell flat and lustreless on the soul of others; if I was approved, it was often for what I condemned myself; and I found that the trite commonplace and the false wit charmed, while the truth fatigued, and the enthusiasm revolted. For men of that genius to which I make no pretension, who have dwelt apart in the obscurity of their own thoughts, gazing upon stars that shine not for the dull sleepers of the world, it must be a keen sting to find the product of their labor confounded with a class, and to be mingled up in men's judgment with the faults or merits of a tribe. Every great genius must deem himself original and alone in his conceptions; it is not enough for him that these conceptions should be approved as good, unless they are admitted as inventive, if they mix him with the herd he has shunned, not separate him in fame as he has been separated in soul Some Frenchman, the oracle of his circle, said of the poet of the Phèdre, 'Racine and the other imitators of Corneille;' and Racine, in his wrath, nearly forswore tragedy for ever. It is in vain to tell the author that the public is the judge of his works. The author believes himself above the public, or he would never have written, and," continued Trevylyan, with enthusiasm, "he *is* above them; their fiat may crush his glory, but never his self-esteem. He stands alone and haughty amid the wrecks of the temple he imagined he had raised 'TO THE FUTURE,' and retaliates neglect with scorn. But is this, the life of scorn, a pleasurable state of existence? Is it one to be cherished? Does even the moment of fame counterbalance the years of mortification? And what is there in literary fame itself present and palpable to its heir? His work is a pebble thrown into the deep; the stir lasts for a moment, and the wave closes up, to be susceptible no more to the same impression. The circle may widen to other lands and other ages, but around *him* it is weak and faint. The trifles of the day, the low politics, the base intrigues, occupy the tongue, and fill the thought of his cotemporaries; he is less rarely conversed of than a mountebank, or a new dancer; his glory comes not home to him; it brings no present, no perpetual reward, like the applauses that wait the actor, or the actor like mummer of the senate; and this which vexes, also lowers him; his noble nature begins to nourish the base vices of jealousy, and the unwillingness to admire. Goldsmith is forgotten in the presence of a puppet; he feels it, and is mean; he expresses it, and is ludicrous. It is well to say that great minds will not stoop to jealousy; in the greatest minds it is most frequent.* Few authors are ever so aware of the admiration they excite, as to afford to be generous; and this melancholy truth revolts us with our own ambition. Shall we be demigods in our closet, at the price of sinking below mortality in the world? No! it was from this deep sentiment of the unrealness of literary fame, of dissatisfaction at the fruits it produced, of fear for the meanness it engendered, that I resigned betimes all love for its career; and if by the restless desire that haunts men who think much, to write ever, I should be urged hereafter to literature, I will sternly teach myself to persevere in the indifference to its fame."

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* See the long list of names furnished by D'Israeli, in that most exquisite work, "The Literary Character," vol. ii. p. 75. Plato, Xenophon, Chaucer, Corneille, Voltaire, Dryden, the Caracci, Domenico, Venetiano, murdered by his envious friend.

"You say as I would say," answered Vane, with his tranquil smile; "and your experience corroborates my theory Ambition then is not the root of happiness. Why more in action than in letters?"

"Because," said Trevylyan, "in action we commonly gain in our life all the honor we deserve: the public judge of men better and more rapidly than of books. And he who takes to himself in action a high and pure ambition, associates it with so many objects, that, unlike literature, the failure of one is balanced by the success of the other. He, the creator of deeds, not resembling the creator of books, stands not alone; he is eminently social; he has many comrades, and without their aid he could not accomplish his design. This divides and mitigates the impatient jealousy against others. He works for a cause, and knows early that he cannot monopolize its whole glory; he shares what he is aware it is impossible to engross. Besides, action leaves him no time for brooding over disappointment. The author has consumed his youth in a work,—it fails in glory Can he write another work? Bid him call back another youth! But in action the labor of the mind is from day to day. A week replaces what a week has lost, and all the aspirant's fame is of the present. It is lipped by the Babel of the living world; he is ever on the stage, and the spectators are ever ready to applaud. Thus perpetually in the service of others, self ceases to be his world; he has no leisure to brood over real or imaginary wrongs; the excitement whirls on the machine till it is worn out—"

"And kicked aside," said Vane, "with the broken lumber of men's other tools, in the chamber of their son's forgetfulness. Your man of action lasts but for an hour; the man of letters lasts for ages."

"We live not for ages," answered Trevylyan; "our life is on earth, and not in the grave."

"But even grant," continued Vane; "and I for one will concede the point,—that posthumous fame is not worth the living agonies that obtain it, how are you better off in your poor and vulgar career of action? Would you serve the rulers?—servility! The people?—folly! If you take the great philosophical view which the worshippers of the past rarely take, but which, unknown to them, is their sole excuse, viz. that the changes which *may* benefit the future unsettle the present; and that it is not the wisdom of practical legislation to risk the peace of our cotemporaries in the hope of obtaining happiness for their posterity,—to what suspicions, to what charges are you exposed! You are deemed the foe of all liberal opinion, and you read your curses in the eyes of a nation. But take the side of the people! What caprice,—what ingratitude! You have professed so much in theory, that you can never accomplish sufficient in practice. Moderation becomes a crime; to be prudent is to be perfidious. New demagogues, without temperance, because without principle, outstrip you in the moment of your greatest services. The public is the grave of a great man's deeds; it is never sated; its maw is eternally open; it perpetually craves for more. Where in the history of the world do you find the gratitude of a people? You find favor, it is true, but not gratitude; the fervor that exaggerates a benefit at one moment, but not the gratitude that remembers it the next year. Once disappoint them, and all your actions, all your sacrifices, are swept from their remembrance for ever; they break the windows of the very house they have given you, and melt down their medals into bullets. Who serves man, ruler, or peasant, serves the ungrateful; and all the ambitious are but types of a Wolsey or a De Witt."

"And what," said Trevylyan, "consoles a man in the ills that flesh is heir to, in that state of obscure repose, that serene inactivity to which you would confine him? Is it not his conscience? Is it not his self-acquittal, or his self-approval?"

"Doubtless," replied Vane.

"Be it so," answered the high-souled Trevylyan; "the same consolation awaits us in action as in repose. We sedulously pursue what we deem to be true glory. We are maligned; but our soul acquits us. Could it do more in the scandal and the prejudice that assail us in private life? you are silent: but note how much deeper should be the comfort, how much loftier the self-esteem; for if calumny attack us in a wilful obscurity, what have we done to refute the calumny? How have we served our species? Have we 'scorned delight and loved laborious days?' Have we made the utmost of the 'talent' confided to our care? Have we done those good deeds to our race upon which we can retire,—an 'estate of beneficence,'—from the malice of the world, and feel that our deeds are our defenders? This is the consolation of virtuous actions; is it so of—even a virtuous—indolence?"

"You speak as a preacher," said Vane, "I merely as a calculator; you of virtue in affliction, I of a life in ease."

"Well, then, if the consciousness of perpetual endeavour to advance our race be not alone happier than the life of ease, let us see what this vaunted ease really is. Tell me, is it not another name for *ennui?* This state of quiescence, this objectless, dreamless torpor, this transition *du lit à la table, de la table au lit;* what more dreary and monotonous existence can you devise? Is it pleasure in this inglorious existence to think that you are serving pleasure? Is it freedom to be the slave to self? For I hold," continued Trevylyan, "that this jargon of 'consulting happiness,' this cant of living for ourselves, is but a mean as well as a false philosophy. Why this eternal reference to self? Is self alone to be consulted? Is even our happiness, did it truly consist in repose, really the great end of life? I doubt if we cannot ascend higher. I doubt if we cannot say with a great moralist, 'If virtue be not estimable in itself, we can see nothing estimable in following it for the sake of a bargain.' But, in fact, repose is the poorest of all delusions; the very act of recurring to self brings about us all those ills of self from which in the turmoil of the world we can escape. We become hypochondriacs. Our very health grows an object of painful possession. We are so desirous to be well (for what is retirement without health) that we are ever fancying ourselves ill; and, like the man in the Spectator, we weigh ourselves daily, and live but by grains and scruples. Retirement is happy only for the poet, for to him it is *not* retirement. He secedes from one world but to gain another, and he finds not *ennui* in seclusion,—why?—not because seclusion hath *repose,* but because it hath *occupation.* In one word, then, I say of action and of indolence, grant the same ills to both, and to action there is the readier escape or the nobler consolation."

Vane shrugged his shoulders. "Ah, my dear friend," said he, tapping his snuff-box with benevolent superiority, "you are much younger than I am!"

But these conversations which Trevylyan and Vane often held together, dull as I fear this specimen must seem to the reader, had an inexpressible charm for Gertrude. She loved the lofty and generous vein of philosophy which Trevylyan embraced, and which, while it suited his ardent nature, contrasted a demeanour commonly hard and cold to all but herself. And young and tender as she was, his ambition infused its spirit into her fine imagination, and that passion for enterprise which belongs inseparably to romance. She loved to muse over his future lot, and in fancy to share its toils and to exult in its triumphs. And if sometimes she asked herself whether a career of action might not estrange him from her, she had but to turn her gaze upon his watchful eye,—and lo, he was by her side or at her feet!

CHAPTER VI.

Gorcum.—The tour of the virtues: A philosopher's tale.

It was a bright and cheery morning as they glided by Gorcum. The boats pulling to the shore full of fishermen and peasants in their national costume; the breeze just curling the waters, and no more; the lightness of the blue

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and the gentle Castillo fainting away at the genius of Murillo. Let us add Wordsworth, cold to the lyre of Byron; and Byron at once stealing from Wordsworth, and ridiculing while he stole.

sky; the loud and laughing voices from the boats, — all contributed to raise the spirit and fill it with that indescribable gladness which is the physical sense of life.

The tower of the church, with its long windows and its round dial, rose against the light, clear sky, and on a bench under a green bush facing the water sat a jolly Hollander, refreshing the breezes with the fumes of his national weed.

"How little it requires to make a journey pleasant, when the companions are our friends," said Gertrude, as they sailed along. "Nothing can be duller than these banks; nothing more delightful than this voyage."

"Yet what tries the affections of people for each other so severely as a journey together?" said Vane. "That perpetual companionship from which there is no escaping, that confinement, in all our moments of ill-humor and listlessness, with persons who want us to look amused, — ah, it is a severe ordeal for friendship to pass through! A post-chaise must have jolted many an intimacy to death."

"You speak feelingly, dear father," said Gertrude, laughing; "and I suspect with a slight desire to be sarcastic upon us. Yet, seriously, I should think that travel must be like life, and that good persons must be always agreeable companions to each other."

"Good persons! my Gertrude," answered Vane, with a smile. "Alas, I fear the good weary each other quite as much as the bad. What say you, Trevylyan, would virtue be a pleasant companion from Paris to Petersburg? Ah, I see you intend to be on Gertrude's side of the question. Well now, if I tell you a story, since stories are so much the fashion with you, in which you shall find that the virtues themselves actually made the experiment of a tour, will you promise to attend to the moral?"

"Oh, dear father, any thing for a story," cried Gertrude; "especially from you, who have not told one all the way. Come, listen, Albert; nay, listen to your new rival."

And, pleased to see the vivacity of the invalid, Vane began as follows:

THE TOUR OF THE VIRTUES.

A PHILOSOPHER'S TALE.

ONCE upon a time, several of the virtues, weary of living for ever with the Bishop of Norwich, resolved to make a little excursion; accordingly, though they knew every thing on earth was very ill prepared to receive them, they thought they might safely venture on a tour from Westminster bridge to Richmond; the day was fine, the wind in their favor, and as to entertainment, — why there seemed, according to Gertrude, to be no possibility of any disagreement among the virtues.

They took a boat at Westminster stairs, and just as they were about to push off, a poor woman, all in rags, with a child in her arms, implored their compassion. Charity put her hand into her reticule, and took out a shilling. Justice, turning round to look after the baggage, saw the folly Charity was about to commit. "Heavens!" cried Justice, seizing poor Charity by the arm, "what are you doing? Have you never read political economy? Don't you know that indiscriminate almsgiving is only the encouragement to idleness, the mother of vice? You a virtue, indeed! I'm ashamed of you. Get along with you, good woman, — yet stay, there is a ticket for soup at the Mendicity Society; they 'll see if you 're a proper object of compassion." But Charity is quicker than Justice, and slipping her hand behind her, the poor woman got the shilling and the ticket for soup too. Economy and Generosity saw the double gift. "What waste!" cried Economy, frowning; "what, a ticket and a shilling! *either* would have sufficed."

"Either!" said Generosity; "fie! Charity should have given the poor creature half a crown, and Justice a dozen tickets!" So the next ten minutes were consumed in a quarrel between the four virtues, which would have lasted all the way to Richmond, if Courage had not advised them to get on shore and fight it out. Upon this, the virtues suddenly perceived they had a little forgotten themselves, and Generosity offering the first apology, they made it up, and went on very agreeably for the next mile or two.

The day now grew a little overcast, and a shower seemed at hand. Prudence, who had a new bonnet on, suggested the propriety of putting to shore for half an hour: Courage was for braving the rain; but, as most of the virtues are ladies, Prudence carried it. Just as they were about to land, another boat cut in before them very uncivilly, and gave theirs such a shake that Charity was all but overboard. The company on board the uncivil boat, who evidently thought the virtues extremely low persons, for they had nothing very fashionable about their exterior, burst out laughing at Charity's discomposure, especially as a large basket full of buns, which Charity carried with her for any hungry-looking children she might encounter at Richmond, fell pounce into the water. Courage was all on fire; he twisted his mustachio, and would have made an onset on the enemy, if, to his great indignation, Meekness had not forestalled him by stepping mildly into the hostile boat, and offering both cheeks to the foe; this was too much even for the incivility of the boatmen; they made their excuses to the virtues, and Courage, who is no bully thought himself bound discontentedly to accept them. But oh, if you had seen how Courage used Meekness afterward, you could not have believed it possible that one virtue could could be so enraged with another! This quarrel between the two threw a damp on the party; and they proceeded on their voyage, when the shower was over, with any thing but cordiality. I spare you the little squabbles that took place in the general conversation, — how Economy found fault with all the villas by the way; and Temperance expressed becoming indignation at the luxuries of the city barge. They arrived at Richmond, and Temperance was appointed to order the dinner; meanwhile Hospitality, walking in the garden, fell in with a large party of Irishmen, and asked them to join in the repast.

Imagine the long faces of Economy and Prudence, when they saw the addition to the company. Hospitality was all spirits; he rubbed his hands, and called for champagne with the tone of a younger brother. Temperance soon grew scandalized, and Modesty herself colored at some of the jokes; but Hospitality, who was now half-seas over, called the one a milksop, and swore at the other as a prude. Away went the hours; it was time to return, and they made down to the water-side, thoroughly out of temper with one another, Economy and Generosity quarrelling all the way about the bill and the waiters. To make up the sum of their mortification, they passed a boat where all the company were in the best possible spirits, laughing and whooping like mad, and discovered these jolly companions to be two or three agreeable vices, who had put themselves under the management of Good Temper. So you see, Gertrude, that even the virtues may fall at loggerheads with each other, and pass a very sad time of it, if they happen to be of opposite dispositions, and have forgotten to take Good Temper along with them.

"Ah!" said Gertrude, "but you have overloaded your boat; too many virtues might contradict one another, but not a few."

"Voila ce que je veux dire," said Vane: "but listen to the sequel of my tale, which now takes a new moral."

At the end of the voyage, and after a long sulky silence, Prudence said, with a thoughtful air, "My dear friends, I have been thinking, that as long as we keep so entirely together, never mixing with the rest of the world, we shall waste our lives in quarrelling among ourselves, and run the risk of being still less liked and sought after than we already are. You know that we are none of us popular; every one is quite contented to see us represented in a vaudeville, or described in an essay. Charity, indeed, has her name often taken in vain at a bazaar, or a subscription, and the miser as often talks of the duty he owes to *me*, when he sends the stranger from his door, or his grandson to jail; but still we only resemble so many wild beasts, whom everybody likes to see, but nobody cares to possess. Now, I propose, that we should all separate, and take up our abode with some mortal or other for a year, with the power of changing at the end of that time should we not feel ourselves comfortable, that is, should we not find that we do all the good we intend; let us try the experiment, and on this day twelvemonths let us all meet, under the largest oak in Windsor Forest, and recount what has befallen us." Prudence ceased, as she always does when she has said enough, and, delighted at the project, the virtues agreed to adopt it on the spot. They were enchanted at the idea of setting up for themselves, and each not doubting of his or her success: for Economy in her heart thought Generosity no virtue at all, and Meekness looked on Courage as little better than a heathen.

Generosity, being the most eager and active of all the virtues, set off first on his journey. Justice followed, and kept up with him, though at a more even pace. Charity never heard a sigh, or saw a squalid face, but she stayed to cheer and console the sufferer; a kindness which somewhat retarded her progress.

Courage espied a travelling carriage, with a man and his wife quarrelling most conjugally, and he civilly begged he might be permitted to occupy the vacant seat opposite the lady. Economy still lingered, inquiring for the cheapest inns. Poor Modesty looked round, and sighed, on finding herself so near to London, where she was almost wholly unknown, but resolved to bend her course thither, for two reasons: first, for the novelty of the thing; and, secondly, not liking to expose herself to any risks by a journey on the continent. Prudence, though the first to project, was the last to execute; and therefore resolved to remain where she was for that night, and take daylight for her travels.

The year rolled on, and the virtues, punctual to the appointment, met under the oak tree; they all came nearly at the same time, excepting Economy, who had got into a return post-chaise, the horses of which, having been forty miles in the course of the morning, had foundered by the way and retarded her journey till night set in. The virtues looked sad and sorrowful, as people are wont to do after a long and fruitless journey, and somehow or other, such was the wearing effect of their intercourse with the world, that they appeared wonderfully diminished in size.

"Ah, my dear Generosity," said Prudence, with a sigh, "as you were the first to set out on your travels, pray let us hear your adventures first."

"You must know, my dear sisters," said Generosity, 'that I had not gone many miles from you before I came to a small country town, in which a marching regiment was quartered, and at an open window I beheld, leaning over a gentleman's chair, the most beautiful creature imagination ever pictured; her eyes shone out like two suns of perfect happiness, and she was almost cheerful enough to have passed for Good Temper herself. The gentleman over whose chair she leaned was her husband; they had been married six weeks; he was a lieutenant, with a hundred pounds a year besides his pay. Greatly affected by their poverty, I instantly determined, without a second thought, to ensconce myself in the heart of this charming girl. During the first hour in my new residence, I made many wise reflections: such as, — that love never was so perfect as when accompanied by poverty; what a vulgar error it was to call the unmarried state 'Single *Blessedness;*' how wrong it was of us virtues never to have tried the marriage bond; and what a falsehood it was to say that husbands neglected their wives, for never was there any thing in nature so devoted as the love of a husband, — six weeks married!

"The next morning, before breakfast, as the charming Fanny was waiting for her husband, who had not yet finished his toilet, a poor, wretched-looking object appeared at the window, tearing her hair and wringing her hands; her husband had that morning been dragged to prison, and her seven children had fought for the last mouldy crust. Prompted by me, Fanny, without inquiring further into the matter, drew from her silken purse a five pound note, and gave it to the beggar, who departed more amazed than grateful. Soon after, the lieutenant appeared, — 'What the d—l, another bill!' muttered he, as he tore the yellow wafer from a large, square-folded, bluish piece of paper. "Oh, ah! confound the fellow, *he* must be paid. I must trouble you, Fanny, for fifteen pounds, to pay this saddler's bill.'

"'Fifteen pounds, love!' stammered Fanny, blushing.

"'Yes, dearest, that fifteen pounds I gave you yesterday.'

"'I have only ten pounds,' said Fanny, hesitatingly, 'for such a poor wretched-looking creature was here just now, that I was obliged to give her five pounds.'

"'Five pounds! good God!' exclaimed the astonished husband; 'I shall have no more money these three weeks.' He frowned, he bit his lips, nay, he even wrung his hands, and walked up and down the room; worse still, he broke forth with, — 'Surely, madam, you did not suppose, when you married a lieutenant in a marching regiment, that he could afford to indulge you in the whim of giving five pounds to every mendicant who held out her hand to you? You did not, I say, madam, imagine —' but the bridegroom was interrupted by the convulsive sobs of his wife; it was their first quarrel, they were but six weeks married: he looked at her for one moment sternly the next he was at her feet. 'Forgive me, dearest Fanny, forgive me, for I cannot forgive myself. I was too great a wretch to say what I did; and do believe, my own Fanny, that, while I may be too poor to indulge you in it, I do from my heart admire so noble, so disinterested a generosity.' Not a little proud did I feel to have been the cause of this exemplary husband's admiration for his amiable wife, and sincerely did I rejoice at having taken up my abode with these *poor* people; but not to tire you, my dear sisters, with the minutiæ of detail, I shall briefly say that things did not long remain in this delightful position; for, before many months had elapsed, poor Fanny had to bear with her husband's increased and more frequent storms of passion, unfollowed by any halcyon and honeymoon suings for forgiveness; for, at my instigation, every shilling went; and when there were no more to go, her trinkets, and even her clothes followed. The lieutenant became a complete brute, and even allowed his unbridled tongue to call me, — me, sisters, *me*, — 'heartless Extravagance.' His despicable brother-officers, and their gossiping wives, were no better, for they did nothing but animadvert upon my Fanny's ostentation and absurdity, for by such names had they the impertinence to call *me*. Thus grieved to the soul to find myself the cause of all poor Fanny's misfortunes, I resolved at the end of the year to leave her, being thoroughly convinced, that, however amiable and praiseworthy I might be in myself, I was totally unfit to be bosom friend and adviser to the wife of a lieutenant in a marching regiment, with only a hundred pounds a year besides his pay."

The virtues groaned their sympathy with the unfortunate Fanny; and Prudence, turning to Justice, said, "I long to hear what you have been doing, for I am certain you cannot have occasioned harm to any one."

Justice shook her head, and said, "Alas, I find that there are times and places when even I do better not to appear, as a short account of my adventures will prove to you. No sooner had I left you than I instantly repaired to India, and took up my abode with a Bramin. I was much shocked by the dreadful inequalities of condition that reigned in the several castes, and I longed to relieve the poor Pariah from his ignominious destiny, — accordingly I set seriously to work on reform. I insisted upon the iniquity of abandoning men from their birth to an irremediable state of contempt, from which no virtue could exalt them. The Bramins looked upon *my* Bramin with ineffable horror. They called *me* the most wicked of vices; they saw no distinction between justice and atheism. I uprooted their society, — that was sufficient crime. But the worst was, that the Pariahs themselves regarded me with suspicion; they thought it unnatural in a Bramin to care for a Pariah! And one called me 'Madness,' another 'Ambition,' and a third 'The desire to innovate.' My poor Bramin led a miserable life of it; when one day, after observing, at my dictation, that he thought a Pariah's life as much entitled to respect as a cow's, he was hurried away by the priests, and secretly broiled on the altar, as a fitting reward for his sacrilege. I fled hither in great tribulation, persuaded that in some countries even Justice may do harm."

"As for me," said Charity, not waiting to be asked, "I grieve to say that I was silly enough to take up my abode with an old lady in Dublin, who never knew what discretion was, and always acted from impulse; my instigation was irresistible, and the money she gave in her drives through the suburbs of Dublin was so lavishly spent, that it kept all the rascals of the city in idleness and whisky. I found, to my great horror, that I was a main cause of a terrible epidemic, and that to give alms without discretion was to spread poverty without help. I left the city when my year was out, and, as ill-luck would have it, just at the time when I was most wanted."

"And oh," cried Hospitality, "I went to Ireland also. I fixed my abode with a squireen; I ruined him in a year, and only left him because he had no longer a hovel to keep me in."

"As for myself," said Temperance, "I entered the breast of an English legislator, and he brought in a bill against alehouses; the consequence was, that the laborers took to gin, and I have been forced to confess, that Temperance may be too zealous, when she dictates too vehemently to others."

"Well," said Courage, keeping more in the background than he had ever done before, and looking rather ashamed of himself, "that travelling carriage I got into belonged to a German general and his wife, who were returning to their own country. Growing very cold as we proceeded, she wrapped me up in a *polonaise* ; but the cold increasing, I inadvertently crept into her bosom; once there, I could not get out, and from thenceforward the poor general had considerably the worst of it. She became so provoking, that I wondered how he could refrain from an explosion. To do him justice, he did at last threaten to get out of the carriage, upon which, roused by me, she collared him, — and conquered. When he got to his own district, things grew worse, for every aid-de-camp that offended her, she insisted that he might be publicly reprehended, and should the poor general refuse, she would with her own hands confer a caning upon them. It was useless to appeal to the archduke ; for if she said it was hot, the general dared not hint that he thought it cold, and so far did he carry his dread of this awful dame, that he never issued a standing order for the army, curtailed a mustachio, or lengthened a coat, without soliciting her opinion first. The additional force she had gained in me was too much odds against the poor general, and he died of a broken heart, six months after my *liaison* with his wife. She after this became so dreaded and detested, that a conspiracy was formed to poison her; *this* daunted even me, so I left her without delay, — *et me voici*."

"Humph!" said Meekness, with an air of triumph ; "I at least have been more successful than you. On seeing much in the papers of the cruelties practised by the Turks on the Greeks, I thought my presence would enable the poor sufferers to bear their misfortunes calmly. I went to Greece, then, at a moment when a well-planned and practicable scheme of emancipating themselves from the Turkish yoke was arousing their youth. Without confining myself to one individual, I flitted from breast to breast; I meekened the whole nation; my remonstrances against the insurrection succeeded, and I had the satisfaction of leaving a whole people ready to be killed or strangled, with the most Christian resignation in the world."

The virtues, who had been a little cheered by the opening self-complacency of Meekness, would not, to her great astonishment, allow that she had succeeded a whit more happily than her sisters, and called next upon Modesty for her confession.

"You know," said that amiable young lady, "that I went to London in search of a situation. I spent three months of the twelve in going from house to house, but I could not get a single person to receive me. The ladies declared they never saw so old-fashioned a gawky, and civilly recommended me to their abigails; the abigails turned me round with a stare, and then pushed me down to the kitchen and the fat scullion-maids, who assured me that 'in the respectable families they had had the honor to live in, they had never even heard of my name.' One young housemaid, just from the country, did indeed receive me with some sort of civility; but she very soon lost me in the servants' hall. I now took refuge with the other sex, as the least uncourteous. I was fortunate enough to find a young gentleman of remarkable talents, who welcomed me with open arms. He was full of learning, gentleness, and honesty. I had only one rival, — Ambition. We both contended for an absolute empire over him. Whatever Ambition suggested, I damped. Did Ambition urge him to begin a book, I persuaded him it was not worth publication. Did he get up, full of knowledge, and instigated by my rival to make a speech, (for he was in parliament,) I shocked him with the sense of his assurance, — I made his voice droop and his accents falter. At last, with an indignant sigh, my rival left him ; he retired into the country, took orders, and renounced a career he had fondly hoped would be serviceable to others; but finding I did not suffice for his happiness, and piqued at his melancholy, I left him before the end of the year, and he has since taken to drinking!"

The eyes of the virtues were all turned to Prudence. She was their last hope, — "I am just where I set out," said that discreet virtue; "I have done neither good nor harm. To avoid temptation, I went and lived with a hermit, to whom I soon found that I could be of no use beyond warning him not to overboil his pease and lintels, not to leave his door open when a storm threatened, and not to fill his pitcher too full at the neighbouring spring. I am thus the only one of you that never did harm; but only because I am the only one of you that never had an opportunity of doing it ! In a word," continued Prudence, thoughtfully, "in a word, my friends, circumstances are necessary to the virtues themselves. Had, for instance, Economy changed with Generosity, and gone to the poor lieutenant's wife, and had I lodged with the Irish squireen instead of Hospitality, what misfortunes would have been saved to both ! Alas ! I perceive we lose our efficacy when we are misplaced; and *then*, though in reality virtues, we operate as vices. Circumstances must be favorable to our exertions and harmonious with our nature ; and we lose our very divinity unless Wisdom directs our footsteps to the home we should inhabit, and the dispositions we should govern."

The story was ended, and the travellers began to dispute about its moral. Here let us leave them

CHAPTER VII.

Cologne. — The traces of the Roman yoke. — The church of St. Mary. — Trevylyan's reflections on the monastic life. — The tomb of the three kings. — An evening excursion on the Rhine.

Rome, — magnificent Rome ! wherever the pilgrim wends, the traces of thy dominion greet his eyes. Still, in the heart of the bold German race is graven the print of the eagle's claws; and amid the haunted regions of the Rhine, we pause to wonder at the great monuments of the Italian yoke.

At Cologne our travellers rested for some days. They were in the city to which the camp of Marcus Agrippa had given birth : that spot had resounded with the armed tread of the legions of Trajan. In that city, Vitellius, Sylvanus, were proclaimed emperors. By that church did the latter receive his death.

As they passed round the door, they saw some peasants loitering on the sacred ground; and when they noted the delicate cheek of Gertrude, they uttered their salutations with more than common respect. Where they then were, the building swept round in a circular form; and at its base it is supposed, by tradition, to retain something of the ancient Roman masonry. Just before them rose the spire of a plain and unadorned church, — singularly contrasting the pomp in the old with the simplicity of the innovating creed.

The church of St. Mary occupies the site of the Roman capitol; and the place retains the Roman name : and still something of the aspect of the people betrays the hereditary blood.

Gertrude, whose nature was strongly impressed with the venerating character, was singularly fond of visiting the old Gothic churches, which, with so eloquent a moral, unite the living with the dead.

"Pause for a moment," said Trevylyan, before they entered the church of St. Mary. "What recollections crowd upon us ! On the site of the Roman capitol, a Christian church and a convent are erected ! By whom ! the mother of Charles Martel, — the conqueror of the Saracen, — the arch-hero of Christendom itself ! And to these scenes and calm retreats, to the cloisters of the convent once belonging to this church, fled the bruised spirit of a royal sufferer, — the wife of Henry IV., — the victim of Richelieu, — the unfortunate Mary de Medicis. Alas ! the cell and the convent are but a vain emblem of that desire to fly to God which belongs to distress; the solitude soothes, but the monotony recalls regret. And for my own part, I never saw in my frequent tours through Catholic countries, the still walls in which monastic vanity hoped to shut out the world, but a melancholy came over me ! What hearts at war with themselves ! — what unceasing regrets ! — what pinings after the past ! — what long and beautiful years devoted to a moral grave, by a momentary rashness, — an impulse, — a disappointment ! But in these churches the lesson is more impressive and less sad The weary heart has ceased to ache, — the burning pulses are still, — the troubled spirit has flown to the only rest which is not a deceit Power and love, — hope and fear, — avarice, — ambition, they are quenched at last ! Death is the only monastery, — the tomb is the only cell ; and the grave that adjoins the convent is the bitterest mock of its futility !"

"Your passion is ever for active life," said Gertrude, "you allow no charm to solitude; and contemplation to you seems torture. If any great sorrow ever come upon you, you will never retire to seclusion as its balm. You will plunge into the world, and lose your individual existence in the universal rush of life."

"Ah, talk not of sorrow!" said Trevylyan, wildly,—"let us enter the church."

They went afterward to the celebrated cathedral, which is considered one of the noblest ornaments of the architectural triumphs of Germany; but it is yet more worthy of notice from the pilgrim of romance than the searcher after antiquity; for here, behind the grand altar, is the tomb of the three kings of Cologne,—the three worshippers, whom tradition humbled to our Saviour. Legend is rife with a thousand tales of the relics of this tomb. The three kings of Cologne are the tutelary names of that golden superstition which has often more votaries than the religion itself, from which it springs; and to Gertrude the simple story of Lucille sufficed to make her for the moment, credulous of the sanctity of the spot. Behind the tomb three Gothic windows cast their "dim religious light" over the tesselated pavement and along the Ionic pillars. They found some of the more credulous believers in the authenticity of the relics kneeling before the tomb, and they arrested their steps, fearful to disturb the superstition which is never without something of sanctity when contented with prayer, and forgetful of persecution. The bones of the Magi are still supposed to consecrate the tomb, and on the higher part of the monument the artist has delineated their adoration to the infant Saviour.

That evening came on with a still and tranquil beauty, and as the sun hastened to its close they launched their boat for an hour or two's excursion upon the Rhine. Gertrude was in that happy mood when the quiet of Nature is enjoyed like a bath for the soul, and the presence of him she so idolized deepened that stillness into a more delicious and subduing calm. Little did she dream, as the boat glided over the water, and the towers of Cologne rose in the blue air of evening, how few were those hours that divided her from the tomb! But, in looking back to the life of one we have loved, how dear is the thought, that the latter days were the days of light, that the cloud never chilled the beauty of the setting sun, and that if the years of existence were brief, all that existence has most tender, most sacred, was crowded into that space! Nothing dark, then, or bitter, rests with our remembrance of the lost; *we* are the mourners, but pity is not for the mourned,—our grief is purely selfish; when we turn to its object, the hues of happiness are round it, and that very love which is the parent of our woe was the consolation—the triumph—of the departed!

The majestic Rhine was calm as a lake; the splashing of the oar only broke the stillness, and, after a long pause in their conversation, Gertrude, putting her hand on Trevylyan's arm, reminded him of a promised story; for he too had moods of abstraction, which, in her turn, she loved to lure him from; and his voice to her had become a sort of want, which, if it ceased too long, she thirsted to enjoy.

"Let it be," said she, a tale suited to the hour; no fierce tradition,—nay, no grotesque fable, but of the tenderer dye of superstition. Let it be of love, of woman's love,—of the love that defies the grave; for surely even after death it lives; and heaven would scarcely be heaven if memory were banished from its blessings."

"I recollect," said Trevylyan, after a slight pause, "a short German legend, the simplicity of which touched me much when I heard it; but," added he, with a slight smile, "so much more faithful appears in the legend the love of the woman than that of the man, that *I* at least ought scarcely to recite it."

"Nay," said Gertrude, tenderly, "the fault of the inconstant only heightens our gratitude to the faithful."

CHAPTER VIII.

The soul in purgatory, or, love stronger than death.

The angels strung their harps in heaven, and their music went up like a stream of odors to the pavilions of the Most High. But the harp of Seralim was sweeter than that of his fellows, and the voice of the Invisible One (for the angels themselves know not the glories of Jehovah,—only far in the depths of heaven, they see one unsleeping eye watching for ever over creation) was heard, saying,

"Ask a gift for the love that burns upon thy song, and it shall be given thee."

And Seralim answered—

"There are in that place which men call purgatory, and which is the escape from hell, but the painful porch of heaven, many souls that adore Thee, and yet are punished justly for their sins; grant me the boon to visit them at times, and solace their suffering by the hymns of the harp that is consecrated to Thee!"

And the voice answered—

"Thy prayer is heard, oh gentlest of the angels: and it seems good to Him who chastises but from love. Go! Thou hast thy will."

Then the angel sang the praises of God, and when the song was done, he rose from his azure throne at the right hand of Gabriel, and spreading his rainbow wings, he flew to that melancholy orb which, nearest to earth, echoes with the shrieks of souls, that by torture become pure. There the unhappy ones see from afar the bright courts they are hereafter to obtain, and the shapes of glorious beings, who, fresh from the fountains of immortality, walk amid the gardens of paradise, and feel that their happiness hath no morrow; and this thought consoles amid their torments, and makes the true difference between purgatory and hell.

Then the angel folded his wings, and, entering the crystal gates, sat down upon a blasted rock, and struck his divine lyre, and a peace fell over the wretched; the demon ceased to torture, and the victim to wail. As sleep to the mourners of earth was the song of the angel to the souls of the purifying star; one only voice amid the general stillness seemed not lulled by the angel; it was the voice of a woman, and it continued to cry out with a sharp cry—

"Oh, Adenheim,—Adenheim, mourn not for the lost!"

The angel struck chord after chord, till his most skilful melodies were exhausted, but still the solitary voice, unheeding,—unconscious even, of—the sweetest harp of the angel choir, cried out—

"Oh, Adenheim,—Adenheim, mourn not for the lost!"

Then Seralim's interest was aroused, and approaching the spot whence the voice came, he saw the spirit of a young and beautiful girl chained to a rock, and the demons lying idly by. And Seralim said to the demons, "Doth the song lull ye thus to rest?"

And they answered, "Her care for another is bitterer than all our torments; therefore are we idle."

Then the angel approached the spirit, and said, in a voice which stilled her cry,—for in what state do we outlive sympathy?—"Wherefore, O daughter of earth, wherefore wailest thou with the same plaintive wail? and why doth the harp that soothes the most guilty of thy companions fail in its melody with thee?"

"Oh! radiant stranger," answered the poor spirit, "thou speakest to one who on earth loved God's creature more than God; therefore is she thus justly sentenced. But I know that my poor Adenheim mourns ceaselessly for me, and the thought of his sorrow is more intolerable to me than all that the demons can inflict."

"And how knowest thou that he laments thee?" asked the angel.

"Because I know with what agony I should have mourned for *him*," replied the spirit, simply.

The divine nature of the angel was touched; for love is the nature of the sons of heaven. "And how," said he, "can I minister to thy sorrow?"

A transport seemed to agitate the spirit, and she lifted up her mistlike and impalpable arms, and cried:

"Give me,—oh, give me to return to earth but for one little hour, that I may visit my Adenheim; and that, concealing from him my present sufferings, I may comfort him in his own."

"Alas!" said the angel, turning away his eyes, for angels may not weep in the sight of others, "I could, indeed, grant thee this boon, but thou knowest not the penalty. For the souls in purgatory may return to earth, but heavy is the sentence that awaits their return. In a word, for one hour on earth, thou must add a thousand years to the tortures of thy confinement here!"

"Is that all?" cried the spirit; "willingly, then, will I brave the doom. Ah, surely they love not in heaven, or thou wouldst know, O celestial visitant, that one hour of consolation to the one we love is worth a thousand thousand ages of torture to ourselves! Let me comfort and convince my Adenheim; no matter what becomes of me."

Then the angel looked on high, and he saw in far distant regions, which in that orb none else could discern, the rays that parted from the all-guarding Eye, and heard the VOICE of the Eternal One, bidding him act as his pity whispered. He looked on the spirit, and her shadowy arms stretched pleadingly toward him: he uttered the word that looses the bars of the gate of purgatory; and lo, the spirit had reëntered the human world.

It was night in the halls of the Lord of Adenheim; and he sat at the head of his glittering board; loud and long was the laugh, and merry the jest that echoed round; and the laugh and the jest of the Lord of Adenheim were louder and merrier than all.

And by his right side sat a beautiful lady; and ever and anon he turned from others to whisper soft vows in her ear.

"And oh," said the bright dame of Falkenberg, "thy words what ladye can believe? didst thou not utter the same oaths and promise the same love, to Ida, the fair daughter of Loden; and now but three little months have closed upon her grave?"

"By my halidom," quoth the young Lord of Adenheim, "thou dost thy beauty marvellous injustice. Ida! Nay, thou mockest me; *I* love the daughter of Loden! why, how then should I be worthy thee? A few gay words, a few passing smiles, — behold all the love Adenheim ever bore to Ida. Was it my fault if the poor fool misconstrued such common courtesy? Nay, dearest lady, this heart is virgin to thee."

"And what!" said the Lady of Falkenberg, as she suffered the arm of Adenheim to encircle her slender waist, "didst thou not grieve for her loss?"

"Why, verily, yes, for the first week; but in thy bright eyes I found ready consolation."

At this moment, the Lord of Adenheim thought he heard a deep sigh behind him; he turned, but saw nothing, save a slight mist that gradually faded away, and vanished in the distance. Where was the necessity for Ida to reveal herself!

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"And thou didst not, then, do thine errand to thy lover?" said Seralim, as the spirit of the wronged Ida returned to purgatory.

"Bid the demons recommence their torture," was poor Ida's answer.

"And was it for this that thou hast added a thousand years to thy doom?"

"Alas," answered Ida, "after the single hour I have endured on earth, there seems to be but little terrible in a thousand fresh years of purgatory!" *

"What! is the story ended?" asked Gertrude.

"Yes."

"Nay, surely the thousand years were not added to poor Ida's doom; and Seralim bore her back with him to heaven?"

"The legend saith no more. The writer was contented to show us the perpetuity of woman's love —"

"And its reward," added Vane.

"It was not *I* who drew that last conclusion, Albert," whispered Gertrude.

CHAPTER IX

The scenery of the Rhine analogous to the German literary genius. — The Drachenfels.

ON leaving Cologne, the stream winds round among banks that do not yet fulfil the promise of the Rhine; but they increase in interest as you leave Surdt and Godorf. The peculiar character of the river does not, however, really appear, until by degrees the Seven Mountains, and "The Castled Crag of Drachenfels" above them all, break upon the eye. Around Neider Cassel and Rheidt the vines lie thick and clustering; and, by the shore you see from place to place the islands stretching their green length along, and breaking the exulting tide. Village rises upon village, and viewed from the distance as you sail, the pastoral errors that enamoured us of the village life, crowd thick and fast upon us. So still do these hamlets seem, so sheltered from the passions of the world; as if the passions were not like winds, — only felt where they breathe, and invisible, save by their effects! Leaping into the broad bosom of the Rhine comes many a stream and rivulet upon either side. Spire upon spire rises and sinks as you sail on. Mountain and city, — the solitary island, — the castled steep, — like the dreams of ambition, suddenly appear, proudly swell, and dimly fade away.

"You begin now," said Trevylyan, "to understand the character of the German literature. The Rhine is an emblem of its luxuriance, its fertility, its romance. The best commentary to the German genius is a visit to the German scenery. The mighty gloom of the Hartz, the feudal towers that look over vines and deep valleys on the legendary Rhine; the gigantic remains of antique power, profusely scattered over plain, mount, and forest; the thousand mixed recollections that hallow the ground; the stately Roman, the stalwart Goth, the chivalry of the feudal age, and the dim brotherhood of the ideal world, have here alike their record and their remembrance. And over such scenes the young German student wanders. Instead of the pomp and luxury of the English traveller, the thousand devices to cheat the way, he has but his volume in his hand, his knapsack at his back. From such scenes he draws and hives all that various store, which after-years ripen to invention Hence the florid mixture of the German muse, — the classic, the romantic, the contemplative, the philosophic, and the superstitious. Each the result of actual meditation over different scenes. Each the produce of separate but confused recollections. As the Rhine flows, so flows the national genius by mountain and valley, — the wildest solitude, — the sudden spires of ancient cities, — the mouldered castle, — the stately monastery, — the humble cot. Grandeur and homeliness, history and superstition, truth and fable, succeeding one another so as to blend into a whole.

"But," added Trevylyan, a moment afterward, "the ideal is passing slowly away from the German mind, a spirit for the more active and the more material literature is springing up among them. The revolution of mind gathers on, preceding stormy events; and the memories that led their grandsires to contemplate, will urge the youth of the next generation to dare and to act."

Thus conversing, they continued their voyage, with a fair wave, and beneath a lucid sky.

The vessel now glided beside the Seven Mountains and the Drachenfels.

The sun, slowly progressing to his decline, cast his yellow beams over the smooth waters. At the foot of the mountains lay a village deeply sequestered in shade; and above, the ruin of the Drachenfels caught the richest beams of the sun. Yet thus alone, though lofty, the ray cheered not the gloom that hung over the giant rock; it stood on high, like some great name on which the light of glory may shine, but which is associated with a certain melancholy, from the solitude to which its very height above the level of the herd condemned its owner!

CHAPTER X.

The Legend of Roland. — The adventures of Nymphalin on the island of Nonneworth. — Her song. — The decay of the fairy-faith in England.

ON the shore opposite the Drachenfels stand the ruins of Rolandseck; they are the shattered crown of a lofty and perpendicular mountain, consecrated to the memory of the brave Roland; below, the trees of an island to which the lady of Roland retired, rise thick and verdant from the smooth tide.

Nothing can exceed the wild and eloquent grandeur of the whole scene. That spot is the pride and beauty of the Rhine.

The legend that consecrates the tower and the island is briefly told; it belongs to a class so common to the Romaunts of Germany. Roland goes to the wars. A false report of his death reaches his betrothed. She retires to the convent in the isle of Nonneworth, and takes the irrevocable veil. Roland returns home, flushed with glory and hope, to find that the very fidelity of his affianced had placed an eternal barrier between them. He built the castle that bears his name, and which overlooks the monastery, and dwelt there till his death; happy in the power at least to gaze, even to the last, upon those walls which held the treasure he had lost.

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* This story is principally borrowed from a foreign soil. It seemed to the author worthy of being transferred to an English one, although he fears that much of its singular beauty in the original has been lost by the way.

The willows droop in mournful luxuriance along the island, and harmonize with the memory that, through the desert of a thousand years, love still keeps green and fresh. Nor hath it permitted even those additions of fiction which, like mosses, gather by time over the truth that they adorn, yet adorning conceal, — to mar the simple tenderness of the legend.

All was still in the island of Nonneworth; the lights shone through the trees from the house that contained our travellers. On one smooth spot, where the islet shelves into the Rhine, met the wandering fairies.

"Oh! Pipalee, how beautiful!" cried Nymphalin, as she stood enraptured by the wave; a star-beam shining on her, with her yellow hair "dancing its ringlets in the whistling wind." "For the first time since our departure, I do not miss the green fields of England."

"Hist!" said Pipalee, under her breath, "I hear fairy steps; they must be the steps of strangers."

"Let us retreat into this thicket of weeds," said Nymphalin, somewhat alarmed; "the good lord-treasurer is already asleep there." They whisked into what to them was a forest, for the reeds were two feet high, and there, sure enough, they found the lord-treasurer stretched beneath a bulrush, with his pipe beside him, for since he had been in Germany, he had taken to smoking; and indeed wild thyme, properly dried, makes very good tobacco for a fairy. They also found Nip and Trip sitting very close together; Nip playing with her hair, which was exceedingly beautiful.

"What do you do here?" said Pipalee, shortly; for she was rather an old maid, and did not like fairies to be too close to each other.

"Watching my lord's slumber," said Nip.

"Pshaw," said Pipalee.

"Nay," quoth Trip, blushing like a sea-shell, "there is no harm in *that*, I'm sure."

"Hush," said the queen, peeping through the reeds.

And now forth from the green bosom of the earth came a tiny train; slowly, two by two, hand in hand, they swept from a small aperture, shadowed with fragrant herbs, and formed themselves into a ring; then came other fairies, laden with dainties, and presently two beautiful white mushrooms sprang up, on which their viands were placed, and lo, there was a banquet! Oh! how merry they were; what gentle peals of laughter, loud as a virgin's sigh; what jests, what songs! Happy race! if mortals could see you as often as I do, in the soft nights of summer, they would never be at a loss for entertainment. But as our English fairies looked on, they saw that these foreign elves were of a different race from themselves; they were taller, and less handsome, their hair was darker, they wore mustachios, and had something of a fiercer air. Poor Nymphalin was a little frightened; but presently soft music was heard floating along, something like the sound we suddenly hear of a still night, when a light breeze steals through rushes, or wakes a ripple in some shallow brook dancing over pebbles. And lo, from the aperture of the earth came forth a fairy superbly dressed, and of a noble presence. The queen started back, Pipalee rubbed her eyes, Trip looked over Pipalee's shoulders, and Nip, pinching her arm, cried out amazed, "By the last new star, that is Prince Von Fayzenheim!"

Poor Nymphalin gazed again, and her little heart beat under her bee's-wing boddice as if it would break. The prince had a melancholy air, and he sat apart from the banquet, gazing abstractedly on the Rhine.

"Ah!" whispered Nymphalin to herself, "does he think of me?"

Presently the prince drew forth a little flute, hollowed from a small reed, and began to play a mournful air. Nymphalin listened with delight; it was one he had learned in her dominions.

When the air was over, the prince rose, and approaching the banqueters, despatched them on different errands; one to visit the dwarf of the Drachenfels, and another to look after the grave of Musæus, and a whole detachment to puzzle the students of Heidelberg. A few launched themselves upon willow leaves on the Rhine, to cruise about in the starlight, and another band set out a hunting after the gray-legged moth. The prince was left alone; and now Nymphalin, seeing the coast clear, wrapped herself up in a cloak made out of a withered leaf; and only letting her eyes glow out from the hood, she glided from the reeds, and the prince, turning round, saw a dark fairy figure by his side. He drew back, a little startled, and placed his hand on his sword, when Nymphalin, circling around him, sang the following words: —

THE FAIRY'S REPROACH.

I.

By the glow-worm's lamp in the dewy brake;
By the gossamer's airy net;
By the shifting skin of the faithless snake;
Oh, teach me to forget:
For none, ah none,
Can teach so well that human spell
As thou, false one!

II.

By the fairy dance on the greensward smooth;
By the winds of the gentle west;
By the loving stars, when their soft looks soothe
The waves on their mother's breast;
Teach me thy lore!
By which like withered flowers,
The leaves of buried hours
Blossom no more!

III.

By the tent in the violet's bell;
By the may on the scented bough;
By the lone green isle where my sisters dwell;
And thine own forgotten vow;
Teach me to live,
Nor turn with thoughts that pine
For love so false as thine!
Teach me thy lore,
And one thou lovest no more
Will bless thee and forgive!

"Surely," said Fayzenheim, faltering, surely I know that voice."

And Nymphalin's cloak dropped off her shoulder. "My English fairy!" and Fayzenheim knelt beside her.

I wish you had seen the fay kneel, for you would have sworn it was so like a human lover, that you would never have sneered at love afterward. Love is so fairylike a part of us, that even a fairy cannot make it differently from us, — that is to say, when we love truly.

There was great joy in the island that night among the elves. They conducted Nymphalin to their palace within the earth, and feasted her sumptuously; and Nip told their adventures with so much spirit that he enchanted the merry foreigners. But Fayzenheim talked apart with Nymphalin, and told her how he was lord of that island, and how he had been obliged to return to his dominions by the law of his tribe, which allowed him to be absent only a certain time in every year; "but, my queen, I always intended to revisit thee next spring."

"Thou needest not have left us so abruptly," said Nymphalin, blushing.

"But do *thou* never leave me!" said the ardent fairy; "be mine, and let our nuptials be celebrated on these shores. Wouldst thou sigh for thy green island? No! for *there* the fairy altars are deserted, the faith is gone from the land, thou art among the last of an unhonored and expiring race. Thy mortal poets are dumb, and fancy, which was thy priestess, sleeps hushed in her last repose. New and hard creeds have succeeded to the fairy lore. Who steals through the starlit boughs on the nights of June to watch the roundels of the tribe? The wheels of commerce, the din of trade, have silenced to mortal ear the music of thy subjects' harps! And the noisy habitations of men, harsher than their dreaming sires, are gathering round the dell and vale where thy co-mates linger; — a few years, and where will be the green solitudes of England?"

The queen sighed, and the prince, perceiving that he was listened to, continued, —

"Who in thy native shores, among the children of men, now claims the fairy's care? What cradle wouldst thou tend? On what maid wouldst thou shower thy rosy gifts? What bard wouldst thou haunt in his dreams? Poesy is fled the island, why shouldst thou linger behind? Time hath brought dull customs that laugh at thy gentle being. Puck is buried in the hare-bell, he has left no offspring, and none mourn for his loss; for night, which is the fairy season, is busy and garish as the day What heart is desolate after the curfew? What house bathed in still nees at the hour in which thy revels commence? Thine empire among men has passed from thee, and thy race are vanishing from the crowded soil. For, despite our diviner nature, our existence is linked with man's. Their neglect is our disease, their forgetfulness our death. Leave then those dull yet troubled scenes that are closing round the fairy rings of thy native isle. These mountains, this herbage, these gliding waves, these mouldering ruins, these starred rivulets, be they, O beautiful fairy! thy new domain. Yet in these lands our worship lingers; still can we fill the thought of the young bard, and mingle with his yearnings after the beautiful, the unseen. Hither come the pilgrims of the world, anxious only to gather from these scenes the legends of us; ages will pass away ere the Rhine shall be desecrated of our haunting presence. Come then, my queen, let this palace be thine own, and the moon that glances over the shattered towers of the Dragon Rock witness our nuptials and our vows!"

In such words the fairy prince courted the young queen, and while she sighed at their truth, she yielded to their charm. Oh! still may there be one spot on the earth where the fairy feet may press the legendary soil, still be there one land where the faith of the bright invisible hallows and inspires! Still glide thou, oh majestic and solemn Rhine, among shades and valleys, from which the wisdom of belief can call the creations of the younger world!

CHAPTER XI.

Wherein the reader is made spectator with the English fairies of the scenes and beings that are beneath the earth.

During the heat of next day's noon, Fayzenheim took the English visiters through the cool caverns that wind amid the mountains of the Rhine. There a thousand wonders awaited the eyes of the fairy queen. I speak not of the Gothic arch and aisle into which the hollow earth forms itself, or the stream that rushes with a mighty voice through the dark chasm, or the silver columns that shoot aloft, worked by the gnomes from the mines of the mountains of Taunus; but of the strange inhabitants that from time to time they came upon. They found in one solitary cell, lined with dried moss, two misshapen elves, of a larger size than common, with a plebeian, working-day aspect, who were chatting noisily together, and making a pair of boots: these were the haus-mannen or domestic elves, that dance into tradesmen's houses of a night, and play all sorts of undignified tricks, — Pucks without his graces. They were very civil to the queen, for they are good-natured creatures on the whole, and once had many relations in Scotland. They then, following the course of a noisy rivulet, came to a hole, from which the sharp head of a fox peeped out. The queen was frightened. "Oh, come on," said the fox, encouragingly, "I am one of the fairy race, and many are the gambols we of the brute-elves play in the German world of romance." "Indeed, Mr. Fox," said the prince, "you only speak the truth; and how is Mr. Bruin?" "Quite well, my prince; but tired of his seclusion, for indeed our race can do little or nothing now in the world, and lie here in our old age, telling stories of the past, and recalling the exploits we did in our youth; which, madam, you may see in all the fairy histories in the prince's library."

"Your own love adventures, for instance, Master Fox," said the prince.

The fox snarled angrily, and drew in his head.

"You have displeased your friend," said Nymphalin.

"Yes, — he likes no allusions to the amorous follies of his youth. Did you ever hear of his rivalry with the dog, for the cat's good graces?"

"No, — that must be very amusing."

"Well, my queen, when we rest by and by, I will relate to you the history of the fox's wooing."

The next place they came to was a vast Runic cavern, covered with dark inscriptions of a forgotten tongue; and sitting on a huge stone they found a dwarf with long yellow hair, his head leaning on his breast, and absorbed in meditation.

"This is a spirit of a wise and powerful race," whispered Fayzenheim, "that has often battled with the fairies; but he is of the kindly tribe."

Then the dwarf lifted his head with a mournful air, and gazed upon the bright shapes before him, lighted by the pine torches that the prince's attendants carried.

"And what dost thou muse upon, O descendant of the race of Laurin?" said the prince.

"Upon time!" answered the dwarf, gloomily. "I see a river, and its waves are black, flowing from the clouds, and none knoweth its source. It rolls deeply on, aye and evermore, through a green valley, which it slowly swallows up, washing away tower and town, and vanquishing all things; and the name of the river is Time."

Then the dwarf's head sank on his bosom, and he spoke no more.

The fairies proceeded: — "Above us," said the prince, "rises one of the loftiest mountains of the Rhine; for mountains are the dwarfs' home. When the Great Spirit of all made earth, He saw that the interior of the rocks and hills were tenantless; and yet that a mighty kingdom and great palaces were hid within them; a dread and dark solitude, but lighted at times from the starry eyes of many jewels; and there was the treasure of the human world, — gold and silver, — and great heaps of gems, and a soil of metals. So God made a race for this vast empire, and gifted them with the power of thought, and the soul of exceeding wisdom; so that they want not the merriment and enterprise of the outer world: but musing in these dark caves is their delight. Their existence rolls away in the luxury of thought; only from time to time they appear in the world, and betoken woe or weal to men; according to their nature, — for they are divided into two tribes, the benevolent and the wrathful." While the prince spoke, they saw glaring upon them from a ledge in the upper rock, a grisly face with a long matted beard. The prince gathered himself up, and frowned at the evil dwarf, for such it was; but with a wild laugh the face abruptly disappeared, and the echo of the laugh rang with a ghastly sound through the long hollows of the earth.

The queen clung to Fayzenheim's arm. "Fear not, my queen," said he; "the evil race hath no power over our light and aërial nature; with men only they war; and he whom we have seen was in the old ages of the world one of the deadliest visiters to mankind."

But now they came winding by a passage to a beautiful recess in the mountain empire; it was of a circular shape, and of amazing height, and in the midst of it played a natural fountain of sparkling waters, and around it were columns of massive granite, rising in countless vistas, till lost in the distant shade. Jewels were scattered round, and brightly played the fairy torches on the gem, the fountain, and the pale silver, that gleamed at frequent intervals from the rocks. "Here let us rest," said the gallant fairy, clapping his hands, — "what, ho! music and the feast."

So the feast was spread by the fountain's side; and the courtiers scattered rose-leaves, which they had brought with them for the prince and his visiter; and amidst the dark kingdom of the dwarfs broke the delicate sound of fairy lutes. "We have not these evil beings in England," said the queen, as low as she could speak; "they rouse my fear, but my interest also. Tell me, dear prince, of what nature was the intercourse of the evil dwarf with man?"

"You know," answered the prince, "that to every species of living thing there is something in common; the vast chain of sympathy runs through all creation. By that which they have in common with the beast of the field, or the bird of the air, men govern the inferior tribes; they appeal to the common passions of fear and emulation when they tame the wild steed; to the common desire of greed and gain when they snare the fishes of the stream, or allure the wolves to the pitfall by the bleating of the lamb. In their turn, in the older ages of the world, it was by the passions which men had in common with the demon race that the fiends commanded or allured them. The dwarf whom you saw, being of that race which is characterized by the ambition of power and the desire of hoarding, appealed then in his intercourse with men to the same characteristics in their own bosoms; to ambition or to avarice. And thus were his victims made! But not now, dearest Nymphalin," continued the prince, with a more lively air, "not now will we speak of those gloomy beings. Ho, there! cease the music, and come hither all of ye, to listen to a faithful and homely history of the dog, the cat the griffin, and the fox."

CHAPTER XII.

The wooing of Master Fox.*

You are aware, my dear Nymphalin, that in the time of which I am about to speak, there was no particular enmity between the various species of brutes; the dog and the hare chatted very agreeably together, and all the world knows that the wolf, unacquainted with mutton, had a particular affection for the lamb. In these happy days, two most respectable cats, of very old family, had an only daughter; never was kitten more amiable, or more seducing; as she grew up she manifested so many charms, that she in a little while became noted as the greatest beauty in the neighbourhood; need I to you, dearest Nymphalin, describe her perfections? Suffice it to say that her skin was of the most delicate tortoise-shell, that her paws were smoother than velvet, that her whiskers were twelve inches long at the least, and that her eyes had a gentleness altogether astonishing in a cat. But if the young beauty had suitors in plenty during the lives of monsieur and madame, you may suppose the number was not diminished when, at the age of two years and a half, she was left an orphan, and sole heiress to all the hereditary property. In fine, she was the richest marriage in the whole country. Without troubling you, dearest queen, with the adventures of the rest of her lovers, with their suit and their rejection, I come at once to the two rivals most sanguine of success, — the dog and the fox.

Now the dog was a handsome, honest, straight-forward, affectionate fellow: "For my part," said he, "I don't wonder at my cousin's refusing Bruin the bear, and Gauntgrim the wolf; to be sure they give themselves great airs, and call themselves '*noble*;' but what then? Bruin is always in the sulks, and Gauntgrim always in a passion; a cat of any sensibility would lead a miserable life with them: as for me, I am very good-tempered when I am not put out; and I have no fault except that of being angry if disturbed at my meals. I am young and good-looking, fond of play and amusement, and altogether as agreeable a husband as a cat could find in a summer's day. If she marries me, well and good; she may have her property settled on herself, — if not, I shall bear her no malice; and I hope I shan't be too much in love to forget that there are other cats in the world."

With that the dog threw his tail over his back, and set off to his mistress with a gay face on the matter.

Now the fox heard the dog talking thus to himself, — for the fox was always peeping about in holes and corners, and he burst out a laughing when the dog was out of sight.

"Ho, ho, my fine fellow," said he, "not so fast, if you please; you've got the fox for a rival, let me tell you."

The fox, as you very well know, is a beast that can never do any thing without a manœuvre; and as, from his cunning, he was generally very lucky in any thing he undertook, he did not doubt for a moment that he should put the dog's nose out of joint. Renard was aware that in love one should always, if possible, be the first in the field, and he therefore resolved to get the start of the dog and arrive before him at the cat's residence. But this was no easy matter; for though Renard could run faster than the dog for a little way, he was no match for him in a journey of some distance. "However," said Renard, "those good-natured creatures are never very wise; and I think I know already what wil make him bait on his way."

With that, the fox trotted pretty fast by a short cut in the woods, and getting before the dog, laid himself down by a hole in the earth and began to howl most piteously.

The dog, hearing the noise, was very much alarmed; "See now," said he, "if the poor fox has not got himself into some scrape. Those cunning creatures are always in mischief; thank heaven, it never comes into my head to be cunning." And the good-natured animal ran off as hard as he could to see what was the matter with the fox.

"Oh dear!" cried Renard; "what shall I do, what shall I do? my poor little sister has gotten into this hole, and I can't get her out, — she'll certainly be smothered" And the fox burst out a howling more piteously than before.

"But, my dear Renard," quoth the dog, very simply, "why don't you go in after your sister?"

"Ah, you may well ask that," said the fox; "but, in trying to get in, don't you perceive that I have sprained my back, and can't stir? Oh dear! what shall I do if my poor little sister gets smothered?"

"Pray don't vex yourself," said the dog; "I'll get her out in an instant;" and with that he forced himself with great difficulty into the hole.

Now no sooner did the fox see that the dog was fairly in, than he rolled a great stone to the mouth of the hole, and fitted it so tight that the dog, not being able to turn round and scratch against it with his forepaws, was made a close prisoner.

"Ha, ha," cried Renard, laughing outside; "amuse yourself with my poor little sister, while I go and make your compliments to mademoiselle the cat."

With that Renard set off at an easy pace, never troubling his head what became of the poor dog. When he arrived in the neighbourhood of the beautiful cat's mansion, he resolved to pay a visit to a friend of his, an old magpie that lived in a tree, and was well acquainted with all the news of the place. "For," thought Renard, "I may as well know the weak side of my mistress that is to be, and get round it at once."

The magpie received the fox with great cordiality, and inquired what brought him so great a distance from home.

"Upon my word," said the fox, "nothing so much as the pleasure of seeing your ladyship, and hearing those agreeable anecdotes you tell with so charming a grace; but, to let you into a secret, — be sure it don't go further —"

"On the word of a magpie," interrupted the bird.

"Pardon me for doubting you," continued the fox, "I should have recollected that a pie was a proverb for discretion; but, as I was saying, you know her majesty the lioness."

"Surely," said the magpie, bridling.

"Well; she was pleased to fall in, — that is to say, — to — to — take a caprice to your humble servant, and the lion grew so jealous that I thought it prudent to decamp; a jealous lion is no joke, let me assure your ladyship But mum's the word."

So great a piece of news delighted the magpie. She could not but repay it in kind, by all the news in her budget. She told the fox all the scandal about Bruin and Gauntgrim, and she then fell to work on the poor young cat. She did not spare her foibles, you may be quite sure. The fox listened with great attention, and he learned enough to convince him, that however the magpie exaggerated, the cat was very susceptible to flattery, and had a great deal of imagination.

When the magpie had finished, she said, "But it must be very unfortunate for you to be banished from so magnificent a court as that of the lion."

"As to that," answered the fox, "I consoled myself for my exile, with a present his majesty made me on parting, as a reward for my anxiety for his honor and domestic tranquillity; namely, three hairs from the fifth leg of the amoronthologosphorus. Only think of that, ma'am."

"The what?" cried the pie, cocking down her left ear.

"The amoronthologosphorus."

"La!" said the magpie, "and what is that very long word, my dear Renard?"

"The amoronthologosphorus is a beast that lives on the other side of the river Cylinx; it has five legs, and on the fifth leg there are three hairs, and whoever has those three hairs can be young and beautiful for ever."

"Bless me! I wish you would let me see them," said the pie, holding out her claw.

"Would that I could oblige you, ma'am, but it's as much as my life's worth to show them to any but the lady I marry. In fact, they only have an effect on the fair sex, as you may see by myself, whose poor person they utterly fail to improve; they are, therefore, intended for a marriage present, and his majesty the lion thus generously atoned to me for relinquishing the tenderness of his queen One must confess that there was a great deal of delicacy in the gift. But you'll be sure not to mention it."

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* In the excursions of the fairies, it is the object of the author to bring before the reader a rapid phantasmagoria of the various beings that belong to the German superstitions, so that the work may thus describe the outer and the inner world of the and of the Rhine. The tale of the fox's wooing has been composed to give the English reader an idea of a species of novel not naturalized among us, though frequent among the legends of our Irish neighbours; in which the brutes are the only characters drawn, — drawn, too, with all nice and subtle shades of distinction, and with as much variety of traits as if they were the creatures of the civilized world.

"A magpie gossip, indeed!" quoth the old blab.

The fox then wished the magpie good-night, and retired to a hole to sleep off the fatigues of the day, before he presented himself to the beautiful young cat.

The next morning, heaven knows how, it was all over the place that Renard the fox had been banished from court for the favor shown him by her majesty, and that the lion had bribed his departure with three hairs that would make any lady, whom the fox married, young and beautiful for ever.

The cat was the first to learn the news, and she became all curiosity to see so interesting a stranger, possessed of "qualifications" which, in the language of the day, "would render any animal happy!" She was not long without obtaining her wish. As she was taking a walk in the wood the fox contrived to encounter her. You may be sure that he made her his best bow; and he flattered the poor maid with so courtly an air that she saw nothing surprising in the love of the lioness.

Meanwhile let us see what became of his rival, the dog.

"Ah, the poor creature!" said Nymphalin; "it is easy to guess that he need not be buried alive to lose all chance of marrying the heiress."

"Wait till the end," answered Fayzenheim.

When the dog found that he was thus entrapped, he gave himself up for lost. In vain he kicked with his hind legs against the stone, he only succeeded in bruising his paws, and at length he was forced to lie down, with his tongue out of his mouth, and quite exhausted. "However," said he, after he had taken breath, "it won't do to be starved here, without doing my best to escape; and if I can't get out one way, let me see if there is not a hole at the other end;" thus saying, his courage, which stood him in lieu of cunning, returned, and he proceeded on with the same straight-forward way in which he always conducted himself. At first the path was exceedingly narrow, and he hurt his sides very much against the rough stones that projected from the earth. But by degrees the way became broader, and he now went on with considerable ease to himself, till he arrived in a large cavern, where he saw an immense griffin sitting on his tail, and smoking a huge pipe.

The dog was by no means pleased at meeting so suddenly a creature that had only to open his mouth to swallow him up at a morsel; however, he put a bold face on the danger, and walking respectfully up to the griffin, said, "Sir, I should be very much obliged to you if you would inform me the way out of these holes into the upper world."

The griffin took the pipe out of his mouth, and looked at the dog very sternly.

"Ho! wretch," said he, "how comest thou hither? I suppose thou wantest to steal my treasure; but I know how to treat such vagabonds as you, and I shall certainly eat you up."

"You can do that if you choose," said the dog; "but it would be very unhandsome conduct in an animal so much bigger than myself. For my own part, I never attack any dog that is not of equal size. I should be ashamed of myself if I did; and as to your treasure, the character I bear for honesty is too well known to merit such a suspicion."

"Upon my word," said the griffin, who could not help smiling for the life of him, "you have a singularly free mode of expressing yourself; and how, I say, came you hither?"

Then the dog, who did not know what a lie was, told the griffin his whole history, how he had set off to pay his court to the cat, and how Renard the fox had entrapped him into the hole.

When he had finished, the griffin said to him, "I see, my friend, that you know how to speak the truth; I am in want of just such a servant as you will make me; therefore stay with me and keep watch over my treasure when I sleep."

"Two words to that," said the dog. "You have hurt my feelings very much by suspecting my honesty, and I would much sooner go back into the wood and be avenged on that scoundrel the fox, than serve a master who has so ill an opinion of me; even if he gave me to keep, much less to take care of, all the treasures in the world. I pray you, therefore, to dismiss me, and to put me in the right way to my cousin the cat."

"I am not a griffin of many words," answered the master of the cavern, "and I give you your choice, — be my servant or be my breakfast; it is just the same to me. I give you time to decide till I have smoked out my pipe."

The poor dog did not take so long to consider. "It is true," he thought, "that it is a great misfortune to live in a cave with a griffin of so unpleasant a countenance; but, probably, if I serve him well and faithfully, he'll take pity on me some day, and let me go back to earth, and prove to my cousin what a rogue the fox is; and as to the rest, though I would sell my life as dear as I could, it is impossible to fight a griffin with a mouth of so monstrous a size:" in short, he decided to stay with the griffin.

"Shake a paw on it," quoth the grim smoker: and the dog shook paws.

"And now," said the griffin, "I will tell you what you are to do, — look here;" and, moving his tail, he showed the dog a great heap of gold and silver, in a hole in the ground, that he had covered with the folds of his tail; and also, what the dog thought more valuable, a great heap of bones of very tempting appearance.

"Now," said the griffin, "during the day, I can take very good care of these myself; but at night it is very necessary that I should go to sleep; so when I sleep, you must watch over them instead of me."

"Very well," said the dog; "as to the gold and silver I have no objection; but I would much rather you would lock up the bones, for I'm often hungry of a night, and —"

"Hold your tongue," said the griffin.

"But, sir," said the dog, after a short silence, "surely nobody ever comes into so retired a situation. Who are the thieves, if I may make bold to ask?"

"Know," answered the griffin, "that there are a great many serpents in this neighbourhood, and they are always trying to steal my treasure; and if they catch me napping, they, not contented with theft, would do their best to sting me to death. So that I am almost worn out for want of sleep."

"Ah!" quoth the dog, who was fond of a good night's rest, "I don't envy you your treasure, sir."

At night, the griffin, who had a great deal of penetration, and saw that he might depend on the dog, laid down to sleep in another corner of the cave; and the dog, shaking himself well, so as to be quite awake, took watch over the treasure. His mouth watered exceedingly at the bones, and he could not help smelling them now and then; but he said to himself, "A bargain's a bargain, and since I have promised to serve the griffin, I must serve him as an honest dog ought to serve."

In the middle of the night he saw a great snake creeping in by the side of the cave, but the dog set up so loud a bark that the griffin awoke, and the snake crept away as fast as he could. Then the griffin was very much pleased, and he gave the dog one of the bones to amuse himself with; and every night the dog watched the treasure, and acquitted himself so well, that not a snake, at last, dared to make its appearance; so the griffin enjoyed an excellent night's rest.

The dog now found himself much more comfortable than he expected. The griffin regularly gave him one of the bones for supper; and, pleased with his fidelity, made himself as agreeable a master as a griffin could do. Still, however, the dog was secretly very anxious to return to earth; for having nothing to do during the day but to doze on the ground, he dreamed perpetually of his cousin the cat's charms; and, in fancy, he gave the rascal Renard as hearty a worry as a fox may well have the honor of receiving from a dog's paws. He awoke panting, — alas! he could not realize his dreams

One night, as he was watching as usual over the treasure, he was greatly surprised to see a beautiful little black and white dog enter the cave; and it came fawning to our honest friend, wagging its tail with pleasure.

"Ah! little one," said our dog, whom, to distinguish, I will call the watch dog, "you had better make the best of your way back again. See, there is a great griffin asleep in the other corner of the cave, and if he awakes, he will either eat you up or make you his servant, as he has made me."

"I know what you would tell me," says the little dog, "and I have come down here to deliver you. The stone is now gone from the mouth of the cave, and you have nothing to do but to go back with me. Come, brother, come."

The dog was very much excited by this address "Don't ask me, my dear little friend," said he; "you must be aware that I should be too happy to escape out of this cold cave, and roll on the soft turf once more; but if I leave my master, the griffin, those cursed serpents, who are always on the watch, will come in and steal his treasure, — nay, perhaps, sting him to death." Then the little dog came up to the watch dog, and remonstrated with him greatly, and licked him caressingly on both sides of his face; and, taking him by the ear, endeavoured to draw him from the treasure, but the dog would not stir a step, though his heart sorely pressed him. At length the little dog, finding it all in vain, said, "Well, then, if I must leave, good-by; but I have become so hungry in coming down all this way after you, that I wish you would give me one of those bones; they smell very pleasantly, and one out of so many could never be missed."

"Alas!" said the watch dog, with tears in his eyes, "how unlucky I am to have ate up the bone my master gave me, otherwise you should have had it and welcome. But I can't give you one of these, because my master has made me promise to watch over them all, and I have given him my paw on it. I am sure a dog of your respectable appearance will say nothing further on the subject."

Then the little dog answered pettishly, "Pooh! what nonsense you talk! surely a great griffin can't miss a little bone, fit for me;" and nestling his nose under the watch dog, he tried forthwith to bring up one of the bones.

On this the watch dog grew angry, and, though with much reluctance, he seized the little dog by the nape of the neck and threw him off, though without hurting him. Suddenly the little dog changed into a monstrous serpent, bigger even than the griffin himself, and the watch dog barked with all his might. The griffin rose in a great hurry, and the serpent sprang upon him ere he was well awake. I wish, dearest Nymphalin, you could have seen the battle between the griffin and the serpent, how they coiled, and twisted, and bit and darted their fiery tongues at each other. At length, the serpent got uppermost, and was about to plunge his tongue into that part of the griffin which is unprotected by his scales, when the dog, seizing him by the tail, bit him so sharply, that he could not help turning round to kill his new assailant, and the griffin, taking advantage of the opportunity, caught the serpent by the throat with both claws, and fairly strangled him. As soon as the griffin had recovered from the nervousness of the conflict, he heaped all manner of caresses on the dog for saving his life. The dog told him the whole story, and the griffin then explained, that the dead snake was the king of the serpents, who had the power to change himself into any shape he pleased. "If he had tempted you," said he, "to leave the treasure but for one moment, or to have given him any part of it, ay, but a single bone, he would have crushed you in an instant, and stung me to death ere I could have waked; but none, no, not the most venomous thing in creation, has power to hurt the honest!"

"That has always been my belief," answered the dog; "and now, sir, you had better go to sleep again, and leave the rest to me."

"Nay," answered the griffin, "I have no longer need of a servant, for now that the king of the serpents is dead, the rest will never molest me. It was only to satisfy his avarice that his subjects dared to brave the den of the griffin."

Upon hearing this the dog was exceedingly delighted; and raising himself on his hind paws, he begged the griffin most movingly to let him return to earth, to visit his mistress the cat, and worry his rival the fox.

"You do not serve an ungrateful master," answered the griffin. "You shall return, and I will teach you all the craft of our race, which is much craftier than the race of that pettifogger the fox, so that you may be able to cope with your rival."

"Ah, excuse me," said the dog, hastily, "I am equally obliged to you; but I fancy honesty is a match for cunning any day; and I think myself a great deal safer in being a dog of honor than if I knew all the tricks in the world."

"Well," said the griffin, a little piqued at the dog's bluntness, "do as you please; I wish you all possible success."

The griffin opened a secret door in the side of the cavern, and the dog saw a broad path that led at once into the wood. He thanked the griffin with all his heart, and ran wagging his tail into the open moonlight. "Ah, ah! Master Fox," said he, "there's no trap for an honest dog that has not two doors to it, cunning as you think yourself."

With that he curled his tail gallantly over his left leg, and set off on a long trot to the cat's house. When he was within sight of it, he stopped to refresh himself by a pool of water, and who should be there but our friend the magpie.

"And what do *you* want, friend?" said she, rather disdainfully, for the dog looked somewhat out of case after his journey.

"I am going to see my cousin the cat," answered he.

"*Your* cousin! marry come up," said the magpie; "don't you know she is going to be married to Renard the fox? This is not a time for her to receive the visits of a brute like you."

These words put the dog in such a passion that he very nearly bit the magpie for her uncivil mode of communicating such bad news. However, he curbed his temper, and without answering her, went at once to the cat's residence.

The cat was sitting at the window, and no sooner did the dog see her than he fairly lost his heart; never had he seen so charming a cat before; he advanced, wagging his tail, and with his most insinuating air; when the cat, getting up, clapped the window in his face, — and lo! Renard the fox appeared in her stead.

"Come out, thou rascal!" said the dog, showing his teeth; "come out, I challenge thee to single combat; I have not forgiven thy malice, and thou seest that I am no longer shut up in the cave, and unable to punish thee for thy wickedness."

"Go home, silly one," answered the fox, sneering; "thou hast no business here; and as for fighting thee, — bah!" Then the fox left the window and disappeared. But the dog, thoroughly enraged, scratched lustily at the door, and made such a noise that presently the cat herself came to the window.

"How now!" said she, angrily; "what means all this rudeness? — Who are you, and what do you want at my house?"

"Oh, my dear cousin," said the dog, "do not speak so severely; know that I have come here on purpose to pay you a visit; and whatever you do, let me beseech you not to listen to that villain Renard; you have no conception what a rogue he is!"

"What!" said the cat, blushing, "do you dare to abuse your betters in this fashion? I see you have a design on me. Go, this instant, or — "

"Enough, madam," said the dog, proudly; "you need not speak twice to me, — farewell."

And he turned away very slowly, and went under a tree, where he took up his lodgings for the night. But the next morning there was an amazing commotion in the neighbourhood; a stranger, of a very different style of travelling from that of the dog, had arrived at the dead of the night, and fixed his abode in a large cavern, hollowed out of a steep rock. The noise he had made in flying through the air was so great, that he had awakened every bird and beast in the parish; and Renard, whose bad conscience never suffered him to sleep very soundly, putting his head out of the window, perceived, to his great alarm, that the stranger was nothing less than a monstrous griffin.

Now the griffins are the richest beasts in the world; and that 's the reason they keep so close under ground. Whenever it does happen that they pay a visit above, it is not a thing to be easily forgotten.

The magpie was all agitation, — what could the griffin possibly want there? She resolved to take a peep at the cavern, and accordingly she hopped timorously up the rock, and pretended to be picking up sticks for her nest.

"Hollo, ma'am," cried a very rough voice, and she saw the griffin putting his head out of the cavern. "Hollo, you are the very lady I want to see; you know all the people about here, — eh?"

"All the best company, your lordship, I certainly do," answered the magpie, dropping a courtesy.

Upon this the griffin walked out; and smoking his pipe leisurely in the open air, in order to set the pie at her ease, continued, —

"Are there any respectable beasts of good family settled in this neighbourhood?"

"Oh, most elegant society, I assure your lordship" cried the pie. “I have lived here myself these ten years, and the great heiress, the cat yonder, attracts a vast number of strangers.”

“Humph, — heiress, indeed! much *you* know about heiresses!” said the griffin. “There is only one heiress in the world, and that is my daughter.”

“Bless me, has your lordship a family? I beg you a thousand pardons. But I only saw your lordship's own equipage last night, and did not know you brought any one with you.”

“My daughter went first, and was safely lodged before I arrived. She did not disturb you, I dare say, as I did; for she sails along like a swan; but I have the gout in my left claw, and that is the reason I puff and groan so in taking a journey.”

“Shall I drop in upon Miss Griffin, and see how she is after her journey?” said the pie, advancing.

“I thank you, no; I don't intend her to be seen while I stay here, it unsettles her: and I'm afraid of the young beasts running away with her if they once heard how handsome she was; she's the living picture of me, but she's monstrous giddy! Not that I should care much if she did go off with a beast of degree, were I not obliged to pay her portion, which is prodigious, and I don't like parting with money, ma'am, when I have once got it. Ho, ho, ho!”

“You are too witty, my lord. But if you refused your consent?” said the pie, anxious to know the whole family history of so grand a seigneur.

“I should have to pay the dowry all the same. It was left her by her uncle the dragon. But don't let this go any farther.”

“Your lordship may depend on my secrecy. I wish your lordship a very good morning.”

Away flew the pie, and she did not stop till she got to the cat's house. The cat and the fox were at breakfast, and the fox had his paw on his heart. “Beautiful scene!” cried the pie; the cat colored, and bade the pie take a seat.

Then off went the pie's tongue, glib, glib, glib, chatter, chatter, chatter. She related to them the whole story of the griffin, and his daughter, and a great deal more besides, that the griffin had never told her.

The cat listened attentively. Another young heiress in the neighbourhood might be a formidable rival. “But is the griffiness handsome?” said she.

“Handsome!” cried the pie; “Oh! if you could have seen the father! — such a mouth, such eyes, such a complexion, and he declares she's the living picture of himself! But what do you say, Mr. Renard? you, who have been so much in the world, have, perhaps seen the young lady?”

“Why, I can't say I have,” answered the fox, waking from a reverie; “but she must be wonderfully rich. I dare say that fool, the dog, will be making up to her.”

“Ah! by the way,” said the pie, “what a fuss he made at your door yesterday; why would not you admit him, my dear?”

“Oh!” said the cat, demurely, “Mr. Renard says that he is a dog of very bad character, quite a fortune-hunter, and hiding a most dangerous disposition to bite under an appearance of good-nature. I hope he won't be quarrelsome with you, dear Renard.”

“With me! Oh the poor wretch, no! — he might bluster a little; but he knows that if I'm once angry I'm a devil at biting; but one should not boast of one's self.”

In the evening Renard felt a strange desire to go and see the griffin smoking his pipe; but what could he do? There was the dog under the opposite tree evidently watching for him, and Renard had no wish to prove himself that devil at biting which he declared he was. At last he resolved to have recourse to stratagem to get rid of the dog

A young buck of a rabbit, a sort of provincial fop, had looked in upon his cousin the cat, to pay her his respects, and Renard, taking him aside, said, “You see that shabby-looking dog under the tree? Well, he has behaved very ill to your cousin the cat, and you certainly ought to challenge him, — forgive my boldness, — nothing but respect for your character induces me to take so great a liberty; you know I would chastise the rascal myself, but what a scandal it would make! If I were already married to your cousin, it would be a different thing. But you know what a story that cursed magpie would hatch out of it!”

The rabbit looked very foolish: he assured the fox that he was no match for the dog; that he was very fond of his cousin, to be sure; but he saw no necessity to interfere with her domestic affairs; and, in short, he tried all he possibly could to get out of the scrape; but the fox so artfully played on his vanity, — so earnestly assured him that the dog was the biggest coward in the world, and would make an humble apology, and so eloquently represented to him the glory he would obtain for manifesting so much spirit, that at length the rabbit was persuaded to go out and deliver the challenge.

“I'll be your second,” said the fox; “and the great field on the other side of the wood, two miles hence, shall be the place of battle; there we shall be out of observation. You go first, I'll follow in half an hour, — and I say, — hark! — in case he does accept the challenge, and you feel the least afraid, I'll be in the field, and take it off your paws with the utmost pleasure; rely on me, my dear sir!”

Away went the rabbit. The dog was a little astonished at the temerity of the poor creature; but on hearing that the fox was to be present, willingly consented to repair to the place of conflict. This readiness the rabbit did not at all relish; he went very slowly to the field, and seeing no fox there, his heart misgave him, and while the dog was putting his nose to the ground to try if he could track the coming of the fox, the rabbit slipped into a burrow, and left the dog to walk back again.

Meanwhile the fox was already at the rock; he walked very soft-footedly, and looked about with extreme caution, for he had a vague notion that a griffin papa would not be very civil to foxes.

Now there were two holes in the rock, one below, one above, an upper story and an under; and while the fox was peering out, he saw a great claw from the upper rock beckoning to him.

“Ah, ah!” said the fox, “that's the wanton young griffiness, I'll swear.”

He approached, and a voice said —

“Charming Mr. Renard! Do you not think you could deliver an unfortunate griffiness from a barbarous confinement in this rock?”

“Oh heavens!” cried the fox, tenderly, “what a beautiful voice! and, ah, my poor heart, what a lovely claw! Is it possible that I hear the daughter of my lord, the great griffin?”

“Hush, flatterer! not so loud, if you please. My father is taking an evening stroll, and is very quick of hearing. He has tied me up by my poor wings in the cavern, for he is mightily afraid of some beast running away with me. You know I have all my fortune settled on myself.”

“Talk not of fortune,” said the fox; “but how can I deliver you? Shall I enter and gnaw the cord?”

“Alas!” answered the griffiness, “it is an immense chain I am bound with. However, you may come in and talk more at your ease.”

The fox peeped cautiously all round, and seeing no sign of the griffin, he entered the lower cave and stole up stairs to the upper story; but as he went on, he saw immense piles of jewels and gold, and all sorts of treasure, so that the old griffin might well have laughed at the poor cat being called an heiress. The fox was greatly pleased at such indisputable signs of wealth, and he entered the upper cave resolved to be transported with the charms of the griffiness.

There was, however, a great chasm between the landing-place and the spot where the young lady was chained, and he found it impossible to pass; the cavern was very dark, but he saw enough of the figure of the griffiness to perceive, in spite of her petticoat, that she was the image of her father, and the most hideous heiress that the earth ever saw!

However, he swallowed his disgust, and poured forth such a heap of compliments that the griffiness appeared entirely won. He implored her to fly with him the first moment she was unchained.

“That is impossible,” said she, “for my father never unchains me except in his presence, and then I cannot stir out of his sight.”

“The wretch!” cried Renard, “what is to be done?”

"Why, there is only one thing I know of," answered the griffiness, "which is this, — I always make his soup for him, and if I could mix something in it that would put him fast to sleep before he had time to chain me up again, I might slip down and carry off all the treasure below on my back."

"Charming!" exclaimed Renard; "what invention! what wit! I will go and get some poppies directly."

"Alas!" said the griffiness, "poppies have no effect upon griffins; the only thing that can ever put my father fast to sleep is a nice young cat boiled up in his soup; it is astonishing what a charm that has upon him. But where to get a cat? it must be a maiden cat too!"

Renard was a little startled at so singular an opiate. "But," thought he, "griffins are not like the rest of the world, and so rich an heiress is not to be won by ordinary means."

"I do know a cat, a maiden cat," said he, after a short pause, "but I feel a little repugnance at the thought of having her boiled in the griffin's soup. Would not a dog do as well?"

"Ah, base thing!" said the griffiness, appearing to weep, "you are in love with the cat, I see it; go and marry her, poor dwarf that she is, and leave me to die of grief."

In vain the fox protested that he did not care a straw for the cat; nothing could now appease the griffiness but his positive assurance that, come what would, poor puss should be brought to the cave, and boiled for the griffin's soup.

"But how will you get her here?" said the griffiness.

"Ah, leave that to me," said Renard. "Only put a basket out of the window, and draw it up by a cord; the moment it arrives at the window, be sure to clap your claw on the cat at once, for she is terribly active."

"Tush!" answered the heiress, "a pretty griffiness I should be if I did not know how to catch a cat!"

"But this must be when your father is out?" said Renard.

"Certainly, he takes a stroll every evening at sunset."

"Let it be to-morrow, then," said Renard, impatient for the treasure.

This being arranged, Renard thought it time to decamp; he stole down the stairs again, and tried to filch some of the treasure by the way, but it was too heavy for him to carry, and he was forced to acknowledge to himself that it was impossible to get the treasure without taking the griffiness (whose back seemed prodigiously strong) into the bargain.

He returned home to the cat, and when he entered her house and saw how ordinary every thing looked after the jewels in the griffin's cave, he quite wondered how he had ever thought the cat had the least pretensions to good looks.

However, he concealed his wicked design, and his mistress thought he had never appeared so amiable.

"Only guess," said he, "where I have been! to our new neighbour the griffin, a most charming person, thoroughly affable, and quite the air of the court. As for that silly magpie, the griffin saw her character at once; and it was all a hoax about his daughter; he has no daughter at all. You know, my dear, hoaxing is a fashionable amusement among the great. He says he has heard of nothing but your beauty, and on my telling him we were going to be married, he has insisted upon giving a great ball and supper in honor of the event. In fact, he is a gallant old fellow, and dying to see you. Of course I was obliged to accept the invitation."

"You could not do otherwise," said the unsuspecting young creature, who, as I before said, was very susceptible to flattery.

"And only think how delicate his attentions are," said the fox. "As he is very badly lodged for a beast of his rank, and his treasure takes up the whole of the ground-floor, he is forced to give the fête in the upper story, so he hangs out a basket for his guests, and draws them up with his own claw. How condescending! But the great *are* so amiable!"

The cat, brought up in seclusion, was all delight at the idea of seeing such high life, and the lovers talked of nothing else all the next day. When Renard, toward evening, putting his head out of the window, saw his old friend the dog lying as usual and watching him very grimly, "Ah, that cursed creature! I had quite forgotten him; what is to be done now? he would make no bones of me if he once saw me set foot out of doors."

With that the fox began to cast in his head how he should get rid of his rival, and at length he resolved on a very notable project; he desired the cat to set out first and wait for him at a turn in the road a little way off. "For," said he, "if we go together, we shall certainly be insulted by the dog: and he will know that, in the presence of a lady, the custom of a beast of my fashion will not suffer me to avenge the affront. But when I am alone, the creature is such a coward that he would not dare say his soul's his own; leave the door open, and I'll follow directly."

The cat's mind was so completely poisoned against her cousin that she implicitly believed this account of his character, and accordingly, with many recommendations to her lover not to sully his dignity by getting into any sort of quarrel with the dog, she set off first.

The dog went up to her very humbly, and begged her to allow him to say a few words to her; but she received him so haughtily, that his spirit was up; and he walked back to the tree more than ever enraged against his rival. But what was his joy when he saw that the cat had left the door open! "Now, wretch," thought he, "you cannot escape me!" So he walked briskly in at the back-door. He was greatly surprised to find Renard lying down in the straw, panting as if his heart would break, and rolling his eyes in the pangs of death.

"Ah, friend," said the fox, with a faltering voice, "you are avenged; my hour is come; I am just going to give up the ghost; put your paw upon mine, and say you forgive me."

Despite his anger, the generous dog could not set tooth on a dying foe.

"You have served me a shabby trick," said he; "you have left me to starve in a hole, and you have evidently maligned me with my cousin; certainly I meant to be avenged on you; but if you are really dying, that alters the affair."

"Oh, oh!" groaned the fox, very bitterly; "I am past help; the poor cat is gone for Doctor Ape, but he'll never come in time. What a thing it is to have a bad conscience on one's death-bed! But, wait till the cat returns, and I'll do you full justice with her before I die."

The good-natured dog was much moved at seeing his mortal enemy in such a state, and endeavoured as well as he could to console him.

"Oh, oh!" said the fox, "I am so parched in the throat, I am burning;" and he hung his tongue out of his mouth, and rolled his eyes more fearfully than ever.

"Is there no water here?" said the dog, looking round.

"Alas, no! — yet stay, — yes, now I think of it, there is some in that little hole in the wall: but how to get at it, — it is so high, that I can't, in my poor weak state, climb up to it; and I dare not ask such a favor of one I have injured so much."

"Don't talk of it," said the dog; "but the hole's very small, I could not put my nose through it."

"No; but if you just climb up on that stone, and thrust your paw into the hole, you can dip it into the water, and so cool my poor parched mouth. Oh, what a thing it is to have a bad conscience!"

The dog sprang upon the stone, and getting on his hind legs, thrust his front paw into the hole; when suddenly Renard pulled a string that he had concealed under the straw, and the dog found his paw caught tight to the wall in a running noose.

"Ah, rascal," said he, turning round; but the fox leaped up gayly from the straw, and fastening the string with his teeth to a nail in the other end of the wall, walked out, crying, "Good-by, my dear friend; have a care how you believe hereafter in sudden conversions!" So he left the dog on his hind legs to take care of the house.

Renard found the cat waiting for him where he had appointed, and they walked lovingly together till they came to the cave; it was now dark, and they saw the basket waiting below; the fox assisted the poor cat into it. "There is only room for one," said he, "you must go first!" up rose the basket: the fox heard a piteous mew, and no more.

"So much for the griffin's soup!" thought he.

He waited patiently for some time, when the griffiness, waving her claw from the window, said cheerfully, "All 's right, my dear Renard; my papa has finished his soup, and sleeps as sound as a rock! All the noise in the world would not wake him now, till he has slept off the boiled cat, — which won't be these twelve hours. Come and assist me in packing up the treasure, I should be sorry to leave a single diamond behind."

"So should I," quoth the fox; "stay, I 'll come round by the lower hole: why, the door 's shut! pray, beautiful griffiness, open it to thy impatient adorer."

"Alas, my father has hid the key! I never knew where he places it, you must come up by the basket; see, I let it down for you."

The fox was a little loath to trust himself in the same conveyance that had taken his mistress to be boiled; but the most cautious grow rash when money's to be gained; and avarice can trap even a fox. So he put himself as comfortably as he could into the basket, and up he went in an instant. It rested, however, just before it reached the window, and the fox felt, with a slight shudder, the claw of the griffiness stroking his back.

"Oh, what a beautiful coat!" quoth she, caressingly.

"You are too kind," said the fox; "but you can feel it more at your leisure when I am once up. Make haste, I beseech you."

"Oh, what a beautiful bushy tail! Never did I feel such a tail."

"It is entirely at your service, sweet griffiness," said the fox; "but pray let me in. Why lose an instant?"

"No, never did I feel such a tail. No wonder you are so successful with the ladies."

"Ah, beloved griffiness, my tail is yours to eternity, but you pinch it a little too hard."

Scarcely had he said this, when down dropped the basket, but not with the fox in it; he found himself caught by the tail, and dangling half-way down the rock, by the help of the very same sort of pulley wherewith he had snared the dog. I leave you to guess his consternation; he yelped out as loud as he could, — for it hurts a fox exceedingly to be hanged by his tail with his head downwards, — when the door of the rock opened, and out stalked the griffin himself, smoking his pipe, with a vast crowd of all the fashionable beasts in the neighbourhood.

"Oho, brother," said the bear, laughing fit to kill himself, "who ever saw a fox hanged by the tail before?"

"You 'll have need of a physician," quoth Doctor Ape.

"A pretty match, indeed; a griffiness for such a creature as you," said the goat, strutting by him.

The fox grinned with pain, and said nothing. But that which hurt him most was the compassion of a dull fool of a donkey, who assured him with great gravity, that he saw nothing at all to laugh at in his situation!

"At all events," said the fox, at last, "cheated, gulled, betrayed as I am, I have played the same trick to the dog; go laugh at him, gentlemen, he deserves it as much as I can, I assure you."

"Pardon me," said the griffin, taking the pipe out of his mouth; "one never laughs at the honest."

"And see," said the bear, "here he is."

And indeed the dog had, after much effort, gnawed the string in two, and extricated his paw; the scent of the fox had enabled him to track his footsteps, and here he arrived, burning for vengeance and finding himself already avenged.

But his first thought was for his dear cousin. "Ah, where is she?" he cried, movingly; "without doubt that villain Renard has served her some scurvy trick."

"I fear so, indeed, my old friend," answered the griffin, "but don't grieve; after all, she was nothing particular. You shall marry my daughter the griffiness, and succeed to all the treasure, ay, and all the bones that you once guarded so faithfully."

"Talk not to me," said the faithful dog. "I want none of your treasure; and, though I don't mean to be rude, your griffiness may go to the devil. I will run over the world but I will find my dear cousin."

"See her then," said the griffin; and the beautiful cat, more beautiful than ever, rushed out of the cavern, and threw herself into the dog's paws.

A pleasant scene this for the fox! — he knew enough of the female heart to know that a soft tongue may excuse many little infidelities, — but to be boiled alive for a griffin's soup, — no, the offence was inexpiable!

"You understand me, Mr. Renard," said the griffin, "I have no daughter, and it was me you made love to Knowing what sort of a creature a magpie is, I amused myself with hoaxing her, — the fashionable amusement at court, you know."

The fox made a mighty struggle, and leaped on the ground, leaving his tail behind him. It did not grow again in a hurry.

"See," said the griffin, as the beasts all laughed at the figure Renard made running into the wood, "the dog beats the fox, with the ladies, after all; and cunning as he is in every thing else, the fox is the last creature that should ever think of making love!"

"Charming," cried Nymphalin, clasping her hands, "it is just the sort of story I like."

"And I suppose, sir," said Nip, pertly, "that the dog and the cat lived very happily ever afterward. Indeed, the married felicity of a dog and cat is proverbial!"

"I dare say they lived much the same as any other married couple," answered the prince.

CHAPTER XIII.

The tomb of a father of many children.

The feast being now ended, as well as the story, the fairies wound their way homeward by a different path, till at length a red steady light glowed through the long, basaltic arches upon them, like the demon hunters' fires in the forest of pines.

The prince sobered in his pace, "You approach," said he, in a grave tone, "the greatest of our temples; you will witness the tomb of a mighty founder of our race." An awe crept over the queen, in despite of herself. Tracking the fires in silence, they came to a vast space, in the midst of which was a lone gray block of stone, such as the traveller finds amid the dread silence of Egyptian Thebes.

And on this stone lay the gigantic figure of a man, — dead, but not deathlike, for invisible spells had preserved the flesh and the long hair for untold ages; and beside him lay a rude instrument of music, and at his feet was a sword and a hunter's spear; and above the rock wound, hollow and roofless, to the upper air, and daylight came through, sickened and pale, beneath red fires that burnt everlastingly around him, on such simple altars as belong to a savage race. But the place was not solitary, for many motionless, but not lifeless, shapes sat on large blocks of stone beside the tomb. There, was the wizard, wrapt in his long black mantle, and his face covered with his hands, — there, was the uncouth and deformed dwarf, gibbering to himself, — there, sat the household elf, — there, glowered from a gloomy rent in the wall, with glittering eyes and shining scale, the enormous dragon of the north. An aged crone in rags, leaning on a staff, and gazing malignantly on the visiters, with bleared but fiery eyes, stood opposite the tomb of the gigantic dead. And now the fairies themselves completed the group! But all was dumb and unutterably silent; the silence that floats over some antique city of the desert, when, for the first time for a hundred centuries, a living foot enters its desolate remains; the silence that belongs to the dust of old, — deep, solemn, palpable, and sinking into the heart with a leaden and deathlike weight. Even the English fairy spoke not; she held her breath, and gazing on the tomb, she saw in rude vast characters,

THE TEVTON.

"We are all that remains of his religion!" said the prince, as they turned from the dread temple.

CHAPTER XIV

The fairy's cave and the fairy's wish.

It was evening; and the fairies were dancing beneath the twilight star.

"And why art thou sad, my violet," said the prince, "for thine eyes seek the ground?"

"Now that I have found thee," answered the queen, "and now that I feel what happy love is to a fairy, I sigh over that love which I have lately witnessed among mortals, but the bud of whose happiness already conceals the worm. For well didst thou say, my prince, that we are linked with a mysterious affinity to mankind, and whatever is pure and gentle among them, speaks at once to our sympathy, and commands our vigils."

"And most of all," said the German fairy, "are they who love under our watch; for love is the golden chain that binds all in the universe; love lights up alike the star and the glow-worm; and wherever there is love in men's lot, lies the secret affinity with men, and with things divine."

"But with the human race," said Nymphalin, "there is no love that outlasts the hour, for either death ends, or custom alters; when the blossom comes to fruit, it is plucked, and seen no more; and, therefore, when I behold true love sentenced to an early grave, I comfort myself that I shall not at least behold the beauty dimmed, and the softness of the heart hardened into stone. Yet, my prince, while still the pulse can beat, and the warm blood flow, in that beautiful form which I have watched over of late, let me not desert her; still let my influence keep the sky fair, and the breezes pure; still let me drive the vapor from the moon, and the clouds from the faces of the stars; still let me fill her dreams with tender and brilliant images, and glass in the mirror of sleep the happiest visions of fairy land; still let me pour over her eyes that magic, which suffers them to see no fault in one in whom she has garnered up her soul! And as death comes slowly on, still let me rob the spectre of its terror, and the grave of its sting; — so that, all gently and unconscious to herself, life may glide into the great ocean where the shadows lie; and the spirit, without guile, may be severed from its mansion without pain!"

The wish of the fairy was fulfilled.

CHAPTER XV.

The banks of the Rhine, from the Drachenfels to Brohl. — An incident that suffices in this tale for an epoch.

From the Drachenfels commences the true glory of the Rhine; and, once more, Gertrude's eyes conquered the languor that crept gradually over them, as she gazed on the banks around.

Fair blew the breeze, and just curled the waters; and Gertrude did not feel the vulture that had fixed its talons within her breast. The Rhine widens, like a broad lake, between the Drachenfels and Unkel; villages are scattered over the extended plain on the left; on the right is the isle of Werth, and the houses of Oberwinter; the hills are covered with vines; and still Gertrude turned back with a lingering gaze to the lofty crest of the Seven Hills.

On, on, — and the spires of Unkel rose above a curve in the banks, and on the opposite shore stretched those wondrous basaltic columns which extend to the middle of the river, and when the Rhine runs low, you may see them, like an ingulfed city beneath the waves. You then view the ruins of Okkenfels, and hear the voice of the pastoral Gasbach pouring its waters into the Rhine. From amid the clefts of the rocks the vine peeps luxuriantly forth, and gives a richness and coloring to what Nature, left to herself, intended for the stern.

"But turn your eye backward to the right," said Trevylyan; "those banks were formerly the special haunt of the bold robbers of the Rhine, and from amid the entangled brakes that then covered the ragged cliffs, they rushed upon their prey. Those feudal days were worth the living in; and a robber's life amid these mountains, and beside this mountain stream, must have been the very poetry of the spot carried into action."

They rested at Brohl, a small town between two mountains. On the summit of one you see the gray remains of Rheinecb. There is something weird and preternatural about the aspect of this place; its soil betrays signs that, in the former ages (from which even tradition is fast fading away) some volcano here exhausted its fires. The stratum of the earth is black and pitchy, and the springs beneath it are of a dark and graveolent water. Here the stream of the Brohlbach falls into the Rhine, and in a valley rich with oak and pine, and full of caverns, which are not without their traditionary inmates, stands the castle of Schweppenbourg, which our party failed not to visit.

Gertrude felt fatigued on their return, and Trevylyan sat by her in her little inn, while Vane went forth, with the curiosity of science, to examine the strata of the soil.

They conversed in the frankness of their affianced tie upon those topics which are only for lovers; upon the bright chapter in the history of their love; their first meeting; their first impressions; the little incidents in their present journey, — incidents noticed by themselves alone; that life *within* life which two persons know together, — which one knows not without the other, — which ceases to both the instant they are divided.

"I know not what the love of others may be," said Gertrude, "but ours seems different from all of which I have read. Books tell us of jealousies and misconstructions, and the necessity of an absence, the sweetness of a quarrel; but *we*, dearest Albert, have had no experience of these passages in love. *We* have never misunderstood each other; *we* have no reconciliation to look back to When was there ever occasion for me to ask forgiveness from you? Our love is made up only of one memory, — unceasing kindness! — a harsh thought, a wronging thought, never broke in upon the happiness we have felt and feel."

"Dearest Gertrude," said Trevylyan, "that character of our love is caught from you; you, the soft, the gentle, have been its pervading genius; and the well has been smooth and pure, for you were the spirit that lived within its depths."

And to such talk succeeded silence still more sweet, — the silence of the hushed and overflowing heart. The last voices of the birds, — the sun slowly sinking in the west, — the fragrance of descending dews, filled them with that deep and mysterious sympathy which exists between love and Nature.

It was after such a silence, — a long silence that seemed but as a moment, — that Trevylyan spoke, but Gertrude answered not; and, yearning once more for her sweet voice, he turned and saw that she had fainted away.

This was the first indication of the point to which her increasing debility had arrived. Trevylyan's heart stood still, and then beat violently; a thousand fears crept over him, he clasped her in his arms, and bore her to the open window. The setting sun fell upon her countenance, from which the play of the young heart and warm fancy had fled, and in its deep and still repose the ravages of disease were fully visible to the agonized heart of Trevylyan. Oh God! what were then his emotions! His heart was like stone; but he felt a rush as of a torrent to his temples; — his eyes grew dizzy, — he was stunned by the greatness of his despair. For the last week he had taken hope for his companion, Gertrude had seemed so much stronger, for her happiness had given her a false support; and though there had been moments, when watching the bright hectic come and go, and her step linger, and the breath heave short, he had felt the hope suddenly cease, yet never had he known till now that fulness of anguish, that dread certainty of the worst, which the calm, fair face before him struck into his soul: and, mixed with this agony as he gazed, was all the passion of the most ardent love! For there she lay in his arms, the gentle breath rising from lips where the rose yet lingered, and the long, rich hair, soft and silken as an infant's stealing from its confinement: every thing that belonged to Gertrude's beauty was so expressively soft, and pure, and youthful! Scarcely seventeen, she seemed much younger than she was; her figure had sunken from its roundness, but still how light, how lovely were its wrecks! — the neck whiter than snow, — the fair, small hand! Her weight was scarcely felt in the arms of her lover: and he — what a contrast! — was in all the pride and flower of glorious manhood! — his was the lofty brow, the wreathing hair, the haughty eye, the elastic form; and upon this frail, perishable thing had he fixed all his heart, all the hopes of his youth, the pride of his manhood, his schemes, his energies, his ambition!

"Oh Gertrude!" cried he, "is it, — is it thus, — is there indeed no hope?"

And Gertrude now slowly recovering, and opening her eyes upon Trevylyan's face, the revulsion was so great, his emotions so overpowering, that, clasping her to his bosom, as if even death should not tear her away from him, he wept over her in an agony of tears; not those tears that relieve the heart, but the fiery rain of the internal storm, a sign of the fierce tumult that shook the very core of his existence, not a relief.

Awakened to herself, Gertrude, in amazement and alarm, threw her arms around his neck, and looking wistfully into his face, implored him to speak to her.

"Was it my illness, love?" said she; and the music of her voice only conveyed to him the thought of how soon it would be dumb to him for ever; "nay," she continued, winningly, "it was but the heat of the day; I am better now, — I am well; there is no cause to be alarmed for me;" and, with all the innocent fondness of extreme youth, she kissed the burning tears from his eyes.

There was a playfulness, an innocence in this poor girl, so unconscious as yet of her destiny, which rendered her fate doubly touching; and which to the stern Trevylyan, hackneyed by the world, made her irresistible charm; and now, as she put aside her hair, and looked up gratefully, yet pleadingly, into his face, he could scarce refrain from pouring out to her the confession of his anguish and despair. But the necessity of self-control, — the necessity of concealing from *her* a knowledge which might only, by impressing her imagination, expedite her doom, while it would imbitter to her mind the unconscious enjoyment of the hour, nerved and manned him. He checked, by those violent efforts which men only can make, the evidence of his emotions; and endeavoured, by a rapid torrent of words, to divert her attention from a weakness, the causes of which he could not explain. Fortunately, Vane soon returned, and Trevylyan, consigning Gertrude to his care, hastily left the room.

Gertrude sank into a reverie.

"Ah, dear father!" said she, suddenly, and after a pause, "if I indeed were worse than I have thought myself of late, — if I were to die now, what would Trevylyan feel? Pray God, I may live for his sake!"

"My child, do not talk thus; you are better, much better than you were. Ere the autumn ends, Trevylyan's happiness will be your lawful care. Do not think so despondingly of yourself."

"I thought not of myself," sighed Gertrude, "but of *him!*"

CHAPTER XVI.

Gertrude. — The excursion to Hammerstein. — Thoughts.

THE next day they visited the environs of Brohl. Gertrude was unusually silent, for her temper, naturally sunny and enthusiastic, was accustomed to light up every thing she saw. Ah, once how bounding was that step! how undulating the young graces of that form! — how playfully once danced the ringlets on that laughing cheek! But she clung to Trevylyan's proud form with a yet more endearing tenderness than was her wont, and hung yet more eagerly on his words; her hand sought his, and she often pressed it to her lips, and sighed as she did so. Something that she would not tell, seemed passing within her, and sobered her playful mood. But there was this noticeable in Gertrude: whatever took away from her gayety, increased her tenderness. The infirmities of her frame never touched her temper. She was kind, — gentle, — loving to the last.

They had crossed to the opposite banks, to visit the castle of Hammerstein. The evening was transparently serene and clear; and the warmth of the sun yet lingered upon the air, even though the twilight had past, and the moon risen, as their boat returned by a lengthened passage to the village. Broad and straight flows the Rhine in this part of its career. On one side lay the wooden village of Namedy, the hamlet of Fornech, backed by the blue rock of Kruzborner Ley, the mountains that shield the mysterious Brohl; and on the opposite shore they saw the mighty rock of Hammerstein, with the green and livid ruins sleeping in the melancholy moonlight. Two towers rose haughtily above the more dismantled wrecks. How changed since the alternate banners of the Spaniard and the Swede waved from their ramparts, in that great war in which the gorgeous Wallenstein won his laurels! And in its mighty calm, flowing on the ancestral Rhine, the vessel reflected on its smooth expanse, and, above, guided by thin and shadowy clouds, the moon cast her shadows upon rocks covered with verdure, and brought into a dim light the twin spires of Andernach, tranquil in the distance.

"How beautiful is this hour!" said Gertrude, with a low voice: "surely we do not live enough in the night, — one half of the beauty of the world is slept away. What in the day can equal the holy calm, the loveliness and the stillness which the moon now casts over the earth? These," she continued, pressing Trevylyan's hand, "are hours to remember; and *you*, — will you ever forget them?"

Something there is in the recollection of such times and scenes that seem not to belong to real life, but are rather an episode in its history; they are like some wandering into a more ideal world; they refuse to blend with our ruder associations; they live in us, apart and alone, to be treasured ever, but not lightly to be recalled. There are none living to whom we can confide them, — who can sympathize with what then we felt? It is this that makes poetry, and that page which we create as a confidant to ourselves, necessary to the thoughts that weigh upon the breast. We write, for our writing is our friend, the inanimate paper is our confessional; we pour forth on it the thoughts that we could tell to no private ear, and are relieved, — are consoled. And, if genius has one prerogative dearer than the rest, it is that which enables it to do honor to the dead, — to revive the beauty, the virtue that are no more; to wreath chaplets that outlive the day, round the urn which were else forgotten by the world!

When the poet mourns, in his immortal verse, for the dead, tell me not that fame is in his mind! — it is filled by thoughts, by emotions that shut the living from his soul. He is breathing to his genius, — to that sole and constant friend, which has grown up with him from his cradle, — the sorrows too delicate for human sympathy; and when afterward he consigns the confession to the crowd, it is indeed from the hope of honor; — honor not for himself but for the being that is no more.

CHAPTER XVII.

Letter from Trevylyan to ——

"*Coblentz.*

"I AM obliged to you, my dear friend, for your letter, which, indeed, I have not, in the course of our rapid journey, had the leisure, perhaps the heart, to answer before. But we are staying in this town for some days, and I write now in the early morning, ere any one else in our hotel is awake. Do not tell me of adventure, of politics, of intrigues; my nature is altered. I threw down your letter, animated and brilliant as it was, with a sick and revolted heart. But I am now in somewhat less dejected spirits. Gertrude is better, — yes, really better, — there is a physician here who gives me hope; my care is perpetually to amuse and never to fatigue her, — never to permit her thoughts to rest upon herself. For I have imagined that illness cannot, at least, in the unexhausted vigor of our years, fasten upon us irremediably, unless we feed it with our own belief in its existence. You see men of the most delicate frames engaged in active and professional pursuits, who literally have no time for illness. Let them become idle, — let them take care of themselves, — let them think of their health, — and they die! The rust rots the steel which use preserves: and, thank heaven, although Gertrude, once during our voyage, seemed roused, by an inexcusable imprudence of emotion on my part, into some suspicion of her state, yet it passed away; for she thinks rarely of herself, — I am ever in her thoughts and seldom from her side, and you know too the sanguine and credulous nature of her disease! But, indeed, I now hope more than I have done since I knew her.

"When, after an excited and adventurous life, which had comprised so many changes in so few years, I found myself at rest, in the bosom of a retired and remote part of the country, and Gertrude and her father were my only neighbours, I was in that state of mind in which the passions, recruited by solitude, are accessible to the purer and more divine emotions. I was struck by Gertrude's beauty; I was charmed by her simplicity. Worn in the usages and fashions of the world, the inexperience, the trustfulness, the exceeding youth of her mind, charmed and touched me; but when I saw the stamp of our national disease in her bright eye and transparent cheek, I felt my love chilled, while my interest was increased. I fancied myself safe, and I went daily into the danger; I imagined so pure a light could not burn, and I was consumed. Not till my anxiety grew into pain, my interest into terror, did I know the secret of my own heart; and at the moment that I dis covered this secret, I discovered also that Gertrude loved me! What a destiny was mine! what happiness, yet what misery! Gertrude was my own, — but for what period? I might touch that soft hand, — I might listen to the tenderest confession from that silver voice, — I might press my kisses upon her fragrant lips, — but all the while my heart spoke of passion my reason whispered of death. You know that I am considered of a cold and almost callous nature, that I am not easily moved into affections; but my very pride bowed me here into weakness, there was so soft a demand upon my protection, so constant an appeal to my anxiety. You know that my father's quick temper burns within me, that I am hot, and stern, and exacting; but one hasty word, one thought of myself, here were inexcusable. So brief a time might be left for her earthly happiness, — could I imbitter one moment? All that feeling of uncertainty which should in prudence have prevented my love, increased it almost to a preternatural excess. That which it is said mothers feel for an only child in sickness, I feel for Gertrude. *My* existence is not! I exist in her!

"Her illness increased upon her at home; they have recommended travel. She chose the course we were to pursue, and fortunately it was so familiar to me, that I have been enabled to brighten the way. I am ever on the watch that she shall not know a weary hour; you would almost smile to see how I have roused myself from my habitual silence; and to find me, — me, the scheming and worldly actor of real life, — plunged back into the early romance of my boyhood, and charming the childish delight of Gertrude with the invention of fables and the traditions of the Rhine.

"But I believe I have succeeded in my object; if not, what is left to me? *Gertrude is better!* in that sentence what visions of hope dawn upon me! I wish you could have seen Gertrude before we left England; you might then have understood my love for her. Not that we have not, in the gay capitals of Europe, paid our brief vows to forms more richly beautiful; not that we have not been charmed by a more brilliant genius, — by a more tutored grace. But there is that in Gertrude which I never saw before; the union of the childish and the intellectual, an ethereal simplicity, a temper that is never dimmed, a tenderness, — oh God! let me not speak of her virtues, for they only tell me how little she is suited to the earth.

"You will direct me at Mayence, whither our course now leads us, and your friendship will make indulgence for my letter being so little a reply to yours.

"Your sincere friend,
"A. G. Trevylyan."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Coblentz. — Excursion to the mountains of Taunus. — Roman tower in the valley of Ehrenbreitstein. — Travel, its pleasures estimated differently by the young and the old. — The student of Heidelberg. — His criticisms on German literature.

Gertrude had, indeed, apparently rallied during their stay at Coblentz; and a French physician, established in the town (who adopted a peculiar treatment for consumption, which had been attended with no ordinary success) gave her father and Trevylyan a sanguine assurance of her ultimate recovery. The time they passed within the white walls of Coblentz, was, therefore, the happiest and most cheerful part of their pilgrimage. They visited the various places in its vicinity; but the excursion which most delighted Gertrude was one to the mountains of Taunus.

They took advantage of a beautiful September day; and, crossing the river, commenced their tour from the Thal, or valley of Ehrenbreitstein. They stopped on their way to view the remains of a Roman tower in the valley, for the whole of that district bears frequent witness of the ancient conquerors of the world. The mountains of Taunus are still intersected with the roads which the Romans cut to the mines that supplied them with silver. Roman urns, and inscribed stones, are often found in these ancient places. The stones, inscribed with names utterly unknown, — a type of the uncertainty of fame! — the urns from which the dust is gone, — a very satire upon life!

Lone, gray, and mouldering, this tower stands aloft in the valley; and the quiet Vane smiled to see the blue uniform of a modern Prussian, with his white belt and lifted bayonet, by the spot which had once echoed to the clang of the Roman arms. The soldier was paying a momentary court to a country damsel, whose straw hat and rustic dress did not stifle the vanity of the sex; and this rude and humble gallantry, in that spot, was another moral in the history of human passions. Above, the ramparts of a modern rule frowned down upon the solitary tower, as if in the vain insolence with which present power looks upon past decay; the living race upon ancestral greatness. And indeed, in this respect, rightly! — for modern times have no parallel to that degradation of human dignity stamped upon the ancient world, by the long sway of the imperial harlot, all slavery herself, yet all tyranny to earth; — and, like her own Messalina, at once a prostitute and an empress.

They continued their course by the ancient baths of Ems, and keeping by the banks of the romantic Lahn, arrived at Holzapfel.

"Ah," said Gertrude, one day, as they proceeded to the springs of the Carlovingian Wisbaden, "surely perpetual travel with those we love must be the happiest state of existence. If home has its comforts, it also has its cares; but here we are at home with Nature, and the minor evils vanish almost before they are felt."

"True," said Trevylyan, "we escape from 'the little,' which is the curse of life; the small cares that devour us up, the grievances of the day. We are feeding the divinest part of our nature, — the appetite to admire."

"But of all things wearisome," said Vane, "a succession of changes is the most. There can be a monotony in variety itself. As the eye aches in gazing long at the new shapes of the kaleidoscope, the mind aches at the fatigue of a constant alternation of objects; and we delightedly return to REST, which is to life what green is to the earth."

In the course of their sojourn among the various baths of Taunus, they fell in, by accident, with a German student of Heidelberg, who was pursuing the pedestrian excursions so peculiarly favored by his tribe. He was tamer and gentler than the general herd of those young wanderers, and our party were much pleased with his enthusiasm, because it was unaffected. He had been in England, and spoke its language almost as a native.

"Our literature," said he, one day, conversing with Vane, "has two faults, — we are too subtle and too homely. We do not speak enough to the broad comprehension of mankind; we are for ever making abstract qualities of flesh and blood. Our critics have turned your Hamlet into an allegory; they will not even allow Shakspeare to paint mankind, but insist on his imbodying qualities. They turn poetry into metaphysics, and truth seems to them shallow, unless an allegory, which is false, can be seen at the bottom. Again, too, with our most imaginative works we mix a homeliness that we fancy touching, but which in reality is ludicrous. We eternally step from the sublime to the ridiculous, — we want taste."

"But not, I hope, French taste. Do not govern a Goethe, or even a Richter, by a Boileau!" said Trevylyan.

"No, but Boileau's taste was false. Men, who have the reputation for good taste, often acquire it solely because of the want of genius. By taste, I mean a quick tact into the harmony of composition, the art of making the whole consistent with its parts, the *concinnitas*, — Schiller alone of our authors has it; — but we are fast mending; and, by following shadows so long, we have been led at last to the substance. Our past literature is to us what astrology was to science, false but ennobling, and conducting us to the true language of the intellectual heaven."

Another time, the scenes they passed, interspersed with the ruins of frequent monasteries, leading them to converse on the monastic life, and the various additions time makes to religion, the German said, "Perhaps one of the works most wanted in the world, is the history of religion. We have several books, it is true, on the subject, but none that supply the want I allude to. A German ought to write it; for only a German would probably have the requisite learning. A German only too is likely to treat the mighty subject with boldness, and yet with veneration; without the shallow flippancy of the Frenchman, without the timid sectarianism of the English. It would be a noble task, to trace the winding mazes of antique falsehood; to clear up the first glimmerings of divine truth; to separate Jehovah's

Word from man's invention; to vindicate the All-merciful from the dread creeds of bloodshed and of fear: and watching in the great heaven of truth the dawning of the true star, follow it, — like the magi of the east, — till it rested above the real God. Not indeed presuming to such a task," continued the German, with a slight blush, "I have about me an humble essay, which treats only of one part of that august subject; which, leaving to a loftier genius the history of the true religion, may be considered as the history of a false one; — of such a creed as Christianity supplanted in the north; or such as may perhaps be found among the fiercest of the savage tribes. It is a fiction, — as you may conceive; but yet, by a constant reference to the early records of human learning, I have studied to weave it up from truths. If you would like to hear it, — it is very short — "

"Above all things," said Vane; and the German drew a manuscript, neatly bound, from his pocket.

"After having myself criticised so insolently the faults of our national literature," said he, smiling, "you will have a right to criticise the faults that belong to so humble a disciple of it. But you will see that, though I have commenced with the allegoric, or the supernatural, I have endeavoured to avoid the subtlety of conceit and the obscurity of design which I blame in the wilder of our authors. As to the style, I wished to suit it to the subject; it ought to be, unless I err, rugged and massive; hewn, as it were, out of the rock of primeval language. But you, madam; — doubtless you do not understand German."

"Her mother was an Austrian," said Vane; "and she knows at least enough of the tongue to understand you; so pray begin."

Without further preface, the German then commenced the story, which the reader will find translated * in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIX.

The fallen star; or, the history of a false religion.

And the stars sat, each on his ruby throne, and watched with sleepless eyes upon the world. It was the night ushering in the new year, a night on which every star receives from the archangel that then visits the universal galaxy, its peculiar charge. The destinies of men and empires are then portioned forth for the coming year, and unconsciously to ourselves, our fates become minioned to the stars. A hushed and solemn night is that in which the dark gates of time open to receive the ghost of the dead year, and the young and radiant stranger rushes forth from the clouded chasms of eternity. On that night, it is said, that there is to the spirits that we see not a privilege and a power; the dead are troubled in their forgotten graves, and men feast and laugh while demon and angel are contending for their doom.

It was night in heaven; all was unutterably silent, the music of the spheres had paused, and not a sound came from the angels of the stars; and they who sat upon those shining thrones were three thousand and ten, each resembling each. Eternal youth clothed their radiant limbs with celestial beauty, and on their faces was written the dread of calm, that fearful stillness which feels not, sympathizes not with the dooms over which it broods. War, tempest, pestilence, the rise of empires and their fall they ordain, they compass, unexultant and uncompassionate. The fell and thrilling crimes that stalk abroad when the world sleeps, the parricide with his stealthy step, and horrent brow, and lifted knife; the unwifed mother that glides out and looks behind, and behind, and shudders, and casts her babe upon the river, and hears the wail, and pities not, — the splash, and does not tremble; these the starred kings behold, — to these they lead the unconscious step; but the guilt blanches not their lustre, neither doth remorse wither their unwrinkled youth. Each star wore a kingly diadem; round the loins of each was a graven belt, graven with many and mighty signs; and the foot of each was on a burning ball, and the right arm drooped over the knee as they bent down from their thrones; they moved not a limb or feature, save the finger of the right hand, which ever and anon moved, slowly pointing, and regulated the fates of men as the hand of the dial speaks the career of time.

One only of the three thousand and ten wore not the same aspect as his crowned brethren; a star, smaller than the rest, and less luminous; the countenance of this star was not impressed with the awful calmness of the others; but there were sullenness and discontent upon his mighty brow.

And this star said to himself, — "Behold! I am created less glorious than my fellows, and the archangel apportions not to me the same lordly destinies. Not for me are the dooms of kings and bards, the rulers of empires, or, yet nobler, the swayers and harmonists of souls. Sluggish are the spirits and base the lot of the men I am ordained to lead through a dull life to a fameless grave. And wherefore? — is it mine own fault, or is it the fault which is not mine, that I was woven of beams less glorious than my brethren? Lo! when the archangel comes, I will bow not my crowned head to his decrees. I will speak, as the ancestral Lucifer before me: *he* rebelled because of his glory, *I* because of my obscurity; *he* from the ambition of pride, and *I* from its discontent."

And while the star was thus communing with himself, the upward heavens were parted, as by a long river of light, and adown that stream swiftly, and without sound, sped the archangel visiter of the stars; his vast limbs floated in the liquid lustre, and his outspread wings, each plume the glory of a sun, bore him noiselessly along; but thick clouds veiled his lustre from the eyes of mortals, and while above all was bathed in the serenity of his splendor, tempest and storm broke below over the children of the earth: "He bowed the heavens and came down, and darkness was under his feet."

And the stillness on the faces of the stars became yet more still, and the awfulness was humbled into awe. Right above their thrones paused the course of the archangel; and his wings stretched from east to west, overshadowing, with the shadow of light, the immensity of space. Then forth, in the shining stillness, rolled the dread music of his voice; and, fulfilling the heraldry of God, to each star he appointed the duty and the charge, and each star bowed his head yet lower as it received the fiat, while his throne rocked and trembled at the majesty of the word. But at last, when each of the brighter stars had, in succession, received the mandate, and the viceroyalty over the nations of the earth, the purple and diadems of kings; the archangel addressed the lesser star as he sat apart from his fellows: —

"Behold," said the archangel, "the rude tribes of the north, the fishermen of the river that flows beneath, and the hunter of the forests, that darken the mountain tops with verdure! these be thy charge, and their destinies thy care. Nor deem thou, O star of the sullen beams, that thy duties are less glorious than the duties of thy brethren; for the peasant is not less to thy master and mine than the monarch; nor doth the doom of empires rest more upon the sovereign than on the herd. The passions and the heart are the dominion of the stars, a mighty realm; nor less mighty beneath the hide that garbs the shepherd, than the jewelled robes of the eastern kings."

Then the star lifted his pale front from his breast, and answered the archangel: —

"Lo!" he said, "ages have past, and each year thou hast appointed me to the same ignoble charge. Release me, I pray thee, from the duties that I scorn; or, if thou wilt that the lowlier race of men be my charge, give unto me the charge, not of many, but of one, and suffer me to breathe unto him the desire that spurns the valleys of life, and ascends its steeps. If the humble are given to me, let there be among them one whom I may lead on the mission that shall abase the proud; for, behold, O appointer of the stars, as I have sat for uncounted years upon my solitary throne, brooding over the things beneath, my spirit hath gathered wisdom from the changes that shift below. Looking upon the tribes of earth, I have seen how the multitude are swayed, and tracked the steps that lead weakness into power; and fain would I be the ruler of one who, if abased, shall aspire to rule."

As a sudden cloud over the face of noon was the change on the brow of the archangel.

"Proud and melancholy star," said the herald, "thy wish would war with the courses of the invisible destiny, that, throned far above, sways and harmonizes all; the source from which the lesser rivers of fate are eternally gushing through the heart of the universe of things. Thinkest thou that thy wisdom of itself can lead the peasant to become a king ? ”

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* Nevertheless I beg to state seriously, that the German student is an impostor; had he taken any other tale of mine, I would have borne it: but one of my very best, — ah, *scelerat !*

And the crowned star gazed undauntedly on the face of the archangel, and answered,

“ Yea ! — grant me but one trial ! ”

Ere the archangel could reply, the furthest centre of the heaven was rent as by a thunderbolt; and the divine herald covered his face with his hands, and a voice low and sweet, and mild with the consciousness of unquestionable power, spoke forth to the repining star.”

“ The time has arrived when thou mayst have thy wish. Below thee, upon yon solitary plain, sits a mortal, gloomy as thyself, who, born under thy influence, may be moulded to thy will.”

The voice ceased as the voice of a dream. Silence was over the seas of space, and the archangel, once more borne aloft, slowly soared away into the farther heaven, to promulgate the divine bidding to the stars of far distant worlds. But the soul of the discontented star exulted within itself; and it said, “ I will call forth a king from the valley of the herdsman, that shall trample on the kings subject to my fellows, and render the charge of the contemned star more glorious than the minions of its favored brethren; thus shall I revenge neglect, — thus shall I prove my claim hereafter to the heritage of the great of earth ! ”

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At that time, though the world had rolled on for ages, and the pilgrimage of man had passed through various states of existence, which our dim traditionary knowledge has not preserved, yet the condition of our race in the northern hemisphere, was then what *we*, in our imperfect lore, have conceived to be among the earliest.

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By a rude and vast pile of stones, the masonry of arts forgotten, a lonely man sat at midnight, gazing upon the heavens, a storm had just passed from the earth, — the clouds had rolled away, and the high stars looked down upon the rapid waters of the Rhine; and no sound save the roar of the waves, and the dripping of the rain from the mighty trees, was heard around the ruined pile; the white sheep lay scattered on the plain, and slumber with them. He sat watching over the herd, lest the foes of a neighbouring tribe seized them unawares, and thus he communed with himself: “ The king sits upon his throne, and is honored by a warrior race, and the warrior exults in the trophies he has won;the step of the huntsman is bold upon the mountain top, and his name is sung at night round the pine fires, by the lips of the bard; and the bard himself hath honor in the hall. But I, who belong not to the race of kings, and whose limbs can bound not to the rapture of war, nor scale the eyries of the eagle and the haunts of the swift stag; whose hand can string not the harp, and whose voice is harsh in the song; *I* have neither honor nor command, and men bow not the head as I pass along; yet do I feel within me the consciousness of a great power that should rule my species, — not obey. My eye pierces the secret hearts of men, — I see their thoughts ere their lips proclaim them; and I scorn, while I see, the weakness and the vices which I never shared, — I laugh at the madness of the warrior, — I mock within my soul at the tyranny of kings. Surely there is something in man's nature more fitted to command, — more worthy of renown, than the sinews of the arm, or the swiftness of the feet, or the accident of birth ! ”

As Morven, the son of Osslah, thus mused within himself, still looking at the heavens, the solitary man beheld a star suddenly shooting from its place, and speeding through the silent air, till it as suddenly paused, right over the midnight river, and facing the inmate of the pile of stones.

As he gazed upon the star strange thoughts grew slowly over him. He drank, as it were, from its solemn aspect the spirit of a great design. A dark cloud rapidly passing over the earth, snatched the star from his sight, but left to his awakened mind the thoughts and the dim scheme that had come to him as he gazed.

When the sun arose, one of his brethren relieved him of his charge over the herd, and he went away, but not to his father's home. Musingly he plunged into the dark and leafless recesses of the winter forest; and shaped, out of his wild thoughts, more palpably and clearly the outline of his daring hope. While thus absorbed, he heard a great noise in the forest, and fearful lest the hostile tribe of Alrich might pierce that way, he ascended one of the loftiest pine trees, to whose perpetual verdure the winter had not denied the shelter he sought, and concealed by its branches, he looked anxiously forth in the direction whence the noise had proceeded. And IT came, — it came, with a tramp and a crash, and a crushing tread upon the crunched boughs and matted leaves that strewed the soil, — it came, it came, the monster that the world now holds no more, — the mighty Mammoth of the North ! Slowly it moved in its huge strength along, and its burning eyes glittered through the gloomy shade; its jaws, falling apart, showed the grinders with which it snapped asunder the young oaks of the forest; and the vast tusks, which curved downwards to the middest of its massive limbs, glistened white and ghastly, curdling the blood of one destined hereafter to be the dreadest ruler of men of that distant age.

The livid eyes of the monster fastened on the form of the herdsman, even amid the thick darkness of the pine. It paused, — it glared upon him, — its jaws opened, and a low deep sound as of gathering thunder, seemed to the son of Osslah as the knell of a dreadful grave. But after glaring on him for some moments, it again, and calmly, pursued its terrible way, crashing the boughs as it marched along, till the last sound of its heavy tread died away upon his ear.*

Ere yet however Morven summoned the courage to descend the tree, he saw the shining of arms through the bare branches of the wood, and presently a small band of the hostile Alrich came into sight. He was perfectly hidden from them; and, listening as they passed him, he heard one say to another —

“ The night covers all things ; why attack them by day ? ”

And he who seemed the chief of the band, answered,

“ Right. To-night, when they sleep in their city, we will upon them. Lo ! they will be drenched in wine, and fall like sheep into our hands.”

“ But where, O chief,” said a third of the band, “ shall our men hide during the day ? for there are many hunters among the youth of the Oestrich tribe, and they might see us in the forest unawares, and arm their race against our coming.”

“ I have prepared for that,” answered the chief. “ Is not the dark cavern of Oderlin at hand ? Will it not shelter us from the eyes of the victims ? ”

Then the men laughed, and shouting, they went their way adown the forest.

When they were gone Morven cautiously descended, and striking into a broad path, hastened to a vale that lay between the forest and the river in which was the city where the chief of his country dwelt. As he passed by the warlike men, giants in that day, who thronged the streets, (if streets they might be called,) their half garments parting from their huge limbs, the quiver at their backs, and the hunting spear in their hands, they laughed and shouted out, and pointing to him, cried, “ Morven the woman, Morven the cripple, what dost thou among men ? ”

For the son of Osslah was small in stature and of slender strength, and his step had halted from his birth; but he passed through the warriors unheedingly. At the outskirts of the city he came upon a tall pile in which some old men dwelt by themselves, and counselled the king when times of danger, or when the failure of the season, the famine, or the drought, perplexed the ruler, and clouded the savage fronts of his warrior tribe.

They gave the counsels of experience, and when experience failed, they drew, in their believing ignorance, assurances and omens from the winds of heaven, the changes of the moon, and the flights of the wandering birds. Filled (by the voices of the elements, and the variety of mysteries which ever shift along the face of things unsolved by the wonder which pauses not, the fear which believes, and that eterna reasoning of all experience, which assigns causes to effect) with the notion of superior powers, they assisted their ignorance by the conjectures of their superstition. But as yet they knew no craft and practised no *voluntary* delusion; they trembled too much at the mysteries which had created their faith to seek to belie them. They counselled as they believed, and the bold dream had never dared to cross men thus worn and gray with age, of governing their warriors and their kings by the wisdom of deceit.

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* *The critic* will perceive that this sketch of the beast, whose race has perished, is mainly intended to designate the remote period of the world in which the tale is cast.

The son of Osslah entered the vast pile with a fearless step, and approached the place at the upper end of the hall where the old men sat in conclave.

"How, base-born and craven-limbed," cried the eldest, who had been a noted warrior in his day; "darest thou enter unsummoned amid the secret councils of the wise men? Knowest thou not, scatterling, that the penalty is death?"

"Slay me, if thou wilt," answered Morven, "but hear! As I sat last night in the ruined palace of our ancient kings, tending, as my father bade me, the sheep that grazed around, lest the fierce tribe of Alrich should descend unseen from the mountains upon the herd, a storm came darkly on, and when the storm had ceased, and I looked above on the sky, I saw a star descend from its height toward me, and a voice from the star said, 'Son of Osslah, leave thy herd and seek the council of the wise men, and say unto them, that they take thee as one of their number, or that sudden will be the destruction of them and theirs.' But I had courage to answer the voice, and I said, 'Mock not the poor son of the herdsman. Behold, they will kill me if I utter so rash a word for I am poor and valueless in the eyes of the tribe of Oestrich, and the great in deeds and the gray of hair alone sit in the council of the wise men.'

"Then the voice said, 'Do my bidding, and I will give thee a token that thou comest from the powers that sway the seasons and sail upon the eagles of the winds. Say unto the wise men that this very night, if they refuse to receive thee of their band, evil shall fall upon them, and the morrow shall dawn in blood.'

"Then the voice ceased, and the cloud passed over the star; and I communed with myself, and came, O dread fathers, mournfully unto you. For I feared that ye would smite me because of my bold tongue, and that ye would sentence me to the death, in that I asked what may scarce be given even to the sons of kings."

Then the grim elders looked one at the other, and marvelled much, nor knew they what answer they should make to the herdsman's son.

At length one of the wise men said, "Surely there must be truth in the son of Osslah, for he would not dare to falsify the great lights of heaven. If he had given unto men the words of the star, verily we might doubt the truth. But who would brave the vengeance of the gods of night?"

Then the elders shook their heads, approvingly; but one answered and said —

"Shall we take the herdsman's son as our equal? No." The name of the man who thus answered was Darvan, and his words were pleasing to the elders.

But Morven spoke out: "Of a truth, oh counsellors of kings, I look not to be an equal with yourselves. Enough if I tend the gates of your palace, and serve you as the son of Osslah may serve;" and he bowed his head humbly as he spoke.

Then said the chief of the elders, for he was wiser than the others, "But how wilt thou deliver us from the evil that is to come? Doubtless the star has informed thee of the service thou canst render to us if we take thee into our palace, as well as the ill that will fall on us if we refuse."

Morven answered meekly, "Surely, if thou acceptest thy servant, the star will teach him that which may requite thee; but as yet he knows only what he has uttered."

Then the sages bade him withdraw, and they communed with themselves, and they differed much; but though fierce men, and bold at the war-cry of a human foe, they shuddered at the prophecy of a star. So they resolved to take the son of Osslah, and suffer him to keep the gate of the council hall.

He heard their decree and bowed his head, and went to the gate, and sat down by it in silence.

And the sun went down in the west, and the first stars of the twilight began to glimmer when Morven started from his seat, and a trembling appeared to seize his limbs His lips foamed; an agony and a fear possessed him: he writhed as a man whom the spear of a foeman has pierced with a mortal wound, and suddenly fell upon his face on the stony earth.

The elders approached him; wondering, they lifted him up. He slowly recovered as from a swoon; his eyes rolled wildly.

"Heard ye not the voice of the star?" he said.

And the chief of the elders answered, "Nay, we heard no sound."

Then Morven sighed heavily.

"To me only the word was given. Summon instantly, oh counsellors of the king, summon the armed men, and all the youth of the tribe, and let them take the sword and the spear, and follow thy servant. For lo! the star hath announced to him that the foe shall fall into our hands as the wild beasts of the forests."

The son of Osslah spoke with the voice of command, and the elders were amazed. "Why pause ye?" he cried. "Do the gods of the night lie? On my head rest the peril if I deceive ye."

Then the elders communed together; and they went forth and summoned the men of arms, and all the young of the tribe; and each man took the sword and the spear, and Morven also. And the son of Osslah walked first, still looking up at the star; and he motioned them to be silent, and move with a stealthy step.

So they went through the thickest of the forest, till they came to the mouth of a great cave, overgrown with aged and matted trees, and it was called the cave of Oderlin, and he bade the leaders place the armed on either side of the cave, to the right and to the left, among the bushes.

So they watched silently till the night deepened, when they heard a noise in the cave and the sound of feet, and forth came an armed man; and the spear of Morven pierced him, and he fell dead at the mouth of the cave. Another and another, and both fell! Then loud and long was heard the war-cry of Alrich, and forth poured, as a stream over a narrow bed, the river of armed men. And the sons of Oestrich fell upon them, and the foe were sorely perplexed and terrified by the suddenness of the battle and the darkness of the night; and there was a great slaughter.

And when the morning came, the children of Oestrich counted the slain, and found the leader of Alrich and the chief men of the tribe among them, and great was the joy thereof. So they went back in triumph to the city, and they carried the brave son of Osslah on their shoulders, and shouted forth, "Glory to the servant of the star."

And Morven dwelt in the council of the wise men.

Now the king of the tribe had one daughter, and she was stately among the women of the tribe, and fair to look upon. And Morven gazed upon her with the eyes of love, but he did not dare to speak.

Now the son of Osslah laughed secretly at the foolishness of men; he loved them not, for they had mocked him; he honored them not, for he had blinded the wisest of their elders. He shunned their feasts and merriment, and lived apart and solitary. The austerity of his life increased the mysterious homage which his commune with the stars had won him, and the boldest of the warriors bowed his head to the favorite of the gods.

One day he was wandering by the side of the river, and he saw a large bird of prey rise from the waters, and give chase to a hawk that had not yet gained the full strength of its wings. From his youth the solitary Morven had loved to watch, in the great forests and by the banks of the mighty stream, the habits of the things which Nature has submitted to man; and looking now on the birds, he said to himself, "Thus is it ever; by cunning or by strength each thing wishes to master its kind." While thus moralizing, the larger bird had stricken down the hawk, and it fell terrified and panting at his feet. Morven took the hawk in his hands, and the vulture shrieked above him, wheeling nearer and nearer to its protected prey; but Morven scared away the vulture, and placing the hawk in his bosom, he carried it home, and tended it carefully, and fed it from his hand until it had regained its strength, and the hawk knew him, and followed him as a dog. And Morven said, smiling to himself, "Behold, the credulous fools around me put faith in the flight and motion of birds. I will teach this poor hawk to minister to my ends." So he tamed the bird, and tutored it according to its nature; but he concealed it carefully from others, and cherished it in secret.

The king of the country was old and like to die, and the eyes of the tribe were turned to his two sons, nor knew they which was the worthier to reign. And Morven, passing through the forest one evening, saw the younger of the two, who was a great hunter, sitting mournfully under an oak, and looking with musing eyes upon the ground.

"Wherefore musest thou, O swift-footed Siror?" said the son of Osslah; "and wherefore art thou sad?"

"Thou canst not assist me," answered the prince, sternly; "take thy way."

"Nay," answered Morven, "thou knowest not what thou sayest; am I not the favorite of the stars?"

"Away, I am no graybeard whom the approach of death makes doting; talk not to me of the stars; I know only the things that my eye sees and my ear drinks in."

"Hush," said Morven, solemnly, and covering his face, "hush! — lest the heavens avenge thy rashness. But behold, the stars have given unto me to pierce the secret hearts of others; and I can tell thee the thoughts of thine."

"Speak out, baseborn."

"Thou art the younger of two, and thy name is less known in war than the name of thy brother; yet wouldst thou desire to be set over his head, and to sit on the high seat of thy father."

The young man turned pale. "Thou hast truth in thy lips," said he, with a faltering voice.

"Not from me, but from the stars, descends the truth."

"Can the stars grant my wish?"

"They can; let us meet to-morrow." Thus saying, Morven passed into the forest.

The next day, at noon, they met again.

"I have consulted the gods of night, and they have given me the power that I prayed for, but on one condition."

"Name it."

"That thou sacrifice thy sister on their altars; thou must build up a heap of stones, and take thy sister into the wood, and lay her on the pile, and plunge thy sword into her heart; so only shalt thou reign."

The prince shuddered, and started to his feet, and shook his spear at the pale front of Morven.

"Tremble," said the son of Osslah, with a loud voice, "hark to the gods that threaten thee with death, that thou hast dared to lift thine arm against their servant!"

As he spoke, the thunder rolled above; for one of the frequent storms of the early summer was about to break. The spear dropped from the prince's hand; he sat down and cast his eyes on the ground.

"Wilt thou do the bidding of the stars, and reign?" said Morven.

"I will!" cried Siror, with a desperate voice.

"This evening, then, when the sun sets, thou wilt lead her hither, alone; I may not attend thee. Now, let us pile the stones."

Silently the huntsman bent his vast strength to the fragments of rock that Morven pointed to him, and they built the altar, and went their way.

And beautiful is the dying of the great sun, when the last song of the birds fades into the lap of silence; when the islands of the cloud are bathed in light, and the first star springs up over the grave of day!

"Whither leadest thou my steps, my brother," said Orna; "and why doth thy lip quiver? and why dost thou turn away thy face?"

"Is not the forest beautiful; does it not tempt us forth, my sister?"

"And wherefore are those heaps of stone piled together?"

"Let others answer, *I* piled them not."

"Thou tremblest, brother; we will return."

"Not so; by those stones is a bird that my shaft pierced to-day; a bird of beautiful plumage that I slew for thee."

"We are by the pile; where hast thou laid the bird?"

"Here!" cried Siror; and he seized the maiden in his arms, and casting her on the rude altar, he drew forth his sword to smite her to the heart.

Right over the stones rose a giant oak, the growth of immemorial ages; and from the oak, or from the heavens, broke forth a loud and solemn voice, "Strike not, son of kings, the stars forbear their own; the maiden thou shalt not slay; yet shalt thou reign over the race of Oestrich; and thou shalt give Orna as a bride to the favorite of the stars. Arise, and go thy way!"

The voice ceased; the terror of Orna had overpowered for a time the springs of life; and Siror bore her home through the wood in his strong arms.

"Alas!" said Morven, when at the next day he again met the aspiring prince; "alas! the stars have ordained me a lot which my heart desires not; for I, lonely of life, and crippled of shape, am insensible to the fires of love; and ever, as thou and thy tribe know, I have shunned the eyes of women, for the maidens laughed at my halting step and my sullen features; and so in my youth I learned betimes to banish all thoughts of love; but since they told me (as they declared to *thee*) that only through that marriage, thou, oh beloved prince! canst obtain thy father's plumed crown, I yield me to their will."

"But," said the prince, "not until I am king can I give thee my sister in marriage, for thou knowest that my sire would smite me to the dust, if I asked him to give the flower of our race to the son of the herdsman Osslah."

"Thou speakest the words of truth. Go home and fear not; but when thou art king, the sacrifice must be made, and Orna mine. Alas! how can I dare lift my eyes to her? But so ordain the dread kings of the night! — who shall gainsay their word?"

"The day that sees me king, sees Orna thine," answered the prince.

Morven walked forth, as was his wont, alone, and he said to himself, "The king is old, yet may he live long between me and mine hope!" and he began to cast in his mind how he might shorten the time. Thus absorbed, he wandered on so unheedingly, that night advanced, and he had lost his path among the thick woods, and knew not how to regain his home; so he lay down quietly beneath a tree, and rested till day dawned; then hunger came upon him, and he searched among the bushes for such simple roots as those with which, — for he was ever careless of food, — he was used to appease the cravings of nature.

He found, among other more familiar herbs and roots, a red berry of a sweetish taste, which he had never observed before. He ate of it sparingly, and had not proceeded far in the wood before he found his eyes swim, and a deadly sickness come over him. For several hours he lay convulsed on the ground expecting death; but the gaunt spareness of his frame, and his unvarying abstinence, prevailed over the poison, and he recovered slowly, and after great anguish; but he went with feeble steps back to the spot where the berries grew, and, plucking several, hid them in his bosom, and by nightfall regained the city.

The next day he went forth among his father's herds, and seizing a lamb, forced some of the berries into its stomach, and the lamb, escaping, ran away, and fell down dead. Then Morven took some more of the berries and boiled them down, and mixed the juice with wine, and he gave the wine in secret to one of his father's servants, and the servant died.

Then Morven sought the king, and coming into his presence alone, he said unto him, "How fares my lord?"

The king sat on a couch, made of the skins of wolves, and his eye was glassy and dim, but vast were his aged limbs, and huge was his stature, and he had been taller by a head than the children of men, and none living could bend the bow he had bent in youth. Gray, gaunt, and worn, as some mighty bones that are dug at times from the bosom of the earth, — a relic of the strength of old.

And the king said faintly, and with a ghastly laugh, —

"The men of my years fare ill. What avails my strength? Better had I been born a cripple like thee, so should I have had nothing to lament in growing old."

The red flush passed over Morven's brow; but he bent humbly —

"Oh king, what if I could give thee back thy youth? What if I could restore to thee the vigor which distinguished thee above the sons of men, when the warriors of Alrich fell like grass before thy sword?"

Then the king uplifted his dull eyes, and he said —

"What meanest thou, son of Osslah? Surely I hear much of thy great wisdom, and how thou speakest nightly with the stars. Can the gods of the night give unto thee the secret to make the old young?"

"Tempt them not by doubt," said Morven, reverently. "All things are possible to the rulers of the dark hour and, lo! the star that loves thy servant spake to him a.

the dead of night, and said, ‘Arise, and go unto the king; and tell him that the stars honor the tribe of Oestrich, and remember how the king bent his bow against the sons of Alrich; wherefore, look thou under the stone that lies to the right of thy dwelling, — even beside the pine tree; and thou shalt see a vessel of clay, and in the vessel thou wilt find a sweet liquid, that shall make the king thy master forget his age for ever.’ Therefore, my lord, when the morning rose I went forth, and looked under the stone, and behold the vessel of clay; and I have brought it hither, to my lord, the king.”

“Quick, — slave, — quick! that I may drink and regain my youth!”

“Nay, listen, oh king: further said the star to me.

“‘It is only at night, when the stars have power, that this their gift will avail; wherefore the king must wait till the hush of the midnight, when the moon is high, and then may he mingle the liquid with his wine. And he must reveal to none that he hath received the gift from the hand of the servant of the stars. For THEY do their work in secret, and when men sleep; therefore they love not the babble of mouths, and he who reveals their benefits shall surely die.’”

“Fear not,” said the king, grasping the vessel, “none shall know, — and behold, I will rise on the morrow; and my two sons, — wrangling for my crown, — verily I shall be younger than they!”

Then the king laughed loud; and he scarcely thanked the servant of the stars, neither did he promise him reward; for the kings of those days had little thought, — save for themselves.

And Morven said to him, “Shall I not attend my lord? for without me perchance the drug might fail of its effect.”

“Ay,” said the king, “rest here.”

“Nay,” replied Morven; “thy servants will marvel and talk much, if they see the son of Osslah sojourning in thy palace. So would the displeasure of the gods of night perchance be incurred. Suffer that the hinder door of the palace be unbarred, so that at the ninth hour, when the moon is midway in the heavens, I may steal unseen into thy chamber, and mix the liquid with thy wine.”

“So be it,” said the king; “thou art wise, though thy limbs are crooked and curt; and the stars might have chosen a taller man.” Then the king laughed again; and Morven laughed too, but there was danger in the mirth of the son of Osslah.

The night had begun to wane, and the inhabitants of Oestrich were buried in deep sleep, when hark, a sharp voice was heard crying out in the streets, “Woe, woe! Awake, ye sons of Oestrich, — woe!” Then forth, wild, — haggard, — alarmed, — spear in hand, rushed the giant sons of the rugged tribe, and they saw a man on a height in the middle of the city, shrieking “Woe!” and it was Morven, the son of Osslah! And he said unto them as they gathered round him, “Men and warriors, tremble as ye hear. The star of the west hath spoken to me, and thus said the star. ‘Evil shall fall upon the kingly house of Oestrich, yea, ere the morning dawn; wherefore go thou mourning into the streets, and wake the inhabitants to woe.’ So I rose and did the bidding of the star.” And while Morven was yet speaking, a servant of the king's house ran up to the crowd, crying loudly, — “The king is dead.” So they went into the palace, and found the king stark upon his couch, and his huge limbs all cramped and crippled by the pangs of death, and his hands clenched as if in menace of a foe, — the foe of all living flesh! Then fear came on the gazers, and they looked on Morven with a deeper awe than the boldest warrior would have called forth; — and they bore him back to the council-hall of the wise men, wailing and clashing their arms in woe, and shouting ever and anon, “Honor to Morven the prophet;” and that was the first time the word prophet was ever used in those countries.

At noon on the third day from the king's death, Siror sought Morven, and he said, “Lo, my father is no more, and the people meet this evening at sunset to choose his successor, and the warriors and young men will surely choose my brother for he is more known in war. Fail me not, therefore.”

“Peace, boy,” said Morven, sternly, “nor dare to question the truth of the gods of night.”

For Morven now began to assume on his power among the people, and to speak as rulers speak, even to the sons of kings. And the voice silenced the fiery Siror, nor dared he to reply.

“Behold,” said Morven, taking up a chaplet of colored plumes, “wear this on thy head, and put on a brave face, for the people like a hopeful spirit, and go down with thy brother to the place where the new king is chosen, and leave the rest to the stars. But above all things forget not that chaplet; it has been blessed by the gods of night.”

The prince took the chaplet and returned home.

It was evening, and the warriors and chiefs of the tribe were assembled in the place where the new king was to be elected. And the voices of the many favored Prince Voltoch, the brother of Siror, for he had slain twelve foemen with his spear, and verily in those days that was a great virtue in a king.

Suddenly there was a shout in the streets, and the people cried out, “Way for Morven the prophet, the prophet.” For the people held the son of Osslah in greater respect even than did the chiefs. Now, since he had become of note, Morven had assumed a majesty of air which the son of the herdsman knew not in his earlier days, and albeit his stature was short, and limbs halted, yet his countenance was grave and high. He only of the tribe wore a garment that swept the ground, and his head was bare, and his long black hair descended to his girdle, and rarely was change or human passion seen in his calm aspect. He feasted not, nor drank wine, nor was his presence frequent in the streets. He laughed not, neither did he smile, save when alone in the forest, — and then he laughed at the follies of his tribe.

So he walked slowly through the crowd, neither turning to the left nor to the right, as the crowd gave way; and he supported his steps with a staff of the knotted pine.

And when he came to the place where the chiefs were met, and the two princes stood in the centre, he bade the people around him proclaim silence; then mounting on a huge fragment of rock, he thus spake to the multitude.

“Princes, warriors, and bards! ye, O council of the wise men, and ye, O hunters of the forests, and snarers of the fishes of the streams; hearken to Morven, the son of Osslah. Ye know that I am lowly of race, and weak of limb; but did not I give into your hands the tribe of Alrich and did ye not slay them in the dead of night with a great slaughter? Surely ye must know this of himself did not the herdsman's son; surely he was but the agent of the bright gods that love the children of Oestrich. Three nights since, when slumber was on the earth, was not my voice heard in the streets? Did I not proclaim woe to the kingly house of Oestrich? and verily the dark arm had fallen on the bosom of the mighty, that is no more. Could I have dreamed this thing merely in a dream, or was I not as the voice of the bright gods that watch over the tribes of Oestrich? Wherefore, O men and chiefs, scorn not the poor herdsman, son of Osslah, but listen to his words, for are they not the wisdom of the stars? Behold, last night I sat alone in the valley, and the trees were hushed around and not a breath stirred; and I looked upon the star that counsels the son of Osslah; and I said, ‘Dread conqueror of the cloud, thou that bathest thy beauty in the streams, and piercest the pine boughs with thy presence; behold thy servant grieved because the mighty one hath passed away, and many foes surround the houses of my brethren; and it is well that they should have a king valiant and prosperous in war; the cherished of the stars. Wherefore, O star, as thou gavest into our hands the warriors of Alrich, and didst warn us of the fall of the oak of our tribe, wherefore I pray thee give unto the people a token that they may choose that king whom the gods of the night prefer!’ Then a low voice, sweeter than the music of the bard, stole along the silence. ‘Thy love for thy race is grateful to the stars of night; go then, son of Osslah, and seek the meeting of the chiefs and the people to choose a king, and tell them not to scorn thee because thou art slow to the chase, and little known in war; for the stars give thee wisdom as a recompense for all. Say unto the people, that as the wise men of the council shape their lessons by the flight of birds, so by the flight of birds shall a token be given unto them, and they shall choose their kings. For, saith the star of night, the birds are the children of the winds, they pass to and fro along the ocean of the air, and visit the clouds that are the war-ships of the gods. And their music is but broken melodies which they gleam from the harps above Are they not the messengers of the storm? Ere the stream chafes against the bank, and the rain descends, know ye not by the wail of birds and their low circles over the earth that the tempest is at hand? Wherefore, wisely do ye deem that the children of the air are the fit interpreters between the sons of men and the lords of the world above. Say then to the people and the chiefs, that they shall take, from among the doves that nest in the roof of the palace, a white dove, and they shall let it loose in the air, and verily the gods of the night shall deem the dove as a prayer coming from the people, and they shall send a messenger to grant the prayer and give to the tribes of Oestrich a king worthy of themselves.' "

"With that the star spoke no more."

Then the friends of Voltoch murmured among themselves, and they said, "Shall this man dictate to us who shall be king?" But the people and the warriors shouted, "Listen to the star; do we not give or deny battle according as the bird flies,—shall we not by the same token choose him by whom the battle shall be led?" And the thing seemed natural to them, for it was after the custom of the tribe. Then they took one of the doves that built in the roof of the palace, and they brought it to the spot where Morven stood, and he, looking up to the stars, and muttering to himself, released the bird.

There was a copse of trees at a little distance from the spot, and as the dove ascended a hawk suddenly rose from the copse and pursued the dove; and the dove was terrified, and soared circling high above the crowd, when, lo, the hawk, poising itself one moment on its wings, swooped with a sudden swoop, and abandoning its prey, alighted on the plumed head of Siror.

"Behold," cried Morven in a loud voice, "behold your king!"

"Hail, all hail the king!" shouted the people; "all hail the chosen of the stars!"

Then Morven lifted his right hand, and the hawk left the prince, and alighted on Morven's shoulder. "Bird of the gods!" said he, reverently, "hast thou not a sacred message for my ear?" Then the hawk put its beak to Morven's ear, and Morven bowed his head submissively; and the hawk rested with Morven from that moment and would not be scared away. And Morven said, "The stars have sent me this bird, that in the daytime when I see them not, we may never be without a counsellor in distress."

So Siror was made king, and Morven the son of Osslah was constrained by the king's will to take Orna for his wife; and the people and the chiefs honored Morven the prophet above all the elders of the tribe.

One day Morven said unto himself, musing, "Am I not already equal with the king? nay, is not the king my servant? did I not place him over the heads of his brothers? am I not therefore more fit to reign than he is? shall I not push him from his seat? It is a troublous and stormy office to reign over the wild men of Oestrich, to feast in the crowded hall, and to lead the warriors to the fray. Surely, if I feasted not, neither went out to war, they might say, this is no king, but the cripple Morven; and some of the race of Siror might slay me secretly. But can I not be far greater than kings, and continue to choose and govern them, living as now at mine own ease? Verily the stars shall give me a new palace, and many subjects."

Among the wise men was Darvan; and Morven feared him, for his eye often sought the movements of the son of Osslah.

And Morven said, "It were better to *trust* this man than to *blind*, for surely I want a helpmate and a friend." So he said to the wise man, as he sat alone watching the setting sun,

"It seemeth to me, O Darvan! that we ought to build a great pile in honor of the stars, and the pile should be more glorious than all the palaces of the chiefs and the palace of the king; for are not the stars our masters? and thou and I should be the chief dwellers in this new palace, and we will serve the gods of night, and fatten their altars with the choicest of the herd, and the freshest of the fruits of the earth."

And Darvan said, "Thou speakest as becomes the servant of the stars. But will the people help to build the pile? for they are a warlike race, and they love not toil."

And Morven answered, "Doubtless the stars will ordain the work to be done. Fear not."

"In truth thou art a wondrous man, thy words ever come to pass," answered Darvan; "and I wish thou wouldst teach me, friend, the language of the stars."

"Assuredly if thou servest me, thou shalt know," answered the proud Morven; and Darvan was secretly wroth that the son of the herdsman should command the service of an elder and a chief.

And when Morven returned to his wife he found her weeping much. Now she loved the son of Osslah with an exceeding love, for he was not savage and fierce as the men she had known, and she was proud of his fame among the tribe; and he took her in his arms and kissed her, and asked her why she wept. Then she told him that her brother the king had visited her, and had spoken bitter words of Morven; "he taketh from me the affection of my people," said Siror, "and blindeth them with lies. And since he hath made me a king, what if he take my kingdom from me? Verily, a new tale of the stars might undo the old." And the king had ordered her to keep watch on Morven's secrecy, and to see whether truth was in him when he boasted of his commune with the powers of night.

But Orna loved Morven better than Siror, therefore she told her husband all.

And Morven resented the king's ingratitude, and was troubled much, for a king is a powerful foe; but he comforted Orna, and bade her dissemble, and complain also of him to her brother, so that he might confide to her unsuspectingly whatsoever he might design against Morven.

There was a cave by Morven's house in which he kept the sacred hawk, and wherein he secretly trained and nurtured other birds against future need, and the door of the cave was always barred. And one day he was thus engaged when he beheld opposite a chink in the wall, that he had never noted before, and the sun came playfully in; and while he looked he perceived the sunbeam was darkened, and presently he saw a human face peering in. And Morven trembled, for he knew he had been watched. He ran hastily from the cave; but the spy had disappeared among the trees, and Morven went straight to the chamber of Darvan, and sat himself down. And Darvan did no return home till late, and he started and turned pale when he saw Morven. But Morven greeted him as a brother, and bade him to a feast, which, for the first time, he purposed giving at the full of the moon, in honor of the stars. And going out of Darvan's chamber he returned to his wife, and bade her rend her hair, and go at the dawn of day to the king her brother, and complain bitterly of Morven's treatment, and pluck the black plans from the breast of the king. "For, surely," said he, "Darvan hath lied to thy brother, and some evil waits me that I would fain know."

So the next morning Orna sought the king, and she said, "The herdsman's son hath reviled me, and spoken harsh words to me; shall I not be avenged?"

Then the king stamped his feet and shook his mighty sword. "Surely thou shalt be avenged, for I have learned from one of the elders that which convinceth me the man hath lied to the people, and the base-born shall surely die. Yea, the first time that he goeth alone into the forest, my brother and I will fall upon him, and smite him to the death." And with this comfort Siror dismissed Orna.

And Orna flung herself at the feet of her husband. "Fly now, O my beloved,—fly into the forests afar from my brethren, or surely the sword of Siror will end thy days."

Then the son of Osslah folded his arms, and seemed buried in black thoughts; nor did he heed the voice of Orna, until again and again she had implored him to fly.

"Fly!" he said at length. "Nay, I was doubting what punishment the stars should pour down upon our foe. Let warriors fly. Morven the prophet conquers by arms mightier than the sword."

Nevertheless Morven was perplexed in his mind, and knew not how to save himself from the vengeance of the king. Now, while he was musing hopelessly, he heard a roar of waters; and behold the river, for it was now the end of autumn, had burst its bounds, and was rushing along the valley to the houses of the city. And now the men of the tribe, and the women, and the children came running, and with shrieks, to Morven's house, crying, "Behold the river has burst upon us; save us, O ruler of the stars."

Then the sudden thought broke upon Morven, and he resolved to risk his fate upon one desperate scheme.

And he came out from the house calm and sad, and he said, "Ye know not what ye ask; I cannot save ye from this peril; ye have brought it on yourselves."

And they cried, "How, O son of Osslah? We are ignorant of our crime."

And he answered, "Go down to the king's palace and wait before it, and surely I will follow ye, and ye shall learn wherefore ye have incurred this punishment from the gods." Then the crowd rolled murmuring back, as a receding sea; and when it was gone from the place, Morven went alone to the house of Darvan, which was next his own: and Darvan was greatly terrified, for he was of a great age, and had no children, neither friends, and he feared that he could not of himself escape the waters.

And Morven said to him, soothingly, "Lo, the people love me, and I will see that thou art saved, for verily thou hast been friendly to me, and done me much service with the king."

And as he thus spake, Morven opened the door of the house and looked forth, and saw that they were quite alone; then he seized the old man by the throat, and ceased not his gripe till he was quite dead. And leaving the body of the elder on the floor, Morven stole from the house, and shut the gate. And as he was going to his cave, he mused a little while, when, hearing the mighty roar of the waves advancing, and afar off the shrieks of women, he lifted up his head, and said, proudly, "No! in this hour terror alone shall be my slave; I will use no art save the power of my soul." He shut the gate, and leaning on his pine staff, he strode down to the palace. And it was now evening, and many of the men held torches, that they might see each others' faces in the universal fear. Red flashed the quivering flames on the dark robes and pale front of Morven; and he seemed mightier than the rest, because his face alone was calm amid the tumult. And louder and hoarser came the roar of the waters; and swift rushed the shades of night over the hastening tide.

And Morven said, in a stern voice, "Where is the king; and wherefore is he absent from his people in the hour of dread?" Then the gate of the palace opened; and, behold, Siror was sitting in the hall by the vast pine fire, and his brother by his side, and his chiefs around him; for they would not deign to come among the crowd at the bidding of the herdsman's son.

Then Morven standing on a rock above the heads of the people, (the same rock whereon he had proclaimed the king,) thus spake: —

"Ye desired to know, O sons of Oestrich, wherefore the river hath burst its bounds, and this peril hath come upon you. Learn then that the stars resent as the foulest of human crimes an insult to their servants and delegates below. Ye are all aware of the manner of life of Morven, whom ye have surnamed the prophet! He harms not man or beast; he lives alone; and, far from the wild joys of the warrior tribe, he worships in awe and fear the powers of night. So is he able to advise ye of the coming danger, — so is he able to save ye from the foe. Thus are your huntsmen swift, and your warriors bold; and thus do your cattle bring forth their young, and the earth its fruits. What think ye, and what do ye ask to hear? Listen, men of Oestrich! they have laid snares for my life; and there are among you those who have whetted the sword against the bosom that is only filled with love for ye all. Therefore have the stern lords of heaven loosened the chains of the river, — therefore doth this evil menace you. Neither will it pass away until they who dug the pit for the servant of the stars are buried in the same."

Then, by the red torches, the faces of the men looked fierce and threatening; and ten thousand voices shouted forth, "Name them who conspired against thy life, O holy prophet, and surely they shall be torn limb from limb."

And Morven turned aside, and they saw that he wept bitterly; and he said,

"Ye have asked me, and I have answered; but now scarce will ye believe the foe that I have provoked against me; and by the heavens themselves, I swear, that if my death would satisfy their fury, nor bring down upon yourselves, and your children's children, the anger of the throned stars, gladly would I give my bosom to the knife. Yes," he cried, lifting up his voice, and pointing his shadowy arm toward the hall where the king sat by the pine fire, — "yes, thou whom by my voice the stars chose above thy brother, — yes, Siror, the guilty one, take thy sword and come hither, — strike, if thou hast the heart to strike, the prophet of the gods!"

The king started to his feet, and the crowd were hushed in a shuddering silence.

Morven resumed:

"Know then, O men of Oestrich, that Siror and Voltoch his brother, and Darvan, the elder of the wise men, have purposed to slay your prophet, even at such hour as when alone he seeks the shade of the forest to devise new benefits for you. Let the king deny it, if he can!"

Then Voltoch, of the giant limbs, strode forth from the hall, and his spear quivered in his hand.

"Rightly hast thou spoken, base son of my father's herdsman, and for thy sins shalt thou surely die; for thou liest when thou speakest of thy power with the stars, and thou laughest at the folly of them who hear thee; wherefore, put him to death."

Then the chiefs in the hall clashed their arms, and rushed forth to slay the son of Osslah.

But he, stretching his unarmed hands on high, exclaimed "Hear him, O dread ones of the night, — hark how he blasphemeth!"

Then the crowd took up the word, and cried, "He blasphemeth, — he blasphemeth against the prophet!"

But the king and the chiefs, who hated Morven, because of his power with the people, rushed into the crowd; and the crowd were irresolute, nor knew they how to act, for never yet had they rebelled against their chiefs, and they feared alike the prophet and the king.

And Siror cried, "Summon Darvan to us, for he hath watched the steps of Morven, and he shall lift the veil from my people's eyes." Then three of the swift of foot started forth to the house of Darvan.

And Morven cried out with a loud voice, "Hark, thus saith the star who, now riding through yonder cloud, breaks forth upon my eyes, — 'For the lie that the elder hath uttered against my servant, the curse of the stars shall fall upon him.' Seek, and as ye find him, so may ye find ever the foes of Morven and the gods!"

A chill and an icy fear fell over the crowd, and even the cheek of Siror grew pale; and Morven, erect and dark above the waving torches, stood motionless with folded arms. And hark, — far and fast came on the war-steeds of the wave, — they heard them marching to the land, and tossing their white manes in the roaring wind.

"Lo, as ye listen," said Morven, calmly, "the river sweeps on, — haste, for the gods will have a victim, be it your prophet or your king."

"Slave," shouted Siror, and his spear left his hand, and far above the heads of the crowd sped hissing beside the dark form of Morven, and rent the trunk of the oak behind. Then the people, wroth at the danger of their beloved seer, uttered a wild yell, and gathered round him with brandished swords, facing their chieftains and their king. But at that instant, ere the war had broken forth among the tribe, the three warriors returned, and they bore Darvan on their shoulders, and laid him at the feet of the king, and they said, tremblingly, "Thus found we the elder in the centre of his own hall." And the people saw that Darvan was a corpse, and that the prediction of Morven was thus verified. "So perish the enemies of Morven and the stars!" cried the son of Osslah. And the people echoed the cry. Then the fury of Siror was at its height; and waving his sword above his head, he plunged into the crowd, — "Thy blood, base-born, or mine!"

"So be it!" answered Morven, quailing not. "People, smite the blasphemer. Hark how the river pours down upon your children and your hearths. On, on, or ye perish!"

And Siror fell, pierced by five hundred spears.

"Smite! smite!" cried Morven, as the chiefs of the royal house gathered round the king. And the clash of swords, and the gleam of spears, and the cries of the dying, and the yell of the trampling people, mingled with the roar of the elements, and the voices of the rushing wave.

Three hundred of the chiefs perished that night by the swords of their own tribe. And the last cry of the victors was, "Morven the prophet, — *Morven the king!*"

And the son of Osslah, seeing the waves now spreading over the valley, led Orna his wife, and the men of Oestrich their women, and their children, to a high mount, where they waited the dawning sun. But Orna sat apart and wept bitterly, for her brothers were no more, and her race had perished from the earth. And Morven sought to comfort her in vain.

When the morning rose, they saw that the river had overspread the greater part of the city, and now stayed its course among the hollows of the vale. Then Morven said to the people, "The star-kings are avenged, and their wrath appeased. Tarry only here until the waters have melted into the crevices of the soil." And on the fourth day they returned to the city, and no man dared to name another, save Morven, as the king.

But Morven retired into his cave and mused deeply, and then assembling the people, he gave them new laws, and he made them build a mighty temple in honor of the stars, and made them heap within it all that the tribe held most precious. And he took unto him fifty children from the most famous of the tribe; and he took also ten from among the men who had served him best, and he ordained that they should serve the stars in the great temple; and Morven was their chief. And he put away the crown they pressed upon him, and he chose from among the elders a new king. And he ordained that henceforth the servants only of the stars in the great temple should elect the king and the rulers, and hold council, and make war; but he suffered the king to feast, and to hunt, and to make merry in the banquet-halls. And Morven built altars in the temple, and was the first who in the north sacrificed the beast and the bird, and afterward human flesh, upon the altars. And he drew auguries from the entrails of the victim, and made schools for the science of the prophet, and Morven's piety was the wonder of the tribe, in that he refused to be a king. And Morven the high priest was ten thousand times mightier than the king. He taught the people to till the ground, and to sow the herb, and by his wisdom, and the valor that his prophecies instilled into men, he conquered all the neighbouring tribes. And the sons of Oestrich spread themselves over a mighty empire, and with them spread the name and the laws of Morven. And in every province which he conquered, he ordered them to build a temple to the stars.

But a heavy sorrow fell upon the years of Morven. The sister of Siror bowed down her head, and survived not long the slaughter of her race. And she left Morven childless. And he mourned bitterly, and as one distraught, for her only in the world had his heart the power to love. And he sat down, and covered his face, saying,

"Lo! I have toiled and travailed, and never before in the world did man conquer what I have conquered. Verily the empire of the iron thews and the giant limbs is no more! I have founded a new power, that henceforth shall sway the lands; the empire of a plotting brain and a commanding mind. But, behold! my fate is barren, and I feel already that it will grow neither fruit nor tree as a shelter to mine old age. Desolate and lonely shall I pass unto my grave. O Orna! my beautiful! my loved! none were like unto thee, and to thy love do I owe my glory and my life! Would for thy sake, O sweet bird! that nestled in the dark cavern of my heart, — would for thy sake that thy brethren had been spared, for verily with my life would I have purchased thine. Alas! only when I lost thee did I find that thy love was dearer to me than the fear of others:" and Morven mourned night and day, and none might comfort him.

But from that time forth he gave himself solely up to the cares of his calling; and his nature and his affections, and whatever there was yet left soft in him grew hard like stone; and he was a man without love, and he forbade love and marriage to the priests.

Now in his latter years there arose *other* prophets, for the world had grown wiser even by Morven's wisdom, and some did say unto themselves, "Behold Morven, the herdsman's son, is a king of kings; this did the stars for their servant; shall we not also be servants to the stars?"

And they wore black garments like Morven, and went about prophesying of what the stars foretold them. And Morven was exceeding wroth: for he, more than other men, knew that the prophets lied; wherefore he went forth against them with the ministers of the temple, and he took them, and burnt them by a slow fire; for thus said Morven to the people: — "A true prophet hath honor, but *I* only am a true prophet; to all false prophets there shall be surely death."

And the people applauded the piety of the son of Osslah.

And Morven educated the wisest of the children in the mysteries of the temple, so that they grew up to succeed him worthily.

And he died full of years and honor, and they carved his effigy on a mighty stone before the temple, and the effigy endured for a thousand ages, and whoso looked on it trembled; for the face was calm with the calmness of unspeakable awe.

And Morven was the first mortal of the north that made religion the stepping-stone to power. Of a surety Morven was a great man!

It was the last night of the old year, and the stars sat, each upon his ruby throne, and watched with sleepless eyes upon the world. The night was dark and troubled, the dread winds were abroad, and fast and frequent hurried the clouds beneath the thrones of the kings of night. And ever and anon fiery meteors flashed along the depths of heaven, and were again swallowed up in the grave of darkness. But, far below his brethren, and with a lurid haze around his orb, sat the discontented star that had watched over the hunters of the north.

And on the lowest abyss of space there was spread a thick and mighty gloom, from which, as from a caldron, rose columns of wreathing smoke; and still, when the great winds rested for an instant on their paths, voices of woe and laughter, mingled with shrieks, were heard booming from the abyss to the upper air.

And now, in the middest night, a vast figure rose slowly from the abyss, and its wings threw blackness over the world. High upward to the throne of the discontented star sailed the fearful shape, and the star trembled on his throne, when the form stood before him face to face

And the shape said, "Hail, brother! — all hail!"

"I know thee not," answered the star; "thou art not the archangel that visitest the kings of night."

And the shape laughed loud: "I am the fallen star of the morning, — I am Lucifer, thy brother! Hast thou not, O sullen king, served me and mine? — and hast thou not wrested the earth from thy Lord that sittest above, and given it to me, by darkening the souls of men with the religion of fear? Wherefore come, brother, come, — thou hast a throne prepared beside my own in the fiery gloom, — come! The heavens are no more for thee."

Then the star rose from his throne, and descended to the side of Lucifer. For ever hath the spirit of discontent had sympathy with the soul of pride. And they sank slowly down to the gulf of gloom.

It was the first night of the new year, and the stars sat, each upon his ruby throne, and watched with sleepless eyes upon the world. But sorrow dimmed the bright faces of the kings of night, for they mourned in silence and in fear for a fallen brother.

And the gates of the heaven of heavens flew open with a golden sound, and the swift archangel fled down on his silent wings; and the archangel gave to each of the stars, as before, the message of his Lord, and to each star was his appointed charge. And when the heraldly seemed done, there came a laugh from the abyss of gloom, and half-way from the gulf rose the lurid shape of Lucifer the fiend.

"Thou countest thy flock ill, O radiant shepherd! Behold! one star is missing from the three thousand and ten!"

"Back to thy gulf, false Lucifer; the throne of thy brother hath been filled."

And lo! as the archangel spake, the stars beheld a young and all-lustrous stranger on the throne of the erring star; and his face was so soft to look upon, that the dimmest of human eyes might have gazed upon its splendor unabashed; but the dark fiend alone was dazzled by its lustre, and with a yell that shook the flaming pillars of the universe he plunged backward into the gloom.

Then, far and sweet from the arch unseen, came forth the voice of God —

"Behold! on the throne of the discontented star sits the star of hope; and he that breathed into mankind the religion of fear hath a successor in him who shall teach earth the religion of love."

And evermore the star of fear dwells with Lucifer, and the star of love keeps vigil in heaven!

CHAPTER XX.

Gelnhausen. — The power of love in sanctified places. — A portrait of Frederic Barbarossa. — The ambition of men finds no adequate sympathy in women.

"You made me tremble for you more than once," said Gertrude to the student; "I feared you were about to touch upon ground really sacred; but your end redeemed all."

"The false religion always tries to counterfeit the garb, the language, the aspect of the true," answered the German; "for that reason I purposely suffered my tale to occasion that very fear and anxiety you speak of, conscious that the most scrupulous would be contented when the whole was finished."

This German was one of a new school, of which England as yet knows nothing. We shall see, hereafter, what it will produce.

The student left them at Friedberg, and our travellers proceeded to Gelnhausen; a spot interesting to lovers, for here Frederic the First was won by the beauty of Gela; and, in the midst of an island vale he built the imperial palace, — in honor to the lady of his love. The spot is, indeed, well chosen to itself; the mountains of the Rhinegeburg close it in, with the green gloom of woods, and the glancing waters of the Kinz.

"Still, wherever we go," said Trevylyan, "we find all tradition is connected with love; and history, for that reason, hallows less than romance."

"It is singular," said Vane, moralizing, "that love makes but a small part of our actual lives, but is yet the master-key to our sympathies. The hardiest of us, who laugh at the passion when they see it palpably before them, are arrested by some dim tradition of its existence in the past. It is as if life had few opportunities of bringing out certain qualities within us, so that they always remain untold and dormant, susceptible to thought, but deaf to action!"

"You refine and mystify too much," said Trevylyan, smiling; "none of us have any faculty, any passion, uncalled forth, if we have *really* loved, though but for a day."

Gertrude smiled, and drawing her arm within his, Trevylyan left Vane to philosophize on passion; a fit occupation for one who had never felt it.

"Here let us pause," said Trevylyan, afterward, as they visited the remains of the ancient palace, and the sun glittered on the scene, "to recall the old chivalric day of the gallant Barbarossa; let us suppose him commencing the last great action of his life; let us picture him as setting out for the Holy Land. Imagine him issuing from those walls on his white charger; his fiery eye somewhat dimmed by years, and his hair blanched; but nobler from the impress of time itself; — the clang of arms; the tramp of steeds; banners on high; music pealing from hill to hill; the red cross and the nodding plume; the sun, as now, glancing on yonder trees, and thence reflected from the burnished arms of the crusaders; but Gela — "

"Ah," said Gertrude, "*she* must be no more, for she would have outlived her beauty, and have found that glory had now no rival in his breast. Glory consoles men for the death of the loved; but glory is infidelity to the living."

"Nay, not so, dearest Gertrude," said Trevylyan, quickly, "for my darling dream of fame is the hope of laying its honors at your feet! And if ever, in future years, I should rise above the herd, I should only ask if *your* step were proud, and *your* heart elated."

"I was wrong," said Gertrude, with tears in her eyes, "and, for your sake, I can be ambitious."

Perhaps there, too, she was mistaken; for one of the common disappointments of the heart is, that women have so rarely a sympathy in our better and higher aspirings. Their ambition is not for great things; they cannot understand that desire "which scorns delight, and loves laborious days." If they love us, they usually exact too much. They are jealous of the ambition to which we sacrifice so largely, and which divides us from them; and they leave the stern passion of great minds to the only solitude which affection cannot share. To aspire is to be alone!

CHAPTER XXI.

View of Ehrenbreitstein.— A new alarm in Gertrude's health. — Trarbach.

ANOTHER time our travellers proceeded from Coblentz to Treves, following the course of the Moselle. They stopped on the opposite bank below the bridge that unites Coblentz with the Petersberg, to linger over the superb view of Ehrenbreitstein which you may there behold.

It was one of those calm noonday scenes which impress upon us their own bright and voluptuous tranquillity There stood the old herdsman leaning on his staff, and the quiet cattle knee-deep in the gliding waters. Never did stream, more smooth and sheen than was at that hour the surface of the Moselle, mirror the images of the pastoral life. Beyond, the darker shadows of the bridge, and of the walls of Coblentz, fell deep over the waves, checkered by the tall sails of the craft that were moored around the harbor. But clear against the sun rose the spires and roofs of Coblentz, backed by many a hill sloping away to the horizon. High, dark, and massive, on the opposite bank, swelled the towers and rock of Ehrenbreitstein, a type of that great chivalric spirit, — the honor that the rock arrogates for its name, — which demands so many sacrifices of blood and tears, but which ever creates in the restless heart of man a far deeper interest than the more peaceful scenes of life by which it is contrasted. There, still, — from the calm waters, and the abodes of common toil and ordinary pleasure, — turns the aspiring gaze! still as we gaze on that lofty and immemorial rock, we recall the famine and the siege; and own that the more daring crimes of men have a strange privilege in hallowing the very spot which they devastate!

Below, in green curves and mimic bays covered with herbage, the gradual banks mingled with the water; and just where the bridge closed, a solitary group of trees, standing thick and dark in the thickest shadow, gave that melancholy feature to the scene which resembles the one dark thought that often forces itself into our sunniest hours. Their boughs stirred not; no voice of birds broke the stillness of their gloomy verdure; the eye turned from them, as from the sad moral that belongs to existence.

In proceeding to Trarbach, Gertrude was seized with another of those fainting fits which had so terrified Trevylyan before; they stopped an hour or two at a little village, but Gertrude rallied with such apparent rapidity, and so strongly insisted on proceeding, that they reluctantly continued their way. This event would have thrown a gloom over their journey, if Gertrude had not exerted herself to dispel the impression she had occasioned; and so light, so cheerful, were her spirits, that she, for the time at least, succeeded.

They arrived at Trarbach late at noon. This now small and humble town is said to have been the Thronus Bacchi of the ancients. From the spot where the travellers halted to take, as it were, their impression of the town, they saw before them the little hostelry, a poor pretender to the Thronus Bacchi, with the rude sign of the Holy Mother over the door. The peaked roof, the sunk window, the gray walls, checkered with the rude beams of wood so common to the meaner houses on the continent, bore something of a melancholy and unprepossessing aspect. Right above, with its Gothic windows and venerable spire, rose the church of the town; and, crowning the summit of a green and almost perpendicular mountain, scowled the remains of one of those mighty castles, which make the never failing frown on a German landscape.

The scene was one of quiet and of gloom; the exceeding serenity of the day contrasted with an almost unpleasing brightness, the poverty of the town, the thinness of the population, and the dreary grandeur of the ruins that overhung the capital of the perished race of the bold counts of Spanheim.

They passed the night at Trarbach, and continued their journey next day. At Treves, Gertrude was for some days seriously ill; and when they returned to Coblentz, her disease had evidently received a rapid and alarming increase

CHAPTER XXII.

The double life. — Trevylyan's fate. — Sorrow the parent of Fame. — Neiderlahnstein. — Dreams.

THERE are two lives to each of us, — gliding on at the same time, scarcely connected with each other! — the life of our actions, — the life of our minds; the external and the inward history; the movements of the frame, — the deep and ever-restless workings of the heart! They who have loved, know that there is a diary of the affections, which we might keep for years without having occasion even to touch upon the exterior surface of life, our busy occupations, — the mechanical progress of our existence; — yet by the last we are judged, the first is never known. History reveals men's deeds, men's outward characters, but *not themselves.* There is a secret self that hath its own life "rounded by a dream," unpenetrated, unguessed. What passed within Trevylyan, hour after hour, as he watched over the declining health of the only being in the world whom his proud heart had been ever destined to love! His real record of the time was marked by every cloud upon Gertrude's brow, every smile of her countenance, every, the faintest, alteration in her disease; yet, to the outward seeming, all this vast current of varying eventful emotion lay dark and unconjectured. He filled up, with wonted regularity, the colorings of existence, and smiled and moved as other men. For still, in the heroism with which devotion conquers self, he sought only to cheer and gladden the young heart on which he had embarked his all; and he kept the dark tempest of his anguish for the solitude of night.

That was a peculiar doom which fate had reserved for him; and casting him, in after-years, on the great sea of public strife, it seemed as if she were resolved to tear from his heart all yearnings for the land. For him there was to be no green and sequestered spot in the valley of household peace. His bark was to know no haven, and his soul not even the desire of rest. For action is that Lethe in which we alone forget our former dreams, and the mind that, too stern not to wrestle with its emotion, seeks to conquer regret, must leave itself no leisure to look behind. Who knows what benefits to the world may have sprung from the sorrows of the benefactor? As the harvest that gladdens mankind in the suns of autumn was called forth by the rains of spring, so the griefs of youth may make the fame of maturity.

Gertrude, charmed by the beauties of the river, desired to continue the voyage to Mayence. The rich Trevylyan persuaded the physician who had attended her to accompany them, and they once more pursued their way along the banks of the feudal Rhine. For what the Tiber is to the classic, the Rhine is to the chivalric age. The steep rock and the gray dismantled tower, the massive and rude picturesque of the feudal days, constitute the great features of the scene; and you might almost fancy, as you glide along, that you are sailing back down the river of Time, and the monuments of the pomp and power of old, rising, one after one, upon its shores!

Vane and Du ——e, the physician, at the farther end of the vessel, conversed upon stones and strata, in that singular pedantry of science which strips nature to a skeleton, and prowls among the dead bones of the world, unconscious of its living beauty.

They left Gertrude and Trevylyan to themselves, and "bending o'er the vessel's laving side," they indulged in silence the melancholy with which each was imbued. For Gertrude began to waken, though doubtingly and at intervals, to a sense of the short span that was granted to her life: and over the loveliness around her there floated that sad and ineffable interest which springs from the presentiment of our own death. They passed the rich island of Oberworth, and Hocheim, famous for its ruby grape, and saw, from his mountain bed, the Lahn bear his tribute of fruits and corn into the treasury of the Rhine. Proudly rose the tower of Neiderlahnstein, and deeply lay its shadow along the stream. It was late noon; the cattle had sought the shade from the slanting sun, and, far beyond, the holy castle of Marksburg raised its battlements above mountains covered with the vine. On the water two boats had been drawn alongside each other; and from one, now moving to the land, the splash of oars broke the general stillness of the tide. Fast by an old tower the fishermen were busied in their craft, but the sound of their voices did not reach the ear. It was life, but a silent life; suited to the tranquillity of noon.

"There is something in travel," said Gertrude, "which constantly, even amid the most retired spots, impresses us with the exuberance of life. We come to these quiet nooks, and find a race whose existence we never dreamed of. In their humble path they know the same passions and tread the same career as ourselves. The mountains shut them out from the great world, but their village is a world in itself. And they know and need no more of the turbulent scenes of remote cities than our own planet recks of the inhabitants of the distant stars. What then is death, but the forgetfulness of some few hearts added to the general unconsciousness of our existence that pervades the universe? The bubble breaks in the vast desert of the air without a sound."

"Why talk of death?" said Trevylyan, with a writhing smile; "these sunny scenes should not call forth such melancholy images."

"Melancholy!" repeated Gertrude, mechanically. "Yes, death is indeed melancholy when we are loved."

They stayed a short time at Neiderlahnstein, for Vane was anxious to examine the minerals that the Lahn brings into the Rhine; and the sun was waning towards its close as they renewed their voyage. As they sailed slowly on, Gertrude said, "How like a dream is this sentiment of existence, when, without labor or motion, every change of scene is brought before us; and if I am with you, dearest, I do not feel it less resembling a dream, for I have dreamed of you lately more than ever. And dreams have become part of my life itself."

"Speaking of dreams," said Trevylyan, as they pursued that mysterious subject, "I once during my former residence in Germany fell in with a singular enthusiast, who had taught himself what he termed 'a system of dreaming.' When he first spoke to me upon it, I asked him to explain what he meant, which he did somewhat in the following words."

CHAPTER XXIII.

The life of dreams.

"I WAS born," said he, "with many of the sentiments of the poet, but without the language to express them; my feelings were constantly chilled by the intercourse of the actual world, — my family, mere Germans, dull and unimpassioned, — had nothing in common with me; nor did I out of my family find those with whom I could better sympathize. I was revolted by friendships, — for they were susceptible to every change; I was disappointed in love, — for the truth never approached to my ideal. Nursed early in the lap of romance, enamoured of the wild and the adventurous, the commonplaces of life were to me inexpressibly tame and joyless. And yet indolence, which belongs to the poetical character, was more inviting than that eager and uncontemplative action which can alone wring enterprise from life. Meditation was my natural element. I loved to spend the noon reclined by some shady stream, and in half sleep, to shape images from the glancing sunbeams, — a dim and unreal order of philosophy, that belongs to our nation, — was my favorite intellectual pursuit. And I sought among the obscure and the recondite the variety and emotion I could find not in the familiar. Thus constantly watching the operations of the inner mind, it occurred to me at last, that sleep having its own world, but as yet a rude and fragmentary one, it might be possible to shape from its chaos all those combinations of beauty, of power, of glory, and of love which were denied to me in the world in which my frame walked and had its being. So soon as this idea came upon me, I nursed, and cherished, and mused over it, till I found that the imagination began to effect the miracle I desired. By brooding ardently, intensely, before I retired to rest, over any especial train of thought, over any ideal creations; by keeping the body utterly still and quiescent during the whole day; by shutting out all living adventure, the memory of which might perplex and interfere with the stream of events that I desired to pour forth into the wilds of sleep, I discovered at last that I could lead in dreams a life solely their own, and utterly distinct from the life of day. Towers and palaces, all my heritage and seigneury, rose before me from the depths of night; I quaffed from jewelled cups the Falernian of imperial vaults; music from harps of celestial tone filled up the crevices of air; and the smiles of immortal beauty flushed like sunlight over all. Thus the adventure and the glory that I could not for my waking life obtain was obtained for me in sleep. I wandered with the gryphon and the gnome; I sounded the horn at enchanted portals; I conquered in the knightly lists; I planted my standard over battlements huge as the painter's birth of Babylon itself.

But I was afraid to call forth one shape on whose loveliness to pour all the hidden passion of my soul. I trembled lest my sleep should present me some image which it could never restore, and waking from which, even the new world I had created might be left desolate for ever. I shuddered lest I should adore a vision which the first ray of morning could smite to the grave.

"In this train of mind I began to ponder whether it might not be possible to connect dreams together; to supply the thread that was wanting; to make one night continue the history of the other, so as to bring together the same shapes and the same scenes, and thus lead a connected and harmonious life, not only in the one half of existence, but in the other, the richer and more glorious half. No sooner did this idea present itself to me than I burned to accomplish it. I had before taught myself that faith is the great creator; that to believe fervently is to make belief true. So I would not suffer my mind to doubt the practicability of its scheme. I shut myself up then entirely by day, refused books, and hated the very sun, and compelled all my thoughts (and sleep is the mirror of thought) to glide in one direction, the direction of my dreams, so that from night to night the imagination might keep up the thread of action, and I might thus lie down full of the past dream and confident of the sequel. Not for one day only, or for one month, did I pursue this system, but I continued it zealously and sternly till at length it began to succeed. Who shall tell," cried the enthusiast, — I see him now with his deep, bright, sunken eyes, and his wild hair thrown backward from his brow, — "the rapture I experienced, when first, faintly and half distinct, I perceived the harmony I had invoked dawn upon my dreams? At first there was only a partial and desultory connexion between them; my eye recognised certain shapes, my ear certain tones common to each; by degrees these augmented in number, and were more defined in outline. At length one fair face broke forth from among the ruder forms, and night after night appeared mixing with them for a moment and then vanishing, just as the mariner watches, in a clouded sky, the moon shining through the drifting rack, and quickly gone. My curiosity was now vividly excited; the face, with its lustrous eyes and seraph features, roused all the emotions that no living shape had called forth. I became enamoured of a dream, and as the statue to the Cyprian was my creation to me; so from this intent and unceasing passion, I at length worked out my reward. My dream became more palpable; I spoke with it; I knelt to it; my lips were pressed with its own; we exchanged the vows of love, and morning only separated us with the certainty that at night we should meet again. Thus then," continued my visionary, "I commenced a history utterly separate from the history of the world, and it went on alternately with my harsh and chilling history of the day, equally regular and equally continuous. And what, you ask, was that history? Methought I was a prince in some southern island that had no features in common with the colder north of my native home. By day I looked upon the dull walls of a German town, and saw homely or squalid forms passing before me; the sky was dim and the sun cheerless. Night came on with her thousand stars, and brought me the dews of sleep. Then suddenly there was a new world; the richest fruits hung from the trees in clusters of gold and purple. Palaces of the quaint fashion of the sunnier climes, with spiral minarets and glittering cupolas, were mirrored upon vast lakes sheltered by the palm tree and banana. The sun seemed of a different orb, so mellow and gorgeous were his beams; birds and winged things of all hues fluttered in the shining air; the faces and garments of men were not of the northern regions of the world, and their voices spoke a tongue which, strange at first, by degrees I interpreted. Sometimes I made war upon neighbouring kings: sometimes I chased the spotted pard through the vast gloom of oriental forests; my life was at once a life of enterprise and pomp. But above all there was the history of my love! I thought there were a thousand difficulties in the way of attaining its possession. Many were the rocks I had to scale, and the battles to wage, and the fortresses to storm, in order to win her as my bride. But at last," continued the enthusiast, "she is won, she is my own! Time in this wild world, which I visit nightly, passes not so slowly as in this, and yet an hour may be the same as a year. This continuity of existence, this successive series of dreams, so different from the broken incoherence of other men's sleep, at times bewilders me with strange and suspicious thoughts. What if this glorious sleep be a real life, and this dull waking the true repose? Why not? What is there more faithful in the one than in the other? And there have I garnered and collected all of pleasure that I am capable of feeling. I seek no joy in this world, — I form no ties, I feast not, nor love, nor make merry, — I am only impatient till the hour when I may reënter my royal realms and pour my renewed delight into the bosom of my bright ideal. There then have I found all that the world denied me; there have I realized the yearning and the aspiration within me; there have I coined the untold poetry into the felt, — the seen!"

I found, continued Trevylyan, that this tale was corroborated by inquiry into the visionary's habits. He shunned society; avoided all unnecessary movement or excitement. He fared with rigid abstemiousness, and only appeared to feel pleasure as the day departed, and the hour of return to his imaginary kingdom approached. He always retired to rest punctually at a certain hour, and would sleep so soundly, that a cannon fired under his window would not arouse him. He never, which may seem singular, spoke or moved much in his sleep, but was peculiarly calm, almost to the appearance of lifelessness; but, discovering once that he had been watched in sleep, he was wont afterward carefully to secure the chamber from intrusion. His victory over the natural incoherence of sleep had, when I first knew him, lasted for some years; possibly what imagination first produced was afterward continued by habit.

I saw him again a few months subsequent to this confession, and he seemed to me much changed. His health was broken, and his abstraction had deepened into gloom.

I questioned him of the cause of the alteration, and he answered me with great reluctance, —

"She is dead," said he; "my realms are desolate! A serpent stung her, and she died in these very arms. Vainly, when I started from my sleep in horror and despair, vainly did I say to myself, — This is but a dream. I shall see her again. A vision cannot die! Hath it flesh that decays? is it not a spirit, — bodiless, — indissoluble? With what terrible anxiety I awaited the night. Again I slept, and the DREAM lay again before me, — dead and withered. Even the ideal can vanish. I assisted in the burial; I laid her in the earth; I heaped the monumental mockery over her form. And never since hath she, or aught like her, revisited my dreams. I see her only when I wake; thus to wake is indeed to dream! But," continued the visionary in a solemn voice, "I feel myself departing from this world, and with a fearful joy; for I think there may be a land beyond even the land of sleep, where I shall see her again, — a land in which a vision itself may be restored."

And in truth, concluded Trevylyan, the dreamer died shortly afterward, suddenly, and in his sleep. One of those strange dreams that ever and anon perplex with dark bewilderment the history of men; and which did actually with him what fate hath metaphorically with so many, made his existence, his love, his power, and his death, the results of a delusion, and the produce of a dream!

"There are indeed singular varieties in life," said Vane, who had heard the latter part of Trevylyan's story; "and could the German have bequeathed to us his art, what a refuge should we not possess from the ills of earth! The dungeon and disease, poverty, affliction, shame, would cease to be the tyrants of our lot; and to sleep we should confine our history and transfer our emotions."

"But most of all," said Trevylyan, "would it be a science worth learning to the poet, whose very nature is a pining for the ideal, — for that which earth has not, — for that which the dreamer found. Ah, Gertrude," whispered the lover, "what his kingdom and his bride were to him, art thou to me!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

The brothers.

THE banks of the Rhine now shelved away into sweeping plains, and on their right rose the once imperial city of Boppart. In no journey of similar length do you meet with such striking instances of the mutability and shifts of power. To find, as in the Memphian Egypt, a city sunk into a heap of desolate ruins; the hum, the roar, the mart of nations hushed into the silence of ancestral tombs, is less humbling to our human vanity than to mark, as along the Rhine, the kingly city, dwindled into the humble town or the dreary village; decay with but its grandeur, change without the awe of its solitude! On the site on which Drusus raised his Roman tower, and the kings of the Franks their palaces, trade now dribbles into tobacco-pipes, and transforms into an excellent cotton-factory the antique nunnery of Koningsberg! So be it; it is the progressive order of things, — the world itself will soon be one excellent cotton-factory!

"Look!" said Trevylyan, as they sailed on, "at yonder mountain, with its two traditionary castles of Liebenstein and Sternfels."

Massive and huge the ruins swelled above the green rock, at the foot of which lay, in happier security from time and change, the clustered cottages of the peasant, with a single spire rising above the quiet village.

"Is there not, Albert, a celebrated legend attached to those castles?" said Gertrude. "I think I remember to have heard their name in connexion with your profession of tale teller."

"Yes," said Trevylyan, "the story relates to the last lords of those shattered towers, and — "

"You will sit here nearer to me, and begin," interrupted Gertrude, in her tone of childlike command, — "Come."

THE BROTHERS.

A TALE.*

You must imagine, then, dear Gertrude, said Trevylyan, a beautiful summer day, and by the same faculty, that none possesses so richly as yourself, for it is you who can kindle something of that divine spark even in me, you must rebuild these shattered towers in the pomp of old; raise the gallery and the hall; man the battlement with warders, and give the proud banners of ancestral chivalry to wave upon the walls. But above, sloping half down the rock, you must fancy the hanging gardens of Liebenstein, redolent with flowers, and basking in the noonday sun.

On the greenest turf, underneath an oak, there sat three persons in the bloom of youth. Two of the three were brothers; the third was an orphan girl, whom the lord of the opposite tower of Sternfels had bequeathed to the protection of his brother, the chief of Liebenstein. The castle itself and the demesne that belonged to it passed away from the female line, and became the heritage of Otho, the orphan's cousin, and the younger of the two brothers now seated on the turf.

"And oh," said the elder, whose name was Warbeck, "you have twined a chaplet for my brother; have you not, dearest Leoline, a simple flower for me?"

The beautiful orphan, — (for beautiful she was, Gertrude, as the heroine of the tale you bid me tell ought to be, — should she not have to the dreams of my fancy your lustrous hair, and your sweet smile, and your eyes of blue, that are never, never silent? Ah, pardon me, that in a former tale I denied the heroine the beauty of your face, and remember that, to atone for it, I endowed her with the beauty of your mind,) — the beautiful orphan blushed to her temples, and culling from the flowers in her lap the freshest of the roses, began weaving them into a wreath for Warbeck.

"It would be better," said the gay Otho, "to make my sober brother a chaplet of the rue and cypress; the rose is much too bright a flower for so serious a knight."

Leoline held up her hand, reprovingly.

"Let him laugh, dearest cousin," said Warbeck, gazing passionately on her changing cheek; "and thou, Leoline, believe that the silent stream runs the deepest."

At this moment they heard the voice of the old chief, their father, calling aloud for Leoline; for ever, when he returned from the chase, he wanted her gentle presence; and the hall was solitary to him if the light sound of her step and the music of her voice were not heard in welcome.

Leoline hastened to her guardian, and the brothers were left alone.

Nothing could be more dissimilar than the features and the respective characters of Otho and Warbeck. Otho's countenance was flushed with the brown hues of health; his eyes were of the brightest hazel; his dark hair wreathed in short curls round his open and fearless brow; the jest ever echoed on his lips, and his step was bounding as the foot of the hunter of the Alps. Bold and light was his spirit; and if at times he betrayed the haughty insolence of youth, he felt generously, and though not ever ready to confess sorrow for a fault, he was at least ready to brave peril for a friend.

But Warbeck's frame, though of equal strength, was more slender in its proportions than that of his brother; the fair long hair, that characterized his northern race, hung on either side of a countenance calm and pale, and deeply impressed with thought, even in sadness. His features, more majestic and regular than Otho's, rarely varied in their expression. More resolute even than Otho, he was less impetuous; more impassioned, he was also less capricious.

The brothers remained silent after Leoline had left them Otho carelessly braced on his sword, that he had laid aside on the grass; but Warbeck gathered up the flowers that had been touched by the soft hand of Leoline, and placed them in his bosom.

The action disturbed Otho; he bit his lip, and changed color; at length he said, with a forced laugh, —

"It must be confessed, brother, that you carry your affection for our fair cousin to a degree that even relationship seems scarcely to warrant."

"It is true," said Warbeck, calmly, "I love her with a love surpassing that of blood."

"How," said Otho, fiercely, "do you dare to think of Leoline as a bride?"

"Dare!" repeated Warbeck, turning yet paler than his wonted hue.

"Yes, I have said the word! Know, Warbeck, that I, too, love Leoline; I, too, claim her as my bride; and never, while I can wield a sword, never, while I wear the spurs of knighthood, will I render my claim to a living rival. Even," he added, (sinking his voice,) "though that rival be my brother!"

Warbeck answered not; his very soul seemed stunned, he gazed long and wistfully on his brother, and then, turning his face away, ascended the rock without uttering a single word.

This silence startled Otho. Accustomed to vent every emotion of his own, he could not comprehend the forbearance of his brother; he knew his high and brave nature too well to imagine that it arose from fear. Might it not be contempt, or might he not, at this moment, intend to seek their father; and, the first to proclaim his love for the orphan, advance, also, the privilege of the elder born? As these suspicions flashed across him, the haughty Otho strode to his brother's side, and laying his hand on his arm, said, —

"Whither goest thou? and dost thou consent to surrender Leoline?"

"Does she love thee, Otho?" answered Warbeck, breaking silence at last, and his voice spoke so deep an anguish, that it arrested the passions of Otho, even at their height.

"It is thou who art now silent," continued Warbeck; "speak, doth she love thee, and has her lip confessed it?"

"I have believed that she loved me," faltered Otho; "but she is of maiden bearing, and her lip, at least, has never told it."

"Enough," said Warbeck, "release your hold."

"Stay," said Otho, his suspicions returning; "stay, — yet one word; dost thou seek my father? He ever honored thee more than me; wilt thou own to him thy love, and insist on thy right of birth? By my soul and my hope of heaven, do it, and one of us two must fall!"

"Poor boy," answered Warbeck, bitterly, "how little thou canst read the heart of one who loves truly. Thinkest thou I would wed her if she loved thee? Thinkest thou I could, even to be blest myself, give her one moment's pain? Out on the thought, — away!"

"Then wilt not thou seek our father?" said Otho, abashed.

"Our father! — has our father the keeping of Leoline's affection?" answered Warbeck; and shaking off his brother's grasp, he sought the way to the castle.

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* This tale is, in reality, founded on the beautiful tradition which belongs to Liebenstein and Sternfels.

As he entered the hall, the voice of Leoline thrilled upon him; she was singing to the old chief one of the simple ballads of the time, that the warrior and the hunter loved to hear. He paused lest he should break the spell, (a spell stronger than a sorcerer's to him,) and gazing upon Leoline's beautiful form, his heart sank within him. His brother and himself had each that day, as they sat in the gardens, given her a flower; *his* flower was the freshest and the rarest; his he saw not, — but she wore his brother's in her bosom!

The chief, lulled by the music, and wearied with the toils of the chase, sank into sleep as the song ended, and Warbeck, coming forward, motioned to Leoline to follow him. He passed into a retired and solitary walk, and when they were a little distance from the castle, Warbeck turned round, and taking Leoline's hand gently, said, —

"Let us rest here for one moment, dearest cousin; I have much on my heart to say to thee."

"And what is there," answered Leoline, as they sat on a mossy bank, with the broad Rhine glancing below; "what is there that my kind Warbeck would ask of me? Ah! would it might be some favor, something in poor Leoline's power to grant; for ever from my birth you have been to me most tender, most kind. You, I have often heard them say, taught my first steps to walk; you formed my infant lips into language; and, in after-years, when my wild cousin was far away in the forests at the chase, you would brave his gay jest, and remain at home, lest Leoline should be weary in the solitude. Ah, would I could repay you!"

Warbeck turned away his cheek; his heart was very full, and it was some moments before he summoned courage to reply.

"My fair cousin," said he, "those were happy days; but they were the days of childhood. New cares and new thoughts have now come on us. But I am still thy friend, Leoline, and still thou wilt confide in me thy young sorrows and thy young hopes, as thou ever didst. Wilt thou not, Leoline?"

"Canst thou ask me?" said Leoline; and Warbeck, gazing on her face, saw, that though her eyes were full of tears, they yet looked steadily upon his; and he knew that she loved him only as a sister.

He sighed, and paused again ere he resumed. "Enough," said he; "now to my task. Once on a time, dear cousin, there lived among these mountains a certain chief who had two sons, and an orphan like thyself dwelt also in his halls. And the elder son, — but no matter, let us not waste words on *him!* — the younger son, then, loved the orphan dearly, — more dearly than cousins love; and fearful of refusal, he prayed the elder one to urge his suit to the orphan. Leoline, my tale is done. Canst thou not love Otho as he loves thee?"

And now, lifting his eyes to Leoline, he saw that she trembled violently, and her cheek was covered with blushes.

"Say," continued he, mastering himself; "is not that flower (his present) a token that he is chiefly in thy thoughts?"

"Ah, Warbeck! do not deem me ungrateful that I wear not yours also: but —"

"Hush!" said Warbeck, hastily; "I am but as thy brother, is not Otho more? He is young, brave, and beautiful. God grant that he may deserve thee, if thou givest him so rich a gift as thy affections."

"I saw less of Otho in my childhood," said Leoline, evasively; "therefore, his kindness of late years seemed stranger to me than thine."

"And thou wilt not reject then him? Thou wilt be his bride?"

"And *thy* sister," answered Leoline.

"Bless thee, mine own dear cousin; one brother's kiss then, and farewell! Otho shall thank thee for himself."

He kissed her forehead calmly, and turning away, plunged into the thicket; then, — nor till then, he gave vent to such emotions as, had Leoline seen them, Otho's suit had been lost for ever; for passionately, deeply as in her fond and innocent heart she loved Otho, the *happiness* of Warbeck was not less dear to her.

When the young knight recovered his self-possession, he went in search of Otho. He found him alone in the wood, leaning with folded arms against a tree, and gazing moodily on the ground. Warbeck's noble heart was touched at his brother's dejection.

"Cheer thee, Otho," said he; "I bring thee no bad tidings; I have seen Leoline, — I have conversed with her, — nay, start not, — she loves thee; she is thine!"

"Generous, generous Warbeck!" exclaimed Otho and he threw himself on his brother's neck. "No, no," said he, "this must not be; thou hast the elder claim. resign her to thee. Forgive me my waywardness, brother, forgive me!"

"Think of the past no more," said Warbeck; "the love of Leoline is an excuse for greater offences than thine: and now, be kind to her; her nature is soft and keen. *I* know her well; for *I* have studied her faintest wish. Thou art hasty and quick of ire; but remember, that a word wounds where love is deep. For my sake as for hers, think more of her happiness than thine own; now seek her, — she waits to hear from thy lips the tale that sounded cold upon mine."

With that he left his brother, and, once more reëntering the castle, he went into the hall of his ancestors. His father still slept; he put his hand on his gray hair, and blessed him; then stealing up to his chamber, he braced on his helm and armor, and thrice kissing the hilt of his sword, said, with a flushed cheek, —

"Henceforth be *thou* my bride!" Then passing from the castle, he sped by the most solitary paths down the rock, gained the Rhine, and hailing one of the numerous fishermen of the river, won the opposite shore; and alone, but not sad, for his high heart supported him, and Leoline at least was happy, he hastened to Frankfort.

The town was all gayety and life, arms clanged at every corner, the sounds of martial music, the wave of banners, the glittering of plumed casques, the neighing of war-steeds, all united to stir the blood and inflame the sense. St. Bertrand had lifted the sacred cross along the shores of the Rhine, and the streets of Frankfort witnessed with what success!

On that same day Warbeck assumed the sacred badge, and was enlisted among the knights of the Emperor Conrad.

We must suppose some time to have elapsed, and Otho and Leoline were not yet wedded; for, in the first fervor of his gratitude to his brother, Otho had proclaimed to his father and to Leoline the conquest Warbeck had obtained over himself; and Leoline, touched to the heart, would not consent that the wedding should take place immediately. "Let him, at least," said she, "not be insulted by a premature festivity, and give him time, among the lofty beauties he will gaze upon in a far country, to forget, Otho, that he once loved her who is beloved of thee."

The old chief applauded this delicacy; and even Otho, in the first flush of his feelings toward his brother, did not venture to oppose it. They settled, then, that the marriage should take place at the end of a year.

Months rolled away, and an absent and moody gloom settled upon Otho's brow. In his excursions with his gay companions among the neighbouring towns, he heard of nothing but the glory of the crusaders, of the homage paid to the heroes of the cross by the courts they visited, of the adventure of their life, and the exciting spirit that animated their war. In fact, neither minstrel nor priest suffered the theme to grow cold; and the fame of those who had gone forth to the holy strife gave at once emulation and discontent to the youths who had remained behind.

"And my brother enjoys this ardent and glorious life," said the impatient Otho; "while I, whose arm is as strong, and whose heart is as bold, languish here listening to the dull tales of a hoary sire and the silly songs of an orphan girl." His heart smote him at the last sentence, but he had already begun to weary of the gentle love of Leoline. Perhaps when he had no longer to gain a triumph over a rival, the excitement palled, or perhaps his proud spirit secretly chafed at being conquered by his brother in generosity, even when outshining him in the success of love.

But poor Leoline, once taught that she was to consider Otho her betrothed, surrendered her heart entirely to his control. His wild spirit, his dark beauty, his daring valor, won while they awed her; and in the fitfulness of his nature were those perpetual springs of hope and fear, that are the fountains of ever agitated love. She saw with increasing grief the change that was growing over Otho's mind; nor did she divine the cause "Surely I have not offended him," thought she.

Among the companions of Otho was one who possessed a singular sway over him. He was a knight of that mysterious order of the Temple, which exercised at one time so great a command over the minds of men.

A severe and dangerous wound in a brawl with an English knight had confined the templar at Frankfort, and prevented his joining the crusade. During his slow recovery he had formed an intimacy with Otho, and taking up his residence at the castle of Liebenstein, had been struck with the beauty of Leoline. Prevented by his oath from marriage, he allowed himself a double license in love, and doubted not, could he disengage the young knight from his betrothed, that she would add a new conquest to the many he had already achieved. Artfully, therefore, he painted to Otho the various attractions of the holy cause; and, above all, he failed not to describe, with glowing colors, the beauties, who, in the gorgeous East, distinguished with a prodigal favor the warriors of the cross. Dowries, unknown in the more sterile mountains of the Rhine, accompanied the hand of these beauteous maidens, and even a prince's daughter was not deemed, he said, too lofty a marriage for the heroes who might win kingdoms for themselves.

"To me," said the templar, "such hopes are eternally denied. But you, were you not already betrothed, what fortunes might await you!"

By such discourses the ambition of Otho was perpetually aroused; they served to deepen his discontent at his present obscurity, and to convert to distaste the only solace it afforded in the innocence and affection of Leoline.

One night, a minstrel sought shelter from the storm in the halls of Liebenstein. His visit was welcomed by the chief, and he repaid the hospitality he had received by the exercise of his art. He sang of the chase, and the gaunt hound started from the hearth. He sang of love, and Otho, forgetting his restless dreams, approached to Leoline, and laid himself at her feet. Louder, then, and louder rose the strain. The minstrel sang of war; he painted the feats of the crusaders; he plunged into the thickest of the battle; the steed neighed; the trump sounded; and you might have heard the ringing of the steel. But when he came to signalize the names of the boldest knights, high among the loftiest sounded the name of Sir Warbeck of Liebenstein. Thrice had he saved the imperial banner; two chargers slain beneath him, he had covered their bodies with the fiercest of the foe. Gentle in the tent and terrible in the fray, the minstrel should forget his craft ere the Rhine should forget its hero. The chief started from his seat. Leoline clasped the minstrel's hand.

"Speak, you have seen him; he lives, he is honored?"

"I, myself, am but just from Palestine, brave chief and noble maiden. I saw the gallant knight of Liebenstein at the right hand of the imperial Conrad. And he, ladye, was the only knight whom admiration shone upon without envy, its shadow. Who then," continued the minstrel, once more striking his harp, "who then would remain inglorious in the hall? Shall not the banners of his sires reproach him as they wave; and shall not every voice from Palestine strike shame into his soul?"

"Right!" cried Otho, suddenly, and flinging himself at the feet of his father. "Thou hearest what my brother has done, and thine aged eyes weep tears of joy. Shall *I* only dishonor thine old age with a rusted sword? No! grant me like my brother to go forth with the heroes of the cross!"

"Noble youth," cried the harper, "therein speaks the soul of Sir Warbeck; hear him, sir knight; hear the noble youth."

"The voice of heaven cries aloud in his voice," said the templar, solemnly.

"My son, I cannot chide thine ardor," said the old chief, raising him with trembling hands; "but Leoline, thy betrothed!"

Pale as a statue, with ears that doubted their sense as they drank in the cruel words of her lover, stood the orphan. She did not speak, she scarcely breathed; she sank into her seat, and gazed upon the ground, till, at the speech of the chief, both maiden pride and maiden tenderness restored her consciousness, and she said, —

"*I*, uncle! shall *I* bid Otho stay, when his wishes bid him depart?"

"He will return to thee, noble ladye, covered with glory," said the harper: but Otho said no more. The touching voice of Leoline went to his soul: he resumed his seat in silence; and Leoline, going up to him, whispered gently, "Act as though I were not;" and left the hall to commune with her heart and to weep alone.

"I can wed her before I go," said Otho, suddenly, as he sat that night in the templar's chamber.

"Why, that is true! and leave thy bride in the first week, — a hard trial."

"Better than incur the chance of never calling her mine Dear, kind, beloved Leoline!"

"Assuredly she deserves all from thee; and, indeed, it is no small sacrifice, at thy years and with thy mien, to renounce for ever all interest among the noble maidens thou wilt visit. Ah, from the galleries of Constantinople what eyes will look down on thee; and what ears, learning that thou art Otho the bridegroom, will turn away, caring for thee no more. A bridegroom without a bride! Nay, man, much as the cross wants warriors, I am enough thy friend to tell thee, if thou weddest, stay peaceably at home, and forget in the chase the labors of war, from which thou wouldst strip the ambition of love."

"I would I knew what were best," said Otho, irresolutely. "My brother, — ha, shall he for ever outshine me! — but Leoline, how will she grieve, — she who left him for me!"

"Was that thy fault?" said the templar, gayly. "It may many times chance to thee again to be preferred to another. Troth, it is a sin that the conscience may walk lightly enough under. But sleep on it, Otho; my eyes grow heavy."

The next day Otho sought Leoline, and proposed to her that their wedding should precede his parting, but so embarrassed was he, so divided between two wishes, that Leoline, offended, hurt, stung by his coldness, refused the proposal at once; she left him lest he should see her weep, and then, — then she repented even of her just pride!

But Otho, striving to appease his conscience with the belief that hers now was the *sole* fault, busied himself in preparations for his departure. Anxious to outshine his brother, he departed not as Warbeck, alone and unattended, but levying all the horse, men, and money that his domain at Sternfels, — which he had not yet tenanted, — would afford, he repaired to Frankfort at the head of a glittering troop.

The templar, affecting a relapse, tarried behind, and promised to join him at that Constantinople of which he had so loudly boasted. Meanwhile he devoted his whole powers of pleasing to console the unhappy orphan. The force of her simple love was, however, stronger than all his arts. In vain he insinuated doubts of Otho; she refused to hear them: in vain he poured, with the softest accents, into her ear the witchery of flattery and song: she turned heedlessly away; and only pained by the courtesies that had so little resemblance to Otho, she shut herself up in her chamber, and pined in solitude for her forsaker.

The templar now resolved to attempt darker arts to obtain power over her, when fortunately he was summoned suddenly away by a mission from the grand master, of so high import that it could not be resisted by a passion stronger in his breast than love, — the passion of ambition. He left the castle to its solitude; and Otho peopling it no more with his gay companions, no solitude *could* be more unfrequently disturbed.

Meanwhile though, ever and anon, the fame of Warbeck reached their ears, it came unaccompanied with that of Otho; of him they heard no tidings: and thus the love of the tender orphan was kept alive by the perpetual restlessness of fear. At length the old chief died, and Leoline was left utterly alone.

One evening as she sat with her maidens in the hall, the ringing of a steed's hoofs was heard in the outer court; a horn sounded, the heavy gates were unbarred, and a knight of a stately mien and covered with the red mantle of the cross, entered the hall; he stopped for one moment at the entrance, as if overpowered by his emotions; in the next he had clasped Leoline to his breast!

"Dost thou not recognise thy cousin Warbeck?" He doffed his casque, and she saw that majestic brow which, unlike Otho's, had never changed or been clouded in its aspect to her.

"The war is suspended for the present," said he; "I learned my father's death, and I have returned home to hang up my banner in the hall, and spend my days in peace."

Time and the life of camps had worked their change upon Warbeck's face; the fair hair, deepened in its shade, was worn from the temples, and disclosed one scar that rather aided the beauty of a countenance that had always something high and martial in its character; but the calm it once wore had settled down into sadness; he conversed more rarely than before, and though he smiled not less often, or less kindly, the smile had more of thought, and the kindness had forgot its passion. He had apparently conquered a love that was so early crossed, but not that fidelity of remembrance which made Leoline dearer to him than all others, and forbade him to replace the images he had graven upon his soul.

The orphan's lips trembled with the name of Otho, but a certain recollection stifled even her anxiety. Warbeck hastened to forestall her questions.

"Otho was well," he said, "and sojourning at Constantinople; he had lingered there so long, that the crusade had terminated without his aid; doubtless now he would speedily return, — a month, a week, nay, a day, might restore him to her side."

Leoline was inexpressibly consoled, yet something seemed untold. Why, so eager for the strife of the sacred tomb, had he thus tarried at Constantinople? She wondered, she wearied conjecture, but she did not dare to search farther.

The generous Warbeck concealed from her that Otho led a life of the most reckless and indolent dissipation, wasting his wealth in the pleasures of the Greek court, and only occupying his ambition with the wild schemes of founding a principality in those foreign climes, which the enterprises of the Norman adventurers had rendered so alluring to the knightly bandits of the age.

The cousins resumed their old friendship, and Warbeck believed that it was friendship alone. They walked again among the gardens in which their childhood had strayed; they sat again on the green turf whereon they had woven flowers; they looked down on the eternal mirror of the Rhine; ah, could it have reflected the same unawakened freshness of their life's early spring!

The grave and contemplative mind of Warbeck had not been so contented with the honors of war, but that it had sought also those calmer sources of emotion which were yet found among the sages of the East. He had drunk at the fountain of wisdom of those distant climes, and had acquired the habits of meditation which were indulged by those wiser tribes from which the crusaders brought back to the north the knowledge that was destined to enlighten their posterity. Warbeck, therefore, had little in common with the ruder chiefs around; he summoned them not to his board, or attended at their noisy wassails. Often late at night, in yon shattered tower, his lonely lamp shone still over the mighty stream, and his only relief to loneliness was the presence and the song of his soft cousin.

Months rolled on, when suddenly a vague and fearful rumor reached the castle of Liebenstein. Otho was returning home to the neighbouring tower of Sternfels; but not alone. He brought back with him a Greek bride of surprising beauty, and dowered with almost regal wealth. Leoline was the first to discredit the rumor. — Leoline was soon the only one who disbelieved.

Bright in the summer noon flashed the array of horsemen; far up the steep ascent wound the gorgeous cavalcade; the lonely towers of Liebenstein heard the echo of many a laugh and peal of merriment. Otho bore home his bride to the hall of Sternfels.

That night there was a great banquet in Otho's castle; the lights shone from every casement, and music swelled loud and ceaselessly within.

By the side of Otho, glittering with the prodigal jewels of the East, sat the Greek. Her dark locks, her flashing eye, the false colors of her complexion, dazzled the eyes of her guests. On her left hand sat the templar.

"By the holy rood," quoth the templar, gayly, though he crossed himself as he spoke, "we shall scare the owls to-night on those grim towers of Liebenstein. Thy grave brother, Sir Otho, will have much to do to comfort his cousin, when she sees what a gallant life she would have led with thee."

"Poor damsel! said the Greek, with affected pity, "doubtless she will now be reconciled to the rejected one. I hear he is a knight of a comely mien."

"Peace!" said Otho, sternly, and quaffing a large goblet of wine.

The Greek bit her lip, and glanced meaningly at the templar, who returned the glance.

"Naught but a beauty such as thine can win my pardon," said Otho, turning to his bride, and gazing passionately in her face.

The Greek smiled.

Well sped the feast, the laugh deepened, the wine circled, when Otho's eye rested on a guest at the bottom of the board, whose figure was mantled from head to foot, and whose face was covered by a dark veil.

"Beshrew me," said he, aloud; "but this is scarce courteous at our revel; will the stranger vouchsafe to unmask?"

These words turned all eyes to the figure, and they who sat next it perceived that it trembled violently; at length it rose, and walking slowly, but with grace, to the fair Greek, it laid beside her a wreath of flowers.

"It is a simple gift, ladye," said the stranger, in a voice of such sweetness that the rudest guest was touched by it. "But it is all I can offer, and the bride of Otho should not be without a gift at my hands. May ye both be happy!"

With these words the stranger turned and passed from the hall silent as a shadow.

"Bring back the stranger!" cried the Greek, recovering her surprise. Twenty guests sprang up to obey her mandate.

"No, no!" said Otho, waving his hand impatiently; "touch her not, heed her not, at your peril."

The Greek bent over the flowers to conceal her anger, and from among them dropped the broken half of a ring Otho recognised it at once; it was the half of that ring which he had broken with his betrothed. Alas, he required not such a sign to convince him that that figure, so full of ineffable grace, that touching voice, that simple action, so tender in its sentiment, that gift, that blessing, came only from the forsaken and forgiving Leoline!

But Warbeck, alone in his solitary tower, paced to and fro with agitated steps. Deep, undying wrath at his brother's baseness mingled with one burning, one delicious hope. He confessed now that he had deceived himself when he thought his passion was no more; was there any longer a bar to his union with Leoline!

In that delicacy which was breathed into him by his love, he had *forborne to seek, or to offer her the insult of,* consolation. He felt that the shock should be borne alone, and yet he pined, he thirsted to throw himself at her feet.

Nursing these contending thoughts, he was aroused by a knock at his door; he opened it, — the passage was thronged by Leoline's maidens; pale, anxious, weeping. Leoline had left the castle, but with one female attendant; none knew whither: — they knew too soon. From the hall of Sternfels she had passed over in the dark and inclement night, to the valley in which the convent of Bornhofen offered to the weary of spirit and the broken of heart a refuge at the shrine of God.

At daybreak the next morning, Warbeck was at the convent's gate. He saw Leoline: what a change one night of suffering had made in that face, which was the fountain of all loveliness to him. He clasped her in his arms; he wept; he urged all that love could urge; he besought her to accept that heart which had never wronged her memory by a thought. "O Leoline, didst thou not say once that these arms nursed thy childhood; that this voice soothed thine early sorrows? Ah, trust to them again and for ever. From a love that forsook thee turn to the love that never swerved."

"No," said Leoline; "no. What would the chivalry of which thou art the boast, — what would they say of thee, if thou weddest one affianced and deserted, who tarried years for another, and brought to thine arms only that heart which he had abandoned? No; and even if thou, as I know thou wouldst be, wert callous to such wrong of thy name, shall I bring to thee a broken heart and bruised spirit? shalt thou wed sorrow, and not joy? and shall sighs that will not cease, and tears that may not be dried, be the only dowry of thy bride? Thou, too, for whom all blessings should be ordained! No, forget me; forget thy poor Leoline! She hath nothing but prayers for thee."

In vain Warbeck pleaded; in vain he urged all that passion and truth could urge; the springs of earthly love were for ever dried up in the orphan's heart, and her resolution was immovable, — she tore herself from his arms, and the gate of the convent creaked harshly on his ear.

A new and stern emotion now wholly possessed him; naturally mild and gentle, when once aroused to anger, he cherished it with the strength of a calm mind. Leoline's tears, her sufferings, her wrongs, her uncomplaining spirit, the change already stamped upon her face, all cried aloud to him for vengeance. "She is an orphan," said he, bitterly; "she hath none to protect, to redress her, save me alone. My father's charge over her forlorn youth descends of right to me. What matters it whether her forsaker be my brother? he is *her* foe. Hath he not crushed her heart? Hath he not consigned her to sorrow till the grave? And with what insult; no warning, no excuse: with lewd wassailers keeping revel for his new bridals in the hearing,—before the sight,—of his betrothed. Enough! the time hath come, when, to use his own words, 'One of us two must fall!'" He half drew his glaive as he spoke, and thrusting it back violently into the sheath, strode home to his solitary castle. The sound of steeds and of the hunting horn met him at his portal; the bridal train of Sternfels, all mirth and gladness, were panting for the chase.

That evening a knight in complete armor entered the banquet hall of Sternfels, and defied Otho, on the part of Warbeck of Liebenstein, to mortal combat.

Even the templar was started by so unnatural a challenge; but Otho, reddening, took up the gage, and the day and spot were fixed. Discontented, wroth with himself, a savage gladness seized him;—he longed to wreak his desperate feelings even on his brother. Nor had he ever in his jealous heart forgiven that brother his virtues and his renown.

At the appointed hour the brothers met as foes. Warbeck's visor was up, and all the settled sternness of his soul was stamped upon his brow. But Otho, more willing to brave the arm than to face the front of his brother, kept his visor down; the templar stood by him with folded arms. It was a study in human passions to his mocking mind. Scarce had the first trump sounded to this dread conflict, when a new actor entered on the scene. The rumor of so unprecedented an event had not failed to reach the convent of Bornhofen;—and now, two by two, came the sisters of the holy shrine, and the armed men made way, as with trailing garments and veiled faces they swept along into the very lists. At that moment one from among them left their sisters, and with a slow majestic pace, paused not till she stood right between the brother foes.

"Warbeck," she said, in a hollow voice, that curdled up his dark spirit as it spoke, "is it thus thou wouldst prove thy love, and maintain thy trust over the fatherless orphan that thy sire bequeathed to thy care? Shall I have murder on my soul?" At that question she paused, and those who heard it were struck dumb and shuddered. "The murder of one man by the hand of his own brother!—Away, Warbeck! *I command.*"

"Shall I forget thy wrongs, Leoline?" said Warbeck.

"Wrongs! they united me to God! they are forgiven, they are no more; earth has deserted me, but heaven hath taken me to its arms;—shall I murmur at the change? And thou, Otho,—(here her voice faltered,)—thou, does thy conscience smite thee not,—wouldst thou atone for robbing me of hope by barring against me the future? Wretch that I should be, could I dream of mercy,—could I dream of comfort, if thy brother fell by thy sword in my cause? Otho, I have pardoned thee, and blessed be thee and thine. Once, perhaps, thou didst love me; remember how I loved thee,—cast down thine arms"

Otho gazed at the veiled form before him. Where had the soft Leoline learned to command! He turned to his brother; he felt all that he had inflicted upon both; and casting his sword upon the ground, he knelt at the feet of Leoline, and kissed her garment with a devotion that votary never lavished on a holier saint.

The spell that lay over the warriors around was broken; there was one loud cry of congratulation and joy. "And thou, Warbeck!" said Leoline, turning to the spot where, still motionless and haughty, Warbeck stood.

"Have I ever rebelled against thy will?" said he, softly; and buried the point of his sword in the earth. "Yet, Leoline, yet," added he, looking at his kneeling brother, "yet art thou already better avenged than by this steel!"

"Thou art! thou art!" cried Otho, smiting his breast; and slowly, and scarce noting the crowd that fell back from his path, Warbeck left the lists.

Leoline said no more; her divine errand was fulfilled; she looked long and wistfully after the stately form of the knight of Liebenstein,—and then with a slight sigh, she turned to Otho; "This is the last time we shall meet on earth. Peace be with us all."

She then, with the same majestic and collected bearing, passed on toward the sisterhood: and as, in the same solemn procession, they glided back toward the convent, there was not a man present, no, not even the hardened templar, who would not, like Otho, have bent his knee to Leoline.

Once more Otho plunged into the wild revelry of the age; his castle was thronged with guests, and night after night the lighted halls shone down athwart the tranquil Rhine. The beauty of the Greek, the wealth of Otho, the fame of the templar, attracted all the chivalry from far and near. Never had the banks of the Rhine known so hospitable a lord as the knight of Sternfels. Yet gloom seized him in the midst of gladness, and the revel was welcomed only as the escape from remorse. The voice of scandal, however, soon began to mingle with that of envy at the pomp of Otho. The fair Greek, it was said, weary of her lord, lavished her smiles on others; the young and the fair were always most acceptable at the castle; and, above all, her guilty love for the templar scarcely affected disguise. Otho alone appeared unconscious of the rumor; and though he had begun to neglect his bride, he relaxed not in his intimacy with the templar.

It was noon, and the Greek was sitting in her bower alone with her suspected lover; the rich perfumes of the East mingled with the fragrance of flowers, and various luxuries, unknown till then in those northern shores, gave a soft and effeminate character to the room.

"I tell thee," said the Greek, petulantly, "that he begins to suspect; that I have seen him watch thee, and mutter as he watched, and play with the hilt of his dagger. Better let us fly ere it is too late, for his vengeance would be terrible were it once roused against us. Ah, why did I ever forsake my own sweet land for these barbarous shores? There, love is not considered eternal, and inconstancy a crime worthy death."

"Peace, pretty one," said the templar, carelessly: "thou knowest not the laws of our foolish chivalry. Thinkest thou I could fly from a knight's halls like a thief in the night? Why, verily, even the red cross would not cover such dishonor. If thou fearest that thy dull lord suspects, why, let us part. The emperor hath sent to me from Frankfort. Ere evening I might be on my way thither."

"And I left to brave the barbarian's revenge alone? Is this thy chivalry?"

"Nay, prate not so wildly," answered the templar. "Surely, when the object of his suspicion is gone, thy woman's art and thy Greek wiles can easily allay the jealous fiend. Do I not know thee, Glycera? Why, thou wouldst fool all men save a templar."

"And, thou, cruel, wouldst thou leave me?" said the Greek, weeping; "how shall I live without thee?"

The templar laughed slightly. "Can such eyes ever weep without a comforter? But farewell; I must not be found with thee. To-morrow I depart for Frankfort; we shall meet again."

As soon as the door closed on the templar, the Greek rose, and pacing the room, said, "Selfish, selfish; how could I ever trust him? Yet I dare not brave Otho alone. Surely it was his step that disturbed us in our yesterday's interview. Nay, I will fly. I can never want a companion."

She clapped her hands; a young page appeared; she threw herself on her seat and wept bitterly.

The page approached, and love was mingled with his compassion.

"Why weepest thou, dearest lady?" said he. "is there aught in which Conrade's services,—services,—ah, thou hast read his heart,—*his devotion* may avail?"

Otho had wandered out the whole day alone; his vassals had observed that his brow was more gloomy than its wont, for he usually concealed whatever might prey within. Some of the most confidential of his servitors he had conferred with, and the conference had deepened the shadow on his countenance. He returned at twilight; the Greek did not honor the repast with her presence. She was unwell, and not to be disturbed. The gay templar was the life of the board.

"Thou carriest a sad brow to-day, Sir Otho," said he; "good faith, thou hast caught it from the air of Liebenstein."

"I have something troubles me," answered Otho, forcing a smile, "which I would fain impart to thy friendly bosom. The night is clear and the moon is up; let us forth alone into the garden."

The templar rose, and he forgot not to gird on his sword as he followed the knight.

Otho led the way to one of the most distant terraces that overhung the Rhine.

"Sir Templar," said he, pausing, "answer me one question on thy knightly honor. Was it thy step that left my lady's bower yester-eve at vesper?"

Startled by so sudden a query, the wily templar faltered in his reply

The red blood mounted to Otho's brow; "Nay, lie not, sir knight; these eyes, thanks to God, have not witnessed, but these ears have heard from others of my dishonor."

As Otho spoke, the templar's eye, resting on the water, perceived a boat rowing fast over the Rhine; the distance forbade him to see more than the outline of two figures within it. "She was right," thought he; "perhaps that boat already bears her from the danger."

Drawing himself up to the full height of his tall stature, the templar replied, haughtily, —

"Sir Otho of Sternfels, if thou hast deigned to question thy vassals, obtain from them only an answer. It is not to contradict such minions that the knights of the Temple pledge their word."

"Enough!" cried Otho, losing patience, and striking the templar with his clenched hand. "Draw, traitor, draw."

Alone in his lofty tower, Warbeck watched the night deepen over the heavens, and communed mournfully with himself. "To what end," thought he, "have these strong affections, these capacities of love, this yearning after sympathy, been given me? Unloved and unknown I walk to my grave, and all the nobler mysteries of my heart are for ever to be untold."

Thus musing, he heard not the challenge of the warder on the wall, or the unbarring of the gate below, or the tread of footsteps along the winding stair; the door was thrown suddenly open, and Otho stood before him. "Come," he said, in a low voice trembling with passion; "come, I will show thee that which shall glad thine heart. Twofold is Leoline avenged."

Warbeck looked in amazement on a brother he had not met since they stood in arms each against the other's life, and he now saw that the arm that Otho extended to him dripped with blood, trickling drop by drop upon the floor.

"Come," said Otho, "follow me: it is my last prayer. Come, for Leoline's sake, come."

At that name Warbeck hesitated no longer; he girded on his sword, and followed his brother down the stairs and through the castle gate. The porter scarcely believed his eyes when he saw the two brothers, so long divided, go forth at that hour alone, and seemingly in friendship.

Warbeck, arrived at that epoch in the feelings when nothing stuns, followed with silent steps the rapid strides of his brother. The two castles, as you are aware, are scarce a stone's throw from each other. In a few minutes Otho paused at an open space in one of the terraces of Sternfels, on which the moon shone bright and steady. "Behold," he said, in a ghastly voice, 'behold!" and Warbeck saw on the sward the corpse of the templar, bathed with the blood that even still poured fast and warm from his heart.

"Hark!" said Otho. "He it was who first made me waver in my vows to Leoline; he persuaded me to wed yon whited falsehood. Hark! he, who had thus wronged my real love, dishonored me with my faithless bride, and thus — thus — thus" — as, grinding his teeth, he spurned again and again the dead body of the templar, — "thus Leoline and myself are avenged!"

"And thy wife?" said Warbeck, pityingly.

"Fled, — fled with a hireling page. It is well! she was not worth the sword that was once belted on — by Leoline."

The tradition, dear Gertrude, proceeds to tell us that Otho, though often menaced by the rude justice of the day for the death of the templar, defied and escaped the menace. On the very night of his revenge a long delirious illness seized him; the generous Warbeck forgave, forgot all, save that he had been once consecrated by Leoline's love. He tended him through his sickness, and when he recovered, Otho was an altered man. He forswore the comrades he had once courted, the revels he had once led. The halls of Sternfels were desolate as those of Liebenstein. The only companion Otho sought was Warbeck, and Warbeck bore with him. They had no subject in common, for one subject Warbeck at least felt too deeply ever to trust himself to speak; yet did a strange and secret sympathy reunite them. They had at least a common sorrow; often they were seen wandering together by the solitary banks of the river, or amid the woods, without apparently interchanging word or sign. Otho died first, and still in the prime of youth; and Warbeck was now left companionless. In vain the imperial court wooed him to its pleasures; in vain the camp proffered him the oblivion of renown. Ah! could he tear himself from a spot where morning and night he could see afar, amid the valley, the roof that sheltered Leoline, and on which every copse, every turf, reminded him of former days? His solitary life, his midnight vigils, strange scrolls about his chamber, obtained him by degrees the repute of cultivating the darker arts; and shunning, he became shunned by all. But still it was sweet to hear from time to time of the increasing sanctity of her in whom he had garnered up his last thoughts of earth. She it was who healed the sick; she it was who relieved the poor; and the superstition of that age brought pilgrims from afar to the altars that she served.

Many years afterward, a band of lawless robbers, who ever and anon broke from their mountain fastnesses to pillage and to desolate the valleys of the Rhine; who spared neither sex nor age; neither tower nor hut; nor even the houses of God himself; laid waste the territories round Bornhofen, and demanded treasure from the convent. The abbess, of the bold lineage of Rudesheim, refused the sacrilegious demand; the convent was stormed; its vassals resisted; the robbers, inured to slaughter, won the day; already the gates were forced, when a knight at the head of a small but hardy troop, rushed down from the mountain side, and turned the tide of the fray. Wherever his sword flashed, fell a foe. Wherever his war-cry sounded, was a space of dead men in the thick of the battle. The fight was won; the convent saved; the abbess and their sisterhood came forth to bless their deliverer. Laid under an aged oak, he was bleeding fast to death; his head was bare and his locks were gray, but scarcely yet with years. One only of the sisterhood recognised that majestic face: one bathed his parched lips; one held his dying hand; and in Leoline's presence passed away the faithful spirit of the last Lord of Liebenstein!

"Oh!" said Gertrude, through her tears, "surely you must have altered the facts, — surely, — surely, — it must have been impossible for Leoline, with a woman's heart, to have loved Otho more than Warbeck."

"My child," said Vane, "so think women when they *read* a tale of love, and see *the whole heart* bared before them; but not so act they in real life, — when they see only the surface of character, and pierce not its depths, — until it is too late!"

CHAPTER XXV.

The immortality of the soul. — A common incident not before described. — Trevylyan and Gertrude.

THE day now drew cool as it waned to its decline, and the breeze came sharp upon the delicate frame of the sufferer. They resolved to proceed no further; and as they carried with them attendants and baggage, which rendered their route almost independent of the ordinary accommodation, they steered for the opposite shore, and landed at a village beautifully sequestered in a valley, and where they fortunately obtained a lodging not often met with in the regions of the picturesque.

When Gertrude at an early hour retired to bed, Vane and Du ——e fell into speculative conversation upon the nature of man. Vane's philosophy was of a quiet and passive skepticism; the physician dared more boldly, and rushed from doubt to negation. The attention of Trevylyan, as he sat apart and musing, was arrested in despite of himself. He listened to an argument in which he took no share; but which suddenly inspired him with an interest in that awful subject, which in the heat of youth and the occupations of the world had never been so prominently called forth before.

"Great God!" thought he, with unutterable anguish, as he listened to the earnest vehemence of the Frenchman, and the tranquil assent of Vane; "if this creed were indeed true, — if there be no other world, — Gertrude is lost to me eternally, — through the dread gloom of death there would break forth no star!"

That is a peculiar incident that perhaps occurs to us all at times, but which I have never found expressed in books; — viz. to hear a doubt of futurity at the very moment in which the present is most overcast; and to find at once this world stripped of its delusion, and the next of its consolations. It is perhaps for others rather than ourselves, that the fond heart requires an hereafter. The tranquil rest, the shadow, and the silence, the mere pause of the wheel of life, have no terror for the wise, who know the due value of the world —

> "After the billows of a stormy sea,
> Sweet is at last the haven of repose!"

But not so when that stillness is to divide us eternally from others; when those we have loved with all the passion, the devotion, the watchful sanctity of the weak human heart, are to exist to us no more! — when after long years of desertion and widowhood on earth, there is to be no hope of reunion in that INVISIBLE beyond the stars; when the torch, not of life only, but of love, is to be quenched in the dark fountain; and the grave, that we would fain hope is the great restorer of broken ties, is but the dumb seal of hopeless, — utter, — inexorable separation! And it is this thought, — this sentiment, which makes religion out of woe, and teacheth belief to the mourning heart, that in the gladness of united affections felt not the necessity of a heaven! To how many is the death of the beloved the parent of faith!

Stung by his thoughts Trevylyan rose abruptly, and stealing from the lowly hostelry, walked forth amid the serene and deepening night; from the window of Gertrude's room the light streamed calm on the purple air.

With uneven steps and many a pause, he paced to and fro beneath the window, and gave the rein to his thoughts. How intensely he felt the ALL that Gertrude was to him: how bitterly he foresaw the change in his lot and character that her death would work out! For who that met him in later years ever dreamed that emotions so soft, and yet so ardent, had visited one so stern? Who ever could have believed that time was, when the polished and cold Trevylyan had kept the vigils he now held, below the chamber of one so little like himself as Gertrude, in that remote and solitary hamlet; shut in by the haunted mountains of the Rhine, and beneath the moonlight of the romantic north?

While thus engaged, the light in Gertrude's room was suddenly extinguished; it is impossible to express how much that trivial incident affected him! It was like an emblem of what was to come; the light had been the only evidence of life that broke upon that hour, and he was now left alone with the shades of night. Was not this like the herald of Gertrude's own death; the extinction of the only living ray that broke upon the darkness of the world?

His anguish, his presentiment of utter desolation, increased. He groaned aloud; he dashed his clenched hand to his breast; large and cold drops of agony stole down his brow. "Father," he exclaimed, with a struggling voice, "let this cup pass from me! Smite my ambition to the root; curse me with poverty, shame, and bodily disease; but leave me this one solace, this one companion of my fate!"

At this moment Gertrude's window opened gently, and he heard her accents steal soothingly upon his ear.

"Is not that your voice, Albert?" said she, softly; "I heard it just as I laid down to rest, and could not sleep while you were thus exposed to the damp night air. You do not answer; surely it is your voice; when did I mistake it for another's?"

Mastering with a violent effort his emotions, Trevylyan answered, with a sort of convulsive gayety, —

"Why come to these shores, dear Gertrude, unless you are honored with the chivalry that belongs to them? What wind, what blight, can harm me while within the circle of your presence; and what sleep can bring me dreams so dear as the waking thought of you?"

"It is cold," said Gertrude, shivering, "come in, dear Albert, I beseech you, and I will thank you to-morrow." Gertrude's voice was choked by the hectic cough, that went like an arrow to Trevylyan's heart; and he felt that in her anxiety for him, she was now exposing her own frame to the unwholesome night.

He spoke no more, but hurried within the house; and when the gray light of morn broke upon his gloomy features, haggard from the want of sleep, it might have seemed, in that dim eye and fast-sinking cheek, as if the lovers were not to be divided, — even by death itself.

CHAPTER XXVI.

In which the reader will learn how the fairies were received by the sovereigns of the mines. — The complaint of the last of the fauns. — The red huntsman. — The storm. — Death.

In the deep valley of Ehrenthal, the metal kings, — the prince of the Silver Palaces, the gnome monarch of the dull Lead Mine, the president of the Copper United States, held a court to receive the fairy wanderers from the isle of Nonneworth.

The prince was then in a gallant hunting-suit of oak-leaves, in honor to England; and wore a profusion of fairy orders, which had been instituted from time to time in honor of the human poets that had celebrated the spiritual and ethereal tribes. Chief of these, sweet dreamer of the Midsummer Night's Dream, was the badge chrystallized from the dews that rose above the whispering reeds of Avon on the night of thy birth, — the great epoch of the intellectual world! Nor wert thou, oh beloved Musæus, nor thou, dim, — dreaming Tieck; nor were ye, the wild imaginer of the bright-haired Undine, and the wayward spirit that invoked for the gloomy Manfred the witch of the breathless Alps, and the spirits of earth and air; — nor were ye without the honors of fairy homage! Your memory may fade from the heart of man, and the spells of newer enchanters may succeed to the charm you once wove over the face of the common world; but still in the green knolls of the haunted valley and the deep shade of forests, and the starred palaces of air, ye are honored by the beings of your dreams, as demigods and kings! Your graves are tended by invisible hands, and the places of your birth are hallowed by no perishable worship.

Even as I write,* far away amid the hills of Caledon, and by the forest thou hast clothed with immortal verdure; thou, the waker of "the harp by lone Glenfillan's spring," art passing from the earth which thou hast "painted with delight." And such are the chances of mortal fame! Our children's children may raise new idols on the site of thy holy altar, and cavil where their sires adored; but for thee the mermaid of the ocean shall wail in her coral caves, and the sprite that lives in the waterfalls shall mourn! Strange shapes shall hew thy monument in the recesses of the lonely rocks; ever by moonlight shall the fairies pause from their roundel when some wild note of their minstrelsy reminds them of thine own; — ceasing from their revelries, to weep for the silence of that mighty lyre, which breathed alike a revelation of the mysteries of spirits and of men!

The king of the Silver Mines sat in a cavern in the valley, through which the moon just pierced and slept in shadow on the soil shining with metals wrought into unnumbered shapes; and below him, on an humbler throne, with a gray beard and a downcast eye, sat the aged king of the dwarfs that preside over the dull realms of lead, and inspire the verse of ——, and the prose of ——! And there, too, a fantastic household elf, was the president of the copper republic, — a spirit that loves economy and the uses, and smiles sparely on the beautiful. But, in the centre of the cave, upon beds of the softest mosses, the untrodden growth of ages, reclined the fairy visiters, — Nymphalin seated by her betrothed. And round the walls of the cave were dwarf attendants on the sovereigns of the metals, of a thousand odd shapes and fantastic garments. On the abrupt ledges of the rocks the bats, charmed to stillness but not sleep, clustered thickly, watching the scene with fixed and amazed eyes: and one old gray owl, the favorite of the witch of the valley, sat blinking in a corner, listening with all her might, that she might bring home the scandal to her mistress.

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* It was just at the time the author was finishing this work, that the great master of his art was drawing to the close of his career.

"And tell me, prince of the Rhine-Island fays," said the king of the Silver Mines, "for thou art a traveller, and a fairy that hath seen much, how go men's affairs in the upper world? As to ourself, we live here in a stupid splendor, and only hear the news of the day, when our brother of Lead pays a visit to the English printing-press, or the president of Copper goes to look at his improvements in steam-engines."

"Indeed," replied Fayzenheim, preparing to speak, like Æneas in the Carthaginian court; "indeed, your majesty, I know not much that will interest you in the present aspect of mortal affairs, except that you are quite as much honored at this day as when the Roman conqueror bent his knee to you among the mountains of Taunus; and a vast number of little round subjects of yours are constantly carried about by the rich, and pined after with hopeless adoration by the poor. But, begging your majesty's pardon, may I ask what has become of your cousin, the king of the Golden Mines? I know very well that he has no dominion in these valleys, and do not therefore wonder at his absence from your court this night, but I see so little of his subjects on earth that I should fear his empire was wellnigh at an end, if I did not recognise everywhere the most servile homage paid to a power now become almost invisible."

The king of the Silver Mines fetched a deep sigh. "Alas, prince," said he, "too well do you divine the expiration of my cousin's empire. So many of his subjects have from time to time gone forth to the world, pressed into military service and never returning, that his kingdom is nearly depopulated. And he lives far off in the distant parts of the earth in a state of melancholy seclusion; the age of gold has passed, the age of paper has commenced."

"Paper," said Nymphalin, who was still somewhat of a *precieuse*; "paper is a wonderful thing. What pretty books the human people write upon it."

"Ah! that's what I design to convey," said the Silver King. "It is the age less of paper money than paper government, the press is the true bank." The lord-treasurer of the English fairies pricked up his ears at the word "bank." For he was the Attwood of the fairies: he had a favorite plan of making money out of bulrushes, and had written four large bees' wings full upon the true nature of capital.

While they were thus conversing, a sudden sound as of some rustic and rude music broke along the air, and closing its wild burden, they heard the following song: —

THE COMPLAINT OF THE LAST FAUN.

I

The moon on the Latmos mountain
  Her pining vigil keeps;
And ever the silver fountain
  In the Dorian valley weeps.
But gone are Endymion's dream; —
  And the chrystal lymph
  Bewails the nymph
Whose beauty sleeked the streams!

II.

Round Arcady's oak, its green
  The Bromian ivy weaves;
But no more is the satyr seen
  Laughing out from the glossy leaves;
Hushed is the Lycian lute,
  Still grows the seed
  Of the Mœnale reed,
But the pipe of Pan is mute.

III.

The leaves in the noonday quiver; —
  The vines on the mountains wave; —
And Tiber rolls his river
  As fresh by the sylvan's cave;
But my brothers are dead and gone; —
  And far away
  From their graves I stray,
And dream of the past alone.

IV.

And the sun of the north is chill; —
  And keen is the northern gale; —
Alas for the song on the Argive hill;
  And the dance in the Cretan vale! —
The youth of the earth is o'er,
  And its breast is rife
  With the teeming life
Of the golden tribes no more!

V.

My race are more blest than I,
  Asleep in their distant bed;
'T were better, be sure, to die
  Than to mourn for the buried dead,
To rove by the stranger streams,
  At dusk and dawn
  A lonely faun
The last of the Grecian's dreams.

As the song ended, a shadow crossed the moonlight, that lay white and lustrous before the aperture of the cavern; and Nymphalin, looking up, beheld a graceful, yet grotesque figure standing on the sward without, and gazing on the group in the cave. It was a shaggy form, with a goat's legs and ears: but the rest of its body, and the height of the stature, like a man's. An arch, pleasant, yet malicious smile, played about its lips; and in its hand it held the pastoral pipe of which poets have sung; — they would find it difficult to sing to it!

"And who art thou?" said Fayzenheim, with the air of a hero.

"I am the last lingering wanderer of the race which the Romans worshipped: hither I followed their victorious steps, and in these green hollows have I remained. Sometimes in the still noon, when the leaves of spring bud upon the whispering woods, I peer forth from my rocky lair, and startle the peasant with my strange voice and stranger shape. Then goes he home, and puzzles his thick brain with mopes and fancies, till at length he imagines me, — the creature of the south, one of his northern demons, and his poets adapt the apparition to their barbarous lines."

"Ho!" quoth the Silver King, "surely thou art the origin of the fabled Satan of the cowled men living whilome in yonder ruins, with its horns and goatish limbs: and the harmless faun has been the figuration of the most implacable of fiends. But why, O wanderer of the south, lingerest thou in these foreign dells? Why returnest thou not to the mountains of Achaia, or the wastes around the yellow course of the Tiber?"

"My brethren are no more," said the poor faun; "and the very faith that left us sacred and unharmed is departed. But here all the spirits not of mortality are still honored; and I wander, mourning for Silenus; though amid the vines that should console me for his loss."

"Thou hast known great beings in thy day," said the Leaden King, who loved the philosophy of a truism, (and the history of whose inspirations I shall one day write.)

"Ah, yes," said the faun, "my birth was amid the freshness of the world, when the flush of the universal life colored all things with divinity; when not a tree but had its dryad, — not a fountain that was without its nymph. I sat by the gray throne of Saturn, in his old age, ere yet he was discrowned; (for he was no visionary ideal, but the arch monarch of the pastoral age;) and heard from his lips the history of the world's birth. But those times are gone for ever, — they have left harsh successors."

"It is the age of paper," muttered the lord-treasurer, shaking his head.

"What ho, for a dance!" cried Fayzenheim, too royal for moralities, and he whirled the beautiful Nymphalin into a waltz. Then forth issued the fairies, and out went the dwarfs. And the faun, leaning against an aged elm, ere yet the midnight waned, the elves danced their charmed round to the antique minstrelsy of his pipe, — the minstrelsy of the Grecian world!

"Hast thou seen yet, my Nymphalin," said Fayzenheim in the pauses of the dance; "the recess of the Hartz, and the red form of its mighty hunter?"

"It is a fearful sight," answered Nymphalin; "but with thee I should not fear."

"Away, then," cried Fayzenheim; "let us away, at the first cock-crow, into those shaggy dells, for there is no need of night to conceal us, and the unwitnessed blush of morn, or the dreary silence of noon, is no less than the moon's reign, the season for the sports of the super-human tribes."

Nymphalin, charmed with the proposal, readily assented, and at the last hour of night, bestriding the starbeams of the many-titled Friga, away sped the fairy cavalcade to the gloom of the mystic Hartz.

Fain would I relate the manner of their arrival in the thick recesses of the forest; how they found the red hunter seated on a fallen pine beside a wide chasm in the earth, with the arching boughs of the wizard oak wreathing above his head as a canopy, and his bow and spear lying idle at his feet. Fain would I tell of the reception which he deigned to the fairies, and how he told them of his ancient victories over man; how he chafed at the gathering invasions of his realm, and how joyously he gloated of some great convulsion in the northern states, which, rapt into moody reveries in these solitary woods, the fierce demon broodingly foresaw. All these fain would I narrate, but they are not of the Rhine, and my story will not brook the delay. While thus conversing with the fiend, noon had crept on, and the sky had become overcast and lowering; the giant trees waved gustily to and fro, and the low gatherings of the thunder announced the approaching storm. Then the hunter arose and stretched his mighty limbs, and seizing his spear, he strode rapidly into the forest to meet the things of his own tribe that the tempest wakes from their rugged lair.

A sudden recollection broke upon Nymphalin. "Alas, alas!" she cried, wringing her hands; "what have I done! In journeying hither with thee, I have forgotten my office. I have neglected my watch over the elements, and my human charge is at this hour, perhaps, exposed to all the fury of the storm."

"Cheer thee, my Nymphalin," said the prince, "we will lay the tempest," and he waved his sword and muttered the charms which curb the winds and roll back the marching thunder; but for once the tempest ceased not at his spells; and now, as the fairies sped along the troubled air, a pale and beautiful form met them by the way, and the fairies paused and trembled. For the power of that shape could vanquish even them. It was the form of a female, with golden hair, crowned with a chaplet of withered leaves; her bosoms, of an exceeding beauty, lay bare to the wind, and an infant was clasped between them, hushed into a sleep so still, that neither the roar of the thunder, nor the livid lightning flashing from cloud to cloud, could even ruffle, much less arouse, the slumberer. And the face of the female was unutterably calm and sweet, (though with a something of severe,) there was no line or wrinkle in her hueless brow; care never wrote its defacing characters upon that everlasting beauty. It knew no sorrow or change; ghostlike and shadowy floated on that shape through the abyss of time, governing the world with an unquestioned and noiseless sway. And the children of the green solitudes of the earth, — the lovely fairies of my tale shuddered as they gazed and recognised — the form of DEATH!

DEATH VINDICATED.

"And why," said the beautiful shape, with a voice soft as the last sighs of a dying babe, "why trouble ye the air with spells? Mine is the hour and the empire, and the storm is the creature of my power. Far yonder to the west it sweeps over the sea, and the ship ceases to vex the waves; it smites the forest, and the destined tree, torn from its roots, feels the winter strip the gladness from its boughs no more! The roar of the elements is the herald of eternal stillness to their victims; and they who hear the progress of my power, idly shudder at the coming of peace. And thou, O tender daughter of the fairy kings, why grievest thou at a mortal's doom? Knowest thou not that sorrow cometh with years, and that to live is to mourn? Blessed is the flower that, nipped in its early spring, feels not the blast that one by one scatters its blossoms around it, and leaves but the barren stem. Blessed are the young whom I clasp to my breast, and lull into the sleep which the storm cannot break, nor the sorrow arouse to sorrow or to toil. The heart that is stilled in the bloom of its first emotions, — that turns with its last throb to the eye of love, as yet unlearned in the possibility of change, — has exhausted already the wine of life, and is saved only from the lees As the mother soothes to sleep the wail of her troubled child, I open my arms to the vexed spirit, and my bosom cradles the unquiet to repose!"

The fairies answered not, for a chill and fear lay over them, and the shape glided on; ever as it passed away through the veiling clouds, they heard its low voice singing amid the roar of the storm, as the dirge of the water sprite over the vessel it hath lured into the whirlpool or the shoals.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Thurmberg. — A storm upon the Rhine. — The ruins of Rheinfels. — Peril unfelt by love. — The echo of the Lurlei-berg. — St. Goar. — Kaub, Gutenfels, and Pfalzgrafenstein. — A certain vastness of mind in the first hermits. — The scenery of the Rhine to Bacharach.

OUR party continued their voyage the next day, which was less bright than any they had yet experienced. The clouds swept on dull and heavy, suffering the sun only to break forth at scattered intervals; they wound round the curving bay which the Rhine forms in that part of its course, and gazed upon the ruins of Thurmberg with the rich gardens that skirt the banks below. The last time Trevylyan had seen those ruins soaring against the sky, the green foliage at the foot of the rocks, and the quiet village sequestered beneath, glassing its roofs and solitary tower upon the wave, it had been with a gay summer troop of light friends, who had paused on the opposite shore during the heats of noon, and, over wine and fruits, had mimicked the groups of Boccaccio, and intermingled the lute, the jest, the momentary love, and the laughing tale.

What a difference now in his thoughts, — in the object of the voyage, — in his present companions! The feet of years fall noiseless; we heed, we note them not, till tracking the same course we passed long since, we are startled to find how deep the impression they leave behind. To revisit the scenes of our youth is to commune with the ghosts of ourselves.

At this time the clouds gathered rapidly along the heavens, and they were startled by the first peal of the thunder. Sudden and swift came on the storm, and Trevylyan trembled as he covered Gertrude's form with the rude boat-cloaks they had brought with them; the small vessel began to rock wildly to and fro upon the waters. High above them rose the vast dismantled ruins of Rheinfels, the lightning darting through its shattered casements and broken arches, and brightening the gloomy trees that here and there clothed the rocks, and tossed to the angry wind. Swift wheeled the water-birds over the river, dipping their plumage in the white foam, and uttering their discordant screams. A storm upon the Rhine has a grandeur it is in vain to paint. Its rocks, its foliage, the feudal ruins that everywhere rise from the lofty heights, — speaking in characters of stern decay of many a former battle against time and tempest; the broad and rapid course of the legendary river, all harmonize with the elementary strife; and you feel that to see the Rhine only in the sunshine is to be unconscious of its most majestic aspects. What baronial war had those ruins witnessed! From the rapine of the lordly tyrant of those battlements rose the first Confederation of the Rhine, — the great strife between the new time and the old, — the town and the castle, — the citizen and the chief. Gray and stern those ruins breasted the storm, — a type of the antique opinion which once manned them with armed serfs; and yet, in ruins and decay, appeals from the victorious freedom it may no longer resist!

Clasped in Trevylyan's guardian arms, and her head pillowed on his breast, Gertrude felt nothing of the storm save its grandeur; and Trevylyan's voice whispered cheer and courage to her ear. She answered by a smile and a sigh, but not of pain. In the convulsions of Nature we forget our own separate existence, our schemes, our projects, our fears; our dreams vanish back into their cells. One passion only the storm quells not, and the presence of love mingles with the voice of the fiercest storms, as with the whispers of the southern wind. So she felt, as they were thus drawn close together, and as she strove to smile away the anxious terror from Trevylyan's gaze, — a security, a delight; for peril is sweet even to the fears of woman, when it impresses upon her yet more vividly that she is beloved.

"A moment more, and we reach the land," murmured Trevylyan.

"I wish it not," answered Gertrude, softly. But ere they got into St. Goar the rain descended in torrents, and even the thick coverings round Gertrude's form were not sufficient protection against it. Wet and dripping she reached the inn: but not then, nor for some days, was she sensible of the shock her decaying health had received.

The storm lasted but a few hours, and the sun afterward broke forth so brightly, and the stream looked so inviting, that they yielded to Gertrude's earnest wish, and, taking a larger vessel, continued their course; they passed along the narrow and dangerous defile of the Gewirre, and the fearful whirlpool of the "Bank;" and on the shore to the left the enormous rock of Lurlei rose, huge and shapeless, on their gaze. In this place is a singular echo, and one of the boatmen wound a horn, which produced an almost supernatural music, — so wild, loud, and oft-reverberated was its sound.

The river now curved along in a narrow and deep channel, among rugged steeps, on which the westering sun cast long and uncouth shadows: and here the hermit, from whose sacred name the town of St. Goar derived its own, fixed his abode and preached the religion of the cross. "There was a certain vastness of mind," said Vane, "in the adoption of utter solitude in which the first enthusiasts of our religion indulged. The remote desert, the solitary rock, the rude dwelling hollowed from the cave, the eternal commune with their own hearts, with nature, and their dreams of God, all make a picture of severe and preterhuman grandeur. Say what we will of the necessity and charm of social life, there is a greatness about man when he dispenses with mankind."

"As to that," said Du——e, shrugging his shoulders, "there was probably very good wine in the neighbourhood, and the females' eyes about Oberwesel are singularly blue."

They now approached Oberwesel, another of the once imperial towns, and behind it beheld the remains of the castle of the illustrious family of Schomberg; the ancestors of the old hero of the Boyne. A little further on, from the opposite shore, the castle of Gutenfels rose above the busy town of Kaub.

"Another of those scenes," said Trevylyan, "celebrated equally by love and glory, for the castle's name is derived from that of the beautiful ladye of an emperor's passion; and below, upon a ridge in the steep, the great Gustavus issued forth his command to begin battle with the Spaniards."

"It looks peaceful enough now," said Vane, pointing to the craft that lay along the stream, and the green trees drooping over a curve in the bank. Beyond, in the middle of the stream itself, stands the lonely castle of Pfalzgrafenstein, sadly memorable as a prison to the more distinguished of criminals. How many pining eyes may have turned from those casements to the vine-clad hills of the free shore; how many indignant hearts have nursed the deep curses of hate in the dungeons below, and longed for the wave, that dashed against the gray walls, to force its way within and set them free!

Here the Rhine seems utterly bounded, shrunk into one of those delusive lakes into which it so frequently seems to change its course; and as you proceed, it is as if the waters were silently overflowing their channel and forcing their way into the clefts of the mountain shore. Passing the Werth island on one side, and the castle of Stahleck on the other, our voyagers arrived at Bacharach, which, associating the feudal recollections with the classic, takes its name from the god of the vine; and, as Du——e declared with peculiar emphasis, quaffing a large goblet of the peculiar liquor, "richly deserves the honor."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The voyage to Bingen.— The simple incidents in this tale excused. — The situation and character of Gertrude. — The conversation of the lovers in the temple. — A fact contradicted. — Thoughts occasioned by a madhouse among the most beautiful landscapes of the Rhine.

THE next day they again resumed their voyage, and Gertrude's spirits were more cheerful than usual; the air seemed to her lighter, and she breathed with a less effort: once more hope entered the breast of Trevylyan; and, as the vessel bounded on, their conversation was steeped in no sombre hues. When Gertrude's health permitted, no temper was so gay, yet so gently gay, as hers; and now the naïve sportiveness of her remarks called a smile to the placid lip of Vane, and smoothed the anxious front of Trevylyan himself; as for Du——e, who had much of the boon companion beneath his professional gravity, he broke out every now and then into snatches of French songs and drinking glees, which he declared were the result of the air of Bacharach. Thus conversing, the ruins of Furstenberg, and the echoing vale of Rheindeibach, glided past their sail. Then the old town of Lorch, on the opposite bank, (where the red wine is said first to have been made,) with the green island before it in the water. Winding round, the stream showed castle upon castle alike in ruins, and built alike upon scarce accessible steeps. Then came the chapel of St. Clements, and the opposing village of Asmannshausen: the lofty Rossell, built at the extremest verge of the cliff; and now the tower of Hatto, celebrated by Southey's ballad; and the ancient town of Bingen. Here they paused for some while from their voyage, with the intention of visiting more minutely the Rheingau, or valley of the Rhine.

It must occur to every one of my readers that, in undertaking, as now, in these passages in the history of Trevylyan, scarcely so much a tale as an episode in real life, it is very difficult to offer any interest save of the most simple and exciting kind. It is true that to Trevylyan every day, every hour, had its incident; but what are those incidents to others? A cloud in the sky, a smile from the lip of Gertrude; these were to him far more full of events than had been the most varied scenes of his former adventurous career; but the history of the heart is not easily translated into language; and the world will not readily pause from its business to watch the alterations in the cheek of a dying girl.

In the immense sum of human existence, what is a single unit? Every sod on which we tread is the grave of some former being: yet is there something that softens, without enervating the heart, in tracing in the life of another those emotions that all of us have known ourselves. For who is there that has not, in his progress through life, felt all its ordinary business arrested, and the varieties of fate commuted into one chronicle of the affections? Who has not watched over the passing away of some being, more to him, at that epoch, than all the world? And this unit, so trivial to the calculation of others, of what inestimable value was it not to him? Retracing in another such recollections, shadowed and mellowed down by time, we feel the wonderful sanctity of human life; we feel what emotions a single being can awake; what a world of hope may be buried in a single grave. And thus we keep alive within ourselves the soft springs of that morality which unites us with our kind, and sheds over the harsh scenes and turbulent contests of earth the coloring of a common love.

There is often, too, in the time of year in which such thoughts are presented to us, a certain harmony with the feelings they awaken. As I write, I hear the last sighs of the departing summer, and the sere and yellow leaf is visible in the green of nature. But, when this book goes forth into the world, the year will have passed through a deeper cycle of decay; and the first melancholy signs of winter have breathed into the universal mind that sadness which associates itself readily with the memory of friends, or feelings, that are no more. The seasons, like ourselves, track their course by something of beauty, or of glory, that is left behind. As the traveller in the land of Palestine sees tomb after tomb rise before him, the landmarks of his way, and the only signal of the holiness of the soil; thus the memory wanders over the most sacred spots in its various world, and traces them but by the graves of the past.

It was now that Gertrude began to feel the shock her frame had received in the storm upon the Rhine. Cold shiverings frequently seized her; her cough became more hollow, and her form trembled at the slightest breeze

Vane grew seriously alarmed; he repented that he had yielded to Gertrude's wish of substituting the Rhine for the Tiber or the Arno; and would even now have hurried across the Alps to a warmer clime, if Du——e had not declared that she could not survive the journey, and that her sole chance of regaining her strength was rest. Gertrude herself, however, in the continued delusion of her disease, clung to the belief of recovery, and still supported the hopes of her father, and soothed, with secret talk of the future, the anguish of her betrothed. The reader may remember that the most touching passage in the ancient tragedians, the most pathetic part of the most pathetic of human poets, -- the pleading speech of Iphigenia, when, imploring for her prolonged life, she impresses you with so soft a picture of its innocence and its beauty; and in this Gertrude resembled the Greek's creation, — that she felt at the verge of death, all the flush, the glow, the loveliness of life. Her youth was filled with hope, and many-colored dreams; she loved, and the hues of morning slept upon the yet disenchanted earth. The heavens to her were not as the common sky; the wave had its peculiar music to her ear, and the rustling leaves a pleasantness that none, whose heart is not bathed in the love and sense of beauty, could discern. Therefore it was, in future years, a thought of deep gratitude to Trevylyan, that she was so little sensible of her danger; that the landscape caught not the gloom of the grave; and that, in the Greek phrase, "death found her sleeping among flowers."

At the end of a few days, another of those sudden turns, common to her malady, occurred in Gertrude's health; her youth and her happiness rallied against the encroaching tyrant; and for the ensuing fortnight she seemed once more within the bounds of hope. During this time, they made several excursions into the Rheingau, and finished their tour at the ancient Heidelberg.

One morning, in these excursions, after threading the wood of Niederwald, they gained that small and fairy temple, which, hanging lightly over the mountain's brow, commands one of the noblest landscapes of earth. There, seated side by side, the lovers looked over the beautiful world below; far to the left lay the happy islets, in the embrace of the Rhine, as it wound along the low and curving meadows that stretch away towards Nieder Ingelheim and Mayence. Glistening in the distance, the opposite Nah swept by the Mause tower, and the ruins of Klopp, crowning the ancient Bingen, into the mother tide. There, on either side the town, were the mountains of St. Roch and Rupert, with some old monastic ruin, saddening in the sun. But nearer, below the temple, contrasting all the other features of landscape, yawned a dark and rugged gulf, girt by cragged elms and mouldering towers, the very prototype of the abyss of time, — black and fathomless amid ruin and desolation.

"I think, sometimes," said Gertrude, "as, in scenes like these, we sit together, and rapt from the actual world, see only the enchantment that distance leads to our view, — I think, sometimes, what pleasure it will be hereafter to recall these hours. If ever you should love me less, I need only whisper to you, 'The Rhine,' and will not all the feelings you have now for me return?"

"Ah! there will never be occasion to recall my love for you, it can never decay."

"What a strange thing is life!" said Gertrude; "how unconnected, how desultory seem all its links! Has this sweet pause from trouble, from the ordinary cares of life, — has it any thing in common with your past career, — with your future? You will go into the great world; in a few years hence these moments of leisure and musing will be denied to you; the action that you love and court is a jealous sphere; it allows no wandering, no repose. These moments will then seem to you but as yonder islets that stud the Rhine, — the stream lingers by them for a moment, and then hurries on in its rapid course; they vary, but they do not interrupt, the tide."

"You are fanciful, my Gertrude, but your simile might be juster. Rather let these banks be as our lives, and this river the one thought that flows eternally by both, blessing each with undying freshness."

Gertrude smiled; and, as Trevylyan's arm encircled her, she sunk her beautiful face upon his bosom, he covered it with his kisses, and she thought at the moment, that, even had she passed death, that embrace could have recalled her to life.

They pursued their course to Mayence, partly by land, partly along the river. One day, as returning from the vine-clad mountains of Johannisberg, which commands the whole of the Rheingau, the most beautiful valley in the world, they proceeded by water to the town of Ellfeld, Gertrude said, —

"There is a thought in your favorite poet which you have often repeated, and which I cannot think true,

'In nature there is nothing melancholy.'

To me it seems as if a certain melancholy were inseparable from beauty: in the sunniest noon there is a sense of solitude and stillness which pervades the landscape, and even in the flush of life inspires us with a musing and tender sadness. Why is this?"

"I cannot tell," said Trevylyan, mournfully; "but I allow that it is true."

"It is as if," continued the romantic Gertrude, "the spirit of the world spoke to us in the silence, and filled us with a sense of our mortality, —a whisper from the religion that belongs to nature, and is ever seeking to unite the earth with the reminiscences of heaven. Ah, what without a heaven would be even love! a perpetual terror of the separation that must one day come! If," she resumed, solemnly, after a momentary pause, and a shadow settled on her young face, "if it be true, Albert, that I must leave you soon — "

"It cannot, — it cannot," cried Trevylyan, wildly; "be still, be silent, I beseech you."

"Look yonder," said Du——e, breaking seasonably in upon the conversation of the lovers; "on that hill to the left, what once was an abbey is now an asylum for the insane. Does it not seem a quiet and serene abode for the unstrung and erring minds that tenant it! What a mystery is there in our conformation! — those strange and bewildered fancies which replace our solid reason, what a moral of our human weakness do they breathe!"

It does indeed induce a dark and singular train of thought, when, in the midst of these lovely scenes, we chance upon this lone retreat for those on whose eyes nature, perhaps, smiles in vain! *Or is it in vain?* They look down upon the broad Rhine, with its tranquil isles; do their wild illusions endow the river with another name, and people the valleys with no living shapes? Does the broken mirror within reflect back the countenance of real things, or shadows and shapes, crossed, mingled, and bewildered, — the phantasma of a sick man's dreams? Yet, perchance, one memory, unscathed by the general ruin of the brain, can make even the beautiful Rhine more beautiful than it is to the common eye; — can calm it with the hues of departed love, and bid its possessor walk over its vine-clad mountains with the beings that have ceased to *be!* There, perhaps, the self-made monarch sits upon his throne, and claims the vessels as his fleet, the waves and the valleys as his own. There, the enthusiast, blasted by the light of some imaginary creed, beholds the shapes of angels, and watches in the clouds round the setting sun, the pavilions of God. There the victim of forsaken or perished love, mightier than the sorcerers of old, evokes the dead, or recalls the faithless by the philter of undying fancies. Ah, blessed art thou, the winged power of imagination that is within us! — conquering even grief, — brightening even despair. Thou takest us from the world when reason can no longer bind us to it, and givest to the maniac the inspiration and the solace of the bard! Thou, the parent of the purer love, lingerest like love, when even ourself forsakes us, and lightest up the shattered chambers of the heart with the glory that makes a sanctity of decay!

CHAPTER XXIX.

Ellfeld. — Mayence. — Heidelberg. — A conversation between Vane and the German student.—The ruins of the castle of Heidelberg, and its solitary habitant.

It was now the full moon; light clouds were bearing up toward the opposite banks of the Rhine, but over the Gothic towers of Ellfeld the sky spread blue and clear; the river danced beside the old gray walls with a sunny wave, and close at hand a vessel, crowded with passengers, and loud with eager voices, gave a merry life to the scene. On the opposite bank the hills sloped away into the far horizon, and one slight skiff in the midst of the waters broke the solitary brightness of the noonday calm.

The town of Ellfeld was the gift of Otho the First to the church; not far from thence is the crystal spring, that gives its name to the delicious grape of Markbrunner.

"Ah!" quoth Du——e, "doubtless the good bishops of Mayence made the best of the vicinity!"

They stayed some little time at this town, and visited the ruins of Scharfenstein; thence proceeding up the river, they passed Nieder Walluf, called the Gate of the Rheingau, and the luxuriant garden of Schierstein; thence sailing by the castle seat of the Prince Nassau Usingen, and passing two long and narrow isles, they arrived at Mayence, as the sun shot his last rays upon the waters, gilding the proud cathedral spire, and breaking the mists that began to gather behind, over the rocks of the Rheingau.

Ever memorable Mayence! — memorable alike for freedom and for song,—within those walls how often woke the gallant music of the troubadour; and how often beside that river did the heart of the maiden tremble to the lay! Within those walls the stout Walpoden first broached the great scheme of the Hanseatic league; and, more than all, oh memorable Mayence, thou canst claim the first invention of the mightest engine of human intellect, — the great leveller of power, — the Demiurgus of the moral world, — the press! Here too lived the maligned hero of the greatest drama of modern genius, the traditionary Faust, illustrating in himself the fate of his successors in dispensing knowledge, — held a monster for his wisdom, and consigned to the penalties of hell as a recompense for the benefits he had conferred on earth!

At Mayence, Gertrude heard so much and so constantly of Heidelberg, that she grew impatient to visit that enchanting town, and as Du ———e considered the air of Heidelberg more pure and invigorating than that of Mayence, they resolved to fix within it their temporary residence. Alas, it was the place destined to close their brief and melancholy pilgrimage, and to become to the heart of Trevylyan the holiest spot which the earth contained: — the **Kaaba** of the world! But Gertrude, unconscious of her fate, conversed gayly as their carriage rolled rapidly on, and, constantly alive to every new sensation, she touched with her characteristic vivacity on all they had seen in their previous route. There is a great charm in the observations of one new to the world, if we ourselves have become somewhat tired of "its back sights and sounds;" we hear in their freshness a voice from our own youth.

In the haunted valley of the Neckar, the most crystal of rivers, stands the town of Heidelberg. The shades of evening gathered round it as their heavy carriage rattled along the antique streets, and not till the next day was Gertrude aware of all the unrivalled beauties that environ the place.

Vane, who was an early riser, went forth alone in the morning to reconnoitre the town: and as he was gazing on the tower of St. Peter, he heard himself suddenly accosted; he turned round, and saw the German student, whom they had met among the mountains of Taunus, at his elbow.

"Monsieur has chosen well in coming hither," said the student, "and I trust our town will not disappoint his expectations."

Vane answered with courtesy, and the German offering to accompany him in his walk, their conversation fell naturally on the life of a university, and the current education of the German people.

"It is surprising," said the student, "that men are eternally inventing new systems of education, and yet persevering in the old. How many years ago is it since Fichte predicted, in the system of Pestalozzi, the regeneration of the German people? What has it done? We admire, — we praise, and we blunder on in the very course Pestalozzi proves to be erroneous. Certainly," continued the student, "there must be some radical defect in a system of culture in which genius is an exception, and dulness the result. Yet here, in our German universities, every thing proves that education without equitable institutions avails little in the general formation of character. Here the young men of the colleges mix on the most equal terms; they are daring, romantic, enamoured of freedom, even to its madness; they leave the university, no political career continues the train of mind they had acquired; they plunge into obscurity; live scattered and separate, and the student, inebriated with Schiller, sinks into the passive priest or the lethargic baron. His college career, so far from indicating his future life, exactly reverses it; he is brought up in one course in order to proceed in another. And this I hold to be the universal error of education in all countries; they conceive it a certain something to be finished at a certain age. They do not make it a part of the continuous history of life, but a wandering from it."

"You have been in England?" asked Vane.

"Yes; I travelled over nearly the whole of it on foot. I was poor at that time, and imagining there was a sort of masonry between all men of letters, I inquired at each town for the *savans*, and asked money of them as a matter of course."

Vane almost laughed outright at the simplicity and naïve unconsciousness of degradation with which the student proclaimed himself a public beggar.

"And how did you generally succeed?"

"In most cases I was threatened with the stocks, and twice I was consigned by the *judge de paix* to the village police, to be passed to some mystic Mecca they were pleased to entitle 'a parish.' Ah," (continued the German with much *bonhommie*,) "it was a pity to see in a great nation so much value attached to such a trifle as money. But what surprised me greatly was the tone of your poetry. Madame de Staël, who knew perhaps as much of England as she did of Germany, tells us that its chief character is the *chivalresque*; and excepting only Scott, who, by the way, is *not* English, I did not find one chivalrous poet among you. Yet," continued the student, "between ourselves, I fancy that in our present age of civilization, there is an unexamined mistake in the general mind as to the value of poetry. It delights still as ever, but has ceased to teach. The prose of the heart enlightens, touches, rouses, far more than poetry. Your most philosophical poets would be commonplace if turned into prose. Childe Harold, seemingly so profound, owes its profundity to its style; in reality it contains nothing that is new, except the mechanism of its diction. Verse cannot contain the refining subtle thoughts which a great prose writer imbodies; the rhyme eternally cripples it; it properly deals with the common problems of human nature which are now hackneyed, and not with the nice and philosophizing corollaries which may be drawn from them. Thus, though it would seem at first a paradox, commonplace is more the element of poetry than of prose. And, sensible of this, even Schiller wrote the deepest of modern tragedies, his Fiesco, in prose."

This sentiment charmed Vane, who had nothing of the poet about him; and he took the student to share their breakfast at the inn, a complacency he rarely experienced at the remeeting with a new acquaintance.

After breakfast, our party proceeded through the town toward the wonderful castle which is its chief attraction, and the noblest wreck of German grandeur.

And now pausing, the mountain yet unscaled, the stately ruin frowned upon them, girt by its massive walls and hanging terraces, round which from place to place clung the dwarfed and various foliage. High at the rear rose the huge mountain, covered, save at its extreme summit, with dark trees, and concealing in its mysterious breast the shadowy beings of the legendary world. But toward the ruins, and up a steep ascent, you may see a few scattered sheep thinly studding the broken ground. Aloft, above the ramparts, rose, desolate and huge, the palace of the electors of the Palatinate. In its broken walls you may trace the tokens of the lightning that blasted its ancient pomp, but still leaves in the vast extent of pile a fitting monument of the memory of Charlemagne. Below, in the distance, spread the plain far and spacious, till the shadowy river, with one solitary sail upon its breast, united the melancholy scene of earth with the autumnal sky.

"See," said Vane, pointing to two peasants who were conversing near them on the matters of their little trade, utterly unconscious of the associations of the spot, "see! after all that is said and done about human greatness, it is always the greatness of the few. Ages pass, and leave the poor herd, the mass of men, eternally the same, — hewers of wood and drawers of water. The pomp of princes has its ebb and flow, but the peasant sells his fruit as gayly to the stranger on the ruins, as to the emperor in the palace."

"Will it be always so?" said the student.

"Let us hope not, for the sake of permanence in glory," said Trevylyan; "had *a people* built yonder palace, its splendor would never have passed away."

Vane shrugged his shoulders, and Du ——e took snuff.

But all the impressions produced by the castle at a distance, are as nothing when you stand within its vast area, and behold the architecture of all ages blended into one mighty ruin! The rich hues of the masonry, the sweeping façades, — every description of building which man ever framed for war or for luxury, — is here; all having only the common character, ruin. The feudal rampart, the yawning fosse, the rude tower, the splendid arch, — the strength of a fortress, the magnificence of a palace, — all united, strike upon the soul like the history of a fallen empire in all its epochs.

"There is one singular habitant of these ruins," said the student, "a solitary painter, who has dwelt here some twenty years, companioned only by his art. No other apartment but that which he tenants is occupied by a human being."

"What a poetical existence!" cried Gertrude, enchanted with a solitude so full of associations.

"Perhaps so," said the cruel Vane, ever anxious to dispel an illusion; "but more probably custom has deadened to him all that overpowers ourselves with awe; and he may tread among these ruins rather seeking to pick up some rude morsel of antiquity, than feeding his imagination with the dim traditions that invest them with so august a poetry."

"Monsieur's conjecture has something of the truth in it," said the German; "but then the painter is a Frenchman."

There is a sense of fatality in the singular mournfulness and majesty which belong to the ruins of Heidelberg; contrasting the vastness of the strength with the utterness of the ruin. It has been twice struck with lightning, and is the wreck of the elements, not of man; during the great siege it sustained, the lightning is supposed to have struck the powder magazine by accident.

What a scene for some great imaginative work! What a mocking interference of the wrath of nature in the puny contest of men! One stroke of the "red right arm" above us, crushing the triumph of ages, and laughing to scorn the power of the beleaguers and the valor of the besieged!

They passed the whole day among these stupendous ruins, and felt, as they descended to their inn, as if they had left the caverns of some mighty tomb.

CHAPTER XXX.

No part of the earth really solitary. — The song of the fairies. — The sacred spot. — The witch of the evil winds. — The spell and the duty of the fairies.

But in what spot of the world is there ever utter solitude? The vanity of man supposes that loneliness is *his* absence! Who shall say that millions of spiritual beings glide invisibly among scenes apparently the most deserted? Or what know we of our own mechanism, that we should deny the possibility of life and motion to things that we cannot ourselves recognise?

At moonlight, in the great court of Heidelberg, on the borders of the shattered basin overgrown with weeds, the following song was heard by the melancholy shades that roam at night through the mouldering halls of old, and the gloomy hollows in the mountain of Heidelberg.

SONG OF THE FAIRIES IN THE RUINS OF HEIDELBERG.

From the woods and the glossy green
  With the wild thyme strewn;
From the rivers whose crisped stream
  Is kissed by the trembling moon; —

While the dwarf looks out from his mountain cave,
  And the erl-king from his lair,
And the water-nymph from her mountain wave,
  We skirr the limber air.

There 's a smile on the vine-clad shore,
  A smile on the castled heights,
They dream back the days of yore,
  And they smile at our roundel rites!
          Our roundel rites!

Lightly we tread these halls around,
  Lightly tread we;
Yet hark! we have scared with a single sound
  The moping owl on the breathless tree,
          And the goblin sprites!
Ha! ha! we have scared with a single sound
  The old gray owl on the breathless tree,
          And the goblin sprites!

"They come not," said Pipalee; "yet the banquet is prepared, and the poor queen will be glad of some refreshment."

"What a pity! all the rose leaves will be over-broiled," said Nip.

"Let us amuse ourselves with the old painter," quoth Trip, springing over the ruins.

"Well said," cried Pipalee and Nip; and all three, leaving the lord-treasurer amazed at their levity, whisked into the painter's apartment. Permitting them to throw the ink over their victim's papers, break his pencils, mix his colors, mislay his nightcap, and go whiz against his face in the shape of a great bat, till the astonished Frenchman began to think the pensive goblins of the place had taken a sprightly fit, — we hasten to a small green spot some little way from the town, in the valley of the Neckar, and by the banks of its silver stream. It was circled round by dark trees, save on that side bordered by the river. The wild flowers sprang profusely up from the turf, which was yet smooth and singularly green. And there was the German fairy describing a circle round the spot, and making his elvish spells. And Nymphalin sat, droopingly in the centre, shading her face, which was bowed down as the head of a water-lily, and weeping crystal tears.

There came a hollow murmur through the trees, and a rush, as of a mighty wind, and a dark form emerged from the shadow, and approached the spot.

The face was wrinkled and old, and stern with a malevolent and evil aspect. The frame was lean and gaunt, and supported by a staff, and a short gray mantle covered its bended shoulders.

"Things of the moonbeam," said the form, in a shril and ghastly voice, "what want ye here, and why charm ye this spot from the coming of me and mine?"

"Dark witch of the blight and blast," answered the fairy, "thou that nippest the herb in its tender youth, and eatest up the core of the soft bud; behold, it is but a small spot that the fairies claim from thy demesnes, and on which, through frost and heat, they will keep the herbage green and the air gentle in its sighs!"

"And, wherefore, oh dweller in the crevices of the earth, wherefore wouldst thou guard this spot from the curses of the seasons?"

"We know by our instinct," answered the fairy, "that this spot will become the grave of one whom the fairies love; hither, by an unfelt influence, shall we guide her yet living steps; and in gazing upon this spot, shall the desire of quiet and the resignation of death steal upon her soul. Behold, throughout the universe all things at war with one another, the lion with the lamb; the serpent with the bird, and even the gentlest bird itself, with the moth of the air, or the worm of the humble earth! What then to men, and to the spirits transcending men, is so lovely and so sacred as a being that harmeth none? what so beautiful as innocence? what so mournful as its untimely tomb? and shall not that tomb be sacred? shall it not be our peculiar care May we not mourn over it as the passing away of some fair miracle in nature; too tender to endure; too rare to be forgotten? It is for this, oh dread waker of the blast, that the fairies would consecrate this little spot: for this they would charm away from its tranquil turf the wandering ghoul and the evil children of the night. Here, not the ill-omened owl, nor the blind bat, nor the unclean worm shall come. And thou shouldst have neither will nor power to nip the flowers of spring, or sear the green herbs of summer. Is it not, dark mother of the evil winds, is it not *our* immemorial office, to tend the grave of innocence, and keep fresh the flowers round the resting-place of virgin love?"

Then the witch drew her cloak round her, and muttered to herself, and without further answer turned away among the trees and vanished, as the breath of the east wind, which goeth with her as her comrade, and scattered the melancholy leaves along her path!

CHAPTER XXXI.

Gertrude and Trevylyan, when the former is awakened to the approach of death.

The next day Gertrude and her companions went along the banks of the haunted Neckar. She had passed a sleepless and painful night, and her evanescent and childlike spirits had sobered down into a melancholy and thoughtful mood. She lent back in an open carriage with Trevylyan, ever constant by her side, while Du ——e and Vane rode slowly in advance. Trevylyan tried in vain to cheer her, even his attempts (usually so eagerly received) to charm her duller moments by tale or legend, were, in this instance, fruitless. She shook her head, gently pressed his hand, and said, "No, dear Trevylyan, — no, — even your art fails to-day, but your kindness, never!" and pressing his hand to her lips, she burst passionately into tears.

Alarmed and anxious, he clasped her to his breast, and strove to lift her face, as it drooped on its resting-place, and kiss away its tears.

"Oh!" said she, at length, "do not despise my weakness, I am overcome by my own thoughts; I look upon the world, and see that it is fair and good; I look upon you, and I see all that I can venerate and adore. Life seems to me so sweet, and the earth so lovely, can you wonder then that I should shrink at the thought of death? Nay, interrupt me not, dear Albert; the thought must be born and braved. I have not cherished, I have not yielded to it through my long-increasing illness; but there have been times when it has forced itself upon me; and now, *now* more palpably than ever. Do not think me weak and childish, I never feared death till I knew you; but to see you no more, — never again to touch this dear hand, — never to thank you for your love, — never to be sensible of your care, — to lie down and sleep, *and never, never once more to dream of you!* — Ah! that is a bitter thought! but I will brave it, — yes, brave it, as one worthy of your regard."

Trevylyan, choked by his emotions, covered his own face with his hands, and leaning back in the carriage, vainly struggled with his sobs.

"Perhaps," she said, yet ever and anon clinging to the hope that had utterly abandoned *him*, "perhaps, I may yet deceive myself; and my love for you, which seems to me as if it could conquer death, may bear me up against this fell disease; — the hope to live with you, — to watch you, — to share your high dreams, and oh, above all, to soothe you in sorrow and sickness, as you have soothed me, — has not that hope something that may support even this sinking frame? And who shall love thee as I love? who see thee as I have seen? who pray for thee in gratitude and tears as I have prayed? Oh, Albert, so little am I jealous of you, so little do I think of myself in comparison, that I could close my eyes happily on the world, if I knew that what I could be to thee, another will be!"

"Gertrude," said Trevylyan; and lifting up his colorless face, he gazed upon her with an earnest and calm solemnity. "Gertrude, let us be united at once! if fate must sever us, let her cut the last tie too; let us feel at least that on earth we have been all in all to each other; let us defy death, even as it frowns upon us. Be mine to-morrow, — this day, — oh God! be mine!"

Over even that pale countenance, beneath whose hues the lamp of life so faintly fluttered, a deep, a radiant flash passed one moment, lighting up the beautiful ruin with the glow of maiden youth and impassioned hope, and then died rapidly away.

"No, Albert," she said, sighing; "no! it must not be: far easier would come the pang to you, while yet we are not wholly united; and for my own part, I am selfish, and feel as if I should leave a tenderer remembrance on your heart, thus parted; — tenderer, but not so sad. Nor would I wish you to feel yourself widowed to my memory, or cling like a blight to your fair prospects of the future. Remember me rather as a dream; as something never wholly won, and therefore asking no fidelity but that of kind and forbearing thoughts. Do you remember one evening as we sailed along the Rhine, (ah, happy, happy hour!) that we heard from the banks a strain of music, not so skilfully played as to be worth listening to for itself, but, suiting as it did, the hour and the scene, we remained silent, that we might hear it the better; and when it died insensibly upon the waters, a certain melancholy stole over us; we felt that a something that softened the landscape had gone, and we conversed less lightly than before. Just so, my own loved, — my own adored Trevylyan, just so is the influence that our brief love, — your poor Gertrude's existence, should bequeath to your remembrance. A sound, — a presence, — should haunt you for a little while, but no more, ere you again become sensible of the glories that court your way!"

But as Gertrude said this, she turned to Trevylyan, and seeing his agony, she could refrain no longer; she felt that to soothe was to insult; and throwing herself upon his breast, they mingled their tears together.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A spot to be buried in.

On their return homeward, Du ——e took the third seat in the carriage, and endeavoured, with his usual vivacity, to cheer the spirits of his companions; and such was the elasticity of Gertrude's nature, that with her, he, to a certain degree, succeeded in his kindly attempt. Quickly alive to the charms of scenery, she entered by degrees into the external beauties which every turn in the road opened on their view; and the silvery smoothness of the river, that made the constant attraction of the landscape; the serenity of the time, and the clearness of the heavens, assisted by those spells which nature ever exercises over her votaries, tended to tranquillize a mind that, like the sunflower, so instinctively turned from the shadow to the light.

Once Du ——e stopped the carriage in a spot of herbage, bedded among the trees, and said to Gertrude, "We are now in one of the many places along the Neckar, which your favorite traditions serve to consecrate. Amid yonder copses, in the early ages of Christianity, there dwelt a hermit, who, though young in years, was renowned for the sanctity of his life. None knew whence he came, or for what cause he had limited the circle of life to the seclusion of his cell. He rarely spoke, save when his ghostly advice or his kindly prayer was needed; he lived upon herbs, and the wild fruits which the peasants brought to his cave; and every morning, and every evening, he came to this spot to fill his pitcher from the water of the stream. But here, he was observed to linger long after his task was done, and to sit gazing upon the walls of a convent which then rose upon the opposite side of the bank, though now even its ruins are gone. Gradually his health gave way beneath the austerities he practised; and one evening he was found by some fishermen, insensible on the turf. They bore him for medical aid to the opposite convent; and one of the sisterhood, the daughter of a prince, was summoned to tend the recluse. But, when his eyes opened upon hers, a sudden recognition appeared to seize both. He spoke — but words in some other tongue; and the sister threw herself on the couch of the dying man, and shrieked forth a name, the most famous in the surrounding country, the name of a once noted minstrel, who, in those rude times, had mingled the poet with the lawless chief, and was supposed, years since, to have fallen in one of the desperate frays between prince and outlaw, which were then common; storming the very castle which held her, — now the pious nun, then the beauty and presider over the tournament and galliard. In her arms the spirit of the hermit passed away. She survived but a few hours, and left conjecture busy with a history to which it never obtained further clew. Many a troubadour, in later times, furnished forth in poetry the details which truth refused to supply; and the place where the hermit at sunrise and sunset ever came to gaze upon the convent, became consecrated by song."

The place invested with this legendary interest was impressed with a singular aspect of melancholy quiet; wild flowers yet lingered on the turf, whose grassy sedges gently overhung the Neckar, that murmured amid them with a plaintive music. Not a wind stirred the trees; but, at a little distance from the place, the spire of a church rose amid the copse: and, as they paused, there suddenly arose from the holy building the bell that summons to the burial of the dead. It came on the ear in such harmony with the spot, with the hour, with the breathing calm, that it thrilled to the heart of each with an inexpressible power. It was like the voice of another world, — that amid the solitude of nature summoned the lulled spirit from the cares of this; — it invited, not revulsed, and had in its tone more of softness than of awe.

Gertrude turned, with tears starting to her eyes, and laying her hand on Trevylyan's, whispered, — "in such a spot, so calm, so sequestered, yet in the neighbourhood of the house of God, would I wish this broken frame to be consigned to rest!"

CHAPTER THE LAST.

The conclusion of this tale.

FROM that day Gertrude's spirit resumed its wonted cheerfulness, and for the ensuing week she never reverted to her approaching fate; she seemed once more to have grown unconscious of its limit. Perhaps, she sought, anxious for Trevylyan to the last, not to throw additional gloom over their earthly separation; or, perhaps, once steadily regarding the certainty of her doom, its terrors vanished. The chords of thought, vibrating to the subtlest emotions, may be changed by a single incident, or in a single hour; a sound of sacred music, a green and quiet burial-place, may convert the form of death into the aspect of an angel. And therefore wisely, and with a beautiful lore, did the Greeks strip the grave of its unreal gloom; wisely did they body forth the great principle of rest by solemn and lovely images, — unconscious of the northern madness that made a spectre of repose!

But while Gertrude's *spirit* resumed its healthful tone, her *frame* rapidly declined, and a few days now could do the ravage of months a little while before.

One evening, amid the desolate ruins of Heidelberg, Trevylyan, who had gone forth alone, to indulge the thoughts which he strove to stifle in Gertrude's presence, suddenly encountered Vane. That calm and almost callous pupil of the adversities of the world was standing alone, and gazing upon the shattered casements and riven tower, through which the sun now cast its slant and parting ray.

Trevylyan, who had never loved this cold and unsusceptible man, save for the sake of Gertrude, felt now almost a hatred creep over him, as he thought in such a time, and with death fastening upon the flower of her house, he could yet be calm, and smile, and muse, and moralize, and play the common part of the world. He strode slowly up to him, and standing full before him, said, with a hollow voice and writhing smile, "You amuse yourself pleasantly, sir; this is a fine scene; — and to meditate over griefs a thousand years hushed to rest, is better than watching over a sick girl, and eating away your heart with fear."

Vane looked at him quietly, but intently, and made no reply.

"Vane!" continued Trevylyan, with the same preternatural attempt at calm; "Vane, in a few days all will be over, and you and I, the things, the plotters, the false men of the world, will be left alone, — left by the sole being that grace our dull life, that makes, by her love, either of us worthy of a thought!"

Vane started, and turned away his face. "You are cruel," said he, with a faltering voice.

"What, man!" shouted Trevylyan, seizing him abruptly by the arm, "can *you* feel? Is your cold heart touched? Come, then," added he, with a wild laugh, "come, let us be friends!"

Vane drew himself aside with a certain dignity, that impressed Trevylyan even at that hour. "Some years hence," said he, "you will be called cold as I am; sorrow will teach you the wisdom of indifference, — it is a bitter school, sir, a bitter school! But think you that I do indeed see unmoved my last hope shivered, — the last tie that binds me to my kind? No, no! I feel it as a man may feel; I cloak it as a man grown gray in misfortune should do! My child is more to me than your betrothed to you; for you are young and wealthy, and life smiles before you; but I — no more, — sir, — no more!"

"Forgive me," said Trevylyan, humbly; "I have wronged you; but Gertrude is an excuse for any crime of love; and now listen to my last prayer, — give her to me, — even on the verge of the grave. Death cannot seize her in the arms, — in the vigils, — of a love like mine."

Vane shuddered. "It were to wed the dead," said he; "no."

Trevylyan drew back, and, without another word, hurried away; he returned to the town; he sought, with methodical calmness, the owner of the piece of ground on which Gertrude had wished to be buried. He purchased it, and that very night he sought the priest of a neighbouring church, and directed it should be consecrated according to the due rite and ceremonial.

The priest, an aged and pious man, was struck by the request, and the air of him who made it.

"Shall it be done forthwith, sir?" said he, hesitating.

"Forthwith," answered Trevylyan, with a calm smile; "a bridegroom, you know, is naturally impatient."

For the next three days Gertrude was so ill as to be confined to her bed. All that time Trevylyan sat outside her door, without speaking, scarcely lifting his eyes from the ground. The attendants passed to and fro, — he heeded them not; perhaps, as even the foreign menials turned aside and wiped their eyes, and prayed God to comfort him, he required compassion less at that time than any other. There is a stupefaction in woe, and the heart sleeps without a pang when exhausted by its afflictions.

But on the fourth day Gertrude rose, and was carried down, (how changed, yet how lovely ever!) to their common apartment. During those three days the priest had been with her often, and her spirit, full of religion from her childhood, had been unspeakably soothed by his comfort. She took food from the hand of Trevylyan; she smiled upon him as sweetly as of old. She conversed with him, though with a faint voice and at broken intervals. But she felt no pain; life ebbed away gradually and without a pang. "My father," said she to Vane, whose features still bore their usual calm, whatever might have passed within, "I know that you will grieve, when I am gone, more than the world might guess; for I only know what you were years ago, ere friends left you and fortune frowned, — and ere my poor mother died. But do not, do not believe that hope and comfort leave you with me. Till the heavens pass away from the earth, there shall be hope and comfort for all."

They did not lodge in the town, but had fixed their abode on its outskirts, and within sight of the Neckar; and from the window they saw a light sail gliding gayly by, till it passed, and solitude once more rested upon the waters.

"The sail passes from our eyes," said Gertrude, pointing to it, "but still it glides on as happily though we see it no more; and I feel, — yes, father, I feel, — I know that it so with *us*. We glide down the river of time from the eyes of men, but we cease not the less to *be*."

And now, as the twilight descended, she expressed a wish, before she retired to rest, to be left alone with Trevylyan. He was not then sitting by her side, for he would not trust himself to do so; but with his face averted, at a little distance from her. She called him by his name; he answered not, nor turned. Weak as she was, she raised herself from the sofa, and crept gently along the floor till she came to him, and sank in his arms.

"Ah, unkind!" she said, "unkind for once! Will you turn away from me? Come, let us look once more on the river; see, the night darkens over it. Our pleasant voyage, the type of our love, is finished, our sail may be unfurled no more. Never again can your voice soothe the lassitude of sickness with the legend and the song, — the course is run, the vessel is broken up, night closes over its fragments; but now, in this hour, love me, be kind to me as ever. Still let me be your own Gertrude, — still let me close my eyes this night as before, with the sweet consciousness that I am loved."

"Loved! — Oh Gertrude! speak not to me thus!"

"Come, that is yourself again!" and she clung with weak arms caressingly to his breast; "and now," she said, more solemnly, "let us forget that we are mortal; let us remember only that life is a part, not the whole of our career; let us feel in this soft hour, and while yet we are unsevered, the presence of the eternal that is within us, so that it shall not be as death, but as a short absence; and when once the pang of parting is over, you must think only that we are shortly to meet again. What! you turn from me still? See, I do not weep or grieve, I have conquered the pang of our absence, will you be outdone by me? Do you remember, Albert, that you once told me how the wisest of the sages of old, in prison, and before death, consoled his friends with the proof of the immortality of the soul? Is it not a consolation? Does it not suffice? or will you deem it wise from the lips of wisdom, but vain from the lips of love?"

"Hush, hush!" said Trevylyan, wildly, "or I shall think you an angel already."

But let us close this commune, and leave unrevealed the *last* sacred words that ever passed between them upon earth.

When Vane and the physician stole back softly into the room, Trevylyan motioned them to be still. "She sleeps," he whispered, "hush!" And in truth, wearied out by her own emotions, and lulled by the belief that she had soothed one with whom her heart dwelt now, as ever, she had fallen into sleep, or, it may be, insensibility, on his breast. There as she lay, so fair, so frail, so delicate, the twilight deepened into shade, and the first star, like the hope of the future, broke forth upon the darkness of the earth.

Nothing could equal the stillness without, save that which lay breathlessly within. For not one of the group stirred or spoke; and Trevylyan, bending over her, never took his eyes from her face, watching the parted lips, and fancying that he imbibed the breath. Alas, the breath was stilled! from sleep to death she had glided without a sigh: happy, most happy in that death! Cradled in the arms of unchanged love, and brightened in her last thought by the consciousness of innocence and the assurances of heaven!

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Trevylyan, after long sojourn on the continent, returned to England. He plunged into active life, and became what is termed, in this age of little names, a distinguished and noted man. But what was mainly remarkable in his future conduct, was his impatience of rest. He eagerly courted all occupations, even of the most varied and motley kind; business, — letters, — ambition, — pleasure. He suffered no pause in his career; and leisure to him was as care to others. He lived in the world like other men, discharging its duties, fostering its affections, and fulfilling its career. But there was a deep and wintry change within him, — *the sunlight of his life was gone;* the loveliness of romance had left the earth. The stem was proof as heretofore to the blast but the green leaves were severed from it for ever, and the bird had forsaken its boughs Once he had idolized the beauty that is born of song; the glory and the ardor that invest such thoughts as are not of our common clay; but the well of enthusiasm was dried up, and the golden bowl was broken at the fountain. With Gertrude the poetry of existence was gone. As she herself had described her loss, a music had ceased to breathe along the face of things; and though the bark might sail on as swiftly, and the stream swell with as proud a wave, a something that had vibrated on the heart was still, and the magic of the voyage was no more.

And Gertrude sleeps on the spot where she wished her last couch to be made; and far, — oh, far dearer is that small spot on the distant banks of the gliding Neckar to Trevylyan's heart, than all the broad lands and fertile fields of his ancestral domain. The turf, too, preserves its emerald greenness; and it would seem to me that the field flowers spring up by the sides of the simple tomb even more profusely than of old. A curve in the bank breaks the tide of the Neckar, and therefore its stream pauses, as if to linger reluctantly by that solitary grave, and to mourn among the rustling sedges ere it passes on. And I have thought, when I last looked upon that quiet place, — when I saw the turf so fresh, and the flowers so bright of hue, that aërial hands might *indeed* tend the sod: that it was by no *imaginary* spells that I summoned the fairies to my tale; that in truth, and with vigils constant though unseen they yet kept from all polluting footsteps, and from the harsher influence of the seasons, the grave of one who so loved their race; and who, in her gentle and spotless virtue, claimed kindred with the beautiful ideal of the world Is there one of us who has not known some being for whom it seemed not too wild a fantasy to indulge such dreams?

THE END OF THE PILGRIMS OF THE RHINE.

ARASMANES, THE SEEKER.

CHAPTER I.

IN the broad plains of Chaldæa, and not the least illustrious of those early sages from whom came our first learning of the lights of heaven, the venerable Chosphor saw his age decline into the grave. Upon his death-bed he thus addressed his only son, the young Arasmanes, in whose piety he recognised, even in that gloomy hour, a consolation and a blessing; and for whose growing renown for wisdom and for valour, the faint pulses of expiring life yet beat with paternal pride.

"Arasmanes," said he, "I am about to impart to thee the only secret which, after devoting eighty years to unravel the many mysteries of knowledge, I consider worthy of transmitting to my child. Thou knowest that I have wandered over the distant regions of the world, and have experienced, with all the vicissitudes, some of the triumphs, and many of the pleasures, of life. Learn, from my experience, that earth possesses nothing which can reward the pursuit, or satisfy the desire. When thou seest the stars shining down upon the waters, thou beholdest an image of the visionary splendours of hope: the light sparkles on the wave; but it neither warms while it glitters, nor can it, for a single instant, arrest the progress of the stream from the dark gulf into which it hastens to merge itself and be lost. It was not till my old age that this conviction grew upon my mind; and about that time I discovered, from one of the sacred books to which my studies were then applied, the secret I am now about to confide to thy ear. Know, my son, that in the extremities of Asia there is a garden in which the Creator of the Universe placed the first parents of mankind. In that garden the sun never sets; nor does the beauty of the seasons wane. *There*, is neither ambition, nor avarice, nor false hope, nor its child, regret. *There*, is neither age nor deformity; diseases are banished from the air; eternal youth, and the serenity of an unbroken happiness, are the prerogative of all things that breathe therein. For a mystic and unknown sin our first parents were banished from this happy clime, and their children scattered over the earth. Superhuman beings are placed at its portals, and clouds and darkness veil it from the eyes of ordinary men. But, to the virtuous and to the bold, there is no banishment from the presence of God; and by them the darkness may be penetrated, the dread guardians softened, and the portals of the divine land be passed. Thither, then, my son—early persuaded that the rest of earth is paved with sorrow and with care—thither, then, bend thy adventurous way. Fain could I have wished that, in my stronger manhood, when my limbs could have served my will, I had learned this holy secret, and repaired in search of the ancestral clime. Avail thyself of my knowledge; and, in the hope of thy happiness, I shall die contented." The pious son pressed the hand of his sire, and promised obedience to his last command.

"But, oh, my father!" said he, "how shall I know in what direction to steer my course? To this land, who shall be my guide, or what my clue? Can ship, built by mortal hands, anchor at its coast; or can we say to the camel-driver, 'Thou art approaching to the goal?'"

The old man pointed to the east.

"From the east," said he, "dawns the sun—emblem of the progress of the mind's light; from the east comes all of science that we know. Born in its sultry regions, seek only to pierce to its extreme; and, guiding thyself by the stars of heaven ever in one course, reach at last the ADEN that shall reward thy toils."

And Chosphor died, and was buried with his fathers.

After a short interval of mourning, Arasmanes took leave of his friends; and, turning his footsteps to the east, sought the gates of Paradise.

He travelled far and alone, for several weeks; and the stars were his only guides. By degrees, as he advanced, he found that the existence of Aden was more and more acknowledged. Accustomed from his boyhood to the companionship of sages, it was their abodes that he sought in each town or encampment through which he passed. By them his ardour was confirmed; for they all agreed in the dim and remote tradition of some beautiful region in the farthest east, from which the existing races of the earth were banished, and which was jealously guarded from profane approach by the wings of celestial Spirits. But, if he communicated to any one his daring design, he had the mortification to meet only the smile of derision, or the incredulous gaze of wonder: by some he was thought a madman, and by others an impostor. So that, at last, he prudently refrained from revealing his intentions, and contented himself with seeking the knowledge, and listening to the conjectures, of others.

CHAPTER II.

AT length the traveller emerged from a mighty forest, through which, for several days, he had threaded his weary way; and beautiful beyond thought was the landscape that broke upon his view. A plain covered with the richest verdure lay before him; through the trees that, here and there, darkened over the emerald sward, were cut alleys, above which hung festoons of many-coloured flowers, whose hues sparkled amidst the glossy foliage, and whose sweets steeped the air as with a bath. A stream, clear as crystal, flowed over golden sands, and, wherever the sward was greenest, gathered itself into delicious fountains, and sent upwards its glittering spray, as if to catch the embraces of the sun, whose beams kissed it in delight.

The wanderer paused in ecstasy; a sense of luxurious rapture, which he had never before experienced, crept into his soul. "Behold!" murmured he, "my task is already done; and Aden, the land of happiness and of youth, lies before me!"

While he thus spake, a sweet voice answered—"Yes, O happy stranger!—thy task is done: this is the land of happiness and of youth!"

He turned, and a maiden of dazzling beauty was by his side. "Enjoy the present," said she, "and so wilt thou defy the future. Ere yet the world was, Love brooded over the unformed shell, till from beneath the shadow of his wings burst forth the life of the young creation. Love, then, is the true God, and whoso serveth him he admits into the mysteries of a temple erected before the stars were formed. Behold! thou enterest now upon the threshold of the temple; thou art in the land of happiness and youth!"

Enchanted with these words, Arasmanes gave himself up to the sweet intoxication they produced upon his soul. He suffered the nymph to lead him deeper into the valley; and now, from a thousand vistas in the wood, trooped forth beings, some of fantastic, some of the most harmonious, shapes. There, were the satyr and the faun, and the youthful Bacchus—mixed with the multiform deities of India, and the wild objects of Egyptian worship; but more numerous than all were the choral nymphs, that spiritualized the reality, by incorporating the dreams, of beauty; and, wherever he looked, one laughing Face seemed to peer forth from the glossy leaves, and to shed over all things, as from its own joyous yet tender aspect, a tenderness and a joy. And he asked how this Being, that seemed to have the power of multiplying itself everywhere, was called?—And its name was Eros.

For a time the length of which he knew not—for in that land no measurement of time was kept—Arasmanes was fully persuaded that it was Aden to which he had attained. He felt his youth as if it were something palpable; everything was new to him;—even in the shape of the leaves, and the whisper of the odorous airs, he found wherewithal to marvel at and admire. Enamoured of the maiden who had first addressed him, at her slightest wish (and she was full of all beautiful caprices) he was ready to explore even the obscurest recess of the valley which now appeared to him unbounded. He never wearied of a single hour. He felt as if weariness were impossible; and, with every instant, he repeated to himself, "In the land of happiness and youth I am a dweller."

One day, as he was conversing with his beloved, and gazing upon her face, he was amazed to behold that, since the last time he had gazed upon it, a wrinkle had planted itself upon the ivory surface of her brow; and, even while half doubting the evidence of his eyes, new wrinkles seemed slowly to form over the forehead, and the transparent roses of her cheek to wane and fade! He concealed, as well as he could, the mortification and wonder that he experienced at this strange phenomenon; and, no longer daring to gaze upon a face from which before he had drunk delight as from a fountain, he sought excuses to separate himself from her, and wandered, confused and bewildered with his own thoughts, into the wood. The fauns, and the dryads, and the youthful face of Bacchus, and the laughing aspect of Eros, came athwart him from time to time; yet the wonder that had clothed them with fascination was dulled within his breast. Nay, he thought the poor wine-god had a certain vulgarity in his air, and he felt an angry impatience at the perpetual gaiety of Eros.

And now, whenever he met his favourite nymph —who was as the queen of the valley—he had the chagrin to perceive that the wrinkles deepened with every time; youth seemed rapidly to desert her; and instead of a maiden scarcely escaped from childhood, it seemed to him that he had been wasting his adoration upon a superannuated harridan.

One day he could not resist saying to her, though with some embarrassment—

"Pray, dearest, is it many years since you have inhabited this valley?"

"Oh, indeed, many!" said she, smiling.

"You are not, then, very young?" rejoined Arasmanes, ungallantly.

"What!" cried the nymph, changing colour— "Do you begin to discover age in my countenance? Has any wrinkle yet appeared upon my brow? You are silent. Oh, cruel Fate! wilt thou not spare me even this lover?" And the poor nymph burst into tears.

"Be consoled," said Arasmanes, painfully, "it is true that time begins to creep upon your charms; but though my love may pass, my friendship shall be eternal."

Scarcely had he uttered these words, when the nymph, rising, fixed upon him a long, sorrowful look, and then, with a loud cry, vanished from his sight. Thick darkness, as a veil, fell over the plains; the Novelty of life, with its attendant, Poetry, was gone from the wanderer's path for ever.

A sudden sleep crept over his senses. He awoke confused and unrefreshed, and a long and gradual ascent, but over mountains green indeed, and watered by many streams gushing from the heights, stretched before him. Of the valley he had mistaken for Aden not a vestige remained. He was once more on the real earth.

CHAPTER III.

FOR several days, discontented and unhappy, the young adventurer pursued his course, still seeking only the East, and still endeavouring to console himself for the sweet delusions of the past by hoping an Aden in the future.

The evening was still and clear; the twilight star broke forth over those giant plains—free from the culture and the homes of men, which yet make the character of the eastern and the earlier world; a narrow stream, emerging from a fissure in a small rock covered with moss, sparkled forth under the light of the solemn heavens, and flowed far away, till lost amongst a grove of palms. By the source of this stream sat an aged man and a young female. And the old man was pouring into his daughter's ear—for Azraaph held to Ochtor that holy relationship—the first doctrines of the world's wisdom; those wild but lofty conjectures by which philosophy penetrated into the nature and attributes of God; and reverently the young maiden listened, and meekly shone down the star of eve upon the dark yet lustrous beauty of her earnest countenance.

It was at this moment that a stranger was seen descending from the hills which bordered the mighty plains; and he, too, worn and tired with long travel, came to the stream to refresh his burning thirst, and lave the dust from his brow.

He was not at first aware of the presence of the old man and the maiden; for they were half concealed beneath the shadow of the rock from which the stream flowed. But the old man, who was one of those early hermits with whom wisdom was the child of solitude, and who, weary of a warring and savage world, had long since retired to a cavern not far from the source of that stream, and dwelt apart with Nature, the memories of a troubled Past, and the contemplation of a mysterious Future,—the old man, I say, accustomed to proffer to the few wanderers that from time to time descended the hills (seeking the cities of the East) the hospitalities of food and shelter, was the first to break the silence.

Arasmanes accepted with thankfulness the offers of the hermit, and that night he became Ochtor's guest. There were many chambers in the cavern, hollowed either by the hand of Nature, or by some early hunters on the hill; and into one of these the old man, after the Chaldæan had refreshed himself with the simple viands of the hermitage, conducted the wanderer : it was covered with dried and fragrant mosses; and the sleep of Arasmanes was long, and he dreamed many cheerful dreams.

When he arose the next morning, he found his entertainers were not within the cavern. He looked forth, and beheld them once more by the source of the stream, on which shone the morning sun, and round which fluttered the happy wings of the desert birds. The wanderer sought his hosts in a spot on which they were accustomed, each morn and eve, to address the Deity. "Thou dost not purpose to leave us soon," said the hermit; "for he who descends from yon mountains must have traversed a toilsome way, and his limbs will require rest."

Arasmanes, gazing on the beauty of Azraaph, answered, "In truth, did I not fear that I should disturb thy reverent meditations, the cool of thy plains and the quiet of thy cavern, and, more than all, thy converse and kind looks, would persuade me, my father, to remain with thee many days."

"Behold how the wandering birds give life and merriment to the silent stream!" said the sage; "and so to the solitary man are the footsteps of his kind." And Arasmanes sojourned with Ochtor the old man.

CHAPTER IV.

"This, then, is thy tale," said Ochtor; "and thou still believest in the visionary Aden of thy father's dreams. Doubtless such a land existed once for our happier sires; or why does tradition preserve it to the race that behold it not? But the shadow wraps it, and the angel guards. Waste not thy life in a pursuit, without a clue, for a goal that thou never mayest attain. Lose not the charm of earth in seeking after the joys of Aden. Tarry with us, my son, in these still retreats. This is the real Aden of which thy father spake; for here comes neither passion nor care. The mortifications and the disappointments of earth fall not upon the recluse. Behold, my daughter hath found favour in thine eyes—she loveth thee—she is beautiful and tender of heart. Tarry with us, my son, and forget the lessons that thy sire, weary of a world which he yet never had the courage to quit, extracted from the false wisdom of Discontent."

"Thou art right, venerable Ochtor," cried Arasmanes with enthusiasm; "give me but thy daughter, and I will ask for no other Aden than these plains."

CHAPTER V.

The sun had six times renewed his course, and Arasmanes still dwelt in the cave of Ochtor. In the fair face of Azraaph he discovered no wrinkles—her innocent love did not pall upon him; the majestic calm of Nature breathed its own tranquillity into his soul, and in the lessons of Ochtor he took a holy delight. He found in his wisdom that which at once stilled the passions and inspired the thoughts. At times, however, and of late more frequently than ever, strong yearnings after the Aden he had so vainly pursued were yet felt. He felt that curse of monotony which is the invariable offspring of quiet.

At the end of the sixth year, as one morning they stood without the door of the cavern, and their herds fed tranquilly around them, a band of men from the western hills came suddenly in view: they were discovered before they had time to consider whether they should conceal themselves; they had no cause, however, for fear—the strangers were desirous only of food and rest.

Foremost of this band was an aged man of majestic mien, and clothed in the richest garments of the east. Loose flowed his purple robe, and bright shone the jewels on the girdle that clasped his sword. As he advanced to accost Ochtor, upon the countenance of each of the old men grew doubt, astonishment, recognition, and joy. "My brother!" burst from the lips of both, and the old chief fell upon Ochtor's bosom and wept aloud. The brothers remained alone the whole day, and at nightfall they parted with many tears; and Zamielides, the son of the chief (who was with the band), knelt to Ochtor, and Ochtor blessed him.

Now, when all were gone, and Silence once more slept upon the plains, Ochtor went forth alone, and Azraaph said unto her husband, "My father's mind seems disquieted and sad; go forth, I pray thee, my beloved, and comfort him; the dews lie thick upon the grass, and my father is very old."

By the banks of the stream stood Ochtor, and his arms were folded on his breast; the wild horses were heard snorting in the distance, and the zebras came to drink at the wave; and the presence of the beasts made more impressive the solitude of the old man.

"Why art thou disquieted, my father?" said Arasmanes.

"Have I not parted with my near of kin?"

"But thou didst never hope to meet them; and are not thy children left thee?"

Ochtor waved his hand with an unwonted impatience.

"Listen to me, Arasmanes. Know that Zamiel and I were brothers. Young and ardent, each of us aspired to rule our kind, and each of us imagined he had the qualities that secure command; but mark, *my* arm was the stronger in the field, and *my* brain was the subtler in the council. We toiled and schemed, and rose into repute among our tribe, but Envy was busy with our names. Our herds were seized—we were stripped of our rank—we were degraded to the level of our slaves. Then, disgusted with my race, I left their cities, and in these vast solitudes I forgot ambition in content. But my brother was of more hopeful heart; with a patient brow he veiled the anger he endured. Lo, he hath been rewarded! His hour came—he gathered together his friends in secret—he smote our enemies in the dead of night; and at morning, behold, he was hailed chieftain of the tribe. This night he rides with his son to the king of the City of Golden Palaces, whose daughter that son is about to wed. Had I not weakly renounced my tribe—had I not fled hither, that glorious destiny would have been mine; *I* should have been the monarch of my race, and my daughter have matched with kings. Marvellest thou, now, that I am disquieted, or that my heart is sore within me?"

And Arasmanes saw that the sage had been superior to the world, only while he was sickened of the world.

And Ochtor nourished the discontent he had formed to his dying day; and, within three months from that night, Arasmanes buried him by the source of the solitary stream.

CHAPTER VI.

THE death of Ochtor, and his previous confession, deeply affected Arasmanes. He woke as from a long sleep. Solitude had lost its spell; and he perceived that inactivity itself may be the parent of remorse. "If," thought he, "so wise, so profound a mind as that of Ochtor was thus sensible to the memories of ambition—if, on the verge of death, he thus regretted the solitude in which he had buried his years, and felt, upon the first tidings from the great world, that he had wasted the promise and powers of life, how much more accessible should *I* be to such feelings, in the vigour of manhood, and with the one great object which I swore to my father to pursue, unattained, and scarcely attempted! Surely it becomes me to lose no longer time in these houseless wastes; but to rise and gird up my loins, and seek with Azraaph, my wife, for that Aden which we will enter together!"

These thoughts soon ripened into resolve; and not the less so in that, Ochtor being dead, Arasmanes had now no companion for his loftier and more earnest thoughts. Azraaph was beautiful and gentle; but the moment he began to talk about the stars, she unaffectedly yawned in his face. She was quite contented with the solitude, for she knew of no other world; and the herds and the streamlet, and every old bush around the cavern, were society to her; but her content, as Arasmanes began to discover, was that of ignorance, and not of wisdom.

Azraaph wept bitterly on leaving the cavern; but by degrees, as they travelled slowly on, the novelty of what they saw reconciled her to change; and, except at night, when she was weary of spirit, she ceased to utter her regrets for the stream and the quiet cave. They travelled eastward for several weeks, and met with no living thing by the way, save a few serpents, and a troop of wild horses. At length, one evening, they found themselves in the suburbs of a splendid city. As they approached the gates they drew back, dazzled with the lustre, for the gates were of burnished gold, which shone bright and glittering as they caught a sunny light from the lamps of naphtha that blazed, row upon row, along the mighty walls.

They inquired, as they passed the gates, the name of the city; and they heard, with some surprise, and more joy, that it was termed, "The City of Golden Palaces."

"Here, then, cried Azraaph, "we shall be well received; for the son of my father's brother is wedded to the daughter of the king."

"And here, then, will be many sages," thought Arasmanes, "who will, doubtless, have some knowledge of the site of Aden."

They were much struck, as they proceeded through the streets, with the bustle, and life, and animation, that reigned around, even at that late hour. With the simplicity natural to persons who had lived so long in a desert, they inquired at once for the king's palace. The first time Arasmanes asked the question, it was of a young lord, who, very sumptuously dressed, was treading the streets with great care, lest he should soil the hem of his robe. The young lord looked at him with grave surprise, and passed on. The next person he asked was a rude boor, who was carrying a bundle of wood on his shoulders. The boor laughed in his face; and Arasmanes, indignant at the insult, struck him to the ground. There then came by a judge, and Arasmanes asked him the same question.

"The king's palace!" said the judge; "and what want ye with the king's palace?"

"Behold, the daughter of the king is married to my wife's cousin."

"Thy wife's cousin! Thou art mad to say it; yet stay, thou lookest poor, friend" (here the judge frowned terribly). "Thy garments are scanty and worn. I fancy thou hast neither silver nor gold."

"Thou sayest right," replied Arasmanes; "I have neither."

"Ho, ho!" quoth the judge: "he confesses his guilt; he owns that he has neither silver nor gold. Here, soldiers, seize this man and woman. Away with them to prison; and let them be brought up for sentence of death to-morrow. We will then decide whether they shall be hanged or starved. The wretches have, positively, neither silver nor gold; and, what is worse, they own it!"

"Is it possible!" cried the crowd; and a shudder of horror crept through the by-standers. "Away with them!—away with them! Long life to Judge Kaly, whose eye never sleeps, and who preserves us for ever from the poor!"

The judge walked on, shedding tears of virtuous delight at the reputation he had acquired.

Arasmanes and Azraaph were hurried off to prison, where Azraaph cried herself to sleep, and Arasmanes, with folded arms and downcast head, indulged his meditations on the notions of crime that seemed so extraordinary to him and so common to the sons of the City of Golden Palaces. They were disturbed the next morning by loud shouts beneath the windows of the prison. Nothing could equal the clamour that they heard; but it seemed the clamour of joy. In fact, that morning the princess who had married Azraaph's cousin had been safely brought to bed of her first child; and great was the joy and the noise throughout the city. Now, it was the custom of that country, whenever any one of the royal family was pleased to augment the population of the world, for the father of the child to go round to all the prisons in the city, and release the prisoners. How fortunate for Arasmanes and Azraaph, that the princess had been brought to bed before they were hanged!

And, by-and-by, amidst cymbal and psalter, with banners above him and spears around, came the young father to the gaol, in which our unfortunate couple were confined.

"Are there any extraordinary criminals in this prison?" asked the prince, of the head gaoler; for he was studying, at that time, to be affable.

"Only one man, my lord, who was committed last night; and who absolutely confessed in cold blood, and without torture, that he had neither silver nor gold. It is a thousand pities that such a miscreant should be suffered to go free!"

"Thou art right," said the prince; "and what impudence to confess his guilt! I should like to see so remarkable a criminal."

So saying, the prince dismounted, and followed the gaoler to the cell in which Arasmanes and his wife were confined. They recognised their relation at once; for, in that early age of the world, people in trouble had a wonderfully quick memory in recollecting relatives in power. Azraaph ran to throw herself on the prince's neck (which the guards quickly prevented), and the stately Arasmanes began to utter his manly thanks for the visit.

"These people are mad," cried the prince, hastily. "Release them; but let me escape first." So saying, he ran down stairs so fast that he nearly broke his neck; and then, mounting his horse, pursued his way to the other prisons, amidst the shouts of the people.

Arasmanes and Azraaph were now turned out into the streets. They were exceedingly hungry; and they went into the first baker's shop they saw, and asked the rites of hospitality.

"Certainly; but your money first," said the baker.

Arasmanes, made wise by experience, took care not to reply that he had no money; "But," said he, "I have left it behind me at my lodging. Give me the bread now, and lo, I will repay thee to-morrow."

"Very well," said the baker; "but that sword of thine has a handsome hilt: leave it with me till thou return with the money."

So Arasmanes took the bread, and left the sword.

They were now refreshed, and resolved to hasten from so dangerous a city, when, just as they turned into a narrow street, they were suddenly seized by six soldiers, blindfolded, gagged, and hurried away, whither they knew not. At last they found themselves ascending a flight of stairs. A few moments more, and the bandages were removed from their mouths and eyes, and they saw themselves in a gorgeous chamber, and alone in the presence of the prince, their cousin.

He embraced them tenderly. "Forgive me," said he, "for appearing to forget you; but it was as much as my reputation was worth in this city to acknowledge relations who confessed they had neither silver nor gold. By the beard of my grandfather! how could you be so imprudent? Do you not know that you are in a country in which the people worship only one deity—the god of the precious metals? Not to have the precious metals is not to have virtue; to confess it, is to be an atheist. No power could have saved you from death, either by hanging or starvation, if the princess, my wife, had not been luckily brought to bed to-day."

"What a strange—what a barbarous country!" said Arasmanes.

"Barbarous!" echoed the prince; "this is the most civilized people in the world,—nay, the whole world acknowledges it. In no country are the people so rich, and, therefore, so happy. For those who have no money it is, indeed, a bad place of residence; for those who have, it is the land of happiness itself. Yes, it is the true Aden."

"Aden! What then, thou, too, hast heard of Aden?"

"Surely! and this is it—the land of freedom—of happiness—of gold!" cried the prince, with enthusiasm; "remain with us and see."

"Without doubt," thought Arasmanes, "this country lies in the far East: it has received me inhospitably at first; but perhaps the danger I escaped was but the type and allegorical truth of the sworded angel of which tradition hath spoken." "But," said he, aloud, "I have no gold, and no silver, O my prince!"

"Heed not that," answered the kind Zamielides: "I have enough for all. You shall be provided for this very day."

"But will not the people recognise me as the poor stranger?"

The prince laughed for several minutes so loudly that they feared he was going into fits.

"What manner of man art thou, Arasmanes?" said he, when he was composed enough to answer; "the people of this city never know what a man has been when he is once rich? Appear to-morrow in purple, and they will never dream that they saw thee yesterday in rags."

CHAPTER VII.

THE kind Zamielides, then, conducting his cousins into his own chamber, left them to attire themselves in splendid garments, which he had ordered to be prepared for them. He gave them a palace and large warehouses of merchandise.

"Behold," said he, taking Arasmanes to the top of a mighty tower which overlooked the sea,—"behold yonder ships that rise like a forest of masts from that spacious harbour; the six vessels with the green flags are thine. I will teach thee the mysteries of Trade, and thou wilt soon be as wealthy as myself."

"And what is Trade, my lord?" asked Arasmanes.

"Trade," replied the prince, "is the worship that the people of this country pay to their god."

CHAPTER VIII.

Arasmanes was universally courted; so wise, so charming a person had never appeared in the City of Golden Palaces; and as to the beauty of Azraaph, it was declared the very masterpiece of Nature. Intoxicated with the homage they received, and the splendour in which they lived, their days glided on in a round of luxurious enjoyment.

"Right art thou, O Zamielides!" cried Arasmanes as his ships returned with new treasure; "the City of Golden Palaces is the true Aden."

CHAPTER IX.

Arasmanes had now been three years in the city; and you might perceive that a great change had come over his person: the hues of health had faded from his cheeks: his brow was care-worn—his step slow—his lips compressed. He no longer thought that he lived in the true Aden; and yet for Aden itself he would scarcely have quitted the City of Golden Palaces. Occupied solely with the task of making and spending money, he was consumed with the perpetual fear of losing, and the perpetual anxiety to increase, his stock. He trembled at every darker cloud that swept over the heavens; he turned pale at every ruder billow that agitated the sea. He lived a life of splendid care: and the pleasures which relieved it were wearisome because of their sameness. He saw but little of his once idolised Azraaph. Her pursuits divided her from him. In so civilized a country they could not be always together. If he spoke of his ships, he wearied her to death; if she spoke of the festivals she had adorned, he was equally tired of the account.

CHAPTER X.

The court was plunged in grief. Zamielides was seized with a fever. All the wise men attended him; but he turned his face to the wall and died. Arasmanes mourned for him more sincerely than any one; for, besides that Arasmanes had great cause to be grateful to him, he knew, also, that if any accident happened to his vessels, he had now no friend willing to supply the loss. This made him more anxious than ever about the safety of his wealth. A year after this event, the new king of the City of Golden Palaces thought fit to go to war. The war lasted four years; and two millions of men were killed on all sides. The second year Arasmanes was at a splendid banquet given at the court. A messenger arrived, panting and breathless. A great battle at sea had been fought. Thirty thousand of the king's subjects had been killed.

"But who won the battle?" cried the king.

"Who but my lord the king?"

The air was rent with shouts of joy.

"One little accident only," continued the herald, "happened the next day. Three of the scattered war-ships of the enemy fell in with the vessels of some of our merchants returning from Ophir, laden with treasure, and, in revenge, they burned and sunk them."

"Were my ships of the number?" asked Arasmanes, with faltering tongue.

"It was of thy ships that I spoke," answered the messenger.

But nobody thought of Arasmanes, nor of the thirty thousand subjects who were killed. The city was out of its wits with joy that the king had won the victory.

"Alas! I am a ruined man!" said Arasmanes, as he sat with ashes on his head.

"And we can give no more banquets," sighed his wife.

"And everybody will trample upon us," said Arasmanes.

"And we must abandon our palace," groaned the tender Azraaph.

"But one ship remains to me!" cried Arasmanes, starting up; "it is now in port. I will be its captain. I will sail myself with it to Ophir. I will save my fortunes, or perish in the attempt."

"And I will accompany thee, my beloved," exclaimed Azraaph, flinging herself on his neck; for I cannot bear the pity of the wives whom I have outshone!"

The sea was calm, and the wind favourable, when the unfortunate pair entered their last ship; and, for a whole week, the gossip at court was of the ruin of Arasmanes, and the devotion of his wife.

CHAPTER XI.

THEY had not been many weeks at sea before an adverse wind set in, which drove them out of their destined course. They were beaten eastward, and, at length, even the oldest and most experienced of the mariners confessed that they had entered seas utterly unknown to them. Worn and wearied, when their water was just out, and their provisions exhausted, they espied land, and, at nightfall, the ship anchored on a green and pleasant shore. The inhabitants, half-naked, and scarcely escaped from the first savage state of nature, ran forth to meet and succour them: by mighty fires the seamen dried their wet garments, and forgot the hardships they had endured. They remained several days with the hospitable savages, repaired their vessel, and replenished its stores. But what especially attracted the notice of Arasmanes, was the sight of some precious diamonds which, set in a rude crown, the chief of the savages wore on his head. He learned from signs easy of interpretation, that these diamonds abounded in a certain island in the farthest East; and that from time to time large fragments of rock in which they were imbedded were cast upon the shore. But when Arasmanes signified his intention to seek this island, the savages, by gestures of horror and dismay, endeavoured to denote the dangers that attended the enterprise, and to dissuade him from attempting it. Naturally bold, and consumed with his thirst for wealth, these signs made but little impression upon the Chaldæan; and one fair morning he renewed his voyage. Steering perpetually towards the East, and with favouring winds, they came, on the tenth day, in sight of an enormous rock, which shone far down over the waters with so resplendent a glory, as to dazzle the eyes of the seamen. Diamond and ruby, emerald and carbuncle, glittered from the dark soil of the rock, and promised to the heart of the humblest mariner the assurance of illimitable wealth. Never was human joy more ecstatic than that of the crew as the ship neared the coast. The sea was, in this place, narrow and confined; the opposite shore was also in view—black, rugged, and herbless, with pointed rocks, round which the waves sent their white foam on high, guarding its drear approach: little recked they, however, of the opposite shore, as their eyes strained towards "The Island of Precious Stones." They were in the middle of the strait, when suddenly the waters became agitated and convulsed; the vessel rocked to and fro; something glittering appeared beneath the surface; and at length, they distinctly perceived the scales and tail of an enormous serpent.

Thereupon a sudden horror seized the whole crew; they recognised the truth of that tradition, known to all seamen, that in the farthest East lived the vast Snake of the Ocean, whose home no vessel ever approached without destruction. All thought of the diamond rock faded from their souls. They fell at once upon their knees, and poured forth unconscious prayers. But high above all rose the tall form of Arasmanes: little cared he for serpent or tradition. Fame, and fortune, and life, were set upon one cast. "Rouse thee!" said he, spurning the pilot, "or we drive upon the opposite shore. Behold, the island of inexhaustible wealth blazes upon our eyes!"

The words had scarce left his lips, when, with a slow and fearful hiss, the serpent of the eastern seas reared his head from the ocean. Dark and huge as the vastest cavern in which ghoul or Afrite ever dwelt was the abyss of his jaws, and the lurid and terrible eyes outshone even the lustre of the diamond rock.

"I defy thee!" cried Arasmanes, waving his sword above his head; when suddenly the ship whirled round and round; the bold Chaldæan was thrown with violence on the deck; he felt the waters whirl and blacken over him: and then all sense of life deserted him.

When he came to himself, Arasmanes was lying on the hot sands of the shore opposite to the Diamond Isle; wrecks of the vessel were strewn around him, and here and there the dead bodies of his seamen. But at his feet lay, swollen and distorted, the shape of his beautiful Azraaph, the sea-weeds twisted round her limbs, and the deformed shell-fish crawling over her long hair. And tears crept into the eyes of the Chaldæan, and all his old love for Azraaph returned, and he threw himself down beside her mangled remains, and tore his hair; the schemes of the later years were swept away from his memory like visions, and he remembered only the lone cavern and his adoring bride.

Time rolled on, and Azraaph was buried in the sands; Arasmanes tore himself from the solitary grave, and, striking into the interior of the coast, sought once more to discover the abodes of men. He travelled far and beneath burning suns, and at night he surrounded his resting-place with a circle of fire, for the wild beasts and the mighty serpents were abroad: scant and unwholesome was the food he gleaned from the berries and rank roots that now and then were visible in the drear wastes through which he passed; and in this course of hardship and travail he held commune with his own heart. He felt as if cured for ever of the evil passions. Avarice seemed gone from his breast, and he dreamed that no unholy desire could succeed to its shattered throne.

One day, afar off in the desert, he descried a glittering cavalcade—glittering it was indeed, for the horsemen were clad in armour of brass and steel, and the hot sun reflected the array like the march of a river of light. Arasmanes paused, and his heart swelled high within him as he heard through the wide plains the martial notes of the trumpet and the gong, and recognised the glory and pomp of war.

The cavalcade swept on; and the chief who rode at the head of the band paused as he surveyed with admiration the noble limbs, and proud stature, and dauntless eye of the Chaldæan. The chief summoned his interpreters; and in that age the languages of the East were but slightly dissimilar; so that the chief of the warriors conversed easily with the adventurer. "Know," said he, "that we are bent upon the most glorious enterprise ever conceived by the sons of men. In the farthest East there is a land of which thy fathers may have informed thee—a land of perpetual happiness and youth, and its name is Aden." Arasmanes started; he could scarcely believe his ears.

The warrior continued—"We are of that tribe which lies to the extremities of the East, and this land is therefore a heritage which we, of all the earth, have the right to claim. Several of our youth have at various times attempted to visit it, but supernatural agents have repelled the attempt. Now, therefore, that I have succeeded to the throne of my sires, I have resolved to invade and to conquer it by force of arms. Survey my band. Sawest thou ever, O Chaldæan, men of such limbs and stature, of such weapons of offence, and shields of proof? Canst thou conceive men more worthy of such a triumph, or more certain to achieve it? Thou, too, art of proportions beyond the ordinary strength of men—thou art deserving to be one of us. Come, say the word, and the armourers shall clothe thee in steel, and thou shalt ride at my right hand."

The neighing of the steeds, and the clangour of the music, and the proud voice of the chieftain, all inspired the blood of Arasmanes. He thought not of the impiety of the attempt—he thought only of the glory: the object of his whole life seemed placed within his reach. He grasped at the offer of the warrior; and the armourer clad him in steel, and the ostrich plume waved over his brow, and he rode at the right hand of the warrior-king.

CHAPTER XII.

The armament was not without a guide; for, living so near unto the rising of the sun, that which with others was tradition, with them was knowledge; and many amongst them had travelled to the site of Aden, and looked upon the black cloud that veiled it, and trembled at the sound of the rushing but invisible wings that hovered over.

Arasmanes confided to the warrior his whole history; they swore eternal friendship; and the army looked upon the Chaldaean as a man whom God had sent to their assistance. For, strange to say, not one of that army ever seemed to imagine there was aught unholy or profane in the daring enterprise in which he had enlisted: accustomed to consider bloodshed a virtue, where was the crime of winning the gardens of Paradise by force?

Through wastes and deserts the adventurers held their way: and, though their numbers thinned daily by fatigue, and the lack of food, and the breath of the burning winds, they seemed not to relax in their ardour, nor to repine at the calamities they endured.

CHAPTER XIII.

DARKNESS spread solid as a wall! From heaven to earth stretched the ebon Night that was the barrier to the land of Aden. No object gleamed through the impenetrable blackness; from those summitless walls hung no banner; no human champion frowned before the drear approach: all would have been silence, save that, at times, they heard the solemn rush as of some mighty sea; and they knew that it was the rush of the guardian wings.

The army halted before the Darkness, mute and awed: their eyes recoiled from the gloom, and rested upon the towering crest and snowy plumage of their chief. And he bade them light the torches of naphtha that they had brought with them, and unsheath their swords; and, at the given sound, horseman and horse dashed on against the walls of Night. For one instant the torches gleamed and sparkled amidst the darkness, and were then suddenly extinguished; but through the gloom came one gigantic Hand wielding a sword of flame; and, wherever it turned, man smote the nearest man—father perished by his son—and brother fell smitten by the death-stroke of his brother; shrieks and cries, and the trample of affrighted steeds, rang through the riven shade—riven only by that mighty sword as it waved from rank to rank, and the gloom receded from its rays.

CHAPTER XIV.

At eve the work was done; a small remnant of the armament, saved from the general slaughter, lay exhausted upon the ground before the veil of Aden. Arasmanes was the last who lingered in the warring gloom; for, as he struggled to free himself from the rush of the flying and the still heaps of the dead, the darkness had seemed to roll away, and, far into its depths, he caught one glimpse of the wonderful loveliness of Aden. There, over valleys covered with the greenest verdure, and watered by rivers without a wave, basked a purpling and loving sunlight that was peaceful and cloudless, for it was the smile of God. And there, were groups of happy beings scattered around, in whose faces was the serenity of unutterable joy; even at the mere aspect of their happiness, happiness itself was reflected upon the soul of the Chaldæan, despite the dread, the horror, and the desolation of the hour. He stretched out his arms imploringly, and the vision faded for ever from his sight.

CHAPTER XV.

The king and all the principal chiefs of the army were no more; and, with one consent, Arasmanes was raised to command. Sorrowful and dejected, he conducted the humbled remnants of the troop back through the deserts to the land they had so rashly left. Thrice on their return they were attacked by hostile tribes, but by the valour and prudence of Arasmanes they escaped the peril. They arrived at their native city to find that the brother of their perished king had seized the reins of government. The army, who hated him, declared for the stranger-chief who had led them home. And Arasmanes, hurried away by the prospect of power, consented to their will. A battle ensued; the usurper was slain; and Arasmanes, a new usurper, ascended the throne in his stead.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE Chaldæan was no longer young, the hardships he had undergone in the desert had combined with the anxieties that had preyed upon him during his residence in the City of Golden Palaces to plant upon his brow, and in his heart, the furrows of untimely age. He was in the possession of all the sources of enjoyment at that period of life when we can no longer enjoy. Howbeit, he endeavoured to amuse himself by his divan of justice, from which everybody went away dissatisfied, and by his banquets, at which the courtiers complained of his want of magnificence, and the people of his profligate expense. Grown wise by experience, he maintained his crown by flattering his army; and, surrounded by luxury, felt himself supported by power.

There came to the court of Arasmanes a strange traveller; he was a little old man, of plain appearance but great wisdom; in fact, he was one of the most noted sages of the East. His conversation, though melancholy, had the greatest attraction for Arasmanes, who loved to complain to him of the cares of royalty, and the tediousness of his life.

"Ah, how much happier are those in humbler station!" said the king; "how much happier was I in the desert-cave, tending my herds, and listening to the sweet voice of Azraaph!—Would that I could recall those days!"

"I can enable thee to do so, great king!" said the sage; "behold this mirror; gaze on it whenever thou dost desire to recall the past; and whatever portion of the past thou wouldst summon to thine eyes shall appear before thee."

CHAPTER XVII.

The sage did not deceive Arasmanes. The mirror reflected all the scenes through which the Chaldæan had passed: now he was at the feet of Chosphor, a happy boy—now with elastic hopes entering into the enchanted valley of the Nymph ere yet he learned how her youth could fade—now he was at the source of the little stream, and gazing on the face of Azraaph by the light of the earliest star; whichever of these scenes he wished to live over again reflected itself vividly in the magic mirror. Surrounded by pomp and luxury in the present, his only solace was in the past.

"Acknowledge that I was right," said he to the sage: "I was much happier in those days; else why so comforted to renew them, though only in the cheat of thy mirror?"

"Because, O great king!" said the sage, with a bitter smile, "thou seest them without recalling the feelings thou didst experience as well as the scenes: thou gazest on the past with the feelings that possess thee now, and all that then made the prospect clouded is softened away by time. Judge for thyself if I speak truth." So saying, the sage breathed over the mirror, and bade Arasmanes look into it once more. He did so. He beheld the same scenes, but the illusion was gone from them. He was a boy once more; but restlessness, and anxiety, and a thousand petty cares at his heart: he was again in the cave with Azraaph, but secretly pining at the wearisome monotony of his life: in all those scenes which he now imagined to have been the happiest, he perceived that he had not enjoyed the *present*; he had been looking forward to the future, and the dream of the unattainable Aden was at his heart. "Alas!" said he, dashing the mirror into pieces, "I was deceived; and thou hast destroyed for me, O sage, even the pleasure of the past!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

ARASMANES had never forgotten the brief glimpse of Aden that he obtained in his impious warfare; and, now that the charm was gone from Memory, the wish yet to reach the unconquered land returned more powerfully than ever to his mind. He consulted the sage as to its possibility.

"Thou canst make but one more attempt," answered the wise man; "and in that I cannot assist thee; but one who, when I am gone hence, will visit thee, shall lend thee her aid."

"Cannot the visitor come till thou art gone?" said Arasmanes.

"No, nor until my death," answered the sage.

This reply threw the mind of Arasmanes into great confusion. It was true that he nowhere found so much pleasure as in the company of his friend—it was his only solace; but then, if he could never visit Aden (the object of his whole life) until that friend were dead!—the thought was full of affliction to him. He began to look upon the sage as an enemy, as an obstacle between himself and the possession of his wishes. He inquired every morning into the health of the sage; it seemed most provokingly strong. At length, out of his wish that his friend might die, grew the resolve to put his friend to death. One night the sage was found in his bed a corpse; he had been strangled by order of the king.

CHAPTER XIX.

The very next day, as the king sat in his divan, a great noise was heard without the doors; and, presently, a hag, dressed in white garments of a foreign fashion, and of a hideous and revolting countenance, broke away from the crowd and made up to the king: "They would not let me come to thee, because I am homely and aged," said she in a shrill and discordant voice; "but I have been in a king's court before now——"

"What wantest thou, woman?" said Arasmanes; and as he spake he felt a chill creep to his heart.

"I am that visitor whom the wise man foretold," said she; "and I would talk to thee alone."

Arasmanes felt impelled as by some mighty power which he could not resist; he rose from his throne, the assembly broke up in surprise, and the hag was admitted alone to the royal presence.

"Thou wouldst re-seek Aden, the land of Happiness and Truth?" said she, with a ghastly smile.

"Ay," said the king, and his knees knocked together.

"I will take thee thither."

"And when?"

"To-morrow, if thou wilt!" and the hag laughed aloud.

There was something in the manner, the voice, and the appearance of this creature so disgusting to Arasmanes, that he could brook it no longer. Aden itself seemed not desirable with such a companion and guide.

Without vouchsafing a reply he hastened from the apartment, and commanded his guards to admit the hag no more to the royal presence.

The sleep of Arasmanes that night was unusually profound, nor did he awake on the following day till late at noon. From that hour he felt as if some strange revolution had taken place in his thoughts. He was no longer desirous of seeking Aden: whether or not the apparition of the hag had given him a distaste of Aden itself, certain it was that he felt the desire of his whole life had vanished entirely from his breast; and his only wish now was to enjoy, as long and as heartily as he was able, the pleasures that were within his reach.

"What a fool have I been," said he aloud, "to waste so many years in wishing to leave the earth! Is it only in my old age that I begin to find how much that is agreeable earth can possess?"

"Come, come, come!" cried a shrill voice; and Arasmanes, startled, turned round to behold the terrible face of the hag.

"Come!" said she, stamping her foot; "I am ready to conduct thee to Aden."

"Wretch!" said the king, with quivering lips, "how didst thou baffle my guards? But I will strangle every one of them."

"Thou hast had enough of strangling," answered the crone, with a malignant glare. "Hast thou not strangled thy dearest friend?"

"What! tauntest thou me?" cried the king; and he rushed at the hag with his lifted sabre: the blade cut the air: the hag had shunned the blow; and, at the same moment, coming behind the king, she clasped him round the body, and fixed her long talons in his breast: through the purple robe, through the jewelled vest, pierced those vulture-fangs, and Arasmanes shrieked with terror and pain. The guards rushed in at the sound of his cry.

"Villains!" said he, as the cold drops broke from his brow, "would you leave me here to be murdered? Hew down yon hell hag!"

"We saw her not enter, O king!" said the chief of the guards, amazed; "but she shall now die the death." The soldiers, with one accord, made at the crone, who stood glaring at them like a hunted tigress.

"Fools!" said she, "know that I laugh alike at stone walls and armed men."

They heard the voice—they saw not whence it came—the hag had vanished.

CHAPTER XX.

THE wound which the talons of this horrible visitor had made in the breast of the king refused to heal: it gave him excruciating anguish. The physicians tended him in vain; in vain, too, did the wise men preach patience and hope to him. What incensed him even more than the pain was the insult he had suffered—that so loathsome a wretch should dare to maim the person of so august a king!—the thought was not to be borne. But the more pain the king suffered, the more did he endeavour to court pleasure: life never seemed so charming to him as at the moment when it became an agony. His favourite courtiers, who had been accustomed to flatter his former weakness, and to converse with him about the happiness of Aden, and the possibility of entering it, found that even to broach the subject threw their royal master into a paroxysm of rage. He foamed at the mouth at the name of Aden—he wished, nay, he endeavoured to believe, that there was no such place in the universe.

CHAPTER XXI.

AT length one physician, more sanguine than the rest, assured the king that he was able to heal the wound and dispel the pain.

"Know, O king!" said he, "that in the stream of Athron, which runneth through the valley of Mythra, there is a mystic virtue which can cure all the diseases of kings. Thou hast only to enter thy gilded bark, and glide down the stream for the space of twenty roods, scattering thine offering of myrrh and frankincense on the waters, in order to be well once more. Let the king live for ever!"

CHAPTER XXII.

It was a dark, deep, and almost waveless stream; and the courtiers, and the women, and the guards, and the wise men, gathered round the banks; and the king, leaning on the physician, ascended his gilded bark; and the physician alone entered the vessel with him. "For," said he, "the god of the stream loves it not to be profaned by the vulgar crowd; it is only for kings that it possesses its healing virtue."

So the king reclined in the middle of the vessel, and the physician took the censer reeking with precious odours; and the bark drifted down the stream, as the crowd wept and prayed upon the shore.

"Either my eyes deceive me," said the king, faintly, "or the stream seems to expand supernaturally, as into a great sea, and the shores on either side fade into distance."

"It is so," answered the physician. "And seest thou yon arch of black rocks flung over the tide?"

"Ay," answered the king.

"It is the approach to the land thou hast so often desired to reach: it is the entrance into Aden."

"Dog!" cried the king, passionately, "name not to me that hateful word."

As he spoke, the figure of the false physician shrunk in size; his robes fell from him,—and the king beheld in his stead the dwarfish shape of the accursed hag.

On drifted the vessel; and the crowd on the banks now beheld the hag seize the king in a close embrace: his shriek was wafted over the water, while the gorgeous vessel with its silken streamers and gilded sides sped rapidly through the black arch of rocks: as the bark vanished, the chasm of the arch closed in, and the rocks, uniting, presented a solid barrier to their gaze. But they shudderingly heard the ghastly laugh of the hag, piercing through the barrier, as she uttered the one word—"NEVER!" And from that hour the king was seen no more.

And this is the true history of Arasmanes, the Chaldæan.

THE CHOICE OF PHYLIAS.

PHYLIAS was a young Athenian, whom the precepts of Socrates had reared to the desire of glory, and the worship of virtue! He wished at once to be great and to be good. Unfortunately, Phylias nourished a third wish, somewhat less elevated, but much more commonly entertained—the wish to be loved! He aimed at esteem, but he yearned for affection; and to an aspiring soul he united a too-susceptible heart.

One day, as he was wandering among the olive-groves that border Cephisus, and indulging in those reveries on his future destiny which make the happiest prerogative of the young, his thoughts thus broke into words:—

"Yes, I will devote my life to the service of my countrymen: I will renounce luxury and ease. Not for me shall be the cooks of Sicily, nor the garlands of Rhodes. My chambers shall not stream with Syrian frankincense, nor resound with the loud shouts of Ionic laughter. No: I will consecrate my youth to the pursuit of wisdom and the practice of virtue; so shall I become great, and so beloved. For when I have thus sacrificed my enjoyments to the welfare of others, shall they not all honour and esteem me? Will they not insist that I take the middle couch at the public festivals? and will not all the friends of my youth contend who among them shall repose upon my bosom? It is happy to be virtuous; but, O Socrates, is it not even happier to be universally beloved for virtue?"

While Phylias was thus soliloquising, he heard a low, sweet laugh beside him: and, somewhat startled at the sound—for he had fancied himself entirely alone—he turned hastily round, and beheld a figure of very singular appearance. It was a tall man in the prime of life; but one side of the face and form was utterly different from the other: on one side the head was crowned with the festive wreath—the robes flowed loose and disordered—joy and self-complacency sparkled on the smiling countenance. You beheld a gaiety which could not fail to attract; but an air of levity which you could not respect. Widely contrasted was the other half of this strange apparition: without crown or garland, the locks fell in sober flow, after the fashion of the Areopagites; the garb was costly, but decent and composed; and in the eye and brow the aspect was dignified and lofty, but somewhat pensive, and clouded either by thought or care: in the one half you beheld a boon companion, whom you would welcome and forget; in the other a lofty monitor, from whom you shrank in unacknowledged fear; and whom even in esteeming you were willing carefully to shun.

"And who art thou? And from what foreign country comest thou?" asked the Athenian, in astonishment and awe.

"I come from the Land of the Invisibles," answered the apparition: "and I am thy tutelary demon. Thou art now of that age, and hast attained to that height of mind, in which it is permitted me to warn and to advise thee. By what vain dreams, O Phylias! art thou befooled? Dost thou not see that thou art asking two boons incompatible with each other—to be popular with the many and to be esteemed by the few? Take thy choice of either; thou canst not combine both. Look well at the guise and garb in which I appear to thee; if thou wouldst please in life, thou seest in one half of me the model which thou shouldst imitate; if thou wouldst be renowned in death, in the other half behold an example. Be superior to thy fellow-men in wisdom, and prepare for the hatred of all whose self-love thou wilt wound: be the equal of thy fellow-men in folly, and enjoy the good will they readily accord to the companion who contributes to their amusement without provoking their envy. Look at me again! which side of mine image wilt thou choose for thy likeness?"

"False demon!" answered Phylias; "thou wouldst sicken me of life itself couldst thou compel me on the one hand to arouse hatred, or on the other to justify contempt. Thou mistakest alike the attributes of the wisdom I covet, and the character of my own ambition. There is nothing in the one so severe that it should repel men's affection, nor in the other so arrogant as to mortify their self-love. Away! thou speakest but to mock or betray me; and art no demon of that kindly race in which Socrates would have permitted a disciple to recognise his guardian spirit."

Again the demon laughed. "Thou wilt know me better one of these days. Meanwhile is thy choice made? Dost thou place thy happiness in the pursuit of renown?"

"Yes!" cried the Athenian; "convinced that if renowned I must be beloved,—because the only fame I desire is that of one who has served his country and benefited mankind."

"Follow the path of life thou hast chosen," said the demon, "and from time to time pause to contrast thyself with Glaucus. Farewell!"

The apparition vanished: musing and bewildered Phylias returned home.

His resolutions were not shaken, nor his ambition damped. He resigned the common pleasures of his youth; he braced his limbs by hardihood and temperance, and fed the sources of his mind from the quiet fountain of wisdom.

The first essays of his ambition were natural to his period of life. He went through the preparatory exercises, and entered himself a candidate for the crown at the Olympic Games. On the day preceding that on which the Games commenced, Phylias met among the crowd, which a ceremony of such brilliant attraction had gathered together in the Sacred Land, a young man whom he had known from his childhood. Frank in his manner, and joyous in his disposition, Glaucus was the favourite of all who knew him.

Though possessed of considerable talents, no one envied him: for those talents were never exerted in order to distinguish himself—his ambition was to amuse others. He gave way to every caprice of his own or of his comrades, provided that it promised pleasure. Supple and versatile, even the sturdiest philosophers were charmed with his society; and the loosest profligates swore sincerely that they loved, because they were not compelled to respect, him. His countenance never shamed them into a suspicion that their career was ignoble; and they did justice to his talents, because they could sympathise with his foibles.

"You do not contend for any of the prizes, I think," said Phylias; "for I do not remember to have seen you at the preparatory exercises?"

"Not I, by Hercules!" answered Glaucus, gaily. "I play in the Games the part that I play in Life—I am merely a spectator. Could I drink more deeply, or sleep more soundly, if my statue were set up in the Sacred Grove? Alas! no. Let my friends love Glaucus their comrade—not hate Glaucus their rival. And you?"

"I am a competitor in the chariot race."

"Success to you! I shall offer up my sacrifice for your triumph: meanwhile I am going to hear Therycides read his new play. Farewell!"

"What a charming person is Glaucus!" thought Phylias.

Even Phylias liked Glaucus the better for knowing that Glaucus was not to be his antagonist.

The morning rose—the hour of trial came on. With a flushed cheek, and a beating heart, Phylias mounted his chariot. He was successful: he achieved the palm. He returned to Athens amidst the loudest acclamations. His chariot rolled through the broken wall of his native city: the poets lauded him to the skies. Phylias had commenced the career of fame, and its first fruits were delicious. His parents wept with joy at his triumph; and the old men pointed him out as a model to their sons. Sons hate models; and the more Phylias was praised, the more his contemporaries disliked him. When the novelty of success was cooled he began to feel that the palm branch had its thorns. If he met his young friends in the street, they saluted him coldly: "We do not ask you to come to us," said they; "you have weightier matters on hand than our society can afford. We are going to sup with Glaucus: while you are meditating, we suppose, the best way to eclipse Alcibiades."

Meetings like these threw an embarrassment over the manner of Phylias himself. He thought that he was ill-treated, and retired into the chamber of pride. He became reserved, and he was called supercilious.

The Olympic Games do not happen every day, and Phylias began to feel that he who is ambitious has no option between excitement and exhaustion. He therefore set about preparing himself for a nobler triumph than that of a charioteer; and from the management of horses aspired to the government of men. He fitted himself for the labours of public life, and the art of public speaking. He attended the popular assemblies—he rose into repute as an orator.

It was a critical time in the history of the Athenian Commonwealth. Alternately caressing and quarrelling with the passionate Alcibiades, his countrymen now saw him a foe in Sparta, and now hailed him a saviour in Athens. Phylias, dreading the ambition of that unprincipled genius, and yet resisting the encroaching tyranny of the four hundred rulers, performed the duty of a patriot, and pleading for liberty displeased both parties. Nothing could be more disinterested than his conduct, nor more admired than his speeches. He proved his virtue, and he established his fame; and wherever he went he was vehemently abused.

He frequently met with Glaucus, who, taking no share in politics, was entertained by all parties, and the most popular man in Athens, because the most unobtrusive.

"You are become a great man now," said Glaucus to him one day; "and you will doubtless soon arrive at the last honour Athens can confer upon her children. Your property will be confiscated, and your person will be exiled."

"No!" said Phylias, with generous emotion; "truth is great, and must prevail. Misinterpretation and slander will soon die away, and my countrymen will requite me by their esteem."

"The gods grant it!" said the flattering Glaucus. "No man merits esteem more."

In the short intervals of repose which public life allowed to Athenian statesmen, Phylias contrived to fall in love.

Chyllene was beautiful as a dream. She was full of all amiable qualities; but she was a human being, and fond of an agreeable life.

In his passion for Chyllene, Phylias, for the first time in his career, found a rival in Glaucus; for love was the only passion in which Glaucus did not shun to provoke the jealousy of the powerful. Chyllene was sorely perplexed which to choose: Phylias was so wise, but then Glaucus was so gay; Phylias was so distinguished, but then Glaucus was so popular; Phylias made excellent speeches,—but then how beautifully Glaucus sung!

Unfortunately, in the stern and manly pursuits of his life, Phylias had necessarily outgrown those little arts of pleasing which were so acceptable to the ladies of Athens.

He dressed with a decorous dignity, but not with the studied, yet easy, graces of Glaucus. How, too, amidst all his occupations, could he find the time to deck the doors of his beloved with garlands, to renew the libations on her threshold, and to cover every wall in the city with her name added to the flattering epithet of *καλη*. But none of these important ceremonies were neglected by Glaucus, in whom the art to please had been the sole study of life. Glaucus gained ground daily.

"I esteem you beyond all men," Chyllene could say to Phylias without a blush. But she trembled, and said nothing, when Glaucus approached.

"I love you better than all things!" said Glaucus, passionately, one day to Chyllene.

"I love you better than all things, save my country," said Phylias the same morning.

"Ah, Phylias is doubtless the best patriot," thought Chyllene; "but Glaucus is certainly the best lover!"

The very weaknesses of Glaucus were charming, but his virtues gave to Phylias something of austerity. With Phylias, Chyllene felt ashamed of her faults; with Glaucus, she was only aware of her merits.

Alcibiades was now the idol of Athens. He prepared to set out with a hundred ships for the Hellespont, to assist the allies of Athens. Willing to rid the city of so vigilant a guard upon his actions as Phylias, he contrived that the latter should be appointed to a command in the fleet. The rank of Glaucus obtained him a lesser but distinguished appointment.

Chyllene was in danger of losing both her lovers.

"Wilt thou desert me?" said she to Phylias.

"Alas! my country demands it. I shall return to thee covered with laurels."

"And thou, Glaucus?"

"Perish Alcibiades and Greece herself, before I quit thee!" cried Glaucus, who, had there been no mistress in the case, would never willingly have renounced luxury for danger.

Phylias, with a new incentive to glory, and a full confidence in the sympathy of his beloved, set out for Andria. Glaucus was taken suddenly ill, remained at home, and a month afterwards his bride Chyllene was carried by torchlight to his house. It is true that every body at Athens detected the imposition; but every one laughed at it goodhumouredly; "For Glaucus," said they, "never set up for a paragon of virtue!" Thus his want of principle was the very excuse for wanting it.

The expedition to Andria failed—Alcibiades was banished again—and Phylias, though he had performed prodigies of valour, shared in the sentence of his leader. His fellow citizens were too glad of an excuse to rid themselves of that unpleasant sensation which the superiority of another always inflicts on our self-love.

Years rolled away. Phylias had obtained all that his youth coveted of glory. Greece rang with his name; he was now aged, an exile, and a dependant at the Persian court. There every one respected, but no one loved him. The majesty of his mien, the simplicity of his manners, the very splendour of his reputation, made the courtiers of the great king uneasy in his presence. He lived very much alone; and his only recreation was in walking at evening among the alleys of a wood, that reminded him of the groves of Athens, and meditating over the past adventures of his life.

It happened that at this time Glaucus, who had survived both his wife and his patrimony, had suffered himself, under the hope of repairing his broken fortunes, to be entrapped into a conspiracy to restore the Oligarchy after the death of Conon. He was detected, and his popularity did not save him from banishment. He sought refuge in the Persian court: the elastic gaiety of his disposition still continued, and over his grey hairs yet glowed the festive chaplet of roses. The courtiers were delighted with his wit—the king could not feast without him:—they consulted Phylias, but they associated with Glaucus.

One evening as Phylias was musing in his favourite grove, and as afar off he heard the music and the merriment of a banquet, held by the king in his summer-house, and with Glaucus at his right hand,—the melancholy exile found himself gently plucked by the hem of his garment. He turned hastily round, and once more beheld his Genius.

"Thy last hour fast approaches," said the demon; "again, then, I come to visit thee. At the morning of life I foretold that fate which should continue to its close: I bade thee despair of uniting celebrity and love. Thou hast attempted the union—what hath been thy success?"

"Mysterious visitor!" answered Phylias, "thy words were true, and my hope was formed in the foolishness of youth. I stand alone, honoured and unloved. But surely this is not the doom of all who have pursued a similar ambition?"

"Recollect thyself," replied the phantom: "was not thy master Socrates persecuted unto death, and Aristides ostracised on account of his virtues? Canst thou name one great man who in life was not calumniated for his services? Thou standest not alone. To shine is to injure the self-love of others; and self-love is the most vindictive of human feelings."

"Yet had I not been an Athenian," murmured Phylias, "I might have received something of gratitude."

"They call Athens ungrateful," answered the spectre; "but everywhere, while time lasts, the ingratitude shall be the same. One state may exile her illustrious men, another merely defame them; but day is not more separate from night, than true fame from general popularity."

"Alas! thou teachest a bitter lesson," said

Phylias, sighing; "better, then, to renounce the glory which separates us from the indulgent mercies of our kind. Has not my choice been an error, as well as a misfortune?"

The countenance of the Genius became suddenly divine. Majesty sat upon his brow, and unspeakable wisdom shone from his piercing eyes, as he replied, "Hark! as thou askest thy unworthy question, the laugh of the hoary Glaucus breaks upon thy ear. The gods gave to him the privilege to be beloved—and despised. Wouldst thou, were the past at thy control,—wouldst thou live the life that he hath lived? wouldst thou, for the smiles of revellers, or for the heart of the mistress of thy manhood, feel that thy career had been worthless, and that thy sepulchre should be unknown? No! by the flush upon thy cheek, thou acknowledgest that to the great the pride of recollection is sufficient happiness in itself. Thine only error was in this,—the wish to obtain the fleeting breath of popular regard, as the *reward* for immortal labours. The illustrious should serve the world, unheeding of its frail applause. The whisper of their own hearts should convey to them a diviner music than the acclamation of crowds. Thou shouldst have sought *only* to be great, so would it never have grieved thee to find thyself unbeloved. The soul of the great should be as a river, rejoicing in its mighty course, and benefiting all—nor conscious of the fading garlands which perishable hands may scatter upon its tide."

The corpse of Phylias was found that night in the wood by some of the revellers returning home. And the Persian king buried the body in a gorgeous sepulchre, and the citizens of Athens ordained a public mourning for his death. And to the name of Phylias a thousand bards promised immortality—and, save in this momentary record, the name of Phylias has perished from the earth!

CHAIROLAS.

CHAPTER I.

Once upon a time there existed a kingdom called Paida, stretching to the west of that wide tract of land known to certain ancient travellers by the name of Callipaga. The heirs apparent to the throne of this kingdom were submitted to a very singular ordeal. At the extremity of the empire was a chain of mountains, separating Paida from an immense region, the chart of which no geographer had ever drawn. Various and contradictory were all the accounts of this region, from the eldest to the latest time. According to some it was the haunt of robbers and demons; every valley was beset with danger; the fruits of every tree were poisonous; and evil spirits lurked in every path, sometimes to fascinate, and sometimes to terrify, the inexperienced traveller to his destruction. Others, on the contrary, asserted that no land on earth equalled the beauty and the treasures of this mystic region. The purest air circulated over the divinest landscapes; the inhabitants were beneficent genii; and the life they led was that of happiness without alloy, and excitement without satiety. At the age of twenty the heir to the throne was ordained, by immemorial custom, to penetrate alone into this debated and enigmatical realm. It was supposed to require three years to traverse the whole of it, nor was it until this grand tour for the royalty of Paida was completed, that the adventurer was permitted to return home and aspire to the heritage of the crown. It happened, however, that a considerable proportion of these travellers never again re-entered their native land—detained, according to some, by the beautiful fairies of the unknown region;

or, according to others, sacrificed by its fiends. One might imagine that those princes who were fortunate enough to return, travellers too respectable to be addicted to gratuitous invention, would have been enabled by their testimony to reconcile the various reports of the country into which they had penetrated. But after their return the austere habits of royalty compelled them to discretion and reserve; and the hints which had escaped them from time to time, when conversing with their more confidential courtiers, so far from elucidating, confirmed the mystery; for each of the princes had evidently met with a different fortune: with one the reminiscences bequeathed by his journey seemed brilliant and delightful; while, perhaps, with his successor, the unknown region was never alluded to without a shudder or a sigh. Thus the only persons who could have reconciled conflicting rumours were exactly those who the most kept alive the debate; and the empire was still divided into two parties, who, according to the bias of their several dispositions, represented the neighbouring territory as an Elysium or a Tartarus.

The present monarch had of course undergone the customary ordeal. Naturally bold and cheerful, he had commenced his eventful journey with eagerness and hope, and had returned to Paida an altered and melancholy man. He swayed his people with great ability and success, he entered into all the occupations of his rank, and did not reject its pleasures and its pomps; but it was evident that his heart was not with his pursuits. He was a prey to some secret regret; but, whether he sighed to regain the land he had left, or was saddened by the adventures he had known in it, was a matter of doubt and curiosity even to his queen. Several years of his wedded life were passed without promise of an heir, and the eyes of the people were already turned to the eldest nephew of the sovereign, when it was formally announced to the court that the queen had been graciously pleased to become in the family-way.

In due process of time a son made his appearance. He was declared a prodigy of beauty, and there was something remarkably regal in the impatience of his cries. Nothing could exceed the joy of the court, unless it was the grief of the king's eldest nephew. The king himself, indeed, was perhaps also an exception to the general rapture; he looked wistfully on the crimson cheeks of his first-born, and muttered to himself, "These boys are a great subject of anxiety."

"And of pride," said a small sweet voice that came from the cradle.

The king was startled—for even in Paida a king's son does not speak as soon as he is born: he looked again at the little prince's face—it was not from him that the voice came, his royal highness had just fallen asleep.

"Dost thou not behold me, O king?" said the voice again.

And now the monarch beheld upon the pillow a small creature scarcely taller than a needle, but whose shape was modelled in the most beautiful proportions of manhood.

"Know," continued the apparition, while the king remained silent with consternation, "that I am the good Genius of the new-born; each mortal hath at his birth his guardian spirit, though the Genius be rarely visible. I bring to thy son the three richest gifts that can be bestowed upon man; but, alas! they are difficult to preserve—teach him to guard them as his most precious treasure."

The Genius vanished. The king recovered from his amaze, and, expecting to find some jewels of enormous value, hastily removed the coverlid, and saw by the side of his child an eagle's feather, a pigeon's feather, and a little tuft of the down of a swan.

CHAPTER II.

The prince grew up strong, handsome, and graceful; he evinced the most amiable dispositions; he had much of that tender and romantic enthusiasm which we call Sentiment, and which serves to render the virtues so lovely; he had an intuitive admiration for all that is daring and noble; and his ambition would, perhaps, have led him into dangerous excesses were it not curbed, or purified, by a singular disinterestedness and benevolence of disposition, which rendered him fearful to injure and anxious to serve those with whom he came into contact. The union of such qualities was calculated to conduct him to glory, but to render him scrupulous as to its means; his desire to elevate himself was strong, but it was blended with a stronger wish to promote the welfare of others. Princes of this nature were not common in Paida, and the people looked with the most sanguine hopes to the prospect of his reign. He had, however, some little drawbacks to the effect of his good qualities. His susceptibilities made him too easy with his friends, and somewhat too bashful with strangers; with the one he found it difficult to refuse anything, with the other he was too keenly alive to ridicule and the fear of shame. But the first was a failing very easily forgiven at a court, and the second was one that a court would, in all probability, correct. The king took considerable pains with the prince's education, his talents were great, and he easily mastered whatever he undertook; but at each proof of the sweetness of his disposition, or the keenness of his abilities, the good king seemed to feel rather alarm than gratification. "Alas!" he would mutter to himself, "that fatal region—that perilous ordeal!" and then turn hastily away.

These words fed the prince's curiosity without much exciting his fear. The journey presented nothing terrible to his mind, for the courtiers, according to their wont, deemed it disloyal to report to him any but the most flattering accounts of the land he was to visit; and he attributed the broken expressions of his father partly to the melancholy of his constitution, and partly to the over-acuteness of paternal anxiety. For the rest, it was a pleasant thing to get rid of his tutors and the formalities of a court; and with him, as with all the young, hope was an element in which fear could not breathe. He longed for his twentieth year, and forgot to enjoy the pleasures of boyhood in his anticipation of the excitements of youth.

CHAPTER III.

THE fatal time arrived; the Prince Chairolas had taken leave of his weeping mother—embraced his friends—and was receiving the last injunctions of his father, while his horses impatiently snorted at the gates of the palace.

"My son," said the king, with more than his usual gravity, "from the journey you are about to make you are nearly sure of returning a wiser man, but you may not return a better one. The three charms which you have always worn about your person you must be careful to preserve." Here the king for the first time acquainted the wondering prince with the visit to his infant pillow, and repeated the words of the guardian spirit. Chairolas had always felt a lively curiosity to know why, from his infancy, he had been compelled to wear about his royal person three things so apparently worthless as an eagle's feather, a pigeon's feather, and the tuft of a swan's down, and still more why such seeming trifles had been gorgeously set in jewels. The secret now made known to him elevated his self-esteem; he was evidently, then, a favourite with the superior powers, and marked from his birth for no ordinary destinies.

"Alas!" concluded the king, "had I received such talismans, perhaps——" he broke off abruptly, once more embraced his son, and hastened to shroud his meditations in the interior of his palace.

Meanwhile the prince set out upon his journey. The sound of the wind-instruments upon which his guards played cheerily, the caracoles of his favourite charger, the excitement of the fresh air, the sense of liberty, and the hope of adventure—all conspired to elevate his spirits. He forgot father, mother, and home. Never was journey undertaken under gayer presentiments, or by a more joyous mind.

CHAPTER IV.

At length the prince arrived at the spot where his attendants were to quit him. It was the entrance of a narrow defile through precipitous and lofty mountains. Wild trees of luxuriant foliage grew thickly along the path. It seemed a primæval vale, desolate even in its beauty, as though man had never trodden it before. The prince paused for a moment, his friends and followers gathered round him with their adieus, and tears, and wishes, but still Hope animated and inspired him; he waved his hand gaily, spurred his steed, and the trees soon concealed his form from the gaze of his retinue.

He proceeded for some time with slowness and difficulty, so entangled was the soil by its matted herbage, so obstructed was the path by the interlaced and sweeping boughs. At length, towards evening, the ground became more open; and, descending a gentle hill, a green and lovely plain spread itself before him. It was intersected by rivulets, and variegated with every species of plant and tree; it was a garden in which Nature seemed to have shown how well she can dispense with Art. The prince would have been very much enchanted if he had not begun to be very hungry; and, for the first time, he recollected that it was possible to be starved. He looked round anxiously, but vainly, for some sign of habitation, and then he regarded the trees to see if they bore fruit; but, alas! it was the spring of the year, and he could only console himself with observing that the abundance of the blossoms promised plenty of fruit for the autumn,—a long time for a prince to wait for his dinner!

He still, however, continued to proceed, when suddenly he came upon a beaten track, evidently made by art. His horse neighed as its hoofs rang upon the hardened soil, and, breaking of itself into a quicker pace, soon came to a wide arcade overhung with roses. "This must conduct to some mansion," thought Chairolas.

But night came on, and still the prince was in the arcade; the stars, peeping through, here and there served to guide his course, until at length lights, more earthly and more brilliant, broke upon him. The arcade ceased, and Chairolas found himself at the gates of a mighty city, over whose terraces, rising one above the other, the moon shone bright and still.

"Who is there?" asked a voice at the gate.

"Chairolas, Prince of Paida!" answered the traveller.

The gates opened instantly. "Princes are ever welcome at the city of Chrysaor," said the same voice.

And as Chairolas entered, he saw himself instantly surrounded by a group of both sexes richly attired, and bending to the earth with Eastern adoration, while, as with a single voice, they shouted out, "Welcome to the Prince of Paida!"

A few minutes more, and Chairolas was in the magnificent chamber of a magnificent house, seated before a board replete with the rarest viands and the choicest wines.

"All this is delightful," thought the prince, as he finished his supper; "but I see nothing of either fairies or fiends."

His soliloquy was interrupted by the master of the mansion, who came to conduct the prince to his couch. Scarcely was his head upon his pillow ere he fell asleep,—a sure sign that he was a stranger at Chrysaor, where the prevalent disease was the want of rest.

The next day, almost before Chairolas was dressed, his lodging was besieged by all the courtiers of the city. He found that, though his dialect was a little different from theirs, the language itself was much the same; for, perhaps, there is no court in the universe where a prince is not tolerably well understood. The servile adulation which Chairolas had experienced in Paida was not nearly so delightful as the polished admiration he received from the courtiers of Chrysaor. While they preserved that tone of equality without which all society is but the interchange of ceremonies, they evinced, by a thousand nameless attentions, their respect for his good qualities, which they seemed to penetrate as by an instinct. The gaiety, the animation, the grace of those he saw, perfectly intoxicated the prince. He was immediately involved in a round of engagements. It was impossible that he should ever be alone.

CHAPTER V.

As the confusion of first impressions wore off, Chairolas remarked a singular peculiarity in the manners of his new friends. They were the greatest laughers he had ever met. Not that they laughed loudly, but that they laughed constantly. This habit was not attended with any real merriment or happiness. Many of the saddest persons laughed the most. It was also remarkable that the principal objects of these cachinnatory ebullitions were precisely such as Chairolas had been taught to consider the most serious, and the farthest removed from ludicrous associations. They never laughed at anything witty or humorous, at a comedy or a joke. But if one of their friends became poor, then how they laughed at his poverty! If a child broke the heart of a father, or a wife ran away from her husband, or a great lord cheated at play, or ruined his tradesmen, then they had no command over their muscles. In a word, misfortune or vice made a principal object of this epidemical affection. But not the only object, they laughed at anything that differed from their general habits. If a virgin blushed—if a sage talked wisdom—if a man did anything uncommon, no matter what, they were instantly seized with this jovial convulsion. They laughed at generosity—they laughed at sentiment—they laughed at patriotism—and, though affecting to be exceedingly pious, they laughed with particular pleasure at any extraordinary show of religion.

Chairolas was extremely puzzled; for he saw that, if they laughed at what was bad, they laughed also at what was good: it seemed as if they had no other mode of condemning or applauding. But what perplexed him yet more was a strange transformation to which this people were subject. Their faces were apt to turn, even in a single night, into enormous rhododendrons;* and it was very common to see a human figure walking about as gaily as possible with a flower upon its shoulders instead of a face.

Resolved to enlighten himself as to this peculiarity of custom, Chairolas one day took aside a courtier who appeared to him the most intelligent of his friends. Grinaldibus Hassan Sneeraskin (so was the courtier termed) laughed longer than ever when he heard the perplexity of the prince.

"Know," said he, as soon as he had composed himself, "that there are two penal codes in this city. For one set of persons, whom you and I never see except in the streets,—persons who hew the wood and draw the water—persons who work for the other classes,—we have punishments, such as hanging, and flogging, and shutting up in prisons, and Heaven knows what;—punishments, in short, that are contained in the ninety-nine volumes of the Hatchet and Rope Pandects. But, for the other set, with whom you mix every day,—the very best society, in short, —we have another code, which punishes only by laughter. And you have no notion how severe the punishment is considered. It is thus that we keep our social system in order, and laugh folly and error out of countenance."

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* It is to be presumed that Chrysaor was the original nursery of the rhododendron; though, in Fairyland, any flower is privileged to grow, without permission from the naturalist.

"An admirable—a most gentle code!" cried the prince. "But," he added, after a moment's reflection, "I see you sometimes laughing at that which to me seems entitled to reverence, while you show the most courteous respect to things which seem to me the fit objects of ridicule."

"Prince, you do not yet understand us: we never laugh at people who do exactly like the rest of us. We only laugh at singularity; because with us singularity is crime."

"Singularity—even in wisdom or virtue?"

"In wisdom or virtue? of course. Nothing so singular as such singularity; therefore nothing so criminal."

"But those persons with rhododendrons instead of faces?"

"Are the worst of our criminals. If we continue to laugh at persons for a certain time, and the laughter fail to correct their vicious propensities, their faces undergo the transformation you have witnessed, no matter how handsome they were before."

"This is indeed laughing people out of countenance," said Chairolas, amazed. "What an affliction!"

"Indeed it is. Take care," added Grinaldibus Hassan Sneeraskin, with paternal unction,—"take care that you never do anything to deserve a laugh—the torture is inexpressible—the transformation is awful!"

CHAPTER VI.

THIS conversation threw Chairolas into a profound reverie. The charm of the society was invaded; it now admitted restraint and fear. If ever he should be laughed at? if ever he should become a rhododendron?—terrible thought! He remembered various instances he had hitherto but little observed, in which he more than suspected that he had already been unconsciously afflicted with symptoms of this greatest of all calamities. His reason allowed the justice of his apprehension; for he could not flatter himself that in all respects he was exactly like the courtiers of Chrysaor.

That night he went to a splendid entertainment given by the prime minister. Conscious of great personal attractions, and magnificently attired, he felt, at his first entrance into the gorgeous halls, the flush of youthful and elated vanity. It was his custom to wear upon his breast one of his most splendid ornaments. It was the tuft of the fairy swan's down set in brilliants of great price. Something there was in this ornament which shed a kind of charm over his whole person. It gave a more interesting dignity to his mien, a loftier aspect to his brow, a deeper and a softer expression to his eyes. So potent is the gift of a Good Genius, as all our science upon such subjects assures us.

Still, as Chairolas passed through the rooms, he perceived, with a thrill of terror, that a smile ill suppressed met him at every side; and when he turned his head to look back, he perceived that the fatal smile had expanded into a laugh. All his complacency vanished; terror and shame possessed him. Yes, he was certainly laughed at! He felt his face itching already—certainly the leaves were sprouting!

He hastened to escape from the crowded rooms—passed into the lighted and voluptuous gardens—and seated himself in a retired and sequestered alcove. Here he was surprised by the beautiful Mikra, a lady to whom he had been paying assiduous court, and who appeared to take a lively interest in his affairs.

"Prince Chairolas here!" cried the lady, seating herself by his side; "alone too, and sad! How is this?"

"Alas!" answered the prince, despondingly, "I feel that I am regarded as a criminal: how can I hope for your love! In a word—dreadful confession!—I am certainly laughed at. I shall assuredly blossom in a week or two. Light of my eyes! deign to compassionate my affliction, and instruct my ignorance. Acquaint me with the crime I have committed."

"Prince," said the gentle Mikra, much moved by her lover's dejection, "do not speak thus. Perhaps I ought to have spared you this pain. But delicacy restrained me—"

"Speak!—speak in mercy!"

"Well then—but pardon me—that swan's down tuft, it is charming, beautiful, it becomes you exceedingly! But at Chrysaor nobody wears swan's down tufts,—you understand."

"And it is for this, then, that I may be rhododendronised!" exclaimed Chairolas.

"Indeed, I fear so."

"Away treacherous gift!" exclaimed the prince; and he tore off the fairy ornament. He dashed it to the ground, and left the alcove. The fair Mikra stayed behind to pick up the diamonds: the swan's down itself had vanished, or, at least, it was invisible to the fine lady of Chrysaor.

CHAPTER VII.

With the loss of his swan's down Prince Chairolas recovered his self-complacency. No one laughed at him in future. He was relieved from the fear of efflorescence. For a while he was happy. But months glided away, and the prince grew tired of his sojourn at Chrysaor. The sight of the same eternal faces and the same eternal rhododendrons, the sound of the same eternal laughter, wearied him to death. He resolved to pursue his travels. Accordingly, he quarrelled with Mikra, took leave of his friends, and, mounting his favourite steed, departed from the walls of Chrysaor. He took the precaution, this time, of hiring some attendants at Chrysaor, who carried with them provisions. A single one of the many jewels he bore about him would have more than sufficed to purchase the service of half Chrysaor.

Although he had derived so little advantage from one of the fairy gifts, he naturally thought he might be more fortunate with the rest. The pigeon's feather was appropriate enough to travelling (for we may suppose that it was a carrier-pigeon); accordingly he placed it, set in emeralds, amidst the plumage of his cap. He spent some few days in rambling about, until he found he had entered a country unknown even to his guides. The landscape was more flat and less luxuriant than that which had hitherto cheered his way, the sun was less brilliant, and the sky seemed nearer to the earth.

While gazing around him, he became suddenly aware of the presence of a stranger, who, stationed right before his horse, stretched forth his hand and thus accosted him:—

"O thrice-noble and generous traveller! save me from starvation. Heaven smiles upon one to whom it has given the inestimable treasure of a pigeon's feather. May Heaven continue to lavish its blessings upon thee, — meanwhile spare me a trifle!"

The charitable Chairolas ordered his purse-bearer to relieve the wants of the stranger, and then inquired the name of the country they had entered. He was informed that it was termed Apatia; and that its inhabitants were singularly cordial to travellers, "Especially," added the mendicant, "if they possess that rarest of earthly gifts — the feather of a pigeon."

"Well," thought Chairolas, "my good genius evidently intends to make up for his mistake about the swan's down: doubtless the pigeon's feather will be exceedingly serviceable!"

He desired the mendicant to guide him to the nearest city of Apatia, which, fortunately, happened to be the metropolis.

On entering the streets, Chairolas was struck with the exceeding bustle and animation of the inhabitants; far from the indolent luxury of Chrysaor, everything breathed of activity, enterprise, and toil.

The place resembled a fortified town; the houses were built of ponderous stone, a drawbridge to each; the windows were barred with iron; a sentinel guarded every portico.

"Is there a foreign invasion without the walls?" asked the prince.

"No," answered the mendicant; "but here every man guards against his neighbour; take care of yourself, noble sir:" so saying, the grateful Apatian picked the prince's pockets of his loose coin (luckily it was not in his pockets that he kept his jewels), and disappeared amidst the crowd.

CHAPTER VIII.

The prince found himself no less courted in the capital of Apatia than he had been in Chrysaor. But society there was much less charming. He amused himself by going out in the streets incognito, and watching the manners of the inhabitants. He found them addicted to the most singular pursuits. One game consisted in setting up a straw and shooting arrows at it blindfold. If you missed the mark, you paid dearly; if you hit it, you made a fortune. Many persons ruined themselves at this game.

Another amusement consisted in giving certain persons, trained for the purpose, and dressed in long gowns, a quantity of gold, in return for which they threw dirt at you. The game was played thus:—You found one of these gownsmen—gave him the required quantity of gold—and then stood to be pelted at in a large tennis-court; your adversary did the same: if the gownsman employed against you dirtied you more than your gownsman dirtied your antagonist, you were stripped naked and turned adrift in the streets; but if your antagonist was the most bespattered, you won your game, and received back half the gold you had given to your gownsman. This was a most popular diversion. They had various other amusements, all of the same kind, in which the chief entertainment was the certainty of loss.

For the rest, the common occupation was quarrelling with each other, buying and selling, picking pockets, and making long speeches about liberty and glory!

Chairolas found that the pigeon's feather was everywhere a passport to favour. But in a short time this produced its annoyances. His room was besieged by applications for charity. In vain he resisted. No man with a pigeon's feather, he was assured, ever refused assistance to the poor. All the ladies in the city were in love with him; all the courtiers were his friends; they adored and they plundered him; and the reason of the adoration and the plunder was the pigeon's feather.

One day he found his favourite friend with his favourite fair one—a fair one so favoured, that he had actually proposed and had actually been accepted. Their familiarity and their treachery were evident. Chairolas drew his sabre, and would certainly have slain them both, if the lady's screams had not brought the king's guards into the room. They took all three before the judge. He heard the case gravely, and sentenced Chairolas to forego the lady and pay the costs of the sentence.

"Base foreigner that you are!" he said, gravely, "and unmindful of your honour. Have you not trusted your friend and believed in her you loved? Have you not suffered them to be often together? If you had been an honourable man, you would know that you must always watch a woman and suspect a friend.—Go!"

As Chairolas was retiring, half-choked with rage and shame, the lady seized him by the arm. "Ah!" she whispered, "I should never have deceived you but for the pigeon's feather."

Chairolas threw himself on his bed, and, exhausted by grief, fell fast asleep. When he woke the next morning, he found that his attendants had disappeared with the bulk of his jewels: they left behind them a scroll containing these words—"A man with so fine a pigeon's feather will never hang us for stealing."

Chairolas flung the feather out of the window. The wind blew it away in an instant. An hour afterwards he had mounted his steed and was already beyond the walls of the capital of Apatia.

CHAPTER IX.

At nightfall the prince found himself at the gates of a lofty castle. Wearied and worn out, he blew the horn suspended at the portals, and demanded food and shelter for the night. No voice answered, but the gates opened of their own accord. Chairolas left his courser to feed at will on the herbage, and entered the castle: he passed through several magnificent chambers without meeting a soul till he came to a small pavilion. The walls were curiously covered with violets and rose-leaves wrought in mosaic; the lights streamed from jewels of a ruby glow, set in lotos-leaves. The whole spot breathed of enchantment; in fact, Chairolas had at length reached an enchanted castle.

Upon a couch in an alcove reclined a female form, covered with a veil studded with silver stars, but of a texture sufficiently transparent to permit Chairolas to perceive how singularly beautiful were the proportions beneath. The prince approached with a soft step.

"Pardon me," he said, with a hesitating voice, "I fear that I disturb your repose." The figure made no reply; and after a pause, Chairolas, unable to resist the desire to see the face of the sleeper, lifted the veil.

Never had so beautiful a countenance broke even upon his dreams. The first bloom of youth shed its softest hues over the cheek; the lips just parted in a smile which sufficed to call forth a thousand dimples. The face only wanted for the completion of its charm that the eyes should open and light it up with soul; but the lids were closed in a slumber so profound, that, but for the colours of the cheek and the regular and ambrosial breathing of the lips, you might have imagined that the slumber was of death. Beside this fair creature lay a casket, on which the prince read these words engraved—"He only who can unlock this casket can awaken the sleeper; and he who finds the heart may claim the hand."

Chairolas, transported with joy and hope, seized the casket—the key was in the lock. With trembling hands he sought to turn it in the hasp—it remained immovable—it resisted his most strenuous efforts. Nothing could be more slight than the casket—more minute than the key: but all the strength of Chairolas was insufficient to open the lock.

Chairolas was in despair. He remained for days —for weeks—in the enchanted chamber. He neither ate nor slept during all that time. But such was the magic of the place that he never once felt hunger nor fatigue. Gazing upon that divine form, he for the first time experienced the rapture and intoxication of real love. He spent his days and nights in seeking to unclose the casket; sometimes in his rage he dashed it to the ground—he trampled upon it—he sought to break what he could not open—in vain.

One day while thus employed, he heard the horn wind without the castle gates; then steps echoed along the halls, and presently a stranger entered the enchanted pavilion. The new-comer was neither old nor young, neither handsome nor ugly. He approached the alcove despite the menacing looks of the jealous prince. He gazed upon the sleeper; and, as he gazed, a low music breathed throughout the chamber. Surprised and awed, Chairolas let the casket fall from his hands. The intruder took it from the ground, read the inscription, and applied his hand to the key;—it turned not;—Chairolas laughed aloud;—the stranger sighed, and drew forth from his breast a little tuft of swan's down—he laid it upon the casket—again turned the key—the casket opened at once, and within lay a small golden heart. At that instant a voice broke from the heart. "Thou hast found the charm," it said; and, at the same time, the virgin woke, and, as she bent her eyes upon the last comer, she said, with unutterable tenderness, "It is of thee, then, that I have so long dreamed." The stranger fell at her feet. And Chairolas, unable to witness his rival's happiness, fled from the pavilion.

"Accursed that I am!" he groaned aloud. "If I had not cast away the fairy gift, *she* would have been mine!"

CHAPTER X.

FOR several days the unfortunate prince wandered through the woods and wastes, supporting himself on wild berries, and venting, in sighs and broken exclamations, his grief and rage. At length he came to the shores of a wide and glassy sea,—basking in the softest hues of an Oriental morn in the early summer. Its waves crisped over golden sands with a delicious and heavenly music; the air was scented with unspeakable fragrance, wafted from trees peculiar to the clime, and bearing at the same time the blossom and the fruit. At a slight distance from the shore was an island which seemed one garden—the fabled bowers of the Hesperides. Studded it was with ivory palaces, delicious fountains, and streams that wound amidst groves of asphodel and amaranth. And everywhere throughout the island wandered groups whose faces the prince could distinctly see, and those faces were made beautiful by peace unruffled and happiness unalloyed. Laughter —how different from that of Chrysaor!—was wafted to his ear, and the boughs of the trees, as they waved to the fragrant wind, gave forth melodies more exquisite than ever woke from the lutes of Lydia or the harps of Lesbos.

Wearied and exhausted the prince gazed upon the Happy Isle, and longed to be a partaker of its bliss, when, turning his eyes a little to the right, he saw, from a winding in the shore on which he stood, a vessel, with silken streamers, seemingly about to part for the opposite isle. Several persons of either sex were crowding into the vessel, and already waving their hands to the groups upon the island. Chairolas hastened to the spot. He pushed impatiently through the crowd; he was about to enter the vessel, when a venerable old man stopped and accosted him.

"Stranger, wouldst thou go to the Happy Isle?"

"Yes! Quick—quick, let me pass!"

"Stranger, whoever would enter the vessel must comply first with the conditions and pay the passage."

"I have some jewels left still," said Chairolas, haughtily. "I will pay the amount ten times over."

"We require neither jewels nor money," returned the old man, gravely. "What you must produce is the feather of a pigeon."

Chairolas shrunk back aghast. "But," said he, "I have no longer a pigeon's feather!"

The old man gazed at him with horror. The passengers set up a loud cry—"He has no pigeon's feather!" They pushed him back, the vessel parted, and Chairolas was left upon the strand.

CHAPTER XI.

CURSING his visits to Chrysaor and Apatia, which had cost him so dear and given him so little in return, Chairolas tore himself from the sea-shore and renewed his travels.

Towards the noon of the following day he entered a valley covered with immense sunflowers and poppies. Anything so gaudy he had never before beheld. Here and there were rocks, evidently not made by nature;—mounds raised by collections of various rubbish, ornamented with artificial ruins and temples. Sometimes he passed through grottoes formed by bits of coloured glass and shells, intended to imitate spars and even jewels. The only birds that inhabited the boughs were parrots and mock-birds. They made a most discordant din; but they meant it for imitations of nightingales and larks. The flare of the poppies and the noise of the birds were at first intolerable, but by degrees the wanderer became used to them, and at length found them charming.

"How delightful this is!" said he, flinging himself under a yew-tree, which was trimmed into the shape of a pagoda. "So cheerful—so gay! After all, I am as well off here as I could have been in the Happy Isle. Nay, I think there is a greater air of comfort in the sight of these warm sunflowers than in those eternal amaranths; and certainly, the music of the parrots is exceedingly lively!"

While thus soliloquising the prince saw an old baboon walk leisurely up to him. The creature supported itself upon a golden-headed staff. It wore a long wig and a three-cornered hat. It had a large star of coloured glass on its breast; and an apron of sky-blue round its middle.

As the baboon approached, Chairolas was much struck by its countenance; the features were singularly intelligent and astute, and seemed even more so from a large pair of spectacles, which gave the animal a learned look about the eyes.

"Prince!" said the baboon, "I am well acquainted with your adventures, and I think I can be of service to you in your present circumstances."

"Can you give me the lady I saw in the enchanted castle?"

"No!" answered the baboon. "But a man who has seen so much of the world knows that after a little time one lady is not better than another."

"Can you then admit me to the Happy Isle?"

"No! but you said rightly just now that you were as well off in this agreeable valley."

"Can you give me back my tuft of swan's down and my pigeon's feather?"

"No! but I can imitate them so exactly that the imitations will be equally useful. Meanwhile, come and dine with me."

Chairolas followed the baboon into a cave, where he was sumptuously served by pea-green monkeys to dishes of barbecued squirrels.

After dinner the baboon and the prince renewed their conversation. From his host, Chairolas learned that the regions called "the unknown" by the people of Paida were of unlimited extent, inhabited by various nations: that no two of his predecessors had ever met with the same adventures, though most of them had visited both Chrysaor and Apatia. The baboon declared he had been of use to them all. He was, indeed, an animal of exceeding age and experience, and had a perfect recollection of the cities before the deluge.

He made, out of the silky hair of a white fox, a most excellent imitation of the lost tuft of swan's down; and from the breast of a vulture he plucked a feather which any one at a distance might mistake for a pigeon's.

Chairolas received them with delight.

"And now, prince," said the baboon, "observe, that, while you may show these as openly as you please, it will be prudent to conceal the eagle's feather that you have yet left. No inconvenience results from parading the false,—much danger from exhibiting the true. Take this little box of adamant, lock up the eagle's feather in it, and, whenever you meditate any scheme or exploit, open it and consult the feather. In future you will find that it has a voice, and can answer when you speak to it."

Chairolas stayed some days in the baboon's valley, and then once more renewed his travels. What was his surprise to find himself, on the second day of his excursion, in the same defile as that which had conducted him from his paternal realms! He computed, for the first time, the months he had spent in his wanderings, and found that the three years were just accomplished. In less than an hour the prince was at the mouth of the defile, where a numerous cavalcade had been for some days assembled to welcome his return, and conduct him home.

CHAPTER XII.

The young prince was welcomed in Paida with the greatest enthusiasm. Every one found him prodigiously improved. He appeared in public with the false swan's down and the false pigeon's feather. They became him even better than the true ones, and indeed he had taken care to have them set in much more magnificent jewels. But the prince was a prey to one violent and master passion—Ambition. This had always been a part of his character; but previous to his travels it had been guided by generous and patriotic impulses. It was so no longer. He spent whole days in conversing with the eagle's feather, though the feather indeed never said but one word, which was—"War."

At that time a neighbouring people had chosen five persons instead of two to inspect the treasury accounts. Chairolas affected to be horror-struck with the innovation. He declared it boded no good to Paida; he declaimed against it night and day. At last, he so inflamed the people, that, despite the reluctance of the king, war was declared. An old general of great renown headed the army. Chairolas was appointed second in command. They had scarcely reached the confines of the enemy's country when Chairolas became no less unhappy than before. "Second in command! why not first?" He consulted his demon feather. It said "First." It spoke no other word. The old general was slow in his movements; he pretended that it was unwise to risk a battle at so great a distance from the capital; but in reality, he hoped that the appearance of his army would awe the enemy into replacing the two treasurers, and so secure the object of the war without bloodshed. Chairolas penetrated this design, so contrary to his projects. He wrote home to his father, to accuse the general of taking bribes from the enemy. The old king readily believed one whom a good Genius had so richly endowed. The general was recalled and beheaded. Chairolas succeeded to the command. He hastened to march to the capital, which he took and pillaged; but, instead of replacing the two treasurers, he appointed one chief—himself; and twenty subordinate treasurers—his officers.

Never was prince so popular as Chairolas on his return from his victories. He was intoxicated by the sweetness of power and the desire of yet greater glory. He longed to reign himself—he sighed to think his father was so healthy. He shut himself up in his room and talked to his feather: its word now was "KING." Shortly afterwards Chairolas (who was the idol of the soldiers) seized the palace, issued a proclamation that his father was in his dotage, and had abdicated the throne in his favour. The king was removed to a distant wing of the palace, and a day or two afterwards found dead in his bed. Chairolas commanded the Court to wear mourning for three months, and everybody compassionated his grief.

From that time Chairolas, now the monarch of Paida, gave himself up to his ruling passion. He extended his fame from east to west—he was called the Great Chairolas. But his subjects became tired of war; their lands were ravaged—their treasury exhausted—new taxes were raised for new conquests,—and at length Chairolas was no longer called the "Great," but the "Tyrant."

CHAPTER XIII.

As Chairolas advanced in years, he left off wearing the false swan's down and the false pigeon's feather. He had long ceased to lock up his eagle-plume; he carried it constantly in his helmet, that it might whisper with ease into his ear. He had ceased to be popular with any class the moment he abandoned the presents of the baboon. By degrees a report spread through the nation that the king was befriended by an evil spirit, and that the eagle's plume was a talisman which secured to the possessor—while it rendered him grasping, cruel, and avaricious—prosperity, power, and fame. A conspiracy was formed to rob the king of his life and talisman at once. At the head of the conspiracy was the king's heir, Belmanes. They took their measures so well, that they succeeded in seizing the palace. They penetrated into the chamber of the Great Chairolas,—they paused at the threshold on hearing his voice,—he was addressing the fatal talisman.

"The ordeal," he said, "through which I passed robbed me of thy companions; but no ordeal could rob me of thee. I rule my people with a rod of iron; I have spread my conquests to the farthest regions to which the banner of Paida was ever wafted. I am still dissatisfied—what more can I desire?"

"Death!" cried the conspirators; and the king fell pierced to the heart. Belmanes seized the eagle's plume: it crumbled into dust in his grasp.

After the death of Chairolas, the following sentences were written in gold letters before the gates of the great academy of Paida by a priest who pretended to be inspired:—

"The ridicule of common men aspires to be the leveller of genius."

"To renounce a virtue, because it has made thee suffer from fraud, is to play the robber to thyself."

"Wouldst thou imitate the properties of the swan and the pigeon, borrow from the fox and the vulture. But no man can wear the imitations all his life: when he abandons them, he is undone."

"If thou hast three virtues, and losest two, the third, by itself, may become a vice. There is no blessing to the world like AMBITION joined to SYM-

PATHY and BENEVOLENCE; no scourge to the world like Ambition divorced from them."

"The choicest gifts of the most benevolent genii are impotent, unless accompanied by a charm against experience."

"The charm against experience is woven by two spirits—Patience and Self-esteem."

On these sentences nine sects of philosophy were founded. Each construed them differently; each produced ten thousand volumes in support of its interpretation; and no man was ever made better or wiser by the sentences, the sects, and the volumes.

A DREAM OF THE DEAD.

I DREAMED that I found myself suddenly in a place which impressed me with an instantaneous sense of strangeness; it was like nothing I had ever seen. I then became aware that my own state of feeling was like nothing I had ever felt. It was a sensation of inexpressible physical relief; all ailment, to which I had been familiarised, was gone—gone all weariness, heaviness, inertness of muscle, of nerve, of spirit. Time and its effects palpably—abruptly—lifted from me as a load may be lifted from the shoulders of a tired and sinking man. I was conscious of an elasticity and lightness of frame, to which that of a vigorous schoolboy bounding into the playground can be but inadequately compared. My first idea was that I was made young again; my second idea, which flashed on me as conviction, made me aware that I was dead. I said to myself, "I am dead, and amongst the dead." With that consciousness came no awe, no fear, only the sensation of unutterable strangeness, and a sentiment of intense curiosity. The place in which I stood was the far end of an immense hall or chamber,—so immense that it baffles all attempt to convey a notion of the space. Its walls were proportionably lofty, it was without roof; above it a dull blue sky, without cloud, without sun, moon, or stars. Along this hall human beings, dressed as we dress in life, were hurrying in various groups or detachments. But so vast was the place, that though I was aware there were millions of such beings within the walls, they appeared like tiny rivulets running on through a mighty plain. I hastened towards one of these detachments, accosted a man, and said, "Tell me, is it true that I am dead?"

"You are dead, of course," said the man impatiently, without stopping. "And you, too?" I asked.

"All here are dead! We *are* The Dead."

I caught the man by the arm, which I felt inquisitively. I wondered to find it so material, contrary to all my preconceived notions.

"But you are no spirit?" I said; "this arm is flesh and blood. Can you explain?"

"Nothing is ever explained here," interrupted the man, shaking me off. He hurried on after the rest, and disappeared within what may be called a doorway; but there was no door. There were many openings as for doors in the hall—none of them had doors. This also excited my curiosity. Why no doors? I walked lightly across the floor, pleased at the briskness of my own step, and again I accosted a fellow-inmate of this strange place.

"I beg pardon," said I courteously, "but why is this hall left unfinished; why no doors where these lofty openings are left?"

"Find out for yourself; no explanations are given here."

"Stop one moment, I am a stranger just arrived. Many dear friends have come here before me. Tell me, I pray, how I am to find them?"

"Find them! This is Infinity. Those who move on never return to the same place; those who come after never catch up those who have gone before."

"What! shall I never see even my own mother?"

"Never. This is Eternity; once lost, for ever lost."

"But my own mother! What has become of her? whither has she gone?"

"How do I know!"

"But I *shall* overtake her," I exclaimed angrily.

"And if you do?" said the man drily, "you would not know each other—you do not wear the same bodies as you did in life. Perhaps you and I were intimate friends once. You do not know me now, nor I you. No knowledge of each other amongst The Dead."

The man hurried on through the opening. I was so amazed at what he said that I awoke.

"This is the most extraordinary dream," I said to myself, when awake.

"How I wish that I could continue it!" In a few minutes I was asleep again, and there I was—exactly in the same place in that hall where the man had left me, near the opening. I followed a string of passengers through that opening into a narrow corridor—the same height of wall, the same dull blue sky overhead.

"How light it is," I said to a man in the throng, "and yet there is no sun, and no moon, and no stars. Is it always as light here, and is this day or is it night?"

"Neither day nor night. No day, no night, to the dead. Time here is dead too!"

I tried in vain to keep this man in conversation. I tried in vain to make friends with others; all answered curtly and impatiently, shaking me off and hurrying on. What now began most to perplex me, was the utter absence of all social intercourse. No one seemed to talk to another; no two persons walked arm-in-arm. I said to myself—"In any city on earth one stranger may accost another, and get some information what he is to do—where he is to find a lodging. Society seems dissolved here—every one for himself. It is well at least that I feel so strong and so young."

I passed my hands over my limbs. Yes, I *was* flesh and blood. Suddenly I began to feel hungry. This amazed me. Again I accosted one of the throng. "Can it be true that one feels hunger here? do the Dead know hunger?"

"Hunger! of course; you have a body, have not you?"

"And how can one get food?"

"Find out for yourself."

"Stop, must one pay for it?"

"Pay! of course, of course; you cannot rob The Dead." The man was gone.

I hurried on with the hurrying throng, and began to feel in my pockets. In my right trouser pocket I found a sovereign and twelve shillings in silver, exactly the sum that I had in my pocket when I went to bed the night of that dream. Again I began to wonder, "How did I bring this money with me, why no more? Can I get no more money? Is this all that is to provide for me throughout eternity?" Several of the crowd now stopped before a recess in the corridor; in this recess persons were serving out coffee, which I observed those who took paid for. I longed for the coffee, but I was seized with a prudent thrift. I thought, "I must not fritter away any part of so small a sum, until I know at least how to get more." I resisted the coffee-shops, and continued to rove on—always in a building, always in a labyrinth of halls, and chambers, and passages. I observed that none of them seemed formed for residence, none of them were furnished, except here and there was a thin comfortless bench against the tall undecorated wall. But always, always a building—always, always as within a single immeasurable house. I was seized with an intense longing to get out. "If I could but find my way into the fields," said I to myself—"if I could but wander into the country, I have been always so fond of nature."

Again I accosted a man. "How can I get out of this building?"

"You can't get out of it, you are dead."

"Yes, I know I am dead; but I still long to see Nature."

"There is no Nature here. Nature is finite—this is infinity."

"But is infinity circumscribed to this building?—no escape from these walls? Explain."

"Explain!" interrupted the man with great anger, as if I had uttered something wicked; "nothing is ever explained here. Wretch, leave me." And the man broke away.

I continued to stride on through the building, always trying to escape out of it. Miles and miles, and leagues and leagues, I went on—always between those lofty walls, under that unchangeable sky. And I could never get a peep into what lay beyond; for to those walls there were no windows.

I said to myself, "If I were alive I should have dropped with fatigue; but I feel no fatigue—not the least tired. Still, if I am to remain here, I should like to have a quiet lodging to myself. Where can I rest?"

So again I stopped a man—I say a man; for hitherto I had seen only men, no women—men much as one sees every day in Oxford Street or Cheapside. I *stopped* a man, say I? The expression is incorrect: no man ever stopped at my bidding, but walked on while I spoke, and only walked faster when he escaped. And never again did I come up to the same man. Well, then, I *accosted* a man:—"What are the rules of this place? Can one have a home as on earth?—can I have a lodging to myself somewhere?"

"Of course you can."

"Where shall I go for one?—how am I to contrive—?"

"Find out for yourself; no one helps another here."

"But stay. I have only got about me one pound twelve. Is there difference of fortune in this place?—are there wealth and poverty?—do some people come with more riches than others?"

"To be sure."

"And is it as good a thing to be rich here as it is on earth?"

"Better. Poverty here is dreadful; for here none lend, and none give."

"I left a great deal of money behind me; can't I get at it now?"

"Certainly not; you should have brought more."

"Alas! I did not know I was coming here. But I am quick and hardworking: I could make money easily enough in the earth I came from. Can money be made here?"

"Yes!"

"How—how?"

"Find out for yourself."

The man escaped me.

I woke a second time, revolving all I had seen in my dream, and much struck by the prosaic and practical character of the whole. "So very odd," I said, "that money should be of use amongst the dead. I will write down this dream to-morrow morning;" and I began to impress all its details on my memory. While so employed I fell asleep again, and again found myself exactly in the same spot on which I had last stood in this singular dream. I felt my pockets—only one pound twelve still. "What a fool was I not to take advantage of my waking, and bring more money with me!" I said with a sigh.

I now came into a desolate banquet-hall: in the midst was an immense table, and several thousand persons were sitting down to a feast. I observed ornaments of plate on the table, and great profusion of wine. I approached: the table was full; there was no room for me. And indeed, though still hungry, I had no desire to join the banqueters. I felt as if I were not of them; no social sentiment bound me to them. But now, for the first time, I perceived women—women at the table. That sight gave me pleasure. I began to count them. At first I only distinguished one or two; gradually the number grew—so many that I ceased to count. "Well," I said, "now I shall see something like gallantry and gaiety and affection amongst The Dead." I was soon undeceived; people ate and drank as on earth, but without mirth or talk—each helping himself. The men had no care for the women, the women had no care for the men. A dreary consciousness that love existed not amongst The Dead came over me, and I left the banquet-hall. I now came into another corridor, at the end of which, to my great joy, I descried what seemed a more open space. I caught a glimpse of green trees. A great throng was hurrying towards this space. I pressed forward in advance of the throng, and entered first; but I was disappointed: the space was still within the building, the walls round it; only it resembled what the French call a *Place d'armes*. The trees, planted in a formal row on either side, as they are in a *Place d'armes*, were small, stunted, and the foliage clipped. Looking more narrowly, I perceived that they were not real trees, but of some painted metal; and I thought of the words, "There is no nature here." While I was thus gazing on the trees, the lower end of this court had become filled with the crowd; and suddenly, from an opening opposite to that by which I and the crowd had entered, I heard a regular tramp as of the quick march of soldiers, and presently a defile of armed men came into the *Place*—so quickly that I had only time to draw on one side to escape being trodden down. They hastened to the upper part of the *Place*, and formed themselves at the word of command. Then, for the first time, I felt fear; for these soldiers did not seem to me so human as all I had hitherto seen. There was something preterhuman and ghastly in their aspect and their movements. They were armed with muskets. In another moment, to my inconceivable surprise and horror, they fired upon the crowd at the far end, and then charged with the bayonet. They came so close by me, that I felt one of the soldiers graze me. But I did not recede; on the contrary, I put myself somewhat in the way of the charge. For my predominant sentiment throughout all this dream was curiosity, and I wished to know if I could be capable of bodily wound or bodily pain. But the soldiers spared me, and charged only on the crowd below. In an instant the ground was covered with victims—bruised, wounded, groaning, shrieking. This exploit performed, the soldiers departed down the passage they had entered, as rapidly as they had marched in.

It seemed to me that I felt no pity for the crowd, and no resentment against the soldiers. I only felt an exceeding surprise. However, I approached the sufferers and said, "But are you sensible of wounds, being already dead?" A man, mangled and lacerated, answered impatiently, "Yes, yes—of course."

"But still, being dead, you cannot be killed, and that is some comfort."

I got no answer to this remark. The sufferers gathered themselves up, no one helping the other; and, limping and groaning, dispersed. I then addressed a man who was one of the few who were unhurt. He was taller, of better mien, and with a less busy and anxious expression of countenance than those I had hitherto questioned. He gave me the idea of a person of rank.

"Sir," said I, insinuating into my manner all the polite respect I could convey to it, "the appearance of soldiers here has startled me; for where there are soldiers there must be Law and Government. Hitherto I have seen no trace of either. Is there, then, a Government to this place? Where can one see it? Where does it reside? What are the Laws? How can one avoid displeasing them?"

"Find out," answered the man, in the same form of words which had so often chilled my questions, but in a milder voice.

"At all events, then, there is a law of brute force that prevails here as on the earth," I said in extreme wonder.

"Yes; but on earth it is understood. Here nothing is explained."

"Can I know even why that crowd was punished; whence the soldiers came; whither they have now gone?"

"Search — this is infinity. You have leisure enough before you; you are in eternity."

The man was gone. I passed very timorously and very wistfully along the passage from which the soldiers had emerged.

The object of my curiosity now was, to get at the seat of that Law of Force which was so contrary to all my preconceived opinions. I felt a most awful consciousness of uncertainty. One might then, like that crowd, at any time be punished; one did not know wherefore. How act so as to avoid offence? While thus musing the atmosphere seemed darker, and I found that I was in a very squalid part of the building; it resembled, indeed, the old lanes and courts of St Giles's (only still within the mansion), and infinitely more wretched.

"So then," I said, "I do see poverty here at last," and I felt with proud satisfaction my one pound twelve. A miserable-looking lad now was beside me. He was resting on a heap of broken rubbish. Looking at him I observed that he was deformed, but not like any deformity I had seen in the living. I cannot describe how the deformity differed, except that he showed me his hands, and they were not like human hands, but were distorted into shapeless knots and lumps. And I said, "No wonder you are poor, for you cannot work with those hands. Man's physical distinction from the brutes is chiefly in the formation of his hand. Your hand is not the hand of man."

And the lad laughed, and that was the first laugh I had heard amongst the dead.

"But are you not very unhappy?" said I in amaze.

"Unhappy! No! I am dead."

"Did you bring your infirmities with you, or did you contract them here?"

"Here!"

I was appalled.

"How? by what misfortune or what sin?"

The lad laughed again, and jumping off his block of rubbish, sidled away, mocking at me as he went with a vulgar gesture.

"Catch me at explaining," said he, and was lost.

Now a sort of despair, but an intellectual despair, seized me. I say intellectual, for with all my amaze and all my sense of solitude in that crowd, I never felt sad nor unhappy; on the contrary I kept constantly saying to myself, "After all it is a great thing to have done with life.— And to feel so well and so young!" But my intellect oppressed me; it was in my way; my curiosity was so intense, my perplexities so unsolved, even by conjecture.

I got out of the squalid part of the building; and in a small lobby I encountered a solitary being like myself. I joined him.

I said, "You and I seem both alone in this vast space. Can we not explore it in company?"

"Certainly not; my way is not your way, nor yours mine. No two have the same paths through infinity."

"But," said I, angrily, "I always understood on the earth, that when we left it we should come into a region of spirits. Where are the angels to guide us? I see them not. I have seen poverty and suffering, and brute force. But of blessed spirits above mankind, I have beheld none. And if this be infinity, such spirits must be here."

"Find them out for yourself then, as I must find them out for myself. This is my way, that is yours."

"One word more; since I cannot discover those who have gone before me, whom I loved, I will wait for some one whom I have left on earth, and he will be my companion, for he will be as strange to this place as I am, and will want a friend, as I want some one. Tell me where I can watch and see the dead come here from life."

"Yes, *that* I can tell you. There are plenty of places in which you will see the dead drop down — there is such a place close by. You see that passage; take it, and go straight on."

I did as the man told me. I came to an open space always between blind walls, but the outer wall seemed far loftier, soaring up, and soaring up, till the dull blue sky that rested on it appeared immeasurably remote.

And down at my feet from this wall dropped a man. "You are one of the dead," said I, approaching anxiously, "just left the world of the living?"

He seemed bewildered for a moment; at last he answered, rubbing his eyes, and in a kind of dreamy voice, "Yes, I am dead."

"Let us look at each other," said I; "perhaps we were friends in life."

We did look at each other without recognition. But, indeed, as I had been told, not amongst the myriads I had met, had I recognised one being I had ever known on earth.

"Well," said I, "this is the strangest place! There is no getting on in it alone; no one will put you into the way of things. Let you and I be friends now, whatever we were before. Take my arm; we cannot fail to be more comfortable, if we keep together."

The man, who seemed half asleep, took my arm, and we went on together. I was very much pleased and exceedingly proud to have found at last a companion. I told him of all I had witnessed and experienced, of all my doubts and perplexities. He listened with very little interest or attention, still I was glad that I had got him safe by the arm.

"I don't think it is such a bad place," said I, "if one could once get into the way of it. But the first thing is to find a lodging to ourselves; and are you not hungry? I am. By the by, what money have you brought with you?"

Thereon my man looked at me suspiciously, and extricating himself from my arm, broke off; and though I hastened to follow him, he was lost in the infinity, and I felt that I was once more amidst infinity—dead and alone.

So I awoke, and I wrote down this dream just as it happened; and attempting no explanation, for no explanation was given to me.

Hermides.