Austrian trade, by land, with Turkey, has experienced a similar increase. Take, for instance, the customs register at Orsova, and we find that the exports were reckoned in Vienna,

	Cwts.
In 1837, ...	8 326
In 1838, ...	12,855

and the Imports reckoned in Vienna,

	Cwts.
In 1837, ...	26.729
In 1838, ...	33,936

The report closes with an expression of satisfaction at the treaty recently concluded between England and Austria.

So much for the Danube Company, whose affairs are going on *swimmingly*. Turn we now to the Steam-Boat Company of the Austrian Lloyd, which runs her vessels from Trieste to the Levant, and we find that, owing to the opposition of the French boats running from Marseilles, their affairs are in by no means so prosperous a condition, having, for instance, been obliged to suspend the line between Syra and Alexandria. As the report is meagre, we content ourselves with giving a statistical view of the traffic, leaving the figures to speak for themselves.

	Passengers.	Precious Metals, &c., worth	Letters.	Goods.	
				Packages.	Vienna cwt.
16 Voyages between Trieste, Constantinople, and Alexandria, ...	3,331	£223,736	44,480	12,926	19,138
8 Voyages between Trieste and Constantinople,	1,343	112,869	23,353	10,453	9,675
10 Voyages between Constantinople, Alexandria, Saloniki, and Trieste, ...	588	11,047	3,112	1,376	2,596
156 between Venice and Trieste, . . .	14,288	721,599		3,527	5,704
7 between Trieste and Dalmatia, . .	1,207	6,638		50	168
17 between Trieste, Ancona, and other parts, .	1,252	90,849	126	14	37

Few Englishmen who read these notices will fail to apply them practically to the vast interests at stake on the shores of the Ganges and the Indus; for, from the days of Vasquez de Gama to the present century, the journey from Europe to India has been but slightly accelerated. Times are now changed—we are in a state of transition; the first great steps have been taken; but as those that are to follow must depend on the march of political affairs in the East, the boldest conjecturer must be puzzled as to the result. Let us hope for the best.

VIOLET HAMILTON; OR, THE TALENTED FAMILY.

CHAPTER VI.

Our heroine, if not much more excited and charmed on first entering a great theatre, than upon her entry into the metropolis, which dulness must have been owing to uncultivated taste and provincial education, was agreeably entertained. Three acts passed; and then Mr Burke Barker, having probably demolished the Whigs with greater ease than he had anticipated, entered the box with his friend Jack, who, by candle-light, and in such a scene, was not nearly so overpowering as in broad day. The ladies, in turn—"Mademoiselle Gabrielle, my gifted pupil," and "Miss Cripps, my eldest daughter," were presented to the man of letters who could make or mar their fortunes. There were other "Orders" and other friends of Mr Barker in the same box, and the Professor judiciously kept his pupil rather in the back ground, separating her by the interposition of his own dapper figure, from the possibility of annoyance, till the box filled to overflow, when he cried—"Here, Mr Barker;" and the young ladies were placed between them; Jack Cryppes standing behind Violet, and sometimes even leaning on the back of her chair, however she might blush, indulging in brilliant whispered sallies, and laughter far louder than his father approved.

"Ha, Barker, Virginia is playing at this box—palpably playing at you. Don't you see that? Can you stand that appeal? Have you a human heart, my friend?"

"Hush!" said the critic, looking solemn, and he made a few pothooks on a card, which he placed in the cuff of his coat. "Do you like her, Mademoiselle? Will she pass?" said he, languidly.

Violet was now fairly interested in the passion of the play. It might partly be the sympathies of youth and sex,—but the actress had also found the way to her heart, which had not before been touched.

"Pass, sir!—is she not a creature of beautiful powers. So pathetic a voice; so"—— but Violet's encomiums were suddenly brought to an awkward close:—

"Our friend, Herbert—it really is, Mademoiselle, entering that box in the lower tier," said Jack; "the third off—that's his mother on the arm of the Earl of Tarbert:

"I saw the Tarberts arrive at the charming widow's to-day;—grand-looking, aristocratic-nosed, old fellow—cut me out with pretty Mrs Herbert—eh, Poll?"

"And who, pray, is the younger lady?" asked Polly, "She *is*, though foreign-looking, rather handsome, don't you think, Mademoiselle?"

Miss Cripps levelled Barker's glass at the box, whispering him—"The Herberts, you must know, are great friends of ours." Polly, after all, found her unaided orbs more efficient than the glass.

"Lady Louisa Temple, the only child of the old un', but no fortune. Father and daughter were spoken of in the clubs to-day, in conjunction with the Herberts, as the *quadruple alliance*. Rather goodish, Barker, that, wasn't it? Do for the *Bon Mot* column of the *Cerberus*, eh?"

Professor Cripps was interested in the new arrivals.

"I had the honour of numbering Lady *Laura*—not Louisa—among my pupils, when she lived, long ago, at Windsor with her grandmother. I shall wait upon and renew my acquaintance with her Ladyship. She ought to know something of music."

"Gracious, papa! how old she must be, and not married yet," cried Polly; and the heart of Violet, which had been sinking with the heavy sense of desolation which so often of late overcame her, experienced that relief, to the sick and weary, produced by a momentary change of feeling. "What is it all to me," was her painful thought; and she tried to give her mind to the scene; though, ever and anon, her eyes involuntarily wandered to the box, which so interested the rest of her party. The younger couple sat together and in the front; the young gentleman evidently giving his fair companion flying notices of "existing circumstances," which seemed to entertain her,—for she smiled from time to time; and then her rather large, but finely-formed and very regular features, gained something of the softness wanted in their general expression.

An indifferent eye might have noted her companion as politely attentive, but too lively and disengaged to look like what Mrs Herbert wished to see him—a lover. And this lady's were not unheedful eyes. She could not see his face; but, in his restless motions, the turn of the head, the involuntary fits of wandering, when his eyes were certainly turned to a particular box, and, above all, the sudden recall of the truant gaze, betrayed to Mrs Herbert, by the quick turn of the head, there was something inexplicable. And then came to him the gracious bow and beaming smiles of Miss Cripps, irradiating the circle.

"Many pretty faces here to-night, Charles, though this is not the most brilliant place of beauty's resort," remarked the old peer, lounging in the back of the box, and *raking* the house, from pit to ceiling, with his glass.

"Very many, my Lord. Indeed, wherever Englishwomen are gathered together, the average of good looks is sure to be pretty equal."

"Charles, Charles," remonstrated Mrs Herbert, tapping him with her fan, "compare Almack's or the Drawing-Room with Greenwich Fair?"

"A good deal to be said for the latter place, ma'am," returned Herbert, who was not disposed, especially at this time, to flatter his stepmother's aristocratic prejudices.

"All authority is against you, Charles," continued the lady, smiling. "But I believe gentlemen don't allow, my Lord, that ladies are good judges of female beauty."

"I am," said Lady Laura, "Are you in search of pretty faces, papa? Look, but not just yet, to the box, the third off, above."

The Earl did not wait long.

"A handsome woman, indeed—fine eyes—good bust."

"You have not hit her, sir. I mean *my* beauty. She is not the lady standing up who bowed to Mrs Herbert just now"——

"To me, love—not to me, I assure you," cried Mrs Herbert, who would not for worlds have been suspected at this moment of knowing an unknown or a *parvenue*. "I have not the honour, I assure you."

"Charles must be the happy individual," said the Peer, still endeavouring to find out the beauty. "Of course, it cannot be an acquaintance of Laura's or mine. Here, nobody can recognise us after all these years."

"You have not hit her yet, papa—my retiring beauty. Mr Herbert, you have. The *very* young girl, with the white camellia drooping over her temple among those light brown ringlets. This is true English beauty, Mrs Herbert. One may look for it in vain over all Europe, save when it is exported. Feminine sweetness and delicacy, united with the indescribable expression of a high intelligence."

Charles Herbert looked admiringly on the fair speaker.

"A pretty, little, thin thing, Laura, who may grow into a fine woman," said the Peer, recommencing his examination of Polly Cripps, whose evident desire, and laborious efforts to attract and charm, amused him. A little pantomime was enacting in the "Order Box," which interested Herbert.

"That camellia is coming loose, Mademoiselle, and is so *limp*—everybody is staring at it. This is what comes of wearing *natural* flowers, though at first they may look almost as pretty as French ones."

"Allow me," cried the alert Jack Cripps, bending over Violet's shoulder, and offering to fix the fugitive flower among the silky tangles of her ringlets.

Herbert thrilled with rage, and felt the strongest desire to knock the distant offender down; while Violet, snatching the flower, made a gesture of haughty impatience, and turned away her head.

"Ah, Mademoiselle, how cruel!" said the undaunted Jack, laughing aloud to carry off the rebuff of his gallantry; while Polly, directing a sly look to Mr Burke Barker, maliciously warbled in *sotto voce* two lines of a once admired song—

> "Love's cherished gift, the rose he gave, is faded;
> Love's blighted flower shall never bloom again."

Above all this impertinence and annoyance rose the overpowering idea—"How childish, how silly, how very foolish, to have chosen this

ornament! What must *he* think of me? and what does it signify what he thinks?" and Violet could have wept for relief, had but the mute sympathy of her solitary pillow been near.

"Hush!" said the critic; "the curtain rises."

Violet furtively thrust the faded flower into her waist-belt, and drew the drapery of her scarf over it. To throw it away, late so fresh and beautiful, like a loathsome weed, to have it trampled under foot? Ah no! Its past brightness and bloom were gone; but there was sweetness in it still. All eyes were now directed to the stage; and, though Violet had made a covenant with her eyes, she could not resist gazing for a few moments on Charles Herbert's mother. This lady's beauty was of a much more engaging character than the austere composure of the lofty Lady Laura: there were here repose, delicacy, grace, and soul-breathing, if somewhat languid, expression; and, when Charles stooped to whisper to her, a smile so sweet—so heavenly! Pleasure, the deep pleasure, was felt by Violet in the distant contemplation of that lovely and placid countenance, which is experienced by a mind of sensibility from gazing upon one of Raphael's Madonnas. "I can never hope to be known to her," thought Violet, turning away her eyes, and sighing.

The distinguished party which had engaged the attention of the Crippses departed early; Violet steadily fixing her attention on the stage as they rose, even when Polly whispered audibly—

"Charles Herbert is taking farewell of us with his eyes."

The Professor remained to the last; making a tour of the boxes in which he recognised the faces of old acquaintances, and, in every direction, enlarging the circle of his friends, and of his supper party.

When he reached home he found that Monsieur Eustache, completely renovated in dress, had succeeded to admiration in everything, save in getting the luggage home. The saucy people at the hotel had recommended daylight, and presented the long bill. The Professor was about to storm, but wisely restrained his anger, and stated, in the hearing of all the servants, that, while so many tricks were played about dressing-cases and desks, the caution was proper.

The supper party consisted mostly of theatrical persons; with only two ladies, no longer of tender age—a singer and an actress. The former appeared an old acquaintance of Mr Cripps. Violet entreated to be allowed to retire, and Polly was indifferent to her movements; but the Professor could hear of no apology. He would not permit his pupil to mope herself to death in this way. It was proper that she should begin to mingle in the society which she was destined to adorn.

The night passed much more agreeably than Violet had anticipated. There was a prevalent tone of gaiety, which, if not cheerful good-nature, formed an excellent substitute; and the wit, if as evanescent as the bubbles on the sparkling champagne, served the same good purpose, of temporary exhilaration. Violet had never in her whole life heard so many clever green-room anecdotes and stories, and droll, if somewhat silly comic songs. Repartees bounced and whizzed across the table faster than the champagne corks; and Mr Burke Barker was finally prevailed upon to give his famous imitation of Macready, which the actress and the female singer, and all who had professional reputations to sustain, and benefits to look forward to, applauded most vehemently. Miss Cripps took the same cue.

Violet, who had from nature a quick perception of the ludicrous or incongruous, was especially diverted by her master, who, as the night waxed later, appeared like a man restored to his native element. His manners became swelling and theatrical. He filled to "ladies' eyes a round," and swore by his "honour," "egad," and "gadzooks," in a style which would have horrified the bumpkins of W——. Jack took the liberty of quizzing the governor; and Mike Twig, as principal aide-de-camp to the accomplished Monsieur Eustache, gave way to outrageous bursts of laughter at jokes which no footman's ears had a right to hear, and drolleries which no footman's eyes had a right to note, and which drew upon him the unmitigated, if silent, wrath of his fuming master, and the burning glances of his young mistress; while they furnished some capital fresh ideas to the gentleman who did "the low comic parts." The latter good-humouredly sued for Mike's pardon, which application, being backed by the ladies, was at once successful.

Neither the M.P. nor Mr Charles Herbert had yet appeared. The latter had, indeed, sent an apology. The unexpected arrival of friends at his mother's, prevented him the pleasure, till a later hour than he had anticipated; and supper was over before Sir George Lees appeared, and banished much of the ease and gaiety of the party; for he brought with him no less a personage than a Count—a German one—but still a Count, Count Rodolpho Zanderschloss, the eldest son of a Hungarian grandee, on his travels in England; principally with a view to improve his estates—more extensive than half Yorkshire, Sir George whispered his host—by the introduction of English husbandry, and the Merino breed of sheep. This sudden accession of brightness quite dazzled and also damped the party. The Professor, though, in general, a well-bred man, could scarcely contain himself; and Miss Cripps at once ceased the flirtation to which she had stimulated the saturnine journalist and critic, to gaze in mute admiration upon the Count.

Mr Burke Barker began to ply Sir George with politics; and the comic actor, who looked doubly droll as he surveyed the Count with side-long glances, and Violet, who saw in him a non-descript monster, more ridiculous and more exaggerated than even Jack Cripps, were the only other members of the party who, in its altered circumstances, retained self-possession. The Count Rodolpho certainly had the advantage of Jack

Cripps in pre-eminent ugliness; besides, his bristly mustachios were now brindled by a copious powdering of the dark-coloured snuff which he socially dispensed from a gold box richly set with diamonds, surrounding the portrait of some bright lady love.

"Is he connected with the embassy—the Count? When did he arrive in London, Sir George? What a tremendously ugly fellow it is," said Mr Burke Barker. "Any the least chance that he may be a chevalier d'industrie, after all?"

Sir George Lees regarded the speaker with a look of haughty surprise.

"My associates are not usually swindlers, Mr Barker. I never saw the Count before to-night; but I have often heard of him in good society, and I know that he came to dine to-day with Lady Buzz, and in a Cabinet minister's carriage; and was selected by her Ladyship to do the honours of her table. There was some disappointment about his cabriolet, and he was seated in mine before it appeared. I chanced to mention this party, the Count's ears are athirst for music; I knew I might take the liberty with my friend, Cripps—and behold!"

Mr Barker beheld the Count Zanderschloss paying assiduous homage to the daughter of his host, the handsomest or most conspicuous woman present; and Miss Cripps, recovered from her first awe at talking to a live Count, with an order on his breast, rallied him on the portrait of the beautiful lady,—who, the agreeable Hungarian nobleman protested, with many laughing grimaces, was "mein tear sistare, Derese." He offered his arm to conduct the exulting charmer through the open folding-doors to the music room.

"Music, Count," said Polly, in the sentimental tone which she did not usually affect, "music is the universal language—now we shall understand each other."

Sir George Lees and Mr Burke Barker had simultaneously offered an arm to conduct Violet, who honoured the editor of the *Cerberus;* and then the whole party, rising from table, moved on.

"You wont sing to-night, I suppose, Mademoiselle?" whispered Polly, while her father was engaged with the Count. "What would you advise me to?—German music, of course. What do you think of the Count? Such polished manners! Though his language is still but imperfect, it, somehow, does not seem awkward—which must be the effect of superior breeding."

"Perhaps," said Violet.

"Don't you think the Count has a strong resemblance to my brother, Quintin, Mr Barker?"

"As like to Monsieur Eustache," replied Barker, looking to that full-dressed and fully-employed functionary; "nor easy to say which is the uglier fellow."

"Jealous already," thought Polly, drawing off her gloves to play, while again the grimacing foreigner advanced, prepared to turn over the leaves of the music; and with many pretty airs Miss Cripps began—

"Have you been singing to-night, Mademoiselle?" asked Sir George Lees, advancing to the corner, where Violet sat, Mr Barker standing rather sulky beside her.

"No, I have not."

"Ah, then, I am still in time—I congratulate myself."

"'Tis a pleasure I have not yet enjoyed," said Mr Burke Barker. "I promise myself very great pleasure indeed, from hearing you, Mademoiselle."

"But I have," cried Jack Cripps, making a vivacious skip forward, and squatting himself on a low stool at Violet's feet. "What care you for angel strains, Barker—you rugged Demo; you fierce Republican. His friends were wont to call him DANTON, Mademoiselle."

"A young man of superior abilities generally starts with Republicanism," observed Sir George, who did not wish to stand ill with the editor of the *Cerberus.*

"And ends with?" asked Jack, knowingly.

"Ends with those sound constitutional principles which naturally result from longer experience and a more matured judgment," said Sir George, pompously, as if he had been in the House.

"Is he meditating ratting already," thought Mr Burke Barker, compressing his lips, and looking fixedly at the new Liberal M.P.

"Ay, ay, gentlemen," said Jack, in his own imitative and humorous style; "it will be all one a hundred years hence—that's my philosophy. 'Taste life's glad moments,' Mademoiselle—that's my precept; and none so glad as those which allow of the delight of listening to your syren strains."

And the undaunted Jack, placing his hand on his heart, squinted up into her face with an air of impudent languishment, which, coolly contemptuous as she generally was of him, provoked her, and she coloured and rose. Mr Burke Barker again offered his arm. Violet was meditating escape by the side door; but the music was still going on, and, to her rustic feelings, it seemed rude to withdraw till the piece concluded. She, therefore, suffered herself to be led into conversation with the *ci-devant* republican, whom she found in a new and quieter scene, and when, without airs of patronage, intelligent and gentlemanlike.

Jack again approached, without an idea that Mademoiselle could be otherwise than delighted with his pleasantries and compliments.

"I warn you off the premises, Mr Cryp-pes," said Barker, gaily; "Mademoiselle banishes you from her presence for the next half hour;" and Jack, affecting to be smitten to the earth by this severity, turned away in despair.

"By the way, is the family name Cryp-pes or Cripps, Mademoiselle? I had fancied the former."

"Really, it is more than I can tell you, sir; and, indeed, I hardly sometimes now know my

own name. I had imagined no right of my own either to the name or honorary title which I bear in this family."—Mr Burke Barker looked up with a quick glance of his sharp, eloquent, and penetrating eyes. "And now I must wish you good night; the music is about over." Violet disappeared.

"Clear, this girl is neither a Cripps nor a Cryppes," thought Barker; and, as Miss Cripps was now promenading the room on the arm of the Count, on the happiest terms possible for so short an acquaintance; the singer and the Professor engaged in preliminary matters about the piano; Sir George in a flirtation with the actress, who was an old acquaintance, and the watchman calling three o'clock, he also stole away, revolving generous designs for the interesting and lovely girl, who, as she seemed to understand her own position, could also probably appreciate his motives.

In this instance, at least, they were good-natured, and tolerably disinterested. Even from a *Prima Donna* Mr Burke Barker had little to expect. At most, she could but give him a supper, now and then, where he might meet agreeable people, and be a pleasant acquaintance herself; but "that sort of gentry all together—there was nothing *solid* to be expected from them." He half resolved to give up the entire departments of musical and theatrical criticism to his subaltern in the *Cerberus*, Jack Cripps, and stick to politics as the better line; but he, in the meanwhile, penned a few really judicious paragraphs for the general benefit of the Cripps family, in which he had a friend, as friends go in the world; and, in spite of the superior attractions of the Count, fancied he might yet find a mistress.

CHAPTER VII.

Violet felt some curiosity next morning to learn what judgment the terrible *Cerberus* had pronounced upon the performance which she had witnessed; and her perusal of the critique certainly raised her opinion of the discrimination, taste, and delicacy of the writer. If Mr Burke Barker displayed supercilious airs of patronage to "the poor players" in private society, he ventured upon no such absurdity in his journal. True, the actors here criticised were fixed stars; each, by inherent lustre, irradiating its own sphere. Yet, had they been lesser or unknown lights, there was nothing in the ordinary course of his critical journalism to discredit the opinion of the reflecting minority, that the periodical press, with all its political and moral imperfections, generally displays the greatest indulgence and leniency, even to obtrusive dulness, and the most kindly sympathy, with a vast deal of indulgent good-nature, to young or unfriended literary aspirants, actors, and artists; which the latter, in the unfledged state, often misconstrue, and rarely, if ever, appreciate aright. Let one only reflect upon the multitude of dull, stupid, or uncongenial books, trashy pictures, and indifferent theatrical performances with which a popular newspaper editor is bored or annoyed; and on which he is expected, as of right, to spend his time and patience, and his own and his reader's paper and print, not unfrequently, to reap the reward of being pronounced a superficial, shallow coxcomb, who never had painted a picture, nor written a book in his life; and who, moreover, must be art and part in the notorious conspiracy which exists among the newspapers and literary journals to crush rising merit in general, and extinguish the aggrieved individual's genius in particular; and all this after the unhappy journalist has probably strained his conscience, and certainly outraged his taste, in bestowing the unsatisfying modicum of panegyric. There can be no question that journalists are the most long-suffering, good-natured, and worst-requited of the scribbling genus. The public, also, begin to guess that it is not altogether by instinct, or pure editorial sagacity, that journals divine, and announce to mankind, the important fact that "Miss *Syreninia Warbli-nia Quaver* is upon a visit at Grandeville Park, where, by her wit, her talent, and her beauty, she forms the charm of a brilliant and noble circle;" nor yet that Lady Basbleu's forthcoming novel is to eclipse all her Ladyship's former, and every other lady's novels; or that Mrs Lynx embarked last week in the *Great Western*, and that the Old World should keep a sharp look-out for some very astonishing revelations from the New World in the course of the next year. And all this "monstering of nothings" is laid to the door of the poor editor, who is, as likely, often annoyed by those momentous announcements; though being, as we aver, the best-natured, and least-thanked man in the world, how can he refuse a small favour so delicately, or haply so importunately, requested.

"How very clever a man Mr Burke Barker must be," said Violet, perusing, a second time, those

> "Things often felt,
> But ne'er so well expressed."

"And how gratifying to be the subject of such delicate praise, and to feel conscious that it is all deserved: a pleasure I speedily anticipate for you, Mademoiselle," added the Professor.

If Violet's little heart fluttered proudly for a moment, it was not more.

"Ah, sir, you forget that I was behind the scenes last night," she replied, smiling; "I am the little country mouse, and do not envy the grandeur and luxury of the town mice. Were it possible for me to achieve the feast, I should still say

> "Give me again my hollow tree,
> A crust of bread and liberty."

"We are but a few days in town; you have not even been at the Italian Opera yet. We shall discuss all this a month hence," returned the Professor. The young ladies now found pleasant occupation. The orders given to Madame Ramsden, the milliner and mercerese, had been diligently executed. The dresses were already made; for Madame sympathized in the pinch of ladies, just arrived from the country, without a thing to wear; and the wan or tea-

coloured sprites who did her hests, had only to add one more vigil to the fifteen which had occurred in the last busy month.

"How beautiful! how exquisite! how nice!" was the frequent climax or anti-climax of Polly, as every fresh packet was undone by the female attendant, from Madame's house; nor was Violet unmoved; her black satin dress fitted to perfection, and was so tastefully trimmed, that it did not look in the least too heavy for her delicate figure; and her bonnet was "a love," Polly said; and she exchanged with her, and then re-exchanged. This pleasant pastime was brought to an end by Madame's agent presenting, with great civility, the bill, which "the lady had, when giving her order, requested to be sent with the goods."

On seeing the sum total, Violet became blind and faint. £44: 16: 10! Were those spectral figures? And did she already owe so much money to a milliner? She, who had never had above five pounds at a time in her own possession before! The milliner's assistant eyed her observantly; and the attention of Miss Cripps being awakened, she made a needful rally.

"Mademoiselle requires a few more things, which will be included in the same bill; you may go now, young woman."

"But stay," interrupted Violet; "the baggage is come from the hotel—I may pay a part at least; and, perhaps, Madame Ramsden would be so good, as the things are quite unsoiled"——

"Go, young woman," said Polly decidedly, ringing hard at the bell. The milliner's assistant curtsied submissively, and moved off.

"Gracious, Gabrielle! how can you be so silly as to expose yourself and the family in this way to a milliner's apprentice!"

"Is it not fearful, Miss Cripps, for me, a young girl, to owe so very much money, which I cannot pay. Oh, those odious little mannikins, for it could not be you, Polly. And I am sure I never ordered half so much; but I will write to the lady, and send what money I have—that twenty pound note I got from Mr Cripps yesterday; and, perhaps, she will take back the most of the things."

"Really ma'am, one does not know what to make of you at times," rejoined Polly. "That you ordered those articles, there can be no doubt, and that Ramsden may have charged you unconscionably, is as likely; but to make a fool of yourself before her assistant, and disgrace my father; it is shameful, Mademoiselle, and not at all, let me tell you, what Professor Crippe is entitled to expect from you."

Violet sat condemned, a conscious culprit, yet pitying herself.

"Don't think more of it," said Polly, more mildly. "I dare say I am twice deeper in Madame's books. But what does it signify—no doubt she will be paid some time."

This was slender consolation to Violet, who went from Polly's chamber to her own, loaded with her inauspicious finery, and resolved to abide by her purpose of attempting to return it. When she had fixed what she had best keep, or rather what the milliner might the most readily take back, she began to open her little desk, which, with her father's smallest military trunk, (now her wardrobe,) and her work-box, had just been brought from the hotel; not, however, before the long bill had been discharged, which left Professor Cryppes a very poor man in ready cash, though he prudently swallowed his chagrin at the rudeness of the hotel-keeper, and graciously intimated that, so well pleased had he been, he would certainly recommend the house to his friends.

Violet opened her desk—the lock moved easily—everything was in order—the few sheets of paper, the pens, the wax, and the various little treasures and memorials which she kept there; but the bank note, so carefully placed in the safest compartment,—too surely it was gone! and the loss of thousands at another time could not have been more appalling to any poor heroine. Another and another search was made,—and too surely she was robbed, bankrupt! Such small and everyday events, which are of no account whatever in the estimation of half mankind, and quite below the dignity of romance, were excruciating trials to Violet. Shrinking from drawing suspicion upon the innocent, or upon any one, and almost feeling her loss as her crime, it cost Violet an effort of resolution before she could go down stairs to make it known, which she at last did with trembling and hesitation, as if it were wrong to hint at having been robbed. Professor Cryppes was startled. The luggage had lain all night at the hotel, and had been fetched a considerable way that morning, by common porters; yet on none of those his suspicions rested; while on Monsieur Eustache, who was at this moment before him, nailing up something about a drapery in the back drawing-room, his eyes involuntarily fixed. Nature herself had legibly written *rogue* about the paroquet beak and up-turned corners of the mouth of the late officer of Napoleon's Guards. Yet this was supposing rather sharp practice in a Major-Domo, hardly yet installed. And what was one poor twenty pounds, filched from a young woman, to the risk of detection, and the loss of character and place? The character was, perhaps, of no great sterling or marketable value; but place must be something to one who had apparently not been without the pressing need of it; or who wished for better opportunities of committing robberies.

"Are you quite sure you have examined your desk properly?" asked the Professor.

"Oh, for that," returned Violet, attempting to smile.

"Well, my dear, you must not mind it; it is a loss and a provocation: but I will not let you annoy yourself. What is a poor twenty pounds?"

This was frank and kind; yet Violet felt, nevertheless, that a poor twenty pounds was just now very much to her. She would have told of her predicament with Madame, but this Miss Crippe evaded, by saying, with forced gaiety,

"And we are both drowned in debt to the milliner, papa. I am not sure but Mademoiselle will, to-night, dream of bailiffs and the Fleet."

The Professor laughed heartily, ere he said—"In the present circumstances of the family, with all the servants new, and the baggage having been transferred from one place to another, I deem it prudent to say nothing about this inexplicable loss; but it must be the last." And, with this consolation, Violet was left to be entertained by Polly with anecdotes, with which her youth had been instructed by her father, of eminent singers, managers, literary characters, and Members of Parliament, who cut the best figures of any people about town, yet never possessed one shilling of their own, and always spent the most recklessly when they had not a farthing to spend, and were drowned in debt.

"They must be very wretched and low-minded people those, who willingly subject themselves to such mortification and mean misery, and only to maintain a false shew that imposes on no one; although such deception were not in itself most contemptible."

"Virtuous indignation!" returned Polly, scoffingly; "I must say, Mademoiselle, that, for a *strict* young lady, you are remarkably free in the use of the phrase 'low-minded.' What do you mean by it?"

"The phrase is plain enough, I think," returned Violet; "though I was not aware that I used it so frequently; low-principled, low-thinking people might be as apt. You often yourself speak of low-lived people."

"To be sure I do—vulgar, mean people, that potter on in a paltry peddling way, when they might rise, if they had spirit, and better themselves. But here comes Mr Barker, to act explanatory dictionary for us."

Mr Barker had a gracious reception from both ladies; he planted himself, on this wet morning, at their work-table; and then there was music, and then lunch; and the Professor and Jack came in together, the former looking rather gloomy.

"You are quite right in your conjecture, Barker. My father may go whistle for that paltry place promised to Ned by Sir George Lees; I am convinced he has given it to another already; the fellow was scarce civil even in lying to us this morning."

"Just like the man—like them all," replied Barker; "got all he can of you, and will be most grateful for favours to come. Charles Herbert, who is a generous, open-hearted fellow, while a minor, involved himself thousands deep to help that *friend*—ruined himself, in fact, for Sir George and one or two more of those scamps; and would have been utterly ruined had not his step-mother been a woman of uncommon generosity. Yet, I do not fancy that he likes his dependence altogether: yesterday, he was sounding me, in a roundabout way, about the probability of a man at his age beginning the study of law or medicine. The latter I declared the readiest profession, as a man's blunders cannot so easily be detected there."

"Apropos, medicine was the favourite pursuit of my son Edmund, whom Sir George Lees has used so infamously."

Jack squinted tremendously at his papa before he rejoined—"Ah, Ned is half a doctor already: he pounded six months with Bolus. But I have another idea: that theatre the proprietors of the *Cerberus* were erecting—it wont do; but it is in a populous gin-drinking and psalm-singing neighbourhood, and I understand they speculate upon converting it into a tabernacle. Now, if Ned have a vocation—as he is a tolerable spouter—his bread is baked."

"Make a Methodist parson of my brother!" cried Polly, tossing her head disdainfully.

"Pays well, Poll, let me tell you; and those sanctimonious fellows are almost sure to marry rich old girls; one, two, three, in succession. I wish I had a vocation; but it wont suit."

Violet looked up with a feeling of horror; but the Professor put an end to what seemed to her the sacrilegious project.

"No son of mine shall descend to any such low, paltry profession," said he, solemnly, "to the eternal disgrace of his family. If ever I have a son in orders, it shall be in the Church, sir, the Church of England—the only church for a gentleman—and not among low-lived puritanical sectarians."

"Nay, father, you might have thanked me for the hint, any way. Suppose, then, as Ned did pound drugs for a few months, we make him a doctor? What say you, Barker?"

"The profession of medicine requires the study of years, which will scarce serve me at present for my son."

"Years! nonsense, papa. Barker will tell you better things. There are three lines: first, obstetrics, then dental surgery—a coining of money"——

"A dentist!" interrupted Polly, with contemptuous disgust, "Surely, Quintin, you forget yourself altogether."

"Sheer provincial ignorance, Poll, my darling. In London, a successful dentist is a great man. But the town is overrun with them—that's the fact; so I vote for obstetrics—unless Ned could be a nerves doctor—go to some foreign watering place, and coddle and curry favour with some woman of quality, who will trumpet his praises, and make his fortune. He is a smooth-spoken, well-looking, imposing young fellow, my aforesaid brother Ned, Mr Barker, who will learn to curry favour among the women. He were not papa's own son else." [Here the Professor smiled conceitedly, and shook his paternal head at his incorrigible elder born.] "One season may float him; and I would rather prefer obstetrics;—the nerve line is uncertain—fine ladies are demd fickle and capricious, even to their doctor."

The plan was worth considering. The Professor was convinced that one literary gentleman was quite enough in the family; and a

learned profession looked well. "Dr Edmund Cryppes, the celebrated accoucheur:" It sounded well.

"With the aid of the *Cerberus*, and our connexion, we might, at worst, carry a city lectureship for Mr Edmund," said Barker; "and that is an opening."

"You are too good, sir," returned the Professor, bowing: "and if Edmund, with his present medical knowledge, matured by a winter at Edinburgh."

"Paris, father, and a little judicious puffing," cried Jack; "Barker will tell you how. Ned must write in the foreign medical journals—that can be managed for him—and get a tail of capital letters to his name, and open correspondence with the learned, like himself, abroad. His recommendations ought to do a great deal for Dr Von Rutsch, or whatever it might be, at Stockholm or Vienna, and, no doubt, they will return their learned correspondent like kindness. It is all my eye, that sort of flip for flap. But I would try the women first; one fashionable petticoat is worth fifty thesis-makers to a young town physician."

"How you rattle on, Jack; why, Mademoiselle, as usual, is believing you in earnest, I suppose," said the Professor, as Violet, with grave abstraction, sat apart, more deeply engaged with the idea of her overwhelming debts than anything else, though a needle and a bit of womanly pretence for idleness were in her hands.

Once it occurred to her, and the idea brought relief, that she might take Mrs Marion Linton into her counsels, and employ her to negotiate with the milliner; but though she believed the Scotchwoman to be both honest, shrewd, and kindly, her manners were gruff, or not such as invited the confidence of a young and sensitive girl. She now longed for the arrival of her friend Susan, to whom she could have partially opened her mind; but days and weeks passed on, and Professor Cripps appeared to have forgotten that he had either a wife or children in a provincial town. His oblivion might have been forgiven, as, between business, pleasure, and finance, the Professor was occupied to distraction.

The first paragraph, which really told usefully on the fortunes of Mr Cripps, ran nearly as follows:—

"We are authorized to state that the august mother of an illustrious Princess, in whom the dearest hopes of England repose, has engaged the celebrated composer, Professor Cryppes, (the instructor of Mademoiselle Gabrielle,) to give her Royal Highness finishing lessons in singing, for which purpose he goes three times a-week to Claremont. The Professor's admirable style is said to combine the energy of the German school with the purity and beauty of the Italian."

There was, as things go in the world, no great harm, perhaps, in this announcement; and if a few people knew it to be totally false, it was scarce worth any one's while to contradict it. In another week, the Professor's phaeton-cab and tall horse, (another purchase besides the fawn-coloured ponies,) might have been seen at several fashionable doors at the West End; and, before a month elapsed, ladies of title, fond and anxious mothers, were besieging his door, entreating that the names of their beautiful daughters might at least be placed on the Professor's list; and that, if not in the present, then in the following season, they might have the immense benefit of his instructions, or those of his pupil. But neither money nor love could prevail with the Professor to allow his accomplished pupil to give a few lessons to the Ladies D——, and the Honourable Misses E——, and the rich Portland Place heiress, Miss F——, whose fortune was half a million at least. The Professor ever smiled, shook his head mysteriously, and was proof to influence, cajoling, and entreaty. Mademoiselle, the wonderful Mademoiselle, never sung save in his own house, and rarely to strangers even there. It was such a favour to be invited at all to his musical parties; and, after waiting a whole night, Mademoiselle—who was as capricious as the most spoiled and the highest of her tribe—might have headach, or cold, or hoarseness, or, as likely, airs.

It was, however, as the Professor began to have a guess, a thing quite possible to overdo this. In London, no mere lion or lioness can possibly draw out a very long existence; their nights are numbered.

The spring was advancing, and sovereigns were still flowing in, in a golden tide; but they were at least as rapidly running out again; and Mademoiselle's original repugnance to make the desired effort was become stronger, if that were possible. Her health was suffering from anxiety, her bloom vanishing, and her mysterious reputation could not much longer be supported either by paragraphs in the *Cerberus* and other prints, or by the whispers of those thrice-fortunate *attachés* and young men of fashion who, frequenting the Professor's parties and *petits soupers*, spread abroad her fame.

"Cryppes' Musical Box," "Cryppes' Nest of Nightingales" in Regent's Park, became a kind of by-word among the minors in the Clubs; and the well-managed affectation of an exclusion which really excluded nobody, enhanced the value of the *entrée*. Sir George Lees had so far conquered the fear of the Professor attempting to borrow money from him, that he went almost every night. The great *Signiors* of the Opera-House—not yet opened for the season—had never absented themselves when they had no better engagements; and now the *Signoras* condescended. It was an exceedingly pleasant house. Many of the best men of the season were to be met there, and not too many ladies; and, if everything was not quite *au fait*, ease, pleasure, and gaiety atoned for mere mechanical defect. As for the wonderful Mademoiselle, once seen, she was not so very formidable. It was the opinion of the professional people that she never would appear on the stage at all, and, most certainly, not succeed if she did. She wanted "nerve."

One of the most regular visiters, at this time, was the Professor's friend and security, Mr Charles Herbert, who had a general invitation, both for the two Public nights of each week and the Family night. Ever chiding his own irresolution, Charles felt, when the hour came, unable to stay away. Violet did not always appear; and sometimes, when she did, she looked perfectly wretched, as if she had been weeping, or as if anger or violence had been employed to force her upon an uncongenial scene.

The kindling glances, the flush of innocent pleasure with which Herbert was welcomed by her, when appearing unexpectedly, now spoke even less plainly than the shy timidity with which, at other times, she avoided his approach;—spoke plainly to all save him, whom love had taught fear and reverence.

After her arrival in London, Herbert had often joined the little quiet parties which the Professor made to shew his pupil and his daughter the most celebrated places in the neighbourhood; and on the day at Richmond, and the other at Windsor, and a third at Hampton Court, when Mr Burke Barker was giving his attentions to Miss Cripps—with whom he was more in love than the editor of the *Cerberus* supposed it possible he ever could be again with any woman—Violet fell, as if by a natural arrangement, to the care of Herbert. These days had been the happiest of his whole life; and their memory was fondly dwelt upon; for now the presence of her who had made them blest, was often more painful than her absence, from the equivocal circle by which she was surrounded. There was, however, more to excite the disgust of Herbert than to alarm his jealousy. Count Zanderschloss was evidently more odious to Violet than was Jack Cripps. Russians, Bavarians, and Neapolitans, *attachés* of all nations, seemed alike indifferent to her, where they were not absolutely disagreeable; though none of these foreigners were so disagreeable as Sir George Lees and Colonel Rivers, whom she would have avoided by taking refuge in a quadrille with Jack himself. Mr Burke Barker was the only individual with whom she cared to converse; and he, whatever else he might be, was well educated and literary, and the evident admirer of Miss Cripps.

The coincidence in opinion and sentiment between Charles Herbert and herself, at this time, often struck Violet as almost miraculous. Their minds—their young, fresh, and loving hearts—were as instruments attuned; and, with bewitching simplicity, Violet would sometimes be surprised into the involuntary expression of her astonishment at Herbert saying the very thing she had been thinking; and that their walks, readings, or conversations, suggested the same images, sentiments, and ideas. In these harmonious sentiments Herbert had often at first associated his mother, saying—"You are after my mother's own heart, Violet;" or, "This is exactly the opinion of my mother;" and, in such moments, the bosom of the orphan girl dilated with pride and happiness; but, latterly, Herbert avoided mentioning his mother, who had declined the rather obtrusive advances of her neighbour, Miss Cripps. Once or twice Violet had met Mrs Herbert walking near her own residence. The lady at first gazed fixedly at her; and once blushing deeply, Violet curtsied by an involuntary motion, and the lady had not returned even the slightest token of recognition. Violet, indeed, felt that she had no right to expect this civility though the incident covered her with deeper confusion and imparted a sense of affront; and the dim hope that she might be made known to one whom, at humble distance, she admired and loved, vanished, and left in its place mortification and shame, and many painful thoughts. The son sought her society, but the mother whom he adored avoided her.

Professor Cripps, as we have noticed, in the excitement, bustle, and anxiety of his new life, seemed entirely to forget that he had a wife in the country; and his daughter, oscillating between vanity in the attentions of Count Rodolpho Zanderschloss, and a few more of her father's gay and fashionable visiters, and pride in the conquest of the "talented journalist," shared in this temporary oblivion of distant domestic ties, and at last came to say—"I dare say, on the whole, papa, it is more prudent for mamma and the rest to remain where they are for a while, save Edmund; they could not, in the meanwhile, do *us* any good here, and London is so horridly expensive to people who attempt any kind of style, as we *must* do." But not so thought Violet, who longed for the presence of even the uncongenial, hard, and acrid matron, to give some appearance of respectability to the establishment, and to introduce the order and economy which, she feared, were sadly wanted in the regulation of the household; and not so thought the indignant and neglected wife and mother herself, who, one fine day, when the family were assembled at lunch, more to the surprise than the joy of her husband and daughter, arrived in a hackney-coach, loaded and stuffed, outside and in, with all manner of boxes and bundles, much like a stroller's van; to the eternal disgrace of the Professor's elegant doorway, and the endless amusement of the ladies'-maids and footmen in the neighbourhood, those of Mrs Herbert included. From Jack alone his mother's reception was sincerely cordial.

"This is, indeed, an unexpected pleasure," said the Professor, embracing his travel-stained lady, whose natural temper a cold and fatiguing night journey had not improved.

"Soh, Cripps!—You have got everything vastly fine about you here. A merry world, if it last, sir," observed Mrs Cripps, untying the strings of her bonnet, to give herself air or vent.

"O mother, such nonsense," said Polly, advancing to assist her mother. "You don't observe Mademoiselle. . . . My father is in the fair way of making a handsome fortune. Your ideas must expand, mamma—indeed they must. We are in a new world here."

Mrs Cripps nodded to Violet, and gazed on

Jack, yet without those symptoms of gratified maternal pride which might have been expected.

"What refreshment will you take, mother? We have just had lunch, and don't dine till eight, when papa's business engagements are over."

"Dine at eight!—very pretty!—two dinners in one day. I fancy it was about high time I was looking after you. Fine management, truly! —and company almost every night. . . . But I'll take anything—a bit of cold meat and a glass of porter. . . . And so that palavering fellow, Sir George, has done nothing for you, Cripps, —nothing but eat your ham and chicken, and drink your wine, and fancy you highly honoured all the while. It won't do, sir. It won't do, I can tell you. You are on the wrong scent, —and Edmund kept back; that is one of my particular errands to London."

"Let us give this hour to pleasure, my life," said the Professor, with affected vivacity. "We discard business for this day. I have taken a line, my dear, and all is in train for Edmund; we have a plan—so hang Sir George and his paltry places. Welcome to Regent's Park, Mrs Cripps."

The Professor required the renovating glass of Madeira, which he filled up as Mike Twig entered to announce that the hackney coachman waited for his fare—seven shillings and sixpence; and hoped, as the parcels were so numerous, the lady would remember him.

"Monsieur Eustache will settle it," said the Professor, frowning; "those trifles are his department."

"Seven and sixpence!" exclaimed Mrs Cripps. "The rascal has not brought me a mile and a half—pretty extortion, indeed! Remember him! —yes, I'll remember him. He ought to be horsewhipped."

"Mounsheer ha'n't got no money," put in Mike, drily, in the first pause, "Mounsheer had none to give the milkman, yesterday; and the coal aint sent in becuz"——

"Hold your impertinent tongue, fellow," interrupted the angry Professor. "Miss Cripps, have you any small change?—these coachman never have a rap of change about them, and a sovereign is scarce safe in their fingers. Monsieur, who is my cash-keeper for small matters, is run out also it seems. In the Regent's Park one ought to keep a stock of silver."

Miss Cripps rather feared she had not as much, expressing herself with embarrassment; while Jack for himself gaily cried—

"Not a tester, papa mine, to keep the devil from dancing a hornpipe in my pocket. Indeed I have given up carrying a purse—'tis a low and an ungentlemanly practice, and only exposes one to being spunged. O Mademoiselle! I see you are of the old *regime*," he continued, as Violet, blushing and hesitating, offered her last half sovereign to Polly, trying to affect an air of indifference, and like other desperate debtors, thinking "what difference does it make," though fully aware, from the many little circumstances, forced upon her notice during the last month, that her own bit of gold was probably the only one to-day under that splendid roof, or around a board loaded with expensive delicacies for the plain noonday refreshment. The Professor now hurriedly rose. His cab was waiting—and waiting also were the Ladies V——, and the Ladies W——, and the Hon. Misses Z—— for their weekly lesson.

"Have something nice for dinner, Polly, to welcome Mrs Cripps to town. Adieu, ladies. Perhaps some friend may drop in to dinner with me."

Mrs Cripps, on Polly's prompting, rose to see her lord drive off; a little natural vanity or conjugal exultation neutralizing her previous acerbity.

The family had been going a-head at a furious rate, while the prerogative of its liege lady lay in abeyance; but lunch fairly over, she lost no time in entering upon her onerous duties, in which she shewed herself a woman of action, and one determined to assert her rights, from the cellar to the attic, over the household, the amazed Monsieur Eustache included.

"*Quelle bête! Peste!—sacre!*" ejaculated Monsieur, as he attended her from place to place, giving but a lame account of his stewardship.

The preternatural exertions of Mrs Cripps on this day did not in the least unfit her for making up long arrears with the delinquent Professor, as soon as they were left *tete-a-tete*, by Polly having followed Violet, to pour into some sympathetic bosom the interesting confidence that Mr Burke Barker had proposed! The congratulations of Violet were warm and sincere; for Polly seemed so happy, and, for the time, so amiable, that it was impossible to withhold her sympathy; yet she wondered that a man so clever and accomplished should have admired Polly Cripps, handsome as she certainly was, and agreeable as she could seem. But, to ladies of all ages, it will, we fear, to the end of time, remain a wonder and a puzzle, how certain men can fancy certain women. And Polly was assuredly not sordid in her preference; for her W—— admirer, the manfacturer's son, was much richer than Barker; and on this Violet grounded a sincere compliment.

"Oh, Mr Benjee may or may not be rich: all will depend on his father and mother, and old Methodist aunts; and I know they hate me, and all of us, as much as I despise them. Barker has at least a thousand a-year, and very great prospects, if *our* party get it; or whether they do or not, they cannot want him. He is going down to an election next week—if I let him—where he will be everything."

"A thousand a-year is a handsome income."

"It will do for a beginning. If a clever man like Barker, in London, really love a woman, he can, somehow, always contrive to maintain her as becomes their station. My father has always said that. No doubt I might do better; and, even as an actress, gain a larger income; but, no matter—I have accepted dear Barker. My mother may not be satisfied; but all the rest of the

family think that she ought; and I am of age, and may please myself. I wish Charles Herbert had my spirit, Gabrielle; but he has not, and most luckily for you; for any connexion of the kind would be utter ruin to your professional prospects—you that may be rich and famous, and marry much higher than anything that proud Mrs Herbert's son can offer you. What an insolent, supercilious woman that is!"

"How can you talk so, Miss Cripps. Why should Mr Herbert's name be associated with mine? Though for me, certainly, Mrs Herbert may marry her son to any one she pleases; yet that gentle being surely looks anything rather than insolent or supercilious."

"Well, my dear; but don't cry. I am glad to see you shew so much proper spirit. Nor is it altogether right to have Charles dangling so much about us, now that I am known to be engaged. I must speak to papa about that."

"Anything you like," said Violet, hardly able to refrain from tears. "Only I would much rather nothing whatever were said on the subject. Mr Herbert has been very civil to us; but for particular attentions—oh, no, no—for heaven's sake, do not expose me to the ridicule of having imagined"——She could get no farther.

"Well, Gabrielle, never mind him," replied Polly, too much wrapt up in her own good fortune to heed the distress of her companion. "Be a singer in high reputation, and you will bring Herbert to your feet. Good bye, dear. How strange it is to be a bride, Gabrielle, or about to be one. I feel like a winged creature."

While this was passing, and while Violet sought her little French bed, with feelings anything but joyous and spousal, Mr and Mrs Cripps were holding, below, not the most amicable of family councils. The lady was full of complaints and reproaches; and the burden of every oration was—"Where is all this to end?" and Mrs Cripps threw herself about on the damask sofa, making its joints creak in a way that would have horrified its refined owner.

"They wish to get you out of this trumpery house already—and the sooner the better. Don't fancy that I am not aware of your goings on, Mr Cripps. . . . . Polly, at least, I fancied, would have played her cards better, when I gained the point, with no small trouble, of Mr Benjamin taking her letters; and I'm certain, the smallest management would have made him renew his addresses, when out of the reach of these old, greedy wretches. But I suppose your fine doings here frightened him, as they must any sensible man. You are the talk of all W——."

"D——n W——," returned the Professor, who could not plead guiltless to Shuffleton's attorney having impertinently intimated that the house would be required, at farthest, immediately after Easter, and who was conscious that many "trifles," as he called long bills, were already pressing upon him; but was it like a woman of sense—was it like a wife, to reproach him who had done and was doing such great things for his family, and who had made such way in society. "Come, *now*, my dear, be reasonable, good-humoured, like yourself—you know that all W—— and Mrs Somers Stocks, on the back of it, is bursting with envy to hear of the way in which we have got forward."

Mrs Cripps hoped this was true, and she was softened, yet she returned to the charge.

"But, Cripps, I see nothing solid—nothing *solid*, sir—such as a connexion with a man of a wealthy, if vulgar family, would have been; and as for that Mr Burke Barker"——

"You have taken a prepossession against my friend, Barker, ma'am; your son Jack's best friend. There is a man worth cultivating. There is no limit to his rise. He may grow into a second Sheridan!"

"Fiddle, faddle, Cripps—Benjamin will have fifteen thousand pounds, every penny of it."

"And never get a step farther, take my word. Barker will, in all likehood, get into Parliament—his talents"——

"And why not my son Jack, as well. Is he cleverer than our Jack? and I don't above half like Jack's appearance either, poor fellow. Mr Benjamin would have settled a jointure of three hundred a-year on Polly, I dare say, if she had managed well."

"Miss Cripps gives me a son-in-law worth, to my family, ten hundred a-year, madam."

"Only he has not a sixpence, gambles, and is very extravagant, and drowned in debt."

"Poh, poh, Mrs Cripps; you are not to judge, by vulgar rules, of a man like Barker. Polly likes him too—and the girl has a right to please herself"——

"Oh, surely, sir; please herself. Your son Edmund too, who, like an idiot as he is, has been sighing and dying for your wonderful pupil, for these five months, should also please himself, and propose for her, though Juliana Stocks, a girl of fortune, has been almost throwing herself at him."

"Foolish puppy! my pupil!" replied the Professor, contemptuously; the man of taste and genius, for the moment, triumphing over the father.

"I fancy my son is not good enough for her, Mr Cripps," retorted the angry lady, who had not forgotten the pride of a mother. "Mademoiselle attired in the first fashion, and driving about in her carriage, must marry a man of family and fortune, sir; while your daughter throws herself away on a fellow who has not a penny save what he scribbles for. Upon my veracity, Mr Cripps, you have managed finely with your family. That wretch, Susan, too, peaking and pining for a still lower fellow of that sort. I shall be glad to make her over to Mistress Stocks, as a governess, to keep her away from London, for I make no doubt, but that she will run off with the vagabond if she once find him."

"What do you mean about my pupil, madam, marrying a man of fortune, or any man whatever?"

"I mean Mr Charles Herbert, sir. A man of

large estate—no less. I mean that, after all the trouble and expense at which you have been with that girl's education, Mr Cripps, you will never make a penny by her for your family."

She was, beyond doubt, a coarse-minded person, Mrs Cripps: the Professor often felt that; which, however, only meant, after all, that she went directly to points, which he approached gingerly, and by circumbendibus; partly, perhaps, to conciliate the feelings of others, and not a little to spare his own.

"My pupil is my pupil, ma'am; firmly articled; under heavy penalties. . . . . I know my ground, Mrs Cripps—you have done well about that foolish Susan; but my daughter, Maria, she is the pride of my family: in her prudence and tact I have the utmost confidence. If she has bestowed her affections on my friend Barker—I despise sordid considerations—I give my daughter with confidence and pleasure to my friend!"

Mrs Cripps growled inarticulately.

"We have made up a little party to dine at Richmond to-morrow; I fear you will be too fatigued to join us; and my pupil has long requested liberty to spend a Sunday afternoon with an old Scotch nurse, who lives somewhere off the Strand. Mike Twig, or, if she prefers, one of the housemaids, may attend her, and fetch her home, or she may take a coach, at least, back. She is not to hear of, nor be in any way annoyed with this nonsense you tell of Edmund's passion; nor by any member of my family, ma'am." The Professor's tone became imperative. "You understand me, Mrs Cripps. In this family, my pupil is a person of the utmost consequence."

Mrs Cripps was a little subdued, and also too indignant to reply. Father, daughter, and pupil, together, were bearing too hard upon her; even her darling Jack was grieving and disappointing her. No doubt his air and demeanour had improved astonishingly; but he had not pushed his way one inch on what she called "solid ground." So reasoned Mrs Cripps in the strength of provincial ideas and impressions, but they gradually gave way. She was now living in a fine house, however uncertain might be the tenure by which it was held; she was driven about by her son in her husband's handsome phaeton; her husband's income, reckoned by his own arithmetic and the W—— standard, seemed immense; handsome dresses had been ordered for her, but not at Madame Ramsden's; her children were to be brought to town immediately, and her eldest daughter was a bride! Mrs Cripps had been more or less than wife, mother, and woman, could her ill-humour or her reasonable fears have stood out against so many mollifying influences; and, besides, Mrs Cripps had full domestic employment.

In the meanwhile, not the least satisfactory circumstance to her was, that the want of small change, so pressingly experienced on Saturday morning, had vanished before Tuesday noon, when Mr Cripps put twenty sovereigns into his lady's hand, telling her that their tradespeople supplied everything, and all the bills would be settled after Easter, or, at any rate, at Midsummer; this sum was for the postman and pocket-money—mere current nothings. Before an hour had elapsed, Jack had coaxed his affectionate mother out of a fourth of her stock of ready money; but, on that same day, he did the family some service.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Barker wont go it, governor; he is so engaged in courting Poll, and—between ourselves—raising the needful for his matrimony, that no good is to be got of him. I am aware of the emergency, and have made a glorious pen-and-ink splash myself. The rascally tradesmen cannot have the bowels of Christians who will annoy you after this announcement, till your great venture is tried; and dont deserve a half farthing in the pound if they do. Hearken!" and Jack read:—

"Laud we the Gods! The genuine English Opera is about to be revived, with more than the brilliancy of its pristine era. We understand that the celebrated Professor Cryppes, the Italianized-English composer——" ["No, hang it, I must score out Italianized; that dont chime," interjected Jack.]—"*English* composer, is engaged upon a serious opera, in which his pupil, Mademoiselle Gabrielle, of whom fame speaks wonders, is to sustain the part of the heroine. The subject of the opera is the beauteous Queen of Scots, and the enamoured and ambitious minstrel and cavalier, Chasteller, who expiated his daring gallantry upon the scaffold, not without suspicion of having created a very tender interest in the bosom of a princess ever devoted to music and poetry. It is whispered that the pens of Mr E. L. B. and T. M. are engaged upon the recitative and lyrical parts of this splendid composition, which excites no small sensation in the fashionable as well as in the musical world. One superb scene was rehearsed last night at the Professor's residence, in the Regent's Park, before a distinguished party of foreign amateurs and the *elite* of the London musical world. At its close, the Princess di L—— clasped Mademoiselle in her arms, kissed her repeatedly, and; plucking the jewelled tiara from her own regal brows, placed it with her own hands among the fair tresses of the lovely syren who so charmingly personated the beautiful Queen. Mademoiselle is still so young, that, careful as her education has been, her teacher is of opinion, that the full powers of her astonishing organ are not yet completely developed, any more than her artistic skill. Her face is extremely lovely, and her figure of the most sylph-like mould. Notwithstanding her foreign name, which is believed, for family reasons, to be assumed, her style is purely English. The new syren is understood to be sprung of a noble, but decayed French family, a younger branch of the house of Chatelrault, and ruined by the Revolution. Mademoiselle, though a strict Protestant, was educated in a convent, where her magnificent voice, remarkable, among the choir of nuns and pupils, for its purity, flexibility, and

compass; was accidentally discovered by the manager of the Italian Opera of Paris, who chanced to be at Dieppe with the Court. Save for her religious scruples, the young Catalani would have been adopted by the Duchess d'Angouleme, who settled a pension upon her. The late overthrow of the Bourbon dynasty again reduced this gifted creature and her family to the utmost distress; and, overcoming her strong repugnance to public life, she has nobly sacrificed her own feelings to the interests of the beloved family, of whom she now forms the sole dependence. The youthful syren"——

"Stay there, Jack," said the Professor, gravely. "Is not this a *leetle* too strong."

"What, sir, my *chef d'œuvre*? Too strong? not a bit of it: your own hints, merely paraphrased by Barker. Come, order Eustache to fetch another bottle of claret, and we shall discuss the heads *seriatim*. My good papa, you *are* behind the age. Now, I flatter myself, I begin thoroughly to understand this sort of work: either how to tickle John Bull, or touch him gently on the *raw*. If you come it too hard, the monster gets fractious, and bolts, and perhaps kicks you down in his uproarious fits. Barker may be cleverer at using the stronger alkalis—he has the trick of it, and the nature too; but let me alone for applying the "soft sawder." But I'll call down Barker, who is billing with Polly up stairs, to convince you. . . . Fancy so acrid a chap as that in love—yet he is, as they call it.—Let alone, any tart of girl—if she but knows how to entangle a man's vanity—what a precious fool she may make of him. Polly's health, governor—you have a daughter, sir."

The Professor mused, and Jack went off, and re-appeared arm in arm with his friend, when the study was resumed.

"Is not this the very thing, Barker?" inquired Jack, when, with due emphasis, he had again read over his paragraph. "Is it not a *bleu-devy* now? Let me alone, Professor, for knowing a thing or two. Depend on it, this is just the neat thing for you. Had your pupil been a dashing, dominant, foreign beauty, with a Parisian, or even a St Petersburgh fame, blazing before her path, the case would have been totally opposite. Ask Barker else. Then the leading events would have been, a flight to Hamburgh in the disguise of a courier, to escape the amorous persecution of some Grand Duke or Prince of the blood,—or haply the jealousy of the Empress. Every man should best understand his own trade. Leave puffing to me."

"I must say," replied Barker, "that this, as a preliminary announcement, is not far amiss, Jack. Honest John Bull—bless him for a dear, credulous, good-natured soul—rather enjoys being pleasantly duped. It does him good, if he does not find it out; and no great harm if he does; it makes his bile percolate. Next to finding the most conceited of monsters in his extreme nationality—his English Clayism—the contradictory brute can either fancy nothing in art, of home production, at all tolerable, or else that it is the pink of all perfection. Then he loves, nay, worships aristocracy, all the while affecting sturdy independence; and, as for beauty, no beauty can equal English beauty; in which the animal is for once right—by accident. But John is a soft-hearted monster at bottom, and, with all his airs of bravado, values the domestic affections, perhaps, above everything else; though he makes the most ridiculous mistakes about what best promotes and cements them. No, no, Sir," continued Barker, rapping the nails of his open hand smartly upon Jack's masterpiece; "this is the very thing. Great talent accidentally found out; but that should have been by yourself: sound Protestantism—extreme personal beauty—noble birth—decayed family—most painful sacrifice to filial and sisterly affection. Stay, suppose we add"—and Barker seized the pen and wrote at lightning speed—"it happens by a remarkable coincidence, [every body likes coincidences, which are often anything but remarkable,] that, in personating the lovely Mary Stuart, the fair debutante claims descent from the Scottish house of Darnley through the noble house of Chatelrault."

"I—I am unlearned in the Scottish peerage," hesitated the Professor.

"Why, for that matter, so am I; but small genealogical knowledge will serve the turn here. One or two plodders may detect inaccuracy"—["Hang them; they find blunders in every thing," interjected Jack]—but the busy millions and the idle thousands, alike will know nothing of it; and what people don't know, does them no ill. Yes, this will take, sir, and tell in two worlds. We will conquer America, sitting here in London! But remember, Cripps, not in the *Cerberus* first; that would hurt the cause, our connexion being known; we can follow it hard up there." With this the sitting broke up.

Mr Burke Barker, who was to set off by the night-mail, on that electioneering business in a southern county, which promised so rich a harvest, and had come so pat, had still to kiss away the gems flowing in anticipation of a ten days' separation from the bright eyes of his tender bride. Yes! Polly was now a bride, and the marriage was to take place immediately after the election; which, whether it succeeded for the candidate or not, must succeed for Mr Burke Barker. It seemed as if Heaven had been graciously pleased to call an old Earl to itself, at this particular time, and his son to the House of Peers, to speed the hymeneal bliss of Polly Cripps; for it was on the strength of the coming contest that Mr Barker had proposed, not wholly uninfluenced by the delicate hints of the distressed damsel, that, now her mamma was arrived, she might be forced into the arms of that detestable rich manufacturer, hateful to her long before she had come to London, or felt any attachment—but now!——

With any plodding, matter-of-fact man, beyond the age of what the Scotch call "calf-love," and not blindly in love, or burning in the hot

stage, Miss Cripps would never have succeeded so easily, strange as this may appear, as with the acute, penetrating, and experienced Barker. Soured and perverted as his original mind was become on many points, he still possessed excitable imagination, which an artful woman might play with; and sensibility to what seemed warm and disinterested personal attachment. In his position, isolated and solitary in the midst of crowds; with hundreds of selfish or vain employers and patrons, and as many nominal friends, yet with scarce one for whom he could feel greater esteem, or on whom he could place more reliance, than Jack Cripps, and few whom he could like so well as Jack, it was soothing, as well as flattering, to be loved and preferred by a handsome and accomplished woman, of fair reputation, who might have made what the sex almost universally term a better match. On first acquaintance, though the free, decided manner—a good counterfeit of the thoroughbred aristocratic—of Cripps' very handsome daughter, together with her marked attention to himself, had made that impression which time and care may deepen, he had also been much struck with her less obtrusive but not less attractive friend. On the night of Covent Garden, in particular, when Miss Cripps had first excited and then piqued his vanity, by her flirtation with the redoubted Count Rodolpho, he had been peculiarly charmed with what he had seen of Violet; but, at succeeding interviews, though to him she continued particularly civil and pleasant, his own quick observation, and the hints of Jack and Polly Cripps, "that Charles Herbert and Mademoiselle were ages gone in love with each other," restored Barker to the allegiance, which every day confirmed. Miss Cripps became proud of her conquest, and more cautious in her flirtations: and Jack's declaration, that "Diogenes Barker, the democrat, was in love, and his sister Polly, the deuce of a clever wench," recorded an unquestionable fact. But "Polly was in love too." Jack could not quite comprehend that—but so it was.

"My daughter will prove a doating wife," said the Professor, sipping his claret on the day of the final arrangement.

"Where do you propose to get shifts and nightcaps for her?" remarked Mrs Cripps, sharply.

"Some things—nay, many things—I must have, for common decency," urged Polly.

"As you are only to be in furnished lodgings—to have no house—the less the better," rejoined her contradictory mother. The Professor always counted so largely on those vast vague sums, which he was to receive at Easter, that it is probable he had come to believe that, at that date, he really could pay all his debts, and afford his daughter a handsome *trousseau*, and suitable wedding presents. All his life he had entertained vague expectations of somehow getting money. This was one of his hallucinations.

"I'll drive you to Madame Ramsden's to-morrow, to hear her ideas for you, my dear." Polly was but too familiar, of late, with Madame's ideas. They had been strongly represented to her every week for a month back.

"I don't think I shall employ that person more. Her style is but second-rate after all, and she charged Mademoiselle monstrously for a few trifles. She runs up such a bill!"—— And this introduced the story of Violet's missing bank-note, and Mrs Cripps' notions of the extravagance of Mademoiselle, and the folly of the Professor.

"She'll be quite as glad, by and by, to make a good *debut*, as you can be to have her father," remarked Polly, "if you manage well. Madame duns and quite frightens her out of her wits, poor dear. I believe Madame is a greater scarecrow to Gabrielle at present than Mrs Herbert herself."

The information was generally correct, and the hint was not lost. Violet was, indeed, made utterly wretched, by what rather annoyed the intrepid bride herself; and now her misery was complicated, by the idea that this appalling debt had been contracted under the most suspicious appearances; when, like an absolute swindler, she had gone to the milliner's in Mrs Herbert's carriage. If she had not directly, herself, used that lady's name, she had suffered it to be understood that Mrs Herbert was her acquaintance, and, perhaps, her hostess.

The very civil and mild young woman, who had called that morning to inquire if it would then be convenient for Mademoiselle Gabrielle to settle the account, had said—"Madame directed me to say, that she imagined that you and the other young lady were particular friends of Mrs Herbert, ma'am." Violet instantly disclaimed the acquaintance, and as earnestly as if it had implied disgrace; but how to answer the other query? To tell that she had been robbed was easy, but could she hope to be believed; and then the sum total of the robbery was not the half of what she owed. Her misery was strongly depicted on her pale features; and the merciful dun, of her own motion, gently hinted—"Perhaps it may not be convenient to-day, ma'am? Shall I tell Madame you desired me to call in a week hence?"

"Yes," faltered Violet. "Not in a week, but in ten days, for then I may have heard from my distant friends." She felt there was an implied falsehood, and added—"Heard what they advise."

The girl went away; and Polly Cripps—at this time being, like all brides, as restless as a turtle that has lost its mate—came in, and found her in tears.

"That odious woman dunning you again!" said the bride. "Why should you heed her. Don't patronise her more; I shall not, I assure her. But I need money at present quite as much as you, Gabrielle; and if we could guarantee each other, I think how we could raise some."

"How, Maria?—for I am sure I cannot, unless Mr Cripps would be good enough to advance for me; and how can I expect that."

Indeed you need not; my father has not

half enough for his own emergencies. But Charles Herbert"——

"Good heavens, Maria!" cried Violet, starting; "you cannot think of anything so horrid?"

"I do, though; and where is the mighty harm? I would guarantee you."

"You, Polly?—have you any money more than myself?" said Violet, with rueful simplicity, where another might have laughed.

"I shall be a married woman in a few weeks, as Herbert knows; and I fancy a married woman's debts may be recovered," returned Polly, smartly, and like a woman of business, and her mother's own daughter, or her mother's self writ large.

Violet made no reply. The plan of Polly had brought more vividly to her mind the most distracting idea by which it had for some days been haunted, that of Charles Herbert hearing of her disgraceful embarrassments, and in the very worst form.

"So you will not go into my scheme?—for your own relief, Gabrielle, remember."

Violet shook her head mournfully. "Anything but that."

"Then I have no more to say to you. I meant you well; and this is your gratitude, ma'am."

Miss Cripps reflected that, whatever became of Violet's debts and her own, she, as a bride, must have money; and from her father there was none forthcoming. Of the sums raised by bills, and other ways and means, concerning which the Professor received illumination from some of his professional friends, his son and his son-in-law elect, nearly the whole had been swallowed up; and, from some occult cause, the civilest tradespeople of January had become the rudest of March. Charles Herbert had already repeatedly complied with the urgent demands of the Professor's polite notes; and other young men, frequenters of his parties for a time, agreed that they were too pleasant not to be paid for, in a reasonable way, by small forced loans. But, on the whole, Mr Cripps found this was a bad plan; his fashionable friends were beginning to absent themselves, and, suffer who might, they must therefore be spared. To enjoy both the countenance and money of aristocracy, was too much to expect. Thus was the bride of Barker left to her own resources; and, bolting her chamber door, to keep off her mother's domiciliary visit, Polly, when she left Violet, hastily arranged her writing materials, soliloquizing thus:—"'Tis all I ever made of the spoon, if I make out this, for the plague he has given me, save a few paltry trinkets, which I will return with the money after I marry;" and she began to write:—

"Regent's Park, London,
"*26th March*, 18—,

"My Dear Benjamin,—You will, I am confident, forgive the familiar appellation of our happy childhood, when to each other we were 'Benjamin and Polly,' the inseparables in every dance and nutting party.

"Papa and I were exceedingly disappointed when we found that you had left town without seeing us again, especially as our foreign servant, though he had general orders 'Not at home,' was particularly desired to admit you, whom I flattered myself he could not fail to recognise from my description. I think I could have recognised you among a thousand, as on that day when the carriage drove past you in St James' Street; and I am sure you fancied me mad in bowing to you. I fear you may have gone away under the impression that we declined seeing you; which is one urgent reason for my addressing you. The recollection, I assure you, of dear W——, makes any one from that beloved quarter precious to us, much less one of our most valued friends. I judge of your feelings by my own heart, when I say so.

"I am confident you will be delighted to hear of my dear father's astonishing success and brilliant prospects. He has much more of the first musical employment in the metropolis than he can overtake; and he teaches none but the daughters of the highest nobility, on terms that would have frightened us, in the days of our simplicity, at dear W——. By the newspapers, you will learn that the Professor is bringing out an opera, for which the greatest success is anticipated; and a successful opera, let me tell you, is a fortune in itself.

"In the meantime, the heavy expense, incidental to getting up the piece, and our launch in London, have, I fear, though I dare not seem to guess it, pressed hard on dear papa's funds; and a certain delicacy in which, I can fully sympathize, prevents him from applying in this emergency to even the most intimate of those friends who would be delighted to assist him. You will, in these circumstances, my dear Benjamin, forgive, I am sure, the tender feelings of a fond daughter, distracted between her native delicacy and her devoted filial affection for such a man and such a father. Nothing short of these emotions could enable me to make the present application; nor is there another man in existence but yourself, the friend of childhood and youth—though now far distant—to whom I could bring myself to state the necessity, for which I blush even on paper. From one hundred and fifty to two hundred pounds, would, I am convinced, materially relieve papa, until returns comes in, for the great expense attending the approaching event. [Polly thought that here she had avoided telling a lie. How silly are those cunning sinners who fancy it so very easy to cheat the devil.] Mademoiselle Gabrielle will most gladly be my guarantee, if between old friends, as I cannot help still fancying that we are, anything of the sort is required. As I anxiously wish no one in the family to suspect the bold step on which my feelings have urged me, I pray that you will write me, under the cover of Mademoiselle.

"Adieu, dear Benjamin! If you have my vivid memory for old times, you will not again leave town without gladdening the Regents' Park with tidings of dear W——, and with the most wel-

come sight to be met in it, the face of an old friend. Never, amidst the beauty and gaiety of this splendid quarter, can I forget the sweet summer-house in your garden, and the old black cherry tree.

"Your affectionate and faithful

"Humble Servant,

"MARIA CRIPPS."

Thou false and treacherous Polly! who couldst thus convert the best affections of a simple kind and unsuspecting heart into the means of gulling and plundering—"seething the kid in its mother's milk;" marrying Barker on Benjamin's gold. That "sweet summer-house!"—It was the very spot where the bashful Benjamin, in the effervescence of his boyish passion, had first essayed his uncouth infant arts of courtship to the endless diversion of the bold romp of sixteen. It was, as a very statesman, in extremity at human nature's naughtiness, was once compelled to exclaim, "too bad;" and, we venture to think, that if Mr Barker had been cognizant of the whole case, there might have been some danger of the affianced wife being repudiated, as slight punishment of a thing so *broad;* done for so paltry an object. There was a waste of character and eloquent deceit which might have sufficed to trick a whole constituency, employed on one booby, to gain a poor hundred pounds. It was a ruinous, small ware, female trick, which he never could have sanctioned. He knew the world too well for that. Jack Cripps, on the contrary, would have enjoyed it as "a famous hoax," and shared the spoils.

Though Mr Barker came afterwards to understand some of the consequences of this manœuvre, he fortunately never learned the precise contents of his bride's letter. It is more important to tell that, in due return of post, an answer came, under cover to Violet, who amasedly saw Miss Cripps snatch what appeared a bank order with rapture, and fling its tender envelope, half-read, into the fire; vexed to find that *business* was to bring her correspondent so very soon to town, and assuaging her conscience with the resolution of returning his trumpery coral necklace, and other pledges of love, with her wedding-cards and a slice of the bride-cake.

While Violet was looking on in wonder, sensible of a little curiosity about what she witnessed, and uneasy at the involuntary share which she had borne in an unacknowledged correspondence, an equally exciting scene, in which she was also involved, was acting in the neighbouring residence. There sat Mrs Herbert with her step-son at a very late breakfast; the young man, between whiles, gleaning from the morning papers such pieces of intelligence as he fancied likely to interest or amuse her. All at once, on commencing a new paragraph, his voice dropped, and he abruptly stopped short, after having read, "Laud we the Gods!"

Mrs Herbert, quietly observant of his movements, and able to read much more of his secret thoughts, in his ingenuous countenance, than Charles at all times cared to reveal to her, perceived his colour heighten, and his brows knit, as he flung down the paper with an air of irritation and impatience, and as hastily snatched it up again for another perusal. Mrs Herbert, though with the most well-bred absence of manner, failed not to observe every shade of change in the reader, nor yet to note the page and column of the newspaper which had proved this stumbling-block. "Consummate impertinence!" was the muttered expression, ere Charles so far recovered his presence of mind as to ask for another cup of coffee, while he placed his elbow on the obnoxious journal, as he cursorily perused one or two more. When he rose from the breakfast-table, he said, lifting the self-same print, with an affectation of indifference which half amused his mother, when viewed in contrast with the usual cordial frankness of his manners—

"You don't patronise the wicked *Cerberus*, I believe. I dare say you are quite right." And he put the newspaper into his pocket, as he went out, saying, "Do not expect me to dinner—I had forgot an engagement. An Oxonian is to dine with me—an old friend."

"Then, I presume, he is a presentable person: pray, rather fetch him with you to my small, my cabinet dinner; only the Tarbets, and one or two more. It would be a pity to leave a stranger alone, when you join us."

"I—I am afraid I cannot shake him off."

"I don't want you to shake him off, Charles; you don't understand me."—"I read you better," thought the smiling lady.—"Language, it has been said by Talleyrand, and long before him, was given to men to conceal their thoughts; with my poor Charles, even writing will hardly do that. I have no doubt whatever about his present thoughts; but I must see farther."

Charles Herbert had not been three minutes gone when his mother ordered her maid to desire the youngest footman, Robert, to go to Regent Street for a book which she wanted; and, among other newspapers, the *Cerberus* of that day. No copy of the print was to be had.

"Robert is so stupid, ma'am," remarked the smart soubrette, who read her lady almost as fluently as her lady did Herbert. "Perhaps I could get the poyem for you ma'am; the paper with it, I mean, if you please?"

"It does not signify, Jenkins," returned the lady, who was arranging flowers in a vase; "though, if you are going out on other business,"——

"I must, ma'am, have soaps, ma'am, for Mrs Herbert, and some extra and particularly nice thread, to take up that rent in the Chantilly veil, ma'am; and"——

"Yes, that must be had, Jenkins: I am only surprised that a person so extremely attentive to your duties as yourself should have neglected that; and, as you will just pass the newspaper place, you may try. And, by the way, is not Mistress Linton to come to-day about that matter you mentioned?—which yet I am persuaded cannot be correct."

"Perfectly correct, ma'am. I assure you,

ma'am; if you mean about the new people in Mr Shuffleton's house, ma'am. Mistress Linton herself, with her own eyes, saw the indentical gold or moloo *pangdool*, ma'am, which stood in Mr Shuffleton's back drawing-room, over the hottoman on the right side of the fireplace, under a glass cover, ma'am; and the indentical inlaid chess-table and shooberbe set of chess gentlemen, ma'am, which cost five hundred or else fifty pounds in Paris, ma'am, in that same pawnbroker's in the city, as I told you, ma'am, which a young gentleman, who squints, in a blue Spanish cloak, brought there, in a close hackney coach, which the coachman said was from the West End—our End, ma'am."——

"Well, you may have done now; and see that I am informed when the Scotchwoman comes, and secure me ten minutes to talk with her, whatever visiters may call."

"And the newspaper for Mrs Herbert, ma'am, if you please?" Mrs Herbert did not choose to appear too anxious, she therefore merely nodded assent; and Jenkins, knowing her cue, tripped off. The two hours of her absence seemed ten to her anxious mistress; yet Jenkins, if tardy, had not been idle.

The incipient passion which, in right of her age—only yet some twenty-eight—and her position in the family, she had, three years before, begun to conceive for the young Oxonian, had smouldered away under his entire indifference; or rather that provoking insensibility or abstraction, worse than indifference, which appeared to render the young man, on his periodical visits home, quite as insensible to the small-featured and trimly dressed airy soubrette, as if she had been the fat coachman. In these circumstances, her transitory flame had expired and been succeeded by an affection quite as natural—a restless, insatiable curiosity about all the affairs, but, especially, the love affairs of the only young gentleman connected with her "present family." The servant who had attended Charles on his electioneering expedition had been as communicative as any reasonable waiting gentlewoman could desire; nor did the domestics of the nearly-adjoining houses by any means preserve that stiff and awful distance maintained by the mistress of one of the residences. It was from the accidental hints of Jenkins, who, most innocently, referred to the day (merely as a date) on which "Mr Charles had sent home the Miss Cryppes in the carriage," or "on which the Miss Cryppes had gone to Madame's, to order things, in the carriage," that Mrs Herbert learnt a circumstance offensive to her pride. This had been followed by other occurrences, even more painful and alarming, arising from her son's intimate connexion with "those people." She had herself seen him escorting the young ladies; and she was aware that, with a whole set of thoughtless young men and *roué* elderly ones, Charles was a constant frequenter of their parties; nay, that he had failed in engagements, by which he ought to have felt honoured, to attend those little parties. It had cost her a great effort, at different times, to prevent him from entering seriously upon the subject of her equivocal neighbours; and, when playful avoidance was no longer possible, she had, in the tone of entreaty, commanded that he would not speak of them. One day, with tears in her eyes, she had said, when Charles urgently begged that she would hear him:—

"Charles, my dearest son—God is my witness how much dearer you are to me than all other interests and objects on earth put together—I will not listen to you on this one point. Certain things are best left unexplained even between the nearest friends. I look forward for you, and I cherish your feelings of self-respect too tenderly to permit your now saying one word of which you shall ever, in any circumstances, live to be ashamed. You shall not have to remember, much less to regret, that in any rash moment of your life you have laid your heart too nakedly open before even me, your most indulgent friend."

Charles kissed the hand stretched out to him; and still he would have spoken and have pleaded against this misconception, and protested against the shadow of shame being involved in what he had to say and to urge.

"She is not a member of this family, mother. She is an orphan girl, of good parentage."

Mrs Herbert would not listen. Violet was not Lady Laura Temple, whoever she might be, and that was enough.

Mrs Herbert rose hastily, on the occasion mentioned, her handkerchief at her streaming eyes, and motioned her son not to follow her.

By Jenkins, who could "draw an inference" better than many students of logic, and as well as ever a waiting-maid in May Fair, these scenes, if imperfectly seen, were shrewedly interpreted. After her return from the hunt of what she was pleased to describe as "the poyem" in the *Cerberus*, and an intermediate conference with Mike Twig, with whom she had condescended to walk home, she was in fine condition to furnish her mistress with explanatory notes, had the slightest opening been offered or permitted. But Mrs Herbert did not even stop her reading to receive the newspaper. She pointed to the little table beside her, as if she desired not to be disturbed; and Jenkins placed it there, left the room, and in one instant returned, apologizing for forgetting to mention before, that she had met Lady Laura Temple's "young lady," and that her ladyship was very well that morning.

There was an exulting sense of gratified revenge in perceiving that Mrs Herbert was already engaged with the paragraph of which Jenkins herself was fully mistress.

"Let her pride be her punishment," was her spiteful thought. "Great ladies will place no confidence in their young ladies. Why should we care for them? let her take it indeed!"

The malicious wishes of Jenkins did not, in this instance, take effect. Derision, and a scornful sense of the ludicrous, curled the beautiful lip of Mrs Herbert, as, flinging the newspaper on the hearth-rug, she beckoned the abigail

to withdraw, and resumed reading. But why did she pick it up, and again spell it over? It was to make assurance doubly sure.

"'Consummate impertinence,' you well might say, Charles;" and her features brightened, and her eyes sparkled. "No, no, my dear boy, unless you were more mad—more infatuated than ever young man, fancying himself in love, was before you, there is no danger to be apprehended here. Your pride and nice sense of honour are my security against this Mademoiselle, although, for a moment, your understanding should fail you."

On the whole, though Mrs Herbert resolved to give a hint to Shuffleton's attorney about the system of swindling which his odd tenants were commencing, she still deemed it wise to be silent to Charles himself. Silent, kind, nay most indulgent, but resolute to prevent irremediable disgrace and misery; she would treat him, if matters came to extremity, as one might a dear friend under delirium—restrain him for his own safety. Every passing day shewed her more clearly how wrong-headed Charles was capable of being, where his generous feelings were interested—or his haughty sense of independence, rendered morbidly acute by his father's extraordinary will, aroused. To look coldly on any animated thing, which, from its very weakness appealed to his protection, was, above all, to rouse the spirit of Charles; and, in such cases, his heart or his impulses, as his mother reasoned, seldom tarried to take counsel of his judgment. One of the most violent quarrels in which Mrs Herbert had ever been called to mediate between the father and son, had no greater cause than a mangy puppy which Charles, when a little boy, had found dying in the fields, dripping and shivering, and with a stone about its neck, as if it had just escaped one mode of death to meet another more lingering and pitiful. The whole family had been annoyed with his favourite, though he had nursed it in the stable, and in his own room; and the housekeeper, who hated it, complained of "the poor brute," Charles said, "which had not a fault or a vice, save that it was ugly and mangy, which it could not help, and he would rub it well, and cure it." Mungo's accuser retorted that it was filthy and troublesome, and would certainly go mad, and bite him.

Mrs Herbert smiled in reflecting upon the young boy's generous sturdiness of disposition, for which she loved him all the better at the time, and his open defiance of his father's anger, when he proclaimed—"If you put away Mungo, I'll go with him—I will—I don't care for being bit." Nor could she forget how her own affectionate and dexterous management of the boy had reconciled every difficulty. Mungo was pensioned off with an old soldier, who undertook for his complete cure, and Charles visited him every day, until the dog got well. When Mungo no longer needed his affection, he became gradually indifferent to the brute, and Mungo was promoted into the confidential post of a carrier's dog, after which Charles totally forgot him.

"I must forbear, not alone the girl, but the whole Cripps tribe," thought Mrs Herbert, "or we should have mangy Mungo over again; and Charles not 'caring to be bit' by 'the lovely Scotch orphan'—that is her style, I believe. What fools young men—ay, the ablest of them—can be made! Men in love are really greater fools than women; only their madness seldom lasts so long."

"Mistress Marion Linton below, ma'am, to wait upon Mrs Herbert, ma'am," was the fresh announcement of Jenkins to her lady.

In respect of her age, and probably of her confidential functions as a woman of business, Mistress Linton was usually honoured with the *tabouret* in Mrs Herbert's dressing-room, though that lady was not at all remarkable for the ease of her intercourse with "the lower orders."

"A cup of chocolate for Mistress Linton, Jenkins—and you need not return: let Robert fetch it. I am daily more pleased with your young countryman, Mistress Linton—he does credit to your recommendation."

"I'm proud and happy at that, mem,"—returned the Scotswoman, "aye weel-pleased to hear ony gude o' my country folks, though no a drap's blood to mysel; the mair be here that it's about ane o' them—puir young freendless thing, I have ta'en the liberty to come this same day to trouble ye."

"I said you need not wait, Jenkins," [exit Jenkins, pursing in her thin lips.] "Any of the people in Mr Shuffleton's pretty house is it? Nice people are they, who take good care of his furniture? I am sure *you* will wish that."

The house-letter shook her head.

"I hope it may be sae; but I misdoot, from all I can gather, it's no that like, my leddy."

"Then you don't like them, I fear?"

"I have, with your pardon, no right either to like or dislike them, whatever I may do;" and she added, drily, "and they are great friends o' Maister Charles, which *must be* ae gude sign o' them."

"Of my son?—very slight acquaintances only, that I am aware; you know enough of gay London society not to consider young gentlemen *friends* in all the houses where they go to parties," replied Mrs Herbert; and the shrewd Scotswoman at once found ground.

"'Tis a professional family I believe," continued the lady: "rather an odd quarter for them; as the families resident hereabout are not likely to suit them at all."

"You mean, mem, not to tak' up wi' them; not to countenance them—the leddies, ye mean? for the gentlemen are jocose enough wi' the Professor's folk, as they ca' him; though in our country, at least in my day—for there's a new world there too noo—a professor wha kent never a word o' the Latin tongue, let a be Greek, and Philosophy, and Mathew Matticks, wad been thought but a droll professor; and, indeed, I canna but fear that this same ane, even wi' the customs of England, is muckle better than a downright swingler, mem; who has entrapped into his cus-

tody and keeping an innocent young leddy o' good birth and family; an orphan, my leddy, fatherless and motherless, and sae having a claim on a' good folks' regard and kindness; trepanned her to make a singing play-actor o' her, as other villains have stolen Scotch bairns to make them gipsies or chimbly sweepers:—forbye, he is harrying and spulzieing Mr Shuffleton's house as sure as ever the Scots did the English, lang syne."

"This is intelligence for Mr Shuffleton's attorney only, not for me," returned Mrs Herbert, now rising, pre-determined not to hear one word of Mrs Marion's orphan countrywoman. "I am just going out; but I shall send a note to the attorney if you wish it. I am sorry I have no leisure to-day—Good bye."

"Your most obedient, madam," said Mistress Marion, stiffly, on being thus summarily dismissed; "and I hope I have not given you owre much trouble. . . . I'll see to business mysel; many thanks." And she retired discomfited, but not cast down.

On that same evening, there was to be a particularly brilliant musical party, a sort of rehearsal, at the residence in Regent's Park, from which Professor Cryppes had been duly warned; and, odd as it may seem to rustics, between that brilliant party and the visit to the city pawnbroker, of the young gentleman, who "squinted in a blue Spanish cloak," there was close and essential connexion. Jack, who had put the frightened governor up to the thing, received no more brokerage on the transaction than five pounds in loan, out of the twenty-five which had been raised on Shuffleton's "pangdool and chess gentlemen," and given to Mrs Cripps to carry into effect the elegant but not expensive entertainment. In some quarters, the family credit was still good. The green-grocer had taken alarm long before the more aristocratic wine merchant; living apart from "the whisper of a faction" of mop-sticks and shoulder-knots, who resented the intrusion of the pretenders into their patrician quarter, more loudly, if not so deeply, as their masters and mistresses. So one twenty pounds might do very well for the night, for trifling articles; and, besides, presents of fruits, flowers, and game were now often appearing, sent from the estates of considerate young estated visiters, in Covent Garden market and the poulterers' shops. The Professor, by the way, never knew whereabouts the estate of Colonel Rivers lay; nor learned, save by report, of the famous preserves of Sir George Lees, though he noted both gentlemen as among the most voracious, or, as it pleased them, dainty consumers of his cates.

Let us at once, however, quit, or soar above, such sublunary and vulgar purse and trencher matters. On this night, a foreign lady, with the title of Princess, was to be present at the rehearsals, of which Jack had obtained the second-night; and Count Rodolpho Zanderschloss had prevailed with the Professor to receive two of his particular friends, young American *attachés*, from whom he expected letters of introduction to the United States. Mademoiselle was positively to appear on this night, and to sing; and Herbert, passionately longing to see Violet after a whole week of absence, broke his engagement with his mother and his own resolution, and took, as if by instinct, the accustomed route. And several circumstances had arisen to justify, as he imagined, that change of resolution, since he had perused the egregious puff to which he was certain she could be no party. Already his hopes of conciliating his mother were low, and now Violet was about to be unconsciously betrayed into placing an impassable gulf between them for ever. By a little delicate management, or, perhaps, tacit connivance, he had come to learn the nights on which Violet would appear; and on these he went early, and sometimes was so happy as to find her for two minutes alone. These were what the Professor called his Family Nights, when he did not receive persons of the very first distinction.

On the great night, which had taxed to the utmost all the resources of Monsieur Eustache, and almost driven Mrs Cripps mad, Herbert, with the faint hope of finding Violet alone, and anxious to have some conversation with her, went very early, and was fortunate; for after he had waited about half-an-hour she entered, and started, and blushed, and looked brightly glad for an instant, and suddenly as grave; protesting business, which was to direct some plants to be removed to the staircase from that conservatory off the saloon which Jack Cripps had pointed out as so famous a place for a little sly flirtation.

"Mike Twig, who is the best creature in the world, is to carry these bow-pots for me; I can't think what has become of him," said Violet.

"Accept of me in his stead. I fear, by the figure Mike cut when he admitted me, he has not yet put the finishing touches to his dress. I know I am very early; but I have been so unfortunate as to miss you the last two times I have been here, and I come charged to-night with a special message from your friend Mrs Linton. After visiting my mother, she visited me to-day, at my chambers."

"This way," said Violet, leading the way into the conservatory, half afraid of the purport of the message.

"Mrs Marion has trotted over the half of London, and not been able to find out the young man. Here is your letter. Am I mistaken in thinking that once before I gave you back a letter with this address? Am I impertinent in venturing to inquire who the man so honoured may be? You are very young, Violet—young in heart and in experience of life; your old rough friend—forgive me for hinting it—seems disturbed about this correspondence, and if I may dare to say so—about the character and habits of the young man who has so strongly interested your feelings.'

"I have never even seen him," said Violet, emphatically, but blushing deeply at the same time, and lowering her eyes under Herbert's

fixed gaze. "Alas! I cannot find any trace of that most unhappy person. If you, Mr Herbert —I have thought of it often, but durst not ask you—if you, who are always so good-natured, would make inquiry?"

"I, Violet!—but if you wish it?"

"That I do, most earnestly. One morning I did get up very early to try to find him out myself; in *that* St Martin's Lane, where I overheard Quintin telling his sister the poor fellow harboured; but it was so—oh! so horrible—so disagreeable—so——Yet it is not pride, I am sure—I am not an aristocrat—I should be humble enough."

"*You*, Violet? You absolutely frighten me. *You* search for this man, by yourself, in such haunts?"

"Yes, I did; and I might have found him too, had I not been such a coward, and so afraid of detection."

Charles Herbert was almost bewildered.

"And you really wish me to try?"

"To find out poor Susan's lover? Certainly I do; and would bless you. They have been attached since childhood—so long, so tenderly; and she sees no errors in him as others do. She is so wretched, and her mother so severe and harsh—but I must not betray if I cannot console poor Susan."

"Her mother!" repeated Herbert with strong emotion. "All mothers are alike, I believe; all cold, proud, ambitious. . . . . And you, dearest girl, you can thus pity one who loves unhappily —one who is but the more wretched for cherishing the deepest, strongest, most passionate love? *Then, Violet, pity me,*" and he wrung the trembling little hand which he had seized.

The words thrilling in her ringing ears, sent a sudden chill to her heart, a choking feeling of indescribable anguish; as if she was about to die, and could not die. Herbert then loved—desperately, hopelessly loved—perhaps that proud and beautiful Lady Laura; and now Violet first felt without any disguise the humiliating truth that she had hoped for, sought to gain—though in all maiden modesty—passionately yearned for the affection of one who was all to her, and to whom she was nothing!

Her emotion could not be wholly concealed as her dry lips imperfectly uttered—

"Pity you, Mr Herbert? Oh, surely!" and she laughed low and hoarsely. "But I believe I am wanted; I am engaged to dance," and she tried to withdraw her hand.

"Stay, Violet, you do not, you cannot affect to misunderstand me? Whom do I love save yourself—you, dearest! loveliest! But, you are ill—very ill."

There was another powerful revulsion of feeling; a sudden flood of exulting, extatic bliss; an eternity of joy compressed into an instant of time; and then a languid suspension of the pulses of life; and, as consciousness returned, a soft kiss lingering on her lips;—but that, after all, might have been a dream. It was certain that she was leaning in an easy chair, to which Herbert had carried her, and that she saw Mike Twig rush in, buttoning his knuckle-deep wrist-bands, and heard Herbert whisper—"Call the housemaid quietly. The lady is better; the heavy odour of these plants made her ill a minute since; but she is coming round," and as Mike fled to communicate the event to the household, Herbert seized the instant to pray that Violet would see him soon—to-morrow, if possible —but, if not, the first day possible, at Mistress Linton's; and she had sighed consent, ere the hurly-burly began, and she was carried up to her chamber by the agitated Professor and the maid-servant.

"It is tight lacing," said Miss Cripps, "I have often warned Gabrielle of that; she pinches her waist so, Mr Herbert."

BURSCHEN MELODIES—No. II.*

Seyd umschlungen Millionen!
Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt!
Drüben überm Sternenzelt
Muss ein lieber Vater wohnen.
SCHILLER.

THE Burschen Bacchanals are, in a sort, very religious; and this is a phenomenon that our Scottish understanding does not at first sight readily comprehend. What religion can there be in a drinking song? is a question which a "Presbyterian sour" *(absit invidia!)* will very naturally ask; but a very foolish question manifestly, so soon as it is considered that the practice of piety does not consist mainly in the painful exactitude of sabbatical observances, (in which point we Scotch are certainly not free from a certain judaizing *ἰθελοθρησκία*,) and that the living theology of the human heart is completely inventoried as little in Calvin's Cate-

* We were asked the other day, What is the etymology of the word *Bursch*? To which question we replied, as is often done, by saying that, in German, the word *Bursch* signifies, "a young man, a young fellow;" and that the German student, being the prince of good fellows, is *κατ' ἐξοχην* the *Bursch*. We find, however, that this is putting the cart before the horse, and that *Bursch* properly and originally signified student, or, at least, stipendiary student,