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THE ROSS-SHIRE BUFFS.

THE

ROSS-SHIRE BUFFS

BY

JAMES GRANT

AUTHOR OF "THE ROMANCE OF WAR," &c.

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"THE ROSS-SHIRE BUFFS."

CHAPTER I.

ENGAGED.

"AND will you love me always—always, as you do now?" asked the girl in a low and winning voice, and after a pause, while colouring deeply.

"Could I ever cease to love you, Dove, darling?" replied the other, questioningly and tremulously.

"And so you are to be my own—my very own."

"So long as my heart has pulsation, Dove!"

Thus it is, with a fragment of the "old, old story," first told in Eden, that our new one begins—and told in a veritable Eden too, where, under the glow of a glorious summer sunset, with seemingly all the flowers that the earth can produce, where the trees are of surpassing loveliness, and the tall feathery palms exceed in size and beauty the boasted ones of Kew, beside a pool where the snow-white lilies floated and the golden fish shot to and fro,—yet a place having the most prosaic of names—the Botanical Gardens of Edinburgh,—our two young friends were exchanging what Le Sage would cal "marks of their mutual esteem."

The hum of the adjacent city, towering high in air

to the south, came with a subdued cadence to the ear; the birds twittered about, the sole witnesses apparently of the half fatuous caresses, which, with tender incoherencies, make up the delight of such a period, when Time itself seems to stand still.

Most decorously and demurely sat the pair, when other bipeds passed near, and, to all appearance, they conversed fluently enough upon botany or anything else that occurred to them; but the moment they were alone face turned to face and eye to eye, while hand sought hand again.

The love-talk in novels, though very delightful to lovers in general, and perhaps to young ladies in particular, we, ourselves, are rather apt to skip; for, remembering our own slight experience in such matters, it seldom seems to have much in it that is capable of coherent record; but, as this is a true narrative and not all romance, a little of it must be given, as preluding and introductory.

"And so you will always love me?" cooed the girl, as her lover, after one swift glance around them, kissed her for the second time, as yet; but her pouting lips invited a third, after which she started and said, "Now, Gillian, we must be very proper, for here come people who may know us."

"Let us walk, then."

And, leaving the rustic sofa which was under a stately tree, they entered a long leafy avenue known as the Lovers' Walk, where doubtless the "old story" would be told over and over again.

And now to introduce them more fully to the reader.

Dove Gainswood—she was well-named "Dove," so gentle and sweet was the girl in her nature—was the only daughter of a wealthy lawyer, living in one of the stateliest squares, at the west-end of the Scottish metropolis—a personage of whom we shall unhappily have much more than his name to record. Under the middle height, she had a face that was charming in its contour and expression, with the pure bright complexion that usually accompanies such thick rich hair as hers, gorgeous dark auburn, of two shades, we may say, for it seemed as if shot with gold when in the sunshine, and her soft dark eyes were of that violet grey which looks black by lamp-light.

Gillian Lamond, her lover and cousin, we shall briefly say, was a handsome, stout, and well-developed young fellow, taller than Dove, by more than a head; with clear, honest, hazel eyes, who looked older than his years, and milder than his real nature, which was proud, fiery, and resentful, for he was, as his name imports, a Highlander by blood.

In the dawn, but not the noon, of love, there is a difference in its effect upon the sexes. At first, a young man is timid—often the more timid of the two; thus hesitation, hope and doubt—doubt of himself and still more of his uncle Gainswood—made Gillian Lamond almost bashful; while Dove was quite, or nearly quite, collected, with a shy yet triumphant smile on her sweet little face.

When they had parted last, a mere boy and girl, she

was in her fifteenth year, and since then had spent three years at a finishing educational establishment. Now, when she had returned to Scotland in her eighteenth year, and when Cousin Gillian was close on twenty-one, it was somewhat perilous to be constantly together—for relationship and propinquity are Cupid's greatest accessories; and Gillian formed a portion of their domestic circle, as her father was his legal guardian.

The hoyden of three years ago had returned from France mistress of many accomplishments; she had a very pure intonation, and spoke very sweetly, with a soft, low, cooing voice, quite in accordance with her name; and had, in addition to that great charm in woman, acquired on the Continent—or perhaps they were natural to her—some pretty little ways and tricks of manner, that were very attractive.

Gillian was an only son. His father and Mr. Gainswood had married two sisters; both of them were dead, and had been so for some years, at the time our story opens. The mother of Gillian, with all her little brood, of whom he was the sole survivor, had died far away in India; and he, in early boyhood had been committed to his uncle's care, while his father, Colonel Lachlan Lamond, whom he had not seen for fourteen years, remained "up country," as the phrase is, serving and scorching to amass money for one object, which had ever been the passion of his life.

To regain by purchase the old estate of Avon-na-gillian, which had been for ages in his family, till it passed into other hands through the mischance of his

having an extravagant grandfather, had been his aim and ambition since the days when he had first passed the Sand Heads of the Hooghly a poor cadet.

As the chief of the Clan Donoquhy had done, when he purchased back his forfeited patrimony; as the late Glengarry hoped to do, when he parted with all his vast estates, save the old castled rock and the burial-place of his family, was the object of Colonel Lamond, and amid years spent as a collector in Central India, during which time he gradually passed, without much fighting certainly, to the head of his regiment, he never forgot the arid rocks and heathy glens of Avon-na-gillian; but had the mortification to see it thrice in the market, before he had been able to transmit to his brother-in-law, Gainswood, a sum sufficient for the purchase-money; for the coveted estate, though small and poor naturally and originally, was now rendered more valuable by its sheep and shootings.

Trusting implicitly in Gideon Gainswood, whom he believed to be a man of the utmost probity, who was always reputed as such, and whom he deemed safe as the Agra Bank or the India House itself, he confided all to him; among others things, the most priceless, his only son, who, with his name, was to inherit the estate when re-won; and whom he would not permit—though it had been the lad's intense wish—to become a soldier, lest the chances of war or of a tropical climate might cut him off, as it had done all his little brothers, who lay buried far apart in different parts of India.

Without binding him by any indenture, or fully edu-

cating him for the legal profession—as the old Colonel had some contempt for it—the injunctions to Gideon Gainswood were, that Gillian should learn habits of order and industry by having a desk in his office, and acquire sufficient knowledge of the law to make him careful, and able to hold his own against all comers when he got it, and became Lamond of Avon-na-gillian, in the Western Isles.

Gillian sighed at this decision, but was compelled to acquiesce in his father's wishes, though repining bitterly; but ere long, after manifesting the greatest reluctance and repugnance, he suddenly began to devote himself with some perseverance to the dry mysteries of the law, and to plod at his desk with a willingness which his brother-clerks supposed to arise from the mere fact that he was a species of volunteer in the work, but which in reality rose from a desire to please his uncle Gainswood, and win his golden opinions, for a reason which did not at first strike that usually astute personage; and this was the return home of Dove, in whose society all the leisure hours of Gillian were passed, and he was her escort everywhere, to the great envy and admiration of his office-chums, who were only permitted to know the young lady by sight, and among whom Gillian was very popular—quite a lion in fact, from his general bonhommie, suavity, and generosity, as he was always "standing" luncheons and dinners, as they phrased it, "to any extent."

It was quite natural, their companionship, the girl thought—were they not cousins? He was quite the

same as a handsome brother; but, of course, a thousand times more tender and attentive. Matters progressed rapidly and delightfully. Gideon Gainswood did not see the situation, so absorbed was he in the legal work of his dirty little world as a lawyer, and in the spiritual affairs of the next, as an Elder of the Kirk; but old Mrs. Elspat McBriar, a poor widowed relation, who managed his household, perceived it without the aid of her spectacles.

And so, with reference to all that we have explained, as they slowly promenaded to and fro, in the leafy tunnel of the Lovers' Walk, with his hand caressingly clasping Dove's—

"I should have been a soldier," said Gillian; "a soldier like my father, and all our forefathers, but for his eccentric reluctance and distinct objection thereto; but now, Dove, that you have come back to us, and now that—that you—"

"Are loved by me, Gillian?"

"Oh, my darling—yes!"

"Well?"

"Ambition of every kind, save to love you in return, and to please you—yes, to adore you, is dead within me!"

Et cætera.

Engaged! So they were engaged, these two, and full of rapture to think that they were so, and at the whole novelty of the sweet, yet secret situation. But to what end? Gillian's allowance was small, and he deemed the Colonel—notwithstanding his Indian pay

and allowances—to be poor, as, according to the statements of his uncle Gainswood, the money destined for the acquisition of Avon-na-gillian came home slowly and in small sums, yet he had a vague hope of more monetary assistance from him in the future.

Dove's father was, he knew, rich, far beyond what legal men in Scotland ever are; but he dared not reckon on that, as he knew him to be grasping and avaricious. Still less did the poor lad know that he, personally, was hated by him secretly, with the hate of those who wrong the innocent, and dread discovery, and the unweaving of the web of deceit.

But, of this, more anon.

Withal that their love was in its flush, marriage, the natural sequel, seemed distant—even remote; but both were so young, there was time enough; and both were so happy, so hopeful in Heaven and so true in themselves.

Poor hearts! they foresaw not then how all this love, hope, and truth were to be tested. It was in the sweet season of summer that Gillian Lamond walked there hand-in-hand with Dove, his heart brimming over with the new found joy.

Alas! he could little foresee where that day six months was to find him—with Outram and Havelock, face to face with the fur-capped Persian Cavaliers of Nusser-ud-Deen, in the land of the great Cyrus—of Nusser-ud-Deen, the same shah whom we had so lately among us, at Buckingham Palace and Trentham—a startling transition indeed.

CHAPTER II.

UNCLE GAINSWOOD.

THE character we are about to pourtray, though not an uncommon one, is a task alike difficult and distasteful.

Mr. Gideon Gainswood, Writer to the Signet and Notary Public, was a good example of those coarse-looking local notorieties, who, painted in accurate black, yearly figure, in kit-cat size, on the walls of the Royal Scottish Academy. His figure was sturdy, and his hands and feet were as those of a hodman, which, perhaps, his more worthy grandfather had been in his time. His features were of a harsh Scottish type; a cunning and sardonic turn of mind had puckered in minute wrinkles the skin near his cold-grey, ferret-like eyes, which seemed to focus on all he addressed. He had coarse hair of a sandy brown, now well grizzled in his fiftieth year; grey leg-of-mutton whiskers, and a thin-lipped, cruel-looking mouth, the jaw of a bull-dog, and a nose that can only be denominated as a large pug. He seldom laughed; then only from the teeth outwards, and these, being yellow, contrasted unfavourably with the scrupulously white neck-tie, which he was never seen without in his double capacity of a professional man and Elder of the kirk.

Yet he was only one of the legion,—

"Who eat, they drink, they sleep, they spend,
They go to church on Sunday ;
For many are afraid of God,
But more of Mrs. Grundy,—"

a typical female who is the bugbear—the modern Gyre Carlin—of "the genteel" classes in Scotland, especially in her capital, thereby restraining all honesty of action and inducing an amount of timidity and snobbery that to a stranger seems astounding.

He certainly had the reputation of being an able lawyer and most upright Elder—"a sly fox—a sharp fellow," some ill-natured people averred; "one who took deuced good care not to be found out," whatever that might mean. His chief weakness, besides unsatiable avarice, was that desire, so peculiar to the middle-class Scotsman and Frenchman, to figure on platforms at public meetings and see their names duly recorded in the provincial prints. As a general rule, the learned professions in Scotland now contribute almost nothing to the literature of the country, but Mr. Gainswood had emitted an annotated edition of "A Shove Heavenward for Heavy-doupit Sinners," which won him some fame, and added to the religious reputation he had won for himself, by perpetually quoting Scripture—more than we shall do for him. And texts therefrom—not illuminated, as such savoured of Popery and Episcopacy, but in fair black roman letters—were hung all over his house, which was one of the handsomest in the city.

He observed the seventh day with a rigidity that was edifying to behold. Under the management of Mrs.

Elspat McBriar, cold dinners ever graced the Sunday board, for as a writer has it, "spite may be permissible on Sabbath, though hot potatoes and novels are not," as poor Dove sighed to think, when, after three years in France, she came home to all this sort of thing.

How such a man came to have a daughter so good and artless, and, more than all, so exquisitely ladylike as Dove, was passing strange, and one of those idiosyncracies of nature "which," as Dundreary says, "no fellow can understand."

Though it suited him never to say so, the Colonel's fond and romantic idea of buying back Avon-na-gillian, spending the last of his days where its bluff rocks met the vast waves of the Altantic, and being laid finally under some old pine trees where generations of the Clan Lamond lay, he considered "especial bosh," as he had no sympathy with any such "old world" speculations.

He always deemed the scheme an impracticable one; and, sooth to say, were the real truth known, for sundry cogent and secret reasons of his own, it would have proved far from unwelcome, had tidings come, that his brother-in-law were cut off in India by death in any fashion, fever, battle, or the assassin's steel, and never came home at all, as he hoped to do ere Gillian was twenty-one; yet he never addressed a letter to the confiding old soldier, without preluding it with "D. V.," as he did those to all his clients.

To such a creature as this, and such as he may prove to be, there are, no doubt—even in his profession—good and bright exceptions; yet in the "College of Justice,"

as it is historically or jocularly called, they are often far apart; and he was one of the representative men of a pretty numerous class of religious pretenders that are to be found in all phases of life.

We have said that, secretly, Mr. Gainswood more than disliked his nephew, yet for the love of his cousin the young fellow was unwearying, and left nothing undone to please him; but so absorbed was the lawyer in his own matters, so little did he seem aware that such an emotion—"folly," he would have termed it—as love existed, that when a wealthy client, the old Laird of Torduff, with whom he was familiar, a sturdy, red-faced old gentleman in a black cutaway coat, top-boots, and corded breeches, ventured to hint at that which poor Mrs. McBriar dared not do, the real state of matters, as they were supposed to be between the cousins, and to offer laughingly his congratulations thereon, the scales fell suddenly from the malicious-like eyes of Gainswood, and he really was, as he asserted himself to be, never more surprised in the whole course of his life.

"What else could you expect, man?" asked Torduff, twirling and untwirling the lash of his hunting-whip.

"It is a complication on which I did not calculate—a mistake I could not foresee, when I undertook the care—the guardianship of my late wife's nephew," said Gainswood, as if half speaking to himself.

"They are a likely and a handsome couple, and all who know and see them say it will be an excellent match."

"The devil they do!" nearly escaped the Elder.

"Excellent match for whom?" he asked, with his bushy brows knit and his thin lips set.

"Why, the Colonel's son, of course," stammered the other; "he is a fine manly fellow—young, of course; but I approve of young marriages."

"I don't—marry in haste and repent at leisure."

"No," replied Torduff, testily; "our Scot's proverb says, 'Marry for love and work for siller.'"

"He who marries my daughter shall have no need to work; besides, the relationship is too near, and I have other thoughts for Dove."

"Then, I am sorry to hear it. Come, come, Gainswood, don't be hard on the young folks," rejoined the cheery old country gentleman; "you have made up a jolly big bank-book by this time."

"My dear sir, the grace of God is enough for me," said Gainswood, suddenly relapsing into his pious whine; "I am one of those who take no heed to gather up riches—those of this world, at least."

"Well, I hope I have done no mischief in telling you the *on dit*—I had it from my own girls," added Torduff, buttoning his riding gloves; "but you go so seldom to places of amusement that you don't know what goes on even in our little world here. And now I am off to the club—good morning."

"Good morning, my *dear* sir—good morning."

With a serene smile, great *empressement*, and a warm shake of the hand, he bowed his client out; then, stamping his heel on the floor, he threw himself into his leathern easy chair with a very unmistakeable—well,

interjection on his tongue; clenched his coarse hands, and glared with a savage expression at a certain green box on the iron frame close by—a box containing his correspondence with Colonel Lamond, and all that related to him, and muttered,—

"On one hand, I cannot send Gillian away, and on the other, this sort of thing cannot go on longer; at any day his father may come upon me, and *what* am I to do then? This upsets all my plans—the plans of years!"

He ground his yellow teeth, with fury purpling in his face, and his eyes wandered vacantly on the scenery beyond the tall windows of his room, without seeming to see it.

The sun of the summer afternoon was shining then in all his beauty above the woody undulations of the Corstorphine Hills, and on all that lay between, white-walled villas, green woodlands, and waving thickets, a scene both varied and charming; but the sordid creature saw it not; his whole thoughts were intent on his own schemes, on what he had heard, and the contents of *the* green box.

So—so! matters must have gone far indeed, between these young folks at home, when others saw plainly that to which he had been blind, and were coupling their names together, as an engaged pair.

So full was he of his own dark thoughts and of his schemes, that some minutes elapsed before he saw one of his clerks, a mere boy, an unpaid drudge, who had timidly approached him from an outer-room, and was silently regarding him with wonder; and certes! at

that particular time, Mr. Gideon Gainswood would not have made a pleasant picture; so here now was a helpless object on which to expend the vials of his wrath.

Knitting his brows more deeply, he demanded, in a voice of thunder,—

"Did you fee-fund those papers in Graball's process, at the Register-house, at the time I told you?"

"You told me too late, sir," replied the little lad, trembling from head to heel.

"Too late—you young whelp!"

Though not blessed with much patience, it was seldom that he exhibited himself in this unchristian fashion.

"Sir, it was a Box-day," urged the lad; "when the office closes at two o'clock, and so—so—I thought——"

"What business have you to think? Leave my office, Macquillan, this instant, and let me see you no more!"

He was a knowing young fellow, Macquillan, who kept a copy of "The Shove Heavenward" on his desk, though some lighter literature was often in the recesses thereof; but the former availed him not now. What could it all mean?

He felt himself ruined by this dismissal—ruined without knowing why, and slunk away in utter bewilderment, to weep his heart out on his mother's shoulder in some sordid quarter of the city; and a month from that time found the poor little quill-driver making more noise in the world than he ever expected to do, by beating a drum in Her Majesty's Black Watch.

A sudden thought seized Mr. Gainswood, and he sharply summoned Gillian Lamond, but that young

gentleman had left the office early, and assuming his hat and gloves, the former walked sullenly home, when, to Dove's surprise, he presented himself in the drawing-room just as she was having afternoon tea, an hour before his usual time, and near her stood Gillian, suddenly busying himself with a periodical and paper-knife.

"Here is your tea, papa dear—this is an unexpected treat," said the girl, turning up her soft and beautiful face to his, the expression of which was smoothed now and inscrutable to all but his daughter.

"You know I never take tea, Dove, especially at this time of the day, nor can I understand any but fools taking it at the really usual dinner hour," he replied, gruffly. "You left your desk betimes, Gillian," he added.

"Only to bring Dove this magazine."

"And do you mean to return?"

"If you will excuse me, uncle—"

"Do, papa, dear, we are going for a walk," urged Dove in her softest tone, and with a determination not to perceive that he was annoyed; for she had a quick apprehension, and detected something, she knew not what, in the eyes of her father, as he feigned to interest himself behind a newspaper; but the eyes dealt—that which she had more than once detected of late—a dark and unpleasant glance at the unconscious Gillian.

They were unusually silent in his presence to-day, he thought, and this was not what they were wont to be. Gillian was hovering near Dove, and a charming picture the girl made, framed in, as it were, by the

drapery of a lofty window, through which a flood of sunshine seemed to enshrine her, edging her auburn hair with burnished gold, as she sat upon her ottoman, sipping and toying with her teaspoon in the prettiest way in the world, and shyly smiling to her lover from time to time.

Mr. Gainswood watched them narrowly and gloomily. Dove had finished her tea, and Gillian hastened to place her cup on the nearest gueridon table. Simple and usual though this small piece of attention, he could perceive an upward and downward glance exchanged between the two—a glance full of tenderness and secret understanding—together with a touch of the hand almost swift as light, and these seemed quite confirmation of what Torduff said, and of his own suddenly awakened fears.

Now, whatever were his secret plans and aspirations, Gideon Gainswood was a man of rapid decision, and when Dove, rising, said,

"Now, Gillian, for our walk—we shall keep papa from his paper."

"Stop," said he; "a word with you, Gillian, in my own room."

The gentlemen retired together, and all that followed was singularly brief, as compared with the importance of all that hinged on the interview. The faintest suspicion of what was about to be referred to, occurred to Gillian Lamond and filled him with confusion, anxiety, and a general emotion of dread. These were no way lessened when Mr. Gainswood, while eyeing him very gravely, said somewhat abruptly,

"This sort of thing between you and Dove cannot go on longer!"

"What sort of thing?" stammered Gillian, scarcely knowing what to say.

"Do not repeat my words, please; you know perfectly well what I mean, but perhaps not that people—gossips—are already coupling your names together."

Gillian coloured deeply and then grew very pale. Was this the beginning of a black ending? and was the bright dawn of love, that but a short time before had come in so sweetly, to have a sunset of cloud and storm?

"Dear uncle," he urged, "then is it possible that you, so clever and sharp, have been the last—the very last to see—"

"What?"

"How much we love each other?"

"Fiddlesticks!"

"Do you disapprove of it?" asked Gillian, almost trembling under the other's cold grey eyes.

"I do," was the snappish rejoinder.

"Uncle!"

"I do—till we have your father's full sanction."

"Oh, sir, we are sure of that; but have we yours?"

Gideon Gainswood paused and played with his eyeglass, for though well versed in duplicity and every art and phrase thereof, the present situation was—to him—a peculiar one. He gave Gillian an indescribable glance—unless that it seemed a threatening one—yet said, in a voice like a gasp,

"Yes—you have my sanction."

"God bless you, dearest uncle, for these words!" exclaimed the impulsive young man, as he strove to take one of the other's hands in his; but his "dearest uncle" deliberately placed them both behind his back, and said, briefly and almost sternly—strangely so—

"I shall write to-night to your father, the Colonel, and if he approves, there is nothing more to be said in the matter—the Record will be closed."

With this professional phrase, he added a wave of the hand, as much as to say the conversation was ended. The man's whole manner was singular; in the fulness of his gushing joy, Gillian took no heed of it then; but there came a time when he was to recall it with sorrow and dread. He was about to speak again, when Mr. Gainswood said,

"Dove will be ready now; go for your walk and leave me."

"What can be meant by this coldness?" thought Gillian; "what by those abrupt changes of manner?"

"Oh, what happiness to us, darling," exclaimed Dove, when he had breathlessly told her all, and she clung to his arm when they set forth for their walk, after he had with difficulty restrained her from rushing back to embrace and weep on the breast of her "dearest papa," who seemed in no mood for such ebullition; "but how did it all come about?"

"I can scarcely tell—I care not to inquire, or to think of aught but that you are to be mine—mine for ever, Dove—dearest Dove!"

Yet Gillian was perplexed by the manner of his

intended father-in-law; and still more would he have been so, as to what that personage meant, had he heard him, while sitting at his desk, and dipping his pen in a bottle of copying ink—for the letter to the Colonel was to be duly copied—muttering between his set teeth,

"In this act I do but make the best of it! It is not what I intended to do—and not what I may do *yet*. But, after all, it might be worse—it might be worse! If Lachlan Lamond ever comes home, he must be merciful to me, for the sake of his son, if not for Dove's sake."

Merciful for what? But the lawyer muttered to himself, while with many a low interjection—many a pause of doubt, and fierce, stealthy glances at nothing, he penned the promised letter to Colonel Lamond, then far away in Central India.

CHAPTER III.

THE COLONEL'S ANSWER.

THEIR love permitted and acknowledged, to Gillian Lamond and Dove it seemed more than ever a fact and reality, and how happy they were in their young hearts, which were filled with gratitude to Mr. Gainswood. But the latter still viewed their engagement with undisguised coldness; there was no doubt about that feature in the affair. He had abruptly consented to it, but with one sternly impressed proviso, that it should be kept as

secret as possible, admitted to none, denied to all, till the proper time came, as such arrangements were better not to be canvassed by any coterie of girls, and old female gossips, till *the time* came, and that had but one meaning full of joy to the pair as they heard him and gave their promise; but another time came when Mr. Gainswood rubbed his hands and ground his teeth with pleasure at his own foresight in this matter.

The Indian mails were watched, and the Colonel's reply anxiously looked for by all; but Gillian had a perfect and perplexing consciousness that since that day on which the engagement had been permitted, the temper of Mr. Gainswood, and his general bearing towards himself, had not been improved. He knew not what to make of it, but trusted vaguely to his father's letter for explaining all.

To his unfortunate employés his manner became almost savage at times, as upon them he could vent his secret wrath unfettered.

Weeks passed on, and no letter came from India; the lovers counted the days, and yet, with them, the time passed happily enough and fast too; equally quickly did they pass with busy Mr. Gainswood, for when not drudging among the drudges in his spacious offices, laying snares for clients, bullying his debtors, toadying or doing something equally dignifying to further his own interests, he was attending religious meetings or others, with reference to which his name was sure to be reported prominently by the provincial press.

One morning, among many others a letter from

India—*the* expected letter was laid on his desk. He uttered a fierce snort, or malediction, but under his breath, as he snatched it up, and by legal force of habit, on glancing at the postmark, he saw that he should have had it the day before.

"Whose duty was it to prepare these letters for me—yours, or Mr. Smith's?" he sternly asked one of his clerks.

"Either Mr. Smith or I, sir—but I left it at the bottom of the letter-box by mistake, and please—"

"You and Mr. Smith," he thundered out to the trembling lad, "may go to the cashier, get what is due to you, and quit my service. I never forgive a dereliction of duty—go!"

The unfortunate fellow saw it was hopeless to urge anything, and slunk away, with a sick heart, no doubt. He was one of those who, from day to day, and year to year, plodded on, under-paid and over-worked, till every hope had died away, and every higher aspiration faded out amid the wearying process of the dullest labour with its ceaseless monotony.

And now for tho letter of the Colonel, which was dated from Calcutta, and some time back, as it had been following him "by dawk" for several weeks, as he came down country. It was a manly and soldier-like letter, filled with the warmest profession of regard for Gainswood, and intense gratitude to him for the care and affection bestowed by that personage on his only son, the last left him by the effects and contingencies of life and service in India.

"The proposed marriage of which you write me," continued Colonel Lamond, "is quite what I wish should be, and is in every way the fulfilment of a hope that often occurred to me, though I never hinted of it. The two sisters, our dear dead wives, loved each other with great tenderness, and for both their sakes, as well as Gillian's, I shall dearly love your daughter Dove. I often think of her now, when all duty is past, and I am left over brandy-pawnee and a cheroot in my lonely bungalow. I remember her well when she was a sweet wee birdie indeed, only some three or four years old, and when I could little think she would ever become a daughter to me. Kiss her for my sake, and say I shall bring her a suite of gold ornaments, the best that Delhi can produce and that a queen might wear.

"Before that time, brother Gainswood, I have some work cut out for me. I have to take command of a little mixed force of all arms, destined to act against some of the hill tribes that are marauding near the Bhotan frontier. This will close my long service in India, and luckily it will only be a flash in the pan, as we used to say. The moment it is over, and the field force is broken up, I shall start for Europe to figure at the marriage, so the youngsters must wait a few months for the sake of an old man who loves them well; and so, God bless you all!"

Then followed a postcript about the repurchase of Avon-na-gillian, which the lawyer read with bitter impatience, and muttered with a saturnine smile on his thin lips.

"Long ere this he has been on the march towards Bhotan, where bullets and poisoned arrows will be flying, and one of these may—well—well, but we are all in the hands of the Lord, so let me not anticipate—let me not anticipate," he added, for this man could actually cant to himself!

"My poor old father going to fight again!" exclaimed Gillian, on the letter being read to him. "Oh, Uncle Gainswood, but for his determined wish and my love for Dove, what a coward and slave I should feel myself just now."

"Don't be melodramatic, Gillian," said Mr. Gainswood, eyeing the lad gloomily from under his bushy eyebrows, as he actually seemed to hate him for a tenderness and enthusiasm which his nature failed to comprehend; "when your good aunt left me for a better world—'blessed are the dead which die in the Lord'—she entrusted you to me, as especially your father did, Gillian; but, alas! we cannot gather figs of thistles. We know not *what* may happen; and, for all your good father's bright hopes, you may still, my boy, be utterly penniless."

The Bhotanese bullets were, perhaps, hovering in the lawyer's mind.

Gillian had more than once heard this unpleasant, and to him inexplicable, inuendo from his uncle, but did not attach to it the weight that, after a time, he found himself compelled to do.

"The dispositions of Providence are mysterious—yea, most mysterious, and no one knoweth what a day may

bring forth!" said Mr. Gainswood, shaking his head solemnly, and using one of those phrases of which he had always a ready stock on hand, and which he used most when he was weaving a web of deceit, as he proceeded to fold, and docket and date the letter, by legal force of habit, "Colonel Lamond, anent his son's marriage," and then consigned it to the particular tin box the key of which he always kept himself.

So the dear old Colonel had consented, and nothing was wanted but his return and his presence to crown the happiness of all, as Gillian thought, when, with Mr. Gainswood's permission, he hurried home to acquaint Dove with the contents of his father's letter, the effect of which was very different upon the recipient thereof, for when left alone, he sat long buried in thought, with his brows knit, his teeth clenched, and his hands thrust far into his trowser's pocket, where they played unconsciously—another habit he had—with the loose money he loved so well.

CHAPTER IV

LORD CAMPSIE.

At dinner, a few days after this, Mr. Gainswood, after his usual long benediction, added thereto, somewhat abruptly, as if it had been a part thereof,—

"The Prince's Hussars have just come in."

"Indeed, papa," said Dove, not much interested by

the intelligence, though rather surprised that her father should be. So was Gillian, who looked up inquiringly from his soup.

"To Piershill?" he asked.

"To Piershill Barracks," added Mr. Gainswood, a little pompously; "and I have just had a letter from our client, Viscount Kilsythe, stating that his son, Lord Campsie, a captain in the regiment, will call upon me, and that I must be careful in making monetary advances to the young fellow; but that he wishes me to pay him some attention as the son of an old friend."

"In what way, papa?"

"Oh—a dinner or a ball, perhaps!"

"A ball, papa?" repeated Dove, her fine eyes filling more with absolute wonder than delight, while a kind of scared expression stole over the wrinkled front of old Mrs. McBriar.

"Such vanities are not in my way—moreover, I never approved of the sexes dancing together, but we shall have some dinner parties, certainly—what do you think, Mrs. McBriar?"

"I mind me well, that when Quarter-master McBriar, of the Scots Greys, was quartered at Jock's Lodge——"

"Bother Quarter-master McBriar!" said Mr. Gainswood, interrupting one of the old lady's stereotyped reminiscences of her late husband, and without the slightest ceremony.

However, it was carried *nem. con.* that a dinner-party was to be given. But though used well enough to such entertainments on a large and lavish scale, Dove and her

chaperone, Mrs. McBriar, were not wont to have guests of the calibre of Lord Campsie and his brother officers. "Parliament House men," as the legal fraternity are named in Edinburgh, from the circumstance of the old Hall of the Scottish Estates being their "Westminster Hall," and solemn, ponderous, or rough, toddy-imbibing country divines she had of late been well used to, and constantly bored by, as they formed her father's "set;" but the Prince's Hussars!

Poor little Dove was more scared than delighted by the prospect of having the responsibility of acting hostess, though the situation was not without its novelty; and forthwith she and Mrs. McBriar, who, of course, took Gillian into their confidence, became deeply involved in the question of who was to be invited, and in the still greater one of who was to be omitted; for in small circles like the Scottish capital and cathedral cities, that is frequently the most momentous feature in connection with an entertainment.

The daily papers were searched now, in vain, by Gillian and Dove, and by none more anxiously than Gideon Gainswood, for some tidings of Colonel Lamond's remote and obscure expedition against the Hillmen. Whatever the result thereof, no news appeared as yet in the journals of the "modern Athens," where, even now in these railway days, the *Times* and other metropolitan journals are generally to be found at the club-houses alone.

One day—Dove never forgot it—she and her particular friend and gossip, Flora Stuart, a pretty blonde girl, whose bright face and attractive figure were familiar

to all the many idlers of the fashionable promenades of that city of loungers, were setting forth together, when a gentleman on horseback passed them in the huge and otherwise empty square.

"A distinguished-looking young fellow—is not he, Dove?" said Flora, as the rider passed them with his horse at a walk, and gave them a casual, but critical, glance through his eye-glass.

Upright, tall, and flat-shouldered, he sat in his saddle with the ease that declared him a finished horseman, and one who had perfect power over the beautiful animal he rode. He seemed about seven or eight and twenty years of age, closely shaven, all save a dark moustache, with deep grey eyes, and features that were undoubtedly characteristic of good blood and lineage. He had the calm, self-satisfied air peculiar to a thorough man-about-town in the present day, and the horse he rode was sufficient to stamp and prove the excellence of his taste in that matter.

It was a dark-bay hunter about sixteen hands high, with small head, slender neck, ample chest, full barrel, broad loins, muscular and well-formed legs. He was attended by a groom of the orthodox English type—neither man nor boy, in leathers and white-topped boots, hat encircled by a thin gold cord, a cockade and gold acorn thereon; closely buttoned in a green coat with waistbelt and well folded white neck-tie. The horse he rode, a thoroughbred bay, was lighter than that of his master, but seemed, like it, to combine both action and blood,

The master was a style of man more often seen in the Row, the Lady's Mile, or elsewhere at the West-end of London, than at the West-end of Edinburgh, or any other quarter thereof now. Dove's eye casually followed the approving glance of Flora Stuart, but she could little foresee the trouble this identical horseman was to cause her in time to come.

"He has reined up at your house, Dove!" exclaimed her friend, as they turned out of the square.

"Oh! one of those hussars, no doubt," said Dove, and dismissed the subject from her mind, save in so far as the inevitable dinner party was concerned.

The groom handed in the card of his master, whereon was engraved,

"Captain Lord Campsie,
"Prince's Hussars,"

a piece of pasteboard destined to occupy a conspicuous place in the card-basket of Mr. Gainswood, on whom, perhaps, his lordship would never have called, but for the circumstance that he was the factor on the little that remained of the Scottish Kilsythe Estates; and that, like Hussars in general, he had debts that required liquidation, and was always getting further into debt to accomplish that desired end.

Mr. Gainswood was at home, and Lord Campsie found himself in the stately double drawing-room, the general good style of which was due to Dove's correct taste; but their magnitude and magnificence would have

been sufficient to impress even him, had he not been attracted by the grandeur of the view from the windows —the great extent of beautiful country that—beyond the deep and rugged ravine where the Leith brawled seaward between rocks and gardens, beyond bosky Deanhaugh with its antique mills and stupendous bridge—stretched away in sunny haze towards the Forth with all its isles, and the shores of Fife, with all its clustering towns, green woods and hills, where every tint and outline were softened and mellowed by distance.

"Respectability, according to Sydney Smith, keeps a gig," thought the young lord; "I always supposed that respectability here, was glad enough to be able to keep itself, without the gig; but, by Jove, old Gainswood, you must have feathered your vulture's nest well!"

It was indeed a vulture's nest in some respects, but in it was a dove, of whom Lord Campsie knew nothing yet.

Mr. Gainswood came bustling in, adjusting his wristbands, looking almost fussy, and with great energy shook Lord Campsie's hand, and had it not been gloved, he would have been unpleasantly sensible that the lawyer had just, in haste, washed his digits, as he made a toilette on hearing his noble visitor announced.

He inquired with great *impressement* after the health of dear *Viscount* Kilsythe; and though, of course, the peer referred to was a Viscount, it betrayed the lawyer's ignorance of good society to style him so; thus his son replied, with a peculiar smile,

"Thanks—his lordship is quite well—at least, the old fellow was, when he looked me up some time ago at Hounslow."

Old fellow! Mr. Gainswood felt this to be a very free and easy way to speak of a peer of the realm; for, in Scotland, though one of the most democratic countries in the world, there is—as in America—a slavish admiration of, and adulation to, title and rank, which in the former instance, can only be accounted for by the non-residence of the aristocracy in her capital; as, when not on a brief visit to their estates, they are, of course, in London.

After some common-places, and agreement by common consent that the weather was fine for the season, the young lord, who felt no great pleasure in Mr. Gainswood's society, thought him of the object of his visit.

"You are aware, I suppose, that I am quartered at Piershill, near—near—"

"Ah—yes, my lord—near John's Lodge, my lord."

"Vulgar snob!" thought Campsie, his handsome face rippling with quiet laughter.

"My daughter is, unfortunately, out," said Mr. Gainswood, who was greatly irritated that she was so at this time; but he added suavely, "I should so like her to have seen your lordship, of whom she has heard so much."

Dove probably knew not there was such a person in existence till her father mentioned the fact.

"So sorry—most happy—I'm sure," lisped Campsie, stroking his mustache and not much interested in the

matter; "I should, perhaps, have called at your place of business; but I was trying a new horse out this way."

He then proceeded to open the trenches at once.

"I am in a scrape, Gainswood."

"Going to be married?"

"Not at all—nothing so stupid."

Gainswood did not think he was; but thought there was no harm in suggesting that personal sacrifice to him, or putting it in his head anyhow.

"What then, my lord?" asked the lawyer, who knew that clients always told their story their own way.

He wanted an advance—"only some cool hundreds—most pressing—a doocid affair—but merely temporary."

Gainswood smiled blandly, and nodded while rubbing his coarse hands over each other. He knew to a farthing the monetary resources and prospects of the Livingstones of Kilsythe, and resolved to advance, as yet, only what he was sure of being repaid, with interest, and not a shilling more; yet for some time he pretended to hesitate and raise doubts. After a time, and having thereby given Campsie cause for a little anxiety, he said, in his most friendly tone,

"We'll arrange it all to-morrow, my lord—lunch with me here at two—sharp; it is quieter than the office, we'll just have a bird and some quiet talk over it."

"Thanks—a thousand thanks—most happy—I'm sure," drawled Campsie, assuming his hat, and little thinking that "the bird," most likely referred to, was poor Dove Gainswood.

To her great annoyance, the young lord came thrice to lunch before the monetary matters were arranged, and on each occasion the lawyer watched him closely.

Pleased, if not charmed, with the fresh young girl's beauty and artlessness, Campsie paid her considerable attention. Flora Stuart, who was present once, declared it to be marked attention; but Dove, as she wished it not, certainly never thought so. When addressing all women, Campsie's manner was naturally chivalrous, gentle, and winning, though there were times, when at the stables and elsewhere, he could be slangy enough; but Dove, though all unused to "Lords and Knights of the Garter," was too intelligent a girl not to distinguish the petty nothings, which, added to a very suave manner, might pass for incipient love-making, and the real bearing of a lover.

Mr. Gainswood had not this delicate perception; but Dove knew her father's heart, and could read his eyes like a printed book. She began to have forebodings of what might yet develop itself, and took care never to be left alone with Lord Campsie even for a single moment.

From that first visit her trials began—trials which she shrunk from confiding even to Gillian Lamond, lest she might wound the honest fellow's loving heart.

CHAPTER V

THE PRINCE'S HUSSARS.

LIKE everything else she undertook, Dove's little dinner party was a success, from the soup and fish to the maraschino or charteuse and the coffee. With the pairing of the couples we have little to do, save to mention that, of course, she was led to the dining-room by Lord Campsie, the guest of the evening, while Stafford Martingale, one of the fastest men of the regiment —a prime favourite with fast women, and who always boasted himself a non-marrying man—to his disgust and bewilderment, had the duty of escorting old Mrs. Elspat McBriar, while fair Flora Stuart was happy in having Sir Hayward Carrington, a good-looking baronet, rather "horsey" and *blasé*, a man about forty years of age, who had learned as much of life in half those years as another man might in a hundred—but with the entertainment in all its petty details we have less to do, than what it led to.

A little excited by the novelty of the affair, the flush in Dove's soft check made her look more beautiful than ever, as it mantled under the transparent texture of her fair white skin. She was dressed in blue, which she knew was most becoming to her complexion and bright auburn hair with its golden sheen. She wore with it the richest lace, and her jewels few, as became a young girl, were good and in excellent taste, and her cable-bracelets

of Italian workmanship set off the whiteness of her beautiful hands, which Campsie, a true connoisseur in such features, could perceive were as handsome as her eyes and the contour of her dazzling throat. How proud of her Gillian felt as he gazed at her from time to time during the protracted repast.

Not quite at his ease, the lawyer rather overdid his part of host; but that which was restlessness passed for hospitality; while old Mrs. McBriar, in honour of the guests, appeared in an amplitude of black skirt, moire antique, of a fashion unknown in this world now, twisting nervously her grandmother's square gold eye-glass, but nodding and smiling graciously to all, and whispering her disappointment to Martingale that they had not come in uniform as she fully expected them to do, with busbies and accoutrements, for in Quarter-master McBriar's time—and so forth—she gave some prosy anecdote to which the Hussar listened with well-bred indifference.

At first she was rather put about by the presence of a real lord at the table. The paper-lord, or "Parliament House" article, she was used to; they were plain, half-bred, toddy-drinking and often coarse-speaking old Scotsmen, but Campsie and his friends of "the Prince's," with their general style, bearing, and easy *nsouciance*—for such it was—impressed her deeply.

Among these Hussars, with their man-about-town bearing and soldierly aspect, their broad views of politics, their references to a fashionable world which he was as unable to comprehend as he was their occasional

"horsey" talk, poor Gideon Gainswood was like a fish out of the water. Perhaps, in his heart he hated them for possessing a tone, rank, and bearing so immeasurably above his own; but he was proud of his guests—a real lord and baronet—and liked immensely that his little barrister friends should see them at his table, but he felt more at ease when it was quitted for the drawing-room.

On the other hand, such is the gratitude of "society," that Campsie, Carrington, Martingale, and two other Hussars who were there, liked his wines, his rooms, and the girls they met, better than his own company, and when the piano was opened he was forthwith ignored; yet he heeded it not—or, perhaps, felt it not.

The three Stuart girls, old Torduff's daughters, and two or three more, who, like their countrywomen in general, were accomplished musicians and sang well, now that the Hussars had been introduced to them, looked fondly forward to the periodical balls and assemblies of the coming season, which there begin in the February of each year; thus they were full of gratitude to Dove, and certainly did their best to excel; while Gillian, in spite of himself, looked rather moodily on the progress of the whole affair.

Dove's beauty, and, more than all, her alleged expectations, had found her many admirers among the men who frequented her father's house; but these were chiefly sprouts of the provincial Bar—"young reekies," as Campsie was wont to call them, whose inordinate self-esteem only provoked the girl's sense of amusement.

Like Gainswood, they were only accustomed to those "Lords" who sprang from their own society; but now, those who were present, when they saw the son of a peer and an English baronet reputed to have £70,000 per annum, talking and looking very much like other people, were perhaps surprised, and thus Campsie and Carrington actually began to lose caste in their eyes.

As Stafford Martingale did not affect to be a musical man, Mrs. McBriar fastened upon him for the infliction of her reminiscences of the Scots Greys, which she interpolated with some choice *morceaux* from "Elijah the Tishbite," "The Shove Heavenward," and similar works, all uttered in a sharp West Highland accent.

"By Jove, the rum old girl is off her nut!" sighed Martingale, as he eyed her through his glass as he might a species of Ourang-outang.

As Martingale had his left arm in a slight sling—little more than a broad black riband—the ladies thought he must have been wounded somewhere, and on Mrs. McBriar venturing to inquire where, he replied,

"In the hunting field, madam."

"In the field—dear me!" she added, full of interest, taking in only the last word.

"It was in Leicestershire, when riding to hounds. I had rasped a bullfinch, but the second fence was an oxer—a ferocious one—a ditch deep and broad, a thick laid fence, and stiff posts four or five feet beyond. I never craned a bit, but rushed my horse at it, Mrs. McBriar,

holding him thoroughly by the head, gave him a squeeze with the knees, a touch with the spur, and he rose like a bird!" continued Martingale, who could be fluent enough on such a subject as this. "I went crash into the rails and came a terrible cropper—you understand me, Mrs. McBriar; but, though my arm was out, I clambered into my saddle, and was in at the death, for the country after that was as easy as the passage of the Red Sea, don't you know."

Mrs. McBriar was as shocked at the comparison as she was mystified by the anecdote, and still more was she bewildered when she overheard Lord Campsie say to Sir Hayward,

"Yes—of course—the Queen runs at Goodwood—she has more than once done a good thing with Spinning Jenny with even weights—I have put a pot of money on her."

"A pot on the Queen!" thought Mrs. McBriar, breathlessly.

"A pot," repeated the Baronet; "by Jove, I would not have put more than a monkey—it is a sell, I fear."

"My book's made, don't you know, and I am safe to win, old boy," replied Campsie, confidently.

"Gad, I hope so—but I gave the straight tip—the Q. T. for light. If you fail——"

"Don't talk of it—my resource, then, would inexorably be the children of Israel."

"The Red Sea and the Children of Israel?" pondered the old lady; "perhaps they were religious and God-

fearing young men," but their language sounded incomprehensible.

Lord Campsie was just the kind of man to feel himself at home anywhere, and as this was his fourth or fifth visit to the house of Gainswood, whom he patronised, and by whom he was treated with servile deference, he felt himself quite *l'ami du maison,* and now he was bending over Dove, as she sat at the piano, stroking his moustache from time to time with all the air of a handsome fellow who is perfectly pleased with himself, with his own "get-up," and with the impression he hoped he was making, while turning over the leaves of the music-book, the pleasant duty heretofore of Gillian Lamond generally.

Sensible of this; when a cluster was about her, after much bad French, indifferent German, and singularly weak English singing — weak as far as composition went—had been performed, when Campsie, with all the *empressement* of which he was master, whisperingly urged her to favour *him* with something—so closely that his moustache touched her ear,—Dove coloured with annoyance, and motioning Gillian to her side to turn over the leaves, said,

"You know all my songs, Gillian—what shall I sing?"

"Sing 'Wild Joanna,'" said he, with his eyes full of pleasure, while Campsie fell back a pace.

"I know it is your favourite—place it before me—thanks, dear Gillian," she whispered.

Her taste in music was cultivated and refined, and

her selection of songs was remarkable for sweetness and quaintness, and she knew that Gillian was never weary of hearing her sing one, of a ballad kind—the one named—which was mournful in cadence; the tender memory of which was fated often to come back to him, when they were far apart.

The song of some unknown writer, it told of a girl who vowed, in her faith, to visit her lover even after death had parted them, and we may be pardoned giving the opening lines here from memory—

"Thou hast sworn, oh wild Joanna!
When death shall come to thee,
That if ever soul come back,
Thy soul will come to me.

"But think impetuous maiden!
Though dear that radiant head,
The mortal heart is weak,
And hath terror of the dead.

"Oh let there be no change!
Come bright and sweet as now;
With the same dusk on thy cheek,
And dark hair on thy brow.

"But come not, come not maiden!
To my bedside in the night
When my eyes with sleep are laden,
Lest my heart may fail with fright."

The most tender verses were the last; and long, long was the expression of Dove's soft violet eyes, as they looked upward for a moment into Gillian's, doomed to haunt him in connection with the story they told.

He withdrew, and once more Campsie assumed his post, with the slightest *soupçon* of supercilious annoyance in his face; while Gillian, whom the other's rank alarmed, and his attention annoyed, was not in the least degree jealous, for simply, the honest fellow could not understand that anyone could know Dove Gainswood without admiring and loving her.

But the evening came to an end at last, and Sir Hayward's carriage took the Hussar party home to their barracks at Piershill, leaving pressing invitations with Mr. Gainswood and Gillian to dine with them at mess, on the next "stranger day."

Some of the ladies present—not Torduff's daughters, who were country people—but of the legal circle, had enjoyed themselves immensely, for one particular reason. They could now, when asked if they knew Viscount Kilsythe's son and heir, or Sir Hayward Carrington, or Captain Stafford Martingale—the rich Hussar—say, and say with truth, that they had met him at the Gainswood dinner party, and so forth.

Flora Stuart's comments on Lord Campsie to Dove made the cheeks of the latter colour.

"Isn't he charming, Dove?"

"Very pleasant."

"Pleasant! he is delightful—so handsome—so rich, and such fun, dear!"

"They say he has spent all his money," croaked Mrs. McBriar.

"Not at all—who dares to say so?" asked Mr. Gainswood, with some asperity.

"Never mind—money or no money," said Flora to Dove, as she shawled herself and the carriage was announced, "he'll be a peer one day, and you have made quite a conquest. Don't you think she has, Mr. Lamond?"

"The 'young reekies' were certainly nowhere to-night," replied Gillian, with a smile to conceal some of the real annoyance which the heedless girl's rattle caused him.

But he forgot that his engagement with Dove had been formally denied to her, as to others.

CHAPTER VI.

AT PIERSHILL.

For the first time in his very prosaic life, Gideon Gainswood began to indulge in some very brilliant day-dreams, out of which he wove a future, even as Alnaschar did out of his basket of glass.

He felt certain that Dove's beauty had made a favourable impression on the young lord, whose monetary necessities he knew, and any monetary advances he made from thenceforward were simply as the means to an end—to get the young heir of Viscount Kilsythe in his power. The name and title of the latter were Scottish, of course; but so far as nationality went, he was no more a Scot than Gainswood himself, and he was about as much one in sentiment as a Fiji Islander.

Apart from the reversion of the estates in both countries, Campsie's belongings were not much. His wardrobe was unexceptionable, and so was his jewellery.

He had four horses at Piershill, besides his charger; a dressing-case that might suit a duchess, and was believed to be the gift of one, and he had a betting-book, bound in gold and morocco, that cost him more thought, certainly, than ever Euclid did.

"No—Campsie doesn't gamble," said Mr. Gainswood musingly, "but he makes his racing pay."

"How?" asked Gillian, who was near.

"Why he won £20,000 on a horse last year."

As it was Gillian who spoke, Mr. Gainswood knit his brows and turned away.

We have referred to the adulation of rank that exists in the Scottish metropolis—a feature almost unknown in London, where the vast community, linked together from the most exalted in station to the most humble, in a graduated scale, gives unto every man his place; but in Edinburgh it is totally different, and there the legal profession, who are generally sprung from the humbler classes, actually assume to themselves the place of the old Scottish aristocracy.

"When royalty went to London," wrote one who knew the subject well, and is now in his grave, "nobility followed; and in Edinburgh the field is left now, and has been so left for a long time back, to Law, Physic, and Divinity. The professions predominate: than these, there is *nothing higher!* In Edinburgh, a Lord of Session is as a Prince of the Blood; a Professor,

a Cabinet minister; an Advocate, an heir to a peerage. The University and the Courts of Justice are to Edinburgh what the Court and Houses of Lords and Commons are to London."

Proh pudor! Yet, elsewhere he admits, that in no other city will we find so general an appreciation of books, music, and art. "It is peculiarly free from the taint of the ledger and counting-house; it is a Wiemar without a Goethe—a Boston without its nasal twang."

Gideon Gainswood was second to none there in his profound admiration of the peerage, though in politics a most uncompromising whig-radical; and now—now, the slender chance, the fond hope, the dazzling prospect of securing by any means such a son-in-law as Lord Campsie, the future Viscount Kilsythe, made him totally oblivious of Dove's own wishes in the matter and his mode of dealing with his nephew. The peerage, attainted in 1715, after the battle of Dunblane, had been restored by George IV., before his famous visit to Scotland in 1822.

He took down the Peerage, and read with a fervour exceeding any he had ever felt when reading the Scriptures perhaps, the pedigree of the Livingstones of Campsie and Kilsythe, from Sir William who fought under James II. at Roxburgh, William, fourth of his title, killed at Flodden, William, sixth, knighted with the Duke of Albany in 1565, and so on to others who fought for the Stuarts in all their struggles, loyally, gallantly, and truly (the popish and bloody house of Stuart, as Gainswood was wont to call it), till in fancy

he saw it coming down to "the present peer, A. E. Viscount Kilsythe, Captain in the Prince's Hussars (and seventeenth of his line from Sir John Livingstone of Callender) who married Dove, only daughter and heiress of Gideon Gainswood, W S., Edinburgh."

This would be indeed a fish-torpedo to explode among the gossips of "the village in the North," as Thackeray named it.

In his over-vaulting ambition, he already foresaw that which poor little Dove, all unconscious of the net that was weaving, certainly did not—his grandson—the Master of Kilsythe—seated on his knee—the picture of himself, as such pictures are alleged to be reproduced in the third generation; and, as for the old Viscount, he already counted as nothing in the lawyer's fervid day-dreams.

But the Colonel—the Colonel was coming home! More than all, my Lord Campsie had not yet proposed; and if he did, Dove might not have him. Dare sho refuse?

But the Colonel! He glanced from his desk to the green charter box; his hands clenched till the finger-nails were buried in the palms, and then, more than ever, did the dark, terrible, and hunted expression, before mentioned, cloud all his sordid visage.

Mr. Gideon Gainswood declined the invitation to dine with the Hussar mess at Piershill. He had dined there once with the son of a client, a lieutenant of Lancers, and drank so much wine of various kinds that he re-

membered nothing of leaving the table, and was oblivious of everything till next morning, when he was found by the Rough Rider and his squad in the Riding School, tucked up to the nose in tan and painted pea-green.

Of this insult he took no notice—wisely, it was said, as an ugly story concerning how he had figured in some heavy bill transaction was whispered about at the time; so Gillian, who was fond of military society, proceeded to the barracks alone.

They are, or were until lately, considered the best accommodation for cavalry in Britain, and stand in the plain immediately below the northern base of Arthur's Seat, within a mile of the Forth, and in a locality rich in such scenic attractions as comport well with the vicinity of a city so picturesque and magnificent. The actual name of the place is Jock's Lodge—as it was so called in the time of Charles II.—but the barracks are named Piershill, in honour of a Colonel Piers, whose residence stood there, and who commanded a corps of dragoons in the days of George II. On one side towers the great mountain that overlooks the city. On the other opens the firth, with its islets and steamers, and the wavy outline of Fife beyond.

Though Gillian was the only stranger, the band was playing at intervals in the barrack square, and all the trophied plate of the mess—the towering and costly vases and epergnes, the accumulations and presentations of past years, added to the magnificence of a luxurious and well-ordered dinner table, to which Gillian was

welcomed by Lord Campsie, Sir Hayward Carrington, and others, and treated with every hospitality; and yet, as the evening wore on, he had much reason to regret that he had accepted the invitation at all. He heard some things that he would rather not have heard.

The troops of the left wing had just come in, and the officers, who had never been in these quarters before, were inquiring what sort of a place Edinburgh was—if there was any "society" and so forth; but, headed by Lord Campsie, the first arrivals were unanimous in voting that Piershill was an awful and melancholy change after Hounslow, where they had been within a few miles of the Row, the Parks, Regent Street, Lillie Bridge, the Opera, and a thousand other things unknown to the modern Athenians; and the first Lord Campsie, who so stoutly defended his castle of Kilsythe against Oliver Cromwell, had he been within hearing, would have been sorely troubled and perplexed by the style, ideas, and conversation of his noble descendant, especially his somewhat contemptuous opinion of the "grey metropolis of the North," and of the "upper ten dozen," whom he affirmed to be the society inquired for. Having been quartered at Piershill before, and moreover, being the son of a Scottish peer, he was naturally looked upon as an authority.

"The women want that finish and delicacy which those in London have, and their fashions are always months behind their time," said his lordship.

"But they have weekly assemblies here—daunces?" lisped Lieutenant Lavender.

"Yes—of course, in what they call the season, and patronised by some sixth-rate lady of the aristocracy, who may be here *en passant;* but they are bad form, very; all legal and shop-people; their wives in cotton velvet, imitation lace, and French jewelry; and, like the men, all displaying the most dreadful air of self-assertion in the world. But it is great fun."

"Come, come, Campsie, that is too bad!" said Sir Hayward; "I have heard that these entertainments—the weekly assemblies—are a very good style of thing, and that Red Coats there are always at a premium."

"Yes," replied Campsie; "there you are right, as the girls are pretty sure that the wearers of them are gentlemen, which the Young-reekies may not be."

"Then, I suppose, the General Assembly must be a very gay one," said Lavender, "given, I suppose, by the Commander-in-chief?"

Campsie laughed outright at this, and then said,

"Congratulate yourself that you have escaped it, my boy, with its swarms of Black-coats, and think of the Scotch paper-lords in the train of the High Commissioner, in cabs, or carriages, with coats armorial that outshine their father's signboards. It's very funny; but it is a yearly nuisance here, of which I shall move for the abolition, if ever I am a representative peer. I have been quartered in this hole before, don't you know, for my sins."

"You are very unpatriotic!" said Sir Hayward.

"I have my own ideas on these matters, don't you know," drawled Campsie. "Mixed though his race is,

that becomes true nationality in an Englishman which is mere querulous provincialism in the Scot or Irishman."

Gillian was decidedly annoyed by the derogatory remarks of the young lord; but was loth to quarrel with him, loth to risk a scene, and especially with one of his uncle's principal clients; and, oddly enough, he was the more annoyed because he knew that some of Campsie's remarks were but too true.

The music of the band partially drowned conversation for a time; the evening being calm and serene, all the mess-room windows were open, though twilight had fallen and the gasaliers were lit. By this time the cloth was removed, and the wine had been circulated pretty freely, so much so, that Campsie's utterance had begun to get a little "feathery," as he phrased it.

"Yes, I agree with you," he was saying to Stafford Martingale; "she is a jolly little girl, and with lots of tin!"

"And utterly without the *patois* of Edinburgh."

"You are right, Staff, my boy; but, by Jove, the old pater—what's his name—Gainswood possesses it in perfection. A girl with such an instep should be a good waltzer."

"You have been noting her points pretty closely," said Martingale.

"Are you speaking of Miss Gainswood?" asked Gillian, somewhat sharply.

"Hope you are not sweet upon her, Lamond?" said Campsie.

"Why?"

"Because I have half a mind to be so myself."

"Sir—she is my cousin."

On this the banter instantly ceased; the burst of laughter in which the young lord indulged at his own conceit passed away, and there was an adjournment made to the smoking-room, where, amid the smoke and odour of manilla cheroots, bland weeds said to be slightly opiated and hence more than usually soothing, and full-flavoured regalias, much "horsey" talk was engaged in, as every officer present rode, hunted, and betted freely on all the coming events, and Campsie, perhaps to remove the unpleasant impression his careless remark might have made upon Gillian, plunged at once into matters of which he knew nothing; the Derby and Oaks, which were just at hand; how it was a wonder he had not killed himself at the last Liverpool steeplechases; but he was a fellow, don't you know, who took a vast deal of killing, and ever and anon referred to his favourite mare on which he had won so much last year, adding,

"I have entered her at Punchestown for the Great United Service Handicap, and at Goodwood too. If she wins both I am a made man."

"If not?"

"Don't think of it, old fellow, for then I shall be in a precious hole!"

After a time the name of Gainswood fell again on Gillian's ear. This time the speakers were Sir Hayward Carrington and Lavender, who were smoking outside

one of the open windows. Their voices came distinctly to his ear, hence it was impossible for him not to listen.

"And you actually dined there—by Jove!" said Lavender.

"Campsie took us. You are right—Gainswood—that is the name; he *is* deuced bad form—a most disreputable old rascal. I know now that it was he who played here at Piershill, such a trick to O'Connor of the Irish Lancers."

"How?"

"O'Connor and he did a bill for five thou. (he had a loss on the Epsom) at inordinate percentage, you may be sure, though he had many religious scruples about advancing money for a racing debt; but the security was unexceptionable. It fell, of course, inexorably due. O's long-suffering parent stumped up like an old Irish brick as he was, but omitted to have the beastly bit of blue paper returned."

"Well?" asked Lavender, tipping the ashes off his long regalia.

"And what does old Gainswood do?"

"Put it in the fire, I suppose."

"Not at all; he had it noted, protested, and paid away, and on its being presented a second time, O'Connor had to pound his commission at Greenwood's, and quit the Lancers for ever."

"Sharp practice, that!"

"Dodson and Fogg couldn't beat it."

"And what became of O'Connor—took to the wine-trade or a secretaryship, I suppose."

"Poor fellow—he took her Majesty's shilling in the 11th Hussars, and was shot through the heart, a private soldier, in the Balaclava charge!" said Sir Hayward with emphatic bitterness. "It nearly broke the heart of the poor old man in Galway. He never meant to drive Pat to that resource. But what did it matter to the Scotch Shylock who had received, twice over, his pound of flesh?"

"I shall not dine here again," thought Gillian, as he took his way homeward soon after hearing these terrible remarks, which made his heart sick, more than all, when he thought of Dove.

He walked slowly onward, cigar in mouth, and lost in thought. The genuine snobbery of the young lord's remarks at mess he had utterly forgotten in the bitterness of the revelation made by Sir Hayward Carrington. Before him rose the green outline of the Calton Hill, with the great open columns of the intended Parthenon darkly defined against the broad bright disc of the summer moon; on his right lay the pretty village of Restalrig, with its quaint cottages and ancient church of the thirteenth century, covered with ivy and embosomed among orchards; and Gillian looked around him dreamily as he walked leisurely homeward.

All that he had overheard concerning Mr. Gainswood—*her* father—galled and stung him. Could such things have been? Dark, vague, and terrible suspicions and anticipations, born of this and of his uncle's peculiar bearing for some time past, began to haunt and appa him in spite of himself. For the first time in his life

he was most unhappy, in having overheard that which he sorrowed to have heard at all.

Perhaps it was all a mistake. Anyway, he resolved to be silent on the subject. He strove to thrust distrust of his uncle's honour (Honour!) from him; but the story would come up again and again, for was he not the father of Dove!

But events, unforeseen, were to happen thick and fast now.

CHAPTER VII.

A NOBLE LORD RESOLVES TO SACRIFICE HIMSELF.

It chanced that one afternoon Lord Campsie came to the conclusion, that with regard to Dove, of whom he had evidently become as much smitten as it was in his languid nature to be, he must do something to place himself on a solid footing with her.

On that afternoon he had been dangling, as usual, about her in the drawing-room; but she had been provokingly cold and distant to him; spoke thrice to Gillian —who resolutely kept his post—for each time she addressed the visitor, and when pressed to sing something, she allowed him alone to turn the leaves of her music, and by her mode of treating Lord Campsie, left nothing undone to show him that Gillian was her affianced and accepted lover, to whom she felt that the attention of one whom she conceived to be only amusing himself,

must be eminently distasteful. Matters had come to such a pass, that some such demonstration as this was necessary; and thus pique brought his lordship suddenly to a point, that he was, perhaps, not yet quite prepared for, so as he turned his horse's head eastward to the barracks he began to reflect.

It was not a common process with him, and usually made him taciturn—even sulky with his best friends.

He began to fancy himself very much in love, and naturally suspected Gillian; but the chief infirmity of his character was a suspicion of motives in every one, a fault created by his mode of education and the circumstances of his position in society.

Though one of the fastest men in the Prince's Hussars, and in his set in town, it was an understood thing, that Lord Campsie must, sooner or later, "commit matrimony," as he would have said, whenever the eligible female came to hand. His father and mother had said so, and everybody else except himself. The charms of a little box at St. John's Wood, with the inevitable outlay, in sealskins, diamonds, bouquets, and tiny brougham, had been, as yet, quite enough for him, especially while the tents of the Hussars were pitched at Hounslow, Aldershot, and other pleasant places within a moderate distance of the metropolis.

In the supposed bride certain qualities were deemed indispensable: beauty, grace, dignity, good birth, and unexceptionable position.

Poor Dove had the first of these three requisites, and

many more, that were lovable, estimable, and adorable; yet she had neither good birth, position, nor anything else in these ways, coming up to the high standard required by the family of Viscount Kilsythe. But, like the daughters of Cottonopolis, she had money. That it was not acquired by honest hard work and genuine industry mattered not.

Campsie knew, or supposed that she would have a handsome dowry; for when asking advances, had not the lawyer said casually, "I must be careful of my little girl—I must not leave her less than eighty or a hundred thousand;" and so now, it seemed high time that he, Campsie, was married and settled at last.

The heir to an old title, taken from the now ruined castle of Kilsythe, in Stirlingshire (about which he cared no more than if it was in Timbuctoo or Dahomey), with already burdened estates in more than one English county, he could not go down to his grave unwed, especially with all his debts, so here was this taking little Dove (though he detested her suave, canting, vulgar father) at hand to make all comfortable, and to be had—he never doubted it—for the asking.

Such were the views of my Lord Campsie, as he slowly made up his noble mind to come to the point and "chuck himself away," whatever the mess and his "set" might think.

Dove would make a very creditable-looking little wife, and—

> "Though from a humble stock, undoubtedly
> Was fashioned to much honour."

Her father was a nobody, and her grandfather, no doubt, a myth. These were bitter pills to swallow; while, after all Campsie had seen and known of life in London and elsewhere, it did seem rather a grim joke that he should be proposing at last to the little provincial, this Scots lawyer's heiress; but, once transplanted elsewhere, and placed among the upper classes, he had no doubt that, with her father's ill-gotten gains—he was certain they must be so—she would pass very well as the future Viscountess Kilsythe.

"Eighty or a hundred thousand, incumbered with such a wife, will be a very tolerable investment of myself," thought Campsie; "but the *pater*—the awful father-in-law, ugh! he will require to be kept utterly and permanently in the background or on his native heath. I wonder if the old beggar wouldn't take some of his own money and emigrate!"

He had once, when under the influence of sundry brandies and sodas, sounded Martingale to ascertain his views of such an alliance.

"I have lost fearfully, on one or two late events, old fellow, don't you know; and at the Derby, my trainer tells me that it is even betting my mare don't start at all; so Martingale, by Jove, I think I'll marry the little Gainswood."

"The devil you will!" drawled the captain, as he lounged back in an Indian chair, with a leg over each arm thereof, watching the smoke from his cigar, as it curled upwards; "why she is only a provincial attorney's daughter, and you know the adage."

"What is it?"

"Brazen pots and earthen vessels ought not to float down the same channel."

"Old Gainswood already holds so many of my acceptances, that in one sense, I am as much in his power as he could wish me to be."

"But old Six-and-eightpence will be certain to see that every penny his girl may have is settled upon herself—everything, even to the Maltese terrier and the pony phaeton, and she might request her lord and master to leave even that, if they quarrelled."

"I would then get a seat in the little one's brougham at St. John's Wood," said Campsie, grimly.

"Gainswood is bad form—very! and without position in society. Take time, old fellow, something else may turn up, even here."

And with the recollection of this not very cheering advice fresh in his mind, Campsie dismounted at the door of Gainswood's office, and even then paused for a moment, as he tied his reins in a knot. He was selfish; for any man brought up as he had been could not—like too many of his class—escape being so, more or less.

"Well," thought his lordship, "hang it—here goes!" and on being ushered into Mr. Gainswood's business-room, he lost not a moment in announcing his object.

"My lord—you really take my breath away!" exclaimed Gainswood, inserting a thumb in each armhole of his vest, and regarding with pretended amaze-

ment, but with intense secret delight, the young lord, who seated himself jauntily on the edge of his writing-table, and flicked his glazed boots with the lash of his jewelled riding-whip. He thought that Campsie had come, as usual, for an advance, or loan; but not to this issue so suddenly.

"I have, indeed, Mr. Gainswood, thought of proposing *au serieux*, for your dear daughter," he repeated.

"You do her and me a high honour, my lord!"

"I do *her* none," was the rather pointed response.

"Who ever has the good fortune to marry my girl, will find with her as much goodness as beauty, and as much money as either."

"A vulgar, purse-proud snob!" thought his intending son-in-law.

"You are the heir to an ancient and honourable Scottish peerage, though not so rich a title as it might be; and you, my lord, pardon me, have many incumbrances; but, oh, my lord, what matter earthly riches; we shall all, I hope, meet one day in Heaven, where no riches are required, save those of the soul, my lord—save those of the soul!"

"But while on earth, and in the Prince's Hussars, a man must have money or credit, or he is safe to go to the dogs and the devil before his time."

"In this matter you are in earnest."

"As earnest as if it was the Derby day, and I heard the saddling bell ring!" said Campsie, impatiently.

"Dove will have a most creditable portion in cash—besides"——

"Besides what?" thought Campsie, while the lawyer was eyeing him acutely out of one eye; and it never seemed necessary to either of these two men, to say one word concerning love, admiration, affection, or such emotions as Dove might be supposed to excite. With the lawyer, whose heart trembled with exultation and ambition, it was simply a magnificent piece of business; while Campsie was much cooler than he had often been when chaffering for a nag at Tattersall's.

"Have I then your permission?" he asked, thinking he had bothered long enough upon the matter.

"Of course, my dear lord—of course, my dear young friend; but can we reckon upon that of Viscount Kilsythe?"

"As he never consulted me in his matrimonial affairs, I don't mean to consult him," was the somewhat flippant response. "The governor may cut up rusty at first; but he'll learn to like Miss Gainswood in time. No one could know her, without liking and loving her." (His lordship thought it was time to say something of this kind now.) "Her manners are doocid good form—her temper sweet—her loveliness undeniable; and as to title——"

"It is the last thing she or I would set store on, my lord!" interrupted Mr. Gainswood, with great fervour.

"Very like a whale!" thought my Lord Campsie.

"My dear daughter," said the lawyer, now deeming it necessary to do a little pathos, "has had a godly upbringing, as beseemed the child of an elder of the kirk

and a Christian man. She is a religious and God-fearing young woman, and will be as a pearl above price—yea, as a crown of glory to her husband. I give her to you, my lord, with the fondest blessing of a loving and tender parent, and the heart-felt wishes of an honest man. May God bless you both!"

Then he wrung the hand of Campsie, and seeming to give way to emotion, covered his eyes with his handkerchief,

"To hide the tears he did not shed."

"Now, that 'the heavy father,' business has been done, I am off like a bird," said Campsie, who had eyed him somewhat dubiously; "so that is arranged—ta, ta, old fellow, I'd look you up to-morrow again."

"Good; what thine heart findeth to do, do it with all thy might."

Again his lordship betook him to his saddle, leaving the lawyer in a very mixed mood of mind, in which exultation, ambition, gratified vanity, and avarice, mingled with much of craven fear and more of hate for Gillian now, as he alone stood in the way, adding to the complications of the situation.

Gainswood had permitted the engagement of Dove and Gillian, and had openly corresponded with the father of the latter on that important subject; and now he had accorded to Campsie permission to address his daughter as a lover! and, as yet, he could not see how the whole affair was to end.

In his vanity and over-reaching ambition, he had not

the courage to act in a straightforward manner, besides, none knew what might happen.

If Dove accepted Campsie, and threw over her cousin, as he never doubted she would, then—he seemed to pause even in speculation, and his fishy, shifty eyes wandered unconsciously to the green charter box.

Meanwhile, half regretting and half exulting in what he had done, Campsie rode slowly homeward by the most magnificent terrace in Europe, and yet saw not a feature of it. "What a poem is Prince's Street!" says Alexander Smith. "The puppets of the busy, many-coloured hour crowd about its pavement, while across the ravine, Time has piled up the Old Town, ridge on ridge, grey as a rocky coast, washed and worn by the foam of centuries; peaked and jagged by gable and roof; windowed from basement to cope; the whole surmounted by St. Giles's airy crown. The New is there looking at the Old. Two Times are brought face to face, and are yet separated by a thousand years."

Oblivious alike of the picturesque as of "the stirring memory" of these thousand years, Lord Campsie rode homeward to his barracks, and saw nothing of all that glorious scenery which makes the city of the gallant James's so full of interest, even to strangers—that old, old city, whose massive mansions of stone, weather-beaten, dark, and built, some of them, in years beyond even the stormy middle ages, have teemed with romantic and historical recollections for many generations of men;

many painful, many pitiful memories, some of love and more of war, duels, and clan battles, of rancorous feud and foreign invasion, and of loyal hearts that have wasted and well-nigh broken in their passionate faith to religion and a race of kings that are no more.

To Campsie, the scenery and the place were all flat, stale, and unprofitable; and if he had a thought on the subject, as he glanced towards the rugged and wonderful outline of the Canongate, it was simply, that "it was d— old and d— dirty."

"I did not think I should have to chuck myself away among the women here, of all places; but needs must, and so, I shall have to make a sacrifice of myself on the altar of necessity!" he muttered as he gave his bay the spur

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CHAPTER VIII.

NEWS FROM INDIA.

All men have their eventful days, it has been said; hence the day after Lord Campsie's visit proved one most eventful to Gillian, who had been—more especially since the dinner at Piershill—apparently somewhat listless and distrait, while in reality full of corroding thought, vague anxiety, and incertitude.

On that morning—Gideon Gainswood never forgot it—there was to be a special meeting of the Presbytery, among whom he was a prominent figure, a shining

light and powerful hand at prayer; various kirk extension schemes, and "overtures" of different kinds were to be considered, yet he was absent.

Important cases before the Lords which were to be heard that day were utterly forgotten, or committed entirely to the care of McCodicil, his Parliament House clerk; for news had come concerning the expedition against the Hill Tribes, and that seemed to absorb every thought of Gideon Gainswood.

He was seated in his office betimes as usual, at the leather-covered writing table, whereon lay many doquets of ominous-looking papers and parchments, title-deeds, processes, leases, and so forth, tied up in legal red tape, while around the room were tin boxes whereon were painted the names of his *clientela*, while a book-case close by was packed with law books and quarto tomes of the "Decisions of the Lords of Council and Session," and on a side-table were somewhat ostentatiously displayed piles of religious tracts and books of prayer.

He was seated, full of thought, pulling his thin under-lip unconsciously, while those cunning eyes of his, which seemed to have the faculty of looking behind him, were idly wandering over the columns of the morning paper, when suddenly he started as if he had received a galvanic shock, and nearly crushed the journal up. Then tremblingly he spread it out upon his desk and turned again to the paragraph which had excited him.

"Unfortunate affair with the Bhoteas—defeat and death of Colonel Lachlan Lamond," so ran the quota-

tion from the "Times" of India. "We have elsewhere stated that an expedition, consisting of 500 Assam Light Infantry, a party of Sowars, and two steel mountain-guns, under that old and distinguished officer, had started from Bengal to punish the marauding Bhoteas. He destroyed their village of Mora and released many of their prisoners, but was compelled to fall back before the hordes that attacked him on every side, who mercilessly slew every wounded man and straggler. Among the slain was Colonel Lamond, who was last seen unhorsed, and fighting bravely, sword in hand, against incredible odds, till he fell pierced by their lance wounds. Thus has the Indian army lost one of its most distinguished officers, for Colonel Lamond served in the Affghan campaigns, including the storming of Ghuznee, the battle of Tizeen, and Sale's defence of Jelalabad."

Thrice did Gideon Gainswood read this paragraph ere he seemed to realise the whole situation; and then his cold, shifty eyes wandered, travelled, unconsciously as it were, to the tin charter-box which bore the unfortunate Colonel's name; anon he cast them upward, as he lay back in his chair, and planted his clenched hands on the desk before him.

"Killed! dead—dead—*dead!*" he muttered; exultation, savage joy, relief and safety, too, all oddly mingled in his deep and husky tone, and in the expression of his then most repellant visage.

Many emotions passed in a moment through the mind of the lawyer, in the vibration of a pendulum; conclusions, doubts, certainties, and contradictions followed

each other thick and fast, while drops of perspiration gathered on his forehead.

To say that he looked relieved, is to give the mildest expression to what his features indicated. The man whose return home might have revealed the secret of a system which he had been pursuing with regard to himself and to his son Gillian, whom he had kept utterly in the dark as to what his heritage really was, had fallen in that distant strife, and the secret of the power he held over him—his brother-in-law—had died within him. He summoned his nephew from the next room.

"Have you seen the morning paper?" he asked, abruptly.

"No, uncle. I was busy with the release in that case of ——"

"It contains bad news for you, Gillian. Your poor father is gone—read for yourself. God's will be done! His ways are not as our ways; nor are His thoughts as our thoughts. He slayeth and He maketh to live."

Greatly excited, Gillian read the astounding tidings again and again, and his affectionate heart went back to the days of his own infancy, and to the face of that only surviving parent of whom he had but a shadowy and indistinct recollection, but little more; and yet he had loved him dearly, for all his letters had been full of tenderness and affection; but, as the Colonel, unfortunately, until quite lately seemed unable to realise the fact that Gillian was approaching manhood, and quite capable of understanding his own affairs, all matters

that were monetary or of other business, he had confided to Gideon Gainswood alone. And while Gillian was reading, with a very scared and crushed expression of face the fatal news, the former was muttering,

"Gone! gone! poor old Lachlan! alas! there is no peace on this side of the grave. May he find it on the other, far distant though the land be where that grave lies. But take comfort, Gillian; whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, and thus are you chastened."

"Oh give me faith in this!" said Gillian, to Heaven rather than the speaker.

"Show your faith by your works, nephew; and now go break this most woful calamity, this sore dispensation of an all-wise Providence, to poor Dove. It will make some sad alterations in our late arrangements for you and her, I fear me—I fear me!"

Gillian withdrew, leaving Mr. Gainswood with his face buried in his hands, as if to control or conceal his emotions; but scarcely had the footsteps of the young man died away, than the former started up, gave by force of habit a stealthy look around him, and lifted the charter-box from the iron frame to the writing-table. Carefully selecting the key from a small bunch, which he always carried with him, and entrusted to none, he unlocked and took forth several documents.

One of these was the last will and testament of Lachlan Lamond, then a captain, leaving everything of which he might die possessed in money or otherwise to his only son Gillian, whom failing to his niece Dove

Gainswood, whom failing to her father, whom failing to an orphan institution for the children of soldiers who died in the service.

The poor colonel's property was all money, amounting to nearly £30,000, remitted for the purpose—or towards it—of recovering Avon-na-gillian.

Of the money thus remitted by the colonel he had kept no separate account; but, in the vague hope that it might all come one day to himself, he had banked it all in his own name; so, but for the existence of this will, the fortune that was in reality Gillian's, but, of the existence of which he had been kept in total ignorance, would go to enhance the dowry of Dove; so, with such a sum as he could then offer as a bribe, Campsie, and even the consent of Viscount Kilsythe, would be doubly secure.

Overcome by the temptation to error and avarice, with the prospect of perfect immunity in case of the colonel's death, he had continued this system, and held these views for years—years that had neither been of regret nor repentance; but only of the hope that he might not, like some others of his kind, be found out.

The colonel was gone; but what evidence was there of the existence of the moneys disposed in the will? The Calcutta attorney who wrote it he knew to be dead; and the names of the witnesses, two brother officers, had long since disappeared from the army list. The document had evidently not been recorded anywhere. Had any one seen it?

The lawyer pondered and paused.

He knew that a will, unlike many other legal instruments, may be revoked by destroying or cancelling it; but he also knew that there had been cases where a will when last seen in the possession of the testator, if it could not be found after his death, the presumption was that he had destroyed it, *animo revocandi.* He had also known, in such cases, draft copies produced, and given in secondary evidence of the contents of the original.

Since this paper came into his possession, no human eye had seen it.

"Bah! though only so much waste paper, it will be as well out of existence. What thine heart findeth to do, do it with all thy might!" muttered Gainswood, as he turned up the gas jet, at which he was wont to seal letters, and deliberately committed to the flame sheet after sheet of the document, the very ashes of which he scattered and trod over the turkey carpet.

"Now—now," thought he, "to get rid of this hulking fellow, who stands between my daughter's prosperity and honour. I have no longer the colonel to dread; and now my Dove shall be Lady Campsie, Viscountess of Kilsythe, mistress of Campsie Hall, in the Midlands, and a dozen other places. If she doesn't love this young lord now, she shall learn to do so in time; she shall marry him first, and let the love come after when it may!"

And he almost hissed out the words as he relocked the charter-box, shot it back into its place, and had just

time to adjust his visage to its usual calm and suave expression, and to affect to be writing intently, with a pen that had no ink in it, when Mr. McCodicil approached him on business, and he listened to what he had to say with half-averted face; for, save when in a rage, or bullying those who were at his mercy, Gideon Gainswood never looked any human being directly in the face, if he could avoid it.

He received with admirable resignation the condolences of his friends and brother elders on the severe dispensation of Heaven that had fallen upon him and especially Gillian,—for whom, he said to all, it would prove a sad and ruinous calamity indeed, poor fellow. For a time, he secretly liked all this; it was a creditable thing to have his brother-in-law, a colonel—he wished he had been a general,—killed in India; but he was nervously anxious that all note-books, papers, and letters of the deceased should be sent to him from Bengal, and wrote, and even telegraphed, for that purpose, but without avail; either no one knew anything about them, or his missives were unanswered.

"Good!" thought the lawyer; "the colonel's papers have perished with him; and I hope the Bhoteas (whoever they may be) have lit their pipes with the last of them!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE APPLE OF DISCORD.

To Dove the news from the far-away Indian Hills fell with a sense of dull, aching sorrow that wrung the girl's heart; and she failed to understand the grim, cold, unsympathetic, and at times, quietly exultant bearing of her father when Gillian was not present.

The death, the assumption of mourning, and so forth, caused a few days' delay in the movements cf my Lord Campsie; and thus, untrammelled by his presence, Dove was kinder and more tender than ever to poor Gillian, whom she was told in secret by her father, was penniless now—a veritable beggar—but not to mention it to himself. So the soft-hearted Dove was pitiful, exceedingly pitiful, and murmured to herself,

"What matters it? Papa is rich, and can give us enough for two."

Full of her great love for Gillian, and real sorrow for the calamity that had befallen them—for his father's death implied and involved more than the loss of him—Dove had attached but small importance to the attentions of Lord Campsie, and was rather provoked by them than otherwise, as she was under the idea that he was only amusing himself and seeking to kill the hours in a town which he declared to be intensely dull and stupid; but she was fairly distressed and "worried,"

when, by some remarks of her father, that were rather more than hints, she was given to understand that he had sought and obtained permission to address her.

"Viscountess Kilsythe would sound well, Dove," said he, pinching her chin with a playfulness that was not his wont, and sat ill upon him.

"Perhaps," replied Dove, with indifference.

"The castle is a roofless ruin, though it has entertained some of the popish House of Stuart, been battered by the Blasphemer, and has now been abandoned to ghosts and gleds; but the Viscount has a place like a palace, they say, in England."

"The dowry of a cotton-merchant's daughter, so Gillian says," said Dove angrily.

"What can he, or such as he, know about it?" demanded Mr. Gainswood, his eyes gleaming dangerously under his shaggy, bristling brows. "It is a place that you may be the mistress of one day, Dove."

"Perhaps, papa; but that would depend upon who was the master and how I liked him," replied Dove, laughing to conceal her annoyance, while her father turned away and left her full of anger.

Now old Mrs. McBriar had barely seen a lord, and certainly had never before spoken to one, hence she was greatly impressed by the idea of Dove's new and sudden expectations, and thus felt, perhaps, less compunction for the intended supplanting of Gillian Lamond, and, acting under Mr. Gainswood's orders, sought to bias the girl's mind to suit his own views and wishes; but, as yet, in vain.

"Dove, dearie," said she; "you will offend your good papa; you are too impulsive and don't know how to guide yourself, or the value of your own bright prospects. A coronet is at your feet—or may be. Oh, lassie, you might as well have expected to see the crown of Scotland there!"

"Oh, bother!" was the unsentimental rejoinder of Dove.

"Now, don't you think you could tolerate such a handsome husband as Lord Campsie?"

"No!" replied Dove sharply, as the unctuous way in which Mrs. McBriar pronounced the titled name provoked her.

"Aye, and learn in time to love him?"

"Don't talk of it, Mrs. McBriar, the very idea chills my heart. And *you*, too, have turned against him?"

"Against whom?"

"Gillian!" replied Dove, her dark blue eyes flashing through their tears, while the rich colour mantled high in her soft cheek; "Elspat McBriar, I am Gillian Lamond's promised wife; my father gave me to him to be so, and his dead father—God rest him in his far-away grave!—blessed us both; and Gillian shall I marry, or never, never marry at all!"

Mrs. McBriar smiled, shook her head incredulously, and withdrew by the way of the inner drawing-room, for, at that moment, a servant announced, "Lord Campsie."

Dove was certainly, at that moment, in the worst of moods to receive him, and, though secretly a little scared,

lest what she feared was to come, she made up a kind of "company smile" as she presented her hand, begged him to be seated, and while a few of the usual commonplaces were uttered, he was as usual eyeing her critically and approvingly.

Dove was in deep mourning, and the black silk and crape, relieved only by her collar, cuffs, and a simple silver brooch—the badge of the Lamonds, of Cowal and Avon-na-gillian, the gift of Gillian—set off to the utmost advantage the whiteness of her slender throat and the purity of her complexion. In the sheeny gold of her auburn hair, in the violet-blue of her beautiful liquid eyes, the usual expression of which was one of softness and—if we may so phrase it—partial surprise, in the fine contour of her features and the firmness of her curled vermilion lip, there were all that Campsie could desire, and he felt conscious that she would adorn the sphere to which he fully intended to remove her.

Such a wife as Dove would certainly adorn his home, and put an end to his St. John's Wood expenses on one hand, and to the schemes and pretensions of certain dowagers and their aspiring daughters in Mayfair and Tyburnia, on the other.

"By Jove!" thought his lordship; "how came such an old toad as this fellow Gainswood ever to have such a daughter?"

"Your mourning does indeed become you," said he, rising and placing a hand on the back of Dove's chair, and bending over her admiringly.

"I deplore that I have had reason to wear it,"

said she. "It is for Gillian's father — you are aware."

"For Colonel Lamond," said Campsie, fitting his glass in his left eye.

"Poor Gillian's father," persisted Dove.

"He was a brave old fellow, it would seem."

"And devoted to Gillian."

This iteration of the same name, by which Dove hoped to protect herself, as by a charm, certainly did pique Campsie, and rather put him out, as he felt that to have such a rival was something contemptible and unendurable; but he changed the subject, and began to pave the way by much small talk and many really earnest compliments, to which Dove listened with a quiet air of resignation, which somewhat baffled him; but, resolved to bring matters to an issue, he very deliberately, and with a greater tone of self-abnegation than he had ever thought to assume, and in, certainly, very well-chosen and well-bred language, made Dove a formal proposal of marriage, which, in a manner as delicate as it was decided—though she secretly trembled, with apprehension, she knew not of what—Dove most distinctly declined.

Though she knew it was coming, she was more fluttered than flattered, and would have given the world, she thought, to have "a good cry over it."

Campsie drew back a pace, and eyed her with a very mingled expression of face, while coolly re-adjusting his eye-glass and buttoning a glove; he was always fussy about his ties, collars, and gloves.

"By Jove!" thought he. Her coldness and indifference piqued and roused in him a spirit of opposition; it enhanced her value, and inspired him with a resolution to conquer, whether he actually cared for her enough or not. It was too absurd that he, "a drawing-room pet" in town, should be baffled thus by a provincial lawyer's daughter—a mere country chit. "It was doocid funny, but doocid unpleasant, to be held so cheap, don't you know!"

"Miss Gainswood—Dove—dear Dove, is there no chance—no hope, that one—in the coming time, perhaps —haw——"

"There is no hope, my lord—I am unchangeable as yonder castled rock!"

"Am I, then, to understand that there is some preoccupation—some foolish fancy——"

"I give you to understand nothing," said Dove, with a decision in her tone that carried conviction with it for the time, and then rose as if the interview was over; and Campsie, his heart, *blasé* and vapid as it was, swelling more with mortification and anger than it had ever done with love, took the hint, and assumed his hat, saying:

"I do not despair of yet gaining your favour, and even more, your love and esteem, Dove Gainswood; but, for the present, I shall retire, and wish you a very good morning."

"Good morning, my lord," faltered Dove, as she rang the bell, and he bowed himself out, without even touching her hand, and feeling himself rather put down

and confused, all the more that he had not a big regalia to hang on to.

"He surely cannot call here again after this," thought Dove (but she was mistaken), as she cast herself into a seat, and murmuring the name of Gillian again and again, gave way to tears and dire apprehension of the future.

Meanwhile, as if to get rid of his annoyance, Lord Campsie, who believed that a good gallop was the best panacea for any evil under the sun, spurred his horse along a lonely road that led into the wooded bosom of the Corstorphine hills, for an hour's rough ride, ere he despatched from the United Service, the Edinburgh "Rag," a brief note to Mr. Gainswood, to report how Dove had rejected him, which meant, to Campsie, the loss of many more thousands than he could think of with patience—especially, when he remembered his betting-book.

Indescribable was the wrath of Mr. Gainswood on receiving the brief note of Lord Campsie. His fury was too great for words and too deep for noisy demonstration, but he hurried home to upbraid, admonish, and rebuke his daughter.

"Refused a lord—you have actually refused Lord Campsie!" he gasped in sheer bewilderment.

"He is a fool, papa."

"You are a fool—an ass, and—and worse!" was the coarse rejoinder, and little more would make me curse you—yea, curse you—as you deserve—but it beseems not," he added, relapsing into his sanctimonious whine.

"Oh, papa!" urged the weeping girl, holding up her beautiful hands as if in deprecation.

"You underrate the good qualities of Lord Campsie."

"That does not matter much, papa."

"Why?" he hissed through his teeth.

"Because he does not underrate himself at all events."

"I should think not—a lord—a viscount that is to be, with ever so many thousands a year; you are mad, girl—stark, staring mad! You will repent this obstinacy."

"When?"

"When you know him better."

"In that case I am very unlikely to repent it at all, papa," said Dove, trembling excessively, for never before had her father, with all his faults, addressed her in his present tone.

"You have trifled with his lordship's heart."

"I don't think *that* had much to do with his proposal," replied the girl, smiling through her tears, "and certainly I am not disposed to sell mine."

"Minx and fool! your ingratitude will break mine," he added, with gravity suitable to the assertion.

"Oh, papa," urged Dove, in her most touching voice, "on earth the most despicable thing is surely the man or woman who marries for money, for rank, or anything but pure and true affection."

"This comes of reading novels—Scott, Bulwer, Dickens—and such-like sinful and pernicious literature. It is the very language of hopeless idiotcy. Alas! that

kind Providence should put upon me the sore dispensation of having a child, so blind to her own welfare, so undutiful and rebellious, so disobedient and cruel to such a father as I have been!" He threw himself into a chair, and believing himself to be a very ill-used man, glared at Dove with his hard, fishy eyes, and added, "May God pardon you for this day's work—but I never, never shall!"

"Dearest papa," said Dove, with fresh tears that seemed to well-up as from her very *heart;* "do not quite forget that you promised me to Gillian."

"To Gillian!" repeated Gainswood, with a deep snort of the fiercest passion and concentrated rage, while starting to his feet as if a cobra had stung him; "to Gillian," he added, grinding his teeth till the sound thereof made Dove's blood run cold; "hah! —true—yes; and now to end that folly for ever; and luckily, here he comes. Follow me to the library—I would speak with you—*you,* who have sown the apple of discord under my roof-tree!" said he to his nephew, who at that moment entered the room, from which Mr. Gainswood departed, looking grim as Ajax.

"What is the matter, Dove?" asked Gillian, looking already crushed in spirit, as the foreboding of evil had come heavily upon him.

She wound her soft arms around him, and pressing her quivering lips to his cheek, whispered hurriedly:

"Papa would speak with you; be brave, gentle, and trusting, whatever he may say, and remember, that tide what may, *I love you, Gillian!*"

The latter followed his uncle mechanically into the library, when there a conversation ensued that was fated never to be forgotten by either.

CHAPTER X.

"IT MAY BE FOR YEARS, AND IT MAY BE FOR EVER."

"Sit down, Gillian, and compose yourself—I would speak with you," said Mr. Gainswood gravely, and seeking to veil under his usually bland exterior his real dislike and intense irritation—dislike of Gillian—simply because he himself had basely wronged this young man, and irritation, that he was the innocent cause of thwarting this matrimonial design upon Lord Campsie. After a pause, he said, "I told you some days ago, when we first had tidings of that sore dispensation of Divine Providence—your good father's death—that it would materially alter your views and relations with Dove. You remember?"

"Yes," replied Gillian, faintly, and fearing that which was to come next.

"Since then, I have been wrestling, as it were, in prayer with Fate, for strength to tell you more, and painful intelligence."

"Of what nature?" asked Gillian, huskily.

"That you are totally without any means of subsistence, other than what my purse may afford you," said Mr. Gainswood, putting the points of his fingers

together, and gazing upward at the ceiling, as if full of sad and pious thoughts.

"How comes this to pass?" asked Gillian, thoroughly startled by such dire intelligence; "my father——"

"Remitted yearly to me a moderate allowance for your maintenance—moderate I say, lest you should be guilty of the sin of extravagance; that allowance dies with him, and you are, in fact, veritably, with pain and sorrow I say it—a beggar!"

The hot blood rushed to Gillian's temples, and for a moment the room seemed to whirl round him. After a pause, he said, in a broken voice:

"But was not my father amassing money?"

"Money!" said Gainswood, sternly, "who could have told you so?"

"For years past I have thought—somehow it was inferred—that he had hopes of repurchasing Avon-na-gillian——"

"A bubble—a vain Highland bubble—folly; he never realised a shilling; all he possessed was his commission, and the pay it procured him. Your allowance, therefore, ceases now; and even if it did not, you could not expect that upon it alone, I could further countenance your views with regard to my daughter. The foolish engagement which, at one time, I was weak enough to countenance, must end here now, and for ever! Moreover, you must leave my house, Gillian, as you must be aware there is an awkwardness in your presence here now; I will hand you the balance of your allowance, for which you will give my cashier a receipt

in full of all demands against me; and by to-morrow at latest I shall expect you to go forth and seek your bread elsewhere—out of this city, I hope. God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, Gillian, and if you are earnest, pious, and prayerful, as you could not fail to be, brought up as you have been in my house and under my guidance, you cannot fail to succeed; but be assured of this, that more I cannot, and will not, do for you."

This intelligence was triply crushing, for in a moment the lad found himself deprived of the actual means of subsistence, of a splendid home, and more than all, of the affectionate girl he so tenderly loved. His agitation was great. He turned deadly pale; his lips became dry, his throat parched; but Mr. Gainswood looked at him gravely and utterly unmoved.

Notwithstanding the usual cant with which he closed a sentence that sounded even as a sentence of death to his nephew, the latter detected something false and hollow in his tone; vague suspicions of being deluded flashed, he knew not how or why, upon his mind, but he could give them neither form nor utterance. Moreover, that the speaker was the father of Dove, repressed much that he might have said. That he was about to lose, or had lost her, alone stood prominently and out amid the ruin and chaos that seemed so suddenly to have enveloped him.

"Uncle Gainswood, I am young—Dove is young—we can wait—I shall work, oh, yes, and work *so* hard; surely, after all your promises, you will not be so

cruel as to separate us now?" he asked, almost in tears.

"It would be greater cruelty not to do so, or to foster your preposterous hopes," replied Gainswood, quietly.

"Preposterous?"

"Of course; you have not a sixpence in the world beyond the balance owing you (some few pounds, I think). Would you marry my daughter on *that?*"

"No, uncle—no," replied Gillian, now thoroughly crushed; "but surely, after the training I have had with you, I might obtain some legal employment——"

"Better not—a lawyer's life is one of sore temptation—all honour be to those who resist the tempter. (*He* had not, whatever he meant.) The All-seeing-Eye will, I doubt not, watch over you; but leave my roof you must, and Dove must learn to forget the folly in which she has been indulging."

"If—if—Lord Campsie has influenced you in coming to this decision," began Gillian, a sudden gust of jealous rage and suspicion coming to his aid.

"Lord Campsie has not influenced me," replied Mr. Gainswood, assuming a lofty and injured air; "but if his lordship had, what then?"

"By my father's soul, I would break every bone in his lordship's body!" was the furious rejoinder.

"Is this a proper spirit in which to receive the dispensations of a chastening Providence—dispensations, doubtless, meant for your good? Leave my house, I tell you, but tell you sorrowfully; moderate your angry

passions, lest you fall into the hands of an angry and avenging God!"

"Oh, Uncle Gainswood, how can you be so cruel, so unjust, and so cuttingly cold to me?" urged Gillian, in a voice that would have touched the heart of any other man but his hearer.

"Enough—that will do; to-morrow at latest—it is a grave necessity—you leave this roof."

"For where?"

"That is your affair; by train I hope, for any place you like. If not, any way Dove Gainswood shall be put utterly beyond the reach of even receiving a letter from you; further communing between you beseems not now."

"So be it," said Gillian, grief mastering and suppressing the passion and indignation that fired his spirit. "My father has dealt hardly and unjustly with me, in keeping me without a profession—even a trade—in feeding false hopes that were never to be realised, and leaving me thus upon a world like a stranded wreck, at the very outset of life—a beggar, as you harshly, but truly, phrase it."

"Your father has gone to his account, Gillian; so judge not lest ye be judged. We part now and for ever—but let us part friends. Go—the record is closed!"

He sighed, and looked heavenward; but only saw the ceiling.

Then, leaving Gillian as if turned to stone, Mr. Gainswood put on his hat and went forth, in the earnest

hope that he might never see his face again. His brows were knit, and there was a fierce glitter in his grey eye—the glitter of suppressed rage, hate, and mortification—rage at Dove, hatred of Gillian, as being the main cause of her contumacy, and keen mortification at the too probable destruction of his ambitious hope; and yet he chuckled with fierce satisfaction that he had amply avenged himself, and acted so quietly throughout the recent interview.

Would Campsie come to the point again? If not!—At this fear and doubt, he ground his teeth, and with all his assumed blandness and Christian meekness, he felt a gust of wrath that nearly choked him. But he contented himself with bullying some of his drudges, dismissing a footman—thus only compelling himself ere the week was out to advertise for another, who was a "Christian and teetotaller,"—and giving orders relative to some unhappy people whose rents were in arrear—orders which he knew would inflict incalculable hardship upon them; and thus, relieved in mind, attired in accurate black, with a spotless necktie, he went blandly, in his capacity of Elder, to some religious meeting where his speeches and prayers proved as usual very edifying to those who were not as hypocritical as himself, but yet thanked God that they were not as other men.

Without having a word of explanation or farewell, or seeing Dove—Mr. Gainswood had taken some sure means to preclude all chance of that—Gillian walked forth with a few shillings in his pocket and a change of

raiment in a hand-bag, without aim, object, or intention, as yet—forth, as it were, into the world.

He felt as one in a dream might do, or as if all this must be happening to some other person, and not to him, the Gillian Lamond of yesterday.

The city with its sounds and associations maddened him, so he sought the solitude of the country. It was a calm summer evening now, and a scene of rare beauty lay before him, the vast and fertile plain, that stretches westward for miles upon miles nearly to the spires and smoke of Glasgow. Amid clouds of gold and amber the sun was setting; the fields of corn were yellowing on the upland slopes, and the birds were circling in the air, full of life and with no fear of the morrow; and in the distance, with their glens and ravines sunk in shadow and their peaks bathed in rosy light, rose the wavy line of the beautiful Pentland Hills which close the view to the south.

Despairing and broken-hearted though he was, Gillian resolved that he would see Dove once more, and then turn his back upon Edinburgh; but for where? The grim fact stood ever before him. Cast suddenly and roughly on the world at his age, without prospects, or profession, or even a trade, what was there left for him to do. He could not work, and to beg he was ashamed, and he almost shivered as he thought of the Scriptural quotation, as such phraseology was so frequently on the lips of Gideon Gainswood.

Pitiless as a famished wolf, the latter had no commiseration for the lad who had grown up to manhood

at his hearth, under his roof and eye, who loved his daughter with his whole heart, and whom in secret he had so foully and terribly wronged, going forth into the cold, hard, and bitter world—into the very darkness thereof, as it were, to push his fortune, to seek his food rather, where, when, or how he best could, and too probably to perish in the attempt.

He saw, or heard of him no more. One circumstance surprised him: that Gillian never asked for the balance of his allowance, and he could not imagine him adopting any line of action without it. Without money he could neither leave the city nor live in it. Penniless and desperate, ardent and full of fiery spirit, would he have committed suicide? Black-hearted though he was, Gideon Gainswood felt somewhat appalled by the idea, and shrunk from it; though there came a time when he might have cared less, had such a calamity actually taken place.

The name of Gillian was seldom or never uttered by Gainswood or by Dove now. Of her sorrow, the former could not fail to be cognisant; but it only fretted and annoyed him, and he watched her pale cheeks and tear-inflamed eyes with a grim smile, as he felt convinced "this sort of thing" would not last long; he could not understand a love that was "never to die," and so forth, and felt assured that now the cause of all this was removed, that Time would effect a cure in the usual way. "A determination to true lovemaking, in this civilised world of ours," says a writer, "is a disease which is always subjected to the management of the

pruning knife of papas and mammas, just as much as a determination of blood to the head belongs to the family physician."

On the fifth night after Gillian's disappearance, Dove was found by Mr. Gainswood, abandoned to her grief and weeping passionately.

"Dove, Dove," said he, in a tone of grave reprehension, "you know not what you do in giving way thus, or the true nature of the lad you are so foolish as to mourn for. You have made a fortunate escape, girl. He takes after his father, who hath now gone to judgment. He is one of those who know not the pain they give unto those who, like me, pray and have prayed that they may see the Light, and who mourn heavily over their indifference to the awful realities of judgment and eternity"

Dove shuddered at this farrago and turned away; yet but an hour before Gillian's kiss had been upon her lips, and it came to pass thus.

Old Elspat McBriar had some human sympathies (if her kinsman Gainswood had none), especially for lovers. Gillian she had loved for his sake, and perhaps all the more for the sake of his father, who had been a soldier, even as Quarter-master McBriar, her "own comely Duncan," had been; and when Gillian wrote to her, from the quiet hotel at which he had temporarily taken a room, she—at the risk of losing all Mr. Gainswood's favour, and even the shelter of his roof—arranged a farewell meeting between the cousins, after dusk in the spacious garden of the square.

Gillian was there betimes. It was to both a

familiar spot, long endeared to them by many sweet and tender memories, and the flowering rhododendrons, the azaleas, the feathery disdara, and the trees whose branches swept the smooth green turf, seemed all as old friends on whom he was looking for the last time.

The idea that he had lost the chance of having Avon-na-gillian, fortune and position never occurred to him now; he thought only of his brave father's romantic and honest aspirations ended by murky death and a distant grave; and that he had lost Dove.

There was a sound—the rustle of a dress—a heavy, heavy sob, one of those that seem drawn from the heart, and the girl was clasped to his breast in a long, and, at first, silent embrace—an embrace all the more wild and passionate, that this interview could last but a few minutes, as Mr. Gainswood was on the *qui vive*.

"I am in despair, Dove!" said Gillian, as his tears mingled with hers.

"Do not despair, my darling, my darling—it is a sin to do so," urged the soft weeper, who clung despairingly, nevertheless, to his breast.

"You must learn to forget me, Dove."

"Never; for I know, Gillian, that you will never, never forget me! And, oh, my own Gillian, if I die before we meet again, I shall come to you in spirit, like the wild Joanna of my song."

"Do not talk so, my love."

After much weeping on the part of Dove, many deep sighs on the part of Gillian, and the utterance of many tender interjections and incoherences,—

"Now," said he, "my darling Dove, I must bury all the old past days and think only of the life that is before me!"

"And where?"

"God alone knows—I do not."

"Gillian—Gillian!"

Tears choked her utterance as he kissed and pressed her hands, for the time had come when they must inexorably part.

"Kiss me once again," she said, in a voice like a broken whisper.

A long, long and clinging kiss was exchanged, and then they were apart—too surely, it seemed, for ever. Old Elspat McBriar led away Dove, who seemed as if turned to stone, while Gillian, stumbling like a blind man, went forth upon his lonely way.

Gillian felt now that he was fairly launched upon the world—committed as it were to the dark tide and turbid waves of Fate.

As he walked moodily and sadly on in the starlight, he gave a farewell glance to all the grand and striking local features that had been so long familiar to him—the mighty mass of the castled-rock towering far and vast in gloom above the city—the dark, ridgy outline of the ancient capital glittering with a thousand lights high above the terraced splendour of the new one; the lion-shaped mountain that for a thousand years and more has looked down darkly, solemnly, and placidly upon the cradle of Scottish history, old Dunedin, "the fort upon the slope"—Gillian, we say, looked sadly

round him, as if bidding a mute adieu to all he had ever loved, and then turned his face resolutely to the path before him.

CHAPTER XI.

DOVE IN HER SORROW.

So they were parted these two young and loving hearts in the full flush of their tenderness, hope, and affection; and Dove's home was, to her, a broken home from thenceforward. Therein were an empty room, a vacant chair—ever a vacant place. A species of living death seemed to have been among them; a familiar voice was hushed, and a well-known footstep had gone forth to return no more; and the heart of the young girl was exceedingly sorrowful.

The sudden disappearance of Gillian had to be accounted for to friends, to whom Mr. Gainswood answered in general terms, that, in consequence of his father's death, he had gone abroad, and would probably emigrate. A few there were who, with honest interest in the lad whom they loved, inquired after his welfare from time to time; but after a while even they ceased to do so, and the very existence of Gillian seemed to be forgotten, or committed to oblivion.

Before friends and visitors, especially such a close observer as her particular ally and gossip, Flora Stuart, poor Dove had to make great efforts to preserve ap-

pearances, and seem to be still in her former happy spirits; but to Flora, and even to Mr. Gainswood, dull and obtuse as he was in all that pertained to tenderness or sympathy, it was evident that Dove's gentle nature was changing. Her piano was never opened, her music lay unused, and when left to herself, she fell into long reveries of silence and abstraction.

From these she would seem to awaken with a half-startled air, and with her dark blue eyes dilated, her manner excited, would begin to talk rapidly about anything that came to hand, as if to lull the suspicions to which her silent reverie gave rise.

At times she was quiet, gentle, and without *will;* at others, her temper, which had been so charming from its sweetness and softness, became irritable, captious, and wayward. This made Mr. Gainswood occasionally sharp and harsh, as it worried him, and he cursed Gillian Lamond all the more bitterly that he could only do so in the secrecy of his own heart; and this bitterness to the absent increased when an eminent physician gently hinted that unless great care was taken with Dove, whose ailment was solely mental, she might go into a decline; and in that event, thought Gideon Gainswood, to what end, or of what avail would be all the riches that, without scruple or pity to others, he had been garnering up for years!

Yet, compunction for the mischief he had wrought, had he none. He had gone too far to recede, nor would he, even if he could have done so.

Days passed on and became weeks, and the weeks

grew into months, and yet no message, letter, or tidings came of the absent one; and meanwhile, Lord Campsie, encouraged by the countenance of her father, for whom he nevertheless had the most profound contempt, had the peculiarly bad taste to continue his visits, and annoy her by his presence and attentions.

Of her fancy, as he called it, for Gillian, Campsie was not in the least jealous; he did not love enough to be so; but idleness, ennui, and want of the "ready," were his chief spurs to the present pursuit.

Love-making would fill up what he was wont to call his "period of expatriation in Edinburgh;" and at this phrase Mr. Gainswood could not resist the little and sardonic grimace which served him usually for a smile, as he thought of how his lordship's ancestor, stout old William of Kilsythe, who fell by King James's side at Flodden, or the later William who fought at Dunblane, would have truncheoned him for using such a term."

"I have the game in my own hands now, Gainswood, as that fellow Lamond has bolted," his lordship would sometimes say, "over the wine and walnuts."

"Of course, my lord," the other would reply, with his feeble smile, for even to him it was evident that the heir of Kilsythe made but little progress.

"Oh, yes, I don't despair, don't you know, of having her yet. Wine, women, and luck always change, according to a Portuguese proverb."

"Of course, my lord, only a few months' delicate attention—you see she is in mourning yet—are necessary

as an honourable and necessary sacrifice to time and appearances; we all live more or less for appearances."

"Here in this sanctimonious hole, by Jove, you do!" was the courteous response of my Lord Campsie, who in his own languid way was perhaps falling in love with Dove's person as well as her purse, and could find no pleasanter mode of passing the afternoons when he was not hunting, playing, or at drill on the seashore, than in her society, though to any one possessed of keener perceptions, it would have been evident to him that he made no progress.

Dove was too remarkable a girl not to have many admirers, whom Gillian's perpetual presence and society had somewhat "scared," though she gave no encouragement to one more than another, while her love for him rendered her indifferent to them all. But now all her elasticity had departed, and Dove was ever sad and triste.

"She'll get over it in time," the Elder would growl to himself.

But she did not get over it "in time."

She had a little respite from annoyance, when Lord Campsie, alleging that he had become greatly bored by the utter emptiness of the town in the summer months, donned a plum-coloured velvet knickerbocker suit, and departed with Sir Hayward Carington in his yacht to shoot and fish in Norway ostensibly, but in reality to keep out of the way of "the chosen people," who held so much of his blue paper, that even Gideon Gainswood was at his wit's end to get matters squared.

Sir Hayward's invitation was extended to the Fair One from St. John's Wood, over whose little bills for diamond bracelets, &c., Gainswood groaned in a spirit of avarice, not reprehension.

"I am a great believer in luck," said Campsie, in a letter written at Christiania; "it is a divinity we often have to worship in our set, and, by Jove, Gainswood, you're a trump, don't you know. Life to me has ever been a kind of merry-go-round, and things always come right in the end somehow. Moses, Aaron, and all the rest of them are pretty familiar with my noble autograph, my expectations, and all that sort of thing, so I never worry about a bill for six hundred falling due when I have only a sixpence to meet it. I always pull through on settling day."

And yet to a creature so brainless and heedless as this he would entrust Dove's happiness. As for her dowry he would take means to secure *that* pretty tightly.

When Campsie returned from his partially enforced voyage among the fiords, that which poor Dove deemed her persecution began afresh, and even her general patient endurance was sorely tested, and every attempt was made to hurry her to, and through, scenes in which, a young girl though she was, she had not the slightest interest.

Pic-nic parties with the band and regimental drag, with *carte blanche* to invito whom she chose; proposed riding parties, and yachting excursions in Sir Hayward's schooner (the pride of Cowes) to the castle on

the Bass, to the Priory on the Isle of May, round the Bell Rock, and even to the Farne Islands, were all declined by Dove, though she was a good sailor and expert horsewoman. Why? She saw, or feared, that Lord Campsie admired, and was learning to love her—or thought he was—and knew that her father was slavishly—oh, how slavishly!—obsequious to him.

"Rum girl—eccentric girl! What does it all mean?" asked his lordship, who detested to be much troubled about any thing.

"The girl is mad—blind to her own interests," thought her father; "and yet I have removed effectually the cause of her contumacy. It hath been a dispensation of Providence to give me a child so fractious."

So Campsie began to be bored again, and said abruptly one day, as he reined up his horse in the street:

"I am going on leave, Gainswood, old man."

"Leave again, my lord?" asked the lawyer.

Campsie muttered under his moustache something with reference to a pot of money he had "put on the winner of the late Gold Cup at Ascot, and how Drawler of the Blues wouldn't stump up."

Mr. Gainswood thought shrewdly that the Fair One with the golden hair was sweeping him away with her for a time, yet he said:

"So sorry, my lord, to lose your society—all the more, that nothing is settled anent that which is so near our hearts; but the All-seeing-Eye knoweth what is for the best."

"Canting old beggar!" thought Campsie, but he replied:

"Oh, all in good time. You helped me over that pinch at the Derby, for which, thanks. Keep your eye on our little Dove; I shall be away, and the enterprising cousin is away, so don't let Shoddy and Co. take the field against me."

"Shoddy and Co., my lord?" asked the lawyer.

"Oh, I mean those priggish little barrister fellows that come about your house, and blow themselves up like the bull-frog in the fable—the 'Young Reekies,' as Dove calls them—members of the mutual admiration society, who deem themselves the swells of the village in the north; so ta, ta, old fellow, till I return;" and touching his bay with the spur, he cantered laughingly away.

His temporary absence relieved Dove again; but the girl's spirits seldom or never rose, and she ever preferred solitude to society.

"Nothing seems changed but me!" Dove would mutter, as she sat alone, and looked from the windows on the same scene that met the languid gaze of Campsie, on the afternoon of his first visit. Setting beyond the wooded ridges of Corstorphine, the evening sun was as bright, the sky as blue and cloudless, as it used to be in the dear old days when Gillian was with her. The woods were less green, for autumn was mellowing them, and the golden grain had been shorn and gathered on the upland slopes; the crows were wheeling and cawing above the ancient rookeries in the

Dean Hollow, where the river brawled over its rocky bed, and sometimes fell in thunder over its broad white weir, and the last sweet songs of the birds filled the air with melody, just as they were wont to do when she and Gillian were together, and oh *where*, she asked in her heart, was Gillian now!

Aware that nothing lasts for ever, Gideon Gainswood awaited some change in her, with that, which for him, was wonderful patience; while, young girl-like, Dove's love for the absent seemed too holy, pure, and sacred a thing to be "trotted" forth, as it sometimes was, upbraidingly in the light of day. She shrunk from the roughness of his scornful taunts, and took refuge in tears and silence.

Little indeed could she imagine all that Gillian, with his antecedents and hopes, the tenor of his past life, high education, bearing, and accomplishments, was undergoing now.

CHAPTER XII.

"CUIDICH'N RHI!"

It was one morning in the November of this year, which was so eventful to Dove Gainswood, that a transport, H. M. steamship *Indus*, was slowly quitting the harbour of Suez, leaving astern the white houses of the town, (which is built upon a flat, with a ridgy eminence in its rear,) and running, partially under canvas, into

the Red Sea, bound for Bombay, with troops, chiefly detachments of the 64th Regiment, 78th Highlanders, under Captain Roderick McAra, and the Royal Artillery, all of whom expected to see the beautiful shores of Western India in about fourteen days from that time.

They had already found, at Suez, a certain foretaste of the land towards which they were journeying (but which many of them were fated not to see), in the shape of Hindoo servants, Indian officers in pith helmets and kalkee uniforms returning homeward, and brown ayas clad in cotton and calico; and now, all the soldiers, or nearly so, on board the *Indus* were young men, little more than recruits, and they crowded in the waist, as the officers did upon the poop and bridge, watching the coast on each side, as hour by hour the great ship sped onward.

To starboard lay the plains of Lower Egypt, with the mountain ridge that looks down upon the Valley of the Nile. On the port side rose Pharaoh's Hill, and then Mount Horeb, where the Law was delivered unto man, and ere long the granite peaks of Mount Sinai, fifteen hundred feet above the sea, excited the admiration even of the most dull by the wonderful combination they presented in outline and colouring, for when evening came and the sun was setting beyond the Egyptian shore, the peaks rose against the deep blue of the sky like petrified fire, and the soldiers, but more especially the Scottish Highlanders, though silent and religious men, gazed with much of wonder, but more of interest and respect, on the land and that sea whose history is coeval with that of mankind.

A little apart from all, in the bow of the steamer, watching alternately the white foam curling up beneath him and the shores of classical and holy antiquity on each hand, was one, in whom now—with his setting-up, closely shorn brown hair, thickened moustache, already embrowned face, and saddened or thoughtful eyes, and who was clad, moreover, in a canvas ship-frock, and the green tartan kilt and gartered hose of the Highland Buffs—it might have taxed even the penetration of Dove to have recognised at once Gillian Lamond—but he it was.

From that night on which we last saw him turning his back, as he believed, for ever upon his home, he had been a soldier; and now he was fully trained, drilled, and *en route* for India, the land of his father's brilliant services, of his hard toil to acquire a competence, and where he had found a grave.

Like the ardent and imaginative youth he was, Gillian had, but for a little time only, his visions of realising a fortune as if by magic—of conquering fate and destiny, and of returning home to claim Dove Gainswood, *vis-et-armis* — again and again had he muttered, "I would do anything for riches—I would do anything for moderate wealth"; and now he was off to see the world, "with sixty rounds of ammunition at his back."

Love and sorrow remained with him; but all bitterness of heart had departed now, and alternately something of heedlessness as to what might happen, and of a dogged resolution to do his duty, to grapple with Fate,

to excel and to win such honour and glory as might befall a poor private soldier, inspired him alone.

How home to his heart had come that rattling air, "The Girl I left behind me," when in the early dewy morning, and all the world of Southampton seemed abed, he had marched, amid the cheers of his comrades, to the place of embarkation, and felt himself in reality a soldier.

Many things had been sorely against "his grain" at first; the incessant saluting of his superiors, and starting to "attention" at their approach, the barrack "fatigue duties," the manners and language of those with whom he was now in daily contact, for more than once when on duty he had shared the same hard guard-bed with men who used coarse language, and were constantly quarrelling with their comrades, who bullied youngsters out of their money for beer, had been flogged for disgraceful conduct, tried for desertion, and whose names appeared scores of times in the "Defaulters' Book;" but he had borne the infliction of such presence patiently, and thanked Heaven that there were few or no such characters in the brave old Ross-shire Buffs; and he soon learned that the happiness or misery of a soldier depends upon himself, and that an honourable bearing, temperance, and strict obedience would ensure him the protection and regard of his superiors, though he felt that a mighty chasm, in some senses, yawned between himself and them now.

At the depôt, most of the officers and sergeants had noted Gillian; the former suspected that he was the

victim of circumstance, though he strictly kept his own counsel as to his antecedents and who he was; and the latter often remarked that he was "a smart young fellow, didn't drink, didn't get into scrapes, and had never been 'up' since he enlisted."

He got used to his duties and position; he strove to fulfil the former, and to endure the latter without repining; but Dove was blotted out of the scheme of his future, yet he ever thought of her as he had last seen her on that night of mental anguish and farewell in the garden. Long ere that hour of calamity came, they had exchanged rings; but the one that she had given him from her beautiful little hand he could not show on his finger now; lest it should be said that thereby hung a tale ill suited to the atmosphere of a barrack-room or orlop deck, besides, apart from cleaning his rifle and accoutrements, he had often work to perform that ill befitted the diamond and pearl ring of Dove, so he wore it with a ribbon at his neck.

She had refused the son of a peer, with all that such an alliance led to—wealth, luxury, rank, London with its society and its drawing-rooms—refused it all, and for *his* sake!

"How long—how long would all this endure?" he would ask of himself, and was muttering even now, as the great ship sped onward, onward, onward, cleaving the blue waves that roll round the low promontory of Ras Mohammed.

"How would it all end?" Ambition, properly so-called and considered, he had none, and no Marshal's

baton had yet been found in the knapsacks of the Ross-shire Buffs. He had shouldered a rifle as much for food as to flee from his own thoughts, and he resolved to do his duty, and die in doing so, if God willed it, but ever and anon came the aching thoughts of Dove!

On one hand, he saw rank and wealth offered her, backed up by assiduity, perseverance, and an undoubtedly prepossessing exterior in Lord Campsie; on the other, were his own absence, obscurity, and hopelessness. When he drew mentally this double picture, he became so desperate and heartless, that all desire to wrestle with hard fortune died within him; while Dove seemed as one who was dead—dead to him certainly. As a bitter sigh escaped him, he felt a hand clap his shoulder, and turning met the bright, cheerful face of his comrade, Colin MacKenzie.

"In the doldrums again, Lamond!" said the latter, half-reproachfully; "I have just got some fresh baccy from the steward—fill your pipe, and we'll blow a little cloud together."

"Thanks, Colin," replied Gillian, proceeding to fill his pipe, which, being a handsome meerschaum, was an object of some interest to his new friends; "I was thinking deeply, and it is not jolly work."

"No—life is a mistake, I have sometimes thought; but still I have contrived to rub on somehow."

"I have often wondered what star I was born under!" sighed Gillian.

"I never did—never had any doubt about mine."

"How?"

"I know deuced well—it was a falling one," replied MacKenzie, laughing heartily.

Colin, of whom we shall have more mention to make, was his chosen comrade and senior in years, as he was about five or six and twenty. His face was ruddy and fresh, he had a thick dark moustache, good regular features, dark grey eyes that, like those of many Scottish mountaineers, were keen as those of the hawk or eagle; he was handsome and stalwart in figure, with a cheerful aspect of perpetual content and jollity, and a frank and fearless bearing.

He was a Highlander from the original cradle of the regiment—Kintail, the land of black cattle, and these he had herded many a day and oft, by the great stones that cover Diarmid's grave, by the shores of Loch Alsh, and on the slopes of Tullochard, which is alike the war-cry and crest of his name, and of the Marquises of Seaforth, the lords of Kintail.

In his boyhood Colin had seen better days, ere misfortune had come upon his father, who was, what the Highlanders call, a "gentleman-drover," or cattle merchant; and so he became a soldier. As such, his companionship and advice had proved of vast service to Gillian in his new and humble phase of life, and each liked, respected, and clung to the other.

Though not exactly told off two and two, every soldier has a comrade, and these men rarely fail each other; each attends to the other's food and wants when on duty, and may clean his arms, accoutrements, or horse,

when he comes off that duty. Tom keeps an eye on Dick when he is in hospital, and Dick will be sure to share his baccy, beer, and clearings with Tom at other times; and many a tale told round the guard-room fire turns on regimental traditions of generous, high-spirited, and humane *camaraderie*, combined with faith and truth; and of this, two are well known. One is of a soldier who, when his comrade, after Culloden, was sentenced to die for desertion, unless a substitute could be procured, according to the then practice, risked a throw of the dice with him on the drumhead and *lost!* another, of a soldier of the 13th, or 1st Somersetshire regiment, who, in 1800, took five hundred lashes at the triangles to save a comrade who was innocent, of a crime which he had himself committed.

MacKenzie's cheerful manner—for, when not whistling interminable pibrochs, he was always singing "The Woodland Laddie," and Highland boat songs, or telling droll stories—drove Gillian from his sorrows in spite of himself for a time; and something of hope—a hope, he knew not of what—would then dawn in his heart, for he was too young to be always desponding; and by the time the bugles blew "retreat," as the last red ray of sunset paled out on the peak of Mount Sinai, he found himself laughing at some of Colin's remarks; but after the bagpipers struck up "tattoo," and marched round the ship, and all were ordered below save the deck watch, of whom Gillian made one, and he was left as it were to himself, his thoughts fell into the old groove again.

"Am I myself or some one else?" he would mutter;

"or am I acting over an incident I have read in a novel or seen in a play—a painful waking dream. Can it be that poor Colin is right, and that life is, after all, a mistake?"

Thus would Gillian ponder for hours, while his comrades of the watch trod to and fro in the waist of the ship, or nestled together to leeward, in their grey great-coats and Glengarrys, while the sound of voices and laughter, and occasionally the notes of a piano, came from the lighted saloon, from that circle of society from which he was now excluded; and when the officers lingered after mess, and while the bright stars that came out overhead, like the sharp crescent moon then just rising above the isle of Jubal, were reflected in the silent waters of the Red Sea.

At such moments, he strove to forget his harsh, rough, and sometimes repellant surroundings, and some of the unpleasant duties he had to perform; yet when deck-washing in the keen breeze of the British Channel, and anon amid the burning winds of the Red Sea, he would smile bitterly, and think, "Could Dove but see me now!"

By day and night, as the *Indus* sped on, he had some compensation for his troubles in the wonderful effects of sunshine or moonlight in all parts of the Red Sea, when the wild mountains of its rugged coasts—the abode of the Arab and Bedouin, or when its many isles became visible; holy places of which he had so often heard his Uncle Gainswood cant and snivel; but at times the heat was something dreadful to endure, when

the *Indus* was steaming *with* the breeze and not head to wind, when even the native stokers fainted in the stoke-hole, and when near the arid rocks that seemed to quiver in the sun, the Highlanders, gasping for breath, thought regretfully of the green mountains of their native home, of the deep and dark blue lochs that wash their bases, of the waving cornfields, of the shady woods, the vast wastes of purple heather, and the pure, balmy air, where the eagle and hawk were whirling aloft.

The poor privates—God help them!—had not much money among them, and Gillian was as yet ignorant or careless of how to spend judiciously his pittance of pay; hence in the days and nights when the air was like a furnace, he often got "a bottle of bitter," that greatest luxury in the East, from the "clearings" of poor Colin, who had been early trained in the "uses of adversity," and in such an atmosphere as that of the Red Sea, at that season, "bitter" was as the nectar of the gods.

At times Colin MacKenzie succeeded in inspiring him with that genuine *esprit-du-corps*, which exists in all regiments, but in none more than the Scottish, which, from their costume and names, have a double character to maintain, with regard to the historic honour of their country and their *prestige* as British soldiers; thus Colin was a genuine enthusiast in all that pertained to his clan, and to the regiment, which was raised out of it, and while still wearing its tartan has upon its appointments the *caberfiedh* of Seaforth, the same stag's head, which was given as a crest to Colin MacKenzie, high

chief of Kintail, who shouted "*Cuidich'n Rhi*" (or Help the King!) and slew by an arrow a stag which was rushing at King Alexander III.* And as Scott sings,

> "Who in the land of the Saxon or Gael,
> Might match with MacKenzie,
> High Chief of Kintail?"

Alexander gave him other lands in Kintail, with "*Cuidich'n Rhi*" as a motto, and deergrass as a clan-badge.

He was never wearied of telling Gillian how, after the Ross-shire Buffs were mustered in 1793 by Seaforth himself, at Fort George, the winter of the following year saw them in Holland with the Cameron and Gordon Highlanders and the Black Watch—all young soldiers, who wore the kilt when the cold was so intense that strong brandy froze in the bottles, yet never a Gael dropped by the wayside, while the track of other regiments was marked by the dead and the dying among the snow, as the Duke of York advanced towards Westphalia; of how bravely they fought on the plains of Assaye, brigaded with the MacLeods, and added the elephant to their other trophies; how they conquered at Maida and Java; and how at Argaum, they charged to the sound of their pipes and the war-cry of *Cuidich'n Rhi!* striking terror to the soul of Scindia, and winning the warmest praises of the future Duke of Wellington.

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* Regimental tradition has it, that MacKenzie slew the stag with his lance, and not with an arrow, as Douglas states in his Peerage, and also that the King had been unhorsed.

When Colin spoke of these stirring memories, his dark grey eyes would sparkle and his cheek flush, while his voice became almost tremulous, for his spirit was brave and ardent; but when he spoke of the pipes, and how the "gathering of the MacKenzies" had risen high among the ranks of the routed Albanian Horse and Foot, on the banks of the Nile, he could little foresee how, in the year subsequent to that in which our story opens, the same warlike air from the same wild instrument would strike joy to the hearts of our garrison in beleaguered Lucknow, when he had gone to a lowly grave, and could hear their notes no more.

In due time the *Indus* was off the sun-baked rocks of Aden—a bleak bare place of ashes and cinders, fabled as once the Rose Garden of Irene, where the wild Abdallees have long since ceased to regard a steamer passing their shore, which is simply a congeries of dark and sombre rocks; but where the little boy divers, for the amusement of the officers and ladies clustered on the poop, ply their trade for sixpences, with as much zest as the mudlarks do at Gravesend.

The steamer had barely dropped her anchor for the purpose of coaling, when a boat, containing a staff-officer, came off to her speedily, pulled by sepoys, with instructions for the officers commanding the troops and ship. These were, that instead of pursuing her voyage to Bombay, she was to proceed towards Bushire, and there join the expedition destined, under Generals Outram and Havelock, for the invasion of Persia, with the Shah of which we had suddenly come to blows.

The regiments to which the detachments with the *Indus* belonged, all formed part of that expedition; and so, three hearty British cheers arose from her deck, when after passing through the straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, or the Gate of Tears, so named by early navigators to mark their sense of the perils attendant on its navigation, the courses of the stately steam transport were let fall, her snow-white topsails hoisted and sheeted home, as she hauled up for the Gulf of Persia.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN THE GULF OF PERSIA.

The secret of his past life, or of the position he had lost, Gillian entrusted to none—not even to Colin, who, suspecting that he had some such secret, advised him to keep it from all non-commissioned officers especially, lest the jealousy of some might be roused, if he were noticed by their superiors or promoted before his time; but Gillian was never thrown off his guard, or nearly so, save once, by a lady-passenger, the wife of a staff-officer.

The evening was a lovely one; the *Indus* under easy steam was some miles distant from the isle of Socotora; the Highlanders on the main-deck had been dancing reels to the sound of the pipes, the player of which had perched himself on the after-capstan, and several officers, with one or two ladies, were clustered at the

back of the poop to see them enjoying themselves, and looked on approvingly and applaudingly, as all Highlanders dance, and moreover dance well.

But from this amusement Gillian withdrew, as he became conscious that a young lady was closely observing him, and more than once drew the attention of others upon him especially. Apart from his handsome figure and attractive face, doubtless in his air and bearing she detected something that marked him out from the rest, and this was a distinction from which he then shrunk.

About an hour after this, while the pile of mountains which forms the isle of Socotora had risen higher from the sea, and the sun that was setting far away beyond the Arabian shore, was tipping as if with red fire the mighty granite peaks that are high as Ben Nevis or Ben More, the same young lady had betaken her to her sketch-book, and under the shelter of the break of the poop was busy with her pencil in transferring to paper the bold and striking outline of the hills, which, at the distance they were then, seemed to start abruptly from the sea, while an officer of the 64th lounged close by, and laughingly criticised her progress.

"Oh, I shall never get my sketch made in time—we shall be past it," she exclaimed, with a pretty air of impatience, "and I make all my sketches for the journal which I promised to send home to mamma."

"And the captain won't stop the engines even for you, I fear," said the officer who hovered near her, in his mess jacket and forage cap.

"Do put your cigar away, or don't stand on that side of me."

The officer threw his cigar overboard.

"I should so wish to achieve this drawing—the outlines are changing fast," she added, for already the flat plain from which the mountains start had risen from the sea, and her pretty white hand had to add it to the foreground; "could you assist me, Captain Jones?"

"Can't draw a line," replied the officer; "have drawn a bill, though—a deuced sight too often."

"A few corks too, I suppose?"

Here her eye fell on Gillian, who was loitering near the stair that led to the poop, and who, in truth, had been watching her with an interest that made her colour slightly. She belonged to that "set" in which he could move no more. The hoop on her finger showed that she was married—indeed Gillian knew that she was the wife of Captain Hartley, a staff-officer, though but a young girl, and she was more than merely beautiful.

"Do *you* draw?" she asked, suddenly.

"A little," said Gillian, colouring in turn, as he raised his hand in salute, "and if you will do me the honour of permitting me"——

"To finish the sketch?"

"If you please?"

"Oh, thanks very much!" she exclaimed, tendering her book and pencils with a bright smile.

"By Jove!" muttered Captain Jones, as by force of

habit he proceeded to manipulate another cigar, while Gillian placing the book upon the gunnel rapidly filled in and shaded the drawing, boldly and freely.

"I saw you dancing with your comrades some time ago," said Mrs. Hartley; "it was very picturesque, and awfully jolly!—but those terrible pipes do pierce one's ears so!"

(But a few months after this the same fair girl at Lucknow was fated to hear that piercing sound ascending amid the musketry of the Secunderbagh, as the voice of a delivering angel!)

Gillian laughed at her remark, handed her the finished sketch, for the execution of which she thanked him very sweetly, and he was about to retire, for he felt conscious that the officer was eying him with cool scrutiny, when Mrs. Hartley said, with something of soft interest in her girlish face:

"How long have you been in the Highlanders?"

"Four months."

His voice trembled, for now as the sunshine fell on her hair, it was the identical hue of Dove's, and she was about the stature and age, too, of Dove, and—it might be fancy—with the same sweet and tender form of mouth.

"A mere recruit," said Captain Jones, curtly, as he thought the time had come for the private to withdraw.

"What is this you have written in the corner of my sketch?" she asked.

"*Dioscorades.*"

"Is that your name?" she asked, with surprise.

"No," replied Gillian, laughing quite merrily, "it is the classic name of the island, and was so called by Ptolemy, when it belonged to the Kings of the Incense Country."

"How did you learn all this?"

"By reading, madam."

"I know that even the humblest of your countrymen are usually well educated; but you must have studied—where?"

It was impossible to equivocate with such lovely eyes as hers bent upon him, so Gillian said, reluctantly—

"At the University of Edinburgh."

"Indeed!" and as she spoke her eyes wandered to the coarse white Highland jacket he wore.

"You are a musician, perhaps, as well as an artist," said Captain Jones, with something of a sneer.

"I have a taste, at least, for music, sir, and greatly was I gratified, when last night I heard Mrs. Hartley sing that song of Leonora's from *Il Trovatore* to your own accompaniment on the piano—she did it, indeed, divinely!"

He was forgetting the gulf between them.

"And you," she asked, "where were *you?*"

"On sentry at the poop door," replied Gillian, at once remembering himself, and with a salute, he was about to retire, when she said,—

"I beg your pardon, soldier—but you will lose that ring, and it seems a valuable one."

"What ring?"

"The one now dangling at the end of blue ribbon from the breast of your jacket."

It was Dove's engagement-ring, which he hastened to replace or conceal, and hurried forward to mingle with the crowd of soldiers, while the young girl looked after him with sympathy and interest.

"That is a lady's ring," said she, "and thereby hangs a tale! That poor lad has a history, which he keeps locked in his own breast."

"Very likely—most men have until they are under the influence of tobacco and brandy-pawnee, then out it comes hand-over-hand, as the sailors say; but as a rule, Scotsmen are always devilish close about their own affairs."

"Poor—poor fellow!"

"My dear Mrs. Hartley, he is no doubt some fast sprig of anatomy who has come to grief, so your sympathy is quite thrown away—but there goes the drum for mess."

Whether the Captain's remarks affected her, it is impossible to say; but the next time she saw Gillian, she affected to stare intently seaward; so he ventured in the vicinity of the poop no more.

"If not happy, I thought I had at least become content or reconciled to my lot, as poor La Vallière said in her convent," thought he; but despite this, the petty episode made him sigh as he thought of the past, and all that had vanished with it.

As the *Indus*, hugging the Arabian coast, bore on her way, it was impossible for those who had been a

reader like Gillian, not to view with deep and growing interest the shore on which they were now looking for the first time, every foot of which was rendered famous by the records of religious and classical antiquity; and, as the headlands and islands came in sight, it seemed strange to him that he should actually be looking on Arabia; that yonder promontory should be Ras al Hhad, where terminates the mighty desert that lies between Mecca and Oman; that these rocks should be the Sohar Isles, and that the coast which anon began to rise on the starboard bow was Beloochistan, and that those mighty peaks which are visible for more than a hundred miles at sea were western Kohistan, the home of the Kurds; that ere long the waters cleft by the steamer were those of the Gulf of Ormus, as her course was altered again, and she headed more directly north-westward for the Gulf of Persia, and left the high basaltic isles of Cape Mussunndom astern.

Some of these natural features were of great grandeur, vastness, and solemnity, but Gillian found, to his own great amusement, that his comrade, MacKenzie, alway drew comparisons that were somewhat invidious, between the land of the Great Cyrus, of Darius, even of Ishmael, and Kintail-of-the-Cows; and declared the Gulf of Ormus was no more to be compared to Loch Alsh or Loch Duich, than sherbet was to a good dram of Farintosh.

But, anon, they began to fall in with other ships and transports forming part of the great expedition, and all bearing on to one point of rendezvous; and now it

may not be unnecessary to inform the reader of the cause that brought a British army, of which our hero formed a unit, into this remote and remarkable part of the globe for the first time.

It had become apparent to our Government for two years before, that Nasser-ed-Deen, the Shah of Persia, son of the late Mahomet Shah and Queen Velliat, of the Kadjar tribe, was resolved on having a war with us; and to this end had despatched an army, under Prince Sultan Moorad Mirza, into north-western Afghanistan, to act against our interests at Herat. The Governor-General of India remonstrated with the Shah on this hostile demonstration, and, meanwhile, many gross insults were offered to British officials at the Persian capital, where our envoy, the Honourable Charles Murray, had ultimately to strike his flag and retire.

The fall of Kars had been circulated over all Asia, with the most exaggerated stories and rumours, during the Crimean war; while the Russians took especial care that the fall of Sebastopol should not be known in the same remote quarters till long after that event was accomplished. The secret agents of the ever-aggressive Czar had thus the most ample means for producing a double result or effect, the sequel of which was, that, impressed by some vague but pleasing ideas that Britain had been beaten, weakened, and humiliated, the effeminate Persians, like the Zemindars of Oude, that kingdom but recently annexed by the Marquis of Dalhousie, thought that now or never was the time to make war on us, and in defiance of all rights and treaties, to conquer and

annex Herat. As every attempt to obtain redress from the Shah—though a prince well acquainted with history, and tolerably correct in his ideas of the relations in which he stood to us and other European powers—proved unavailing, an expedition sailed from Bombay early in January for the Gulf of Persia.

Major-General Sir James Outram, K.C.B., "the Bayard of India," to whom the command was assigned, hastening from London, found that the first division of "the army of Persia," had already sailed, under Major-General Stalker, on which he placed himself at the head of the second, which he reserved for his old Indian comrade, Brigadier Havelock, who arrived soon after.

On entering the Gulf of Persia, Outram received the rank of Lieutenant-General. Colonels Wilson and Houssen were the brigadiers of the first division; Colonels Hamilton (of the Ross-shire Buffs) and Hale were brigadiers of the second. Brigadiers Tapp and Stuart led the cavalry; Hill, the artillery; and there was a numerous staff.

The strength of the whole force destined to invade and to humble the land of that Cyrus who was lord of Babylon, Media, and Persia, was singularly small; for, even when joined by the detachments on board the *Indus*, it only mustered as follows: 419 sabres, including the 3rd Bombay cavalry and Poonah horse; 4,653 bayonets, including H.M. 64th Foot; the Ross-shire Buffs, 2nd Bombay Europeans, a battalion of Beloochees, and three of native infantry, with thirty-two pieces of cannon, some European artillery, and 1,842 camp followers.

The 78th Highlanders, when joined by Captain Roderick MacAra's detachment, mustered only 739 bayonets.

The general rendezvous of the land and sea forces was at Ma'mer, on the Gulf of Persia, and towards that point all the transports and ships of war were speeding, under sail and steam, on the evening in the end of January.

CHAPTER XIV

A BIVOUAC AND AN "ALERTE" ON THE PLAIN OF SHIRAZ.

THE landing-place was Bushire, a well-frequented town, with a harbour, on a long and sandy peninsula, one hundred and twenty miles westward of Shiraz, and in storms or high tides it is completely surrounded by water.

The vessels of the expedition came to anchor in the roads, under the protection of the isle of Karrack, as ships drawing above eighteen feet of water cannot enter the harbour. The town, which is triangular in form, is defended by a mud-wall on the land side, armed with cannon. Gillian, as, with Colin, he stood apart from the rest, comparing notes, could see that it occupied a slight eminence, shelving gently down on each side, and that though mean in reality, it presented rather a handsome appearance to the seaward.

Its streets were narrow; the principal mansions were

flat-roofed and terraced, while the minor dwellings were merely unroofed enclosures formed of reeds; and not a dome or minaret rose to break the monotony of the view, which was terminated in the distance by the ever-snow-capped mountains of Ardshir.

The boats were hoisted out, and cavalry, infantry, and artillery, with all their baggage and stores, began the work of disembarkation together. As the troops were crowding towards the gangway and side ladder of the *Indus*, Gillian saw pretty Mrs. Hartley descending it among the first who went. On this occasion she nodded smilingly to him, and said, while her eyes shone with a peculiar brightness of expression, which was, indeed, her own,

"I shall send your sketch of the island to mamma, as a souvenir of our voyage together in the *Indus*."

He touched the sling of his rifle in salute, and the fair bright English face passed away from him for the time.

Gillian had now become completely accustomed to his knapsack and accoutrements, for MacAra had frequently held deck parades in heavy marching order. At first his shoulders had ached, and were black as if bruised, and his arms were so stiff that he had to ask his comrade to put off or on his plumed bonnet; now all these seemed as a part of himself, though on the first day's march he felt his heart thumping painfully at his ribs, over which the tight breast-strap was buckled.

In other ships alongside the *Indus*, the pipers of the regiment could be heard playing "Seaforth's Gather-

ing," the same wild air that, in the warlike days of old, had many a time and oft summoned the MacKenzies to Tullochard, when the bale-fire of war smoked on its lofty summit.

In Bushire, MacAra "handed over" his detachment to the commanding officer, and Gillian with his comrade were pleased to find themselves placed together in company of the former.

Bushire was taken almost without opposition, the Persian troops in the place taking to flight ere the cavalry of the expedition could get their horses on shore; and on the 3rd of February the inland march began.

As the Highlanders moved off with the first division, the pipers, accompanied by all the brass drums, struck up "Righ Alisdair."

"That is the march of King Alexander, who gave to the MacKenzies the stag's head that is now on your sporran," said Colin; "the same Alexander who hunted in Kintail, and was killed at Kinghorn."

For, strange as it may sound to English ears, our Scottish regiments often muster, march and charge at times, to airs, perhaps, a thousand years old—the oldest and grandest of all being the march of *Gillichroisd,* or the "Follower of Christ."

Gillian was but a small unit in Outram's army—a nameless private—true! yet, when he thought that the soil he trod was Persia, the land of that Cyrus who conquered Lydia, turned the current of the mighty Euphrates, and slew Belshazzar; the land of the Selucidæ, and many other warlike dynasties, high and

great thoughts rose within him; and when he heard the trumpets of cavalry, and the bands of the other regiments filling the morning air with martial music —the native infantry clad in silver grey, faced with white, the Bombay rifles in green, the picturesque battalion of Beloochees; and more than all, while he looked along the still more picturesque column of the 78th on the march, with the black waving plumes and graceful tartans, and thought of all the past and of the scenes in which those kilts and bonnets had so often led the way to death, but never to disaster or defeat, there swelled up in his heart a glow of passionate triumph, which, though difficult to describe, is second to none that Heaven implants in the human heart.

The chief, that pet phrase for the colonel, now common to all our line regiments, who have caught it up from the Highland corps, rode at the head of the column. He was a worthy cadet of "the princely House of Hamilton," as Scott has it, and was yet to win for himself a glorious name in the terrible wars of India.

"A braver or a better man is not in the British army," said Captain MacAra to Gillian, whose superior bearing he had frequently remarked; "if Hamilton has one fault, it is too great an eagerness for battle; and many a time, on our long and dusty marches in Central India, I have seen him marching on foot, while the knapsacks of the failing and the weary were slung on the back of his horse; so Lamond, you may well be proud to serve under him."

An open plain, some forty miles in extent, lies between the mud-wall of Bushire and the chain of snow-clad mountains separating it from Shiraz. On this plain nothing was visible but occasional clumps of palm-trees, though in the gardens, three miles distant from the town, pomegranates, oranges, and aloes grew in luxuriance together.

During the first two days' march our troops encountered some of those unpleasant incidents peculiar to a tropical climate. Tempests of wind swept across the advancing columns, bearing with them mighty clouds of fine white, whirling dust, which penetrated not only the ears, eyes, and nostrils of the soldiers, but seemed to force its way through the very pores of the skin.

"I'd give a month's pay for a good glass of beer," said Colin MacKenzie, as he looked ruefully at his feather-bonnet, and shook its black plumage which the dust had turned to white; and thirsty indeed were they all; for though the heat was moderate, the dust was stifling, all the more so, when kicked up by so many thousand marching feet. They were literally enveloped in it, as in a dense and blinding cloud, amid which, at times, the columns seemed like masses of shadowy spectres.

The sun set in dun and dusky-looking clouds when Sir James Outram ordered the troops to halt and bivouac, but in the order of march. It was in an open and comfortless place; but each battalion piled arms by companies, date-trees were hewn down, dry branches collected, and fires were lighted. Round these the

officers and men sat or lay in groups, cloaked or great-coated, and strove to make themselves as comfortable as circumstances would permit. This was on the 4th of February, and all were full of hope that on the morrow they would thrash the Persians, who were said to be in position, and in some strength, about nine miles distant.

After supping on a single ration biscuit, and a draft of cold water from his canteen, Gillian reclined upon his knapsack, and, as usual, began to indulge in reverie. Far away from the singular scene around him, where the glare of the watch-fires produced a Rembrandtish effect of strong red light and deep shadow on the groups of soldiers, the kilted Highlanders, the dark sepoys in their blue great-coats, the wild Belochees in their scarlet turbans and Asiatic costume, the piles of glittering arms, with all their bright bayonets fixed, and the distant figures of the cavalry videttes thrown out in the direction of the enemy—far away from that Persian bivouac and the snowy hills of Shiraz, his mind sped home—home to Dove, back to that bright eve of sunshine when they first acknowledged their love for each other, and that bitter eve of gloom and sorrow when they parted, it would seem, for ever.

How wondrously changed were all his surroundings now! He should never, never see her more, even as the wife of another.

He strove to thrust aside such thoughts, and to listen to the heedless banter and the songs with which his comrades strove to while away the time; and merrily

many of them sang, though, for all they could foresee, that night might be their last in the land of the living.

And now Colin struck up an old ditty—a reaper lassie's song—he had learned from his mother, and sung it to that air which is still used as the march of the 55th, or old Stirlingshire.

> "To win my love in glances soft, the woodland laddie came;
> He vowed he'd ever be sincere, when thus he told his flame:
> 'The moon is bright, my winsome lass, as bright as moon can be,
> To the woodland come, my lassie dear—to the greenwood come wi' me.'
>
> "My lad wi' love was sae distressed, I could na' say him nay,
> My lip he pressed, my hand caressed, as we gaed owre the brae:
> 'My soldier-lad, thou'rt brave and braw, and blythe as blythe can be,
> And I to yonder fair greenwood, will gang my lad wi' thee.'
>
> "Our bridal day has come to pass; such joy was never seen,
> For I am called the greenwood lass—the soldier-laddie's queen!
> I bless the day, sae fresh and fair, I tauld my mind sae free—
> And went to yonder gude green wood, my soldier lad wi' thee."

The last line of each verse was chorused, and in this homely ditty, which woke the echoes of the date groves of Shiraz, none joined more heartily than an old staff colonel, who had reined up his horse near the company of MacAra, and with kindly interest expressed in his war-worn, grey, but handsome face, was looking at the Highlanders.

"The general's orders are, that we march at daybreak," said he to Captain MacAra; "where can I find Colonel Hamilton?"

"At the head of the column," replied the captain.

"Come here, young man," said the Colonel to Gillian, as he dismounted; "hold my horse for a few minutes."

Gillian started to his feet mechanically, but the expression of his face was rendered fully apparent in the light of the fire that blazed close by them. On seeing the angry and haughty flush that suffused his features, the old field-officer glanced at him inquiringly and curiously; but ere Gillian could take the reins, MacKenzie started forward and said:

"Allow *me*, Lamond—I understand cattle better than you."

"Thanks," muttered Gillian, as he wearily resumed his place on the sod; "I thought I had got over all this sort of thing, and must school myself, in time, to do so."

In a few minutes the old Colonel returned, and sprang on his horse, and waving his hand, exclaimed, as he rode off:

"To-morrow we may be face to face with the Persians, so '*Clanna nan Gael anguillan achele!*'"

From this cry—the favourite toast, meaning "Clansmen, shoulder to shoulder," they learned that he was a countryman of their own.

Weary with the long and dusty day's march, Gillian strove to sleep; but in addition to the strangeness of the place, and his general surroundings, there was the sensation of still being at sea, and on board the *Indus*; he had yet "the roll of the ship," thus the ground on

which he lay seemed to heave beneath him, to rise, fall, and oscillate.

At last he dropped into a kind of dull waking doze, and not till rain began to fall was he aware that, in addition to his grey great-coat, he was covered by that of Colin Mackenzie, who had spread it over him.

"I cannot permit this," he exclaimed, starting up.

"You've not been used to this kind of work, Lamond," said the other; "many a night, when stalking deer or driving cattle, I have slept on the slopes of Tullochard with only my plaid about me."

"You are a good, kind fellow, Colin!"

"I have known misfortune, so have you—I can see that with half an eye."

And now the rain began to fall as surely it had never fallen since the flood. Long, long did our Perisan army remember that dreadful thunderstorm in the plain of Shiraz; mingled with hail, the rain came down in blinding torrents, drenching to the skin officers and men, for all were alike tentless and shelterless, while from the snow-clad hills there came an icy wind that rendered their sufferings all the greater; but nothing could daunt the ardour of such troops, especially when led by such a general as Outram—"Old Jamie Outram," as they loved to call him.

The infantry drums beat, and the cavalry trumpets blew "boot and saddle," though the troopers were booted and the horses saddled (as they had been throughout that wretched night), when the grey dawn of the 5th of February stole into that wet and desolate

bivouac, and the brigades stood to their arms. All loaded muskets were discharged in the air and reloaded, to preclude any missing fire when the march to the front was resumed, after each man had breakfasted on a pulpy biscuit, the rain having soaked everything in their haversacks.

Riding by her husband's side, among the staff of the 1st Division, Gillian saw the pretty Mrs. Hartley well-mounted, pass to the front, caracoling her horse, and laughing merrily, sitting square in her saddle, patting the neck of her horse as he arched it, in impatience of her tiny but restraining hand. Where or how she had passed the night he knew not; but her bright auburn hair was coiled smoothly under her smartly-veiled hat, and her well-fitting habit was as fresh as if she had only come out of "the Row." Despite Captain Hartley's wish, she would not remain with other ladies on board the *Indus*, but insisted on accompanying him into the field—an affectionate obstinacy which was yet to cost them both dear.

About midday the bugles of the advanced guard sounded a halt, and then every eye brightened, and every heart beat high with expectation, as a murmur ran along the columns that "the enemy were in front;" and ere long the Persians, in grey-looking masses, were seen in possession of a strongly-intrenched position, where ever and anon the steel of their bayonets and swords flashed out as the occasional gleams of a watery sun fell on them.

"The brigades will deploy from column into line,"

was now the order of Outram, whose firm dark face, with lip compressed, and thick grizzled moustache, seemed to glow with ardour, as his staff galloped hither and thither to the leaders of brigades and regiments; but barely was the order of battle complete, when, to the intense annoyance of all, the Persian masses seemed to break, and then, by the wavering and uncertain gleaming of their arms, it was evident that they were in full retreat, and without firing a shot!

"Forward, the cavalry!" was then Outram's order.

Cheerily the trumpets rang out, and unsheathing their swords as they galloped off, the Horse of Brigadier Housen swept forward in hot pursuit. He narrowly escaped a ball which pierced his saddle; but many of the Persians were cut down on every hand, and the military Governor of Bras-joon, a dark and fierce-looking man, wearing a dark fur cap and plume, a blue frock and large epaulettes, was made prisoner.

On the 7th of February the march was resumed, yet the Persians still avoided all collision with our troops, who could see them, but at a vast distance, still continuing their retreat into the dark defiles and woody fastnesses of the snow-capped mountains that overlook the plain of Shiraz.

In that open spot—open save where a few scattered date-palms grew, the army again halted and bivouacked for the night. Arms were piled, fires lighted, and the out-pickets posted in the direction of the mountains.

Gillian was on duty as an advanced sentinel, and as the darkness was closing, he stood, as in duty bound, with arms "ordered," and his eyes fixed on the distance, where a range of red sparkling dots along the mountain slopes indicated the watch-fires of the Persians. Weary with the toil of the past day's march he would gladly have slept; but now he had to keep himself most keenly awake and alive to all about him for the single hour he was posted, such being the period when sentinels are in front of an enemy. The sound of horses' hoofs made him spring to attention and challenge, and he found himself face to face with the old staff-colonel, whom he had often observed hanging about the flanks of the Highlanders when on the march.

"You are a young soldier for this sort of work," said the veteran, checking his horse, and looking kindly at Gillian's pale face; "but you know your duty, I presume?"

"Yes, sir; to observe the enemy closely, to communicate by signal with the picquet, and with the sentinels on my right and left."

"Exactly. You seem a good style of young man—a smart fellow, too! I should like much to have you for my permanent orderly."

Gillian was silent, but he coloured deeply.

"This would remove you from much of the discomfort, and even the perils of the service," urged the other.

"For those very reasons, permit me to decline, sir."

"My lad," said the Colonel, after a little pause, "you seem to have belonged to another sphere than the ranks?"

"I did, sir."

"Your family——"

"Are all in their graves, in India."

"Your father," continued the old man, kindly.

"Was a soldier, like myself."

"His rank—you may tell me that?"

"A colonel in the Bengal army; he was killed in action. Please say nothing of this to any one, and let us cease the subject. It is not what we *choose* that we do in this world; but what Fate chooses for us."

"Most true, my lad, your secret is your own, keep it. Good night."

"Good night, sir," replied Gillian, as the old officer, with something of hauteur in his bearing, rode off.

"Orderly!" said Gillian, with great irritation, when his post was "relieved;" "that d—d old fellow seems to have an inclination to insult me, Colin!"

"Nay, you misjudge him; how can you think so?" replied MacKenzie; "he looks like a kind old man; but, of course, he views you only as—as—"

"What?"

"A private soldier, like myself."

"True; and now for a snooze on mother earth."

The night was one of intense darkness; not a star was visible overhead; it was very still, too, and no sound broke the silence save the occasional neigh of a charger, or the voice of a distant sentinel challenging a

passer near his post, and Gillian soon dropped into a sound sleep—yet not so sound as to prevent him dreaming, and for the first time, these many months, of Dove Gainswood.

A strange but vivid sense of the reality of her presence was impressed upon him. Her face, with all its sweetness of expression, its pale and delicate beauty, seemed bending close to his, and as she whispered to him there was tender quivering in her cherry lips that was peculiarly her own. Her voice came distinctly to his ear as she sang the last lines of "Wild Joanna,"

> "When half asleep, I'm reading,
> Some amorous lyric rare,
> Lean softly down and kiss me,
> From the bosom of the air!
>
> "Thus come, my wild Joanna!
> For well I know 'twill be,
> If ever soul come back again,
> Thy soul will come to me!"

Her lips seemed about to touch his, when he started and awoke, to be haunted, bewildered, and half-terrified by the dream and its import, as there flashed upon his memory her farewell words in the garden: "If I die, Gillian, I will come to you like the wild Joanna of my song"; but he had little more time to think of it, for, at that moment, the whole bivouacked army was startled by a volley of musketry flashing redly out of the gloom, together with the roar of two pieces of cannon in its rear.

Many men fell killed and wounded; bullets struck and overturned the piles of arms to which the soldiers mechanically rushed; thousands of voices rang clamourously on the night air; chargers plunged; drums were beaten, trumpets, bugles, and bagpipes blown; and for more than half an hour the whole force became involved in a most singular and utterly indescribable skirmishing fire with an unseen foe, for the night, we have said, was so gloomy that the darkness seemed opaque.

Vociferously yelling and blowing their trumpets, the Persian cavalry galloped about, cutting down stragglers, and MacKenzie caught by the throat a Persian bugler who was actually mingling in the ranks of the Highlanders, and blowing with might and main our British bugle calls, "incline to the right," "incline to the left," and "cease firing," to increase the general confusion and "the *fighting devil* which lurks in the heart of every man."

The shrill yelling, the hoarse shouting and bugling ceased after a time, and satisfied with the *alerte* they had given us, the Persians withdrew into the gloom and mist, leaving the British under arms, their hearts throbbing wildly with rage and excitement, and the bivouac strewed with killed and wounded, officers, soldiers, camp-followers, and baggage animals.

Dawn spread over the plain and on Outram's now marshalled host, and with it spread the startling intelligence that Mrs. Hartley—the pretty little woman who was daily seen riding by her husband's side among the staff—had been carried off by the Persian cavalry, and

the grief and terror of the unfortunate captain were pitiable to behold.

Gillian was deeply concerned by the intelligence, for, though far removed from him, he had somehow learned to look upon her as a friend.

CHAPTER XV

THE BATTLE OF KHOOSH-AB.

"I SAY, Gillian, old fellow," said Colin MacKenzie, with a waggish expression in his eyes, as the troops began their forward march again; "who *is* Dove—Dove, yes, that is the name?"

"Dove Gainswood!" said Gillian, in a breathless voice, the tossing plumes of his bonnet failing to hide or shade the flush that crossed his face.

"You mention that name now with surprise; when last you muttered it, it was lingeringly done, as if sweet to your memory."

"When?"

"Last night, as you lay near me asleep on the turf, ere that confounded shindy began."

"Ask me not about her," said Gillian, sadly and petulantly.

"Why? She is some girl you have loved and lost, I suppose."

"Yes—loved and lost," muttered Gillian, through his firmly set teeth.

"Well—I have had my turn of that, too—so we shall say no more about it; we've other things to think of now."

That the Persians should have a knowledge of our bugle-calls surprised the troops, very few of whom, if any perhaps, were aware that European discipline had first been introduced into the Persian army by two Scottish soldiers of fortune—Major Christie and Lieutenant Lindesay—while a third Scot—Doctor Campbell—organised their medical staff, such as it was, under Prince Abbas Mirza, when his army was encamped on the plain of Yam.

As our troops advanced early on the morning of the 8th of February, the mist that had overhung the plain drew up skyward like a mighty curtain, and then the Persian army, about 7,000 strong, led by Shooja-ool-Moolk, were seen in position with eighteen pieces of cannon, some of which were of very heavy calibre.

Among these troops, the flower of the Persian *serbaz*, or infantry, were the Shah's own guards, the regiments of Shiraz, Tabriz, and Kaskai, with the Eilkhanee cavalry. All were uniformly clad in dark blue, with white cross-belts and conical caps of black lambs-wool. Their ridgy lines of bayonets and their crooked sabres shone brightly in the sun, and at the usual intervals were seen their colours, with the Persian Lion, floating in the wind.

Their right flank rested on a village, Khoosh-ab, which gave its name to the battle that ensued. Along their front were several dry water-courses, which were lined with skirmishers in a very orthodox manner; and,

as our troops deployed and advanced in line against the position, a cannonade from the flanks of each army preluded the closer strife ; but the resolute Outram advanced with such steady rapidity, that our losses, as yet, were small.

"One steady volley, Sir James," said Colonel Hamilton; "and then we shall get at them with the bayonet —we can face the world—do everything with the bayonet!"

"Except sit upon it, as old Nap said," replied Outram, laughing. But next moment a cry escaped him. Struck by a Persian ball, his horse fell under him, and he was stunned, as he tells us in his despatch, "at the commencement of the contest, recovering only in time to resume my place at the head of the army shortly before the close of the action."

Of the latter, Gillian, now for the second time under fire, could see little but what occurred in his own immediate vicinity. The first thrill at facing death or mutilation, the first long-drawn breath and sensation of tightness about the chest as the balls whizzed past—one tearing away a plume of his bonnet and another grazing his hand, a third killing the man on his left—passed away, and he heard the voice of Captain MacAra above the fast-gathering and deepening roar of the musketry.

"Old Roderick," as the soldiers called him, was a grim and sun-burnt warrior, who had served in the Afghan campaign, and with the army in Kohistan ; he had lost an ear in the Pisheen Valley, his left hand in the Khyber

Pass; he led the stormers at Ghuznee, and, covered with wounds, had been carried away for dead at Candahar.

"We are now in action," he cried, brandishing his claymore; "men, be steady—none must fall out to look after the wounded; *they* must lie with the dead, and remember, lads, it is as natural to die as to be born!"

"The very words of Jeremy Taylor," said Colin MacKenzie; "but who'd have thought, Gillian, of hearing them here in Persia, and from the lips of old Roderick MacAra!"

Another moment, and the gallant MacAra was lying prone on his face with a bullet in his heart; but coolly, as if upon parade, the lieutenant assumed the command of the company as the lines went on.

The attack was, in reality, made by our artillery and cavalry, supported by two lines of infantry. The cavalry, like the rush of a mighty wind, charged twice with splendid success and gallantry, the Poonah Horse burst into a square of the Kaskai regiment as if it had been but a field of wheat, and captured its colours, while the 3rd Light Cavalry, by sheer dint of the sword, nearly annihilated the entire battalion; but Captain Forbes, their leader, fell wounded, and Lieutenant Frankland, of the 2nd Europeans, acting as Brigade Major, was killed. In this charge, Lieutenant A. Moor won the Victoria Cross. "He was the first man within the square of infantry. His horse was shot under him and he was on the point of being bayoneted, when Lieutenant John Grant Malcomson, of the same regiment, rode to his assistance, cut down the Persians on the right and

left, and, by dragging him out of the enemy's square, also won the much-prized Order of Valour."

Our first line of infantry rushed on; the foe were soon so close that Gillian could see the dark faces, the darker gleaming eyes of the fur-capped Persians, and the flashing of their muzzles seemed terribly near, when, with a dreadful crash, the bayonets were brought to the charge, and their whole line gave way about ten in the morning.

They fell back in a state of utter disorder, and seemed to bear away with them some of MacAra's company, who had got mingled with them in the wild *mêlée*, and among these was Colin MacKenzie.

As the regiment halted for a minute to re-form and close in, out of the hurley-burley and the smoke that whirled and eddied in front, where the Persians were crowding together in yelling herds and casting away their arms, there came the stately figure of a Highland soldier.

It was MacKenzie, who came staggering back towards the British line; save one, all the black feathers of his bonnet were shred away, his white belts were spotted with blood, one bare knee was all bloody too, like his hands and his bayonet, which was now bent and twisted. He had a fierce, dazed aspect, as if yet hand-to-hand with the Persians; his tartans were torn and his red jacket was rent under the arms. His keen eyes were dilated and his teeth were set; but a cry of "*Cuidich'n Rhi!*" ending in a low wail of agony escaped him, as he fell on his face dying.

Darting from the ranks, Gillian rushed towards him, though some Persian horsemen were riding at the fallen man with their lances. Gillian shot down the foremost, unhorsed the next with his musket, which he slung over his shoulder, and, by the fierce excitement of the moment, endowed with a strength that was far beyond what he usually possessed, he raised Colin from the ground and hurried with him to the rear.

The whole regiment applauded the action; but a ball had pierced MacKenzie—who had many wounds—in the region of the heart; and now all that was mortal on earth of the poor fellow was in the arms of Gillian Lamond, who deposited the body under a date-tree, and resumed his place in the ranks, weary, panting, breathless, and sad.

Among those who complimented him, the most flattering and not the last, was the old colonel, who served on the staff of his friend Outram as a volunteer, out of sheer love of fighting.

By this time the whole Persian army had melted away, and the field was strewed with their arms and the débris of their commissariat; while nothing but the smallness of our cavalry force saved them from total destruction and the loss of all their guns. The number of their killed and wounded was never ascertained. It was only known to be very great; while on our side, the grand total of casualties of every kind amounted to only seventy-seven of all ranks.

For the remainder of the day, the troops bivouacked close to the battle-field. Along the plain were sad

groups of the maimed and the bleeding, of those who were spent with exhaustion, and of others stretched on the earth, whose life was ebbing, or had already ebbed away, and who would never march again; mingled side by side with the effeminate Persians were the pale and stiffening bodies of those British soldiers,—the sturdy Saxons of the "64th," or Staffordshire, and the hardy Gaels of the Ross-shire Buffs ("that beautiful regiment," as Napier was wont to call it), who had marched to battle, reckless, defiant, full of fighting and genuine pluck,—that majesty of bravery so peculiar to our troops.

The loss of his merry, bright-eyed comrade, ever so cheery and kind, with his songs, stories, and even the endless pibrochs he was wont to lilt and whistle, was keenly felt by Gillian, and, as yet, he cared not to have another in Colin's place.

"It was formerly thought effeminate not to hunt Jews," says Leigh Hunt; "then not to roast heretics; then not to bait bears and bulls; then not to fight cocks and throw sticks at them. All these evidences of manhood became generally looked upon as no such evidences at all, but things only fit for manhood to renounce; yet the battles of Waterloo and Sobraon have been won, and Britons are not a jot less brave all over the world. Probably they are braver—that is to say, more deliberately brave—more serenely valiant; also more merciful to the helpless, and that is the crown of valour."

And in this spirit of tenderness and generosity the

wounded Persians were cared for as rigidly and as kindly as our own.

For their marked bravery in this field, the 78th Highlanders were ordered to inscribe "Khoosh-ab" on their colours with "Persia."

There is always a great revulsion of the spirits after the fierce excitement of a battle, and when men have been face to face with death. Gillian felt this emotion keenly, and overcome by the whole events of the morning, lay on the ground, striving, but in vain, to sleep. He thought of yellow fields of waving grain, of revolving wheels, of anything that would induce a doze; and so he had to lie there, thinking, thinking, thinking as only the sorrowful and the desperate can do, of his dream over-night, and the death of his comrade Colin; and he envied the calm of his present companion, a little boy, who nestled asleep within his great-coat, and all unconscious that his father was lying on the adjacent field, cold and stark, with his unclosed eyes staring up to Heaven, for Gillian had promised him to carry the child safely to the rear.

Ere long the serjeant-major came to seek him, and say that the colonel had appointed him a lance-corporal for what he had done that day. To Gillian it seemed that he had done nothing; but this first step of the long ladder gave him no satisfaction; yet that solitary stripe of lace was to lead to the elucidation of much ere long.

With nightfall the army began its march of twenty miles over a country rendered all but impassable by

the torrents of rain that fell, and amid a tempest reached Bushire. In some places the mud or mire was so deep that it reached the kilts of the Highlanders, and with the hail came biting winds that swept over the almost treeless waste; and yet this was in Shiraz, which the Persians say is so famous for the richness of its fruits and wine, and the beauty of its women, that had Mahomet been sensible of its many pleasures, he would have begged God to make him immortal there.

Without the loss of a straggler our troops came into Bushire, bringing with them all the wounded, and even the dead, whom the gentle and chivalrous Outram buried within our lines with all the solemn honours due to British soldiers; three volleys were fired over the great ghastly trench where they lay, and the "Point of war" was beaten beside it by the drummers.

For many days the rain fell at Bushire, as if once again the windows of Heaven had opened, and the Union Jack on the ramparts flapped heavily in the sea breeze above the Lion of Persia; and it was during these days that Henry Havelock, of noble and immortal memory, arrived from India to assume the command of his division.

About the same time there came tidings that the unhappy Mrs. Hartley was alive, but destined for the zenana of Shooja-ool-Molk, the defeated Persian general.

CHAPTER XVI.

TIDINGS OF THE LOST ONE.

And now to glance briefly homeward.

During all this time, and while these stirring operations had been progressing, no tidings had been heard of Gillian Lamond. To Dove it seemed as though he had passed away as completely as if he had never existed. As to Mr. Gainswood, he had perhaps ceased to think about him at all.

He had not put the ill-gotten £30,000 odd to any account as yet; neither had he made any important progress in his matrimonial project, though every week put the improvident young heir of Kilsythe more and more in his power, till the latter almost writhed under the conviction of degrading and hopeless entanglement.

"She is still moping after that young beggar!" said his lordship one day, as he played with the lash of his hunting-whip.

"Yes, my lord," replied Mr. Gainswood, adopting the whine with which he usually quoted scripture, and half-closing his grey ferret-like eyes. "'Many waters,' as Solomon saith, 'cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.'"

"By Jove, if you turn on the religious tap, I'm off like a bird;" and away he went, muttering, "how the

deuce will all this end? Devilish hard, don't you know," he continued, addressing some imaginary person, "to chuck one's self away—not on the *crême-de-la-crême* of Mayfair, as I might do, but the scum-de-la-scum of this provincial lot!" So thus, in the insolence of his spirit, could he speak or think even of Dove.

And now he went off by train to ride with "the Pytchley hounds." One can always get leave in the hunting season; and with him went Stafford Martingale, who was a wonder even among the welter-weights of the Prince's Hussars: so Dove saw no more of her tormentor for a time.

Before his departure she had one good laugh at him. On the occasion of a dinner party, when various divines had been especially invited to meet "Lord Campsie," and rejoice in the light of his noble countenance, till when talking of disestablishment and other matters clerical, of which he knew about as much as the Khan of Khiva, he said:

"The Church of England is, of course, a high branch of the Civil Service, but that of Scotland—is—is—aw——"

"What, my lo*a*rd?" asked one, hanging with delight on the coming opinion of a titled man on any subject.

"Vulgaw—demmed vulgaw!"

By degrees, through little Mr. McCodicil, who had some correspondent in the Ross-shire Buffs, it came to be known that a recruit from Edinburgh, named Gillian Lamond, had joined with the last draft from Scotland

at Bushire, and some other items of information proved his identity with the lost one.

Old Elspat McBriar, to whom he gave the intelligence, lost no time in communicating it to Mr. Gainswood and to Dove, on both of whom it acted very differently. To the latter it brought a startling and crushing sense of new sorrow; to the former, secret, fierce, and glowing exultation, and the hope that some Persian bullet might find the billet he wished it, but if not, it mattered little.

"So the lad has become a soldier!" said Mrs. McBriar, with a kindling of the eye.

"The camp is the natural home of the ne'er-do-weel and the ungodly," sighed Mr. Gainswood, fixing his eyes on the lofty ceiling of his luxurious dining-room; "many perils must encompass him there—yea, many and enough; yet I forgive him his ingratitude to me, and hope he may pray with the psalmist, 'O spare me, that I may recover strength before I go hence, and be no more.'"

So that night the servants were assembled betimes in the library, and "family worship," as it was called, was held earlier than usual, Mr. Gideon Gainswood leading the van in powerful prayer.

In spite of herself and her desire to see Dove Lady Campsie, at the risk even of all the girl's future happiness, old Elspat McBriar's heart warmed within her at the idea of Gillian being a soldier, even one so humble in rank. She loved the "redcoat," not the less for the sake of her "dear old man," who had worn it as

quarter-master of the Greys, but more than all when it was associated with the kilt, the bonnet, and claymore, and all the past and present associations of Highland chivalry; but from all her communings on these subjects, Dove could gather no comfort. One grim fact stood ever before her.

By this time, amid the strife that surrounded him, his kind and gallant spirit might have fled forever, and the suspense she felt was becoming beyond endurance now; while it was too dreadful to think that when she had been talking, idling with her friends, promenading in the gardens or the gay and sunny streets, the struggle for the life of him she loved had been going on, and the worst that could happen might all be over now.

A soldier! Gillian, so tender and loving, so noble and true—true as herself, who had no thoughts unconnected with him—fighting in the ranks. What could it all mean? what had driven him in desperation to this resource, and what was the mystery involved in it? she would ask of herself, little conceiving that the sphynx that could have told her of all was daily at her elbow.

Had she and Gillian been able to compare notes, they might have found that on the same night when he dreamt of her and her song, so weary and worn, he lay on the bare earth with his knapsack for a pillow, in that desolate bivouac on the plain of Shiraz, she had been alone, abandoned to reverie and full of thoughts of him; but how different were *her* surroundings in that splendid mansion at the west end of Edinburgh.

She was in what a writer calls "that charming apartment known as 'my own room,' which comprises the mysterious repose of a sleeping chamber, with the solid comforts and light of a sitting-room." Within an arched recess was her pretty little bed, with its laced pillows, on which many a tear had fallen unseen; light muslins separated it from the room in summer, but now, when snow capped the scalps of the Pentlands, rich folds of heavy damask were festooned to the pilasters on each side. The fire burned ruddily in the grate of polished steel, and the lights were blazing brightly in the slender gaselier of Venetian bronze overhead.

Beside her were book-cases full of her favourite authors, on whose leaves were many a pencilling made by the hand that was far away, at that time she knew not where. And there were her beautiful desk, her jewel case, her Maltese spaniel—a gift from Campsie, with its silver collar—in a mother-of-pearl basket, her riding-whips with silver and jewelled heads, her favourite albums and sketch books, with a hundred other pretty trifles, such as young girls love to have in their own peculiar sanctum; and here she loved to retire, for Dove was one of those to whom a library with its books, a fire with its embers, like the sea with its waves, always furnished companionship.

As she looked on these, and could have seen where Gillian was lying at that moment, the sight might have broken poor Dove's gentle heart.

But now she knew the worst, or nearly the worst; he was in Persia.

"Persia!" she would mutter, with a tone of almost incredulity, as she looked at the map of the world. Oh, could it be that about five thousand miles, as the crow flies, of land and sea lay now between her and him whose kiss was on her lip, but yesterday as it were; yet in the confusion of thought it seemed long, long ago.

"And where is Gillian *now?*" she asked of herself, as she interlaced the fingers of her delicate hands, clasped them above her hair of golden auburn, and turned her passionate and beautiful face upward to heaven. "Oh, Gillian—Gillian!"

Had Dove Gainswood possessed the magic mirror of "Aunt Margaret" or of Cornelius Agrippa, as the clouds on its surface dispersed, she might have seen the single and lonely figure of a Highland sentinel in his dark great-coat and drooping plume, wet and dank with the shower that had passed away, standing with "arms ordered," silent, thoughtful, pale, and hungry—for food was scarce in camp, and the haversacks were empty—on the old rampart of Bushire; high overhead the crescent moon, "sweet Regent of the Sky," tipping with light the cannon in the adjacent embrasures, the white marble dome of a mosque, and the summits of the dark waves that rose and fell in the mighty Gulf of Persia, the leaves of the date palms, and other objects that rose here and there amid the mass of murky shadow, as Gillian, with the rest of his comrades, awaited the red flash and hoarse boom of the morning gun—the morning that saw the soldiers of Outram on their way to the bombardment of Mohammerah!

But it was remarked by all the household—though none of them knew the cause—that from the day when little McCodicil's tidings came, Dove's health visibly and painfully declined.

CHAPTER XVII.

A BOMBARDMENT AND AN EXCITING ADVENTURE.

To give the reader a detailed or even succinct account of our campaign in Persia, forms no part of our plan, nor is it necessary thereto; suffice it, that we must refer to some of those movements in which Gillian Lamond bore a part, and during which, even in his minor capacity, he was fated to figure prominently.

An amelioration of the tempestuous weather at Bushire tempted General Outram, on the 4th of March, to despatch an expedition against Mohammerah, while leaving a sufficient force (3,000 men) under General Stalker, in Bushire, to keep that garrison and hold the Persians in check. He took with him 4,000 men, including five companies of the Highlanders and five others of H.M. 64th regiment, to fight the Persians, who were averred to be 13,000 strong at Mohammerah, on which seven of our ships of war were to hurl their broadsides at a hundred yards' distance.

Passing the bleak, rocky isle of Icarus, then held by

the 4th Punjaub Rifles, and then the mouth of the Euphrates, rolling as it rolled in the days of Alexander and of Xenophon, by the 23rd the whole squadron was quietly at anchor off the doomed place. With his comrades who crowded the side of the warships, Gillian could see the Persian cavalry, clad in light blue, with high fur caps and white cross-belts, galloping in clouds along the great stream of the classic ages, flourishing their flashing sabres, and poising their slender lances, as if they were seeking to impress the British with high ideas of the terrible troops they were about to oppose.

All the Persian batteries were manned, strong, grim, and sulky they looked; the walls were lined, and the gunners, with their inevitable black fur caps, were seen standing by the guns, while, in the gentle breeze of a calm and beautiful day, the banner with the Persian Lion swelled gracefully out from its tall flagstaff, and ere long little more than it became visible, when the general bombardment began, and the batteries replied, till the increasing breeze dispelled the smoke, and then a striking and beautiful scene presented itself.

The ships of war all decked in brilliant bunting to their trucks, as if for a holiday, were ranged with all their flaming ports on one side; on the other, lay the bank of the Euphrates, glittering in the sunshine of the early morning, fringed with date trees and green, luxuriant shrubbery, beyond the openings in which the brilliantly-clad Persian cavalry could be seen uselessly galloping to and fro; and closer at hand were the thunder-

ing batteries of Mohammerah, against which the troops now began to disembark; the Highlanders, under Havelock, in the *Berenice*, leading the way, as he often led them to glory in the more terrible days that were to come, for, of all our regiments in the East, the Ross-shire Buffs were his favourites; and now the old Staff-Colonel, who seemed a regular fire-eater, was by his side armed, not with a regulation sword, but a prodigious Indian tulwur.

So crowded was the deck of the *Berenice*, so densely were the Highlanders massed thereon, that had a single shot struck her, the result would have been calamitous; but the dreadful broadsides of the Indian navy protected them, and boat after boat, with its living freight, and a piper blowing defiance in its bow, swept in shore, while Outram, landing at another point, with the grenadiers of the 64th, made terrible havoc among the Persian matchlocks who held a grove of date palms, and cleared a way for the whole force to advance against the main point to be attacked, the camp of the Shahzadeh, uncle of Nassir-ed-Deen, leaving the shipping to pound the town.

One of our 68-pound shots fell crashing into the Persian camp.

"Oh" exclaimed the terrified Shahzadeh, "if they fire things like these, the sooner we are off the better!"

His advice was taken at once; the whole Persian army abandoned its camp, and melted away like a dissolving view, abandoning all the cannon, and leaving

to its fate Mohammerah, which soon surrendered after the explosion of its grand magazine, by a random shell from our shipping.

The scene then was an awful one! Gillian looked with an emotion of shrinking horror on the legs, arms, hands, and other mangled fragments of poor humanity that protruded from amid the fire-blackened and shattered ruins; and among all this ghastly *débris* lay the wounded Persians in heaps, mingled with the dead, their hideous cuts and gashes exposed, all undressed, to the now blazing sunshine, the sharp whirling dust and the agonizing stings of great insects that battened in their blood.

There lay, half disembowelled by a cannon shot, and dying, a Persian officer, who, in answer to some questions of Sir James Outram, informed him that Mrs. Hartley had not been transmitted as yet to Teheran, but was conveyed about by the Shahzadeh in *takhteraidan*, or mule litter, the usual carriage of a Persian lady of rank, and Captain Hartley ground his teeth as he listened.

A few minutes after this the Persian expired, and in one of his pockets was found a letter, addressed to his wife at Teheran, stating that he was certain there would be a conflict on the morrow, foreboding his own fate, bidding her tenderly farewell, and entrusting the care of her and their little ones to his brother in Teheran; to which place it was at once transmitted by Sir James Outram, so true it is that—

"One touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

Hartley, of course, rode as yet with the General's staff, doing his duty steadily and obeying all orders, but looking distraught and like the ghost of his former self.

Sir James Outram now ascertained that the Persians had fallen back, intending to halt at a place called Akwaz, a hundred miles distant on the Karun River, the ancient *Eulæus*, which traverses the Bachtiyara range of mountains and falls into the Gulf of Persia by several channels, one of which joins the Euphrates.

At Akwaz stood their great depôt of provisions and all munitions of war, to destroy which and anticipate their reaching the point, he instantly despatched a small expedition, consisting of only 150 men of the 64th regiment and 150 Highlanders under Captain Duncan MacAndrew, a veteran of the Affghan wars, on board of three steamers, the *Comet*, *Planet*, and *Assyria*, and it was Gillian's fate to be in the first-named vessel. They had in tow a gun-boat armed with two 24-pound howitzers.

This expedition followed collaterally by water the track of the retreating Persians along the beautiful and varied scenery of the river's bank, and parties landing from time to time, could trace the marks of their route, the hoof indentures of the horses, the wheel tracks of five pieces of cannon, and of the mule litter.

On the morning of the 30th of March, the expedition made such progress towards Akwaz, that the exploring party found the ground on which the Persians had been

but twenty-four hours before, the new graves of several who had just been interred, and a straggler informed Commodore Rennie that their force consisted of seven battalions and 2,000 horse, with four guns, the fifth, which was now unserviceable, being towed up the river; and to pursue all this column were only 300 British soldiers!

To capture the gun in the towed boat, the *Comet* shot ahead under high steam and with canvas set as the wind served, but failed to do so till next day, when the other ships came up, and the whole Persian force were known to be massed somewhere beyond a low range of sandy hills that lay near the bank of the river, and the boat with the disabled gun was seen moored and half hidden among some thick, dense mangrove-like shrubbery that overhung the Karun.

"Now to capture the gun," said the Captain of the *Comet*—"I want but a party only of a few—who will volunteer?"

"I, sir," said Gillian, starting forward; "but who will follow me?"

"I, and I—and I!" cried every man, rushing forward.

"This won't do, Lamond," said the officer commanding, laughing; "four men are enough."

"Then, sir, I shall take the four next me."

"Good—here is the pinnace—jump in—shove off."

The Commodore's despatch simply calls this party "a corporal's guard of the 78th Highlanders," but omitted to mention *who* the corporal was; so that was left for

Outram to report. Every Highlander then would have volunteered to follow Gillian, for all who knew him, especially the men of his company, liked and respected the lad for his gentleness, good conduct, orderly ways, and strict sobriety, nor were the officers slow to recognize these and other good qualities.

He and his four men loaded and capped their rifles as the pinnace was pulled in shore, and speedily secured the gun, which proved to be a brass 12-pounder of exquisite workmanship, and while softly, but speedily, the seamen were hoisting it into the pinnace, he sprang ashore and crept up the bank to have a peep at the country beyond, all unaware that the Commodore and the old Staff-Colonel, who were watching him through their glasses, were reprehending his temerity and the probable delay it might cause in no measured terms.

Gillian could see far off near a mosque that stood between the brown sandhills, four dark columns of infantry massed and halted, their arms glittering in the rising sun; on the plain, in the middle-distance, was a column of some 2,000 cavalry also halted, and close by him, within some fifty yards at the utmost, under the shelter of a beautiful grove of palm trees, where evidently it had passed the night—he saw, what?

The *takhteraidan* with its escort! The latter consisted of six Persian lancers clad in long blue coats, with white trousers and cross-belts. In one was slung a sabre, in the other a matchlock, and they evidently belonged to the Bachtyara tribes, who form the flower of the Shah's cavalry. They were all dismounted,

girthing up, adjusting their bridles, and feeding their horses prior to starting again in the direction of Akwaz.

At a window of the mule litter he could see a small pale face, evidently that of their fair English captive, gazing intently towards the river, where the smoke of the British steamers ascended high and thin into the clear ambient air of the early spring morning. Gillian's plan was instantly formed, for he had Lowland prudence that tempered his Highland fire, and he resolved to rescue Mrs. Hartley or die!

The gun was already on board the pinnace, when by a low whistle he attracted the attention of his four comrades and beckoned them up to his side, where in a moment he told them his plans, which were simply to fire a volley, rush on in the smoke, and bring off the lady; and the whole affair was done and over nearly in the time we take to write these lines.

"Not a shot must be thrown away—come, each, a man in succession," said Gillian, in a low voice, that excitement rendered husky.

Aiming from the knee, the Highlanders each selected a Persian."

"*Now!*" cried Gillian. The rifles rang together as one; there was a yell of agony, and five Persians were stretched on the ground killed or wounded, while the sixth fled. Gillian rushed to the mule litter; its pale and terror-stricken occupant *was* Mrs. Hartley, whose trembling hands vainly strove to unfasten the door; but Gillian wrenched it open with his bayonet,

and with a strange and indescribable cry—joy, prayer, and terror mingled—she fairly fell into his arms, and without a word he bore her to the boat.

Not a moment was to be lost, as already a scattered cloud of Persian cavalry from the column on the plain, were galloping in wild and hot confusion towards them, unslinging their matchlocks as they came on, and already opening fire at random on the high jingle by the river side. Ere they reached it, the crew of the pinnace had shipped their oars, and with a defiant cheer were pulling into the fairway, from whence the guns of the *Comet* sent over their heads a few round shot booming and shells screaming. These soon cooled the ardour of the horsemen, and put them to flight; but not until they had peppered the pinnace with matchlock balls, one of which grazed the cheek of the coxswain and broke the left collar-bone of Gillian, and inflicted on him other injuries that were internal; but after the first shrill cry elicited by pain and alarm escaped him, he could only groan through his set teeth, while the blood flowed fast from his wound, and his arm hung powerless by his side.

He was borne up to the deck of the *Comet* in a fainting condition, and was scarcely conscious of the buzz that surrounded him, or the joy of her he had rescued, as she clung to the breast of her husband.

CHAPTER XVIII.

GILLIAN MAKES A STARTLING DISCOVERY.

For the present Gillian's fighting was over, though he remained, of course, on board the *Comet*, with the expedition, which ended successfully in the entire capture or total destruction of the Persian munitions of war at Akwaz, and the consequent disorganization of the army of the Shah—facts that belong to history rather than to our story.

Gillian was the hero of the hour; there was not a man in the army, from Outram and Havelock down to the humblest camp-follower, but envied the gallant young rescuer of pretty Mrs. Hartley.

Oblivious of all this, conscious only of his agony, and inspired by no wish but to escape it by death, he lay between two after guns on the starboard side of the main-deck, with a pillow under his head and a top studding-sail spread as awning above him—pale, breathing heavily, and was only completely roused, when Captain Hartley, after thanking him in words, which certainly came from his very heart, proffered him first his purse and next his watch.

Then an angry flush crossed Gillian's face, the blood from his wound burst through the doctor's dressings, and with his right hand he motioned the Captain away impatiently.

"A most singular young man!" said he to the Staff-Colonel, who leant on his sword—the old tulwur—and looked on approvingly.

"Hartley, dearest, leave him to me," urged his wife, who looked pale, ill, weary, and worn, after the terror she had been lately enduring; "the poor lad is not what he seems."

"Seems! by Jove, he is a soldier to the heart's core; but, as you will, my darling."

Full of tender and womanly sympathy, she hung over the lad, bathing his temples with a handkerchief, dipped in eau-de-cologne; and, as he lay there, on the hard deck, in the "garb of old Gaul"—the garb that for grace is second to none in the world,—a woman's eye could see how handsome he was, above the middle height, stalwart and well knit in figure, with finely proportioned limbs, and a more than pleasing face, and delicate in its features. His plumed and chequered bonnet was off now, and his close shorn hair seemed rich and crisp as that of a girl. His four-tailed Highland doublet had been thrown open, that the wound might be dressed, and she could see, as all near did, the ring of Dove Gainswood, attached to its blue ribbon.

"Poor fellow," said she, bursting into tears, as her husband led her away; "that bauble contains the secret of his life, and doubtless it is a sad one."

"His future shall be our care in every way," said the officer, full of gratitude and generosity; but there was another near, of whom he and Gillian wotted little

—the old Staff-Colonel, who had been regarding him with great and growing interest.

"My God!" said he, in a low but piercing voice, "how strongly—how much and mysteriously his face reminds me of one I saw—long, long ago!"

"Of whose, Colonel?" asked the doctor, who had been gently re-adjusting the bandages.

"Of my poor dead wife. What is your name, my lad?" he asked, stooping over the sufferer.

"Lamond, sir," replied Gillian, faintly.

"Ah—my own—I, too, am a Lamond," replied the other, as his eyes brightened, and clansman-like, he pressed in his the young corporal's passive hand; "what other name—John, Duncan, or what?"

"Gillian Lamond," replied the other, with his eyes closed.

"How came you by that uncommon name?"

"It was that of my grandfather."

"And *who* was he?"

"Gillian Lamond of Avon-na-gillian."

A singular cry, or rather gasp, in which utter bewilderment and joy, were mingled with grief and horror, escaped the old field-officer, as he sank, tremulous in voice and in every limb, on his knees by Gillian's side, and in defiance of the astonished doctor, asked a few more hurried and earnest questions—only a few, but more than enough to convince him that this sufferer, who, from being a betrayed out-cast, had become a soldier, was his son; and so, while the *Comet* and her two consorts were steaming up the Karun,

blazing with their mortars and 36-pounders at the distant pickets of Persian cavalry, a great discovery was being made on her deck, and the strands of a singular narrative were woven together, but only at such long intervals as the cautious doctor would permit, for Gillian was now—notwithstanding all the blood he had lost—in a state so low and feverish, that any excitement might kill him.

"Gillian, my boy—Gillian, my son—whose ring is this you wear, as Mrs. Hartley tells me, at your neck?" asked the Colonel.

"Dove's—Dove Gainswood, father." (How new the words seemed now to his lips!)

"Then, for her sake, I shall not curse her father," replied the old soldier; and after a time proceeded to do so in no very measured or gentle terms, recurring ever and anon, pathetically, to the secret sentiment that had first stirred his soul, when he saw Gillian in the bivouac on the plain of Shiraz.

So it seemed that the newspaper report, concerning the defeat and death of Colonel Lamond among the hill tribes, was all a canard or mistake. His party had been victorious; but he had certainly been wounded and carried off prisoner in the affair at Mora; but an old Lama priest, saved, protected, and cured him, and conveyed him to the plains, from whence he had reached Calcutta. From thence and Bombay, he had written to his brother-in-law, Gideon Gainswood, announcing his safety and homeward journey; but both letters would seem to have been miscarried; and, as at Bombay,

he found "his old friend, Jamie Outram," departing with his expedition for Bushire, he could not resist having, as he said, "a farewell shy at the Persians," and thus had joined his personal staff as a volunteer, in the capacity of an extra aide-de-camp; and thereby hung a great deal more than the pious and godly Gideon Gainswood would care to see nicely woven up into a "process" before the Lords of Council and Session; and the old man gnawed his grizzled moustache, while black fury gathered in his bronzed visage, as he thought of the cruel, dark, and treacherous game that had been played to himself and his son; and where now, he thought, were all those savings of years of industry and peril, that were to have made his son the heir of their ancestral rocks and hills of Avon-na-gillian!

"I suppose much must be pardoned even in a Scotch lawyer, that would be unpardonable in a man of any other trade," said the Colonel, as he sat on the gunslide near Gillian, and poured forth his wrath, sometimes in Hindostanee, when the vocabulary of English abuse failed him; "but Gainswood is a psalm-singing scoundrel of the deepest die, and one whom, ere long, I shall most terribly unmask."

"But, father," urged Gillian, in a broken voice; "to use his own adopted phraseology—are the children to suffer for the sins of their parents? Is Dove to be considered as venial as her father?"

"Dove is a dear girl, and a genuine little brick!" exclaimed the Colonel, smiting the deck with his tulwur; "but as for her father, I must, when thinking of him,

agree with Mrs. Shelly, that 'it is certainly more creditable to cultivate the earth for the sustenance of man, than to be the confidant and accomplice of his vices—which is the profession of the law.' When shall I be face to face with the sanctimonious legal Thug!"

Night came down on the Karun; the moon, no longer a crescent now, but full, round, and in all her silver beauty, came out of the blue sky; the boom of the guns and the crash of the mortars had died away, and under half steam the *Comet* moved quietly in the fairway of that stately tribute of the Euphrates.

For the last few hours Gillian was almost voiceless, or able to speak only in tremulous and uncertain whispers; and he was sleeping heavily, while the old Colonel, sleepless, full of sad and fierce thoughts, sat yet on the gunslide and watched him, as the doctor alleged it was too close between decks to have one so feverish taken below; and from time to time, the old man stooped and gazed on him, till his eyes became blind with tears, and even while prayers gathered in his heart, the curses of deep and most just anger hovered on his lips.

Around him was the Persian shore bordering the waves of that classic river. It was a calm and lovely evening now; dusky shadows were stealing upward from the roots of the graceful date palms, and pomegranate trees, the leaves of which glittered in the moonlight, even while the last rays of sunshine lingered redly on the snow-clad mountain peaks that stood up so sharply against the deep blue of the sky beyond.

The rising breeze rustled the foliage, the river went flowing downward to the Euphrates, snatching at the roots of the overhanging underwood, and watching by his newly-found son, that old man sat buried in bitter thought.

Away from the banks of the Karun, away from Shiraz, where Hafiz, the Anacreon of Persia, lies in his rose-covered grave near the garden of Jehan Numa; away from Faristan, the land of Abassides and the Attabegs, where the chinar, the dark cypress, and the pale willow grow side by side, and cast their changing shadows on the rice and brilliant poppy fields, the cotton-trees, the saffron and the hemp, the old Indian soldier's heart went home to Avon-na-gillian—the place of his hopes and his day-dreams—amid the surf-beaten isles of the West.

He saw before him a heath-clad glen, traversed by the Avon, a rough mountain stream, foaming over water-worn rocks, with tufts of vegetation sprouting in the many crevices as the burn leaped from pool to pool, its brown surface flecked by air-bells and the frequent trout. Overhead is a grey sky, against which stands a weather-stained old tower, looking down upon the distant tumbling sea, as it looked when Hacho's galleys fled from Largs in the days of old.

Old Lachlan Lamond had seen the wonders of the Taj Mahal at Agra, the marble domes of Delhi, and Seringham with its Temple of the Thousand Pillars, but he would freely have given them all for that old battered Hebridean tower; and the glories of the Indus, the

Jumna and Ganges, were as nothing to his heart, when compared with the old brawling burn that foamed through the lonely glen.

From his reverie he was roused by the doctor kneeling and looking anxiously at Gillian, who was an object of uncommon interest now.

"Is he in danger?" he asked, in a hoarse whisper.

"Very great."

"Will the boy die?" he asked piteously, after a painful pause.

The staff-surgeon only waved his hand, as if to impose silence or resignation, and moved away without any other response.

Then the heart of the old soldier—the heart that had never quailed amid the strife of India's bloodiest battles—died away within him, and stunned and bewildered by the discoveries and catastrophe of the day, bowing his head upon the hilt of his sword, he wept like a very woman.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE TANGLED WEB UNWOVEN.

In these our days of haste and hurry, steam and telegraph, when all men acknowledge that life seems far too short for what we seek to cram into it, it must not seem incorrect or "a violation of the unities," if we suddenly turn from Persia, and take another glance

homeward at the most beautiful, yet, perhaps, most provincial, of all European capitals.

In Edinburgh the night was cold and gusty—the last of April—with occasional blasts of rain and hail. Mr. Gainswood was seated alone in his library; Dove was in the drawing-room, for father and daughter were now more apart than they were wont to be. With something of pleasure he heard her touching the piano. Poor Dove! Tortured and despairing, she had been more than once on the point of yielding to her father's matrimonial wishes, and she seldom thought of her music now. Seldom, indeed, she opened the piano, and even then she was running her pretty fingers over the keys in a wandering and purposeless way; at one time it was a waltz, at another a national melody that Gillian loved; then the lawyer would grind his teeth, as it always ended in "Wild Joanna."

"Poor girl!" he muttered; "she always looks so pale—curse that designing cousin! Her eyes have an expression so mournful and sad that often I feel inclined to take her in my arms and kiss her—but 'tisn't my way. She casts the mercies from her! How like a serpent's tooth it is——"

Then he paused, in doubt whether he was quoting Scripture or some profane writer, to do which beseemed not a man of his religious character.

Sunk back in softly stuffed easy chair, Mr. Gainswood abandoned himself to the luxury of thinking over the riches he had amassed from a very small and very sordid beginning. The lofty room was brilliantly lighted, and its interior contrasted pleasantly with the cold and

stormy night without, where the tall trees with the old rookery were swaying in the occasional blasts. Sweeping curtains of rich maroon damask shrouded the windows, and from cornices of walnut-wood, gilded, bearing the Gainswood crest (some cognizance to heraldry unknown) fell on the rich carpet woven in the looms of Aubusson, in the department of Creuse—a carpet wherein the florid crimson roses, mellowed into the pink and yellow of other flowers.

It was a stately room, and everything around him betokened ease combined with splendour.

In the low, deep chair he sat before the fire, his slippered feet stretched out upon the fender of polished steel; and, while listening with dreamy pleasure to the wailing of the wind and the gusts of the storm that *he* was not exposed to, he thought over all he had amassed (without caring how); of an address he was to make at a religious meeting on the morrow; of cases pending before the Inner and Outer Houses; and then, as the notes of the piano came idly from the distant drawing-room, of Dove's rare beauty—a useless commodity as yet, unless she yielded to him and Campsie; and anon, by the chain of thought, a vision of a face came before him with painful distinctness—the face of the wanderer, him whom he had expelled and robbed of his inheritance—the face of Gillian as he had seen it last.

The war was over in Persia; a peace had been concluded so early as the 4th of March, unknown to Sir James Outram; and the 78th Highlanders, under Havelock, had gone to India, where new and terrible compli-

cations were arising. Mr. Gainswood knew all this from the public papers. Many rank and file had fallen in battle he knew; he had gloated over their numbers hopefully. Had Gillian escaped; and, if so, would he escape the greater perils that were to come?

A sour smile gathered in his ferret-eyes, and the bull-dog jaw assumed a set expression of defiance. It passed away, and the former smile of indolent ease and of bland hypocrisy spread over his coarse face, as he thought, and thought, and thought again, of how he "had flourished even as the green bay-tree," till a loud ring of the front door bell echoed through the stone staircase and corridors, after a wheeled vehicle had stopped at the pillared portico without.

Mr. Gainswood glanced inquiringly at his library clock. Who could his visitor be at such an unusual hour?

"A gentleman wishes to see you, sir," said the servant, ushering in a person whom Mr. Gainswood saw to be a stranger, who had come thus suddenly without the prelude of sending up his card. He was a tall, thin man, of haughty and aristocratic bearing and undoubtedly military aspect, bronzed and furrowed in face, with a densely thick moustache that mingled with his flowing and silvery beard. Many years had elapsed since Mr. Gainswood had seen Colonel Lamond, for he it was; he was closely shaven in those days, with hair of a ruddy brown, so he utterly failed to recognize him or even his voice now.

The Colonel threw open his Highland cloak, deposited

his hat and leather gloves with something of emphasis on the table, grasped nervously a silver-mounted and heavy malacca cane, and, when asked to "be seated," took a chair, with a keen and scrutinising expression in his eyes that thoroughly roused Mr. Gainswood, who said:

"May I ask whom I have the honour to receive?"

"An extra aide-de-camp of General Sir James Outram," replied the other, wishing to preserve his incognito for some time.

"Your name?"

"That you will have in good time. We have met before."

"Perhaps; but I have no recollection——"

"All the better."

"Your business, sir?"

"Is with you."

"Well?" said Mr. Gainswood sharply, as he decidedly thought his client was a strange one, and felt restless under his keen, bright, steady, and contemptuous glance.

"I have a message to you from Colonel Lachlan Lamond."

"My *late* brother-in-law!" exclaimed Mr. Gainswood, now thoroughly roused.

The Colonel smiled and twisted his heavy grey moustaches, as he saw that Gainswood's face became livid, and that already drops of clammy perspiration glittered about his temples; but he said:

"Poor old Lachlan! he was killed at Mora by

the Bhoteas. Alas! in the midst of life we are in death!"

"He left a son in your care, Mr. Gainswood."

"A profligate, who left me and went forth into the world—I know not where. Were you in the campaign against the Hill Tribe?"

"I was."

"Then what was, or is, your message to me?"

"It concerns the will which Colonel Lamond entrusted to your care—the will by which he bequeathed all he possessed to his son, whom failing, to your daughter."

"I never heard of any such document, and, if it existed, it will, no doubt, be recorded somewhere."

"It was *not*, so far as I know."

"Then there is no proof of its existence at all."

"Very probably," replied the Colonel, scornfully; "so we shall pass that, and come to the fortune left by the Colonel, out of which you brought up his son, as a species of half-drudge in your office, in total ignorance that such a thing existed."

"A fortune!"

"Thirty thousand pounds and more, transmitted to you from India as a portion of the money to re-purchase Avon-na-gillian."

"You have been dining or are dreaming, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Gainswood, growing pale, but attempting to bully nevertheless, as he started to his feet and approached a bell-handle.

"Sit down, sir, and listen to me, or, by Heaven, I shall stretch you beside that fender!" cried the Colonel,

grasping his heavy cane and looking as if he meant to use it.

Mr. Gainswood re-seated himself and affected to listen, with the half-amused and incredulous smile of one who has a lunatic to humour, and lay back in his elbow-chair with the tips of his fingers placed together; but, with all this assumed exterior, there flashed upon his memory the old saying about giving even the tip of one's little finger to Satan.

"Do you mean to deny the existence of this money, as well as that of the will, or that you ever received it?" asked the Colonel, quietly.

"I do."

"Foul liar!"

"Calm yourself, my good sir—calm yourself. Your words, if heard, are actionable; but there is a power above that rules us all and guides us all," replied the lawyer, looking with an air of resignation upward to the crystal gaselier that glittered overhead; "you are labouring under some incomprehensible delusion. If the money, those many thousands, were ever transmitted to me, or anyone else, by my dear dead brother-in-law some vouchers of the fact must be somewhere."

"They are so."

"Indeed; where?"

"In the hands of my banker," replied the other, with a calm smile.

For nearly a minute the two men regarded each other in silence. The trembling lips and pallid cheeks

of Gainswood had been the result of his naturally bullying temper, but now they came of craven, abject fear, for terror and alarm were curdling in his coward heart. The malice of the devil was in it, and in his ferret eyes, yet his plight and aspect were pitiable—most pitiable—and the Colonel, even with all his scorn, felt it to be so.

"There are shades of guilt, Mr. Gainswood," said he.

"Shades, sir," stammered the lawyer.

"Yes, sir; shades."

"The All-seeing Eye can pierce all shades——."

"The less we have of this from such a worm as you the better, sir," interrupted his visitor, rising; "there are people of your infamous stamp who think it less guilty to suppress evidence than to destroy it; but that you have done, suppressed or destroyed the will left with you, and other documents that concern the transmitted money; but the proof of that transmission my vouchers can affirm."

"And you, sir," exclaimed the lawyer, fairly brought to bay at last, "*who* are you?"

"Colonel Lachlan Lamond, of whose existence the Procurator-Fiscal shall convince you to-morrow morning," replied the other sternly, as he carefully drew on his gloves, and eyed with withering scorn the lawyer, who, like a hunted creature, uttered a moan, not of sorrow, but of mingled rage, hate, and baffled desire for defiance, as he covered his face with his trembling hands, and thought perhaps,—

"O what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive!"

Here was a turning of the tables with a vengeance. His shame and disgrace, his committal and trial as a felon were in the hands of Colonel Lamond, and judging by himself and his own nature, he felt certain that the injured father would be merciless. He could have no comfort in his religion, for religion had he none. Though ever on his lips, he had about as much of it in his heart as a Zulu Kaffir, or those Bhoteas, who, so unfortunately for him, had not made mince meat of his brother-in-law.

The Colonel had ended buttoning his gloves and highland cloak, and was about to assume his hat, when Mr. Gainswood, whose hands shook like aspen leaves, stretched them forth deprecatingly, and said:

"Lachlan, for the sake of our dead wives, for the sake of Dove, do not, do not expose me!"

Something of sadness now mingled with the sour scorn that filled the eyes of the old soldier, who, after a pause, said:

"Faithless and false-trickster as you have been, thief as you would be, heartless and cruel though you proved to my poor boy, Gillian, for the memory of those you name, and for the sake of the cousins who have loved each other so well and tenderly, I shall forgive you; but never, while the breath of Heaven is in your nostrils, ask Lachlan Lamond to degrade himself by taking your hand in his!"

"And where is Gillian now?" asked Gideon Gainswood, after a pause.

"Within summons if you wish to see him."

And sooth to say, during all this exciting interview, Gillian, whom we had last seen lying, to all appearances done nigh unto death, on the deck of H.M.S. *Comet*, had been in the adjoining drawing-room, with Dove's head pillowed upon his breast, and his arms around her.

Gillian, she thought, looked certainly haggard, pale, and hairy, and there was an unwonted glitter in his eye that was born of the sufferings he had undergone, but it was blended with the brightness and triumph of his present joy.

Gillian alive, safe, and back home again! It required days to pass ere Dove—in blissful ignorance of the dark and intricate springs on which her fate had turned—would settle down into a calm and delicious state of happiness subsequent to the return of the loved one, so bitterly mourned as lost for ever, that their engagement was permitted, and all barriers, monetary and otherwise, were dissipated and removed.

How differently passed the days now since she knew that he was safe and her own as before. Ah, how wearily they were wont to lag and drag in the dreadful past time, when at dawn and noon she only longed for night, though, when all were abed and asleep, she lay awake, with her heart aching, and her poor little head full of all manner of terrible imaginings, and knew that

if she slept, she would, with daylight only come back to a dull sense of all-pervading sorrow.

As for my Lord Campsie, who had been to her a species of Frankenstein, she was relieved of his presence for ever, and with more ease than he was ever likely to be of his monetary embarrassments.

He has since espoused the fair one with the golden locks, thus combining the establishment at St. John's Wood with his own. He has, moreover, become a representative peer by the death of the old viscount, and being chronically "hard up," will have no objection to pocket the salary and figure yearly as H.M. Commissioner to the Kirk, if it will have him, "though it is a doocid bore, don't you know, and so demmed vulgaw." But then "the viscountess would have the upper ten dozen of Edinburgh and their women folk" at her receeptions in the long gallery of the kings of Scotland, and there might be a little satisfaction in that.

A FORGOTTEN PRINCE OF WALES.

In the following pages I propose to give the brief history of a Prince of Wales who, had he lived long enough, might, by the brilliance of his talents and the tenor of his character, have changed the whole fate and annals of the British Isles after his own time, in so far, that Cromwell and the great civil war, the Scottish Covenant, the battles of Montrose and Claverhouse, the advents of William and Mary, of Anne, and even the accession of the House of Hanover, *would never have been heard of.*

At three in the morning of Tuesday, the 19th February, 1593, there was born in the Castle of Stirling, Henry, afterwards Prince of Wales, eldest son of James VI. of Scotland and I. of Great Britain, by his queen, Anne, daughter of Frederick II., and sister of the gallant sailor-king, Christian IV of Denmark, in the fourth year of their marriage. A discharge of twelve great guns announced the event to the town; the king sent for the ministry, desiring that everywhere the people should be called together, to have public thanksgiving; and bale-fires were, as Calderwood records, set

ablaze on all the great mountains; and Moyse adds in his memoirs, that so great was the joy of the nation, "that people in all parts appeared to be *daft* for mirth."

The baptism was deferred for six months, says Dr. Birch, the king having "thought proper to invite several foreign princes and states to send their ambassadors to be present at that solemnity"; but scarcely had that young prince—the future heir of all the British Isles—seen the light ere faction, the old curse of the Scottish nation, began to contemplate employing the unconscious infant for the promotion of its base designs. By the conspirators it was proposed to retain him in their hands as the means of strengthening their own party. To the honour of Lord Zouch, however, to whom the offer was made, he peremptorily declined all concurrence; so the despicable expedient, which had been so successful in past times of Scottish history, was abandoned. In the meantime Zouch, though strictly watched, busied himself, in conformity with his infamous secret instructions from Queen Elizabeth, to intrigue with all the Scottish nobility who were opposed to James's temporising policy, and embroil him with his people.

On the 27th of August the little prince was baptised in the Castle of Stirling, amid unusual magnificence. He was borne from his own room to the queen's chamber of presence, laid on a stately bed, in care of the Countess of Mar and other ladies of rank, who delivered him to Ludovic Stewart, Duke of Lennox, Admiral and Lord High Chamberlain of Scotland, who presented him to the foreign ambassadors. Among

these was the representative of Elizabeth, the young Earl of Sussex, who was connected with her by ties of blood, and who came attended with a magnificent retinue, bearer of a letter from his royal mistress, congratulating the king on the auspicious event, and abounding in expressions of friendly feeling, in her own quaint manner; though at that very time she was intriguing for the destruction and death of Maitland, the Lords Home, Huntly, and others who were his most loyal nobles. There too were the ambassadors of the Duke of Brunswick, the States of Holland, the Duke of Mecklenburg, and other princes. "Behind the Earl of Sussex," says Dr. Birch, "stood the Lord Wharton and Sir Henry Bromley, Knight, no other Englishman being admitted into the chapel royal."

Thither the child was borne by Sussex, preceded by Lord Home bearing the ducal crown, Lord Livingstone the napkin, Lord Seaton the basin, and Lord Semple the laver. Above their heads was a great canopy, borne by the Lairds of Buccleuch, Cessford, Dudhope, and Traquair, while the prince's train was held up by the Lords Sinclair and Urquhart. Around was a guard of chosen young men of Edinburgh, richly dressed and armed; and the trumpets sounded as the king seated himself in a chair "adorned with the arms of *France*."

After a sermon "in the Scots tongue," by one of the king's chaplains, David Cunninghame, Bishop of Aberdeen, preached in Latin on the creed. The child was then baptised and knighted; the trumpets sounded,

again the cannon thundered over the Valley of the Forth, while the Lyon King and his heralds from the gates and battlements proclaimed the now-forgotten prince, by the name of "Frederick Henry, Henry Frederick, by the grace of God Knight and Baron of Renfrew, Lord of the Isles, Earl of Carrick, Duke of Rothesay, Prince and Great Steward of Scotland" (Calderwood). Gifts were then presented to the infant. Among these were a cupboard of plate worth £3,000 from Elizabeth; two massive gold chains from the King of Denmark; a table enriched with diamonds from the Duke of Mecklenburg; two gold cups from the States of Holland, worth 12,400 crowns, each weighing 400 ounces, and in one were 5,000 florins, the first of the prince's annual donations from the conservator of Scottish privileges at Campvere in Zealand.

History tells us that the pageants which succeeded this ceremony were of the most costly and gorgeous description, "and much ingenuity was expended by Mr. Fowler, Master of the Revels, as well as by the king himself, in planning masks, shows, and triumphs, together with curious and mysterious devices suited to the tastes of that age." Soon after, the prince was committed to the care of John, Earl of Mar, Governor of the Castle of Stirling and Chamberlain of Monteith, &c.; and he was assisted in his charge by his mother, Annabella, Countess Dowager of Mar, a daughter of the Lord Tullybardine.

For these two guardians the little prince, as boyhood crept on, showed such affection that the queen became

jealous of them, and endeavoured to remove him into her own custody; but James wrote to the earl, desiring him upon no account to give up the prince to his mother; yet the charge of the old countess ended when, in his sixth year, Adam Newton, a gentleman "learned in languages," was made his tutor. Many attendants of rank were appointed; but chief of all these was still the Earl of Mar. It was at this time, in 1599, that the pedantic James composed for his use in *Greek* "His Majesty's Instructions to his dearest son, Henry the Prince." In the preface thereto were some passages that puzzled many; for by his bitterness against the Puritans he gave grounds for doubting his Protestantism, and in others he seemed to cherish some vindictiveness against England, though the heir to its throne.

In 1600, when in his seventh year, the prince wrote in his own hand a letter to the States-General, expressing gratitude to and regard for them. This letter, which most probably was dictated by the "Scottish Solomon," was taken to Holland by Sir David Murray. In the year following the prince began to take great pleasure in all manly exercises—in learning to ride, sing, dance, leap, to shoot with the bow and to toss the pike; and in most of these things he became a great proficient, under the care of Sir Richard Preston (of Craigmillar), Constable of Dingwall, and afterwards Earl of Desmond in Ireland. Of his progress in learning we have a proof in the recorded fact that he wrote a letter on his ninth birthday to his father, in which he mentions that "he

had begun two years before to write to his Majesty, in order to make him a judge of the proficiency he had made in his studies; and that since his (James's) departure he had read over Terence's *Hecyra*, the third book of Phædrus's *Fables*, and two books of Cicero's *Select Epistles*."

On the death of Elizabeth, at Richmond, in 1603, James succeeded peacefully to the English throne, and soon after took with him to London his heir, still in the custody of the Earl of Mar; but the latter had, for a time, to return to Scotland, where Queen Anne was demanding from his custody her daughter, the Princess Elizabeth (afterwards Queen of Bohemia), and her son, Prince Charles (afterwards Charles I.); but the earl urged again the express commands of the king on the subject, and it is said that the queen never forgave him. Mar resumed his care of the prince, who, together with the earl, when the feast of St. George was celebrated at Windsor, on the 2nd of July, 1603, received the Order of the Garter; and young Henry, now for the first time saluted as Prince of Wales, "was highly commended by the Earl of Nottingham, in the hearing of Edward Howes, our English chronicler of that age, for his quick witty answers, princely carriage, and reverend obeisance to the altar" (Dr. Birch).

Bramshill, in Hampshire, was built as a residence for him. He was the *first* Prince of Wales who ever wore the *triple* plume, and all the traditions which assign it to the Black Prince and John of Bohemia are totally unsupported by history. The latter at Cressy wore an

eagle's pinion in his helmet, and the seal of the former in 1370 shows him wearing a *single* feather.

On New-year's-day, 1604, when in his eleventh year, he sent to his father a short poem in Latin hexameters, as his first offering of that kind. In the same year the prince, having already evinced a great love for naval affairs, had a vessel specially built for his amusement and instruction at Limehouse; and on the 14th of March it was brought to anchor off the king's lodging in the Tower, where the prince came and showed the lord high admiral and other nobles, with much boyish delight, how he could handle this craft, which was gaily furnished with ensigns and pendants. Anon we are told that it was brought to anchor off Whitehall Stairs, when the prince again went on board with the admiral, the Earl of Worcester, and other persons of rank. The anchor was then weighed, and under her foresail and topsail she dropped down the river to Paul's Wharf, where, with a great bowl of wine, the prince baptised her by the name of the Disdain.

The prince evinced a great love of arms, and was never weary of handling the pike; and in Drayton's *Polyolbion* we have a portrait of him when about his seventeenth year thus engaged, and the drawing depicts him as handsome in figure, regularly featured, with his hair starting in spouts from an open forehead. He is dressed in rich half-armour, with gauntlets, trunk hose, and the Garter on his left leg. Already men of learning had begun to court him as their patron, and he maintained a correspondence with such as were most

eminent for their talent; and he gave such promise of future greatness that foreign princes solicited his friendship, and in a letter which the French ambassador sent home he remarked to the king his master, "that it would be a serious omission in policy to neglect a prince who promised such great things. None of his pleasures savour the least of childish pursuits. He is a particular lover of horses and what belongs to them; but he is not fond of hunting, and when he goes to it, it is rather for the pleasure of galloping than for that which the dogs afford him. He plays willingly enough at tennis, and at another Scots diversion very like mall [golf?], but always with persons older than himself, as if he despised those of his own age. He studies two hours a day, and employs the rest of his time in tossing the pike, or leaping, throwing the bar, shooting with the bow, vaulting, or some other exercise of that kind, for he is never idle. He shows himself likewise very amicable to his dependents, and supports their interests against all persons whatsoever, and pushes what he undertakes for them with such zeal as procures success; and by exerting his whole strength to compass what he desires, is already *feared* by those who have the management of affairs."

The Duke de Sully tells us in his memoirs that the young prince naturally hated Spain and favoured France, though there seems to have been some strange proposal on foot for having him educated finally in the former country. He also tells us that it was a favourite project of Henri IV to marry his eldest daughter to the prince, to whom he sent "a golden lance and helmet, enriched

with diamonds, together with a fencing-master and vaulter" (*Memoirs*, vol. iii.). With all these gifts of mind and person we are told that he was less a favourite with the queen than her second son, Charles, Duke of York and Albany. The company of Merchant Taylors having requested the king to become a member of their guild, he replied that he "was already free of another company," referring to the similar corporation in Edinburgh; but added that his son the prince would avail himself of the honour, and that he would be present at the ceremony. So the king came, and "with his highness was entertained with vocal and instrumental musick—the musick of twelve lutes equally divided, and placed by six and six in a window of the hall; and in the area between them was a gallant ship triumphant, in which were three men dressed like sailors, eminent for their voice and skill, who were accompanied by the lutists."

In vol. i. Coke relates an anecdote which he heard from his father, who about the time was of the prince's age. Being out hunting, a butcher's dog chanced to kill the stag, and thus spoil the sport. As Henry did not resent this, the courtiers, to incense him against the butcher, said, that "if the king his father had been served thus, he would have sworn so that no man could have endured it." "Away," replied the gentle prince; "all the pleasure in the world is not worth *one* oath!"

In 1612 the cowardly and contemptible Elector Palatine came to London to marry the Princess Elizabeth,

whom the scarcely less pitiful James had named after the woman who destroyed his unhappy mother. He was received in London with profound respect, and the court was fully occupied by brilliant entertainments, masques, and joyous diversions in honour of the royal nuptials; but amid them a mortal illness seized upon the promising young prince, who, not conceiving it dangerous, continued to appear in public with the elector till he was unable to leave his bed, on the 27th of October; and he died, between seven and eight o'clock P.M., on the 6th of November. He expired at St. James's Palace, and in the arms of the Earl of Mar.

Of what disease he died none now can say; but, as usual in those days, ugly whispers were abroad.

"He was," says Rapin, combining the encomiums of Wilson, Coke, and Osburn, "the most accomplished prince that ever was—I will not say in all England, but *in all Europe*. He was sober, chaste, temperate, religious, full of honour and probity. He was never heard to swear, though the example of his father and of the whole court might have been apt to corrupt him in that respect. He took great delight in the conversation of men of honour, and those who were not reckoned as such, were looked upon with a very ill eye at his court. He had naturally a greatness of mind, with noble and generous thoughts, and as much displeased with trifles as his father was fond of them. He frequently said if ever he mounted the throne his first care should be to try and reconcile the Puritans to the Church of England. As this could

not be done without concessions on each side, and as such a condescension was directly contrary to the temper of the court and clergy, he was suspected to countenance Puritanism. He was naturally gentle and affable; but, however, in his carriage had a noble stateliness, without affectation. He showed a warlike genius in his passionate fondness for all martial exercises. In short, to say all in a word, though he was only eighteen when he died, no historian has ever taxed him with any vice."

Another annalist tells us that "neither the illusions of passion nor of rank had ever seduced him into any irregular pleasures; business and ambition alone engaged his heart and occupied his mind. Had he lived to come to the throne he might probably have promoted the glory more than the happiness of his people, his disposition being strongly turned to war" (Russell).

Regarding this spirit, Coke tells us that on a French ambassador coming one day to take leave of the prince he "found him tossing a pike"; and on asking "what service he would commend him to the king his master," "Tell him *what I am doing*," was the significant reply.

The weak king his father, on finding that Henry's court at St. James's was more frequented than his own, is said to have exhibited some jealousy on the subject, and was one day heard to ask "if his son would bury him."

The disease of which he died puzzled his physicians so much that the usual vulgar rumour, as I have said,

went abroad that he had been poisoned, and Burnet tells us that, without the slightest proof, many actually accused Viscount Rochester of the crime; and thus a *post-mortem* examination took place, in presence of many physicians and surgeons, who declared on oath that they were unable to detect the slightest symptoms of poison. Howes says that he died of a malignant fever, which in that year "carried away a great many people of all sorts and ages." Balfour calls it "a malignant purpuer fever."

It is somewhat remarkable that the king forbade all court mourning, unless it can be explained that he was loth to cast a gloom over his daughter's recent marriage; but the funeral, which took place in Westminster Abbey on the 7th of December, was a stately one, and cost £2000 of the money of that time (Howes).

Sir Robert Douglas states that, after the prince's death, the faithful old Earl of Mar returned home, and, after being Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, died at a green old age in 1634.

With regard to the well-known plume, perhaps he adopted three feathers to signify the three kingdoms to which he was heir, or because three feathers are the badge of a chief in Scotland; but, whatever the cause, Henry Stuart, Prince of Wales, was the first who gave that crest to the Principality.

The "Scots Magazine" for 1809, contains a copy of the doggrel epitaph—perhaps penned by the pedantic king his father—which was carved upon his tomb in Westminster Abbey.

Many of his letters are inserted in Disraeli's "Curiosities of Literature;" and his magnificent suit of armour is still preserved in the Tower of London.

THE STRANGE STORY OF THE DUCHESS OF KINGSTON.

IN the twenty-fifth year of the reign of George III. no *cause célèbre* made greater excitement than the trial of this person, whose appearance at the bar of the House of Lords, on a charge of felony, was long remembered in London.

Elizabeth Chudleigh was the daughter of a colonel in the army, representative of an ancient Devonshire family, a member of which fought valiantly at the defeat of the Armada. He died when Elizabeth was very young, and the care of her education devolved upon her mother, who had little more than her pension as an officer's widow, to add to which she opened a fashionable boarding-house in London, whither she would seem to have come, according to the statement of the Attorney-General, in the year 1740, when her daughter was in the bloom of her beauty, "distinguished for a brilliancy of repartee, and for other qualities highly recommendatory, because extremely pleasing." George II. was then residing at Leicester House, and his son Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales (who died in 1751), had, of course, an establishment of his own elsewhere.

To his princess, Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, Miss Chudleigh was presented by the famous Mr. Pulteney, who obtained for her, in her eighteenth year, the post of one of her maids-of-honour.

Having secured for her this elevated position, Mr. Pulteney endeavoured to cultivate her understanding, suggested to her a course of reading, and they frequently corresponded on various subjects; but we are told that "the extreme vivacity of her nature" precluded her from acquiring much. Her personal attractions won her many admirers at court, among others, John Duke of Hamilton, who afterwards married Miss Gunning. Indeed they were formally engaged, and their marriage was to take place after his grace, like all men of fashion in those days, had made "the grand tour;" but during his absence distrust ensued between them, and in the interim, at the house of an aunt, whose name was Hanmer, at Laneston, in Hampshire, the Honourable John Augustus Harvey, then a lieutenant in the navy, was introduced to Miss Chudleigh, and fell deeply in love with her. To favour his views, her aunt strangely and treacherously contrived to intercept all the letters of the Duke of Hamilton. His supposed silence roused the indignation of Elizabeth; her pride was easily worked upon, and the attentions of a handsome and winning lover at such a crisis were almost sure to meet with success. Piqued beyond endurance by what she deemed the insulting silence of her betrothed, she agreed to accept the hand of Mr. Harvey, and they were privately married by Mr. Amus, the rector, on the 4th August,

1744, in a private chapel at Laneston, adjoining the mansion of Mr. Merril; and the only surviving witness of *four*, when the subsequent trial ensued, was an old female servant of the family, named Anne Craddock.

The reason given for a *private marriage* was, as stated by the Attorney-General on that occasion, "that both their situations in life rendered a public marriage very impracticable, as he on one side depended on his friends for his future prospects, and she, on her remaining a single woman, derived her chief rank and support; that such being the situation of the parties, they agreed to marry privately, without the knowledge or consent of their friends." They soon after came to London, and lived privately in Conduit Street, Hanover Square, but in a state of great unhappiness, owing to the dissipated conduct of Harvey, for six months, till he joined his ship in the East Indian Seas, under Sir John Danvers. Her position was now a very painful and anomalous one—Miss Chudleigh and a maid-of-honour in public, Mrs. Harvey and a wife in private! She was still an attractive centre in the higher circles, and the Princess of Wales was still her most particular friend; but she had many more; and few women in London in those days made more conquests. The fame of them reached Harvey, now a captain; and when he returned, at the end of a year and a half, he insisted that she should live with him again; though so great was her aversion of him, that she had resolved never to subject herself to his cruelties again.

However, she would seem to have been prevailed

upon, under terror of his threats, to join him again at their house in Conduit Street. One account says that she was lured thither, and had the doors locked upon her, to secure her detention. The result of this union was a boy. "Cæsar Hawkins became the professional confidant on this occasion, and Miss Chudleigh (as the world knew her) removed to Chelsea for change of air, but returned to Leicester House perfectly recovered from her indisposition. The infant soon sank into the arms of death, leaving only the tale of his existence to be related," and his father joined his ship in the Mediterranean.

The year 1748 saw Miss Chudleigh the belle of Tunbridge Wells; and she figures in an old engraving of the period, with the burly Johnson, Cibber, simpering beau Nash, Mr. Pitt (Earl of Chatham), Mr. Whiston, Richardson, and others about her—they in all the glory of bag-wig and sword, high-heeled shoes, and point ruffles. In Richardson's letter to Miss Westcomb he speaks of her as "the triumphant toast," lively, sweetly tempered, and gay. "She moved not without crowds after her; she smiled at every one; every one smiled when they heard she was on the walk. She played, she lost, she won, all with equal good-humour. But, alas! she went off before she was wont to go off, and then the fellows' hearts were almost broken for a new beauty."

It was about this time that, after a long residence abroad, the Duke of Hamilton, who still loved her passionately, had an interview with her, and then the whole Hanmer conspiracy was brought to light, when

too late. He again offered her his hand, but knew not why she dared not accept it, and she was compelled to prohibit his visits; thus, four years after, he married Miss Gunning, of Castle Coote. She also refused to marry the Duke of Argyle (who espoused the latter lady in her widowhood, in 1759) and several others. The world of fashion was astonished, and her mother, who was kept in ignorance of her secret marriage, reprehended what she deemed her folly in no measured terms. To be rid of all this she left England, and went to Dresden and Berlin; and her late position in our royal household secured her the attention of the pedantic King of Prussia, who corresponded with her. On her return, we are told that she "ran the course of pleasure, enlivened the court circles, and each year became more ingratiated with the mistress she served; led fashions, played whist with Lord Chesterfield, and revelled with Lady Harrington and Miss Ashe." So passed the days; but with night came reflection, and too often the debauched Harvey, like an evil spirit crossing the path of her whose life he had, to a great measure, blasted. Unable to claim her, in dread of the resentful nature of his father the earl, he nevertheless was exasperated to see her so admired and so immersed in gaiety; and times there were that, in fits of rage, he threatened to disclose the whole affair to the Princess of Wales. In this, however, she would seem to have anticipated him.

Her royal mistress heard and pitied her, and continued her friend to the hour of her death. So plans were proposed to rid her of Harvey. One was a divorce, on the

plea of his immoral habits; but this she shrank from, as involving many disclosures; the other—a most unwise measure—was to destroy the proofs of their marriage. The clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Amus, who officiated at that ceremony, and many of the witnesses, were dead. She visited the obscure little church at Laneston, where the register-book chanced to be in careless hands. A small sum procured an inspection of it, as if from curiosity, and while the custodian was beguiled with some amusing story, she contrived to "tear out," says a print of the day, "to erase," says the Attorney-General, "every memorial of her marriage with Mr. Harvey." Thus, in her rashness or ignorance, passion or hate, believing she was now free, she bade Harvey defiance; and, as it chanced that about this time he had unaccountably and totally ceased to care for her, he gave her no further inquietude, and ceased, as he was wont, to haunt every rout, ridotto, or ball at which he was likely to find her.

And now her better angel influenced with love for her the heart of a man whom an old magazine styles "the exemplar of amiability." This was Evelyn Pierrepoint, Duke of Kingston, K.G., and Master of the Staghounds north of the Trent, who raised a regiment of horse to act against the Highlanders in 1745, and, when a lieutenant-general, carried St. Edward's staff at the coronation of George III. in 1761.

At this time it appeared that very soon Captain Harvey would succeed to the earldom of Bristol, his grandfather having died in 1751, and his elder brother, who succeeded to the peerage, being unmarried and unlikely

to marry. Much as she disliked her husband, rank and fortune were too tempting to Miss Chudleigh, and a very short period before Harvey succeeded to these, she contrived once more to visit Laneston, to procure a re-insertion of her marriage. To achieve this she employed artifice, all the charms of which she was mistress, and spent money with a liberal hand. The officiating clerk, little supposing that his caligraphy would be tested by the legal and critical acumen of the House of Lords, "doctored" the register to her wishes; and from Mr. Merril's house she returned to London, rejoicing that she had now two noble strings to her bow. We are told, "she did, it is true, succeed, but it was laying the groundwork of that very evidence which, in conjunction with oral testimony, operated afterwards to her conviction and disgrace. Here was cunning enveloping the possessor in a net of her own fabricating; and no wonder, when her hour of degradation arrived, that she fell unpitied; but *re-married* by her own stratagem, the participation of ducal honours became legally impossible."

Ignorant of all this secret plotting, the Duke of Kingston, who had been born in 1705, and was now not much past the prime of life, became the most ardent of her lovers; yet, with the Bristol marriage hanging over her, how was she to accept him? and while loving him she still hoped to die Countess of Bristol. But Harvey's brother, the second earl, lived longer than she anticipated, and she conducted her intrigue—for, after all her brilliant offers, to an intrigue she descended at last—

with such care and decorum "that," as a writer says of it, "although their intimacy was a moral, it was not an evidenced, certainty." At last he who was really her husband became third Earl of Bristol in 1775; but five years before this, on the 8th of March, 1769, Elizabeth Chudleigh had been publicly espoused by the Duke of Kingston.

Lord Bristol, ignorant of how the register had been tampered with, and having fallen in love with a new flame, "the civilians were consulted on the matter, a jactitation suit was instituted; *the evidence* which could prove the marriage *was kept back*." He failed to substantiate the marriage that he might procure a divorce; and raised now to the pinnacle of her fate, the (so-called) duchess defied him, and paraded her new honours for some years in perfect safety till the death of the duke by a stroke of palsy at Bath, on the 23rd September, 1773; and he was "interred with a magnificence becoming his dignity in the family vault at Holme-Pierrepoint in Nottinghamshire" (*Ann. Reg.*). It is now the property of Earl Manvers, for Duke Evelyn was the last of his line. His will now produced a fatal storm. It excluded from any benefit an elder nephew and preferred a younger, thus giving rise to a public prosecution of the duchess, which ended in her exile and the beggary of the nephew. Two wills would seem to have been drawn, but only one signed—that by which "the duke bequeathed the income of his estates to his relict during her life, expressly under the condition of her continuing in a state of *widowhood*"; but as this did not suit her

ulterior views, she strove in vain, with Mr. Field of the Temple, to have another signed, that was more to her taste.

The moment the vault at Holme-Pierrepoint was closed the duchess sailed for Rome, where Ganganelli, a Pope who bestowed always great attention upon the English, treated her with marked favour and honour. She now built a magnificent yacht—then a most uncommon appendage to an English household—and giving the command of it to Mr. Harding, a lieutenant of the navy, cruised about the Mediterranean, all ignorant that a storm was gathering against her in England, and that a Nemesis was hovering over her in the person of old Anne Craddock, or that a motion was being moved in the Consistory Court of London against "Elizabeth Countess of Bristol, calling herself Duchess of Kingston."

Anne Craddock, being in reduced circumstances, had applied for pecuniary relief to Mr. Field of the Temple, urging her distress and the absence of the duchess, on whose purse she had a just claim as the witness of her first marriage. Lawyer-like, he turned a deaf ear to her, and the old woman, exposed to penury, gave herself up to the task of vengeance and ruin. To the elder nephew of the late duke, she gave all the information in her power, and he, assisted by legal friends, had a bill of indictment for bigamy preferred against the duchess, whom Mr. Field advised at once to return to Britain lest she should be outlawed. The fashionable circles were filled with astonishment by this sudden *exposé*. If

there were fraud or collusion, the Earl of Bristol must have acquiesced in both! Evidence in support of the first marriage was fully gone into, and it then came forth that if there was turpitude in the destruction of the register of a marriage with him, there was something extremely covetous in the attempt to restore it; and the latter act a woman named Judith Philips proved beyond a doubt, and the birth of the child was proved by Mr. Cæsar Hawkins.

The opponents of the duchess took every means to prevent her return to England. With Mr. Jenkins, a banker in Rome, she had placed securities for such sums as she might require; but when she requested money to enable her to return home, he so sedulously avoided her, that she at last lost all patience—fearing the sentence of outlawry—and swore that Jenkins was in the interest of her enemies; so, armed with a brace of pistols, she repaired to his house. The usual answer was given her, that he was not at home.

"Here shall I remain a week, a month—yea, a year, till he returns!" was her resolute rejoinder; and finding her inflexible, the banker at last appeared, and a stormy interview ensued. She demanded her money. He attempted to prevaricate; but the production of her pistols ended that. Her cheques were cashed, and she instantly set out on her return by way of the Alps. Excitement and anxiety—shame perhaps at the sudden and terrible exposure about to be made—brought on a fever, and caused an abscess in her side, compelling her to travel in a litter instead of a carriage to Calais; thus

after a painful and tedious journey, which in her ignorance of law she feared would end in a London prison, yet resolutely she travelled home, and was joined by Colonel West, brother of John Earl of Delaware, and by the famous Earl of Mansfield, who, from the post of Lord Chief Justice, had been raised to the House of Lords. After her arrival at Kingston House, he soothed her apprehensions, and her natural spirits rose on finding that she had friends of such zeal and ability.

The Dukes of Ancaster, Portland, and Newcastle, Lord Mountstuart, and others, became her warm adherents; and from the moment that recognisances for the appearance of the duchess were entered into, public excitement rose to fever heat, but pending the trial, she suddenly found a new and rather unexpected enemy in the person of Samuel Foote, the famous player. This gentleman was perfectly intimate with the leading features of the duchess's life, and some of the more private matters thereof he obtained from a Miss Penrose. All these he wove up in a piece called *A Trip to Calais*, in which the character of the duchess was humorously and admirably, but disadvantageously, drawn. For its suppression, and before it could appear at the Haymarket, he was mean enough to expect a handsome sum from her, and he had the effrontery, when visiting her, to read at her request those scenes in which she figured as "My Lady Kitty Crocodile." She started up, inflamed with passion.

"Mr. Foote," she exclaimed; "what a wretch you make me!"

"This is not designed for your grace—it is not you," he urged, but in vain.

A long and angry correspondence (which will be found in the "Westminster Magazine" of 1776) ensued between them; and for the suppression of the farce Foote would seem to have demanded £2,000. She proffered him a cheque on Drummond for £1,600. The time for her was most critical, and she felt acutely that, at this crisis of her affair, with a trial impending before the Upper House, the production of this farce might destroy her. Foote held out for the original sum, but was baffled, as he deserved to be, in the end, as the Lord Chamberlain would not permit the *Trip to Calais* to be acted.

At last the day of trial came inexorably, and on the 15th of April, 1776, she was arraigned at the bar in Westminster Hall, and charged with bigamy and felony. The commission to try her was read. The judges were in their robes, the masters in Chancery in their gowns. The Lord High Steward asked their lordships if it was their pleasure that the judges should be covered; and on an answer being given in the affirmative, the sergeant-at-arms called aloud,

"Elizabeth Duchess of Kingston, come forth and save yourself and your bail, or forfeit your recognisance."

On this the duchess, attended by Mr. Egerton of the Bridgewater family, Mrs. Barrington, widow of the general of that name, Drs. Isaac Schomberg and Warren, entered the court, preceded by the Yeoman

Usher of the Black Rod, and was desired to seat herself. We are told that she "was dressed in a black polonaise, with a black gauze cap. She seemed cheerful and composed after the first shock. While she was reading the paper delivered in to the lords, she appeared to be strongly agitated and very sensibly affected. The business of her alleged crimes was then fully gone into; many witnesses were examined; and the trial, which excited the whole country, lasted five days. Anne Craddock's evidence, that of Judith Philips, and others, was fatally conclusive; and after the court adjourned to the chamber of parliament, Lord Mansfield asked each peer in succession whether the prisoner was or was not guilty; and all in succession replied, "Guilty, upon my honour," save the Duke of Newcastle, who added, "*erroneously*, but not intentionally."

On this being announced to her, she claimed "the benefit of the peerage applicable to the statute." She was then discharged on paying her fees; but on learning that, as Countess of Bristol, the prosecutors were preparing a writ of *ne exeat regno*, to prevent her quitting England and to deprive her of her property, she resolved to give them "the slip." She ordered her carriage to be driven about the public thoroughfares, and invited a select party to dine at Kingston; and while they were assembling she was travelling in all haste to Dover, where Harding, the captain of her yacht, met her, and in an open boat conveyed her safely to Calais.

And now began her life of aimless wandering. She

repaired to Rome, where she found the palace she had rented there, and in which she had left much property, had been stripped by thieves in her absence; while at home every means were taken to set aside the will of the Duke of Kingston. In a handsome vessel, built at her own expense, and in which "there was a drawing-room, a dining-parlour, and other conveniences," and on board of which she put several of the late duke's most valuable pictures, as a present for the Empress of Russia, she sailed for St. Petersburg, where the novelty of an English lady "braving the billows of the Baltic" excited considerable interest, and a handsome mansion was assigned her. The empress treated her with great distinction, but our ambassador had to keep aloof from her in public. She purchased an estate near St. Petersburg for £12,000, and named it Chudleigh, and thereon she erected a distillery for making brandy! Leaving an Englishman in charge, she again returned to Calais, accompanied by a Russian colonel with his wife and children. The former, says an old *Edinburgh Magazine*, *en route* "took French leave of the duchess, borrowing one of her watches, merely that he might not be at a loss as to the hour of the day, and taking a couple of rings, the brilliance of which would remind him of the charms of the real owner." Repairing to Paris, she bought a residence at Montmartre, with much land about it, and thence she sent much game to the markets; so the people in London alleged that she had become a Russian distiller and a French rabbit-merchant. In the latter affair she had a legal dispute.

In the August of the following year, when she was at dinner, it was announced that a decision had been given against her concerning the French property. She became greatly agitated, and burst a blood-vessel internally. She appeared to recover; but a few days afterwards, on the 26th of the month, when about to rise from bed, she complained of weakness, had some medicine given her, and was conducted to a couch.

"I shall lie here," she said; "I can sleep, and after a sleep I shall be entirely recovered."

She sank gradually back into a profound sleep, and from that slumber she never awakened.

STORY OF A HUSSAR OF THE REGENCY.

Sir Bernard Burke in recording the name of the *last* baronet of the old line of Craigie in Ayrshire—the parent stock from which the Scottish patriot sprang—Sir Thomas Wallace, says, that he married a daughter of Agnew Lochryan, "by whom he had one son, a captain of the Guards, who pre-deceased him.

This is all the clue that Sir Bernard gives to one of the most extraordinary and wasted, miserable and wandering, lives that ever existed; for this Captain William Wallace (who was never in the Household troops), early in his career, became embroiled—through the famous Mrs. Mary Anne Clark—with those in high places at Court, and with the Horse Guards, most singularly and fatally for himself; but whether in the future, he was in guilt or error personally, or the victim of a most remarkable plot, it is difficult now to tell. Any way, our ambassador at Paris, Sir Charles Stuart, in writing of his affairs in 1819, asserts that "he considers him to have been the victim of a most unfounded and unprecedented persecution."

In the early part of the present century, there was

published by a respectable firm in Stationers' Court, a volume of his memoirs, now out of print, or long since bought up for cogent reasons, and from it this paper is chiefly made out, with constructive evidence of his assertions from other sources.

Born in 1788, this heir of an old and honourable line began his military career in 1802, when he joined the army in India, and served in most of the operations of that war, so successfully waged by Wellington (then General Wellesley), against the Mahrattas, and when we were so signally triumphant on the plains of Assaye; and during that time, young Wallace would seem to have won the affection of his brother officers, and the esteem of his superiors. When the power of Scindiah was broken, and the strife was over, he came home for the recovery of his health, which had been seriously injured by service in India. In his eighteenth year, he was on leave of absence in London, at that time when "H.R.H. the Prince Regent," was the source of so much gossip, and the Pavilion at Brighton was the centre of rank and dissipation; when gloomy Old Bond Street was still in its glory as a fashionable lounge, though rivalled by the New and Piccadilly; when the Life Guards still wore Kevenhüller hats, and the Line rejoiced in their pigtails and pipe-clayed breeches.

Habituated to Oriental splendour and profusion, new to the gay world in which he found himself, by nature warm and impetuous, and, as an only son, too liberally supplied with means, young Wallace fell readily, for some time, into the perpetration of many follies, in the

midst of which he was appointed to the 15th Hussars, then commanded by the Duke of Cumberland, and noted as one of the most expensive regiments in the service. Soon after, he found himself engaged to marry one of the richest heiresses in England, and, at this period, in the brilliancy of his expectations, with his natural vivacity, and the example of his wealthy and reckless comrades, he plunged into the most prodigal extravagance, incumbering himself with horses, carriages, and dogs to a useless extent.

In vain did his father, the old baronet, remonstrate with him. His love of adventure and impetuous character, led him into many *intrigues d'amour*, and frequent duels, for every regiment and circle had then its "triers and provers" of a young fellow's courage; but by horsewhipping publicly the Marquis of H—— in Hyde Park, and thrashing a gentleman in the Round Room of the Opera House, with several similar offences, won him many enemies. This wild career caused his marriage to be broken off, and as he had calculated upon it, as a means of paying those debts which he had contracted with the profusion of a Timon, a phalanx of creditors took the field against him.

He asserts in his vindication of himself, that his Colonel, the Duke of Cumberland, assumed a haughty right of interference in his private affairs. Perhaps the Royal Duke was only giving him sound advice; but as he could no longer remain in the 15th Hussars, he begged permission to exchange into the 2nd Life Guards with a Mr. Barrington; but the Duke objected

to the personal appearance of the latter, while, on the other hand, if we are to believe the portrait of Captain Wallace, engraved by W Woolnoth in 1821, the latter was a handsome young man, with regular features, pensive eyes, a well-formed mouth and chin, a slight moustache, and hair shorn very short for the days of the Regency.

He then applied to the Duke for permission to exchange into the 10th Hussars; but the prince, offended by his determination to leave his regiment, gave him a peremptory order to rejoin the 15th Hussars, thus arbitrarily cancelling sick leave of absence which he had obtained from the Commander-in-Chief. Conceiving the Colonel's order illegal, he delayed obeying it, and found himself *superseded*, just about the time he was wounded in a duel with a Captain Ross.

The moment he recovered, he laid the case before the kind Duke of York, through the influence of that fine old soldier the Earl of Cathcart, and was restored to rank and pay; but by being gazetted to the 17th Light Dragoons, *then* under orders for India, the climate of which he dared not face again in consequence of his broken health, he applied for any cavalry corps in the Peninsula, where Moore was then combating Soult, but memorials were in vain, and at this juncture, his evil star gave him an introduction to—Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke.

This lady took the young dragoon so much into her confidence, as rashly to intrust him with a very remarkable correspondence, which, in kinder days, had passed between her, the Duke of York, and Colonel McMahon,

and was now to be of vast service to her in the measures she was about to institute against the former.

Wallace was rash enough to boast of possessing these formidable letters; rumour soon reached those in power of the startling fact, and the most strenuous efforts were made to induce their surrender. He thus drew upon himself the indignation of those whose favours he was at that very time soliciting, and whom it was his interest to have conciliated. About this time, he dined, he states, with the Duke of Sussex and other officers at the Neapolitan Club, where he drank freely, as all men did in those days, and losing all caution, was persuaded, by one who accompanied him home, to destroy those letters, on the publicity of which so much depended. This person, he asserts, was Charles Viscount Falkland, who fell in a duel in 1809. Wallace flung them in the fire. The whole merit of their destruction was attributed to the Viscount; and from that hour his entreaties were vain, and the only answer he received from the Horse Guards was a peremptory order to join his regiment.

Again he urged his health in India, and the injuries he had received by his horse falling back upon him when rearing—injuries so severe, that he was borne to the nearest house, that of the Duchess of Roxburghe; again he urged his services in the Mahratta war, and enclosed medical certificates from Drs. Bailey and Heaviside. We have only his own word for the tenor of this correspondence, which ended, however, by the appearance of his name in the Gazette as having *resigned* His Majesty's Commission.

"It is impossible for me to attribute this unprecedented treatment," he wrote; "to H.R.H. the Commander-in-Chief, whose well-known liberality and kindness to the army in general, I had formerly experienced in the most marked manner myself; but to a false and malicious representation of the transaction itself."

All hope in the Horse Guards seemed over now, yet, in the ardour of his temperament, young Wallace conceived the romantic idea of all-but wresting back his commission, by quitting his sick-room, and joining our army in the Peninsula, as a cavalry volunteer; but his then evil genius preceded him, and by the malice of certain persons never known, his project was nearly defeated on his arrival in Portugal. His appearance in the ranks, divested of all the insignia of an officer, made him the subject of much, and not always friendly conversation; thus at the dinner-table of Sir Charles Stuart, then our Ambassador at Lisbon, he became embroiled with a Captain Fenwick and a Colonel Mackinnon, the former asserting that he had seen him behaving improperly at Plymouth, and the latter that he held certain of his acceptances. To these officers he sent challenges by the Honourable Dudley Carlton (who died in 1820), and received apologies for the assertions, but a prejudice against him remained in the mind of Sir Arthur Wellesley.

As a volunteer trooper, risking every privation and danger, his bravery with the advanced guard at the Lines of Torres Vedras won him the notice, perhaps the

pity, of General Sir William Erskine, who took him out of the ranks and placed him in a temporary situation near his person. On every occasion, reconnoitering, foraging, or harassing the enemy, his peculiar position compelled him to be prominent; but the night-guards, without shelter from the cold or rain, brought back his Indian fever, and the once gay Hussar was reduced to the verge of the grave. A return home was necessary, and furnished with such testimonials as he hoped would restore to him the commission he prized so much, and charged with private despatches from Sir William Erskine, he returned to London, where, while his name was placed on the list at the Horse Guards for re-appointment (as the Records show, on the 17th December, 1814), he was assailed by a host of creditors, whose attacks were worse than those of the French, so to avoid them he retired into Scotland.

After a time of gloom, disappointment, and useless regret, he effected a compromise with his creditors, but returned to town only to fall into fresh scrapes, and he became, for a time, the victim and slave of one of the famous and fascinating, beautiful and extravagant of the *demi-monde*, whose name it is useless to record; but who had recently come to the metropolis after queening it at Brighton. Having gone to visit his father, Sir Thomas Wallace, who, after being long a prisoner of war in France, was released by the Treaty of Paris, to his rage and mortification, the fair one on whom he had lavished all, eloped with one of his friends; but such was the weakness of his character, that some time after,

on going to a masked ball at the Argyll Rooms, accompanied by Colonel Brown, Captain Moore of the Life-Guards, and two other officers, a lady near him, "either fainted, or affected to faint, and fell into the arms of the bystanders." Her mask was removed, and in all her wonderful beauty he saw the woman he had loved and lost! Pity seized him now; he was silly enough to bear her to her carriage, which drove her and his friends to her house, No. 3, Crawford Street, where a mad night of champagne and deep play ensued, and the losses of Wallace were enormous. Other gambling transactions followed with reckless spirits of the Guards, and many of those military idlers whom the Peace had cast upon the town. In one of these a Mr. Bradburne lost so much that he shot himself, and a paragraph in "The Day" announced that he had been "decoyed (to gamble) by Captain W—— and a Mr. A.," and had put a period to his existence in consequence. Action was taken against the Editor, but too late; the story spread with a thousand additions. Wallace certainly held Bradburne's acceptances for £2,200, which he had fairly won in the attempt of the latter to win *his* money; yet after receiving a promissory note for the amount on Hoare and Co., he threw it into the fire; but his rash career in London had gained him such a host of enemies, that society viewed him coldly, and accompanied by a friend, named Andrews, he left it. "We determined to proceed to the nearest sea-port town," he states, "and there await the favourable moment at which it was agreed we were to be recalled by our friends, to

meet the charges and defeat the machinations of our prosecutors. With this view we departed for Calais."

But his friends failed to recall him, for now began the most extraordinary portion of his misfortunes and adventures.

On the 7th March, 1816, they put up at the Hôtel de Bourbon, Rue de la Paix, Paris, waiting news from London, and then, the maître d'hôtel, Monsieur de Marcel, urged him to go to the Hôtel de Valois, which he kept in the Rue de Richelieu, promising to afford better service and accommodation. "There was an eagerness in the manner of this fellow—an importunity beyond all bounds—that struck me with suspicion of some further motive," says Wallace; "I coldly declined his solicitations, but it did not discourage him; he came almost daily and besieged me with entreaties, and bore repulses with a patience that would have astonished me in any one but a Frenchman." Eventually the friends removed to his other hotel on the 19th of March, and Wallace had soon reason to suspect that his escritoire had been opened and his papers examined, by Marcel and some suspicious-looking men, whom he once surprised in his rooms; but they were partly in their host's power by that time, as Mr. Andrews was 1,040 francs in his debt. For this he gave bills upon his mother and Lord Wallscourt, and then left for Madrid with the Count de Gadez; while Wallace, finding that the bad impression against him in London had passed away, set out for England by the way of Brussels, where he was well received by the many English tourists to whom the

continent was now open. Unfortunately a friend induced him to revisit Paris, where more than once he saw his former host, Marcel, who always saluted him with marked respect. He then went to Boulogne, and one evening when he was dining with some friends at the Hôtel Charpentier, a party of gendarmes broke into the room and roughly arrested him, at the instance of Marcel, for a debt of 4,000 francs. He was conducted to prison, where, resolving to resist this infamous attempt to extort money, he employed MM. Lessis and Deslandes, an advocate and attorney, to defend him before the *Tribunal de Première Instance Civile,* which —as Marcel was unable to prove his claim—set Wallace at liberty, and awarded him damages for the insult, the motive for which seemed inexplicable to all.

Reflection showed that Marcel had some secret inducement, and that he was the paid agent of powerful enemies elsewhere. This Marcel had been notorious during the Reign of Terror, and only escaped death by having a friend, whose name was *Martel,* executed, by a strange trick, in his place. He became a member of the secret police, and by his denunciations had long "kept the guillotine in the south of France in continual motion, and Bordeaux in perpetual mourning." Such was the agent of the enemies of Wallace, who states, that when leaving the debtor's prison in accordance with the sentence of the Court, he was, to his rage and astonishment, arrested by the *concierge* on a charge of *robbery,* and was conducted with a "brigade of convicts," under an armed guard, to Paris—everywhere, as an

Englishman—taunted and reviled, for Waterloo was fresh in every Frenchman's mind. He had, however, the use of a cabriolet, which deposited him at the prison of La Force, after being insolently treated by the *Procureur du Roi*, and coldly answered by our ambassador; and then his spirit would have sunk but for the kindness of a young Belgian girl, to whom he had become attached, and who had followed him from Brussels. Of this influence he was soon deprived, by being thrust into a cell with nine *galériens*, who robbed him of money supplied to him by kind Deslandes, the advocate, to pay "the right of entry." His valet was denied access to him, and all his letters were intercepted. Then, surrounded by bolts and bars, the dust and dirt of years, and among such ruffians as France can alone produce, he remained in an agony of perplexity till, on the absurd charge of stealing from the Hôtel de Valois three towels and a shoebrush, the property of M. Marcel, eighteen months before, he was arraigned at the *Palais de Justice*, where Marcel appeared in the double capacity of prosecutor and witness; and though "all were anxious to hear the accusation that would banish an Englishman to the galleys," he totally failed to prove it, and once more Wallace was set at liberty.

Boiling with rage, he hastened into the street, resolving to demand redress from our ambassador, Sir Charles Stuart, when he was seized by an armed party, and beaten by them so severely that he would have been killed but for the intervention of an Irish soldier in the French service. He was then dragged back to La Force,

into which he was thrown on a new charge—forgery! A few days after, he was thumbscrewed, and brought under escort, before M. Meslin, the *Juge d'Instruction*, for examination; he was denied the use of an interpreter, and no one was suffered to be present but the *greffier*, an intimate friend of Marcel.

He was told that his name was Philip, not William; that he was a Russian, not a Scotsman, and the *Juge* alluded to many mysterious events to which William was a total stranger. He was declared incorrigible. "*Gendarmes, remenez-le à La Force!*" was the order, and he was marched back to prison. Eventually he was ordered to be released, when his advocate, the Chevalier Duplessis, discovered through Pozzo di Borgo, the Russian ambassador, that he had been arrested in mistake for another person who had forged a draft upon His Excellency. On Wallace appealing to M. Meslin for some satisfaction for all he had undergone, that official only laughed, and ordered him again to La Force, saying there was a new and more serious charge against him! This was an accusation of swindling. He was flung into the dreadful *Bâtiment-neuf*, where his sufferings, like the horrible scenes he witnessed, are beyond all description. The charge was made at the instance of the inevitable and inexorable Marcel! He based it on the old claim of debt. Duplessis treated the prosecution as a nullity; but Marcel procured a judgment against him by default, and he was tried by the *Cour de Première Instance*, on the charge of having obtained credit from Marcel through a bill drawn on a *Lord*

Wallace. The bill drawn by Mr. Andrews on Lord *Wallscourt*, and on which the name of Wallace did not appear "either as drawer, or acceptor or indorser," was adduced in evidence against him. The charge fell to the ground. Even the *Procureur du Roi* was warmly in his favour. He was acquitted, and left the court overjoyed.

As he went forth, he was again arrested in virtue of the judgment obtained by Marcel, through default, and thrown into Ste. Pélagie, the King's Bench of Paris, where his place of confinement was so horrible, that he longed to be back again in La Force. He was now almost heart-broken; but as the wretch who persecuted, failed to aliment him, he was released on the 27th January, 1818; but at the gate he was again arrested by order of the Comte d'Angles, the Prefect of Police, in virtue of a *private letter*, and confined "*au secret!*" No human being could have access to him now, and all intercourse with the outer world was denied. His situation was now harrowing in the extreme. "I felt," he says, "all the difference between the misery that has hope to dwell upon, and that which has *none*." Without a pretext, his captivity would be without an end, it seemed.

But, on the 28th January, 1818, the *concierge* abruptly announced an order to set him free; and added that M. Marcel was without with a party of gendarmes. He begged permission to remain till sunset; but the agent of the Secret Police, finding that he did not come forth, entered and dragged him out; and along the quays and

bridges he was torn by twelve armed men, followed by a vast unpitying multitude, with a handkerchief thrust into his mouth, and then retaken to Ste. Pélagie, on *three* charges of murder — for assassinating a British General at Valenciennes, and two bankers in Paris!

On these outrageous charges he pined in prison for eighteen months longer, till consumption began to waste him, and all spirit and all desire for life were gone; for though no attempt was made to substantiate them, the *Cour de Première Instance* had reconfirmed to Marcel the power of detaining him as a debtor for life in Ste. Pélagie. Fortunately, about this time he was discovered by an old English friend, who, by ample bribery, prevailed upon that remarkable scoundrel (who thought his victim was dying) to sign a document, relinquishing all claim, if Wallace would abandon all right of counter prosecution. He also added an invitation to take up a residence in *his house!*

On the 6th October, wasted, worn, penniless, and every way destitute, he quitted Ste. Pélagie, and was conveyed to the humble lodging of his faithful valet in the Faubourg St. Marceau, when on the verge of death. In the solitude of his various prisons, how often must this son of luxury, this butterfly of fashion, who, though brave in battle, was but a Bond Street lounger when at home, have felt bitterly that the shaping of his life had gone beyond him now, ere youth was well-nigh past; and that its illusions, hopes, and enthusiasm had also gone for ever.

Nursed by his old valet he gradually recovered

strength, and on receiving an affectionate letter from his father urging that the air of his native country would completely restore him, he gladly turned his back on Paris, and its hated police power.

But he would seem never to have got over the shock of all these accusations, as he sank into a premature grave, thus leaving old Sir Thomas Wallace the last of his line, and without an heir to his baronetcy, which was created in 1669.

A WEIRD STORY OF BRUGES.

Six months ago, when in Bruges, that "quaint old town of art and song," as Longfellow styles it—a town all unchanged since the ancient days of Flanders—I became cognisant of the following events, by happening to be present at the examination of the chief actor in them, before one of the two burgomasters who govern the city.

With a Belgian friend, I had been lounging in a window of the club-house that overlooks the spacious square known as the Grande Place (above which towers the wonderful belfry, from whence one may look down on the frontiers of Holland as on a map, and from whence, it is said, the mouth of the Thames may be seen on a clear day), when a police escort, with swords drawn, conducted a prisoner past, towards the Palais de Justice. He was a young man of the better class, apparently, very pale, very sad, and depressed in aspect, very handsome in face, graceful in bearing, and most unlike a criminal. His hands, however, were manacled, and a crowd of workmen and children clattered noisily around him in their wooden sabots.

As the rumour spread that a terrible assassination

had just been committed, we followed the escort to the magnificent old hall in that edifice, which was whilom the Palais du Franc de Bruges, and which contains a chimney-piece occupying one entire side of it, with gigantic statues carved in wood, and marble bas-reliefs representing chastely the story of Susannah and the Elders, as the reader may find in his "John Murray."

From that which transpired at the examination of the prisoner, and what I read in a few subsequent numbers of the little local paper named *La Patrie,* I gleaned the substance of the following story, which, in some of its features, reminds one of the case of Oriental metempsychosis mentioned in the *Spectator*—the passing of the soul from body to body, including the influences of mesmeric, crystalline, and magnetic forces, though I do not pretend to know anything of the learned and mysterious jargon concerning those matters; but much of which I heard that day referred to in the Palais de Justice.

A mile or so on the level highway beyond the beautiful round towers of the loopholed and embattled Porte St. Croix, one of the still remaining barriers of the old fortifications, there stands at a little distance from the road, a quaint old Flemish dwelling-house, built of red brick, and almost hidden among chestnut and apple-trees. If we are to believe the "Chronyke Van Vlanderen," it was once a shooting-box of Charles the Bold, and near it Mary of Burgundy received the fall from her horse which proved so fatal. Be all this as it may,

it is a house with many pointed gables, strange outshot and beams of quaintly-carved oak; and therein, wit his nephew, Hendrik, and an old housekeeper, reside Dr. Van Gansendonck, called Doctor, not from hi profession, but for his learning, as he enjoyed th reputation of understanding all languages, living an dead, and being master of every science, human an divine; and was regarded by the simple and religiou Brugois, as altogether a miracle of a man in som respects.

Some there were who deemed him a dangerous dup to his own powers, and these were the clergy especially who, with something of repugnance, drew their blac cloaks closer about them when "the doctor" passe them on the highway or in the narrow unpaved streets as it was notorious that he never crossed the threshol of a church, or was known to lift his hat either to them or to the numerous Madonnas that decorate every stree corner, and many a doorway too, in Bruges.

The Herr Doctor, now past his sixtieth year, had, i some respects, decidedly a bad reputation, and a hundre and fifty years ago or so, might have ended his studie amid a blaze of tar-barrels in the Grande Place as wizard, but in this our age of steam and telegraphy h was viewed as simply a learned eccentric, and as dabbler in mesmerism, clairvoyance, the odic light, an second sight; but these occult mysteries, which th church condemns, he would seem to have carried to length that seems strangely out of place in these day of hard facts and practical common-sense,

A forehead high and bald, a head tonsured round by a fringe of silvery hair, eyes keen and quick as those of a rattlesnake—eyes that seemed to glare through his gold-rimmed glasses, made the face of Herr Van Gansendonck so remarkable, that those who saw it never failed to be impressed by its strange expression of intellectual power, tinged with somewhat of insanity; but his visitors were few. His time was chiefly spent in his library; and as he was rich, being proprietor of more than one of those gigantic mills, the sails of which overshadow the grassy ramparts, he could afford to please himself by living as he chose, and seclusion was his choice. He seemed to have but one favourite only—Hendrik—a brother's orphan son, whom he had adopted, educated, and who was to be his heir.

Hendrik was now in his twentieth year, decidedly handsome, but with dreamy blue eyes that had an expression in them one could not easily forget; yet the lad's temperament was poetic and enthusiastic, and now he had but recently returned to Bruges, after undergoing a course of study, and attending those lectures which are given on science, literature, and art at the library of the Museum in Brussels.

The grim old student hailed the return of the younger one with a pleasure that he did not conceal, and there was at least *one* more in Bruges that did so with joy.

This was Lenora, the daughter of Madame Van Eyck, a widow lady, residing in one of those quaint old houses at the Quai Espagnol. To her he had been betrothed,

and the monetary plans of his uncle alone were awaited for their marriage, young though Hendrik was.

Bruges, according to an old monkish rhyme, has ever been celebrated for its pretty girls, but Lenora Van Eyck, a bright blonde of eighteen, was more than pretty—she was charming, with that wonderful bloom of complexion which is so truly Belgian; light, laughing, hazel eyes that were full of merriment, and all her ways and modes of expression piquant and attractive.

She had been one of the six young ladies who, clothed and veiled in white, were selected on the last Corpus Christi day to bear the gilt Madonna through the streets before the bishop. Lenora had been with her family at Blankenburg—the little Brighton of the Brugois—for several weeks after the return of Hendrik to the house of his uncle; and when again they met at their favourite trysting place, the long walk of stately poplars by the canal near the Porte St. Croix, she soon became conscious of a strange and painful change in the bearing, the manner, and the eyes of her lover. Languor seemed to pervade every action; his face had become pale, his eyes more dreamy than ever, and he was unusually taciturn and abstracted.

Why was this? Lenora asked of herself, while she watched him with that keenness of eye and anxiety of heart that are born of love and tenderness, for there was a singular mystery now about the once happy Hendrik that filled her with grave perplexity. Had his love for her changed? His eyes, though sad, were

loving in expression as ever, when they met hers—yet even his smile was sad—so very sad!

Again and again, in her most winning way, she would implore Hendrik to reveal to her any secret that weighed upon his mind, but in vain. Why was it, she asked, that he, whom she had left so lively in bearing and happy in spirit, had now become so moody? and why was it that there were times when he seemed to feel himself compelled, as it were, to leave her suddenly and in haste, without a word of explanation, apology, or excuse? She pleaded without avail; Hendrik could but avert his pallid face, or cover his eyes with his hand, as if to shut out some painful vision or crush some worrying thought.

He dared not tell her—lest she should deem him mad, and so shrink from him—that his uncle, the Herr Van Gansendonck, had, mesmerically, acquired a mysterious and terrible influence over him, and that by the mere power of will he could summon him to his presence at all times, wherever he might be, or with whomsoever he was engaged—even with herself; and that he, Hendrik, found himself totally powerless and incapable of effecting his emancipation from the bodily and mental thraldom under which he writhed!

He dared not tell her all this, or, further, that Herr Van Gansendonck had the power to set him asleep on a chair in his library, and then to cause his spirit (for this was alleged in the Palais de Justice) to disengage itself from the body, and go on distant missions through the air for thousands of miles in the course of a few

minutes, or that when thus put to sleep, the Herr, by exciting his organ of *ideality*, could obtain such information as he wished on strange and abstruse subjects.

That he had become a helpless and nerve-shattered mesmeric medium, he thought at times he might confide to her; but even in this his courage failed him, for other and more terrifying convictions were creeping upon him; thus he shrank from telling the girl who loved him so dearly, that when his spiritual essence was despatched to distant lands, the Herr, by the same power, permitted *other* spirits to enter his body and use its members for purposes of their own. The horror of this idea, it was alleged, made the youth's life insupportable, for on awaking from these strange and involuntary trances, he would at times find on his person cuts and bruises he was all unconscious of receiving; sometimes his purse would be gone, or in its place might be found strange money and letters to and from individuals of whose existence he knew nothing.

All this was done by one whose power he could neither repel nor defy; and now he had the natural dread that if his body was made to obey the behests of these spiritual intruders, he might be led into some horrible predicament — the committal of a dreadful crime. Another might even come in his place and meet Lenora!

One evening as they sat on the grassy rampart that overlooked the great canal, the girl strove to rouse or soothe him by singing with great sweetness one of Jan

Van Beer's Flemish songs; but the music of her voice and the poetry of the author of "Zeik Jongeling" fell on Hendrik's ear in vain. When she paused,

"I dreamt of you last night, darling Lenora," said the young man, looking at her with inexpressible tenderness; "but such dreams are so tantalising, even more so than the dreams one has by day."

"All your life seems one hazy dream now, Hendrik," said Lenora somewhat petulantly.

"Forgive me, dearest, you know not what you talk of. My mind, I grant you, is a chaos, full of strange terrors, perplexity, and confusion; and times there are when I fear for my reason," he added wildly, passing a hand over his forehead, and looking aside.

"Dear Hendrik, do not speak thus, I implore you."

"I must—in whom can I confide, if not in you? And yet I dare not—I dare not!"

After a pause he spoke again, but with his eyes fixed, not on her, but on the still, deep water of the shining canal.

"This much I will tell you, Lenora. Yesterday, my uncle sent me on some business of his to the house of an advocate, Père Baas, near the Béguinage, a house in which I had never been before, and I was shown into a room to wait. On looking round, to my astonishment, every article in it—and the room itself—the ceiling, the stove, the windows, and the paintings—especially one by Hans Hemling—were all familiar to me, and I seemed to *recognise* every object there. 'I was never here before,' thought I; 'and yet I must have been—

but when? If so, there is a little window behind this picture, which opens to the garden of the Béguinage.' I turned the picture, and lo! there was the little window in question; I saw through it the garden with all its cherry-trees and two or three béguines flitting about. Oh, Lenora, there is indeed some power beyond matter, proving that the soul is independent of the body!"

"It must have been a dream."

"It was *no* dream," replied Hendrik gloomily.

"But how do you account for the strange fancy?"

"My disembodied spirit must have been there, sent on some accursed errand by my uncle!"

"But you would die, Hendrik."

"Not if another tenant were at hand," replied Hendrik, gnashing his teeth.

Then the girl wept to hear him, as she naturally deemed it, raving thus.

"Such things cannot be," said she, sobbing.

"My uncle says they may; and the theory is as old as the days of Pythagoras."

"I know nothing of Herr Pythagoras; but this I know, that the Herr Van Gansendonck is a strange and bad man. Pardon me, dear Hendrik; but he never enters a church door, nor has he been to mass or confession for years. Leave him, and Bruges too, rather than become the victim of such dreadful delusions."

"To do either is to leave and to lose you! I am his heir; and we have but to wait his pleasure—or, it may be, his death, to be so happy," replied Hendrik, sadly: and then they relapsed into silence. With Lenora it

was silence induced by sorrow and alarm, while her lover seemed to let his thoughts slip away into dreamland.

The sultry summer evening breeze rustled the leaves near them; the honey-bees buzzed and hummed among the wild flowers and buttercups that grew on the old rampart; and far away could be heard the ceaseless chirping of the crickets.

Lenora's head rested on Hendrik's shoulder, and he was lost in thought, though mechanically toying with her hair, which shone like ripples of gold in the light of the setting sun.

He was aware that Lenora had begun to speak to him again; her voice seemed to mingle with the drowsy hum of the bees and the evening chimes or carillons in the distant spires; but he heard as if he heard her not; till suddenly a thrill seemed to pass over him, as a secret and intuitive sense or knowledge that his terrible relation required his immediate presence, made him start from the grassy bank, snatch a hasty kiss, and hurry away by the arch of the Porte St. Croix, leaving Lenora mortified, sorrowful, and utterly bewildered by the abruptness of his departure.

"Oh, how changed he is!" thought she, as she proceeded slowly in the other direction towards her home on the Quai Espagnol.

On two or three occasions the unhappy Hendrik had, what he conceived to be, undoubted proof of his body having been, in the intervals of mesmeric trances, tenanted by another spirit than his own; and this strange and wild conviction caused such intense horror

and loathing of his uncle that the expressions to which he gave utterance to more than one of his friends—more than all to Lenora—were recalled, most fatally for himself, at a future time.

One day, in the Rue des Augustines, he was accosted by brother Eusebius, a Capuchin.

"Friend Hendrik," said he, severely and gravely, "was it becoming in you to be roystering as you were yesterday at the low estaminet in the market-place, and with such companions—fellows in blouses and sabots?"

"Impossible, Brother Eusebius; I was not there," faltered Hendrik, as the usual fear crept over him.

"I myself saw you. And, moreover, you looked at me."

"When—at what hour?"

"Six in the evening."

"Six!"

Hendrik felt himself grow pale. He remembered that at that identical time he was under the hands of his uncle. He groaned in sore and dire perplexity, and his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, while the Capuchin continued to address him in tones of rebuke and earnest remonstrance.

"Have I a double-ganger, or am I becoming crazed?" urged Hendrik. "Believe me, Brother Eusebius, I was not there!" he added, piteously and earnestly.

"At the hour of six?" persisted the unbelieving Capuchin.

"I swear to you that at the hour of six I was, and had been for some time, in one of those unaccountable

trances in which my uncle has the power to cast me—one of those hours of bodily torpor that have come upon me," he added, while the perspiration poured in bead-drops from his pallid brow. "I awoke about eight. I heard the chimes ringing in the church of St. Giles, and near me sat my uncle, pen in hand, as if in the act of questioning me and committing to paper that which I had been revealing in my magnetic slumber. Oh! am I the victim of necromancy?"

"Scarcely, in this age of the world," replied the Capuchin, but now with more of pity than rebuke in his manner.

"I swear to you by the Holy Blood that I speak tho truth!" continued Hendrik, referring to the famous *relique* of the Brugois in the little chapel near the Hôtel de Ville. "I last remember hearing the voice of my uncle as I sank into sleep; my arms fell powerless by my side; my eyes closed; waves of magnetic fluid or air seemed to flow over me; and my spirit passed away, at his behest, to other lands."

"What madness—what raving is this, Hendrik?" said the sandalled friar, with sadness and severity. "Do you mean to tell me that your uncle is another Cagliostro—a veritable Balsamo?"

"I fear it—I fear it," said Hendrik, with clasped hands.

"Learn first to fear the potations of the estaminet," replied the Capuchin, as he turned coldly and bluntly away, believing that the young man was intoxicated.

On another occasion Hendrik failed to keep an appointment with Lenora Van Eyck, who waited for him anxiously till long past the time named, and then proceeded pensively homeward. As she approached the steep and antique bridge that leads from the Rue des Augustines to the Quai Espagnol she saw Hendrik cross it, and look at her calmly and deliberately the while, but without a glance or smile of recognition. Her heart, which at first had beat happily, now became perplexed as he turned abruptly up the opposite bank of the canal, and dropped into a little skiff, which he proceeded to unmoor, and, in doing so, cut his right hand severely.

"Hendrik! Hendrik!" she called aloud; but he heard her not, and, shipping a pair of sculls, pulled swiftly out of sight.

When next they met, and she upbraided him with this strange conduct, the same emotion of fear that had come over him when confronted by the Capuchin again filled his heart, and he called Heaven to witness that it was not he whom she had seen.

"But here, Hendrik, love, is the wound on your hand," urged the astonished girl.

"I know not how I received it," he moaned, "though aware that a wound is there."

"This passes all comprehension!" said Lenora mournfully. "Oh! Hendrik, I thought a love like ours would never die; yet doubt and terror are destroying it now."

Something like a sob came into Hendrik's throat,

and through his clenched teeth he muttered hoarsely and fiercely—

"This kind of life—a double life, it would seem—cannot last for ever. Nothing does last for ever, and the end will come anon." And as he spoke he fixed his moist and now hollow eyes as if on some distant horizon which he alone could see.

"Hendrik! — dearest Hendrik!" urged the girl soothingly, as she caressed his face between her soft and pretty hands, for her heart was full of alarm as well as love; it was a conviction so dreadful, the fear that he was perhaps becoming insane.

"Can over-study at Brussels have made the poor boy ill," thought Lenora, in the solitude of her chamber that night. "Oh! must I give him up after all—after all? Dare I go through life as the wife of one so strange, so wayward, and so moody? No; better be a béguine like Aunt Truey. I am so happy at home. Why do girls marry? and for what do I want to marry?" And as she pondered thus, she sat looking at her white hands, and changing Hendrik's betrothal ring—an opal set with diamonds—from one finger to another, till it slipped from her and rolled away on the varnished floor, whence she snatched it up with a little cry of alarm, for the event seemed ominous of evil. "Oh, I must indeed consult Brother Eusebius about this matter," was her concluding thought, more especially as the Capuchin had told her that 'opals were unlucky'

And when he dropped in for his post-prandial cup of

coffee with her mother that evening, Lenora did take him into her confidence; but the friar only imbibed pinch after pinch of snuff from the huge wooden box which he carried in the sleeve pocket of his brown frock; hinted of what he had seen at the estaminet, and shook his shaven head, adding that "Hendrik Van Gansendonck came of a bad stock, and should be avoided." So the Capuchin was consulted no more on the subject.

Hendrik now broke many appointments made with Lenora. He seemed to be no longer the master of his own actions, and he was so frequently reproached by her for his inattention and unkindness, that he feared to make a promise to her at all, and two entire days passed without their meeting.

Could he tell her that which he now confidently believed to be the case; that Herr Van Gansendonck had cast him into a mesmeric trance, leaving him in that condition, and intending to come back in an hour or so; but, having been summoned away on business, had left him, to all appearance spell-bound and helpless, to the terror of the old housekeeper at the château?

On the third day he met her coming from vespers in the church of the Béguinage, where she had been to visit her Aunt Truey.

Lenora was very pale; her eyes were full of tears, and, as Hendrik could perceive, they were sparkling with resentment. She was in the very summer of her beauty—that age when all girls seem pretty. Hendrik gazed upon her carelessly, and would have kissed her, but the walk was a public one, and the *blanchisseurs*

were busy amid the Minnewater. Lenora was so prettily dressed, too: and most suitably did her silver-grey costume, trimmed with rose-coloured ribbon, become her blonde beauty, her purity of complexion, and fair shining tresses. Fresh, young, and graceful, there was a delicacy and softness in all her air and person, yet anger was apparent in her eyes; and those of Lenora were what a writer has described, as "wonderful golden eyes—eyes which painters dare not imitate, because the colour is so subtle, and the light in them so living—eyes that are called hazel, but are not hazel."

"I now know the reason of your avoiding me in the Rue des Augustines, and also where you were going on that evening in the skiff," said she.

"Lenora, have I not already said——"

"Hendrik," interrupted the girl, with severity, "I have for some time feared that you were crazed; now I find that you are wicked, and that Brother Eusebius was right after all."

"Wicked—my darling!"

"Do not speak to me thus; I have good reason to be most indignant with you," she continued, stamping her little foot on the ground.

"For what, dearest?" asked Hendrik, whose heart was sinking with vague apprehension as usual.

"Cease to twist your moustache, and answer me this: was it right or proper of you to be drinking with soldiers at the Rampart de Caserne last evening?—and worse still, to be toying with and caressing little

Mademoiselle Dentelle, the lace-maker, who lives there—toying with her actually in the open street, while mamma and I passed you?" added Lenora, whose eyes were flashing through their tears, though her cheek was pale, as Hendrik's now became.

He was voiceless, and could make neither response nor reply, for he knew that at the time to which he referred he had been, as he simply phrased it, "put to sleep in his kinsman's study," and that on awaking he had found himself *not* there, but lying on the grassy bank near the Rampart de Caserne, and that, instead of his hat, he found on his head the képi of a soldier of the 2nd Regiment, then quartered in Bruges, and a pipe, of which he knew nothing, dangling from a button of his coat! The stars were shining, and the dew was on the grass, but how long he had been there, or how he came to be there, were alike mysteries to him.

He felt bitterly the utter hopelessness of urging more to Lenora; yet he attempted to falter out some explanation.

"This is juggling, Hendrik," replied the girl passionately; "another face—another love has come between us, otherwise you would not dare to treat me thus?"

"Your suspicion is false, dearest Lenora," said he. "Oh, pardon me, sweet one! but I feel as if I were in a dream—as if I were some one else, and not myself!"

"Again, dreams!" said Lenora scornfully, as she drew his betrothal ring from her finger, dashed it at his feet, and left him. Night after night had Lenora lain

awake, brooding over the change that had come upon Hendrik, weeping the while, with wide-open eyes in the darkness, and now she had come to the firm resolution to dismiss him for ever; but when she left him, silent, stunned, and confounded by the Minnewater, her heart yearned for him again, and she repented her severity, lest his mind might be, as she too justly feared, affected.

And now he, while gazing wistfully after her retiring figure, thought with loathing and horror of the keen visage, the hawk-like nose, the cold, yet clear glittering eyes and gold spectacles of that odious relative to whom he was unhappily indebted even for food and raiment, for his past education, and all his future prospects in life—Lenora included; but who seemed to possess over him a power so unaccountable, so terrible and diabolical! Much of this he said to one or two friends whom he met on his way homeward, and the expressions were also remembered against him in the time that was to come.

Soon after he found himself secretly and imperatively summoned to the presence of the Herr, who—as he afterwards told the Burgomaster in the Palais de Justice—"bade him go sleep," and sent his spirit on some mysterious errand, hundreds of miles away. What happened in the library of that lonely little château outside the Porte St. Croix, while his spiritual essence was thus absent, the unhappy Hendrik never could know; but when it re-entered his body—or when he awoke—he was horrified to find his learned uncle lying

dead on the floor amid a pool of blood, his face and throat gashed by dreadful wounds, which had evidently been inflicted by a blood-spotted knife which Hendrik found clutched in *his own right hand!* Blood gouts were over all his clothes, the pockets of which were found to be stuffed with money, jewels, and other valuables taken from a bureau and desk, which had been burst open and ransacked.

The soul of Hendrik died within him! Even if he had committed this crime in frenzy—and he felt certain that he did not do so—why should he have sought to rob his uncle? He then thought of Lenora, and of the sorrow and shame that would come upon her now; he reeled and fell senseless on the floor. The cries of the old housekeeper speedily brought aid; Hendrik was arrested, charged with assassination and robbery, and was at once consigned, as already described, to the Palais de Justice, where all the weird story came to light. The hatred and horror he had expressed of his dead uncle were now remembered fatally by all who had heard them; but the knife he had in his hand was, singularly enough, found to be the property of a soldier of the 2nd Belgian Infantry.

To the last Hendrik asserted his innocence, when tried and convicted for that which was, not unnaturally, deemed a most cruel and ungrateful crime; and his advocate, Père Baas, who, singularly enough, was also a dabbler in mesmerism, laboured hard in his cause, but in vain. When brought to the scaffold in the Grande Place, Hendrik, attended by Brother Eusebius,

had all the bearing of a martyr, as he fully believed that the crime committed, if by his hand, was at least by the dictate of another spirit.

Lenora visited him in the dreary cell the night before he died, and, according to "La Patrie," as they parted, Hendrik said:

"Death, even on the scaffold, has no terror for me now. I know where my spirit will go, and that none on earth can recall it. You will come to me, beloved Lenora," he added, pointing upwards; "you will come to me there in heaven, where there can be no parting, no death, and no sorrow."

And, with one long embrace, they parted for ever.

The editor of "La Patrie," writing of these things next day, said, not without truth, "Hendrik Van Gansendonck was, too probably, crazed; and if so, should not have been executed."

AGNES SOREL, "THE LADY OF BEAUTY."

This celebrated favourite of Charles VII. of France —one who has inherited from her own time to ours, after a lapse of more than four centuries, the distinctive sobriquet of "the beautiful Agnes"—was the daughter of M. Soreau (vulgarly called Sorel, according to De Mezerai), the Seigneur de St. Geran, a noble gentleman of Touraine, and not the child of a humble house, *de petite basse maison*, as George Chastelain, her personal enemy, would have us to believe in his "Chronique des Ducs de Bourgogne."

She was born in 1409, and in 1431, when in her two-and-twentieth year, received the appointment of attendant or lady of honour to Isabella, queen of Naples and Sicily, from whose court and service she passed into that of Mary, daughter of Louis II. Duke of Anjou, afterwards queen of Charles VII., where her rank, education, and more than these, her marvellous beauty, all conspired to win her the perilous attention of a king who was younger than herself. Agnes was *not* seventeen, as the fair authoress of the "Histoire des Favorites," asserts she was, at this time; but had

attained the more mature age of at least twenty-eight —perhaps thirty, as Oliver de la Marche, a contemporary, when recording some event which took place in 1444, tells us that "the king had just then elevated a poor lady, a pretty woman, called Agnes Sorel, and placed her in such triumph and power that her state was comparable to that of the greatest princess of the realm."

Her features were beautiful, and expressive of extreme gentleness; her skin has been described as being of the hue of alabaster, and her hair was marvellously golden in its brightness. She was then in the full bloom and beauty of womanhood, and possessed a vivacity of manner which "spread an air full of charm on the least of her actions, so that the most insensible souls could not resist her" ("Histoire des Favorites"). "Heaven," says this authoress, "had not only endowed Agnes with the charms of face; she had an air full of grace, an admirable figure, more wit than any other woman in the world, and the most delicate and finely turned, with a certain greatness of soul which led her naturally to generosity; all her inclinations were noble; she was attentive, compassionate, ardent in friendship, discreet, sincere, and, in short, altogether fitted to make herself beloved to distraction" (p. 102).

De Mezerai writes of her as "a very agreeable and generous lady, who, by setting herself up as the equal of the greatest princesses, became the envy of the court and the scandal of France." With all her errors, Agnes was admitted to be lavish to the poor, to be

pious, generally humble, and always patriotic and full of public spirit. The majority of historians have written most favourably of her, and never did the mistress of a king—especially a king who was her junior —make so wise a use of her perilous power, which she ever employed only for the good of others. Pride, and an extreme love of dress, are the chief errors alleged against her; but to her influence over Charles VII. must be attributed all the good that ever appeared in him, and the effort to which he was roused—that essay by which, at last, the invading English were driven from the soil of France; for he had been a lover of pleasure, " and of the fair sex, which never can be a vice," adds Voltaire, " save when it leads to vicious actions."

Charles was neither a warlike nor a high-spirited king. The influence of England in France after the death of its conqueror, Henry V., was so nobly sustained by his brother, the Duke of Bedford, that after the demise of Charles VI., his successor had been crowned at Poictiers, Rheims being then in possession of the foe; and he was but the monarch of a nominal kingdom, France having greatly aided the English invaders, as she was rent by two rival factions, one led by the Duke of Burgundy and the other by the Duke of Orleans. Charles VI. had been alternately the prisoner of each, and the dauphin was the scoff of both—often a fugitive, and always in danger of destruction.

When the latter became Charles VII., aided by an alliance with Scotland—the usual "cat's-paw" of the French in their English wars—and by a body of Scot-

tish troops under the Earl of Buchan, who was constable of France, he made some show of resistance, when all hope seemed at an end, and to this unwonted activity he was roused by Agnes Sorel.

He had already conceived the feeble idea of retiring into Languedoc or Dauphiny, and contenting himself with the defence of these minor provinces, which must, eventually, have been wrested from him. Mary of Anjou, a princess of great prudence and merit, vehemently opposed this measure, which she saw would lead to a general desertion of his cause by the French people.

"The fair Agnes Sorel," says Hume, "who lived in entire amity with the queen, seconded all her remonstrances, and threatened that if he (Charles) thus pusillanimously threw away the sceptre of France, she would seek at the court of England a fortune that was correspondent to her wishes." Thus, the love of her on one hand, and dread of losing her on the other, roused in the breast of Charles VII. a glow of courage which neither just ambition, nor pure patriotism, could kindle, and he resolved to dispute every inch of French soil with his imperious enemies, rather than yield ingloriously to an evil fortune, and to the loss of his crown and mistress. And thus, in urging him to the field, Mary of Anjou was forced to seek the assistance of that fair rival who had supplanted her; and she seems at all times to have borne with singular sweetness of temper —with a resignation that some might think savoured of indifference or stupidity—the alienation of the

king's love for herself; and neither by action or word does she seem ever to have reproached the reigning favourite.

But now a new ally came, in the person of Joan of Arc; victory attended her banners, and in two months Charles VII. was crowned again, a step considered necessary after the double coronation of young Henry of England at Westminster and Paris. The loss of the latter city soon followed. The maid of Orleans perished at the stake, but her mission was accomplished: France was free, and England was glad to sign the treaty of Arras.

After this consummation, Charles abandoned himself entirely to the society of Agnes Sorel; "ease and prosperity," according to De Mezerai, "plunged him into dalliance and effeminate softness." She was his greatest passion, states Duclos, and was the most worthy of it; she loved Charles tenderly for himself, and had no other object in her conduct than the glory of her somewhat soft lover and the good of the state. Agnes Sorel, he adds, distinguished herself by qualities preferable to those which are usually found in her sex—a rather obscure phrase. But, despite what some allege of her humility, ostentation and a love of splendour are said by others to have been among her weaknesses; but such are pardonable enough in a beautiful woman.

At court she appeared in all the state of a royal princess; her apartments were more expensively decorated with hangings of silk and taffeta, with furniture and tapestries, than those of the queen, Mary of Anjou;

she had a larger and more splendid retinue of servants than her royal mistress, and had quite as much reverence shown her. Her couches, her linen, her vessels of gold and silver, her rings and other jewelry, all surpassed in beauty and in value those of the queen. Even her kitchen surpassed that of the neglected wife; "for with this woman, called Agnes, whom I have seen and known," says the author of the "Chronique des Ducs de Bourgogne," "the king was terribly besotted."

Her robes were more costly, and her trains were longer, than those worn by any of the royal princesses; and it was remembered that to show the extreme fairness of her skin and beautiful contour of her bust, she had all her dresses more *décolletées*, or cut lower in front, than had ever been the custom at the court of France. Enguerand de Monstrelet, in his "Chronicles," corroborates the statements of Chastelain concerning her love of finery. "This fair Agnes had been five years in the service of the queen," he writes, "during which time she enjoyed all the pleasures of life, in wearing rich clothes, furred robes, golden chains, and precious stones."

But what young and pretty woman, in any age of the world, has ever been quite careless of such accessories to enhance her natural charms? And in being somewhat *décolletée*, Agnes might perhaps only have followed others, for the same was said of Isabella of Bavaria, queen of Charles VI., whose love of dress was carried to a length so fantastic, that the doors of the palace of Vincennes had to be altered to permit her and the

ladies of her suite to pass with their lofty horned head-dresses.

In some burst of temper, Agnes has been accused of having so arrogantly disregarded the feelings of the queen, that she was struck on the mouth by the son of the latter, the dauphin, afterwards the cruel, subtle and savage Louis XI., in whose whole character there was but one undeniably redeeming point—a love for his mother, with a tender reverence for her memory.

Alain Chartier, secretary to Charles VII., and author of a history of that king—a writer whom Pasquin compares to Seneca—extols the "perfect purity" of Agnes and the unsullied love which she had for her royal master; which sounds comical enough, when we know that she bore him three daughters during the few years she held his heart in undivided sway. De Mezerai asserts that these three daughters of Charles were by three different ladies of the court.

Agnes died in the year 1450, as many historians have affirmed, of poison, a common suspicion in those days, and for long after. De Mezerai states the circumstance broadly and clearly, that when the king was at Jumièges, fourteen miles from Rouen, where there was then a vast and famous abbey containing no less than two thousand four hundred monks and lay brethren, "they (*i.e.* the courtiers) poisoned his dear Agnes de Soreau, without whom he could not live one moment."

No one was ever punished for this alleged poisoning, which scandal hinted to have been the work of Louis

the dauphin; but the mutual ill-will they bore each other, and the old quarrel and affront, might readily serve to fix such a stigma and suspicion on one who was so crafty and so cruel by nature.

"Her illness was violent and spasmodic, and carried her off in her fortieth year, while she was still in the bloom of her wonderful beauty. In her last hours she was attended by the Sieur de la Trimouille, the lady of the seneschal of Poitou, and M. Gouffier, an equerry of Charles VII., to all of whom she spoke eloquently and pathetically of the littleness of human life and human vanity. "She was very contrite," records Monstrelet, "and sincerely repented her sins. She often remembered Mary Magdalen, who had been a great sinner, and devoutly invoked God and the Blessed Virgin Mary to her aid."

She distributed alms and gifts to the value of sixty thousand crowns; she begged her confessor to give her absolution for all her sins and wickedness, conformable to an absolution which she said had been accorded to her at Loches; and the confessor thereupon absolved her. After receiving the last sacraments, she called for a missal, in which she had, with her own hand, written "the little prayer of St. Bernard," which ends, "O Mother of the Eternal Word, adopt me as thy child and take upon thee the care of my salvation. Do not let it be said that I have perished, when no one ever found but grace and salvation."

With a loud shriek she called once more "on the mercy of God and support of the Blessed Virgin Mary,

and gave up the ghost on Monday, the 9th February, about six o'clock in the afternoon. May God have mercy on her soul and admit it into Paradise!" adds the old chronicler Monstrelet, who never showed her any particular favour.

Then we are told that the fair and tender body of Agnes was interred in the abbey church of Our Lady at Loches, which had been often enriched by her liberality. A black marble tomb was placed over it, surmounted by an effigy the size of life, and of the purest white marble. Two kneeling angels supported the pillow on which the head of this recumbent statue reclined, and, in allusion to her name, a lamb was carved at its feet.

Her heart was sent to the church of St. Philibert the Abbot, at Jumiéges, and deposited near the high altar, a circumstance to which we may attribute the attachment of her lover Charles for that place, where he had an apartment in the abbey fitted up for his especial use, when he chose to come thither for meditation.

In a valley of the forest of Loches, there are still traceable the remains of a hunting lodge, or "rendez-vous de chasse," built by Charles VII., and where he spent many a day in the society of Agnes. Beneath it is a cave, in which lies a prodigious treasure, according to tradition, but watched by the usual guardian of such things in Touraine—a fiery dragon.

It is stated that Francis I., who lived about a century after her, believed in the gentleness and patriotism of "the Lady of Beauty," as she was named, and, finding

a picture of her, among others, he wrote the following lines under it:—

> "Gentille Agnès ! plus d'honneur tu mérites,
> La cause étant de France recouvrée,
> Que ce que peut dans un cloître ouvrer
> Close nonnain, ou bien dévote hermite."

At the period of the Revolution a band of ruffians, when desecrating the church of Loches, broke open the tomb of Agnes Sorel; rent the coffin asunder, and scattered her bones in the streets.

"The rancour of her own sex has long ceased to persecute the memory of Fair Rosamund, and even of the more guilty Jane Shore," says a clever but sneering writer; "and the most harshly virtuous of the sex in the present day are good enough to hope that both the one and the other have found that grace which was given to Mary Magdalen and Rahab. Under the notion, which is the prevailing one in the present day, that Agnes Sorel was an extremely amiable sinner, a lover of her country and her country's glory, a set of quadrilles bearing her name is admitted to a place on virtuous pianos; just as Nell Gwynne is at this day introduced on the stage in decent comedies."

Charles survived her seven years, and died literally of hunger, in his nervous dread of poison from the dauphin, and not knowing from what hand to take his food without peril; but his days of mourning for his lost Agnes would seem to have been few; and there is something curiously ironical in the manner in which De Mezerai dismisses the subject of his sorrow.

"To comfort him, Antoinette de Maignelais, Dame de Villequier, cousin of the deceased, took her place; but she was not the sole mistress." Others followed this Lady of Beauty in rapid succession, and the last who was taken into the favour of the most Christian king was the daughter of a pastry-cook!

Prior to the outrage committed at the Revolution, we have an interesting account of the remains of Agnes Sorel, as described in a French work, entitled "Amours et Galanteries des Rois de France," by M. Saint-Edme.

He tells us that in 1777, Louis XVI., in compliance with reiterated requests of the canons of Loches, consented to the removal of the tomb of Agnes Sorel from the choir to the nave of the church, with the express injunction that no part of the body which it contained should be disturbed; but curiosity is often destructive of the feelings of humanity.

Of the remains found in the tomb, nothing was in a state of preservation but the head, and alas! for human beauty—of that little more than the bones. On attempting to raise it, the hair remained in the hand, together with the two maxillary bones, which, as well as the lower jaw, were furnished with all the teeth.

The hair *crêpé,* from four or five inches in height, and from nine to ten inches in width, formed the upper part of the head-dress of Agnes, while on each side were two flowing curls. The hair at the back of the head, in tresses of from eighteen to twenty inches in length, was gathered up and fastened under the *crêpé.* The

hair was of a light brown or ash colour (*brun clair, ou cendré*). At this point of exhumation only one tress of Agnes's hair was purloined; but under the *régime* of the convention the remainder of the hair was stolen, the jaws were broken up for the extraction of her beautiful teeth, and her remains were scattered as we have described.

THE VEILED PORTRAIT.

It has been asserted that one cannot hold intercourse with that which is generally called the Unseen World, or behold anything supernatural, and live; but these ideas, from my own experience, I am inclined to doubt.

In the year subsequent to the great Bengal mutiny, I found myself at home on sick leave. My health had been injured by service in India, and by our sufferings consequent on the revolt; while my nervous system had been so seriously shaken by a grape-shot wound received at Lucknow, that it was completely changed, and I became cognisant of many things so utterly new to me, and so bewildering, that until I read Baron Reichenbach's work on magnetism and crystalism, I feared that I was becoming eccentric. I was sensible of the power of a magnet over me, though it might be three rooms distant, and twice, in darkness which seemed perfect to others, my room became filled with light; but the Baron holds that darkness is full of light, and that to increase the sensitiveness of the visual organs is to

render that rare and dissipated light susceptible, with all that it may *contain*.

I was now compelled to acknowledge the existence of that new power in nature which the Baron calls the Odic Light, and of many other phenomena that are described in "Der Geist in der Natur," of Christian Oersted—the understanding that pervades all things.

But to my story.

Nearly a year had elapsed since the mutiny. The massacres at Delhi, Lucknow, Cawnpore, and elsewhere had been fearfully avenged by that army of retribution which marched from Umballah, and I found myself in London, enfeebled, enervated, and, as the saying is, "weak as a child." The bustle of the great capital stunned and bewildered me; thus I gladly accepted a hearty invitation which I received from Sidney Warren, one of "ours," but latterly of the Staff Corps, to spend a few weeks—months if I chose—at his place in Herts; a fine old house of the Tudor times, approached from the London road by an avenue that was a grand triumphal arch of nature's own creation, with lofty interlacing boughs and hanging foliage.

Who, thought I, that was lord of such a place could dream of broïling in India—of sweltering in the whitewashed barrack at Dumdum, or the thatched cantonments of Delhi or Meerut!

My friend came hurrying forth to meet me.

"How goes it, old fellow? Welcome to my new quarters," he exclaimed.

"Well, Sidney, old man, how are you?"

Then we grasped each other's hands as only brother soldiers do.

I found Warren, whom I had not seen since the commencement of the revolt, nearly as much changed and shattered in constitution as myself; but I knew that he had lost those whom he loved most in the world amid the massacre at Meerut. He received me, however, with all the warmth of an old comrade, for we had a thousand topics in common to con over; while the regiment, which neither of us might see again—he certainly not, as he had sold out—would prove an endless source of conversation.

Sidney Warren was in his fortieth year, but looked considerably older. His once dark hair and coal-black moustache were quite grizzled now. The expression of his face was one of intense sadness, as if some secret grief consumed him; while there was a weird and far-seeing expression that led me to fear he was not fated to be long in this world. Yet he had gone through the storm of the Indian war without receiving even a scratch! Why was this?

Before I had spent two days with Sidney, he had shown me all the objects of interest around the Warren and in it—the portrait gallery, with its courtiers in high ruffs, and dames in the long stomachers of one period and *décolletée* dresses of another; his collection of Indian antiquities, amassed at the plundering of Delhi; and those which were more interesting to me, ponderous suits of mail which had been hacked and battered in the wars of the Roses, and a torn pennon unfurled by

Warren's troop of horse, "for God and the King," at Naseby.

But there was one object which he would neither show nor permit me to look upon, and which seemed to make him shiver or shudder whenever it caught his eye, and this was a picture of some kind in the library—a room he very rarely entered. It was the size of a life-portrait, but covered closely by a green-baize hanging. Good taste compelled me to desist from talking to him on the subject, but I resolved to gratify my curiosity on the first convenient occasion; so one day when he was absent at the stable court, I drew back the hanging of this mysterious picture.

It proved to be the full-length portrait of a very beautiful girl—a proud and stately one, too—bordering on blooming womanhood. Her features were clearly cut and classic; she had an olive-coloured complexion, that seemed to tell of another land than England, yet the type of her rare beauty was purely English. Her forehead was broad and low; her dark eyes, that seemed to haunt and follow me, were deeply set, with black brows well defined; her chin was rather massive, as if indicating resolution of character, yet the soft, ripe lips were full of sweetness; while the gorgeous coils of her dark hair were crisp and wavy. Her attire was a green riding-habit, the skirt of which was gathered in her left hand, while the right grasped the bridle of her horse.

It was *not* a portrait of his wife, whom I remember to have been a fair-haired little woman; so *who* was this mysterious lady? I cannot describe the emotion

this portrait excited within me; but I started and let fall the curtain, with a distinct sensation of some one, or *something* I could not see, being close beside me; so I hurried from the shady library into the sunshine. Lovely though the face—I can see it yet in all its details—it haunted me with an unpleasant pertinacity, impossible either to analyse or portray. But I was a creature of fancies then.

"Herein," thought I; "lurks some mystery, which may never be cleared up to me." But in this surmise I was wrong, for one night—the night of Sunday, the 10th May, *the first anniversary* of the outbreak at Meerut, after we had discussed an excellent dinner, with a bottle or two of Moselle, and betaken us to iced brandy *pawnee* (for so we still loved to call it), and to the "soothing weed," on the sofas of the smoking-room, Warren became suddenly seized by one of those confidential fits which many men unaccountably have at such times, and, while he unsparingly and bitterly reproached himself for the part he had acted in it, I drew from him, little by little, the secret story of his life.

Some ten years before those days of which I write, when in the Guards, and deeply dipped in debt by extravagance, he had, unknown to his family, married secretly a beautiful girl who was penniless, at the very time his friends were seeking to retrieve his fortune by a wealthy alliance. An exchange into the Line—"the sliding scale"—became necessary, thus he was gazetted to our regiment in India, at a period when his young

wife was in extremely delicate health; so much so that the idea of her voyaging round the Cape—there were no P. and O. Liners then—was not to be thought of, as it was expressly forbidden by the medical men; so they were to be separated for a time; and that time of parting, so dreaded by Constance, arrived inexorably.

The last fatal evening came—the last Sidney was to spend with her. His strapped overlands and bullock-trunks, his sword and cap, both cased, were already in the entrance hall; the morrow's morning would see him off by the train for Southampton, and his place would be vacant; and she should see his fond hazel eyes no more.

"Tears again!" said he, almost impatiently, while tenderly caressing the dark and glossy hair of his girl-wife; "why on earth are you so sad, Conny, about this temporary separation?"

"Would that I could be certain it is only such!" she exclaimed. "Sad; oh, can you ask me, Sidney, darling? The presentiment of a great sorrow to come is hanging over me."

"A presentiment, Constance! Do not indulge in this folly."

"If I did not love you dearly, Sidney, would such a painful emotion rack my heart?"

"It is the merest superstition, darling, and you will get over it when I am fairly away."

Her tender eyes regarded him wistfully for a moment, and then her tears fell faster at the contemplation of the coming loneliness.

After a pause, she asked :

"Are there many passengers going out with you?"

"A few—in the cuddy," he replied carelessly.

"Do you know any of them?"

"Yes; one or two fellows on the staff."

"And the ladies?" she asked, after another pause.

"I don't know, Conny dear; what do they matter to you or me?"

"I heard incidentally that—that Miss Dashwood was going out in your vessel."

"Indeed; I believe she will."

Constance shivered, for with the name of this finished flirt that of her husband had been more than once linked, and his change of colour was unseen by her as he turned to manipulate a cigar. So for four, perhaps six months, these two would be together upon the sea.

Constance knew too well the irritable nature of her husband's temper to say more on the subject of her secret thoughts; and deeply loth was she that such ideas should embitter the few brief hours they were to be together now; so a silence ensued, which, after a time, she broke, while taking between her slender fingers a hand of Sidney, who was leaning half moodily, half listlessly against the mantelpiece, twisting his moustache with a somewhat mingled expression of face.

"Sidney, darling," said she entreatingly; "do forgive me if I am dull and sad—so *triste*—this evening."

"I do forgive you, little one."

"You know, Sidney, that I would die for you!"

"Yes; but don't, Conny—for I hate scenes," said he, playfully kissing her sweetly sad, upturned face; and the poor girl was forced to be contented with this matter-of-fact kind of tenderness.

So the dreaded morrow came with its sad moment of parting.

To muffle the sound of the departing wheels she buried her head, with all its wealth of dark, dishevelled hair, among the pillows of her bed, and some weeks—weeks of the most utter loneliness, elapsed, ere she left it, with the keen and ardent desire to recover health and strength, to the end that she might follow her husband over the world of waters and rejoin him; but the strength and health, so necessary for the journey, were long of coming back to her.

She had hoped he would write her before sailing from Southampton—a single line would have satisfied the hungry cravings of her heart; but, as he did not do so, she supposed there was not time; yet the transport lay three days in the docks after the troops were on board. He would write by some passing ship, he had said, and one letter, dated from Ascension, reached her; but its cold and careless tone struck a mortal chill to the sensitive heart of Constance, and one or two terms of endearment it contained were manifestly forced and ill-expressed.

"He writes me thus," she muttered, with her hand pressed upon her heaving bosom; "thus—and with that woman, perhaps, by his side!"

She consulted the map, and saw how far, far away on the lonely ocean was that island speck. Months had elapsed since *he* had been there; so she knew that he must be in India now, and she had the regular mails to look to with confidence—a confidence, alas! that soon faded away. Long, tender, and passionate was the letter she wrote in reply; she fondly fixed the time when she proposed to leave England and rejoin him, if he sent her the necessary remittances; but mail after mail came in without any tidings from Sidney, and she felt all the unspeakable misery of watching the postman for letters that never, never came!

Yet she never ceased to write, entreating him for answers, and assuring him of unswerving affection.

Slowly, heavily, and imperceptibly a year passed away—a whole year—to her now a black eternity of time!

"Could Sidney be dead?" she asked herself with terror; but she knew that his family (who were all unaware of *her* existence) had never been in mourning, as they must infallibly have been in the event of such a calamity; and in her simplicity she never thought of applying to the Horse Guards for information concerning him—more information than she might quite have cared to learn.

Her old thoughts concerning Miss Dashwood took a strange hold of her imagination now; a hundred "trifles light as air" came back most gallingly to memory and took coherent and tangible shapes; but a stray number of the "Indian Mail" informed her of the marriage of

Miss Dashwood—her *bête-noire*—to a Major Milton; and also that the regiment to which Sidney belonged "was moving up country," a phrase to her perplexing and vague.

Her funds were gone—her friends were few and poor. Her jewels—his treasured presents—were first turned into cash; then the furniture of her pretty villa, and next the villa itself with its sweet rose-garden, had to be exchanged for humbler apartments in a meaner street; and, ere long, Constance Warren found, that if she was to live, it must be by her own unaided efforts; and for five years she maintained a desperate struggle for existence—five years!

A lady going to India "wanted a young person as a governess and companion."

To India—*to India!* On her knees Constance prayed that her application might prove successful; and her prayer was heard, for out of some hundred letters—from a few which were selected—the tenor of hers suited best the taste of the lady in question. She said nothing of her marriage or of her apparent desertion; but as her wedding ring, which, with a fond superstition of the heart, she never drew from her finger, told a tale, she had to pass for a widow.

So in the fulness of time she found herself far away from England, and duly installed with an Anglo-Indian family in one of the stately villas of the European quarter of Calcutta—a veritable palace in the city of palaces, overlooking the esplanade before Fort William—in charge of one sickly, but gentle little pale-faced girl.

She had been a month there when her employer's family proposed to visit some relatives at Meerut, where she heard that Sidney's regiment was cantoned! To her it seemed as if the hand of Fate was in all this. O the joy of such tidings! Some one there must be able to unravel the horrible mystery involving his fate; for by this time she had ascertained that his name was out of the corps; but her heart suggested that he might have exchanged into another.

"If alive, is he worth caring for?" She often asked this of herself, but thrust aside the idea, and pursued with joy the long journey up country by river steamers, dawk-boats, and otherwise, on the Ganges to Jehangeer-abad, from whence they were to travel by carriages to the place of their destination, some fifty miles distant.

On the way Constance had an addition to her charge in the person of a little boy, who, with his *ayah*, was going to join his parents at Meerut. This little boy was more than usually beautiful, with round and dimpled cheeks, dark hazel eyes, curly golden hair, and a sweet and winning smile. Something in the child's face or its expression attracted deeply the attention of Constance, and seemed to stir some memory in her heart. Where had she seen those eyes before?

She drew the boy caressingly towards her, and when kissing his fair and open forehead, her eyes fell involun-tarily on a ring that secured his necktie, a mere blue riband. It was of gold, and on it were graven the initials C. and S. with a lover's knot between. These

were those of herself and her husband, and the ring was one she had seen him wear daily. Constance trembled in every limb; she felt a deadly paleness overspread her face, and the room in which she sat swam round her; but on recovering her self-possession, she said:

"Child, let me look at this ring."

The wondering boy placed in her hand the trinket, which she had not the slightest doubt of having seen years before in London.

"Who gave you this, my child?" she asked.

"My papa."

"Your papa!—what is your name?"

"Sidney."

"What else?" she asked, impetuously.

"Sidney Warren Milton."

"Thank God! But how came you to be named so? There is some mystery in this—a mystery that must soon be solved now. Where were you born, dear little Sidney?"

"In Calcutta."

"What is your age, child?"

"Next year, I shall be seven years old."

"Seven—how strange it is that you have the name you bear!"

"It is my papa's," said the boy, with a little proud irritability of manner.

"Where did your papa live before he came to Calcutta?"

"I don't know—in many places—soldiers always do."

"He is a soldier?"

"My papa is Major Milton, and lives in the cantonments at Meerut."

"A little time, and I shall know all," replied poor Constance, caressing the boy with great tenderness.

On arriving at Meerut, however, she found herself ill--faint and feverish—so that for days she was confined to her bed, where she lay wakeful by night, watching the red fire-flies flashing about the green jalousies, and full of strange, wild dreams by day. She had but one keen and burning desire—to see Major Milton, and to learn from his lips the fate of her husband. On the evening of the fifth day—the evening of the 10th of May—she was lying on her pillow, watching the red sunshine fading on the ruined mosques, and Abu's stately tomb, when just as the sunset gun pealed over the cantonments, the *ayah* brought her a card, inscribed, "Major Milton—Staff Corps."

"Desire the Major to come to me!" said Constance, in a broken voice, and terribly convulsed emotion; for now she was on the eve of knowing all.

"Here to the *mehm sahib's* bedside?" asked the astonished *ayah*.

"Here instantly—go—go!"

Endued with new strength, as the woman withdrew, she sprang from her bed, put on her slippers, threw round her an ample cashmere dressing robe, and seated herself in a bamboo chair, trembling in every fibre. In a mirror opposite she could see that her face was as white as snow. The door was opened.

"Major Milton," said a voice that made her tremble, and attired in undress uniform, pith-helmet in hand, her husband, looking scarcely a day older, stood gazing at her in utter bewilderment. He gave one convulsive start, and then stood rooted to the spot; but no expression or glance of tenderness escaped him. His whole aspect bore the impress of terror.

Years had elapsed as a dream, and they were again face to face, those two, whom no man might put asunder. Softness, sorrow, and reproach faded from the face of Constance. Her broad, low forehead became stern; her deep-set, dark eyes sparkled perilously, her full lips became set, and her chin seemed to express more than ever, resolution.

"Oh, Constance—Constance," he faltered; "I know not what to say!"

"It may well be so, Sidney" (and at the utterance of his name her lips quivered). "So *you* are Major Milton, and the supposed husband of Miss Dashwood?"

There was a long pause, after which she said:

"I ask not the cause of your most cruel desertion, but whence this name of Milton?"

"A property was left me—and—but, of course, you have long since ceased to love me, Constance?"

"*You* actually dare to take an upbraiding tone to me!" she exclaimed, her dark eyes flashing fire. Then looking upward appealingly, she wailed, "Oh, my God! my God! and *this* is the man for whom, during these bitter years, I have been eating my own heart!"

"Pardon me, Constance; you may now learn that there is no gauge to measure the treachery of which the human heart in its weakness is capable. Yet there has been a worm in mine that has never died."

She wrung her hands, and then said, with something of her old softness of manner:

"You surely loved me once, Sidney?"

"I did." He drew nearer, but she recoiled from him.

"Then whence this cruel change?"

"Does not some one write, that we love, and think we love truly, and yet find another to whom one will cling as if it required these two hearts to make a perfect whole?"

"Most accursed sophistry! But if you have no pity, have you not fear?"

"I have great fear," said he, in a broken voice; "thus, Constance, by the love you once bore me, I beseech you to have pity, not on me, but on my little boy, and his poor mother—preserve their happiness——"

"And sacrifice my own?" said she, in a hollow voice.

"Spare, and do not expose me—my commission—my position here——"

"Neither shall be lost through me," she replied, in a voice that grew more and more weak; "but leave me—leave me—the air is suffocating—the light has left my eyes. Farewell, Sidney—kiss your child, for my sake."

He drew near to take her hand, but she repulsed him with a wild gesture of despair, and throwing up her arms, fell back in her seat, with a gurgle in her throat, her head on one side, and her jaw fallen.

"Dead—quite dead!" was his first exclamation, and with his terror was blended a certain selfish emotion of satisfaction and relief at his escape. The blood again flowed freely in his veins, and he was roused by the cantonment *ghurries* clanging the hour of *nine*.

"Help—help!" cried he; but no help came, and as he hurried away, the sudden din of musket-shots, of shrieks and yells, announced that the great revolt had begun at Meerut, and that the expected massacre of the Europeans had commenced. In that butchery, those he loved most on earth perished, and midnight saw him, wifeless and childless, lurking in misery and alone in a mango tope, on the road to Kurnaul.

* * * *

While listening to the narrative of my friend Sidney, whom I had always known as Warren, rather than Milton, the clock on the mantelpiece struck *nine*, and he said, in a broken voice:

"It was at this very hour, twelve months ago, that my boy and his mother were murdered by the 3rd Cavalry, at the moment that Constance was dying!"

As he spoke, a strange white light suddenly filled one end of the smoking-room, and amid it there came gradually, but distinctly to view, two figures, one was a little boy with golden hair, the other a woman whose left arm was around him—a beautiful woman, with clearly-cut features, masses of dark hair curling over a low, broad forehead, lips full and handsome, with a massive chin and classic throat—the woman of the veiled picture, line for line, but to all appearance living

and breathing, with a beautiful smile in her eyes, and wearing, not the riding-habit, but a floating crape-like white garment, impossible to describe. There was a strange, weird brightness in her face—the transfigured brightness of great joy and greater love.

"Constance—Constance and my child!" cried Sidney, in a voice that rose to a shriek; and like a dissolving view, the light, and all we looked on with eyes transfixed, faded away!

I was aware of an excess of sensitiveness, and that my heart was beating with painful rapidity. I did not become insensible, but some time elapsed before I became aware that lights were in the room, and that several servants, whom my friend's cry had summoned in haste and alarm, were endeavouring to rouse him to consciousness from a fit that had seized him; but from that fit he never recovered. His heavy stertorous breathing gradually grew less and less, and ere a doctor came, he had ceased to respire.

His death—sudden as hers on that eventful night, but a retributive one—was declared to be apoplexy; but I knew otherwise. Since then, though the effect of the grape-shot wound on my nervous system has quite passed away, I feel myself compelled to agree with the hackneyed remark of Hamlet, that "there are more things in heaven and earth, than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

A LEGEND OF THE OLD 55TH;

OR, THE REGIMENT OF FLANDERS.

For the truth of the following remarkable story, which is much more fact than fiction, we must refer the reader to the quarto "History of the Mauritius," privately printed in London in 1801, from the papers of the late Governor thereof, under Louis XVI., Baron Grant, Maréchal of France, and edited by his son, Charles Grant, "Vicomte de Vaux sur Seule, Normandie," who knew well the family of the hero, and of his father, M. de Grenville, with whom he had become intimate at the house of another Scoto-French gentleman (whom he styles M. Grant d'Anelle, then in the Isle of France), and of whom he writes thus, page 219:—

"This gentleman (M. de Grenville, of an ancient family in Normandy) is an old officer who has served with honour both in France and India; and may, with truth, be represented as superior to the generality of mankind, from his understanding, his knowledge, and the qualities of his character. He is distinguished here, by the title of the Philosopher, and he deserves it. In the early part of his life, the vivacity of his temper, heightened by the military spirit of the period, engaged

him in frequent affairs of honour; and the last having taken place with a nobleman in the service of the Court, in the Garden of Versailles, and under the very windows of the king's apartment, it threatened the most serious consequences. But M. de Maupou, then in high office, to whom he was related, procured him a commission in India, where he served with distinction.

"If it were consistent with the objects of this work, it would be a delightful circumstance to dwell on the virtues and extraordinary qualities of this family. I must, however, confine myself to one, M. de Grenville de Forval, the second son of M. de Grenville.

"Some events relative to him are so connected with the manners of these islands, and are so remarkable (and romantic) in themselves, that they will at the same time heighten the interest, as well as add to the information of this work (*i.e.* the History of the Mauritius).

"In these islands there is not a single example of a deformed or crooked shape, which must arise from the natural and unrestrained mode of education which prevails there. To these advantages, Forval united a martial air, blended with a slight appearance of severity, and an approved courage, to the most noble and generous sentiments that are to be found in the human heart."

But to quote the gossipping old Baron at greater length, would be only to anticipate the legend to which we refer.

At the time when the Comte de Malartic was first appointed commander-in-chief and governor-general for

the most Christian king of the Isles of France and Bourbon, and over all the French establishments eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, there was stationed in the Mauritius (as we now name the Isle of France) a battalion of the old French Regiment de Flandre, then numbered as the 77th of the monarchy, and afterwards as the 55th regiment of the line, under Napoleon III. —the same corps in which the father of Victor Hugo, author of "Notre Dame" and "Les Misérables," served with honour as a captain.

Among the officers who came with a detachment from France to join this famous regiment were the Chevalier René d'Esterre and Captain Forval de Grenville, the representative of one of the oldest families in Normandy, the same stock from whence spring the English Dukes of Buckingham and Chandos.

Forval was a gay and handsome man, and in the prime of life. Baron Grant, the Vicomte de Vaux, in his history of the island, records as stated, that he had a martial air, with a slight appearance of severity, and that he was a man of the most approved courage. He was always attired in the height of fashion when not in uniform; but he generally preferred the latter, as the costume of the Regiment de Flandre was very handsome, and became his dark complexion well, being white, faced with light blue, and laced with gold.

Whether in uniform or out of it, he was never known to be without his sword, in the use of which he excelled, and with which he had fought many a duel, sometimes about the powdered and jewelled ladies of the court,

and quite as often about ballet-girls and actresses—all were the same to Forval de Grenville.

His reckless career in France was, however, brought suddenly to a close by a flirtation with a *chanoinesse*—the famous Comtesse de V.——, which by its scandal and extravagance drove him to seek shelter in the distant Isle of France from the rage of the noble families of Segonzac, Sainte-Croix, and Cressi, with whom she was allied.

His affair with the high-born countess might have had a perilous end—the Bastille St. Antoine, perhaps—but for his acceptance of foreign service, and the aid given him by his friend, René d'Esterre, who, as he had pursued a similar career of folly and extravagance, had a fellow-feeling for him, and we all know that a fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind.

The monotonous pleasures of the island soon palled upon the *blasé* Forval and his friend, and they sighed for the gaieties of Paris, or rather to be anywhere but where they were.

"Morbleu!" exclaimed Forval, as he and D'Esterre sat over their wine one evening at an open window in a *café* of Port Louis, after being long silent, and gazing dreamily on the sea, whose waves were rippling in gold and purple against the rocks and bastions of the little Isle aux Tonneliers, which lies before the harbour, and while the red rays of the sun, now sinking in the Indian Sea, lingered on the rocky and fantastic Tête de Peter Bott. "Morbleu, chevalier! but this atrocious Isle of France does grow irksome."

"Yet it is the land of Paul and that sweet little Virginia, for another such as whom we have sought over all the isle."

"And have sought in vain. Diable, yes! Such miracles—such sphinxes—exist only in the pages of Bernardin St. Pierre and such like fellows."

"Perhaps so," sighed D'Esterre, as he emptied his glass. "However, I am sick unto death of this island and its utter monotony. Paris——"

"Ah, dear, dear Paris! when shall we see it again?"

"When our debts are paid, perhaps."

"Don't speak of impossibilities, please. How strange to think that the tide of life flows there—that the great world rolls on all the same as when we mounted guard at the Louvre, and not content with that, sighed to be on duty at Versailles or the dear little Trianon."

"You always preferred the latter," said D'Esterre. "The Comtesse de V——, that dazzling little creature, was always about the queen."

"Don't speak of her now, when all those thousand miles of bridgeless sea are rolling between us," exclaimed Forval, with knitted brows. "That hulking fellow, Baron Zurlerben, of the Gardes Suisses, will no doubt be on her staff now. She could never exist without an affair of the heart. Well, I am at one with you —sick indeed of duty here."

"The comtesse was devoted to the chevaliers of the army," said René d'Esterre, musingly.

"All the girls in Paris favoured us immensely."

"All the girls in France, you mean," said the chevalier, complacently.

"How comes it to pass, René? Is it the handsome uniform or the risk we run in war that gives us such an advantage over the mere *bourgeoisie?*"

"I don't know what it is; but the interest is very pleasant, and I trust it will never cease. So 'Vive le Regiment de Flandre! Vive la ligne!'" cried René, draining a bumper of wine.

"Stop! A thought strikes me," said Forval. "Suppose that for a little temporary excitement one of us should get married?"

"Agreed," cried D'Esterre. "Here is a golden louis; we shall toss up for who is to marry the first pretty Creole girl we meet. The losing man shall dance at the other's wedding."

"What if the pretty girl refuse?"

"Refuse one of the Regiment de Flandre! My dear fellow, such an outrage on good taste is not to be anticipated. She shall be married after a month's engagement."

"Ah, likely enough. People do strange things in the Indian isles."

"Is it a low state of finances?"

"No, a high state of the thermometer. A month may see us ordered off to Pondicherry; but you must be the victim, chevalier. I have an affianced in France."

"And I have three! Parbleu!"

"Well, to kill time, we have nothing for it but to volunteer for the next slave-hunting expedition to the

Isle Dauphine. What say you, chevalier—will you go?"

"Think of the distance—by sea, too!"

"Something less than five hundred miles."

"And the feeding——"

"Will not be up to the Parisian mark; but, then, we shall have some excitement."

"A little fighting?" said René.

"Yes; and I had better be shot with honour than shoot myself."

"Very well, I shall go with you. Let the war support the war. We shall feed ourselves at the bayonet's point among the Madagasees."

So in this spirit, when the time came, did M. Forval de Grenville and his friend René d'Esterre set out for Madagascar, or, as the French then named it, the Isle Dauphine.

A scarcity of slaves for manual labour in the Isles of France and Bourbon rendered such predatory expeditions to Madagascar and the coast of Africa necessary. Vessels were generally equipped for the purpose by the Comte de Malartic and wealthy merchants, and certain detachments of troops were sent with them to favour and enforce the object of the voyage; and with two hundred men of the Regiment de Flandre, Forval and D'Esterre, having volunteered for the first slaving expedition, sailed in two vessels for Madagascar in the month of May, which is the finest and most healthy season for operations in the island.

The vessels, with the troops on board, ran along the

eastern coast, and on disembarking, a camp was formed on the small rocky isle of Sainte Marie, called Ibrahim by the natives. There they found the remains of a *chaloupe*, or sloop, which had been constructed out of the shattered hull of the ship *Utile* (which had been wrecked there some forty years before), but had never been launched. Her crew being only French negroes, no attempt was ever made to succour or to save them, so they all perished miserably of hunger, and their whitened bones, bleached by the sun, lay all over the little rocky isle when Forval and his comrades landed. These remains he had collected and interred, while despatching messengers to Adrian Baba, the king of the island, to acquaint his sable majesty of the errand on which he had come, offering him for every man and woman in full health, and between the ages of thirteen and forty years, two muskets, fifteen hundred leaden bullets, and the same number of flints.

"Corbœuf!" said the Chevalier D'Esterre, "I hope we shall not be detained long on this rock of Sainte Marie. I am all curiosity to see the wonders of Madagascar. Does not La Croix tell us that the woods abound with snow-white apes having black tails, and that there is a kind of creature in the cane-brakes as large as a heifer, with a round head, a man's face, and hands and feet like a monkey?"

"La Croix was an ass to record such rubbish, and you are exceedingly simple to believe it," replied Forval, laughing at his friend's credulity.

King Adrian, who had been at war with some of his

African neighbours, had, or pretended to have, plenty of prisoners in his hands, and sent to M. Forval most friendly replies, together with presents.

In a short time Adrian Baba arrived in person, and crossed the little strait which separated the Isle of St. Marie from the mainland in a gaily painted pirogua, accompanied by much barbaric pomp, and was received by the little party of French troops with all the honours they could present to European royalty, and with keen and covetous eyes he surveyed their handsome white uniforms and gold epaulettes, their fine muskets, swords, chests of arms, and so forth, for which the slaves were to be bartered, and he was heard to say to a prince of the second class who accompanied him :

"Why may I not keep my people, and make lawful spoil of all these things? The Isle of Ibrahim is mine, and what do these Frenchmen do here?"

His voice was soft and his manner persuasive, and he easily persuaded Forval and D'Esterre to cross from the island, and encamp a portion of their troops—of whose discipline and resolute aspect he had a wholesome dread—on the mainland, and to leave the rest on the isle, or send them on board the ships at their anchorage; but Forval warily preferred the former plan, and left them in their tents at the first encampment under a lieutenant.

With a hundred infantry he pitched his tents in a pleasant spot about a mile from the sea. Adrian, who yet hoped to have even the two ships, if their crews could be massacred, loaded Forval and his friend with

presents and attentions, and showing them a vast herd of cattle, asked them, in the pride of his heart, if the King of France was as great a king as he.

To this the polite Frenchmen, who both knew the Polynesian language of the Madagasees, made a courteous but dubious reply, which caused the eyes of the half-savage monarch to sparkle with satisfaction.

Charmed by the friendly bearing and character of the king and his people, and lulled into a sense of trustful security, on the third day, after forming a little camp for half his force on the mainland, Forval de Grenville doffed his uniform, and clad in a light white hunting suit, took his gun, and followed by a favourite dog, set forth into the adjacent forest in search of game, attended by a negro boy, who carried his bag.

At last he reached a place where the forest became more open and the ground more rocky. Overcome by the heat of the day, the young French officer hailed with pleasure a little tarn, or pool, which lay at the base of some rocks, and was completely surrounded by lofty trees.

Forval lay down on the sward, half hidden by the giant leaves of the wild gourds that grew there. He lay long, sunk in a reverie, till a very strange and startling sight aroused him; and he sprang to his feet and peered through the bushes.

A girl was in the act of disrobing for the purpose of bathing in the pool, and already she was seated on its bank ere Captain de Grenville could speak. In fact, he knew not what to say or do, and so, wholly hidden

among the great green leaves, he looked on in breathless wonder, for that she was a Madagasee was evident; but then her skin, though brown, was fair for a native of that sunny isle.

She was in the full bloom, the first blush, of budding womanhood, and the fire of love, as yet unkindled, was doubtless hidden in her heart.

So thought the French officer as he stood there among the leaves.

The form of the young girl was perfection. Her eyes were large and black, and her hair rolled in silky masses over her smooth brown shoulders.

Advancing to the edge of the pool, she put in one tiny foot and tapered ankle. The water seemed to strike her with a chill, for she drew back, and seemed all unconscious that a human eye was upon her.

"Here is an adventure," muttered Forval. "Could I but catch such a slave as this, old Monsieur le Comte de Malartic, governor of the Isle of France, and so forth, should not have her from me even for a pile of golden louis as high as the Tête de Peter Bott itself. Ah, could I but catch her now! But how am I to set about it? The finest girl in Paris is but a cub when compared with her."

The unknown beauty was still trembling on the brink when one of those monster bats peculiar to those woods, blinded by the rays of light, flew against her. On this she uttered a cry of terror, and sprang, half-robed as she was, into the pool, where she swam about like a Naiad of classic antiquity, her beautiful head

and shoulders rising above the silver ripples that seemed to kiss her as she shot from side to side in the cool, deep pool.

Forval remained in doubt what to do. The wonderful beauty of the girl had inspired him with a desire to know more of her—to capture her, in fact. But, then, he was far away from his little camp, and she might have friends or armed attendants near, for by her dress and ornaments—particularly a necklace of great pearls—her rank seemed to be high in the land, and he might pay a terrible penalty for even seeing, without molesting her.

Loth to retire, lest he should lose her, and afraid to advance lest he should alarm or offend her; he lurked among the leaves, feeling, with a blush upon his cheek, that he was committing an offence against propriety even in that savage land, for though a *roué*, and a wild one too, Forval de Grenville was, withal, a gentleman.

He longed for the sudden arrival of some wild beast, from which he might defend or save her with his gun, even with his life, but longed in vain, as there are no such animals in the Isle of Madagascar.

He turned to search for the slave boy who bore his game bag. The latter lay there, but its sooty bearer was gone. He had disappeared, concealed himself, or fled, and even this circumstance was calculated to inspire Forval with alarm. He felt if his hunting-knife was loose in its sheath, and looked to the flints and priming of his gun, into each barrel of which he

now slipped a ball, so that he might be ready for any emergency.

By the time he had done this quietly and slowly in his hiding place, the girl had quitted the pool, and rapidly and completely attired herself in the simple but graceful costume then worn by a Madagasee lady—a long and loose robe of brilliantly coloured silk, without sleeves—and she was in the act of shaking out the water from the heavy masses of her shining black hair, when our adventurous Frenchman, fearful of losing her, suddenly started from his lair among the leaves and gourds, and advanced towards her, praying in very choice words that she would linger for one moment and speak with him, as he had lost his way in the forest.

But, instead of according him any reply, with her cheeks paled by terror and her large eyes dilated, she turned and fled with the speed of an antelope.

Obeying his first impulse, and undeterred by danger, Forval dashed after her in pursuit; but, strong and active though he was, she proved too swift of foot for him. Carried away by her fears, or aided by the activity natural to a savage race, she clambered over the cliffs of rock crystal, where he dared not follow her, and when he reached the other side by a detour round the pool she had vanished, and not a trace of her was to be found.

Forval was intensely perplexed and provoked that he had not attempted her capture while in the pool. Then he repelled the idea, by considering that such an act would have been unbecoming a French gentleman.

"Bah!" thought he, after all; "she is only a little Madagasee, and I may get her as a slave for a few old muskets. I must speak to Sa Majesté le Roi—to King Adrian about it on the first opportunity."

Neglecting his soldiers on one hand, and the purchase of slaves on the other, for three entire consecutive days did Forval haunt the vicinity of the sequestered pool; but the beautiful Naiad came there no more.

On a stated day the king was to hand over to Forval and D'Esterre five hundred male and female slaves, in exchange for one thousand old regimental muskets and the requisite proportion of flints and ammunition.

"If I can but get the girl from him, whoever she is, I'll give him a couple of ship cannon."

"And all our empty champagne bottles," added D'Esterre; "but you may have some difficulty in describing her."

"Nay, her beauty and extreme fairness of skin—fairness at least amid this dusky people—as well as a string of enormous pearls of great purity which she wears round her neck, must make her known; and they are pearls to which those of Monseigneur de Rohan's famous necklace were but a joke."

Forval was all excitement when he went for presentation to the king, in his capital of Antanarivo, which contained some twenty thousand inhabitants then, but many more now; the houses of which are of wood, covered with plantain leaves, and entirely surrounded by a fortification of palisades.

Here Adrian Baba could easily have cut off his

unsuspecting visitor; but the Chevalier René d'Esterre remained in camp with the small band of troops, and Forval was accompanied only by two faithful sergeants, armed with their swords, and a double brace of loaded pistols under their coats.

Adrian Baba received him very graciously in a chamber, the furniture of which consisted chiefly of some seamen's chests and other *débris* of an occasional wreck or piracy, and mats of red and yellow straw, which served as seats or beds, as occasion required, and around him were his sub-princes, the lords of villages and districts, learned men, guards, and slaves, all arrayed in their best robes, with swords, darts, and feathers and beads in great plenty; others with shield, knife, and war club, and all looking most unpleasantly numerous, savage, and warlike.

But what was the astonishment of Captain de Grenville on beholding by the side of the king, clothed in a long robe of fine silk, striped alternately with scarlet and yellow, the Naiad of the lonely pool, with her brown but yet beautiful arms bare to the shoulder, and adorned only by strings of snowy pearls, like those which were woven in her dark hair—pearls outshone by her own teeth.

Perceiving that the eyes of the French officer were fixed on her with wonder and admiration, old Adrian Baba said, in the language of his country:

"My daughter, Ranavolana."

"She is beautiful enough to be the daughter of—of perfection," said the French officer, bowing low, and

kissing her hand, while he half knelt before her—a courtesy, a bearing of adoration which astonished the girl, and provoked the sneering smiles of those who looked on. "But how wonderfully white for a Madagasee—the daughter of this old King of the Cannibal Islands," thought he. "Here is a discovery! I don't believe he will give her up even for a dozen of old ship guns, and all D'Esterre's empty bottles into the bargain. Were they full, we might have a better chance of success."

The soft dark eyes of the young princess regarded the handsome Frenchman, as he thought shrewdly, with a strange and sorrowful interest, and it was evident that, as he was now in the uniform of the Regiment de Flandre, she did not recognize him, and he afterwards learned that the extreme fairness of her skin was to be accounted for by the circumstance that her mother had been the daughter of a notorious English pirate, who bore the extremely prosaic name of Tom Simcolls, and who for a time had made himself the petty king of a portion of the isle, till Adrian Baba overthrew him in battle, and made spoil of all he possessed, including a favourite daughter, who became the mother of Ranavolana.

Adrian's treacherous plans with regard to the French were not yet completed, so it was arranged that on the following day Forval was to come with a hundred infantry to receive over the slaves for embarkation.

That night, in the tent of Forval, he and the

Chevalier D'Esterre lingered long over their wine, and their hopes that a European war might bring their regiment home, till, weary and sleepy, and considerably overpowered by wine, René d'Esterre retired to his own quarters.

Forval remained in his tent, stretched upon a couch, feeling far from sleepy—very wide awake, indeed—and gazing through the open triangular door of his canvas habitation on the dark blue waters of the strait that lay between the mainland and the Isle of Sainte Marie.

His mind was dwelling on the singular beauty of Ranavolana, the girl whom he had seen by the side of Adrian, and closing his eyes, as if to concentrate his thoughts, he drew in glowing fancy again and again the vision he had seen of her in the forest pool.

Suddenly there was a sound as of rustling silk, a soft hand touched his shoulder lightly and timidly, he looked up, and Ranavolana, the island princess, stood before him, and alone.

She must have glided unseen past his sentinels; but then he thought not of that. Though large and sparkling, her eyes were pensive, and wonderfully beautiful in expression, in form of lid and length of lash, "especially for a savage," as Forval thought; and in his time he had seen some of the brightest eyes in Paris and Versailles droop beneath the saucy and loving glances of his own.

"I disturb your sleep," said she, timidly drawing back a pace, as Forval sprang from his camp bed.

"Do you think I would have slept, mademoiselle, had I expected you?"

"Not with the tidings I have for you," she replied, gravely.

"Tidings of what?"

"Death."

"Death?"

"A cruel one, too."

"I do not understand all this. But we have met before."

"At my father's court to-day."

"And elsewhere?"

"Indeed!"

"Pardon me, but I had the delight of seeing you bathing in a pool in yonder forest."

"You it was who pursued me?"

"Yes, mademoiselle, and I crave your pardon now," said he, kneeling.

She blushed painfully, and, as Forval thought, angrily.

"What have I to fear here when your father, the good old Adrian Baba, is my friend?"

"He deceives you. My father has neither prisoners to sell nor slaves to give you on the morrow."

"Am I mocked or snared?" asked Forval, haughtily.

"You are both."

"And I am to be killed, lady—eh?"

"You and all who are with you," said she, mournfully.

"Well, so far as I am concerned, the loss will not be great," replied Forval, with true French *sang froid.*

"Why?"

"I have five brothers in France, all wilder fellows than I, so France can well spare one of us."

"But is life, indeed, so valueless to you?" she asked.

"To me perhaps it is; but you could shed a light upon it, lovely girl, and make that sunshine which at present is all gloom to Forval de Grenville."

She did not quite understand him, save that he was paying her a compliment, and half savage though she was, she smiled with pleasure. A brilliant light filled her eyes, a species of dusky fire, and casting them down, she said, in her own soft language:

"You have seen me but thrice. You cannot love me already?"

Forval was somewhat bewildered by the suddenness of this remark; but he was too gallant a gentleman to leave her long in doubt.

"Not love you!" he exclaimed, while endeavouring to take her hands in his; "ah, who could look upon you and not love you?"

"Would you not wish me changed—whiter, I mean?" she asked, with a timid smile.

"Changed in what respect? Are you not as near perfection as possible? Nay, you are perfection itself."

She laughed, and so did Forval, for he thought of what some of the powdered and patched, painted and furbelowed dames and demoiselles at whose feet he had knelt in the gilded *salons* of Paris and Versailles, would have said, had they seen him—Captain De Grenville, of

the Regiment de Flandre—on his knees in apparent adoration of a little Malay girl!

"But, *vive la bagatelle!*" thought he.

Starting up, he sought to kiss her; but she shrank back.

"Do you hate me?" he asked, sadly.

"No—oh no!"

"Do you love me then?" he asked, in a different key.

"No——"

"Parbleu! you must do either one or other."

"You did not let me finish what I was about to say—that I neither hate nor like people until I have known them for a time; but in your case——'"

She paused.

"Ah, well—in my case?"

"I love you!" said she, looking fully and tenderly into his dark eyes.

Forval's heart leaped, for few women had ever made such an avowal to him before; but the abruptness and strangeness of it in such a place, and at such a time, rendered the Frenchman suspicious. He began to fear some snare, and remembered the manner in which she had commenced this singular conversation.

"Accept my gratitude, lovely girl," said he, laying a hand upon his heart; "but you did not come to tell me this alone—you came to warn me of some impending danger?"

"I did. Would you wish to sacrifice my life to save your own?"

"Heavens! I should think not!" he exclaimed.

"Well, a plot has been formed against your life, and the lives of all who accompany you. I am full of sorrow that so handsome and kind a white man should perish" (here the captain drew himself up and bowed low) "and I shall tell you all, on one condition."

"Name it."

"That you will take me away with you."

"To the Isle of France?"

"Yes; and make me your wife."

Forval, still more astonished by her simplicity and trust, charmed by her beauty and grace, and bewildered by the whole affair, forgot all about poor Mademoiselle De Motteville and a dozen other fine ladies, and registered a solemn and most energetic vow that he would do as she required.

Taking her right hand between his own, he pressed it to his lips, and thinking what a faultlessly beautiful little hand it was, he said,

"And now, lady, speak. What is this terrible plot?"

"I must have one promise from you."

"Indeed! something beyond marriage?"

"Yes," said she, beginning to weep. "For you I am about to sacrifice my father's throne, which, as I am an only child, is my inheritance. For you, my country, my friends, my native customs, and that liberty which is so dear to me. My kinsmen, who would deem me dishonoured, will detest me, and if you leave me to

their vengeance I shall be reduced to the endurance of tortures worse even than the death they propose for you."

"Heavens! but this is a terrible prologue to our matrimonial comedy."

"Promise to grant me what I demand, swear that your soldiers will not injure my people, and I will reveal all that is necessary for you to know."

With growing admiration and astonishment, Forval gave another solemn assurance.

"Well," said she, with tremulous accents, while her tears fell fast, "the king, my father, will come here to-morrow by sunrise. He will seem to be attended apparently by only a few; but followers to the number of thousands, armed with poisoned arrows, lances, and hatchets, are to be concealed in a wood close by; and at a given signal they will rush upon and massacre all your people."

"Indeed!"

"For you is reserved a peculiar mode of death, suggested by the learned men of the nation."

"And this flattering distinction is——"

"That you be taken to the summit of the cliff which rises in the centre of the city, and be hurled from thence alive."

Forval grew pale with rage on hearing all this, for he knew that the place referred to is the Tarpeian Rock of Madagascar, where the vilest criminals are executed by being hurled headlong down a precipice of eighty feet, at which depth his battered remains, after being

received on some scattered masses of rock, fall four hundred feet below to the base of the hill.

"You are thus to be offered up as a solemn sacrifice to the gods of Madagascar," she said.

"Offered up to them? Thrown down, you mean! Here's a scheme! But the signal you speak of, what is it?"

"To-morrow, if my father breaks a white wand which he usually carries, it seals the fate of you and all your followers."

"Is no other sign to be given?"

"Only one more. If the king should see fit to change his mind, and wish his people to return, he will cast his plumed cap towards them, as if the heat or weight of it oppressed him."

Forval loaded his beautiful visitor with thanks and caresses; but as the night had nearly passed, and the morning would soon be at hand, no time was to be lost in preparing for the coming emergency. He sent her on board the *Madame de Pompadour*, and the ships he ordered to prepare for sea, to be hove short on their anchors, to have all the cannon loaded, and the boats in readiness to embark the troops the moment a rocket was discharged.

These he immediately got under arms, and brought from the Isle of Sainte Marie the hundred who were there under the lieutenant. His mind was full of deep gratitude. But for the timely revelations of this generous and merciful girl, how terribly for him and for his comrades must the morrow have closed!

René d'Esterre was still more astonished when he heard of the adventures of the night; but alarm was mingled with his thoughts.

"Now, by St. Denis!" he exclaimed, "or rather by St. Lawrence, after whom this rascally island was once named, we should broil this demon of a king on a gridiron of ramrods, even as St. Lawrence himself was broiled!"

"And over eggshells, as the Bollandists have it?"

"No; but over a pile of good pine faggots."

"But you forget my promises to the girl; and then, to broil one's father-in-law—the idea is not to be thought of."

"Ah! the charming savage! Why did I not see her?" exclaimed D'Esterre, laughing, as he loaded a pair of pistols and placed them in his embroidered belt.

"Come, come," said Forval, with an air of mock serenity, to cover the avowal under which he winced; "I must again remind you that the king is to be the father-in-law of Forval de Grenville."

"Oho!" laughed D'Esterre, "Mademoiselle Rana—Rana — what's her name? — la Princesse de l'Ile Dauphine—is not at all a marrying young lady—quite passionless in all her proceedings, it would appear!"

"'Pon my soul, René, I'll parade you at twelve paces after this business is over."

"No you won't. You were not to marry Mademoiselle de Motteville until you were a colonel, and now, as

a captain, you are about to espouse—— Oh, it is too absurd," and the chevalier laughed till he nearly shook his epaulettes off.

"The girl is lovely, and you have not seen her. But now day is breaking. Let the men get under arms, and fall in in front of the line of tents."

"Ah, we wanted a little excitement, and now we have it with a vengeance."

"By the gods of the Greeks, I should think so. We are but two hundred Frenchmen, and in yonder wood the savages muster in thousands."

"But we belong to the Regiment de Flandre," said René, proudly, as he took his sword and left the tent.

Forval felt his heart beat with many strange emotions, amid which rage and alarm were not wanting, when, about sunrise, he saw the treacherous king coming very deliberately towards the little camp, mounted, and having borne above his head a large gilded umbrella with a deep scarlet fringe. He wore his royal robes of flowing silk of many colours, with his plumed cap, and in his right hand was a long white wand—the death-signal—and he was accompanied by about a dozen young princes, all handsomely equipped and unusually well armed. Their countenances betrayed nothing of the deadly purpose they had in view.

As Adrian Baba dismounted, and gave his bridle to a slave, the French drums beat a salute and the ranks presented arms — arms that were carefully loaded—while Forval and D'Esterre saluted with their swords.

He approached Forval, who already saw, or thought he saw, the dark visages clustering thick as bees among the underwood of the adjacent forest.

When within three paces of Forval, the king snapped his white wand in two pieces.

"Thunder of heaven!" cried the Frenchman, as he seized him by the throat, and placed a pistol at his head. "Treacherous dog, throw your cap towards those scoundrels in the wood, or you die!"

"Shoulder arms—ready!" commanded the Chevalier D'Esterre, and suddenly the ranks closed, and the two hundred soldiers cocked their muskets.

"Sire, forgive my *brusquerie;* but really——" Forval paused with suppressed rage, and fierce mockery in his eyes, as he pressed the cold muzzle of the pistol against the head of Adrian Baba.

Terrified by the unexpected discovery and seizure, the king cast his royal cap in the direction indicated. On this the savages in the wood disappeared; nay, more, on a shot or two being fired, his attendant princes took to their heels in ignominious haste, and left him a prisoner in the hands of Forval, who resolutely kept him as a hostage until he had the whole of his force, with all their tents and stores, embarked; and ere night fell he found himself far out upon the lonely seas, standing once more towards the Mauritius, with the coast of Madagascar and the Ile aux Prunes sunk to a stripe upon the starboard quarter, the Princess Ranavolana being the sole trophy of the famous expedition on which the Comte De Malartic had sent him.

There was a chaplain on board, and despite all that the more wary D'Esterre and others could say, Forval, who was a man of his word, prepared regularly to espouse her on the following day.

"My dear Forval, are you mad? Think of your family," exclaimed his friend, who he knew loved him well.

"What do my family think of me?" was the petulant response.

"That you are *étourdi*—nay more, a *vaurien*, perhaps."

"And they are right."

"But think of your ancestors—of Richard de Grenville, who was Lord of Rouen and Caen in Normandy!" What says La Roque of them in his 'Treatise on Nobility?'"

"I neither know nor care. I can do nothing for my ancestors, and they nothing for me. What is done is done."

"But not that which is to do. I grant you that the girl is beautiful, and that you might make a fortune out of her——"

"Where?" asked Forval, sharply.

"At the Théâtre des Funambules (ropedancers), in the Boulevard du Temple."

"Sacré!" but now you go too far," cried Forval, with a hand on his sword; but he felt himself compelled to withdraw it, as his friend was choking with laughter.

"In all your love affairs at home, I have heard you

declare that you would never be 'in love' with any one."

"Ah, but, René, this is very different. My little Malay is so *piquante*."

"And you have been so long bored with *ennui*."

"Perhaps I shall sicken at the sight of the Peter Bott. Besides, I have passed my word to her."

"Think of your betrothed in France," urged René, with great seriousness; "think of Mademoiselle de Motteville, whom sedulously you taught to love you well, and who had more wedding rings offered her than she had pretty fingers—refusing all because she was infatuated about you. Think of that charming Countess V——; think of——"

"I'll think of nothing but my pledged word and my *piquante* little savage, so cease, chevalier, I command you," responded Forval, impetuously.

The chevalier shrugged his shoulders, and said:

"Well, I am safe from all such spells."

"How so?"

"I left my heart——"

"Or that which did duty for it?"

"In France behind me."

"Pity you did not leave your sagacious head there, chevalier."

"Why?"

"Both would have been spared the chance of having a bullet through them."

"Here we may face many bullets, Forval, and yet never win the cross or cordon of St. Louis."

"I have always had a prejudice in favour of a well-dressed wife, with a fashionable *trousseau*—of a bride with kid gloves and well-made boots, with a modern costume, instead of only a string of beads, and a robe like your grandmother's *sacque*. But the climate here is so different; and then fancies are prejudices—yes, in faith, mere prejudices, and my little Malay is charming without any of our fashionable absurdities."

"So, courage, Forval, my friend you may one day be king of the Isle Dauphine, this infernal Madagascar, on which those perfidious and grasping English have had their eyes for some time past."

M. l'Abbé, the chaplain, had some scruples about wedding a Christian gentleman like Forval to a believer in Rahillimaza, Ramahavely, and Co.; but they were overcome, and he was formally married to Ranavolana, the Captain of the *Pompadour* transport officiating in place of Adrian Baba, and he landed with her as his wife, to the astonishment of all the people in the Isle of France, the sole trophy of his great slaving expedition.

Not long after this her father, the treacherous Adrian Baba, died. The people of Madagascar, who are ardently attached to the blood of their native kings, sought her out, and the government of the island was offered to her and her husband by ambassadors in the name of the people.

"The king is dead! Long live the king!" cried the volatile and reckless René D'Esterre on parade that morning."

"Long live Forval, the king of the Isle Dauphine!

Long live the Regiment de Flandre!" cried the entire battalion.

"Forval," said Ranavolana, "you had the generosity to marry me in opposition to the wishes of your friends and the prejudices of your religion and your country when I had nothing to offer you but my humble person, and those charms which, whatever they might have been considered in my native country, fell far short of the women of France; but I have now my inheritance, and, Forval, it is yours."

So Captain de Grenville became King of Madagascar, and those who wish to see the documentary details of his story will find them in the "History of the Isle of France," by Charles Grant, Vicomte de Vaux, and it was their granddaughter, Queen Ranavolana, whose outrages on the English residents and French missionaries—all suggested by her lover, a renegade Frenchman, in the name of the false gods—that caused a British armament to destroy, by shot and shell, her principal town in the year 1845, and it is a singular circumstance that the name of her renegade lover was D'Esterre, the grandson of Forval's friend and comrade.

The Chevalier René returned to France and married Mademoiselle de Motteville, whose engagement had been a conditional one, and their descendant it was who, for complicity in the affairs of 1848, had to fly from France, and found a stormy home in the Isle of Madagascar.

THE

FATAL VOYAGE OF THE ' LAURA;"

OR, THE STORY OF JACK MILMAN.

It was in the midsummer of this year that my friend Milman, of the Household Brigade, invited me to accompany him on a trip in his new steam yacht, the *Laura*, along the shores of the Baltic.

She was a well-formed, smart—indeed, elegant—little vessel, the *Laura*, a good sea-going boat, as well as a safe coaster.

We were five of a party. Little Tom Tucker, fresh from Oxford; his chum, Harry Winton, ditto; Morton Parker, of the late Bengal Army, home on two years' leave—great on the subjects of niggers, hog and tiger hunting, chutney, and curry—Jack, and myself; and a merry party of thoughtless addlepates we were.

We had "done" the entire Baltic, and the Gulfs of Finland and Bothnia, and had come to the conclusion that the said Baltic was all very slow, stupid, and that there was "nothing in it," though we had seen Cronstadt, the Malta of that sea, with all its batteries and countless cannon, had flirted with the fair-haired girls of

the Rue de Goths and Amalien Gade at Copenhagen, drunk lager beer at Dantzig, steamed past Elsinore, and actually, with our four six-pounders, had exchanged salutes with a Danish man-o'-war in the Cattegat, as poor King Christian IX. has been an ill-used man; and then we stood down the Skager Rack for old England.

My friend Jack, or Long Milman, as we called him, for he was above six feet, was the *beau ideal* of a fine young Englishman. "A trump, a brick," and so forth, Jack was termed by all who knew him; but he was a finished gentleman and a thorough good fellow, a prime bat and bowler, always had the stroke oar at Oxford, and was a good rifle-shot.

All the girls envied her who waltzed with Jack. He was a king of every pic-nic, and always shone in amateur theatricals, disdaining such tame characters as John Mildmay, and choosing such as Sir Affable Hawk, in which (privately) it was Jack's weakness to think that he quite equalled Mr. Charles Mathews.

As the very antipodes of his home costume and Guards' uniform, on this voyage Jack wore a round blue jacket, with anchor buttons, a straw hat, with a blue ribbon (changed occasionally for a sou'-wester), and a black handkerchief knotted loosely round his neck. In London Jack wore the best fitting gloves that Houbigant could produce; but now he disdained any such coverings for his digits, which were as dark as salt water, tar, and exposure could make them, for Jack was every inch a man, and could tally on to a rope with the best seaman on board.

"By Jove, if Laura could only see me with these paws!" he would sometimes say; and then we laughed, for we knew who Laura was, and rather envied Jack's ascendency in that quarter.

The yacht was under steam, with her fore and aft, fore and mainsails set, as we sat at dinner, on the day we quitted the Skager Rack, and the summer weather was soft and balmy.

Jack proposed that, instead of standing through the North Sea for the coast of England, we should steam westward, and visit some of the Scottish Isles before returning.

"Impossible," said Harry Winton.

"And wherefore impossible, thou man of objections?"

"I'm due in London by the end of the month."

"So am I," said Jack; "but we'll manage it in time. Pass the bottles. Consider the magnificent scenery we shall see."

"Pshaw—scenery! It is, as some one writes, but a weak invention of artists and innkeepers."

"'Oh, blessed are they that sneer!' exclaimed Jack, brandishing his cigar case; 'for they shall never make fools of themselves.' An addition to the list of beatitudes well becoming the spirit of the present day. Try another glass of that glorious old port—it's 1820 vintage—and see how my project looks then. Buttons, wine for Mr. Winton."

"I certainly have a curiosity to see some of those islands, where no one ever goes to, and no one ever comes from," said Morton Parker.

"Mere curiosity," replied Harry, while sipping his wine; but beware of it. It was their wives' thirst for unwise knowledge which wrecked alike the peace of Father Adam and of Bluebeard."

Winton's opposition was soon laughed down. Jack Milman consulted his skipper, and the yacht's head was at once trimmed west and by north.

"We shall only be a fortnight or so longer absent," said Parker; "no heart will break in that time."

"Laura will be sure to think I am lost," said Jack, in a low voice to me.

"It may excite her."

"No difficult matter, by Jove?" replied Jack, laughing; for Laura Hammond was a girl who was fond of all excitement—made up her book on the Oaks and Derby, and had herself photographed on horseback, on skates, at archery meetings, in fancy dresses, and all manner of ways, as we well knew, by the albums with which Jack's cabin was plentifully strewn.

On the second day after this, while at luncheon, we heard the cry of "Land ahead!" and saw a stern and rocky coast rising slowly from a dark grey and rather bleak and stormy sea.

It was the Scaw of Lambness, the most northern point of the Shetland Isles, towering up amid foam, with mist resting on its scalp, and the wild seabirds whirling round it.

"Deuced glad we are drawing near home, anyway," said Jack, as he tied his sou'-wester on, and levelled his telescope at this shore of most uninviting aspect.

"Ugh!" said little Tom Tucker, who hailed from the region of Bayswater. "Heavens, Jack, do you call this home?"

"Well, Tom, it is the first instalment of it. We are four hundred miles from the Tweed, as a bird flies."

"So that beastly chart below tells me."

"Seven hundred and fifty, at least, from Bayswater, Tom," I added, laughing.

"And we have polished off the most of our wines," said Jack. "Buttons gave us the last bottle of that tidy Bordeaux yesterday, and to-day he has opened our last case of Cliquot, so we shan't stay hereabout long, I promise you, Tom."

By nightfall we had run through the Sound of Yell, amid little sandy holms and mossy rocks, where the eider-duck and grey gull seemed the only inhabitants, and where whales appeared spouting at times, and the young sillocks were in swarms. We came to anchor in a quiet and sheltered little voe (as the inlets are there named), and then we discovered from a fisherman who came on board that we were off Northmaven, part of the mainland of Shetland, one of the most northern and primitive of the almost countless isles of Scotland, forty-four leagues west of Bergen, in Norway, and forty-seven north of the coast of Buchan.

Night was setting in when the "native," "the Sawney Bean," as some of us termed him, was brought down to the cabin for our inspection, and his own delectation in the matter of grog.

Magnus Kolbainson — for so this northern named

himself—was a rough and weather-beaten old stump of a Shetlander, in his seventieth year; but hardy, hale, and active as a southron of half his age, with a clear, bright grey eye, and a face which, though a mass of wrinkles, was still ruddy and fresh.

He removed a black fur cap from his white, silvery hairs, and glanced round the little cabin with much of wonder in his face, for he was quite unused to luxury, and had spent all the years of a long life amid storms and shipwrecks, in pursuit of the whale and the walrus.

He drank horn after horn of stiff boatswain's grog, and his conversation—in a strange dialect, and at times unintelligible—consisted of weird tales of wrecks upon the rocks of Eaglesbay and Gunister, or of whales stranded by hundreds in the shallow voes of Burra, Quayfirth, and Gluss; of the terrors of the Holes of Scraada; of witches' spells; of spirits haunting holms and dunes, and Pict-houses; of names, places, and things that seemed and sounded strange and barbarous to us; and yet this queer old man was a loyal subject of Queen Victoria, and a Briton like ourselves, though he knew as much about steam or electricity as Noah or Tubal Cain might have known. Hence we questioned and surveyed him with wonder and speculation.

From subsequent circumstances I am thus particular in describing old Magnus Kolbainson.

When he rose to go ashore in his little punt, the summer moon was shining brightly, and we could see all the rocky indentations of that most picturesque

coast with great clearness. As he crossed the deck, he suddenly started, and after an exclamation expressive of surprise and alarm, asked:

"When was *that* man drowned?"

"Who?—where?—what man?" asked Jack Milman.

"He there!"

"Where?"

"Lying by the capstan, with a white handkerchief over his face," said Magnus, gravely and earnestly.

"Stuff! my good fellow," said Milman. "There is no man lying there. It is a shadow you've seen—or has our grog been too strong for you, old boy?"

The old man, with fear and wonder in his face and manner, approached the spot he had indicated, and passed his hands over the planks, and then across his eyes.

"Strange!" said he; "I thought I saw a man lying there, dead and cold, wet and dripping. It must have been the shadow of a bird or a cloud—perhaps a spirit—between us and the moon."

"The poor old fogey is screwed," said Jack, as we carefully assisted him into his little punt, and, with honest anxiety, watched until we saw him safe ashore, and proceeding in the pale moonshine up the steep rocks, to where a red light shone in the window of his hut.

The skipper was ordered to get the yacht close in shore, and alongside the rocks, in the morning, so that we might land as easily and as often as we pleased, as we had resolved to pic-nic on the island.

The morning proved a lovely one. Breakfast over,

Buttons packed a hamper to take ashore, while Jack produced from his armoury guns of all kinds, double and single-barrelled, muzzle and breech-loaders, as we meant to make a great slaughter among the gulls, cormorants, seals, and whatever else came within range of our fire.

"Buttons, my boy, give us plenty of the Cliquot," said Jack to his steward. "Chuck in the old Melton pie for Mr. Tucker—chutney for Captain Parker; he'll die without it—Bengal chutney."

We all landed with our guns and game-bags, and, under the guidance of old Magnus Kolbainson, made our way along the slopes of Mons Ronaldi, which is said to be the highest hill in all those isles, being nearly four thousand feet in altitude; and to Londoners—we travelled Londoners, as we rather flattered ourselves we were — the scene we witnessed was certainly novel, exciting, and terrible.

We shot a few seabirds, but they were scarcely worth picking up; and we scared great herds of the wild ponies, and made them scamper to and fro.

With many a strange tale of the rude and antique tower that crowns the mountain, and of the chain of watch-houses or Pictish dunes that guard the coast, our quaint old *cicerone* beguiled the way, all unsuspicious of how we "chaffed, and trotted him out," though puffing, blowing, and perspiring sorely, for the heat of the weather was great, and the mountain paths were steep, rugged, and tortuous, and seldom trodden by aught but sheep, rabbits, and wild ponies.

At last we reached the western side of the peninsula, where the cliffs are stupendous in height, and seem to have been rent and torn by billows, earthquakes, and volcanic throes, into strange and fearful shapes.

In these cliffs are the perpendicular caverns known as the Holes of Scraada.

These are two immense natural perforations, distant from the sea-cliffs two hundred and fifty feet inland, sinking down collaterally like two deep pits, separated only by a bridge-like mass of grass-covered rock, under which the sea communicates by a cavernous tunnel, where the waves, surging with the whole force of the Atlantic, boil, suck, gurgle, and thunder, with the most appalling sound.

Little Tommy Tucker shrank back, and could by no means be persuaded to approach, and, though stigmatised by Jack as "a muff," candidly wished himself at Bayswater, or anywhere else. Even Morton Parker, who had seen more of the world than any of us, and had peeped into the Bloody Well of Cawnpore, felt timid, while plucky Harry Winton declared it "doocid good, and the best got up thing of the kind he had ever seen."

"So well got up, indeed, old fellow, that I mean to make a sketch of it for Laura Hammond's album," said Jack Milman, producing his sketch-book, and seating himself in a secluded spot, unpleasantly near the verge, though.

"What the dickens, Jack," said Tucker, ruefully; "you don't mean to say that you are about to bother and make a sketch of this place?"

"And why not, by my halidame, by'r lady, or anything else?"

"It will occupy the whole afternoon, and it is past two now. I'm a lineal descendant of that Mr. Thomas Tucker who sang for his supper, and I'm dying for something to eat."

"And I for something to drink," chorused we all.

"Well," said Jack; "till I've made my sketch for Laura Hammond, I won't budge—that's flat! You know where Buttons has opened the hampers and spread out the grub. Walk slowly back, and I'll rejoin you. Keep a bottle of the sparkling in a cool runnel for me —I won't be twenty minutes behind you. Now be off, those who are hungry. Meantime, I'll have a quiet weed, and sketch this truly infernal hole!"

"All right," said Tommy; "but if you are late, Jack, I hope you won't give us the trouble of coming up this awful road after you; for really it's rather hard upon a fellow in his thirties, and on the confines of fogeydom."

"Never fear! I may see something else to sketch. Away! I'll be on board the *Laura*, dead or alive, by four o'clock — dead or alive! Look after that old Sawney Kolbainson—supply his little wants, and now, *au revoir!*"

Shrugging his shoulders as if he wished to be rid of us, Jack commenced his sketch, and as we descended, we saw him contemplating it from time to time complacently, with his head on one side, and a cigar between the fingers of his left hand.

Pure hunger and an intense thirst, conduced by exercise, heat, and the keen breeze from the sea, made us enjoy the luncheon of cold fowl, Russian tongue, and other condiments provided for us by Buttons, who had spread a snow-white cloth on the grassy sward, and in a runnel that gurgled close by he had the most acceptable of all viands, the Cliquot, sunk among the pebbles for coolness.

We were all very merry, and uncorked bottle after bottle of champagne; and great was the astonishment of old Magnus Kolbainson, after imbibing such a beverage as he had never seen or heard of before, and to his throat it was new and strange as the ambrosia of the gods.

Inspired thereby, however, he told us a long, weird story of the stone ship we saw, and how it was the craft of a pirate, on whom a spell or curse had fallen; and then he sang us a strange and uncouth song, which sounded exactly like a Norse ballad.

"Four o'clock," said Tucker, looking suddenly at his watch.

"And yet no appearance of Jack," said I, starting up.

"He spoke of twenty minutes. His sketch has taken longer."

"Less, I should say. There is Jack half a mile off, and making his way straight for the yacht!"

"Without us," cried Parker.

"Without lunch, too. Strange. I hope we hav'n't offended him in any way," suggested Tucker.

"Should be sorry if so. Milman's the best fellow in the world. Hallo! Jack—Jack Milman!"

But Jack walked steadily on by the rugged and descending road, which led to the voe where the yacht lay. Leaving Buttons and two of the crew to pack the *débris* of the luncheon, we picked up our guns, and a few of those birds which we proposed to have stuffed in London as *souvenirs* of our sojourn in Ultima Thule, and hurried after Milman, who had now disappeared in a conie, or hollow. We had evidently gained on him though, for when he reappeared we were much nearer him.

"He's in a devil of a hurry, surely," said Parker. "Thinks, perhaps, we've polished off the Cliquot, and wants some of that '41 Lafitte, or brandy and seltzer."

We shouted singly and together; but received no answer.

Jack's conduct was unaccountable, and we began to fear that something untoward had happened. Jack had neither his gun, straw hat, nor shot-belt; the back of his jacket was rent open, and his right arm seemed to dangle helplessly by his side.

Thoroughly alarmed by these indications, we ran on to overtake him, but were not quick enough. He reached the steamer before us, and, unnoticed, apparently, by the crew, stepped from the rocks upon the gangway, crossed the deck, and, after lingering for a moment, as if looking at the sky, descended into the cabin.

We soon followed, and dived below; but Jack was

nowhere to be seen. We searched all the state-cabins, and every locker and bunk, without finding a trace of him.

"He's hiding somewhere," said I. "Come along, Jack; show yourself. Are you ill, old fellow, or only up to some of your usual larks?"

There was no reply, and after a minute search we became painfully certain of the fact that Jack Milman was not on board at all!

We questioned the crew on deck. All denied having seen him, and the skipper, who had been seated all the time in the cabin, had seen no one enter, heard no one come down. What mystery was this?

All our weariness vanished now; and, with emotions of alarm, astonishment, and anxiety difficult to describe, we retraced our steps towards the western side of Northmaven, just as the sun was verging towards the Atlantic, expecting to meet Jack returning; but no trace of him was seen till we reached the brink of the Black Holes of Scraada, where the sea boiled through its subterraneous caverns, in surf and foam, with the dreadful sound I have described.

By the edge of the rocks, we found a double barrelled gun, a half-smoked cigar, and a pencil lying. Lower down lay a sketch-book open, with its leaves fluttering in the wind; the grass of the bridge or middle rock was torn and rent, as if someone had fallen there, and clung thereto; and lower down, alas! a hundred feet or more, was the body of poor Jack Milman, appearing and disappearing momentarily, as it

was tossed upward or sucked down, a drowned, sodden, and battered corpse, the sport of the furious waves, in that appalling hole.

Bewildered and in silent horror, we stood for a time looking at it, and in each other's blanched faces. Old Magnus Kolbainson alone took off his fur cap, and said:

"The Lord receive his soul! Mind ye o' his parting words, that at four o'clock he would be on board, *dead or alive*, and he hath kept his word!"

We knew not what to think of all this, and sat by the margin of the dreadful place, utterly crushed.

Not so old Magnus. Aided by his sons and grandsons, all hardy Islemen, who now came to our assistance, he was slung by a rope down into that watery profundity. He fastened a line to the body; it was drawn reverently upward, and laid on the grassy slope. Then we found that the face and hands had been sorely bruised by the rocks, and that his right arm was broken in three places, just as it had appeared in that of the figure we had followed on board the steamer.

Poor Jack had kept his promise; but at the moment we were questioning the skipper, he had been for three hours a drowned corpse.

Slowly and sadly we bore him down from that frightful place to the *Laura*. When we brought him on board, the ghostly moon was shining clearly; and that a complete fulfilment of the strange foreshadowing of his fate might not be wanting, it chanced that we laid him down by the capstan, and spread a handkerchief

over his pallid face; and as we did so, the last night's vision of Magnus Kolbainson rushed vividly and painfully on the memory of us all.

Poor Jack Milman, the king of good fellows, lay there!

After such an adventure as this, it may well be conceived that the next morning found us running, as fast as steam and wind could take us, on our homeward path, towards the Orkneys and the mainland of Scotland.

THE END.

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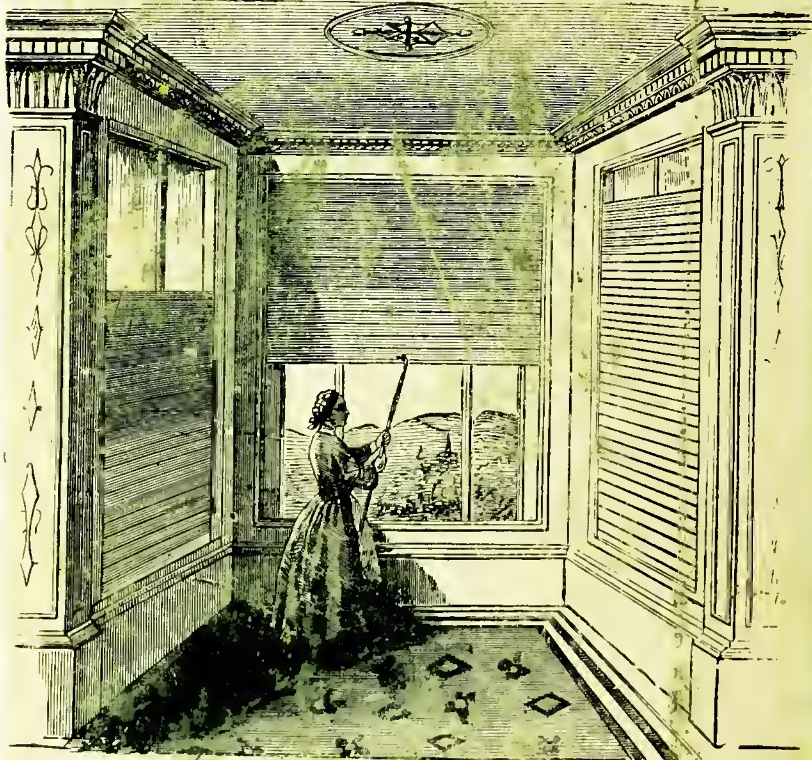

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