

THE
PHRENOLOGIST'S DAUGHTER.

A Tale.



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CHAPTER I.

It would have been evident to the most undiscerning stranger that a difference of opinion, a dispute—perhaps even a quarrel—existed between Mr. and Mrs. Pheeler.

The husband was a gentleman of about sixty, rather bald, and corpulent; but he needs no description, his personal appearance being similar to that of most English country gentlemen. The expression of his face at the present time would not give you a fair

idea of his general appearance, for something had evidently occurred to ruffle his temper. The lady suffered under the same disadvantages, though there was more sorrow than anger in her large eyes. She was about fifty-five, and her figure and face still retained the shadow of former beauty, but as that beauty was of the quiet, placid order, she was not looking her best either, now that she was labouring under an unusual excitement. We will therefore, if it shall seem necessary to give a further description of her personal appearance, take a more favourable opportunity for so doing.

Mr. Pheeler was sitting in an arm-chair before a small table, on which rested his clenched hand. His mouth was firmly shut, and his face was very red.

Mrs. Pheeler stood very erect near the door, the handle of which she held fast, thereby securing the only means of retreat available to the enemy; for a man of Mr. Pheeler's age and respectability could hardly make his exit by the window or the chimney. Mrs. Pheeler's mouth was *not* shut.

“You know well, William, that I have always wished to give you pleasure, that I have never opposed your wishes, however inconvenient to myself. Have I not for thirty years submitted to your experiments, listened to those dull lectures, and entered into all your plans with apparent interest, however foolish they may have been? Have I not allowed you to choke me with nasty plaister when you wanted to get my bumps for your stupid phrenological experiments? Have I not sat all the evening while you have tried to mesmerize me, sometimes, too, when there has been all the mending to do, and I have been ever so much pressed for time? Have I not pretended to be asleep when you have mesmerized me before company; and I have not been able to sleep in reality, just because I thought it would give you pleasure? Have I not even borne to cry out when you stuck pins into me, lest you should be annoyed at the discovery that I was pretending. For myself I do not care, and that you know, but now that our daughter's interests are at stake, I

will not give way, Mr. Pheeler, that I will not ! There is a limit to all acquiescence, and Lotty's happiness shall not be marred because of the idle prejudices " (here the lady opened the door) " of a lunatic ! "

Here the door closed on her retreating form. Her woman's instinct told her to retreat when she had gained the climax, and she felt that the word "lunatic" was sharp and forcible ; indeed, her soft heart reproached her the moment after, with its utterance.

Mr. and Mrs. Pheeler had been married for thirty-two years, and this was the first time that gentleman had experienced the volubility and acridity of a female tongue. The lady was, in truth, a most amiable woman, and though her powers of endurance had been constantly put to the test, she had always been ready to provide "Smiles on the shortest notice."

She had also more belief in, and respect for, her husband's various hobbies of mesmerism, electro-biology, physiognomy, and phrenology, than the tag-end of her speech,

which we have heard, seemed to imply ; though certainly the little pious frauds of pretending to be mesmerised when wide-awake, confessed to, only in a moment of irritation, practised to please her husband, unknown to him, who, poor man, was in daily hope of his wife becoming a clair-voyante, had considerably weakened her belief in mesmerism ; but then, again, she had actually thought her tea sugared when she knew it was not, because he had so willed it, so there was a proof of electro-biology ; and then for phrenology, had he not fallen in love with her bump of benevolence, and had he been disappointed ? Certainly not, she was about the gentlest, most amiable creature imaginable, indeed, her good nature amounted to weakness, and yet we have seen her, and that too, on our first introduction, in a mood decidedly rebellious. I have no doubt there are occasions when the dove, that most polite of bipeds, would drop its olive-twig and peck its mate, and such an emergency had now arisen.

Mrs. Pheeler left the room, covering her

retreat by the discharge of the barbed word—*lunatic*.

Mr. Pheeler, left to himself, behaved in an extraordinary, not to say improper manner. He clenched his fist, ground his teeth, kicked the footstool to the other end of the room, and demolished with one thrust of the poker a plaster-of-paris head modelled from an enormously-destructiveness-bumped malefactor, who had been hanged—poor victim of his organisation!—for the murder of his wife, and Mr. Pheeler seemed likely, if his present mood continued, to suffer a similar fate for a similar crime. At last a thought flashed through the philosopher's brain, could he, he the calm, he the platonic, he the superbly scientific, care for the weak words of a woman? No! far be it! he was not angry, not he, but he despised, yes, despised, scorned, contemned her! and here Mr. Pheeler tried to get up a sneer, which was not quite so successful as it might have been, had his face been sharp, thin, or in any way suited for such an operation; as the case stood his physiognomy was too fat and solid

for the contemptuous or diabolic expression he was aiming at, and he could only get up a look of smirking sulkiness, which he contemplated in a large mirror for a long time, trying to improve upon it, but without much success. While Mr. Pheeler and his image are sneering away at each other, out of compliment to woman-kind in general, and Mrs. P. in particular, I will tell you what extraordinary event could have occurred to occasion that meekest of ladies to rebel.

Their only "pledge" was a daughter, and what a pretty pledge she was! She was everything which a woman ought to be to drive a man clean out of his senses,—a regular Saxon beauty,—none of your dark, passionate eyes, brown skins, supple forms! You could not imagine her stabbing you in a fit of jealousy, or serving as page to her lover while he fought a duel, or doing anything but dance, or laugh, or sing, or lie back in a sofa and go to sleep over a novel, or loll in an easy chair. She was just at the right age, too,—nineteen; neither too young nor too old. What a nice moon-like face she

had! so full, so clear! To see her cheeks and not kiss them, was something approaching to torture. Her eyes were large and blue—her mouth and nose were faultless; and little children were always pulling and playing with her ear, it was so nice and silky; her figure was full, very full for her age, threatening to be *too* full at sixty. Some, indeed many persons, admire “fine” women; we do, and so did Arthur Stapleton. Mr. Pheeler was living on a small estate near Clifton, and young Stapleton was living on a large estate, about a mile off. He was a handsome young fellow, and had just come into a handsome property, having attained his majority about a month before the time at which this story opens. He was a constant visitor at Mr. Pheeler’s, and many were the pleasant rides, drives, and walks, Lotty Pheeler and Arthur Stapleton had together. I do not know of any place in the world so well adapted for those exercises as Clifton and its neighbourhood. Now there is nothing on earth so pleasant as being constantly in the society of a girl one particularly admires, at

twenty-one. We go deeper and deeper into the strawberry-mess quagmire (if you can imagine such a thing) of love, without one moment's thought of how we are to get out again; the notion of marriage never comes across the mind to spoil our bliss; we rush on in the race, regardless of the halter dangling from the goal, and when the infatuated lover whispers, "Dearest, I am ever thine," it does not occur to him that being "ever hers" means giving up smoking, being home every night by ten——But why not let the "little victims play?" why tell the deaf adders of their fate? I will not! Well, well! Arthur Stapleton was only twenty-one; he, also, admired "fine women." Lotty was a fine woman;—find the result.—Why, he became "very particular" in his attentions, very particular, indeed! He was rich withal, and good Mrs. Pheeler's motherly heart was so inflated with joy at her daughter's prospects, that it nearly rose in the air with her,—at least, she said she felt as if it would. Full of her subject, she had sought her husband's study and had held

that conference with him the disastrous termination of which has been pourtrayed in the beginning of this chapter. She had begun by imparting what she had noticed between the young couple, and was proceeding to descant on the extraordinary advantages of the match, when Mr. Pheeler interrupted her:

“Mrs. Pheeler, once for all, Charlotte shall never” (here he raised his right fist), “never” (here he raised it higher), “never marry that man!” and down came his clenched hand on the table, and the matter seemed so settled and for ever determined, one would have thought young Love had been taking a nap on that table, with his head reposing on the very spot so rudely struck.

Mrs. Pheeler jumped: “Why, my dear?”

“Never!”

“My love!”

“No forehead, large destructiveness, ditto amativeness, enormous hole where benevolence ought to be; no veneration, sensuality and selfishness in every line of his face; does not believe in mesmerism, Madam! Tush!

would you have *our* daughter—*my* daughter marry such an one as this?”

Mrs. Pheeler replied—“Yes!”

Then did they try to convince each other, waxing angry by degrees; and then, for the first time, they had a regular battle, at the end of which Mrs. Pheeler called her husband a lunatic—a very home thrust—and fled.

With a comfortable income and no sons to help him to get through it, Mr. Pheeler had spent his life as his father had spent his before him, in doing nothing; yet, happy man, he was always busy. There were few sciences he had not dabbled in,—Anatomy, Physiology, Mathematics, Chemistry, Geology, had in turn engaged his attention; but, like most men who attempt many things, he had not made much progress in any one. Of late years he had taken up the more mysterious and uncertain isms and ology's, which always possess great attractions for minds wholly unoccupied by hard practical schemes of business or politics. Had he lived in earlier times, he might have dissipated his fortune and health in researches after the

Philosopher's Stone or the Elixir of Life. Fortunately, however, exertions of the will are very cheap, and plaster-of-Paris casts are not ruinously expensive ; so that had he not, with all his eccentricities, been a kind-hearted and very charitable man, he would have had some difficulty in getting through his income.

Possessed of considerable abilities and a good deal of information, he was on the whole an agreeable companion ; and though, when mounted upon one of his hobbies, he was rather a bore, he had a large circle of friends, many of them disciples, it is true, of Mesmerism or Phrenology, but many also, who, though sceptical on such points, liked him for his other qualities. His only enemies were the two doctors in the neighbourhood, and even they did not refuse his acquaintance. Poor man ! what would he have done if they had deserted him ! They were the only people who argued with him, and argument in defence of his favourite doctrines was meat and drink to him ; and yet he did enough to excite medical rancour. Every day at twelve o'clock came a whole

troop of poor people—maimed, halt, and even blind,—to have passes made before their eyes, and have mysterious tasteless (at all events, harmless) physic infused into them through Mr. Pheeler's fingers. And, worse than this, he had drawn away two or three of the best patients in the neighbourhood,—rich ladies, upon whom he had performed most surprising cures. Mrs. Nerf, in particular, had spread the fame of Mesmerism and Mr. Pheeler far and wide. If any doubt of the science was incautiously whispered before that lady, she turned upon the offender immediately.

“What am I to think?” she would say. “For ten years I was an invalid. During that time I felt every change of wind; I was a perfect weathercock; and now, I give you my word, I have not known a day's illness since that blessed day when—”

And here followed a long description of the first time Mr. Pheeler had planted his forefinger into her eye, and kept it there till she went to sleep. It was impossible to contradict the lady, or insinuate the report

current among her early friends, that she had been quite well before ; and the sceptic was silenced if not convinced, and his silence was looked upon as a triumph, and Mr. Pheeler's fame prospered. That gentleman had by this time sneered himself into a more composed state ; and twelve o'clock having arrived, the footman opened the study-door, and announced that the daily complement of poor patients were assembled in the hall. Let us leave him to manipulate before them, hoping his exertions, if otherwise fruitless, may at least give him an appetite for luncheon.

CHAPTER II.

It was in the pleasant month of June, the weather was delightful, and Adderly-Hall, the residence of Arthur Stapleton, Esq., looked its very best. The Hall was not very large, if the extent of the estate be taken into consideration ; that is, it is a very common thing to see much larger houses surrounded by fewer acres. It was built in the old, substantial style, and was situated at the bottom of a dell, so that the beautiful scenery of the surrounding country was completely shut out ; yet the view from the front window was refreshing to the eye. The lawn was beautifully kept. Near the house were statues, flower-beds, and a fountain.

Further on were more flower-beds, and a few beautiful old trees. Gradually the grass got coarser and the trees thicker, until the garden was lost in the park. There was no fence, visible or invisible, to spoil the effect ; but the deer could approach as near to the house as they dared. The pheasants ran so freely over the lawn that it was difficult to say whether they or the peacocks (those pets of the rich, as "birds of a feather flock together") were the tamest. It was an old place, and had seen many changes, in costume, at least, for the plot of one man's life is much like the plot of another's, and though the old hawking parties and the modern fox-hunting expedition, as they set out from the same old gates, might present very different spectacles, yet much the same hopes, fears, loves, and hatreds panted under the green baldrics as under the scarlet coats. Yes, the old house had but seen the same old melodrama performed over and over again by different actors, in different dresses. We can but act parts which others have acted before us ; but pshaw ! what does that matter ?

Let us fix on the merrier characters of the play for our parts, and cut the tragic as much as we can ! Arthur Stapleton had some college friends staying with him, and, as I have said, the beautiful landscapes which abound in that part of the world being shut out from the house, they had their dessert laid, after dinner, in a summer-house, situated on the highest ground on the estate. Young Stapleton had been left an orphan while quite a child, and had, unfortunately, been brought up by an over-strict guardian, who, by condemning innocent amusements and real vices together, had raised a most unfortunate confusion of the idea of right and wrong in the boy's head. Like all other boys who are denied every amusement when young, he put too much value on pleasure, esteeming it as the only one thing worth living for. We cannot turn ascetics at twenty-one, and if young men are forced into puritanism, let those set over them beware of the recoil.

It is not so difficult, as may be thought, to deter youth from vice without keeping a continual espionage over their actions. Vice

possesses a peculiar attraction for those who can but seldom escape from the eye of their friends, and those who allow their children to share, at proper times, in the pleasures of their age, will have the opportunity of sowing seeds of virtue in their breasts which will bear fruit some time or another, even though the storms of the passions may at times appear to have blown them away.

The summer-house, we have mentioned, was situated on the most commanding spot in the grounds, and the view from it was most beautiful. A thickly-wooded hill sloped down from its base to the very banks of the Avon, and a similar wood rose from the opposite bank, extending as far as the eye could reach towards Bristol. The tide was up, and every now and then a huge steamer would disturb the peaceful surface of the river, and break upon the quiet of the summer evening. In the opposite direction the eye could trace the stream until it mixed with the broad waters of the Severn, and beyond rose the clear blue hills of Wales, so clear that they did not seem more than a mile off, thrown

into relief by the setting sun, which bathed the whole landscape in a flood of golden light as it sank behind them. On a table in the summer-house stood dessert and a claret-jug, and however unromantic it may appear, a beautiful view is doubly enjoyable on a fine evening when accompanied by a glass of claret and pipe. These comforts were provided for the delectation of four young men who sat gazing on the scene before them. The handsomest of the party was Stapleton, his complexion was rather dark, but clear, his hair was soft and wavy, his whiskers were ambrosial, and his figure (or his tailor) very near perfection ; his face was thin and certainly handsome, but his mouth was rather large, and his lips rather too full, and there were one or two lines about the corner of his mouth which made him look as if that organ occasionally "watered" after the good things of this life, and required certain channels to carry off such metaphorical streams. You would have set him down, indeed, as a man who preferred pleasure to pain, at once, and any tokens in his face of such a disposition were considerably heightened at the

present time by his attitude, for as he lolled back in an easy chair, with a cigar in his mouth, and his finger fidgetting with the stem of a claret-glass, he *did* look inclined to enjoy himself. Near him sat the butt of the party, he looked like a fool, and his looks did not belie him ; yet, though ignorant and stupid about most things, he was a good hand at calculation, and Tom Stephenson, in spite of his meaningless blue eyes and fat whiskerless cheeks, could make a very good book on the Derby, and play a very good game at ecartè. These accomplishments were possessed also by Noel, the third of our party, but then Noel was a clever man, he was the oldest of the party, and knew more of the world than all the rest put together. He was fair, and rather good-looking, though not nearly so handsome as Stapleton ; and yet, in conversation, when he became animated, and his eye sparkled, he might have been thought better-looking than the other. He was reading for the bar, I mean by that keeping his terms, for at the present moment, he was reading neither for the bar nor anything else, but

was lying on his back on a sofa smoking a long meerschaum. The fourth man was called Newfield, he had gone through the University with the intention of going into the Church, and still intended to do so; he was only waiting till he should be reformed. He was a dark man, with rather a long nose, and a very pleasing expression. He had very sound common sense and good abilities, and being endowed with a great aversion to cutting any one, or wounding his feelings, his associates at Cambridge were of a very mixed order. He would breakfast with a musical set of men, who would give him a little morning concert, drop in upon a reading man and have a problem explained to him, lunch with a sporting man, and bet with him on all the races to come, adjourning with him to the billiard-room to play at pool, be dragged from the pool-room down to the river by a boating man, dine with a Shakespeare-club, adjourn to a prayer-meeting held by some saints, go from thence to a debating society, and having heard much politics talked, wind up the day at the fastest supper-party to be found in the Uni-

versity. Poor man ! he had one great fault, he possessed a conscience, and this conscience would not let him enter the Church without reforming, and for the necessary reformation he had but little mind. It was a great weakness of his, and one but seldom given way to by Oxford and Cambridge men, though somehow they do turn out very good men in five or six years, so that it is all right, I, as a layman, dutifully suppose.

The beauty of the scene, the stillness of the evening, had inclined the party to silence, and some minutes had elapsed since any one had spoken. Newfield was the first to break the charm.

“What a jolly evening !” said he.

“Yes,” said Stapleton, “we are lucky to get all the scenic effect of this part of the world at once. The air is clear, the sun is setting, and the tide is full ; when the tide is out we have nothing but mud down there in the Avon, and few people of taste, barring eels, prefer mud to water. Wales, too, is very often out of sight, or nearly so.”

“Well, it isn't out of sight now, at all

events," said Newfield, "I could almost swear to being able to see my old tutor, the Rev. Lewis Jones, walking over that hill, I believe I should too, if he were there."

"What a row you fellows are making," cried Noel, without taking the pipe from his lips, "I can't hear the nightingales."

"Nightingales! man, that's a blackbird; there are no nightingales here."

"A blackbird! confound it, Stapleton, why did you tell me that? Here have I been all my life trying to hear a nightingale, without success; this is my second disappointment."

"What was your first?"

"Oh, why, some years back, I was staying at Brighton, and, one evening, found a number of people, in one of the public walks, in a state of great excitement; a nightingale had been heard about there the evening before. As you may suppose, I was overjoyed to find a probability of my hopes being accomplished, and sure enough, in about half-an-hour, the bird began; we were entranced; I never felt in such a romantic state in all my life. I began to fall in love

immediately with each young lady that passed ; soon, however, my curiosity became excited, I longed to see the wonderful bird I had heard so much of, and, to that intent, went towards the thicket where he was—”

“ And it turned out a blackbird ? ”

“ No.”

“ A thrush then ? ”

“ No, it was a sweep ! ”

“ A sweep ! well, is not that a *blackbird* ? ”

“ Pshaw ! the young wretch could imitate every bird under heaven ; and some fellow, who was making love to a girl who wanted to hear a nightingale, had got hold of him, and paid him to warble every evening. It was not a bad idea ; it made so many excuses for walking out with the girl in the evening, the best time going for making love.”

“ Well, but there must be nightingales here,” said Stephenson. “ Did you not say, Newfield, that there was a place near here, called Nightingale Valley ? ”

“ Why, yes,” cried Newfield, with a wink to the others, “ there were nightingales till very lately, but when Stapleton there came

of age, he gave a fearful spread, and, amongst other rare dishes served up, a nightingale tongue pie, in imitation of the Romans. It was very good, but all the nightingales in the valley had to be shot, to provide even a tolerably small dish."

"For my own part," said Stapleton, "I look upon the bird as fabulous; you might as well talk of taking a country-walk to solve the Sphinx's riddles, or light your cigar at the Phoenix's ashes, as go out to hear a nightingale; or, if they do exist, they keep themselves to the woods of America, just as sea-serpents visit only American vessels."

"Stapleton!" exclaimed Stephenson, "you have no poetry in you, you care for nothing but the fleeting and sensual indulgences, which—which—what d'ye call it—while they—thingummy, you know; and yet on such an evening as this, with the sun sinking—ah!"

"Why, Stephenson, you are getting romantic, surely the gods have not made *you* poetical; my dear fellow, keep to betting, the other thing won't pay, depend upon it."

"Ah !" said Stephenson, "you men don't appreciate me, but I am very fond of poetry, I assure you, very."

"The devil you are !" laughed Stapleton. "Come then, 3 to 2, in sovs., you won't recite a whole verse of any poetry under the sun, barring the classics, for you may have had some Horace licked into you at school."

"3 to 2 ! you're on !" cried Stephenson.

Just then a servant came to the door, and called Stapleton out, to speak to him upon some matter connected with horseflesh.

Stephenson seemed to be hard put to it for his verse ; he remembered two lines of an old hymn,—

" Whene'er I take my walks abroad,
How many poor I see."

But what the two next lines were, he could not for the life of him remember ; so, taking out a pencil and the back of a letter from his pocket-book, he wrote what he remembered, and above it put, "Finish it for me, Noel, do ; they will laugh at me so damnably." This he managed to hand to Noel unper-

ceived by Newfield. Noel took the note, read it, smiled, and after thinking a little, wrote down two more lines, and handed it back. Stephenson was overjoyed to see the couplet completed, and winked and nodded his thanks to Noel, who puffed away at his pipe, till he was hidden in a small cloud. Presently Stapleton came back, but not before Stephenson had learned off the whole verse.

"Well, old boy! Can you remember anything?" said he, as he shut the door.

"Oh, lots! There's that beautiful thing—

'Whene'er I take my walks abroad,
How many poor I see,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
And curs of low degree.'

Hand over your three sovereigns."

But Stapleton was incapable of handing over sovereigns at that moment. He was choking with laughter, and some claret which had gone down the wrong way, in astonishment at the unexpected finale of poor Stephenson's poetry. Newfield was roaring, and an extraordinary chuckle proceeded from

the fog where Noel might be supposed to be concealed.

"What are you laughing at?" grumbled Stephenson. "I see nothing to grin at so. I suppose it's wrong, but that's Noel's fault; he thought it was that, too. (Fresh burst of laughter.) Well, but he did, though; here it is in his handwriting, and who was to know. I'm sure it sounds all right—many poor I *see*, curs of low *degree*. I'm sure it rhymes. There, you are laughing again; I'm hanged if I—worra, worra, worra." Here the gentleman's speech became very indistinct, and finally ceased, though he himself looked very sulky; however, after a few seconds, he lit a cigar, filled himself a glass of sherry, and resigned himself to his fate in a philosophical manner.

After they had sufficiently chaffed poor Stephenson, Noel discovered that the sun and his pipe had simultaneously gone out, and proposed an adjournment to the house, which was carried unanimously. The arrangements for the amusements of the evening were not so quickly made, Newfield wishing the

billiard-room to be lighted up, and Noel vowing he was too hot and tired to go walking round and round a table with a cue in his hand ; whereupon, a rubber was proposed, seconded, put to the vote, and carried, and candles were placed in the "study." There was not a very large library in this study ; some very old numbers of the "Spectator" and "Gentleman's Magazine," together with an old Family Bible, and the "Encyclopædia Britannica" being the only occupants of the capacious book-shelves. If there is such a thing as an odour of learning, as well as an odour of sanctity, it must (to judge from this, and many other studies) smell very much like tobacco.

"Cut for partners," said Stapleton, when candles and cards were on the table. "You and I, Noel. What points, Stephenson ; as usual, I suppose—half-a-crown, and a sovereign on the rub?"

"Yes ; will you go sovereign on the odd trick?"

"Very well."

"Now that's what I call playing half-

crown points," said Newfield; "what do you say, Noel; shall he have farthing points, a penny on the odd, and ponies on the odd trick? Simeon himself could not call farthing points gambling. Stephenson! I denounce you as a Jesuit!"

"All right, Newfield; now, perhaps, after all that jaw, you will condescend to deal."

"Oh! is it my deal? I beg your pardon. You need not be in such a hurry, though, Stapleton; every minute delayed is so much money in your pocket; you can't make head against our superior play; there, I've turned up an ace."

Stapleton had bad luck, and did not play well, consequently he lost nearly every rubber. At last he was quite disgusted with the game, and proposed loo. Still his bad luck followed him, and at last, about five in the morning, he went to bed, his head aching with over-excitement, and his hand shaking as if he were ruined. Yet he had not lost very much; they had not played high enough for that; but it was the simple feeling of fortune being against him which had such an



effect on his mind. Some men can be ruined without seeming to mind it. To judge by their countenances, they appear rather to like it than otherwise. Others cannot lose five shillings without going through every stage of anger and impatience. A painter would oftener get a good study for "The last stake," or "The ruined gamester," in a rich old foggy losing at shilling whist, than in the habituée of the gaming-house. Why on earth Stapleton ever touched a card, none of his friends could devise; he was never cool enough to play well at any game. If he lost, he was outrageous; if he won, he was wretched because the stake had not been higher. The only game he played pretty decently at was billiards, and then he never won a game if he had any stake on it. Yet he was a cool, collected, happy kind of man enough at all other times. When in the society of ladies, he was gay, sprightly, and animated; when in the company of men who did not bet, he was almost boisterous in his genuine, unforced mirth. He had not a care in the world, was not subject to fits of depression or indi-

gestion, and therefore one would have thought that the preternatural excitement of gaming would have had no charm for him. It certainly afforded him no pleasurable sensations. Then why did he pursue it? Who knows? So it was, and so it is with many others. His case cannot, of course, be applied generally. The great majority of young men sit down to a rubber as an amusement, and, not playing high, rise from it with the same feelings, whether they have lost or won. These men may play cards every evening, if they like, but those whose minds are constituted like Stapleton's had better die than touch a card, or bet on a race. Play will soon become to them what his dram is to the drunkard—necessary to existence. Long after his three friends and guests were fast asleep, Stapleton, the richest of the four, was tossing about, thinking what might have happened had he played some particular card at some particular juncture. Then he thought what a pretty girl Lotty Pheeler was, and what an old fool her father was. Then he cross-questioned himself to find out whether he

was in love with her, and determined that he was not, but that he would ride over and see her next day ; and finally he fell asleep, and dreamed that Lotty Pheeler was a trump, in the form of the Queen of Hearts ; that he had just led her, and was in a great fright lest he should be over-trumped by the King, whose jolly fat face bore an extraordinary resemblance to Mr. Pheeler's.

CHAPTER III.

A LITTLE before noon next day, the whole party having finished their breakfast, Stapleton left his three friends in the billiard-room, and set out on horseback for Mr. Pheeler's. It was one of those days when the heart expands under the influence of nature. Whatever sorrows may be aching in the breast, such a day as this will soothe and compose them ; but when the heart is young and unburdened by a care, the effect is intoxicating. The only sound audible was the singing of the birds ; and since the young man's course lay along a bridle-path, he was spared the heat and dust of the high-road. Almost the whole way, his path was sheltered by the

wide-spreading trees; while, at times, a sudden opening would show him a dioramic view of the surrounding scenery. Although Stapleton was not very deeply in love, his thoughts naturally reverted to the pretty girl he was on his way to visit.

“She’s charming—char-ming,” he muttered to himself; “and if I thought she was in love with me, by Jove! but I’d return the compliment. But, confound it, it’s a bore speaking about that to her till I’m sure; but how am I to make sure? I can’t tell whether the girl likes me or no. She’s not like other girls, but then she hardly ever sees any other men. By-the-bye, I hope she won’t meet Noel anywhere; he’s so handsome, and such a devilish taking sort of a fellow. What a fool I was to ask him, and yet I don’t know why she should like him better than me; I don’t think I’m so very bad-looking. And if she were to have me—Yoicks! that would be *very* jolly. I’d never touch a card again—I’d turn teetotaller; of course, I’d get as steady as Origen. I’d give up—No, that would hardly be necessary;

she would never be cruel enough to exact that. Besides, I daresay she likes the smell of tobacco; I'll find out that, though, beforehand. Fancy being sober, chaste, and temperate; living in such a jolly place as this, with such a lovely—"

He left off thinking aloud here, and soon after arrived at Mr. Pheeler's.

It was a pretty little place that of the old phrenologist's. The house was low, only two stories high, long and broad; the walls were covered with creepers, (*plants*, so called,) interspersed with roses; and the place looked very pretty when the creepers were green and the roses in bloom. The garden surrounded the house, was very well kept, and boasted a hothouse filled with choice botanical specimens. It was situated in the exact centre of about 300 acres of meadow-land, Mr. Pheeler's own property, and a dairy-farm stood about a hundred yards from the house, where the stables were also situated. Stapleton, who knew the ins and outs of the family, rode directly up to the stable, dismounted without being barked at by either

Cæsar, Jowler, or Tartar, so well was he known, and proceeded unannounced towards the house on foot. As he passed through the garden, he heard a pretty, silvery voice, issuing from an old summer-house :—

“ Where the bee sucks, there lurk I ;
In a cowslip's bell I lie.”

Stapleton immediately entered the damp old place, getting his hat knocked off in passing through the low entrance. A few distorted rays of light, which struggled through a coloured glass skylight in the roof, showed him Lotty Pheeler stretched on a rustic sort of sofa, warbling away like a thrush, and superintending the motions of a frog, who pertinaciously refused to leap over the handle of her parasol. She was dressed in one of those delightfully *fresh*-looking summer things, and her head was enveloped in a shapeless affair, with a great flap all round to hang over her neck, and keep it from being freckled. It was not exactly the head-dress or the occupation to make a conquest ; but very little did she care for that. On

hearing the noise of Stapleton's hat falling, she started up.

"How do you do? You did not come over yesterday."

"No, I was not able to come; I unfortunately have friends staying with me. But what were you playing with there?"

"Only an old frog. You were teaching me to leap my horse over some ditches the other day, and it is not pleasant to be always a pupil,—I like to be tutor sometimes, so I have been teaching the old frog to leap over my parasol; but he is very stupid. But come into the house. Mamma and papa are at luncheon. I think I heard the bell ring a few minutes ago."

Stapleton was so constant a visitor, that his appearance excited no commotion or surprise, the phrenological exception which the old man had taken to him made no difference in his behaviour towards him; until his wife had mentioned it the morning before, it had never entered his head, that his daughter would marry, or that Stapleton could be her husband, and he had since made up

his mind that it was all her fancy. The mother's eye had, however, detected the state of the young man's heart, and as he was handsome, rich, and almost the only man Lotty ever saw, the thing seemed settled. And yet, whatever she might feel at a future period, the girl's heart was untouched yet. She had no idea whatever of love, it was mixed up in her head with the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, and genii, and black slaves, and tarts with pepper in them. She liked young Stapleton, but she honestly wished he was her brother; she liked to ride, and walk, and play chess, ecarté, backgammon with him, he amused her with his conversation, and laughed at her little anecdotes, but as for being in love, she was about as much so as the Venus de Medicis.

They all sat down to luncheon.

"What an advantage it would be," said Mr. Pheeler, "were every one open to the influence of electro-biology. For instance, no doubt you would prefer your hock iced, now I not having any ice cannot oblige you, but I can my wife. My dear, would you

like your hock iced?" "If you please, dear." Mr. Pheeler rose, frowned, gnashed his teeth, put his hand on his wife's forehead, snatched it away again. "It's cold, very cold indeed," said he, "now it is very cold indeed, it is, and it shall be till I warm it, very cold, iced." Mr. Pheeler sat down contentedly, and Mrs. Pheeler had her hock iced. Stapleton let the old gentleman try, for the thousandth time, on him, but without any effect.

"So, Mr. Stapleton," said Mrs. Pheeler, "you have some college friends staying with you, you must bring them over to dinner on Friday." Stapleton made his acknowledgments, and asked Lotty to ride that evening.

"Can you get away from your friends?" asked she.

"Oh, yes, I'll manage to do that somehow. Which way are you going this evening?"

It had quite become the custom for the philosopher to drive his wife about in a gig, accompanied by Lotty and Stapleton on horseback, every fine summer evening, and a very pleasant custom it was. If any one

who reads this has ever ridden alone, on a summer evening, through pretty scenery, at the side of somebody nice, I will lay odds on his looking back on that evening as one of the happiest in his life. Walking, even when with those we love, is a bore, sitting still is better, but riding! The Centaurs, who spent their lives on horseback, were famous for their amorous *pursuits*, cavalry officers are almost proverbial, but why enumerate proofs of what no one doubts? Most girls are set off by a riding cap and habit. The exercise, too, is one which shows off the grace and flexibility of the limbs to greater perfection than any other feminine exercise, except dancing on the tight rope, an amusement young ladies but seldom indulge in.

The direction of their evening ride was determined, and Stapleton returned to his friends.

He found them sitting in the billiard-room looking over the day's newspapers.

"Look here!" cried Stephenson on his entrance; "here's Secretary gone down to 14 to 1, and Mumbo Jumbo risen to 5!"

"Oh! confound that Derby! I do believe, Stephenson, the only part of the paper you ever look at is the 'Sporting Intelligence!'"

"No, I read the Police Reports sometimes."

"Been playing at billiards, Newfield?"

"Yes, I've been playing with Noel; he wanted to give me ten, and play me a sov. a-game, the leg! but I would back myself for no more than half-a-crown, because he can give me more than ten."

"Well, and how many half-crowns did you lose?"

"Oh! I won three or four. Noel plays carelessly, unless he has a good stake on the game!"

"The fellow flukes so!" cried Noel. "I am glad you have come back, Stapleton; these two fellows are in love, and, consequently, unbearable."

"Well, Newfield always is in love; it is nothing for him—he is used to it; but Stephenson!—has some girl been winning a steeple-chase in jockey's clothes, or has he met Margaret Catchpole?"

"I don't know her name," said Stephenson, "but I know this, she is about the prettiest girl I have ever set eyes on! You remember Jane, at the confectioner's shop in Cambridge? Well, she beats her all into fits!"

"When did you see this beauty?"

"Why, the other day, you know, when I went over to Clifton Downs, I went into the Folly; there was a carriage waiting outside for the young lady, who was taking a sketch of the old tower. I wonder if she sketched me? I lay on the grass, looking at her all the time she was there,—a-a-a-ah!"

"Poor Stephenson!—why, man, you will never see her again!"

"What will you bet?"

"Mumbo Jumbo for the Derby against your ever speaking to her!" cried Noel.

"Done, for a pony!" answered Stephenson.

"Well, Newfield, where did you meet your charmer?"

"Oh, you know, I rode over to that place where there's a view—Punt-pole Point, or

whatever you call it—yesterday afternoon; and while my horse was getting a feed, I walked about to look at the scenery, and I did see an uncommonly pretty bit of scenery. She was—but I won't describe her, or you would all be my rivals. I was enchanted—transfixed! She sat on a bench with an old gentleman, and when I came upon them she was reading to him. Filial affection, you know, and all that! Stunning pretty thing that filial affection! After a time they rose and walked away, leaving a paper-cutter on the bench. Here was an opportunity! I seized it, kissed it very loud, in hopes she would hear me, ran after her, and presented it, and she received it with such a smile; I can shut my eyes and see her now!”

“Well,” said Stapleton, “I have got an invitation for all three of you to dine with a Mr. Pheeler next Friday; he is a nice old man, but rather eccentric; he affects the philosopher. Have you ever been mesmerised, Newfield? because if you have not, here is a chance for you.”

"A fellow tried on me once, and he sent me to sleep, certainly: does Mr. Pheeler glory in that kind of thing?"

"I should rather think he did!"

"I wish he could make me a clairvoyant; then I might see this girl once more, find out who she is, and where she lives."

"Yes," said Noel, "and if you could get put into a clairvoyant state just before you sat down to whist, you might see your partner's hand through the back of the cards."

"Can you find out future events by mesmerism?" asked Stephenson.

"Oh, yes, I believe so;—why?"

"Nothing!—one might find out the winning horse of all the races beforehand; that's all!"

"Don't let us sit in all this afternoon," said Newfield; "what shall we do? we are not enough for cricket. There are some young rooks (I don't allude to you, Stephenson), and if there are any rifles, we might have a knock at them; or Noel and Stapleton shall run, walk, or hop races, and Stephenson and I will sit and bet on them."

Perhaps that will be best, for it is rather warm."

The proposed principal actors did not fall in with this idea quite so readily as might have been expected. Noel took horse and went off without answering any inquiries as to where he was going. The other three hunted up two rifles and a fowling-piece, and spent the afternoon first in looking for lead, then in endeavouring to melt it, and then in moulding bullets; by the time their preparations were complete, it was too near their dinner-hour to go after the young rooks, so they practised at a bottle on the lawn. Noel, in the meantime, had ridden off towards Clifton Downs; when he arrived there he went straight to the gate of some gardens leading to an old tower called "The Folly," and engaging a boy to hold his horse, walked along the edge of the valley sloping down to the Avon, till he came to a part thickly wooded and less precipitous than the rest. Descending through the young trees and bushes he came, about half-way down, to a small grassy spot nearly

level, a sort of ledge in the side of the hill, so surrounded by trees that it formed a natural arbour. Looking at his watch he uttered an exclamation of disappointment, and proceeded to lift up a fragment of rock which lay on the grass near him; on removing it he saw, as indeed he had expected, a small pink note, tearing which open he read as follows:—

“Adieu, we are obliged to leave Clifton, and here is an end of our *passionette*, happy lovers that we are, thus to part before we have become tired of each other, that recollection which might then have caused a yawn, will now be an agreeable souvenir.”

“M. G.”

“Extraordinary girl,” said Noel, with a smile and a sigh; “well it is, as she says, better to part with an agreeable recollection of our little *liaison*; in this case too I have nothing to reproach my conscience with, and yet it is rather galling to one’s vanity, she might have loved——ah! bah! what selfish wretches men are! With this true reflection he returned to his horse, and retraced

his steps at a rather slower pace than he came at.

What selfish wretches men are ! Of the few moral men in the world the greater part are so out of consideration to their own health, character, or reputation ; a better class avoid impurity lest their hearts and tastes should become corrupted. Religion curbs the passions of some ; but how few, how very few are deterred in the moment of temptation by any thought of the misery, the intense, fearful misery they are entailing upon others. The Devil never displayed greater cunning than when he invested immorality with a halo of romance, than when he breathed into the ear of lovesick poets the sweetest thoughts, the most enchanting images.

This little episode may serve as a type of Noel's character : light, gay, clever, and utterly wrapped up in himself, he was liked by all and loved by none ; indolent as a Turk, he seemed incapable of any strong emotion, and though particularly fond of woman's society, he had never felt any deeper

feeling than a passing fancy for any of the fair creatures he had from time to time met. Handsome in person and elegant in manner, he had been more than usually fortunate in those skin-deep *affaires de cœur*, which possess so much attraction for men of his temperament, and they had the same effect upon him as upon others; for, necessarily thrown amongst the least estimable of the sex, he had imbibed a scornful mistrust of all, and that scepticism had spread to every thing else; and yet he had in his breast the germ of many excellent qualities, and had he formed any strong attachment to a woman he esteemed, he was just the sort of man to form a very decent member of society; as it was, the good qualities were year by year becoming more indistinct, the bad ones more and more dominant.

Noel got back just in time to get ready for dinner, his appetite for which, the little disappointment he had met with that afternoon had not taken away.

"How many rooks have you shot?" said he to his friends.

"None, we have been making bullets all day ; how many ladies have *you* shot with those eyes of yours, Mr. Don Giovanni Abelard Lothario ?"

"My dear fellow," replied Noel, "pray do not call me such dreadful names ; if there is one thing I pique myself upon more than another, it's my moral character."

"Exactly," said Newfield ; "in like manner, if there is one thing Stephenson, &c., it is his abhorrence of gambling."

"I am going to do a very rude thing," said Stapleton ; "I have a particular engagement this evening, and I must leave you for an hour or two after dinner ; I shall be back by nine ; I hope you will excuse me."

"Oh, Stapleton ! Stapleton !" exclaimed Newfield ; "you are surely not going to leave me to the mercies of this harpy ; Noel is no defence after dinner, he lies smoking his pipe, leaving me to the tender care of Stephenson, who *will* always make me play *ecarté*, and *will* always beat me."

"I am very sorry," said Stapleton ; "but really what can I do ? if I knew any method

of turning up the king, I would tell it you ; but as I don't, why, perhaps, you had better not play."

"But it is so dull to sit still doing nothing."

"Then I suppose you must lose your money."

Ten minutes after the cloth was removed, Stapleton rose, and making fresh apologies, went off on his "particular business."

"Did you hear from Lord ——, this morning, Noel?" asked Stephenson, after a pause.

"Yes."

"Is Brobdignag *meant* for the Goodwood?"

"Yes, he has backed him to the tune of £20,000."

"Then we must get the odds from Stapleton at once."

"Well, you are a cool sort of a fellow, Stephenson, you are ; sitting here drinking a man's claret, and calculating how you may best fleece him."

"He would cheat his own father," said Newfield.

"No, no," replied Stephenson; "I tried that once, but the old boy was too sharp for me."

"You don't say so! no, you are joking, surely."

"No, it's a fact; the governor was staying up at Cambridge to vote about something, and I got him to lay me odds against my driving a match against time in my tandem; I knew the tits could do it, for I had tried them over the same ground often. Well, about a dozen of us went to the place agreed on, and I started, laughing to myself as I thought how I had done the governor. However, when I got half-way, I met a fly right in the middle of the road; in vain I hallooed to the driver to get out of the way, he only pulled up right directly across; I was forced to stop, or drive into the ditch, and began to abuse the fly-man in no very elegant terms; when the door opened, and out got a proctor, two bull-dogs, and a groom.

The Proctor touched his cap, and civilly informed me that tandems were contrary to the statutes; the bull-dogs unharnessed the leader, and the groom trotted off on his back; I could not do the rest of the distance in the time with only one animal, and so I lost the bet."

"Did you ever pay?"

"Well, I can't say I did; one could not well pay one's own father, you know; besides, he took out his money in laughing at me, for he was an old college friend of the Proctor's, and had put him up to meeting me himself."

"How proud Mr. Stephenson must be of his son!" said Newfield.

"Do you think so? no, do you though?" said Stephenson, with a faint smile of conscious worth. "Well, I think he does appreciate me. It is rather stupid work, though, sitting here doing nothing; let us have a little *ecartè*, Newfield, just for fun over our wine." Newfield rose and retreated towards the door. "Well, *vingt-et-un*, mild,

just for amusement." The door closed, and Stephenson and Noel were left alone.

Newfield went into the hall, took his hat and gloves, and walked out for an evening stroll. He certainly enjoyed the calm of the evening much more than the *ecartè* of Stephenson; yet a man of so companionable a disposition found himself sadly in want of some one to express his admiration to. Under the influence of this gregarious feeling, he left the grounds surrounding the house, and strolled along the road, hoping to meet some labourer or farmer to talk to. Such modest wishes were gratified beyond all anticipation by the appearance of a pretty nursery-maid, who was hugging and kissing a child of about a year old, conversing with it in that extraordinary manner patronised by those who teach the very young idea how to talk. "It was a dear little dumbledum-doodledum den, it was;" though what a "dumbledum-doodledum" was, or at what period of its infancy the child had partaken of the nature of that extraordinarily-named thing, she did not condescend to explain.

“My dear,” said Newfield, approaching her, “you should consider that that child is of a very tender age, its little frame is at present incapacitated from bearing the extremes of sorrow or joy ; beware lest the kisses of that lovely mouth should be too fragrant, too delightful for it, it might expire with delight, and the coroner’s verdict would be ‘Died of bliss ;’ now I am older and stronger, I *may* be able to bear it, so if you want something to kiss, why, kiss me !”

He smiled, and tried to look very attractive ; but the girl thought him mad, and looked so very much alarmed, that Newfield walked off as briskly as he could, striking as soon as possible out of the highroad into a path which led through the green fields. He strolled on, now laughing at himself at the recollection of the frightened face of the girl, now crouching along, stone in hand, as some rabbit jerked itself out from a neighbouring copse, till he thought it was about time to return ; and seeing a path through the copse, which appeared to lead more directly towards Stapleton’s house than the course he had

taken, he determined to return that way. He went "darkling" (as a school-crib used to render "obscurus" in the sixth book of the *Æneid*) through the wood for a quarter of a mile, and then, emerging into the twilight on the other side, found himself on a long grassy slope. While thinking which way to go, he heard a footstep behind him ; and, turning round, saw a double-barrelled gun pointed straight at his breast. The owner of the gun was a stout, thick set, villanous-looking fellow, in a shooting-jacket and leather leggings ; his dress, his gun, and a setter that followed at his heels, made him look uncommonly like—what he was—a gamekeeper.

"So I've cotched yer at last, has I?" said this unprepossessing guardian of pheasants. "What's yer a-doing on here arter the pheasants' heggs, yer scoundrel?"

"My good man," said Newfield, "you have got those ugly barrels in a direct line with my waistcoat ; of course, you are not aware of it, but that right-hand lock appears to me to be at full-cock ; come, just lower

that gun, and I will tell you who I am and all about it."

He had no time to say more, for the fellow, who had evidently been drinking, actually had his finger upon the trigger. Newfield thought it no joke to go on parleying with him, while in such a dangerous position ; so seizing the barrel of the gun suddenly, he turned the muzzle aside. It was a dangerous experiment, for the unexpected jerk had forced the man's fore-finger, which was inside the guard, against the trigger, and the gun went off, the charge happily passing under Newfield's left arm. Still grasping the barrel of the gun with his left hand, he struck the gamekeeper several heavy blows in the face with his right, when the man, finding he was getting the worst of it, whistled to his dog, which sagaciously seized the arm, which had been so violently assaulting his master, and dragged it down, tearing coat, shirt, and flesh with his teeth. Newfield was usually a good-natured, good-humoured man, kind in his actions, and temperate in his language ; but when angry he lost all command over

himself, and now, the contest and the pain arising from the bite thoroughly enraged him. Throwing the dog off, and giving it a kick in the jaws, which sent it yelping to some distance, he flew at the gamekeeper like a tiger, and grasped his throat with both his nervous hands so fiercely, that soon his eyes started from his head, his face turned blue, and he gave every sign of speedy suffocation. The sight instantly brought Newfield to himself, he released his hold, and the man fell like a dead weight to the ground.

“Dear, dear me!” said Newfield; “I hope I have not robbed poor Mr. Calcraft of a job. Speak, you beggar, whose gamekeeper are you, that I may get you turned off to-morrow? That cursed dog of yours has torn my arm half off, and it is better to die of suffocation than hydrophobia, any day, so I am worst off; speak!”

It was some minutes before the man, now thoroughly sobered, could reply. When he did, it was with great humility, which humility became perfectly abject when he

found that his late antagonist was a friend and guest of his master, for on inquiry it turned out that he was Stapleton's game-keeper. Newfield was easily persuaded to promise that he should not be discharged, in consideration of the punching and throttling he had already undergone. When peace was established, Newfield's coat was taken off, and the wound, which proved to be trifling, washed and cleansed from the blood in a neighbouring rivulet, and then bound up with a handkerchief.

"That dog has not—a-hem—shown—a-hem—any repugnance to water lately, has he?" asked Newfield.

"Well, no zur, not as I'se noticed on; if you feels any fear loike, I've heerd say as to go for to burn the place with a red-hot hiron is as good a thing as here and there one."

"Thank you, thank you; good night. The path, you say, leads straight to the lodge."

"Yes, zur; and if I sees anything hextraordinary about that 'ere dog, I'se be sure and let yer honour—"

"All right ; good night."

"Good night, zur."

When Newfield got home, he found that Stapleton had returned some little time, and they were all three waiting for his arrival.

"Why, where on earth have you been to?" said Noel, as he came into the room ; poor Stephenson has been in despair for want of his whist. He calculates that your absence has exactly cost (that is, prevented his winning) two pounds seventeen shillings and sixpence three farthings ; the three farthings come in in a calculation of the interest he has lost on the money. But how is this ? your coat is torn, and your shirt is bloody ! Have you met your lady-fair again, and been vanquishing a dragon or two to gain her love ? Seriously though, what have you been at ?"

"I have been bitten by a mad dog, that's all."

"That's all ! my dear fellow, the fact, simply considered, is, indeed, as you speak of it, a comparative trifle ; but when you take into consideration the probability of

your going mad yourself, and the consequent possibility of your biting *me*, the event becomes of considerably greater importance."

"My dear Newfield," put in Stapleton, "are you really hurt? Let me have a look."

"Oh, no! it is not much; I will just go and change my coat, you can come up and satisfy yourself if you like."

All the party adjourned to Newfield's room, where Noel, who was the handiest of the lot in those sorts of things, soon discovered that the chief damage incurred was the tearing of the coat,—“always provided that the dog be in his right mind.”

Newfield then told the whole story, having first extorted from Stapleton a promise not to discharge his gamekeeper. They then returned to the “study,” and sat down to play, Noel and Newfield with a desire of being amused, Stephenson with a business-like gravity, and poor Stapleton with all the feverish excitement of a gambler.

CHAPTER IV.

It is six o'clock in the evening, Mr. and Mrs. Pheeler are endeavouring to amuse a room full of guests waiting for their dinner; they did not exactly succeed; who but Theodore Hook ever did raise a laugh at such a solemn time? Let us have a look at them as they sit, hungry and dull, about the room. That old lady who looks so very blue, having blue ribbons and bugles in her cap, a blue dress, and turquoise rings and ear-rings, is Mrs. Nerf. You may see by the wrinkles between her eyes and the expression of her mouth, that she is a very "anxious" lady. Look at that gorgeous woman! that woman would be worth her weight (no slight matter) in gold,

could she be but transported to Persia. It is said by some traveller that a perfect beauty there would be a load for a camel, and the camel appointed to carry Mrs. Plancher ought to have a very strong back. The lady is now sixty-five, but, oh ! how lovely she was at twenty ! plump she had been from her cradle, but at forty she began to lose her figure, and now, alas ! alas ! Those three young ladies are her daughters, pretty girls, but, of course, "not what their mother was at their age." There are several other ladies. Among the gentlemen present are two Bristol merchants, one General, part of a Colonel (he was minus a leg), one clergyman, and a medical man.

The door opened to admit our four friends, Stapleton and Co. After sundry introductions, which made a temporary flare-up, the whole party were relapsing into silence, when Lotty came in, and Stapleton advanced to meet her.

"By Jove !"

"Heavens !"

Exclaimed Newfield and Stephenson together, one catching hold of Noel's right arm, the other of his left, and each looking eagerly in his face to engross his attention.

"Noel, Noel, that's the girl I saw at what's-his name Point the other evening."

"You've lost your bet, Noel; that's the girl I saw sketching at the Folly."

Since they both spoke together, they could not understand, or be understood, at first. When they came to the rights of the matter,

"Why," said Newfield, "we are rivals, Stephenson. I'll make you a bet for once, my chance against yours for a pony."

"Pshaw! there's another horse entered," said Noel, pointing to Stapleton, who was offering his arm to Lotty to lead her in to dinner. "And I'll back him against the field at any odds; it's of no use, my poor Stephenson, he has got such a good start, you will never pass him. Come, we must pair off, and go to dinner."

The conversation during dinner was, of

course, very desultory. The two old army-men abused the manœuvres of some commanders in India, the rich Bristolians talked about politics and docks, Mr. Pheeler touched on various sciences; the Doctor, a clever little man, quizzed or complimented (no one could tell which) everybody in turn; and Noel carried on as desperate a flirtation as a hungry man can with the prettiest of the Miss Planchers, the young lady whom he had taken in to dinner.

When the dessert was on the table, Mr. Pheeler, who had long been eying Stephenson in a longing manner, directed his conversation at that youth—

“You were at Cambridge with Mr. Stapleton, I think? Excuse me, but if I may ask, I have a reason for wishing to know—decidedly a mathematical organization—did you not take rather a good degree?”

Never was question more unfortunate. Poor Stapleton, after having been plucked five times, had at last given the whole affair up as a bad job.

“Why no, ah, that is, perhaps, the fact is—”

“My friend has always been too nervous to take his degree,” struck in Newfield, out of sheer pity; “he is of an extremely anxious temperament, and fearing lest he should not be the very first, he has always withdrawn from the examination after the first day. In vain did I urge upon him, the last time he went into the Senate-house, that to be second, or even third wrangler, was to take a good degree. ‘Aut Cæsar,’ he replied, ‘aut nullus!’ Alas, his nerves caused him to be the nullus.”

“Ah! Mr. Stephenson,” said Mrs. Nerf, “I can sympathise with you; but you must conquer the enemy; mesmerism can do wonders, and to the nestling arms and ever-bounteous bosom of Electro-biology must the wounded hart fly for repose and happiness; to have its wounds healed and its nerves braced.”

The gods had made Mrs. Nerf poetical; they had not done the same thing for Stephenson, who, hearing that he wanted something “braced,” felt anything but comfortable; for, if he required bracing, it occurred

to him that some portion of his costume must be very untidy, and yet nothing felt loose ; he was bewildered ; never had he heard trousers called nerves before.

“Pray, Mr. Stephenson,” resumed Mr. Pheeler, returning to the attack ; “though peculiar circumstances—a-hem !—have occurred to prevent your attaining honours at the University, no doubt you have a love for the mathematics, a quick perception of numbers, a ready calculation of chance.”

At the last words, Stapleton pricked up his ears ; he began to get into his depth.

“Is it not so ?”

“Well, perhaps I do know a little about making up a book ; can I do anything for you in that way ?” answered Stephenson, modestly, seeing a vague hope of picking up an advantageous bet looming through the mysterious wordy mist which had hitherto surrounded him.

“There,” said Mr. Pheeler, triumphantly, “I saw it at once ; I saw the bump the instant he entered the room ; and he actually wishes to amuse himself by looking over my

account-books, as an after-dinner recreation. No, no, Mr. Stephenson; I keep my accounts too irregularly to show my books to such a deep mathematician as you. Somehow, on adding up at the end of the year, I always find myself some hundreds short."

"Ah! that's because men don't pay up as they should," explained Stephenson.

Mr. Pheeler, not knowing what he meant, and never pleading guilty to ignorance of any kind, answered, "No doubt."

"Have you seen the papers to-day, sir?" asked Stephenson, turning to the clergyman.

"I just glanced over the *Times*."

"Doing anything about Blunderbuss for the Metropolitan?"

The clerical gentleman had no notion what he meant; no more had the one-legged Colonel, who overheard the question, but he thought he had.

"Indeed, a very good idea," said the old soldier; "I have often thought that the metropolitan police were not sufficiently well armed, and a blunderbuss would be the very weapon most useful where one man is

called upon to resist the attack of an unarmed mob; but I was not aware that blunderbusses were to be provided for the metropolitan police."

It was now Stephenson's turn to look slightly bewildered, but he held his peace, and was therefore, by those who knew him not, "counted wise."

Conversation dropped, the gentlemen began to cast wistful eyes towards the claret; the ladies took the hint, and withdrew. Extraordinary custom! We are certainly a paradoxical people, for, though we must be allowed, on all sides, to be domestic and amorous, we banish the fairer sex from our social enjoyments. If a gentleman wishes for a holiday, he makes up a bachelor expedition to Blackwall or Greenwich; if a poor man, he seeks the skittle-alley or bowling-green.

How can we account for this? The French gentleman does not send his wife off after dinner, the French peasant does not sit alone guzzling beer. Perhaps the stiffness which our ladies, in their excessive terror of vul-

garity, affect, is partly the cause of this ; though why merriment should be vulgar, it is difficult to imagine. Perhaps the old Puritans, who destroyed our May-poles, and made such an odd jumble of moral philosophy, were the cause ; for men can get drunk with long faces and sanctimonious expressions, especially if the beverage be beer ; while they cannot laugh, dance, and sing without cheerfulness and good-humour, qualities those worthies seemed to consider as far more displeasing to God and inconsistent with the Christian religion than the harmless amusements of theft and murder. However, be the cause what it may, let us hope the effect will disappear in time. May the dance on the village-green be revived, and where we now see ten pot-houses may our grandsons see one !

Whenever old Colonel Shaw received an invitation to dinner, he spent the interval between the day of asking and the day of eating, in brightening up his favourite anecdotes, just as he had formerly been wont to furbish his pistols the night before an en-

gagement. These anecdotes were fired at intervals through the evening, and great was his delight when the countenances of his audience showed him they had taken effect. The departure of the ladies caused a slight and temporary confusion, as the gentlemen had to re-arrange their chairs and fill their glasses, and the Colonel was too old a soldier not to know how to take advantage of any disorder in the enemy's ranks.

"Have you seen any dogs about lately, Mr. Pheeler?" he always masked a story by a question; "because I have a great horror of dogs in warm weather; it is a weakness, but events sometimes take a great hold on the mind, and I was once witness to a horrible case of hydrophobia."

Newfield put down untasted a glass of claret, which he was in the act of raising to his mouth—

"Where was it, sir?" said he.

"When our regiment was in India, I once was stationed with a few men in a small fort in a jungle. You may imagine that without any books or papers, being

the only officer there, I felt rather dull, and so I was lonely enough at first ; but after I had been there a month or so, an English gentleman, of the name of Reed, came into the neighbourhood to shoot tigers. We became great friends, lived in the same tent, drank bitter beer out of the same pewter pot, and very often shot the same tiger. We formed acquaintance with a native prince, who was very useful to us in our sporting expeditions, providing us with natives to beat the jungles, dogs, and elephants. One night news was brought us from this prince that his people had discovered the whereabouts of a very fine tiger, and that if we liked to join him in pursuit of it, he would have everything ready next morning. Next day we set off accordingly, and had one of the hottest and most fatiguing hunts I ever remember, and all for nothing, for we never found the tiger. As we came back we perceived that Reed's favourite dog, a hound he was so fond of that he always allowed it to lie in his room at night, looked very queer ; its tongue was hanging out, and there was a

great deal of foam about the mouth. We had not been home long before it lay down, and began howling as if in great pain. Reed went up to it, and began caressing it, when the dog turned suddenly upon him, and seizing him by the throat, brought him heavily to the ground. I had my rifle in my hand, and stepping up to the dog, I put the muzzle to his ear, and so managed to shoot him dead, without injuring my friend Reed. My first care was, of course, to examine Reed's neck, but as the fangs of the dog had fortunately fastened in the collar and bosom of his shirt, a slight scratch on the skin was the only wound visible, and as that healed in a day or two, the whole event would have passed from our memory, had it not been for the loss of the dog. One day, about a fortnight afterwards, as we were sitting at tiffin, Reed said suddenly—

“Shaw, I feel very queer, I have an extraordinary horror at the sight of water; oh, God! the dog! I must have got the hydrophobia!”

I tried to persuade him it was a nervous

fancy, but, poor fellow, that was soon disproved; he went raving mad. I watched him day and night while he was raving and foaming; and, horrible remembrance, barking like a dog. I believe I have seen death in most forms, but I never saw anything to equal that in horror. Poor fellow, he soon died, and I buried him in the jungle; but he has bequeathed me an intense horror of dogs.

"Hydrophobia is a most extraordinary disease. I was once called in to attend a man who had it, and who died of it, though the dog that bit him never had it. I believe myself he frightened himself into it, for the very worst thing you can do is to talk about hydrophobia to a man who has been bitten by a dog, as imagination can *give* complaints *as well as cure them*," said the Doctor, with a glance at Mr. Pheeler.

Newfield's face grew longer and longer.

"What are the first signs of the malady?" said he, turning to the Doctor.

"A-hem! in this distemper the symptoms are so various that they can hardly be enu-

merated ; for we seldom hear of two cases of hydrophobia which do not differ very remarkably in this respect. In some few instances, the disease has commenced in seven or eight days from the accident, but generally the patient continues in health twenty, thirty, or forty days, or even much longer. The bite will in general be healed long before that time. The approach of the disease is known by the cicatrix of the wound becoming high, hard, and elevated," (Newfield felt his arm,) "and by a peculiar sense of pricking at the part. The patient becomes melancholy, loves solitude, and has sickness at stomach. Sometimes the dread of water comes on all at once. The patient never entirely loses his right senses, but will talk without intermission, praying, lamenting, despairing, cursing, sighing, foaming, screeching. Every member is convulsed by fits, but most violently from the navel to the breast and œsophagus. The fit comes on every quarter of an hour," ("Oh !" groaned Newfield,) "the fauces are not red, nor the tongue dry. The face grows pale, then brown, and then—"

“ Oh Lord! Doctor, stop, stop, for goodness sake !” cried poor Newfield. “ I was—bit—by a—a—the other evening.”

Half the company were on their legs in a moment, the description of the Doctor (quoted by him chiefly from the *Encyclopædia*) was of a kind calculated to excite some slight horror of the complaint; and it was some time before equanimity was restored. This was, however, effected at last by Stapleton declaring that he had seen the dog that morning, and that it was in as sound a state of mind as man or animal had ever been since the creation—the fall I meant to say. However, poor Newfield still felt rather uncomfortable; he once asked for the fauces, when he wanted the biscuits; and requested the Colonel to pass the *œsophagus*, when he felt a yearning towards claret.

After a pause, the Colonel turned to Mr. Pheeler,—“ Apropos of mad dogs, did you ever try to mesmerise one ?”

“ Bless my soul, no ! it never entered my head,—thank you for the idea; where and how can I get a mad dog ?”

"Oh, that is easily enough managed," said the Doctor; "get some dog you care nothing for, and turn it into a large empty room without water, tie tin-kettle to tail, and keep for three days."

"And if he bites you at the end of them, it will serve you quite right," said the clergyman. "I never heard of such a horrible piece of barbarity in my life."

"But, my dear sir, in the cause of science acts otherwise cruel partake, I may say, of the nature of virtue."

"Should the 'Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' hear of it, you would have to pay rather dear for the experiment," said one of the merchants.

"Well, well," said Mr. Pheeler, "I do not mean to do such a thing; but still it would be curious to know whether the magnetic power would have any influence over an animal in a rabid state, for I have never observed that it affected a sane brute, though I have tried experiments with horses, dogs, cows, and pigs!"

"Pigs!" exclaimed half-a-dozen voices at once.

"Yes, I had one of my pigs washed one day, and brought up into my study, and I rather think he was slightly affected; instead of the usual passes, I made use of a scratching process, which had so remarkably soothing an effect, that the animal sank off in a gentle slumber. Yet I hardly think it was the mesmeric trance, for when I inserted the point of my penknife into his skin, with the view of ascertaining the soundness of his sleep, he started up with that shrill cry peculiar to the animal, the sound of which, indeed, rang in my ears for a fortnight afterwards."

"Have you been fortunate in your researches into the arcana of this noble science, sir?" asked Noel, with the gravest face imaginable. "I myself am particularly interested in it, and I account myself particularly fortunate to have met with one who—"

"My dear sir, you flatter me. Well, I have

not been fortunate enough to meet with so perfect a clairvoyant as I could have wished, but since you are interested in the science, I do not mind expressing to you my hopes. Did you notice," added Mr. Pheeler in a lower tone; "did you notice the younger Miss Plancher, Miss Arabella Plancher? oh! ah! you took her in to dinner; well, I was looking at her face all dinner-time, and if I am not mistaken she is a clairvoyant! I mean to persuade her to let me experimentalize upon her this very evening; and if we succeed, only think, Mr. Noel, what a triumph! No one knows my hopes but yourself, therefore do not mention them, there are many sceptics here; how we shall enjoy their conversion if we succeed, eh! eh! But, gentlemen, you are not taking any wine. What! no more! well, then, shall we join the ladies?"

The ladies were on the lawn drinking coffee, and the first thing Noel did on finding himself amongst them, was to single out Miss Arabella Plancher, and plot, plan, and intrigue, to get a minute's private con-

versation with her, unnoticed by the rest of the company ; at last he managed to get her into a shady walk, where no one was visible, and they themselves were not audible.

“ At last, Miss Plancher !” he exclaimed ; “ I have been trying to gain your private ear for ever so long. I have a scheme in my head which will be the best fun imaginable if we only keep our counsel.” The young lady’s eyes sparkled at the word *fun* ; it was the only thing she lived for, and the more mischief mingled with it the better. “ Mr. Pheeler has made up his mind that you are a clairvoyant, and he intends asking you ‘to sit’ to him this very evening ; don’t refuse him, pretend to go off to sleep, I will play into your hands ; if awkward questions are asked pretend to be sound asleep ; here is an inventory of all the things in my rooms in London, written hurriedly on the back of this letter, can you read them ? That’s all right, my friends know my rooms well, and they will bear witness to the correctness of your visions. And stay, I know Newfield always carries in his waistcoat pocket a small coin,

which has been blessed by the Pope ; it has a bust of the Pope on one side, and the four Evangelists, with their symbols, on the other."

" I'll remember, I'll remember ! Oh, what fun it *will* be ! but people will suspect if they miss both of us ; do you join them first ; this path leads directly to the lawn, I can get into the house unperceived, by the study window, which comes down to the ground ; people will never suspect, for I never saw you before to-day. What extreme fun !" And the young gipsy tripped off to the study window, while Noel strolled on to the lawn, sought out Mrs. Pheeler, and declared he had been spending ten minutes looking for her everywhere ; he wanted to know the name of that very pretty plant.

The evening drew on, and the ladies began to discover that a heavy dew was falling, so a general movement took place in the direction of the house. Part of the company were assembled round the piano, and the remainder were scattered about the room, talking, laughing, or yawning, as the case

might be; when the attention of all was directed towards the master of the house, who approached the piano where Miss Arabella Plancher was receiving thanks and praises for a song which she had just finished.

"My dear Miss Plancher," said he, "I am going to request a favour of you; I have your mamma's permission."

"Why, Mr. Pheeler, you have a wife already!"

"Oh, you need not fear, I am not going to make you an offer; I only want to try an experiment on you."

"An experiment! how very awful!"

"Not at all, my dear young lady, not at all; it is the most delightful sensation imaginable; I often try it upon Mrs. Pheeler."

"Really, Mr. Pheeler, what *can* you mean?"

"I only want to mesmerise you, to see if you are a clairvoyant; I rather fancy that you are."

"Oh dear! no, I am sure I am nothing so dreadful! But what am I to do?"

"Only to sit in that easy-chair and let me send you to sleep, nothing can be more simple."

"Except the old gentleman himself," said the Doctor aside to Stapleton.

The patient was duly installed in the easy-chair, the company all gathered round. Mr. Pheeler took up his station in front of the chair, took the young lady's right hand in his left, and fixed his eyes on hers, bringing their noses to about three inches distance from each other.

The younger gentlemen thought that they too would like to be mesmerists.

"Do you feel anything?"

"Yes." (So she did—a great inclination to laugh.)

The philosopher's head was gradually drawn backwards, his right arm was raised, his fingers expanded and approached the clairvoyant's eyes, and she did see those fingers *very* clearly. Gradually the eyes grew heavy, twinkled, closed;—the hands dropped over the arms of the chair. The philosopher glanced around in triumph, and

then once more fixed his eyes upon his patient.

“Do you hear me?”

No answer.

“I will you to hear, you must and shall hear; hear me. Do you hear now?”

“Y-e-s.”

“That is all right,” said Mr. Pheeler, turning to the company; “now we will see if she can see things at a distance. Who will ask something?”

“Stop a bit,” said the Doctor; “we will all retire and decide upon something in the dining-room, leaving you here with your patient, Mr. Pheeler; of course not because *I* feel any fear of collusion, but in telling the story afterwards, it is as well, you know—”

“I understand, and thank you for the thought; do so, by all means.”

After they had retired, various questions were proposed, which Noel seemed to fall into until they were almost determined upon, when he exclaimed, as if an idea had struck him—

"Stay, though ; I have never met the young lady before in my life, she cannot guess at my tastes or habits ; let us ask her to describe my rooms in town ; my three friends here, Stephenson, Stapleton, and Newfield will be able to bear witness whether the description is a true one ; but stop, though, I might give you an idea beforehand, and then you can judge."

He then mentioned briefly the position of the various articles of furniture and pictures in the rooms, and they returned to the drawing-room.

"We have determined to ask her to describe my rooms," said Noel.

Mr. Pheeler made Noel take the clairvoyant's hand, which he did (resisting the desire he felt to press it, for fear of upsetting her gravity), and then bade her look at the rooms of the gentleman who held her hand, in ——— Street, London.

"Yes," she said.

"Well, what do you see?"

"Oh, I can't see anything in particular, all is so misty."

“ Well, now, it is clearer, I will it; you can see now ? ”

“ Oh dear ! yes ; oh ! how very funny ! What a handsome mirror over the chimney-piece ! with cards stuck all round, too ! ”

“ What is there on the mantel-piece ? ”

“ There is a gold snuff-box, with a portrait on the top, and a pair of bronze candlesticks, vestal virgins ; they are holding wax-candles in their hands, and there are two or three clay pipes, very short, and one of them is very nasty and black, and is set in gold ; what an odd idea ! and then there are two pictures, one on each side of the fire-place, portraits they seem ; oh ! it is written underneath who they are,—one is Tennyson, and the other Dr. Arnold. And there is a great big meerschaum hanging up against the wall ; and there are two pictures of opera-dancers hanging on the wall over the sofa, and what a comfortable sofa it does look ! and then there is such an easy-chair ! There is one large window leading out into a balcony, which looks down into the street. There is a piano, too—a cottage one, on the side oppo-

site to the fire-place, and such a queer-shaped musical instrument lying by the side of it; it is something like a guitar, but it is not a guitar either. And then there is an oil-painting over the piano; I think it must be one of Etty's. And the paper of the room is blue, and the curtains are blue, and there is a book-case with some nicely-bound books in it; let me see, there are Byron's Works, and Moore's, and a Shakspeare, and Camoens, and Tasso, and Rousseau; and those are the prettiest bindings."

As she rattled on in this way, Noel, Stapleton, Stephenson, and Newfield showed, as indeed the three latter felt, excessive astonishment.

"My dear sir," said Noel to the Doctor, "what can this mean, how can it be? surely mesmerism cannot be true! Pshaw! it is impossible. I wonder how she knew, for she has described everything most accurately."

"Most accurately, most accurately!" murmured the other three witnesses.

"What do you say to this, sir?" said Mr. Pheeler, triumphantly, to the clergyman.

But that gentleman said nothing ; he only looked gravely at Mr. Pheeler's feet, and shook his head.

"Convincing as this must needs be to any one, however sceptical," said Mr. Pheeler, "I should like some other gentleman to try some experiment of a different nature."

"Have you got that coin in your pocket, Newfield?" said Noel.

"Yes."

"Then that's the very thing ; go and ask her to describe it."

"Yes, yes ; that will prove it all one way or the other," chorussed the whole party.

Newfield in his turn took the fair clairvoyant's hand, and requested to know what was in his waistcoat-pocket.

"There is a coin like an oval shilling ; on one side there is an old man's head, and on the other four little figures, one of which is playing with a lamb, and another—"

Newfield dropped her hand, and made a rapid retreat to the other end of the room. All crowded round him—

“Let us see, let us see; have you such a coin?”

The medal was handed round; directly the clergyman saw it he made for the door, and when he was well out of the room, he put his head in, and looking at Mr. Pheeler, said—

“I pray Heaven, sir, you are not the devil!”

With which laconic “good-night” he left the house.

The same sort of impression was left on one of the Bristol merchants, who was debating in his own mind how much Sir Nicholas had given for his host's soul along with the gift of mesmerism, and was wondering whether it would be a very rude thing to ask.

The Doctor owned it was very curious, —very!

Lotty Pheeler said to Stapleton, “Now you cannot laugh at dear papa any more.”

And Stapleton answered, “Enchantment runs in the family.”

And so the party broke up, and Miss Arabella Plancher was awakened. And Mr. Pheeler slept not that night for joy, nor did the clergyman sleep for fear, nor the Doctor for astonishment, nor Noel nor Miss Plancher for laughing.

CHAPTER V.

THE next morning at breakfast, Noel intimated that he had received a letter which obliged him to go up to London that day, a relation having quitted the world, and an estate, to which he was next heir. After he had been duly congratulated, Stephenson declared his intention of accompanying him, as he had to make up his book on an approaching race, and he could do that with safety nowhere but at Tattersall's. Accordingly, they left together, Stephenson carrying in his pocket a check upon Stapleton's banker for a considerable sum; seeing that they had been only gaming "for

amusement." The two friends, who were now left alone, did not regret their absence; for they really liked each other, while Stephenson valued his companions for their money, and Noel possessed a real friendship for only one man, and that man was himself. They walked, rode, drove together; played billiards, but not for money, together; and paid almost daily visits to the Pheelers together. Indeed, Mr. Pheeler and Newfield struck up a tremendous friendship, which enabled Stapleton to engross the attention of Lotty; and, consequently, to fall more deeply in love with her; and now that the card-table and the betting-book were left unopened, he was surprised to find how far his affections were engaged. The angel Love set his foot for awhile on the neck of the devil Gaming; the evil spirit lay dormant—if it was not dead.

Stapleton thought it would never rise again; and so he said to Newfield, as they sat over their wine after dinner, a fortnight after the other two had left them.

"I am glad I have always lost," said he;

“if I had ever had luck on my side I should have never given up betting.”

“What! have you given it up?” said Newfield; “well, I am very glad to hear it, only you must give it up altogether, you cannot do it in moderation as I do. It has often been a mystery to me how men worth anything could bet, if it were only for the set it throws you amongst. Of all the odious beings on the earth, the most odious is your tight-trouserer, riding-gloved, solemn-paced betting man. And yet you will see such despicable things as these—beings in whose breasts low cunning usurps the place of talent, conceit that of pride, the love of gain that of passion—I say, you see such fellows hand and glove with men of literary tastes, and even of talented minds. Gambling is like its first-born poverty for one thing, it makes one acquainted with strange bed-fellows!”

“Witness Stephenson.”

“Exactly.”

“Shall we go over to see the Pheelers? We shall get there before they go out for their evening drive, if we start at once.”

"By all means."

They set out on their walk, and very soon arrived at their destination. On inquiring, however, for the master of the house, they heard that he was not at home, but that the ladies were in the garden; they joined them, and Stapleton asked where Mr. Pheeler was. He learned from Lotty that that gentleman had gone to Bath, to eat a dinner which had been got up for him by a Philosophical Society, of which he was a member, in honour of his late success in the clairvoyant line. "By-the-bye," added she, "Arabella Plancher was so frightened when she heard what had been done, and she positively refused to let herself be done again; is it not ill-natured? and Mr. Orthodox preached a sermon last Sunday against Demonology and Witchcraft, and lamented that the '*wholesome*' laws against such practices had been put down; and he looked so *very* hard all the while at our pew; I am sure he thinks papa a wizard. Poor old man! he is a clergyman you know, so I must not be disrespectful, or else I should say he was quite an old woman."

Stapleton laughed. "Why," said he, "it is no proof of folly to make use of a good wall to shelter yourself under. If Mr. Orthodox really and truly believed and thought that mesmerism was the work of the devil, he would indeed deserve your pity; but depend upon it neither he nor any one else actually believes any such thing. It is an old *ruse* which has been very useful in all ages to hide ignorance, or gloss over a pudding-headed prejudice. Steam, gunpowder, clock-work, have all been attributed to supernatural agency. Now, Mr. Orthodox could not deny or explain away what he saw the other night; he had always laughed at clairvoyance, and he was ashamed to own himself mistaken, or even puzzled, *voilà tout!* But I think I could convince him that he had not a leg to stand upon in his very *low* assertions; at least, I could make out a very fair *primâ facie* case against him. Is it possible, I would ask him, for a man to have at the same time, an angel for a daughter, and the devil for a friend?"

"Are you not very dull up there, at Ad-

derly Hall, now your friends are gone?" said Lotty, treating his *angelic* insinuation in the most cavalier manner.

"Dull!" answered Stapleton; "dull! when—" * * * *

Excuse me, reader, I never yet could manage a compliment on my own account with tolerable grace, and it is hard if I am obliged to utter them for others. I will not attempt it. Imagine, then, all that might be said upon so fine an opening, and you will not be far wrong.

On their going in to tea, Stapleton noticed that a woman waited on them, and asked where the old man-servant was.

"What, John?" said Mrs. Pheeler. "Oh! his brother is going out to America, and he has gone to see him for two or three days. It has happened rather unfortunately, for William, the groom, has gone to Bath with his master, and we are left without any man in the house."

"And expect," added the younger lady, "to wake to-morrow morning with our throats cut 'from ear to ear,' as the papers say."

"Don't, Lotty !"

"Certainly not, mamma, if I can avoid it. Mr. Newfield, are you *quite* sure that Miss Plancher did not know beforehand that you had that funny coin in your pocket the other night?"

"Upon my honour I never told her, and no one could have been more astonished than I was when she described it," answered Newfield.

"How very curious !" was the rejoinder ; and they drank tea, and Newfield sang some songs, accompanying himself, for he did a little of everything ; and Lotty remembered having seen him at Penpole-point, and Stapleton let out some of the admiration he had expressed before he knew whom he had seen, and Newfield got rather bantered, and he blushed—which amused the others still more, and finally the clock struck ten ; whereupon the two young men took their leave.

It would have been a moonlight night if there had been no clouds ; as it was, they could every now and then distinguish objects pretty clearly, though the planet was never

entirely free from the mists which surrounded her. The two friends were leisurely sauntering home, and had already entered the grounds surrounding Adderley Hall, when Stapleton suddenly seized his companion's arm. "Hush!" he said, "stay here for five minutes. I am sure I saw a man enter that copse on the right; some beggarly poacher, I'll be bound! I'll follow him and see what he is after. If there is a row, I will holloa, and you can come; but do not move if all is quiet."

"All right," answered Newfield, sitting on the ground.

Stapleton then stole cautiously towards the place where he had seen the figure. When he came to the paling which surrounded the copse, he looked carefully about, but without being able to distinguish anything which might enable him to tell in what direction the object of his search had gone. Climbing noiselessly over the fence, he then advanced farther into the wood, and had not gone twenty yards before he saw the gleam of a lantern through the bushes. Sinking imme-

diately on his hands and knees, he crept up to the place, and peering through the brush-wood, saw four or five men—he could not be certain of the number, one of whom held the lantern whose light had betrayed where they stood, and what was Stapleton's astonishment at recognising in the man's features, those of his own gamekeeper. "The rascal," thought he to himself; "to join the poachers, instead of keeping them off! I'll turn him away to-morrow."

They seemed to be examining one another's faces by the light, but what they said he could not catch distinctly; at last he heard one of the men say, "Where are the tools, Joe?" and the lantern was set down open on the ground, and the gamekeeper proceeded to pull some things out from the long grass where they had lain concealed; amongst which Stapleton was astonished to distinguish a circular saw, a rope, and a crow-bar. What could poachers want with such things? He tried with all his soul to hear what they were saying, and whether it was that they spoke louder after a time, or

whether his power of hearing became more acute, through the eagerness of his attention, he was at last able to make out the following conversation.

“And you are sure that both the men are away?”

“Aye, aye, one has gone off with old Pheeler to Bath, and t’other’s at Bristol, there’s only the gals.”

“And now, boys, take care of them masks, that’s all; and if one *should* slip, why the person as sees the face mustn’t swear to arterwards, twig? Not as I recommends violence unless there be’s occasion, but we mustn’t get scragged, that’s all; and now this ’ere’s the plan I recommends, first we meets on the lawn at twelve——”

Stapleton waited to hear no more, he withdrew as quietly as possible, fortunately without being heard; retreated to the outside of the wood, got over the paling, and soon gained the place where Newfield was waiting for him.

“Hush!” said he, as his friend rose to his feet; “don’t speak above your breath, come

home and I'll tell you all about it, come, quick !” They ran rather than walked home, let themselves in—for Stapleton let the servants go to bed at ten when there was no company in the house ; struck a light, and went into the study, where Newfield learnt the whole story.

“ They are to make their attack at twelve,” said he, when the narrative was finished ; “ it is now five minutes to eleven, we had better be there before half-past eleven to get everything in readiness.”

“ Have they any fire-arms there ?”

“ Yes, but I do not know where they are kept, we had better take our own fowling-pieces and some ammunition ; how fortunate it is we made those bullets the other day !”

“ Had we not better take rifles ?”

“ No, the fowling-pieces are double barrelled.”

“ True, true ; but take some small shot, we may be able to intimidate or disable them by sending some No. 6 about their legs, without killing them.”

They soon made their preparations ; each took a double-barrelled gun, a pistol, a powder-flask, a shot-belt, and some nine or ten bullets. Thus armed, they let themselves out of the house and soon arrived at their destination ; but here a difficulty presented itself which they had not remembered, all the family had gone, or were going, to bed. However, after a little consultation, Stapleton went directly under a window from which streamed the greatest flood of light, and cried—

“ A-hem ! ”

No answer ; a pebble was thrown against the window, and the curtain was a little drawn aside, the outer rim of a night-cap, one eye, and part of a nose becoming thereby visible.

“ A-hem ! ”

The light disappeared, the curtain was drawn aside and the window opened, and the silver voice of Lotty Pheeler rang in the night air.

“ Who's there ? ”

“ It's me—Stapleton, please tell your

mamma to come down and let us in, it is something important."

"There is nothing the matter with papa?"

"Oh, no! it is not connected with him."

Certain lights were seen to flit about, and finally the bolts of the door were withdrawn, a chain rattled, the key turned in the lock, the door opened, and in walked the intruders.

Fear having entirely banished all care or thought for personal appearance, both Mrs. and Miss Pheeler appeared in the hall in their night-caps and dressing-gowns. If they were frightened before, the appearance of the two young men was not calculated to re-assure them, armed to the teeth as they were.

"Oh! Mr. Stapleton, oh! Mr. Newfield, what is the matter?" ejaculated poor Mrs. Pheeler.

"Nothing! that is, only some burglars that are coming to rob the house, thinking there are no men in it; when they find out their mistake they will probably run away again."

"Oh! dear, dear! let them take any-

thing they like, so long as they don't murder us all. Oh ! dear, dear !”

“ Come along, mamma, come up-stairs, the gentlemen will do everything that is necessary, don't be afraid ; I am not afraid, you see,” said Lotty, shivering like an aspen-leaf.

The two ladies retired into Mrs. Pheeler's bed-room, but they kept the door open that they might receive immediate assistance if the robbers came in at the window.

Newfield and Stapleton had intended to have barricaded all the doors, and, one guarding the kitchen-entrance and the other the front, to have disputed the passage of the enemy into the house ; but this plan was frustrated by Mrs. Pheeler, who was frightened to death when they left the landing on which was her room. So they altered their tactics, and simply bolting and locking the front-door, they placed a candle on the hall table, and took up their station at the top of the first flight of stairs. It was not a winding staircase, but rose straight in front of the hall-door, and as there was no other

entrance into the house from the offices but that through the hall, they had nothing to fear as far as being taken in the rear was concerned.

CHAPTER VI.

THE guns were carefully charged, one barrel of each being loaded with small shot, the other with ball, and they were thinking what they should do next, when Miss Pheeler came out on the landing and asked them if they would like to have a feather-bed for a barricade. It was the very thing, so the young lady went back into the room and returned with the proposed article, which was immediately placed, together with a couple of chairs, at the stair-head, and behind this temporary fortification the two young men ensconced themselves.

The state of excitement they were in was excessive, every tick of the old eight-day clock seemed to strike on the brain. At last it

struck twelve, and still they heard no noise ; one, two, three, four, five minutes crept by. At last voices were distinguishable outside, then there was the sound of a key being inserted in the lock, it was gently turned, and the door was pushed against, and as it was bolted, without effect. A grating sound then commenced at the top of the door, and in half a minute a circular piece of wood was removed, and an aperture left just large enough for the introduction of a man's arm. A hand was then thrust through the hole and the top bolt withdrawn. The same process was repeated at the bottom of the door, and the lower bolt was also withdrawn. The door was pushed open, and six men, disguised, one armed with a gun, two with pistols, and the rest with bludgeons, entered the hall. They seemed surprised to find a light burning, but as it was so placed as to throw no light on the staircase, they could not see the preparations on the landing.

The man who seemed to direct the movements of the rest was the one armed with the gun ; he was disguised by a sack put on over

his head, with two holes for his arms at the sides, and two more for him to see through in front. They all advanced to the stair-foot, the man in the sack going first. His foot was on the first step, when it was arrested by Stapleton calling out—

“Who is that?”

“Damnation!” muttered the burglar, “a man’s voice!” and he fell back amongst the rest. After whispering with his comrades, he advanced again, cocking his gun, and throwing it forward in readiness to fire.

“If you come up another step,” cried Stapleton, “I’ll shoot you down like a dog,” and the click of his lock came in at the end of his speech in the most convincing manner.

“Two can play at that,” answered the thief; “shoot, and be damned!” and raising his gun, he fired in the direction of the voice, and the shot with which it was loaded went tearing into the feather-bed. Bang went Stapleton’s gun, the burglar sank down without a cry, and the light was extinguished. Crack! went a pistol from the thieves, the bullet from which went through Newfield’s right whisker, grazing

the skin off his cheek. Bang, bang, bang ! went the three remaining barrels from the top of the stairs, as the party from below made a rush up. They all seemed to fall in a heap together ; such a noise of screaming, yelling, cursing, and groaning ascended from the hall, but the defenders could not see anything, and had to judge of the effect of their volley by the multifarious sounds it occasioned.

By way of adding to the confusion, all the women-servants, awakened by the firing, came screaming to know what was the matter. At this juncture the moon burst from the clouds, and her light streaming in at the hall-door, showed three of the men carrying out one of their companions. Newfield, who was a very tiger when his blood was up, drew the pistol he had stuck in his waistband and sprang after them. But he was so impeded, first by the barricade, and then by two bodies on the staircase, one of which clutched hold of his leg, so that by the time he was out of the house, the fugitives had got a good start. He saw them, however, and pursued them for a little way, but remembering how much he

must be wanted in the house, he fired his pistol after them and made his way back. As he re-entered the house he found Stapleton busily engaged in striking a light, a difficult matter, seeing he had got hold of a particularly bad box of lucifers. The noise and confusion had given way to a dead silence, broken only at intervals by a groan from the staircase. This sudden stillness was occasioned by all the servants, the cook, the housemaid, and the ladies' maid, having fainted away simultaneously. At last a light was procured, and they proceeded to examine the field of battle.

The man with the sack over his head showed no signs of life; he lay on the stairs all in a heap. The other lay disabled by a ball in the hip, but he was alive, and groaning in a most dismal manner. Their first care was to get the two bodies off the staircase, and carry them into a small store-room which opened into the hall, in which Stapleton remembered there was a large, old-fashioned sofa, which they might put the wounded man upon. After they had got him

safely laid upon it, they stowed the dead man away upon the floor; and Newfield proceeded to examine the wound of the living one, while Stapleton went up-stairs to get some linen to dress it with, and to quell, at the same time, the apprehensions of the ladies. He found them in a perfect stupor from fright; however, he re-assured them by the information that all was safe now, that three of the thieves were wounded, two of whom were in the house, that the rest had made their way off with their wounded companion, and that there were not the slightest grounds to fear their return. He then asked for some lint, which Lotty, after being assured that it was for the wounded robbers, and not for himself or friend, who were uninjured, brought. She wanted also to go down-stairs, to see if she could be of any use; but this Stapleton would not allow, not caring that she or her mother should know that they were under the same roof with a dead man,—a fact she must have discovered if she had gone to dress the wound of the other. So she went

back to her mother, and they went quietly to bed again.

Stapleton and Newfield had a regular job to staunch the blood of their burglar, the wound being in a very awkward position for that purpose; however, they managed it at last, by tying a linen bandage as tight as they could round the body, and turning the knot round, so as to press upon the wound. The fellow did not seem to approve of the operation altogether, and no doubt they were rather rough surgeons; but he was too weak from loss of blood, to resist anything they might please to do.

"Now he will do," said Newfield; "let us have a look at the other."

Accordingly, they commenced operations with cutting off the sack, when they both recognised, in the pale features before them, Joe, Stapleton's gamekeeper.

"The rascal! to fire on one who had been so good a master as I have been!" exclaimed Stapleton; "but let me see where his wound is."

In cutting off his clothes they both started

back with an exclamation of horror, and the wound was indeed a horrible one to look at. The charge, which was a heavy one of No. 6 shot, had entered the man's left side in a body, making a hole of about five inches in diameter.

"There's no doubt about *him*!" said Stapleton, after a few seconds had elapsed; "no good trying to staunch *his* blood, at all events; the charge must have passed right through his heart."

"Say, rather, must have blown it right out of his body!" answered Newfield. "By Jove! Stapleton, how close that gun of yours must carry!"

"It does. Heigh-ho! I wish we had some policemen and a surgeon. Somehow, I am not used to killing people; it is very awful. But, Newfield! why, man, what on earth is the row with your face? Why, you are wounded!"

"Am I? Then I don't know it; it can't be very bad. By the way, though, the skin of my cheek does smart a little; and I re-

member that a bullet did whiz very near my ears."

"You have had a near shave," said Stapleton, holding the candle up to his friend's face; "the bullet has cut a gap in your whisker, and has grazed the skin a little. But, as I was saying, I wish we had a doctor and some policemen. If you will wait here, I will go off to my house and send for Dr. Sarfe; and the man might as well go on to Clifton, to give information of the affair to the authorities. Stay here; I will be back in less than half an hour. Stay, though, I should like some wine first. I don't know how you feel, but the re-action of all that excitement depresses me."

Stapleton knew where the wine was kept; and getting out a decanter of sherry, he drank off half a tumbler, and, handing it over to Newfield, left the house. Newfield had a habit of soliloquizing.

"Well, this is pleasant, to be left alone in a room with two companions—(that's a bull, hum!)—one of whom is dead, and the other,

for aught I know, dying. Well, the absence of a feeling of jollity on the occasion is, perhaps, excusable. It is just as well Stapleton thought of the sherry."

Here the wounded man asked for water, and Newfield got up to give him some.

Stapleton kept his promise, and returned in somewhat less than half-an-hour; and shortly after that, Dr. Sarfe came bustling in.

"How is this? how is this?" said he. "So you have been burglar shooting; what a lucky thing you were here, how did it happen? But stop! you have a wounded man, have you not? we must attend to him at once, you can explain everything afterwards; we must save the fellow's life, if we can, that he may give evidence as to the rest."

The doctor had brought his instruments, so he proceeded at once to extract the ball and dress the wound; and when all that was done, he assured those who had done the mischief, that there was every probability of the man living.

"Which," added he, "must be a great satisfaction to you, as, through his means, you may have the pleasure of hanging the rest."

He then examined the dead man, and stood so long in silence over him, that Stapleton thought they were going to have a little discourse on death. He had been mentally philosophizing upon that fruitful theme, and felt inclined to talk about it; so, seeing that the doctor made no observation, he broke the ice himself with—

"Wonderful thing!"

"Yes," said Dr. Sarfe, "it is indeed a very interesting science. I wonder if they will let me have it."

"Have what?"

"The body to be sure, I have long wanted a subject."

"Might not Stapleton give it you?" put in Newfield; "it surely ought to be considered his; if a man shoots a hare or a bird it becomes his property, why should not the case extend to man?"

"Why, you see, he is only a poacher; not

being in the army, he has no license—that is, commission, to kill men ; yet still I think they might let me have it. Mr. Pheeler will put in a claim for the head, you may depend upon it ; and I should not grudge him that, it is the intestines I chiefly want ; how fortunate that your charge did not go through them !”

“ I am sorry the charge touched any vital part,” said Stapleton ; “ it cannot be helped now, but, if I had more presence of mind, I should have adhered to my original intention of firing only at the man’s legs, but the fellow fired first at me, and that drove every thought of the kind out of my head ; I shot him instinctively, considering only my own safety.”

“ And quite right too. Pooh, pooh, man ! why, I wish, for my part, you had shot the whole lot of them,” said the doctor.

“ Aye !” said Newfield ; “ but you must remember, doctor, that Stapleton is not so used to taking away human life as—as—you know what wags wickedly say about gentlemen of your profession.”

“ Oh ! you need not mince the matter, cut any jokes you like upon that subject, and I think I may safely promise you five pounds for every new one. Every one laughs at medical men while he is well, but he does not think or believe what he says. Men seldom appreciate medicine or religion till they are ill. No doubt, there are persons in every profession who are unfitted for it, and if a careless or unskilful practitioner gets hold of a patient, he may do more harm than good ; but even such a one would, in the course of his life, save a great many more lives than he would destroy.”

Horses' feet were now heard clattering along the road ;—another minute, and they stopped at the door ; there was a jingle of sabres as they drew up, and Stapleton went out to see who had come. In the hall he met an inspector of police, who knew him by sight, and, without any preliminary remarks on the weather, entered at once upon the subject which had brought him there.

The whole story was soon told, and the inspector expressed his opinion that the gang

was one which had long infested the neighbourhood, and had successfully robbed houses in Clifton, and even in the midst of Bristol town. He then expressed a wish to see the wounded man, and was shown accordingly into the room where the rest of the party were. He looked long at the burglar, shook his head, and called in one of his men, who also looked hard in the robber's face, but without recognising him; for he declared he was a new hand, "least-ways" he had never set eyes on him before. The inspector then began to question Newfield about the direction the fugitives had taken, and finished by requesting him to put two of the six men he had brought with him on the track, a wish to which Newfield eagerly acceded; one of the policemen who were to remain gave him up his horse, and, followed by the two men chosen to accompany him, off he set on the track of the thieves. One of the remaining policemen was sent off for a cart in which to remove the dead man to the nearest public-house, there to remain until "sat upon" by the Coroner.

The other men set about removing the wounded burglar to an out-house, where it was arranged that he should be kept until his committal was made out by the magistrate. Doctor Sarfe had, in the meantime, been up-stairs to see how the family were getting on ; but the servants had recovered from their fainting-fits without his assistance. and were now dressed and wondering what was going to happen next. The ladies' maid went softly into her mistresses' room, and returned immediately with the report that both the ladies were asleep; wearied out, doubtless, by the excitement of the night. It being now broad daylight, the other servants came down-stairs, and began to set the house in order. The cook and policemen instinctively fraternized ; the kitchen fire was soon lighted, and breakfast preparing, a meal to which the whiskered guardians of the peace, no doubt, did ample justice.

In about an hour Newfield returned alone, giving the following account of their success in the pursuit :—

“The wounded man they carried must

have been preciously peppered, for we traced them, by his blood, right across the lawn, and some little way into the copse at the bottom of it; there they seemed to have halted, and to have bandaged the fellow's wounds, for we found one or two shreds of a shirt on the neighbouring bushes, and after that there were very few traces of blood, but we could track them, by their footsteps, as far as the road which skirts the other side of the copse; there they must have got into some kind of vehicle, for we discovered the marks of wheels on the grass at the side of the road next the copse, as if a cart had been backed to a gap in the hedge; we saw that they must have taken the road to the right, that is towards Bristol, because the wheel-marks turned from the grass in that direction, and there were no signs of a cart having been turned round just there, so we pursued that direction until we came to that part where the road divides, one branch leading to Clifton Downs, the other to Westbury. Here we were at fault, for there seemed so many ruts branching off in each direction, that we could not guess which way

they had gone. I was for taking the Westbury road, not thinking it was possible that they would have the hardihood to go into the town; but one of the men shook his head, and said that there were many snug little places where a man could lie close in Bristol, and bide his time for getting over into Ireland. And it proved that they had taken the Bristol road, for on going a little way along it, I found fresh traces of blood, one of the wounded man's bandages having, no doubt, become loosened. So the two policemen went on to Bristol, and I returned here."

"Bravo, Mr. Newfield, you ought to have been a Bow Street runner!" said the Inspector.

Newfield bowed depreciatingly, "With practice, perhaps. But, Stapleton, let us go home and wash and change, and I should not mind adding, 'get something to eat' to the programme, for I am ravenously hungry."

"With all my heart. Dr. Sarfe, will you come with us?"

"No, thank you; when I have had one more

look at this wounded man, I must be off home. I am a married man you know; besides, there is a patient I must see at nine."

"Well, I will not press a married and medical man; but you, sir, turning to the Inspector, must come and breakfast with us."

"Thank you, I will; but you must not wait for me, I will come when everything is settled here, but cannot name a time."

"Any time you come, then, you will find some breakfast going on. Come along, Newfield."

And the two friends got their guns, and set off home.

The air was fresh and exhilarating, the dew sparkled on every blade of grass, and the blackbirds warbled on every twig in such a determined manner that it was evident some grand concert was about to take place amongst the birds, for which the performers were severally and independently practising. The two young men enjoyed, no doubt, the beauty of the morning, but they certainly did not express as much to each other, for they did not speak during the whole walk. Perhaps

the events of the night were passing in review through their minds ; perhaps they were ruminating on the shortness of life, and the ease with which the vital spark is quenched ; perhaps ——, but where is the use of perhapsing at this rate, when I happen to know the real reason for their silence.

They were too hungry to talk !

CHAPTER VII.

AN unusual number of men, interspersed here and there with a few women with their hands under their aprons, were assembled round the Adderly Arms. Some were gathered in knots under the trees which stood on the green before the house. A few old stagers, men who had lived too long, and drank too many pots of beer in the course of their lives, to be violently excited about anything, were sitting calmly on a bench, uttering every now and then a few oracular sentences, to which nobody gave heed. But the greater number of those assembled were crowding round the doorway, and filling the passage and bar of the little inn.

It was the morning of the inquest. A room on the left-hand side as you enter, contained the object of all the excitement so unusual in the little village—the carrion which attracted all these blue-bottles. Every come-at-able pane in the window of that room, showed those inside the flattened tips of at least two noses ; and one would have thought the key-hole of the door to be the peep-hole of a raree-show, judging from the succession of people who applied their eyes to it, in spite of the previous peeper in each case declaring that he could see nothing but part of a policeman's back,—a sight, no doubt, often grateful to the idle good-for-nothings hanging about. Presently a girl came to the door of that mysterious room, with the “two more pots of porter” which had been demanded five minutes before the last occupier of the key-hole was displaced. The door, on receiving two peculiar raps, opened ; the porter, escorted by the bar-maid, entered ; at the same time that the Coroner came out. He was a a respectably-dressed middle-aged man, with a face not denoting genius, but

still promising as fair a proportion of common sense as usually falls to the lot of coroners. Going into the bar, he tapped the landlord on the shoulder—

“Any signs of them yet?”

“Don't know. Come out into the road and see?”

Into the road they accordingly went, and very steadfastly did they look along it, but without seeing anything but a very fair specimen of Mr. MacAdams' handiwork, bounded by two hedges.

“I wish they'd come; all the jury will be drunk and incapable in another half-hour. They are muzzy already, and I should be sorry if we appeared to disadvantage on this occasion, when so many of the magistrates and gentry will probably drop in.”

“Well, they be rum uns for beer, anyways!—but, see, there is one a'-coming;” and the landlord pointed to a dust on the road.

The dust turned out to be caused by a dog-cart, which dog-cart contained Stapleton, Dr. Sarfe, and a tiger. After the dog-cart

came a gig, containing Mr. Pheeler and Newfield, and several gentlemen, some on horseback, some in various vehicles, rose, one after another, to view. The fact was, the neighbours had been very much interested in the affair, and Mr. Pheeler (who returned the day following the attack) and Stapleton, had to answer very many kind inquiries. Finding it unpleasant to repeat the same story so very often, Stapleton had asked a great many gentlemen who had beset him with questions to breakfast with him on the morning of the inquest, and then accompany him to it, where they would hear everything explained in the most explicit manner. This was the cause of so many arriving *en masse*, as indeed it was the cause of the principal parties not using their own legs instead of their horses for so short a journey, the inn not being further than a mile from Adderly Hall.

The approach of the "gents" was communicated to the jury, and all pots, glasses, and jugs were cleared out of the room where the body lay waiting to be sat upon. Things

were hardly reduced to order and a comparative decency of appearance when the leading dog-cart drew up at the door. The passage and bar were speedily cleared of loungers, and the newly-arrived party were shown into the room which has been already described as the object of so much attention. The most prominent and important-looking personages in the room were the jury, fat, tall, clumsy farmers, as stupid, sulky, and "good-hearted," as English agriculturists usually are. In a conspicuous position, and covered over by a table-cloth, lay the occasion of all this disturbance. Two reporters sat at a little table in one corner of the room, which was rather inconveniently full when the witnesses and accompanying friends and magistrates were assembled. After all the preliminary arrangements had been gone through, Stapleton gave a clear and succinct account of the whole matter. After that, Newfield gave the same account in a different style. Then the doctor stated how he had been called up, and the state he had found the house in ; that he had examined

the body of the deceased, and had discovered that death had been caused by the heart having been cut in two by a charge of small shot. One of the jury felt that the witnesses had had it all their own way too much, that somehow they ought to have been cross-examined, though why that was to be done, or how it was to be done, he had not the faintest idea. Under the influence of this feeling, he determined to be rather hard upon the Doctor.

“Wul ’ee svare as that vos enew to kill un?”

“What! having his heart cut in two? certainly.”

“How dost know?”

Dr. Sarfe gave a long anatomical description of the functions of the heart, illustrating the great difficulty a man would have to live without it. As every word of the explanation was perfectly unintelligible to the Solomon who had put the question, he looked quite satisfied; and all his brother jurors thought what a clever fellow farmer Hogg must be. The Inspector next told his story,

and the jury brought in a verdict of "Wilful murder against some party or parties unknown, and they begged to testify their approbation of Messrs. Stapleton and Newfield's conduct in the affair." This unexpected and rather complicated and contradictory opinion astonished everybody, and the coroner took great pains to show the jury that they must say something else. They accordingly re-considered the matter, and then stated that the deceased "Died by the visitation of God." Nobody could contradict this, yet still it was not quite sufficiently explicit, so the coroner requested to know the means employed, and a mysterious whispering commenced between Mr. Hogg and the coroner, in the course of which the voice of the former was heard saying, in a pretty loud whisper—

"Vull, dom ye, what *are* we to zay?"

After a little more whispering a verdict was returned "that deceased had met with his death in endeavouring to break into the house of J. Pheeler, Esq., for unlawful purposes; that the jury begged to express their

commendation of the conduct of Messrs. Stapleton and Newfield, and wished they had shot the whole lot of them." The inquest being over, Mr. Pheeler went up to "deceased," removed the table-cloth from the upper part, and commenced an examination of the head.

"As I expected, humph ! destructiveness very large, no benevolence, veneration below the average ; a very animal head, very, and highly corroborative, highly. I wish I could have it."

Dr. Sarfe took him by the arm. "I think we can manage it, my dear sir, I have been making inquiries, but don't mention it so loud, I very much want the intestines, the legs are booked already, but I have put in a word for the head, and as I do not so much want that I will send it over to you."

"My dear Dr. Sarfe, how can I sufficiently thank you ! And the brains ?"

"Yes, you can have the brains, I will not remove them if you want them, but don't say any more about it here."

"Well, Doctor, you must dine with me to-

day ; a short notice, certainly, but there is no one else coming, unless Stapleton and Mr. Newfield will come ? ”

“ Most happy.”

“ Most happy.”

“ That is all right, and you too, Doctor ? ”

“ Yes, thank you, there is no reason why I should not. I am totally disengaged, that is, as far as a medical man can be.”

“ That is a good thing, for I have something to show you ; a great prize I have brought home from Bath ; you shall know what it is this evening, not before ; till then, good bye.”

One by one those who had attended the inquest went off in different directions. Stapleton and Newfield were the last to go, but after a little while they, too, mounted the dog-cart, and took the road to Bristol. Their object was to learn if any further discovery had been made of the gang who had been so roughly handled. On their arrival they learnt that three men, one of them severely wounded, had been apprehended, and were in custody on suspicion of being mem-

bers of the gang. They had been seized in the cellar of one of the lowest cribs in Bristol, and the injured man had evidently received his hurt from a charge of small shot. They had been taken before a magistrate, who had fully committed them to take their trial at the next assizes. The other wounded man also had been removed from Mr. Pheeler's barn to the county gaol.

"I hope they have caught the right men," said Stapleton, as they rode home.

"No doubt of it, why should they be hiding in the cellar of a thieves' den if they were not in fear of pursuit?"

There was a pause for some time, Newfield was the first to break it. "I was thinking, Stapleton, what a bore it will be having to come up to the assizes, and stand in the witness-box, and be bullied by some keen-witted barrister; and I almost feel with those thick-headed louts who had to decide a most important matter this morning, and wish that we had shot the whole lot of them. What an expense to the country and what trouble to ourselves that would have

saved! rather difficult to accomplish, though; certainly, unless we had had a twenty-four pounder at the top of the stairs, and the report of that *might* have startled the ladies."

"I cannot agree with you, I am only too sorry that I had to kill that one; what is all the expense and trouble in the world to a human life?"

"But these fellows will be transported; and even if they escaped, what good would their lives be of to themselves or others?"

"None; but they have souls, and I should not think a man was in a fit state—"

"All right, I know what you are going to say, I forgot that; somehow one does not consider that practically, though, of course, we all believe it theoretically. By the way, what consummate cowards most of us would be if we did consider it practically."

"Speak for yourself, Mr. Professor. I do not half like having killed that fellow though, but, being done, it can't be undone, and there is no good bothering about it. But here we are at home, rush up and dress, or we shall

be late for dinner ; the one thing, next to doubting his hobbies, which most distresses old Pheeler."

In less than an hour they were at the house, at the entrance of which they met Mr. Pheeler in dinner costume. "I have been over to the stables to look at the Doctor, he is not very well."

"What, old Doctor Sarfe ; what is the matter with him ?" said Stapleton.

"Nothing much, only a cold."

Newfield looked mystified. "He seemed very well this morning," said he.

"Who, what ? oh ! you thought, ha ! ha ! you thought I meant the Doctor ; ha ! ha ! it is only my old horse. Some years ago I bought a horse of Dr. Sarfe, and we have transferred the name from the master to the animal, that is all. You must not name the quadruped Doctor before the biped Doctor though ; the old gentleman is rather touchy on that point. I shall never forget how awkward I had to look once on account of that very confusion of names ; it was about a year after I bought the horse, and when I knew very little of

the Doctor, that he was dining with me. We were sitting over our wine after dinner, when the footman, a new hand, and not very polished, opened the door and said, "Please sir, Dr. Sarfe wants a ball!" How the people who were dining with us stared, and how they laughed when I explained! But, I hear his horse's feet, he will be here in a minute, talk of the—hum! you know—" and laughing at the recollection of the scene he had described, the gentleman led the way into the house. The ladies were expecting them in the drawing room, and Dr. Sarfe coming in soon after, they went in to dinner. Stapleton thought that Lotty talked less lazily to him than she had been accustomed to do, she seemed to pay more attention to what he said, and to be more careful to reply sensibly than she had been before the attack on the house, and his heart beat more quickly as he observed it. And he had some reason to expect that her feelings towards him were rather favourable than otherwise. When a girl has known and liked a man for some years, when that girl's

affections are disengaged, and this man whom she knows and likes suddenly comes out as a species of knight-errant, and shoots and gets shot at in her defence under her own eye, she really ought to fall in love with him ! I only wish, male reader, that you had such a chance in your favour with *her*, you know whom I mean.

The conversation during, and immediately after dinner, turned chiefly on the inquest, the apprehension of the burglars, and the attempted burglary itself. The event was too recent for any other general topic of conversation to get firm footing ; such a wonder in a country place is allowed a much longer settlement than the nine days legally due to it. However, when the ladies left the four gentlemen to their wine, Mr. Pheeler began upon the subject which he had most at heart.

“ You are all impatience, I have no doubt, to see what I have got to show you,” said he, rising from his seat and going to the side-board, from a cupboard of which he brought up a box, which he placed before him on the table. “ I have here a cast of the head of the

man who invented the famous, or rather infamous Infernal Machine — the gun, you know, that is so many guns all at once ; I dare say you have seen a model of it at Madame Tussaud's. Well, I have a cast of that man's head, and I got it so cheap; you would hardly credit that I only gave £50 for it; but it is a fact, I assure you, only £50 ! and guess, Mr. Stapleton, what organ is the most prominent ?”

“ Can't tell.”

“ Can you guess, Mr. Newfield ?”

“ I do not understand anything about phrenology,” answered Newfield ; “ but I should think the predominant organ in such a man's head would be a *barrel*-organ.”

“ Very good, very good ; but, joking apart, did you ever see so large a destructiveness in your life,” and so saying Mr. Pheeler lifted the cast from the box and set it down on the table with a most triumphant air. “ There !”

All tried to look interested and astonished, and Stapleton, feeling the most prominent lump on the piece of plaster before him, with his hand, said, “ Decisive !”

"Oh! that is not an organ; that is only the top of the spine—the back-bone, you know,—this is the place, above the ear," said Mr. Pheeler.

"Oh! ah! yes, I see," rejoined Stapleton, looking like a man who has put his foot in it.

"The worst of phrenology," said the Doctor, "is that it assumes too much. We know so very little about the brain, that it is very difficult to take for granted that it is distributed over the head in such a manner that each little section has its peculiar talent or passion connected with it; and yet I could imagine the shape of the head to denote a talent for mathematics, language, or logic; but when you come to tastes or passions it is a different thing. What can fondness for children have to do with the brain? How is a good appetite connected with thinking?"

"And yet," answered Mr. Pheeler, "the matter is proved by experiment."

"I deny it in toto; for one time that you are right, you are wrong a hundred times."

"That is because different organs counteract each other; and, the science being as

yet in its infancy, we have no regular rule to go by."

"Then you cannot wonder at its not meeting with general support and belief."

"Oh, Doctor! remember how you used to laugh at clairvoyance."

"Oh! that is a different thing; that can never pretend to be a science. I class that with the appearance of ghosts, prophetic dreams, and other things which are too well authenticated to be boldly denied, however sceptical one may feel. However, to leave debateable ground, I have managed to secure that head for you. I packed it up, and it will be here this evening. Bless me!"

This ejaculation was called forth by the first of a succession of female shrieks, which brought all the party to their feet, and they rushed simultaneously to the door.

While they were talking over their wine, the two ladies were superintending some arrangements in the dairy, when a servant came with the information that a hamper had arrived from Dr. Sarfe's, with his compliments. The present was ordered to the kitchen, set upon the table, and opened.

“What can it be?” said Lotty.

“Please mam, I think it's meat of some kind; it smells very gamey.”

Whatever it was it was pinned neatly up in a white cloth, and the cook placed it in a white dish.

“What can it be?”

One pin was removed, another, another; the cloth fell.

* * * * *

“U-u-u-gh!”

“O-o-o-o-o-o-ohh!”

“Lord, have mercy!!”

It was a human head.

“Why, there's Joe!” said Stapleton, as he entered the kitchen.

CHAPTER VIII.

ONE morning about a fortnight after the inquest, Stapleton was sitting alone in his study. Some extraordinary struggle seemed to be going on in his breast, for his movements were not at all those of a man in a calm or rational state of mind. First he sat down in an easy chair, then on a cane-bottomed one, then on the table, then he walked to the window, filled and lit a pipe, took a few puffs and then laid it down again, stretched himself on the sofa, got up and rang all the changes on easy chair, cane-bottomed ditto, table and sofa again. He was in that most paradoxical state of ignorance usually expressed as "not knowing his own mind."

Mr. Pheeler was going to take his wife and daughter to Germany, and Stapleton felt a certain wish to follow in their train, which he felt he could not do unless he was an accepted lover. This he could not well be without making Lotty an offer, and this was the impediment to his sitting still and smoking his pipe in peace according to custom.

It was true, thought he, that Lotty was a very nice girl, and a very pretty one; but it was a bore to be engaged, and a greater bore to be married so soon, before he was one-quarter tired of the pleasures of bachelorhood. 'Twas hard to set down the cup of pleasure before he had done more than sip it. Why should he tie himself to one woman when every bright eye made his heart leap, when every rosy, pouting lip made his brain swim? There was no hurry, he could amuse himself like other young men for a few months, till he got tired, in fact, of dissipation, and then it would be quite time enough to marry, and it would be fairer to his wife, because if he got tired of

dissipation *before* marriage, he would have no temptation (Oh, how sharp the devil is !) to be wild afterwards. And, again, if he did offer now, how did he know whether Lotty would accept him ? And if she did accept him, how did he know that she would continue to love him when she came to see other men, secluded as she had been all her life. But, then, she was such a nice, dear, good, kind, pretty girl, and domestic quiet with her would be so infinitely preferable to —— ; but still he might as well see life first, and see how he felt inclined when she returned from Germany.

“Confound it,” said he aloud at the end of this train of thought, “what a shocking scoundrel I must be to think like that. But still I had better wait, we are both young, and I am as yet uncertain about two things, firstly, whether I am in love with her ; and secondly, whether she is in love with me. No, I will not say anything yet.”

Now I know it was very unorthodox of Stapleton to think and speak in such a manner ; I know it is equally unorthodox for

me to assert, which I do assert, that he did not know whether he was in love or not. Yet, it is a very common case. People talk of falling in love, or being in love, as if love was a material thing, like a ditch, or a quagmire, or a pond; as if the person precipitated therein could tell the precise moment of his entrance and exit. Love is a passion, like grief, anger, friendship, and is more or less violent according to the temperament of the man affected by it. You may hate a man very much at ten in the morning, less at eleven, more again at twelve, not at all at one, intensely at two, and so on through the day; different events and occurrences affecting your mind differently at different times; and in the same way you may love a woman.

Stapleton had, like most men, his vices and his virtues, and a pure and noble love had a good many enemies to fight against in his breast. He was naturally selfish, indolent, and voluptuous, and fortune had placed him in a position likely enough to foster those three not very amiable qualities. He was also peculiarly sensitive to ridicule, and rather

deeply imbued with the works of French sentimentalists, and English satirists, and both these agree in leaving on the mind a decided dread of matrimony, a dread felt more generally than is confessed to. His good and bad genii were struggling for the mastery in the young man's breast, and the bad spirit had got a momentary ascendancy, the good angel a repulse, when Newfield came into the room, turning, unwittingly, like the Prussians at Waterloo, that repulse into a rout.

"I have got to go up to London to-night, Stapleton," said he; "come up with me, and let us have a week's spree, there will be no one we know in town."

Stapleton had been so watched during his minority, that he had never had the opportunity of completely throwing the reins on the neck of folly in the metropolis, and the prospect was proportionally tempting to him. Had it been the season he would not have gone, for fear of being dragged into society, which would have bored him to death. But to go up to town with one friend whom he liked, to take up his abode at the Tavistock, and make as great a

fool of himself as he felt inclined, without restraint, without question, and with plenty of money ! the prospect was delightful ! To what young fellow of twenty-one would it not be delightful ?

After a little demurring on one side, and a little painting of the amusements they were to participate in on the other, it was settled that they should go up to town together that same afternoon, take up their abode at the Tavistock, and do what seemed good in their own eyes.

Stapleton wrote a letter to Mrs. Pheeler, expressing his sorrow at being obliged to hurry off to London on particular business, without taking leave of the family, hoping they would enjoy their trip to Germany, &c., &c. ; a letter which crushed that lady's hopes of his accompanying them in their tour as her daughter's affianced, an event which would have been hailed with pleasure by the whole party ; Mr. Pheeler having forgotten his prejudices against the young man, partly in the good feeling engendered between them by recent events, but principally because he had

spoken much more respectfully of mesmerism since the triumph achieved for that science by Noel.

The letter was sent off, packing was hastily got through, and by three o'clock in the afternoon they were seated in a first-class carriage of the Great Western, most comfortable of railways, in as high spirits as a couple of mad boy-men ever were.

Look back, reader, upon all the greenest, brightest spots in your past life, upon all the expeditions in pursuit of pleasure which have not disappointed your expectations, upon all the days that have passed like a glass of champagne, rosy and sparkling at the brim, sweet to the dregs, you will fairly be able to count them all, whatever your age may be ; no man enjoys many such days. I will lay you the crystal palace to a cucumber frame, that not one such party of pleasure was planned a fortnight before it came off. Plans of amusement and table-beer get flat by standing, you should drink them off frothing up with a head on. If you give your imagination time to dwell upon what you are

going to see, it is sure to figure up something to itself far surpassing the original, and you will be consequently disappointed, or else some member of the party will get a head-ache, or ear-ache, or tooth-ache, or some other mental or bodily ache in the interim, and throw a gloom upon everything ; or else the day will be wet, or hot, or cold, or else—in a word something is sure to spoil your sport.

Did the noise of a train in which you were travelling, ever form itself into some favourite air ? It always does so with some people, playing different tunes to different dispositions, accommodating the melancholy or sulky with a funeral march, the lively and light-hearted with a jig. Thus, after Stapleton and Newfield had sunk back silently in their respective seats, after making themselves hoarse with attempting to keep up a bellowing conversation, and nearly blind with trying to read the paper ; to the former, the panting, rattling, and roaring, sounded like the posthorn gallop, to the latter like a Parisian quadrille : at last the galop and quadrille ceased, for they arrived at

Paddington, where an obsequious porter took as much pains to get their luggage into a four-wheeled cab, and themselves into a Hansom, as if "more money than wit" had been labelled on their hats; it was also remarkable how anxious he was that they should know, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that their boxes and portmanteaus were 'all right,' bending over them as they sat in the Hansom again and again to reiterate his information; and it proves how disinterested the English mind is when the interests and portmanteaus of his fellow-subjects are at stake, knowing as we do, that railway servants are not allowed to receive any acknowledgment of their services beyond what may be conveyed verbally.

"Do you belong to any club?" said Newfield, when they were fairly on their way to Tavistock.

"No, I do not, you know I am awfully green about town."

"Then you must belong to mine, Noel and Stephenson are members too, and several other men you know. I wish Noel was in

town, by the bye, I had sooner he put you up than me, he knows all the members ; in fact, I don't know whom he does not know."

"As I do not belong yet, however, we had better dine at the Tavistock, had we not?"

"Anywhere, so long as we dine at once, I am terribly hungry."

"So am I. Here we are. Pay the cab, waiter," said Stapleton, entering the hotel.

The second order came from Newfield, and was rather concise. "Take the luggage up to our rooms, let us have dinner directly, put some champagne in ice, and secure us two stalls at the Adelphi."

It was eight o'clock, the little theatre was full, as it always is, the curtain was down, the gas was up, the denizens of the pit were standing up with their hats on, their backs to the stage, their faces to the boxes. The orchestra was playing a favourite air, and those who had just procured half-price tickets were endeavouring to squeeze into the already over-crowded pit, when our two friends entered the orchestra stalls, which they had engaged. Just as they took their seats, the

orchestra ceased, the little bell tinkled, and a new world opened upon Stapleton.

Never before had he laughed at Wright and Bedford, never before had the charming Woolgar put his whole nervous system in a state of tremor, lest he should lose a point of her inimitable acting. He was no connoisseur, and could not turn from Paul Bedford's drolleries with a 'very good for what it is—low comedy.' Why *will* people sneer at what amuses, or should amuse them? We seek, or ought to seek, instruction at home, every day of our lives; and we go to a theatre to be amused, to relax. Are you a lover of Shakespear? and do you therefore regret that you cannot see Shakespear well acted? It is *impossible* that Shakespear should be well acted, and if it were you would reap no benefit from it. Shakespear is a thing to be studied at home, to be read alone, to be pondered over, and compared with the feelings of our own hearts. Take up any play you like, identify yourself with the principal characters, try to *feel* as they

are represented to feel ; then you will reap pleasure and profit from the prince of poets. It is almost profanation to put him on the stage, badly as the majority of the characters must be sustained. How many in a large audience would appreciate the character of Hamlet, however well acted ? Don't call it childish to be amused by broad farce or pantomime ; who leads the silliest life, the man whose serious time being wholly occupied with grave and thought-exacting subjects, finds pleasure and amusement in anything which makes him laugh, be it a learned flea or harlequin, or the man who makes theatrical matters a study, a business ?

Stapleton never had any serious business, so he ought to have been a connoisseur ; but he had never been in the way of initiation, poor man, so he was content to be amused. In the second act of the piece they were seeing, a ballet divertissement was introduced, one of the dancers in which attracted Stapleton's attention.

"Newfield!" he whispered, excitedly, to his

companion, "look at that girl on the left, with sparkling eyes and *very retrousee*; is she not pretty?"

"Yes, she is rather."

"I should like to speak to her; how could I get behind the scenes?"

"I am afraid we should find some difficulty. If Noel was here now—gad! talk of the devil! there he is in that private box; let us go to him."

They managed to get out without any confusion, their stalls being near the door, and made their way to the box where they had seen Noel, telling the box-keeper to fetch him out; because, as Newfield judiciously observed, "it is impossible to say whom he may have in the box with him." Noel came out, and, of course, a violent shaking of hands took place, and everybody expressed a wish to be informed who would have expected to have seen the party addressed there; and they entered the box after being informed that it was only "Jenny." Newfield and Jenny seemed to be old friends, for they shook hands, and the lady, in inquiring after

his health, used the term "Old brick." On seeing Stapleton, however, she tried to play the lady, though she did not succeed quite so well as she might have done, had her educational advantages been greater; but vulgarity itself is charming, when set off by a pretty face and charming figure, and Jenny was decidedly handsome.

"Noel," said Newfield, turning suddenly, "Stapleton is smitten, hit hard, by a girl in the *corps de ballet*; just take him behind the scenes and introduce him; you are sure to know her, for she is rather pretty. (We all know what good taste he has, Jenny.) And I will endeavour to make myself agreeable here till you come back."

"Certainly; come along Stapleton," said Noel, dragging him along, muttering denials and apologies.

On entering behind the scenes, the first thing Stapleton saw was the object of his admiration standing, with her head thrown back, and her pretty little nose entirely hid in a pewter pot, the contents of which were refreshing her, after her Terpsi-

chorean exertions. Now, a Grecian beauty, a Roman beauty, a haughty beauty, or a voluptuous beauty would not look well drawing her breath after a long draught of porter. We cannot imagine Diana doing such a thing, nor Juno, nor Venus; but a bright, merry, saucy little thing, with the slightest turn-up in the world to her nose, cannot do wrong. Whatever you catch her at, she is sure to fall on her feet. Did you see her with a leg of mutton in her hands, dining without knife or fork, she would make such a face at you that you could hardly feel disgusted.

"Ah! Rosa, said Noel, "let me have a draught out of your pot, I am so thirsty; why, you little toper, it's empty!"

"That is the girl," whispered Stapleton.

"Then you need not break your heart, she will not be very cruel. Rosa, this gentleman admires you and your dancing to such a degree that he wants you to be his partner at the masquerade at Vauxhall, and if you will allow him to send you some dresses to choose amongst for the occasion, he will esteem it a particular honour."

"That is your cue," added he in a whisper, as he passed Stapleton. "Rich as Croesus," in the same tone, as he passed Rosa.

They got on capitally together, and when Stapleton returned to the box he announced, with great glee, that he was to meet Rosa at the masquerade the night after the next.

"Why not before?" asked Newfield.

"She said she was engaged professionally," answered Stapleton.

"A-hem!" said Jenny.

"Who doubts it," asked Noel, with an astonished air.

"But the play is just over," said Newfield.

"Good night, Jenny; see you to-morrow, Noel, at the Tavistock."

"Where shall we go?" said Stapleton, when they were once more alone amidst the crowd moving along the Strand.

"Let us look in at the Cyder-Cellars and get a kidney."

"So they did go into the Cyder-Cellars and they did get a kidney, after waiting some time for it, and then they ate it, after what appeared to be the custom of the place—a bite, a puff

of smoke, a draught of porter, succeeded by bite, puff, draught over and again, till the eating gradually gave way to continued puffing and drinking. Stapleton was unused to so extraordinary a method of proceeding with his meals, and by the time he had finished his kidney he was in a state of mental obfuscation truly pitiable. It was all just like a dream ; he was in a thick, warm mist, out of which, on all sides, rose the clattering of knives and forks, the jingle of glasses, and the murmur of many voices. Suddenly, from the end of the room, came the rat-tat-tat of the presidential hammer, which seemed to possess marvellous authority, for all sounds were immediately hushed. Stapleton strained his eyes in that direction, and distinguished, looming through the mist, a platform, with a piano at the back and a table in front. On the table were jugs of hot water, sugar-basins, and glasses of grog, and before these creature comforts sat several men in shabby-genteel garments, of different ages; but all having the like red eyes and flushed faces.

“Gentlemen,” said the President, and Sta-

pleton smiled as he glanced down the long table which filled the room. "Gentlemen, Mr. Brown will now sing a comic song."

This announcement was received with much enthusiasm, and Mr. Brown sang a song which utterly disgusted the novice, though he *had* gone through a course of college supper-parties; but the company seemed to like it, for they applauded greatly. Other songs succeeded; some sentimental, others of a nature most disgracefully coarse, and the friends were getting sick of it, when some song was called for which appeared to be a great favourite, to judge from the clamour raised on its behalf.

"You must hear this," said Newfield, and though they had risen from their seats, they sat down again, and then began a dismal affair indeed. Through an intervening cloud of slang, Stapleton made out that the singer was supposed to be a poor wretch who had been brought up a thief, under the *ruse* of acting as a chimney-sweep; that he had committed murder, and was now under sentence of death; that, under these circumstances,

his mind was entirely engrossed by two passions—intense horror and dread of death, and excessive hatred against the man who taught him to steal, the police, judge, jury, and society in general, at whom he uttered a fearful imprecation at the end of each verse. As the singer acted the character to great perfection, Stapleton was horror-struck to a degree he would have conceived impossible. What was his astonishment and disgust, then, at hearing a general burst of laughter as the last curse broke from the apparently frenzied lips of the singer. Newfield saw his look.

“Why, my dear fellow,” said he, “they are used to it. It shocked me horribly when I first heard it; but this is about the fifth time, and the impression having worn off, it is so amusing to watch other people’s faces; but that confounded song has given you the blue-devils; let us go somewhere else.”

They left; but the song haunted Stapleton. He could not recover his gaiety, and so they went straight home, and Stapleton dreamt all

night that he was standing at the foot of a gallows, on which stood a trembling wretch, who, from time to time, gazed down and cursed him.

CHAPTER IX.

To those who have assisted at the carnival balls at Paris, a masquerade in England would appear a very dull thing. The number of young men in plain clothes, who walk about arm in arm, with as much starch in their manners as their laundresses have put in their shirt collars ; clerks and "counter-jumpers," who think that by a supreme contempt for everything and everybody, they may be taken "for one night only" for aristocrats. The utter want of elegance in a great many of the dancers, the uncomfortable looks of Turks, Jews, Circassians, in their unaccustomed clothes, all throw a damp on the life, the spirit of the scene. Yet to

one entering, for the first time, such an arena, the effect, inferior though it may be, is still dazzling, intoxicating.

After some discussion, Stapleton and Newfield had determined to go in costume.

"It is not the correct thing," said the latter, "but '*dulce est desipere in loco*,' and if one place is more suited to folly than Vauxhall on a masquerade night, I should like to be acquainted with it."

Being a good dancer, and thinking that he might as well be as great a fool as possible while he was about it, he fixed on the dress of a Perrot ; while Stapleton, having rather fine legs, went disguised as a Highlander, and in that costume entered the gardens on the night of the ball, with Rosa on his arm, her pretty figure set off by the piquant dress of a *debardeur*.

The scene surpassed his expectations ; it was half-past twelve, and a great deal of the stiffness which characterises the commencement of anything of the kind had worn off ; the glare of the lamps, which flooded the alcoves and orchestra with light, and glittered

everywhere among the trees, on the dancing platform, and along the distant walks; the music, lightening the feet with one of the most enticing polkas; the novelty of the scene, the variety of costume, all combined to dazzle his senses, and bewilder his mind. Here a romp was skipping, surrounded by a small crowd who applauded her success, or laughed at her failure. There a gipsy-girl was telling fortunes, and eliciting bursts of laughter by the humorous disasters which she foretold. In another place more laughter was excited by the shriek of some startled fair, at having the hideous face of a devil or satyr suddenly thrust under her bonnet. The most childish pranks were everywhere being played, and were everywhere successful. The mercurial Newfield disappeared in a moment amongst the crowd of dancers, while Stapleton and his companion walked round the alcoves, looking at the costumes, and bandying jests, or what served for such, with the masquers. But Stapleton was too bewildered to be noisy, and Rosa was unaccountably quiet.

“How dull we are,” said she, at length;

"come into this box and send for some champagne to raise our spirits to the proper pitch."

They did so, and Stapleton asked the cause of her dejection.

"Oh !" said she, "it is nothing ; I very seldom have an attack of low spirits, and it never lasts more than ten minutes ; I shall be merry enough soon ; but I could not help thinking of the last masquerade I was at."

Stapleton's curiosity was excited, and at last he elicited the following story :

"Two years ago," she began, "I ran away from home with a gentleman whom I fancied I was in love with. He brought me up to London, and we were gay and merry enough till he went back to Oxford, when he left me enough money to live quietly upon, but he was not very rich, and I had a great taste for extravagance ; and I fear I did not behave well while he was away. He found that out when he left the University, and I believe he would have married me if I had acted rightly. He never quite deserted me, however, and I liked him very much when I

saw him, but 'out of sight out of mind' they say. At last his friends persuaded him to go into the church, and he told me he must reform, and discontinue his visits to me; and last winter he came up to town to have a regular carnival, he said, before burying himself in virtue and a country parsonage for the rest of his life. It was at the time of Jullien's masquerade, and we went to it; and after spending a very mad night, were preparing to go home, when he suddenly felt ill, and said he had better return to his hotel. He did so, poor fellow, and died that very night. Was it not awful? He had something the matter with his heart."

They sat in silence for some minutes after this recital. A man used to London life would not have believed one word of it; Stapleton was young in dissipation, and took it all for truth; and for once the green-horn was right.

"Pooh! what is the past, Rosa?" said Stapleton at last, filling her glass and his own; "here's to the present."

"The present," replied she, tossing it off;

and by the time the bottle was finished, all traces of gloom had vanished.

As they drained the last glass, Newfield came skipping up with a vivandiere. "Dance!" he cried, "come, they are forming quadrilles; come, Stapleton, I am not going to lose you as a vis-a-vis, after all the trouble I have had to teach you the can-can."

They took their places; the music struck up, and off they went in a style which drew many round them, for Newfield had learnt the French style of dancing at the Parisian gardens. His partner, the vivandiere, was a French woman. Rosa was an excellent dancer, and pretty *au fait* at that peculiar style; and Stapleton acquitted himself very fairly, for a first attempt in public. It was certainly rather perplexing for one whose ideas of a quadrille, previous to his friend's instructions, had been a little quiet walking about, without regard to figure, time, or anything else, to find the toe of his vis-a-vis within an inch of his nose on advancing to meet her, to waltz in one figure, and gallop round hand in hand, like a mad bull in a Spanish arena, in ano-

ther; yet still he made no mistakes, and shuffled his legs and shoulders about in a very praiseworthy manner.

A waltz succeeded to the quadrille, then came a polka, then another quadrille. The night advanced, the mirth grew more noisy; the dancing more and more unrestrained. The stiff collars went away, and two fresh bands arrived to console the revellers for their absence; one taking up its stand in a broad walk, the other in the theatre, which was thrown open to the dancers; thus, three bands, each a sun with scores of worlds revolving around it, were playing together. The polkers at one, flew off; immediately the attraction ceased, to the waltzers at the other, or the quadrillers at the third, without pause or respite. There must be something *very* attractive in dancing!

But it is proverbially inconvenient to “dance *upon nothing*,” and even when tricked out as *debardeurs*, *vivandières*, Highlanders, or French fools, people get hungry. So at last the two friends with their partners made their way, panting from a galop, to the

raised saloon overlooking the platform, and here, while regaling themselves on chickens, cold ham, champagne, and iced punch, they watched the groups beneath them, shouting, laughing, riding on each others shoulders, chasing one another about, playing, in a word, every conceivable antic.

In one place a devil was being led in solemn triumph by a jolly-looking monk, who held the unambitious ambassador of his Satanic Majesty by the nose, a smaller demon following behind, and dutifully bearing his master's tail, while in another a party of red Indians, rather drunk, no doubt through a desire to exhibit one of the principal characteristics of the savage, were executing a war-dance.

Standing near the four revellers was a man of different appearance to the majority of the company. Not that there was anything peculiar in his figure, which was of the middle height, or his dress, which was simply that of a gentleman, for he was not in costume. But his face bore a very different expression to that of the gay and devil-

may-care crowd around him. There was a benevolent calm in his grey eyes; talent and energy were betokened by his high forehead and wide-nostrelled nose; and the lines about his mouth proved, though he was yet young, that he was one who *thought*. He approached Stapleton, and laid his hand on his shoulder, and the latter immediately recognised, with some surprise, the man who had "coached" him for his degree.

"Ah, Norton! what, *you* here! I should have thought you would have been elbow-deep in law-books at this hour."

"No; I am undergoing a course of lectures on 'the proper study for mankind.' But who is this? Why, Newfield! who could recognise you with that false nose? However, I congratulate you on having found an appropriate costume at last. I think you tried every species of hunting-dress, shooting-dress, boating-dress, and even reading-dress at Cambridge, but none became you so well as this. But, I see you are waiting to go and take your places in

that quadrille ; good night. Where are you staying?"

" At the Tavistock."

Very well, I will look in to-morrow. Thoughtless fellows," he continued to himself, as the mad quartette mingled with the crowd, "if they could see their blooming paramours as they will be, ten, five, or even two years hence, they would soon lose their gaiety ; unless, indeed, they are quite hardened, which they can hardly be yet, though the heart congeals quickly too, under the influence of dissipation. Yes, laugh!" he continued, half-aloud, as in passing from the gate the clearing of women's voices from the interior of the gardens fell on his ear. "Laugh, dance, sing, beautiful victims ! preparing for the hospital, the hulks, and the mad-house ! Your lovers, soon growing weary of pleasure, will flood the church, the senate, the bar, and becoming 'exemplary' husbands and fathers, will consider it 'encouraging immorality' to lend a hand for the reclamation of a class they have helped to form."

The early dawn was putting the coloured

lamps considerably out of countenance, when the three bands, one after another, broke from the last galop into "God save the Queen;" and the motley crowd deployed from the gardens into the road, now crowded with "Hansoms." At the very moment that Stapleton was tenderly wrapping a cloak round his *debardeur's* shoulders, a pure, affectionate, and beautiful girl was lying awake, far off in a small inn in Germany, thinking over his more than hints of affection, and praying for his happiness!

Stapleton, you were a fool!

CHAPTER X.

ONE day, about twelve o'clock, early in November, Stapleton sat alone in handsomely-furnished lodgings. A large fire burned in the grate, and a small table at his elbow, covered with breakfast things, showed that he had only just left his room. His pale face, the black lines under his eyes, and the trembling of his hand, as he poured out his coffee, told a tale by no means flattering. In fact, he had been leading, for the last four months, a most irregular life. As the charms of his first excesses lost their attraction, he added that of wine, and, still feeling a craving for excitement, he relapsed into his old madness,—play, by far the worst and most

demoralizing passion of all. In this he was encouraged by a set of men whose acquaintance he had made at the club Newfield had alluded to, and of which he had been elected a member soon after his arrival in town, and night after night was devoted to the hopes, the fears, the agony of high play. He had learned now to control his feelings under the elation of winning and the dejection of losing, but, when alone, he still mentally brooded over his past victories and defeats; still often started in his sleep from a dream of cards or dice. Those with whom he played, played well, but fairly; they were chiefly officers in the army and men of strict honour; had it been otherwise he would have been ruined long before. As it was, though his fortune varied, his losses far exceeded his winnings, and he was already considerably embarrassed. Newfield had left London after about a fortnight's stay. Had he known how his friend was going on, he would have done his best to get him away, for he was a good-hearted fellow, and, though fond of pleasure, possessed sufficient

common sense to see the absurdity of allowing his passions to become his masters.

Stapleton's feelings, as he sat in his easy chair over the fire, were of no enviable description. He had been gaming all night, and now discovered that his losses had been considerable. Then again, he had swallowed so large a quantity of wine and spirits, that his head ached, and all his joints felt loose in their sockets.

While he was sitting thus, trying to remember the exact events of the preceding night, he heard a foot on the staircase, and immediately afterwards Norton entered the room.

"Ah, Stapleton," said he, "I heard you were still in town, so I came to have a look at you. I am going to give myself a holiday; you cannot imagine the delight, to a hard-working man, of having nothing to do. I say, though, you keep rather late hours; I have lunched this hour, while you are only just up. Oh, I see the reason," added he, holding up an empty soda-water bottle, which lay on the breakfast-table. "Ah!

you lead a happy life. Wine and beauty, music and dancing ! You would not like to change it for mine, eh ?”

Stapleton had a great respect for Norton ; he could not make him out. They had seen more of each other than might have been expected, considering the difference in their tastes and habits. Norton, after taking a very good degree, had remained at Cambridge, to cram men with sufficient knowledge for their examinations ; and Stapleton was one of those who had successfully undergone that operation in his hands. They had read together for two consecutive terms every day, from twelve till two, at which hour their horses were usually brought round, and they rode together till four. Thus, without striking up any great friendship, they had acquired a degree of intimacy which enabled them to converse without reserve ; and Stapleton felt glad to see one to whom he could communicate the disgust he felt at all the world without danger of being laughed at.

“ I am not sure,” he began, “ that mine is the happiest life, after all.”

"That is because you were drunk last night. Excuse the term, but it means the same thing as 'elevated,' 'inebriated,' or any other long name for intoxication."

"No," answered Stapleton, "I do not think so because I was drunk last night; you mistake the effect for the cause, I got drunk because I thought so."

"What do you intend to do, then? Having no business to occupy you, but to make yourself happy, why can't you try some other experiment?"

"I have tried everything I can think of."

"And, like a second Solomon, you have come to the conclusion that 'all is vanity.' Shall I give you a sermon? Shall I catechise you? You know even Byron recommends 'sermons and soda-water the day after.' The latter I see you have already had, now for the former. Suppose I set to work, like a doctor, to find out where the disease is. First of all, you have a grudge against Bacchus, have you not?"

"No; you must strike deeper than that; I never care for wine unless I am in low

spirits ; if you find me a better remedy, of course the other will be superseded ; wine is to me only a mental medicine."

"Well, then, we will try back. The debardeur I saw you with at Vauxhall was decidedly pretty."

"What Rosa ? The mercenary—"

"Stop," cried Norton, almost sternly ; "do not abuse her, or any of them, on *that* score. Think what must become of them in age if they cannot lay by money in youth. So you do not find happiness in the society of ballet-girls ; *that* is not very wonderful, as men *must* be of a low order, mentally and morally, who do. No man can be happy while entailing misery on his fellow-creatures, and, however the idea may be scouted, every man who leads a dissipated life, is responsible for a vast share of the misery entailed on the victim of dissipation. But to return ; we have now discovered *two* things, which do not add to your happiness,—wine and women. Perhaps you play. I see a *Bell's Life* yonder. Do you ?—you do !—well, how much happiness does that afford ?"

"Happiness ! it is actual misery !"

"What, when you win?"

"Yes."

"Then here are *three* things which fail to afford you happiness—the three things, too, which poets have raved about since the world began, in every tongue under Heaven—wine, women, and play ! And such violent pleasures having failed you, of course mere amusements are insipid. For instance, *I*, after a hard day's work, am delighted beyond expression by a couple of hours' relaxation at the theatre, while you are bored to death thereby ? Is it not so?"

"True, oh Socrates !"

"And the same holds with respect to books?"

"I never read any now but the *Racing Calendar* and *Hoyle*."

"Excuse me if I ask rather a delicate question. Have you been lucky in your racing and gaming speculations?"

"Lucky !" replied Stapleton, with a quivering lip, and drawing his chair nearer to his friend, "lucky ! I have lost all the

money I had in the funds which I could touch, and there is only £5,000 tied up, and there is a mortgage-deed for £7,000 on one of my farms, now awaiting my signature ! Altogether, I have lost about £20,000."

"Well, then," replied Norton, "you have not profited by these pursuits, and you say you have received no pleasure from them ; the conclusion is obvious, give them up."

"But that is the extraordinary thing. Though gaming is positively painful to me, and though I feel it will ruin me, I feel irresistibly drawn towards it. I cannot explain my feelings, and you probably cannot understand them."

"I cannot, indeed ! It seems to me like madness."

"It is madness. The fit comes on me at the very sight of a card, just as a mad dog is convulsed at the sight of water."

"Did it never occur to you that it might be a good plan to own yourself fairly beaten by this Devil, and—run away from him ? Pack up your things this very day, go home, associate with the neighbouring gentry, go

to their balls, eat their dinners, hunt, shoot, farm, look after your tenantry, improve the condition of your labourers, build schools, read books, (not *Hoyle's* works); if you can manage to fall in love and marry, all the better. Do anything which will occupy your mind in a way that a civilized human being's mind ought to be occupied. Leave the American savage to gamble away the blanket from his shoulders, the beastly Russian to his lethargic brandy-stupor, the effeminate Otaheitian to his voluptuous revels. But you, an educated Englishman—a man to whose care many talents are entrusted—a man who holds in his hands a certain power for good or evil over many of his fellow-creatures,—will you, who ought to exert that power for the rescue of others from vice and misery, mingle with them, nay, lead them on in their downward course? Yes, lead them on; for vice in the upper classes encourages, nay, gives birth to vice in the lower; and those follies which have struck at your fortune, would, in a needy man, without money to gratify his vicious tastes, have led to theft

and the hulks, perhaps to murder and the gallows. Some would have urged higher motives still upon you, but I cannot, for I grieve to say I do not fully comprehend them myself; but, even taking the lowest ground, that of your own temporary comfort, it is evident that you ought to take yourself off to your estates in Lincolnshire, or near Clifton, as soon as possible."

They were both silent for some time. Norton, whose eye had kindled, and whose whole face had beamed with earnestness and benevolence while speaking, relapsed into his usual thoughtful expression; and looking steadfastly into the fire, he followed up the train of thought which his exhortation had excited.

Stapleton was the first to break the silence.

"You are right," said he; "and I will follow your advice on one condition,—that you return with me. There will be some good shooting at Adderly Hall; as for going into Lincolnshire, there is no house there fit to live in, and the neighbourhood is dull to a degree. But if you will come to Clifton, I

can insure you some good shooting, and a sight of your fellow-creatures in the evening. Also, you will find some books ; indeed, you shall have the room where all the books are, appropriated to yourself. It is not in the library, but a room up-stairs, used as a bedroom, and there are cupboards all round it, full of old books. Will you come ?”

And Norton agreed to accompany him home on the following morning, and further, spent the evening with him, to prevent a relapse. They dined together, and went to the play together ; and whether it was owing to the conversation of his friend, or consciousness that he had regained his liberty, Stapleton felt happier that evening than he had done for months. But when Norton arrived at his lonely chamber, he threw himself into a chair and sighed, for he feared lest one who was so easily led along the right path, should be as ready to follow the first who urged him to take the wrong.

CHAPTER XI.

WHILE Stapleton was thus squandering health and money in an unavailing pursuit of that soapy-tailed pig (this illustration is new), Pleasure, he might have been combining real enjoyment with usefulness to others. Mr. Pheeler had projected his excursion into Germany from a desire to converse with the actual fathers and wet-nurses of his darling sciences. In spite of this they were very near getting no further than Paris; for, on the day of their arrival in that city, he met with an old acquaintance and brother philosopher, a Monsieur Forvolantè, now residing in Paris, and unfolding to the natives the mysteries

of the unseen and visible worlds (see advertisement), by the aid of a clairvoyant of the first water, whom he literally held under his thumb. They went home together, and Mr. Pheeler determined to defer his Rhineward journey until Mr. Forvolantè should have nothing more to show him. Having set out on his travels for the benefit of his crotchets rather than his family, his wife and daughter had to shift a good deal for themselves, or rather Lotty had to shift for both of them, so utterly bewildered by everything and everybody was poor Mrs. Pheeler; and here it was that Stapleton might have made himself useful. Poor Mrs. Pheeler, she could not make it out at all. The only thing she admired in a town were the shops, and by *shops* she meant linen-drappers; as by *fish*, a Scotsman means salmon. As all the fashions came from Paris, she expected to see a perfect Paradise of millinery, with all the back slums equal at least to Regent Street; and the Boulevards—words cannot express what she had pictured to herself about them. She was

wofully disappointed. One told her to admire the Place de la Concorde.

"Yes," said she; "it is larger than Trafalgar Square, I own, but where are the shops?"

Another pointed to the loveliness of the Madeleine, or bade her bow before the splendour of the Louvre; but, like her countrymen at Waterloo, "she did not know when she was beaten."

"But there are no shops!" was her constant reply; "I have seen nothing yet I like half so well as Regent Street. Where do all the fashions come from? All the shops are cafès, or tobacconists, or lollipop-makers. And then the men are so nasty, spitting about so; one cannot walk about without holding up one's things. It makes me feel quite sick."

Then again, for the first week she was almost starved; nothing could persuade her that the dishes brought to her elbow at dinner had no frogs in them. The bread was sour, and she knew better than to eat *French eggs*; I do believe she thought that

French hens laid them stale. Poor thing ! she little dreamed of what was in store for her. She grew less squeamish before her travels were over, and often looked back on the Parisian cookery with regret from some small, dirty inn in Germany. For they did get off at last, thanks to an unforeseen occurrence. Monsieur Forvolantè was in the habit of advertising the clairvoyant powers of his ecstatic Louise in the public papers, urging those who were ill to come and be told what was the matter with them by Mademoiselle, who could see through and through them with her eyes shut. Several who had been and paid their fees, had declared themselves benefitted ; others, who had also paid their fees, were never heard of again, so we will assume that they, too, were cured.

Monsieur had been a medical student, and knew something of the rudiments of the profession ; doubtless he could have cured a stomach-ache, possibly he might have wrestled with an attack of the measles, if slight. But, of course, his medical know-

ledge had nothing to do with the cures. One day, a gentleman well-known in Paris called on him for advice. Louise was sent off in a mesmeric trance, and directed to examine the patient's entrails. She did so, and discovered a dreadful disease, for which violent remedies were necessary. The gentleman was much alarmed, took the medicines directed, and—died of them in a few days! The body was opened, there was no such disease as had been intimated; he was evidently poisoned by the medicine, and Mons. Forvolantè and poor Louise were seized by the police, fined, and imprisoned. Such are the persecutions which ever await genius. What are the lives of a few men, who must die some time or another, to the advancement of science? Mr. Pheeler became as much disgusted with the French as his wife was, and their journey was continued. They all enjoyed the beautiful scenery which surrounded their path exceedingly. Mrs. Pheeler, not expecting to see fine shops on the Rhine, was not disappointed at their absence. She discovered at last, to her surprise, that

eggs were more easily obtained fresh abroad than in England. The air, too, made her hungry, and hunger bade her forget that her food was dressed in oil. Poor Lotty was the chief sufferer now ; how the vermin at the inns did revel on her beautiful plump limbs, even occasionally attacking her face, leaving white lumps on her soft skin. Oh ! that man should walk erect, and boast himself that he alone of created beings possesses reason ; that he is a god over all creatures on the earth, and yet be the slave, the victim, the dinner of a bug ! What are mountains, lakes, rivers, forests ? what all the most beautiful combinations of nature to the man who has to scratch himself while gazing upon them ?

They went up the Rhine to Mannheim, and from thence to Heidelberg, where Mr. Pheeler, who was a good German scholar, fraternized extensively with the German professors, and their lodging, a pretty villa on the banks of the Neckar, was always full of members of the University.

They made a long stay here, and the

Phrenologist was as happy as the day was long, the only drawback to his comfort being that his bearded friends persuaded him that a philosopher ought to smoke tobacco, and he set up a large meerschaum which did not agree with him at all at first. The students all fell in love with Lotty, and sent her sonnets in German, a language she could not read or understand. Two of them, however, were good English scholars, and voted themselves first on the list of rivals, on the strength of their attainments. Of course they quarrelled and fought a duel on the occasion, and one of them had his nose cut off. He made his appearance a fortnight after with his face plastered up, and made Lotty an offer of himself and pipes, appealing to her sympathies for the mutilation of his face. "For the love of her," urged he, "he had lost his nose." He could not pronounce the "n" without that useful and, sometimes, ornamental feature.

Poor boy ! it took fourteen bottles of bad beer and pipes innumerable to cure his passion. Lotty was rather amused by all the

ardent attachments she seemed to excite, and wondered what being in love was like; and then she thought of Stapleton, why she could not tell, but still she *should* like to know whether an old friend ever missed her——she meant their company. It was well she did not know how he was amusing himself in her absence!

They left Heidelberg after a time, and wandered away to Munich and Berlin, Mr. Pheeler collecting casts of heads, skulls, and other specimens wherever he went, till their luggage became a positive nuisance.

It was not until the end of August that they bade adieu to phrenological professors, beery students, stumpy vines, ruined castles, and all the charms of Fatherland, and arrived, with all their baggage, safely at Dover.

Mrs. Pheeler was, beyond measure, delighted to get back to “dear old England” again; and, contrary to her usual silent habits, was waxing eloquent upon the subject, when her remarks were cut short by a custom-house officer, who somewhat rudely snatched a bag which she carried from her

hand, and proceeded to examine the contents, pushing it back at last towards her with the remark, "what the deuce can ladies want with such a lot of brandy!" It was but a scurvy greeting, and the lady waxed indignant, which was a pity, for her indignation made the searcher suspicious, and every box, every bundle was examined with a most provoking scrutiny. As box after box full of casts and skulls was opened, Mr. Pheeler's agony, lest they should be injured, increased, and all the other victims who were waiting about till their luggage should be examined crowded round to see and remark upon the extraordinary cargo; many were the conjectures passed upon the owner's tastes, habits, and pursuits, but the prevailing idea, very audibly expressed, seemed to be that he was a resurrectionist. At last the ordeal was passed, and they arrived safely at an inn in the town, rather tired, and very hungry. Here Mrs. Pheeler again broke out in rapturous anticipation of getting something plain and wholesome to eat; and if a tough beef-steak, utterly defying masti-

cation, be considered plain and wholesome, she had no reason to be disappointed.

In a week's time they were once more comfortably settled in Cranium Villa; the mysterious boxes were unpacked, and the contents classified, arranged, and labelled. It was just luncheon-time, Mrs. Pheeler was making a pocket-handkerchief—(Alas! for the best of us, a *smuggled* one)—Lotty was engaged with some worsted-work, and Mr. Pheeler was immersed in the pages of a pamphlet entitled “Startling discovery of the whereabouts of a runaway slave in Kentucky by the means of mesmerism,” when Stapleton was ushered in, followed by Norton, who was speedily introduced to the party.

As Stapleton gazed once more upon her, of whose affection he was all unconscious and totally undeserving, he did feel ashamed of himself. Never before had she appeared so charming, so engaging, so innocent. How could he ever have doubted for an instant whether he was in love with her? How was it he had hardly thought of her all these months? What kind of society had he preferred to

hers? All this flashed upon his mind in an instant, and on the tablets of his own heart he wrote himself down an ass. There was hope for him yet; as long as a man retains the faculty of feeling ashamed of himself, he will never become utterly depraved.

If Norton had studied the matter for five years, which he had not, he could not have hit on a more fortunate time for good reception at Cranium Villa. When we have just returned from some place where we have never been before, how fond we are of recounting all we heard and saw. Thus Norton was regaled with descriptions of scenery and accidents, dresses and pictures, bonnets and statues, by the ladies, and feasted with more abstruse subjects by Mr. Pheeler. Of course, being a stranger, he was obliged to listen with a seriousness of attention which earned for him the reputation of a most agreeable companion. This is a very stale receipt, but it cannot be too often or too seriously impressed upon those who are to make their way in the world by yielding to others. Talk to the silent, but listen to the talkative. To

prove how easily a man may earn a reputation for wit by following this rule, witness the anecdote, true as the tale of the sea-serpent.

“Sir Henry B——, Bart., a man of great conversational powers, somehow was induced last week to pay a visit to a famous waxwork ; feeling much interested by the exhibition, but not seeing any one he knew in the room, he looked about for an intelligent stranger to whom he might utter some of the brilliant ideas which had been engendered by the waxen beauties around. With this view he addressed himself to an old man seated on a bench, who gracefully inclined his head in acquiescence to what was asserted, and they entered into a long conversation, which Sir Henry afterwards declared was the most interesting and profitable he ever held in his life ; who that wonderful and gifted old man was he would give anything to know ! How Tom Brown deposes, on oath, that on the same day he entered the waxwork exhibition aforesaid, and beheld Sir Henry B——, Bart., sitting by the side of the mechanical wax figure which bows its head, talking to it

vociferously, and even goes so far as to declare that Sir Henry poked the figure in the ribs, but this may be an exaggeration."

Norton gained as much credit as the wax figure, with about the same amount of exertion. Nor was he much bored, for the old man amused him; while the daughter seemed to him the most charming being he had ever met, and in her company he felt that a man might endure any amount of talk. When we find ourselves in the presence of any one, male or female, who takes our fancy, we naturally endeavour to talk to them, and Norton made many attempts at getting up a conversation with Miss Pheeler, but the Phrenologist had marked him for his own, so good a listener was not to be found every day, and directly luncheon was over he was dragged out to admire the garden, laid out under Mr. Pheeler's own eye; the fruit-trees, the finest in the world, only they were all blighted this year, and the arbours, very nice, only smelling of wet straw, and containing mouldy slimy gods and goddess. Then the victim was dragged off to the farm-yard to

be introduced to the pigs, whither the ladies followed them not ; and, of course, Stapleton remained with the ladies in preference to the pigs, so that Mr. Pheeler had the listener all to himself. How he held forth ! the breeds of pigs, of cows, of oxen, of horses, of hens, nothing came amiss to him. But he was most eloquent on the subject of manures.

“ I mean to try the new idea of a large tank for all refuse, there is no calculating the waste that goes on in a farm that way. Now, what should you call that ?” said he, pointing to an odoriferous podgey ditch that bounded one end of the yard.

“ Well,” answered Norton, “ I should call it——call it——”

“ Guineas sir ! its guineas, all running to waste !”

Norton thought that they smelt very nasty for all that.

All this time Stapleton and the ladies were taking a much pleasanter walk.

“ What a nice man Mr. Norton seems to be,” said Mrs. Pheeler ; “ what is he ?”

“ He has just been called to the bar,”

answered Stapleton, "and is a man for whom I have the highest regard. He is in rather an anomalous position. His father was the younger of two sons, and, all the family property being in land, consequently poor. He died while my friend was an infant, and his wife soon followed him to the grave. The orphan was brought up by his uncle, who has never married, and whose heir Norton therefore, is. The old boy is dreadfully penurious, and makes his nephew a very small allowance. And this is the odd thing, though Norton must come into the family estates, which are in Ireland, on his uncle's death, he has no idea whether they will prove a fortune or a burden to him, for they have been very heavily mortgaged from time to time, and the old man declares he will distribute his personal property, which is very large, and over which he has unlimited control, amongst different charities. Report says he has paid off all the mortgages on the estates, but of this there is no certainty; and thus my friend Norton is grinding away at law books, instead of spending the life of an Irish country gentle-

man. Norton thinks that this conduct of his uncle's arises from a desire that he should be saved from that reckless extravagance which is the ruin of so many an Irish landholder ; but he never attributes a bad motive, if he can help it, to any one. For the rest, he is a few years my senior, and had just taken a high degree when I first went up to the University, and he is the only man of my own age whom I really esteem."

"You give him a good character," said Lotty, "he seems to be a favourite of yours."

"I have reason, indeed, to think highly of him," was the answer, and the conversation passed to other subjects.

Meanwhile Mr. Pheeler was descanting learnedly on the regeneration of cows and pigs.

"I wish those who take so much interest in such things would turn their minds to the regeneration of labourers," said Norton. "While agriculture is progressing, the agriculturist is retrograding. You have taken away from him the Sunday fêtes, the wrestling matches, the Christmas games, which

made so many epochs in his toilsome existence; and you have given him nothing in return. You refuse him recreation for his body, and yet neglect to cultivate his mind. I have often watched a ploughboy plodding over the sods hour by hour, day by day, and wondered what he could be thinking of; what relief he could find in such utterly mechanical employment. He must either work out some train of thought for himself, which requires what one in twenty millions, perhaps, possesses, genius; go mad, or become stolid or brutalized; and nature being more merciful than his human masters, he usually becomes the latter. His son is yet more stolid than himself, and his grandson a greater fool still. What, then, will become of the bold English peasantry five hundred years hence? From policy, if not from any higher motive, we should look to this. Let the ploughman's mind feast upon what he has read the night before, while his hand mechanically guides the machine, and he will be, not only a better workman, but, which is of more consequence, a better and

happier man. I do not speak from theory, I have mixed a great deal with the peasantry of different parts of England, and have sometimes found an educated man toiling amongst his clod-souled brethren; and he has invariably been a happier man. But I fear it is a hopeless business; the people of England will never do anything which they cannot get any money by. It is strange that the most generous of all people, taken individually, should be so mean as a nation. The John Bull who would give a hundred pounds down without grudging to an hospital, would raise heaven and earth with his clamour if a tax of half-a-farthing in the pound was levied upon him for the building of the same institution."

"Your feelings and opinions do you credit, Mr. Norton," said Mr. Pheeler; "but I fear it would be some years before you could raise our peasantry from the earth. We ought to begin at once, for each generation will, if uneducated, be as you say, more animal and less human than the preceding one. As it is, the head of the English plough-

man has become very much deteriorated. Phrenology bears you out in all you have just said."

Norton, who had been rather bored by the account of the cows and pigs, was alive to anything of human interest, and Phrenology is so intimately connected with the Physiology of different nations, that it could not well escape his serious attention. The conversation naturally flowed into that channel, and Mr. Pheeler was delighted he had found just the man to interest and excite so ardent a votary of modern sciences; one who, not convinced of their truth, thought there was a good deal in them; one who, evidently, was unbiassed and unprejudiced; who only wanted for satisfactory proofs, and these Mr. Pheeler thought he had as plenty as blackberries, for everything he believed. The Phrenologist's sanctum was invaded, inspected; every skull, every cast descanted upon; but Norton would not own to as much as his preceptor desired.

"I can see," he said, "clearly enough that the intellect of a man or a nation may

be judged of by the shape of the head, but I do not understand all these classifications; I do not think it proved that the head is portioned out in square inches, and that you may tell, not only a man's character, but his tastes and habits from the prominence of the bone covering that square inch. It seems to me that you try for too much. Because you have found a general index to character, you think you have a book where character is plainly written down. You may be right, but I do not think there is any proof of it. I never knew an instance of the character being clearly told by Phrenology, while I have known many failures; while several instances of the judgment of character by the hand-writing, and other means which do not even pretend to be scientific, which have come under my own observation, have been life-like."

"What! are you fond of skulls, too?" cried Miss Pheeler, entering the room at this instant, followed by the other two. "Fancy your having been here all the time; we have been looking for you everywhere, for

we did not know your taste agreed so well with papa's."

"I am only a pupil," answered Norton, "and I must confess I prefer skulls which have flesh and hair on them, even though those ornaments should hide the bumps."

"Lotty! I am very angry with you for coming in and spoiling our conversation; we were much better engaged than in listening to your foolish little tongue;" said Mr. Pheeler, laughing, and tapping his daughter's cheek. "You would hardly believe it, Mr. Norton, but she has taken quite a dislike to the science ever since I wanted her hair to be cut off, to have a cast taken of her head! but women never are scientific, it is all dress and personal appearance with them."

"Now, papa!" said Lotty, "do not abuse the ladies on *that* score. How many of those German friends of yours would have consented to have *their* black beards and moustaches cut off for the sake of any science that ever was invented?"

"Invented! my dear child! a science invented!"

Stapleton foresaw the lecture which was forthcoming, and cut it short by saying, it was time for himself and friend to go home to dinner. Accordingly, they took their departure, after promising to be guests at Cranium Villa on the evening following. They went home, dined, and made preparations for shooting on the morrow. All which being done, they sat down before the fire to talk, but words were wanting to both of them; and after sundry efforts on either side, the conversation died quite away, and they sat in silence so long, that at last Stapleton was led to offer, after the manner of elderly ladies, the sum of one penny sterling for his neighbour's cogitations. They were worth more, Lotty, for you were the subject of them, and, for that matter, of his own too.

CHAPTER XII.

FORMER times had partly returned to the phrenologist's circle. Once more Arthur Stapleton was their constant companion and guest; but the friend he had *now* introduced was one of whom he was proud, and he no longer stole away from his own guests, to seek quiet with the others. Norton accompanied him in all his visits, and was soon on as firm a footing as if he, too, had been known there from childhood. There was something in the simplicity of the family, in the good-natured eccentricity of the father, the benevolence of the mother, the *naïveté*, kindness, and beauty of the daughter, which wound round his heart; for the first

time in his life he felt as if he had found a home.

And Stapleton—how low he sank in his own esteem! What a fool he appeared to himself! That he should ever have doubted his own heart! How was it that he had left *her* without a pang, nay, with a feeling of relief from restraint? How had he lived so long without thought of her? He could not account for his own conduct—his own feelings. He did not know how much cold-blooded selfishness there was in his breast, to counteract love itself—if, indeed, he yet experienced love. However, he believed he did, and determined to take a decided course, and ask if his passion was requited. Pshaw! *he in love!* Shades of Petrarch, Abelard, Werter! Why did ye not rise against him and thrust the false words back into his throat? Yet, is there more truth in the proverb, “Out of sight, out of mind,” as applied to the great majority of *men* (women are far more faithful, much as they have been slandered), than the admirers of romance might imagine. If Romeo had got over his

first paroxysm of grief at Juliet's death (supposing her to have been dead in good earnest), how long, think you, would he have remained without another mistress? Stapleton made up his mind, then, that he was in love with Lotty, and prepared to act accordingly; but, unfortunately, it struck him on his first advances, that she might not return the compliment. Times had changed; she was no longer the free unembarrassed being she had been before, saying whatever came first into her head, scolding him when he delayed to come at an appointed hour, caring not to conceal her chagrin at his departure. She was reserved, and unconversationable; appeared never to heed whether he came or went, and avoided walking alone with him. Yet, with Norton she was the same as she had been. Was Lotty also among the coquettes? By no means; and had Stapleton been more knowing and experienced in *affaires de cœur*, he would have seen what was passing in her breast as clearly as if he had been a somnambule. But he was young, very young. He did not know that, for an

innocent country girl to be free and unembarrassed with you is about the worst sign you can have, if you have any design upon her affections. Instead, then, of jumping out of his wits with joy at her change of manner towards him, he became horribly sulky, went less often to Cranium Villa, and shot birds and hares by wholesale. Had the poor partridges understood their own interests, they would have got up a deputation to Lotty, begging her to smile upon their murderer, and so draw him from the turnip-fields to the drawing-room. No; Lotty was not a coquette, she acted only from impulse; she thought so much of Arthur Stapleton in his absence, that she felt timid and abashed in his presence, feeling as if he could read her heart, and tell what had been passing there. Yet, had she been the veriest coquette that ever studied attitudes in her glass, she could not have hit on a line of conduct so well adapted to gain the triumph that coquettes delight in, considering the two young men now within the circle of her fascinations. Norton was charmed by her

candour and evident attention to what he said, while the other was goaded into a stronger passion than he had hitherto felt, by what he considered her coolness towards him, just as a cold wind serves admirably for the drawing up of a fire. It did him a world of good, that state of doubt. It took down his self-conceit a good deal to think that he had been cast off by one to whom he had been making love, all his life pretty nearly, and it made him feel the value of that heart he had before hesitated about seeking, while his conscience whispered pretty loudly that his late behaviour deserved any amount of punishment. This latter idea weighed so on his mind, that he at one time suspected that Norton had betrayed his London life, though a moment's reflection banished the thought for ever, and he was ashamed of having even momentarily entertained such an idea. Was he getting jealous? I think he must have had a touch of the malady; and when a man gets affected that way, it is all over. When Damon thinks Clarissa returns his passion, he loves her in a cool,

patronizing, philosophic manner ; when Clarissa shows signs of coldness, he becomes excited and impassioned in an inverse ratio ; but should Clarissa be seen walking with Colin, heigh ho ! it is all over with poor Damon. Vanity, love, pride, emulation, envy, rage—away go the passions, helter-skelter, all in a ruck. If you see Damon, under these circumstances, cross the road, get over the stile, do anything but meet him, talk to him, or reason with him, for his ears are closed—a mist is before his eyes, through which he sees everything as in a mirage, much magnified and topsy-turvy. Oh Turks ! ye only true philosophers, who, considering prevention better than cure, shut your wives up in such a manner that jealousy can but rarely get at you ; you do not know the multitude of feelings of which you deprive yourselves. What is the good of all those wives ; oh ! three-tailed pacha, when you do not get half a sensation out of the whole lot ? Oh ! competition, nurse of all arts and sciences, what a relish thou givest to all our pleasures, what a lever thou art to our

labours? No dog half enjoys his bone, unless there is another prowling about it with hungry looks.

“What an ass I was to bring Norton here,” said Stapleton to himself; “I am sure Lotty likes him better than me, because she always talks so much to him; and he certainly is a taking sort of man—he is more amiable, more moral, far cleverer than I am. But, confound him,” added he, glancing at the mirror, “he is not half so handsome! Pshaw! what do I care about her, after all. She may marry Norton, or any one else, for what I care.”

And having made this resolution, he went to seek Norton to go out pheasant shooting; and two hours after he was walking with the very young lady, whom he had determined not to see again, leaning on his arm, Norton following with Mrs. Pheeler, their guns being left at Cranium Villa, whither they had gone for luncheon after killing a few pheasants. There is not one man in ten who has any business to make a resolution, so few there are who can keep one! It was a splendid

day in October : there had been a frost in the early morning, so that the dew was yet on the grass and fallen leaves, and all Nature glittered in the rays of the warm bright sun.

“I shall be sorry to leave this beautiful part of the world for my smoky, dingy, old chambers,” said Norton to Mrs. Pheeler ; “but I must return the day after to-morrow, and I shall have to thank you for the pleasantest time I have ever spent in my life.”

“If you are sincere,” answered Mrs. Pheeler, “you will come and spend your Christmas with us ; though how our small dull party can possibly amuse you, I cannot imagine.”

Norton eagerly accepted the invitation ; it was too painful to him to think that days of such happiness as he had experienced there should pass away for ever. While he was making his acknowledgments, the attention of the whole party was arrested by an extraordinary figure coming towards them along the road. His boots were travel-worn, his trousers an immense black and white plaid,

cut in a *very* foreign fashion; his coat was out at elbows, his face was hidden by a bush of whisker, beard, and moustache, and a slouching Spanish wide-awake sheltered his head. On his back was a knapsack, and in his hand he carried an Alpine staff, with a chamois-horn for a handle. When they came up to this wild being, to their astonishment he stopped and saluted them.

“What! don’t you know me, Miss Pheeler!—Stapleton! Norton! even Carlo, dear Carlo, who bit me!”

“What, Newfield! you don’t mean to say that it is you?”

“I do, though. Pardon the contradiction. Can dress so change the object of our affections, that when a man returns to his native land after tending the Latinity and morality of three young scions of noble houses, (rejoicing in the names of Smith, Hodgeson, and Pipeclay,) on a walking tour through France and Switzerland, he is not recognized by those of whose bread he has eaten, of whose cup he has drunk,—whose robbers he has helped to shoot, and whose gamekeepers

have endeavoured to make game of him,—whose dogs have bitten him—haven't they, Carlo? Poor doggy, then! I won't shake hands with anybody else, because I am rather dirty; but if Stapleton will give me an order on his housemaid for a warm bath and a bed, I will stay in the latter till my shirt is washed and my coat mended, for all my luggage is contained in this knapsack. I left my boxes at Paris."

They all shook hands with him in spite of his excuses, and turned back towards Adderly Hall, whither they all proposed to accompany him. On their way, he told them the cause of his sudden appearance in a more coherent manner.

"Three Oxford men," he said, "wanted to make up a reading party to Switzerland; I wanted to make a little money, and am fond of travelling, so we soon came to terms. We went first to Paris, where I met Noel, who is still staying there. I am to join him there again soon, by the bye. We agreed to leave our luggage at Paris, and proceed with knapsacks on a walking tour, which we did;

but, unfortunately, we did not read much, for we left all our books, by mistake, with our luggage at Paris, except one small edition of Don Juan and a French Dictionary. My services as tutor were not, therefore, much required; but I am sure I earned my money as courier, for none of them had been abroad before, and I had often. We went up Mont Blanc—don't stare, we did not get to the top—and got lost in a snow-drift—we did not get to the bottom—and I left my razor behind, *voilà !* We wandered about, in fine, everywhere, until my pupils had to go back to Oxford. We then returned to Paris for our luggage, which they easily found; but I, unfortunately, had left mine with Noel, who had disappeared; his lodgings were shut up, and himself gone. So I thought I would come and see you, and refit in England; so made my way to Bristol, and here I am, very dirty, and rather anxious for a cutlet. And here *we* are," added he, as they arrived at the house.

"Now, Stapleton, just tell your old butler that I am a Christian, and not a kangaroo, and

he will soon recognise me, and, as we are sworn friends and allies, he will look to my creature comforts, while you escort the ladies home. Adieu, Mrs. Pheeler, I will call and hear your adventures on the Continent directly I am presentable, which I hope to be by the day after to-morrow, and *then*, perhaps, you will speak to me, for I declare you have done nothing but laugh ever since I met you."

Merry was the dinner at Adderly Hall that evening, and merry was the shooting expedition of the following morning, for Newfield was in tip-top spirits, as he always was on returning from the Continent. The day next to that was the first of November, and Norton returned to London. The conversation between Stapleton and Newfield turned, of course, after dinner upon the friend who had just left them.

"He is a good fellow," said Newfield, "but I stand rather in awe of him."

"He is, indeed, a good fellow! I wonder how much I should have lost by this time if he had not dragged me down here!"

"Lost!" cried Newfield, "what do you

mean? By-the-bye, I have never heard how you got on in London after I left you to your own devices. You did not bet, I hope?"

"I did though, and lost pretty considerably; and I made a great fool of myself in a variety of ways. In a word, I got sick of everything but play, and I lost heavily night after night."

"Now, that is your way," answered Newfield, "how can you be such an ass? *why* did you go and get used up in that manner? When you began to feel disgusted you ought to have gone away. Reading, travelling, or yachting, would soon have brought you round again. Why, if I had your income I would not feel a moment's dullness, if I lived to be a hundred. Are there not Northern passages to be found where you may get frozen? Are there not Arabian deserts where you may die of thirst? Are there not wild beasts in Africa who will eat you, and savages in America who will scalp you. Why *should* you be dull? Don't you remember what glorious fun we had that night at Vauxhall? I suppose you soon got sick of such scenes? You did, and tired of

Rosa? I thought so. Well, then, I tell you what I should have done had I been you. The first time I found myself sick of dancing before four in the morning, or yawning in the company of a pretty girl, I should have packed up my traps and gone off to Africa or Lapland, as I might feel hot or cold at the time. Do you not think I should have regained my appetite for fun by the time I came back? I am now speaking theoretically, you know, for I myself never felt a moment's *ennui*."

"Well, I never suffer that way while I am leading a quiet life," answered Stapleton, "I have my books and my gun, and a little society, and a good digestion; and I get along very comfortably. It is in the intervals of great excitement that I feel that leaden oppression, under the influence of which I can so easily imagine men committing suicide."

"Dissipation does not agree with you, I know it. You must, therefore, come with me to Paris this winter."

"What a paradox!"

"Not at all, there you can be gay,

without becoming dissipated, unless you like; a thing you cannot do in London."

"You will find me a very dull companion," answered Stapleton, "for I do not mean to go on again as I did in London; but I want to see Paris, and I do not see why I should not go with you. Did you not say Noel would be there?"

"Yes, I am to meet him at the Cafè de Paris on the 20th of December. You had better come. I can get you lodgings in the house I always stay at, by writing at once. I will secure them by to-morrow for the last ten days in December, the whole of January and February, and then you can return to England in March; that is settled, I am glad I shall have some one green to point out the beauties of the Louvre and Versailles to. I adore lionizing."

Stapleton acceded the more easily to this plan, that it favoured his determination of running away from the object of his passion. That it was not requited, he felt assured, and he suspected that Norton was more fortunate than himself, and determined to watch Lotty's

manner, thinking to judge by that, whether she was uneasy at Norton's departure. With this view he said abruptly on meeting her next day—

“Norton's gone !”

“So I suppose,” she answered ; “he said he was going yesterday. What a nice man he is ; you are fortunate in your friends.”

“Thank you,” said Newfield, coming forward, “you doubtless alluded to me, and, though I say it who should not say it, my friend here *is* particularly fortunate in his friends.”

Lotty broke out in the clearest, most natural laugh that ever was laughed, there was nothing forced about it.

No, thought Stapleton, she is not in love with Norton, *that* is evident. He was soon confirmed in this opinion, by observing that Lotty's manner towards Newfield was as free and unconstrained as it had been towards Norton ; it was with himself alone, then, that she was altered. But why ? did she see his passion, and was she anxious to prevent its growth, from the consciousness that she must

disappoint it? doubtless that was it. He was a great deal too proud to ask for her love, while there was any chance of a refusal. However, he did not get so morose and sullen as a good lover ought to under such circumstances, partly because he saw the Pheelers every day, and partly because Newfield's high spirits were irresistible.

It amused Newfield much to watch the lovers, for he saw through the whole plot at the first glance, and always tried to throw them together, and leave them alone if possible; but he could not make out the reasons for Stapleton's delay, evident as it was that the girl was fond of him. He and Doctor Sarfe had many a quiet chuckle over it of an evening, when Stapleton would sit for more than an hour without making any remark beyond an intimation that "it was going to rain." Then would Newfield whisper in the Doctor's ear, "That fellow has the queerest way of making love I ever saw."

November passed away, the early part of December followed, and Adderly Hall was once more shut up. Stapleton accompanied

his friend to Paris, still uncertain whether or no he had any chance of getting the wife he wanted.

Stapleton had hardly left the neighbourhood when Norton arrived, according to previous invitation, at Cranium Villa. He was in mourning, for his uncle had lately died, leaving him all his property, with an injunction not to sell his Irish estates. His arrival gave great joy to all, especially to the master of the house, who, as age grew upon him, confined himself more to his study, and grew more and more hobby-horsical. And as Norton shook hands with Lotty on his arrival, he thought how delightful her aid would be in civilizing his Irish peasantry !

CHAPTER XIII.

ON the morning of the twenty-first of February, 1848, four Englishmen sat at breakfast in a handsomely furnished room in the Rue ———, Paris. Three of the party we are already acquainted with: Noel, Stapleton, and Newfield, and it was at the apartments of the former that they were assembled. The fourth was a small fair man, slight, but muscular in make, who was very short-sighted and wore an eye-glass. For the rest, he was well dressed, and boasted of the name of Eglinton.

“Come, Stapleton, you are quite dull this morning,” said Noel; “take a glass of

champagne, man; what is the matter with you?"

"Oh, nothing, one cannot be always laughing; I have seen all the lions here, and think I shall return to England in a day or two, it is getting dull work."

"Wait a bit," said Eglinton; "and you will not complain of dulness, there will be a row directly; you may depend upon it, the people will not stand the stopping of this banquet, if I know anything of their character."

"Oh, it will not be much," said Noel; "a mere row which will be put down immediately by a change of ministry; Louis Philippe knows well what he is about. If there was to be a revolution now, it would be some fun. If we were to fight for Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, there would be something in it. But these low-minded bourgeois, the shop-keepers, and National Guard hate the very name of a Republic; they care far more for the preservation of their goods than the spread of liberty and the enlightenment of mankind."

“Why, Noel, you talk like a Socialist! I always took you for a Church and State man!” cried Newfield.

“My dear fellow, when I am in England I hold those opinions which I believe to be safest and best for my country; I do not choose that her prosperity, and consequently my own, should be risked for the sake of trying absurd and poetical experiments which never can answer; but in France I give the reins to my imagination, and dream of the regeneration of mankind. If France likes to try it and ruin herself, it does me no harm, and I like to see experiments of every kind tried, I always did when a boy, especially when they ended in a bang, which political experiments always do! What is the use of holding slow, old-womanish, every-day politics, when you get no good by them? No! no! Vive la Republic! a bas Guizot! Libertè! Egal——go on, one of you, I am exhausted; give me some champagne, Stapleton?”

“Then you think we had better be Repub-

lieans?" asked Eglinton; "is it not rather *low*?"

"Not a bit, not a bit, quite the contrary, all the shopkeepers are royalists, answered Noel; "but you will not have any occasion to fight for any opinions or cant notions, for there will be no fun."

"Won't there!" cried Newfield. "Hark!" And in the distance they heard that confused murmur which betokens the advance of multitudes, and soon distinguished the words—

"Allons, enfants de la patrie,"

sung in a loud clear voice, then suddenly the chorus burst on their ears from thousands of voices:—

"Marchons, qu'un sang impur abreuve nos sillons."

"Won't there!" reiterated Newfield rubbing his hands; "come, Stapleton, and let us see what is going on." Stapleton, who was as much excited as himself, caught up his hat and followed to the door.

"Are you coming?" he said to the other two, as he left the room.

"Not yet," replied Noel, laughing.

"We have not finished breakfast yet," added Eglinton. "You dine with me to-day remember, Stapleton, and if you are later than six we shall conclude you are shot, or sabred, or guillotined, and shall go to dinner without you."

"All right!" answered the other, as he closed the door.

On leaving the house Newfield and Stapleton found themselves in a mixed crowd of students and operatives, and falling in with them, they marched on they knew not where. All the cafès and shops on the Boulevards were closed; and their ranks were augmented at every step. At length the cry was raised, "To the Madeleine!" and soon they were assembled in the open space before that beautiful church. So vast was the crowd that not only this space, but all the adjacent streets were blocked up. On inquiry, they found that the mob were awaiting here the deputies of the opposition, not being aware

that the intended demonstration had been abandoned.

As Newfield seemed much excited, screaming "Vive la Reforme!" "a bas Guizot!" at the top pitch of his voice, Stapleton concluded he knew all about it, and asked him what was to be reformed.

"I don't know," was the reply. "It seems the thing to shout, and you may be sure that something wants reformation, nothing human being ever perfect. The fact is, I never read the papers, so I am lamentably ignorant about state affairs; but from what I can make out, the Whigs of the French parliament are out, and the Tories are in, and Guizot is Prime Minister, and the Spanish marriages and one or two other little things have made the King unpopular, and the Whigs have got up a Reform banquet to come off to day, and the Government have stopped it, and the people say they have no right to do so, and I sympathise so deeply with them, because I remember my feelings at school once, when the master discovered and stopped a supper which the boys had

got up at the end of the half —— But, look here, they are handing papers about, and one man has got upon another man's back to read one of them out; let us go nearer to him, we may pick up some information." Pressing themselves into the immediate circle round the man with the paper, they listened to a long preamble setting forth that, in consequence of the resolution adopted by the opposition, an act of impeachment should be proposed against the ministry, and after "considering" a great many things, finished up with "Considering, moreover, that the general manifestation in which the population of Paris were to have operated, imparted its real character to the approaching banquet.

"That the measures adopted by the military authorities would expose to certain sanguinary collisions such as might persist in making a collective demonstration against force.

"That patriotism and humanity both commanded the avoiding of such extremities. For these motives, the committee have

decided that the twelfth arrondissement banquet shall be adjourned."

Yells, groans, and curses followed this announcement, and the execrations which had before been heaped on the ministry, were now transferred to the opposition. A second paper was soon handed to the same man, and those immediately around him were quiet.

"Electoral Committee of the second arrondissement,

"The members of the second arrondissement Electoral Committee, being informed that the opposition deputies have resolved on not repairing to the twelfth arrondissement banquet, have unanimously decided that the second arrondissement expresses its astonishment at such decision having been adopted without being accompanied with the resignation of the opposition deputies, and invites the opposition deputies to tender their resignations without delay, it being the only means which can, at this moment, afford satisfaction to the public opinion."

The scene was now curious and exciting.

Orators were in every direction haranguing the crowds around them, who, however, paid little attention to them, but gathered in knots, talking and gesticulating vehemently. After a time, a large part of the crowd went off to the house of Odillon Barrot, to ask for an explanation ; and others dispersed in various directions ; but the greater part, with whom our friends kept, adjourned to Guizot's residence, the Hotel des Affaires d'Etrangeres, in the Rue des Capuchins, where they amused themselves with execrating the Minister, and breaking the windows, in which latter pastime Newfield excelled greatly, for he was a capital shot with a stone.

"If the French *want* their windows broken, *why* should we not accommodate them?" he asked Stapleton. So successful was he in this and other Republican ebullitions, that a man with a most filthy beard, and blouse to match, his breath reeking with garlic, insisted on fraternising ; and falling into his arms, kissed his lips, and wept upon his bosom. He was a glazier !

But this kind of thing could not last for

ever; and just when everybody least expected it, the gates of the hotel opened, and a body of the Municipal Guard issuing therefrom at the charge, drove the unarmed crowd into the Champs Elysees. Other crowds also converged here before other detachments of the military, and as they could not get away again, they amused themselves by breaking the lamps and burning the public chairs there. These amusements, however exciting to Frenchmen, soon became wearisome to our two English revolutionists, and about five o'clock in the evening, they wormed themselves out of the crowd, and took their way to Eglinton's lodgings, where they arrived at length, tired and hungry, without meeting any adventure. Noel and Eglinton were not there, but they soon came in; the former looking much amused, the latter, much astonished. They, too, had been out to see what was going on, but had witnessed no actual collision between the military and the populace; and about five o'clock, they, too, felt inclined to go home to dinner. The rat-a-tat of the rappel had told them for some time that the

National Guard was turning out; and what with that body, and the troops of the line, they both came to the conclusion that the mob would be utterly cowed, and that no serious row would take place. Just as they had convinced themselves of this, they came to the Boulevard des Italiens, which they had to cross to get home. To their surprise, all that part, which they had expected to find crowded to excess, was cleared of people; they were the only two on the pavement. As they were both short-sighted—Eglinton particularly so—they reached the middle of the street before they discovered that a line of soldiers was drawn up across it, about thirty yards on their left.

“They are the Municipal Guard, and look! there on the right, drawn up facing them, are the Garde National,” said Noel, “what can they be about?—not fighting, surely, for they are both called out to keep the mob in order. By Jove! though, they look very hostile. What the devil! they are loading their muskets! Come along, Eglinton, we are right between them! If

one side miss us, the others are sure to hit us."

But Eglinton would not budge an inch. There he stood, right in the middle of the Boulevard, looking first at one side, then on the other, with his eye-glass to his eye.

"Nonsense! man," said he, "the Garde National like Louis Philippe; *they* will never fraternise with the mob. Besides, too, men would never be such fools as to stand opposite one another like that, and——By Gad! though, they are doing something funny with their muskets."

"Good Heaven! they have brought them to the 'present!'" cried Noel, dragging his obstinate friend to the other side by the collar; and hardly had they reached a spot of comparative safety, when both parties fired!

"There! you see!" said Noel. "My dear fellow, let it be one of your maxims in your walk through life (which does not at present promise to be a *long* walk), never unnecessarily to expose yourself to a cross-fire!"

But Eglinton was so astonished that he did not seem to think of the imminent danger he had been in. He kept exclaiming :

“Well, who ever heard of such absurd folly ? I can understand people fighting over a barricade, when they have had all the trouble of making it. But to go and stand opposite each other, feel uncertain whether to be friends or enemies, think some little time about, and then calmly and deliberately to shoot at each other ! Well ! I never had a very good opinion of the French, but I never considered them such fools as all that !”

He made the same remarks at dinner, and the servant who waited on them explained the matter, by informing them that the Municipal Guard had, in many places, behaved with unnecessary cruelty to the mob, and that the National Guard had interfered. But Eglinton could not imagine why they fought at all.

“Why not let the people have their dinner ?” he asked ; “or why should the people fight to be allowed to hold a dinner, when

they could get a much better one for less money at the Cafè de Paris?"

"They fight for liberty," said Stapleton.

"Liberty! what the devil is the good of liberty, or fraternity, or a banquet, or anything else in that line, when you have got from two to three ounces of lead in your stomach, with a beast of a bayonet sticking between your fourth and fifth ribs?"

No one present could accurately specify the amount of pleasure allowable to a man under such circumstances, and the questioner remained unanswered. They sat for some time after dinner, recounting what they had seen in the course of the day, speculating on what would happen, and discussing which side they had better take.

"If they make use of artillery, Government will get the better, if not, the Opposition; suppose we start with the people, and if we see a cannon, or hear one rumbling in the distance, we had better change sides as soon as possible. It is not so amusing to defend a barricade which is being pegged at with cannon-balls!"

While they talked on in this way, the noise in the streets increased every half-hour. Thousands rushed about the city, in all directions, screaming,—“Aux armes, aux armes, citoyens !” at the top pitch of their voices.

“Not a bad hint,” said Noel. “Which-ever side we take, we had better have some weapons. You all have pistols I believe.”

They had.

“So have I, we will take them, but they will not be of any use, we must get some swords, for we shall want to defend ourselves more than to hurt others.”

“I will send my servant for some,” said Eglinton, ringing the bell. “He knows where to get everything, were all the shops shut up. Hallo ! Newfield ! Stapleton ! why, you are not off again.”

“I can stand this no longer,” said Newfield.

“Nor I,” added Stapleton, “I have been half-mad the last half-hour ; besides one does not get hold of a revolution every day,

and this will not last long, it is a pity to lose any of the fun. Get what weapons you like for us while we are gone, and we will be back in a couple of hours."

"These fellows will certainly get killed!" said Eglinton, as the door closed.

"Most probably," answered Noel, lighting a cigar.

"Oh, here is Jean," said Eglinton, as his valet entered the room. What shall we have, Noel?"

"Oh, Jean, will you go out and get us four good, strong, light cut-and-thrust swords; and, Jean, will you bring some more coffee?"

"Oui, m'seur," answered the valet; and, in half-an-hour afterwards, swords and coffee made their appearance together. The former were examined and approved of, the sword-exercise gone through, to the great alarm of the lodger over-head, who was a nervous man, and who thought, when he heard the steel clashing underneath, that the house was attacked; and then they sat down to discuss the latter. They had not contributed

many sips towards this duty, however, before they heard some one tumbling up the stair-case, and immediately afterwards the two, whose speedy decease had been so confidently predicted, burst into the room, hot, breathless, and vehemently excited.

"Well, where have you been?" was the first question naturally put.

It was received by a rolling volley of answers.

"Everywhere," said one.

"Nowhere," said the other.

"Committing burglary."

"Changing dynasties."

"Dethroning tyrants."

"Enlightening mankind."

Were a few of the explanatory sentences which burst from the panting pair.

"Take it easy," said Noel; "have some brandy and water to clear your throats; decide between yourselves who is to be spokesman, and then, perhaps, we shall have a chance of understanding what you have to tell us; and here is a beautiful full-flavoured real Havannah cigar—no worthless trea-

sure in France—to console him who is not the spokesman.”

Stapleton claimed the cigar, and Newfield the ear of the house. Their appearance, indeed, was such as to excite admiration and inquiry ; their hats and coats were covered with tri-coloured-ribbon flags. The wide-awakes they had gone out in were replaced by red night-caps, and they were armed, Stapleton with a spit, Newfield with an old musket and bayonet.

“On leaving the house,” began Newfield, “we, of course, found ourselves in the middle of a mob, not, however, so harmless a mob as it was in the morning, but one partially armed, and unanimously decided on arming. Some of the blouse-clad citizens carried muskets over their shoulders and cartouche-boxes at their backs, others bore carbines, others pistols ; some had pitchforks, some knives, some scythes—ugh ! fancy being mowed ; one had an enormous blunderbuss with a spring bayonet, and one a small cannon used for firing salutes at *fêtes*. No species of weapon seemed to come amiss to them. We

paraded through the streets, shouting for arms, and inviting all good citizens to produce any guns or swords they might have in the house, to be used for the liberation of their country. The good citizens not being over forward, in some cases, in assisting to arm their patriotic defenders, we, instead of deserting them, as they deserved, graciously insisted in watching over their liberties, in spite of themselves; forcibly entering the houses where weapons were supposed to be, and applying them, when found, to patriotic purposes. It is not to be supposed that we were uninterrupted in our laudable proceedings. Bodies of police—those enemies to freedom in all countries—occasionally interfered; but some we put to death, some we fraternised with, and others fled. It was after one of these encounters, in which I had a set-to with a gens-d'arme, which resulted in the latter receiving two black eyes, that we came under the special notice of a man who seemed to be a species of leader amongst the mob. Nature had not bestowed upon him those charms which are calculated to find

favour with the fair. He had the most decided squint I ever saw; his front teeth stuck out beyond his lips; and, altogether, he looked more like a devil than a human being. However, devil or not, he thought fit to approve of our humble endeavours to break the heads of the gendarmerie. 'Noble sons of France,' said he, 'patriotic defenders of our liberties, receive those weapons of which you have proved yourselves worthy; take them, take them, and use them for the glory of France, and the regeneration of mankind.' Here he gave me this musket and bayonet—a deadly weapon had it a lock, and were it not so rusty and honey-combed that I had sooner some one fired it at me than fire it off myself. However, the bayonet would be useful to poke up tyrants in the ribs, though, from its bluntness, inferior in this respect to this spit, observe it, which Cock-eye presented to Stapleton at the same time that he gave me the musket; though I fear, if our friend here used it for culinary purposes, the result would hardly be 'for the glory of France.' As a weapon of war, however, I

have no doubt he will wield it with great *éclat*, and gain immortal fame thereby, especially as foreigners are so fond of *spitting*. On our way home we went into a low *café* and treated some artizans, male and female, to wine, the former, whereupon, embraced us, and the latter made these harlequin figures of us, pinning their ribbons all about us. Ha! here are the swords! We shall have a regular spree to-morrow! Louis Philippe has been reviewing ten thousand men on the Carrousel."

"I congratulate you on the latter event," said Noel, "you will have a chance of getting your throat cut after all; but had we not better go to bed at once if we are to fight all to-morrow?"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE progress of the revolution on Wednesday the 23rd, was fast and furious, though no one knew what he was fighting about. The National Guard, who felt insulted at the distrust displayed towards them by government, both by forbidding their attendance at the banquet, and delaying so long the summons to preserve the peace, in every case took part with the people. And even the troops of the line refused to attack a barricade in the Rue St. Martin. The Municipal Guard, however, showed fight, and skirmishes between that body and the people were going on all day.

An event, however, occurred that night,

which aroused the passions of the people to the highest pitch, changed the shouts of "Vive la Reforme," into one universal yell of "Vive la Republic!" and altered the whole character of the revolution. A large mob had assembled opposite the Hotel d'Etrangeres, upon which they were supposed to be meditating some attack; to prevent which the military were drawn up across the Boulevard, to arrest the progress of the crowd. Seeing this, the head of the mass made a rush forward, and broke through the line before the soldiers had time to bring their bayonets to the charge; at the same time one of the ringleaders presented a pistol at an officer, and fired. The officer fell. In an instant the muskets of the men were at their shoulders—the mob paused—there was a moment's silence, broken by the word of command, "Fire!" The volley burst forth as if from one machine, and as the bullets tore into the crowded masses, shrieks, groans and curses rent the air. The mob, dispersing, fled through the streets, calling on their fellow-countrymen to avenge the

slain. When the bravest of the multitude returned, they found fifty corpses weltering in their blood. Waggon's were procured, the dead bodies arranged within them, and a solemn procession commenced through the principal streets by torch-light. The ghastly appearance of the dead, as the glare of the torches flittered over their contracted features and blood-stained limbs, the lamentations of their friends and relations, collected round the cars, the screams and yells for vengeance resounding from the armed men who escorted them; the furious gestures of the women who followed in the procession, adjuring the citizens to arm and revenge the death of their husbands and sons, and cursing all those who seemed inclined to hold back; the inflammatory speeches of republican orators, who were not slow to seize upon so favourable an opportunity, all raised the passions of the people to the highest pitch.

Everywhere armed men were to be seen hurrying about, yelling, foaming at the mouth; nay, even weeping in their excitement. Men embraced each other, swearing

to establish a republic or die. Barricades were commenced in all quarters, without much reference to situation or position, and at one of these rather an absurd scene took place. Our English friends had not been idle all day, they had shouted, sung, and now and then found themselves engaged in a scrimmage, without knowing or caring what the result might be. And when night came, and the excitement of those around them rose nearly to madness, they, too, yielded to the influence of the hour, and at half-past eleven were hard at work erecting a barricade in a street where it could not possibly be of the slightest use. First an omnibus was seized by the mob, overturned, and covered with stones torn from the pavement; tables, chairs, and sofas from the neighbouring houses added to the heap. Just then a devoted voiture drove up; it was immediately stopped, and the horse being taken out of the shafts, immediately forced into its place in the foundation of the barricade. Now, a gentleman was in the voiture when it was stopped; but not knowing what the intentions of the mob

might be, he thought it might be the safer plan to remain quiet where he was, which he did, until the vehicle he was in was almost entirely covered over with other articles. When he discovered his position he endeavoured to get out, but that was now impracticable; and he was unobserved, or unheeded by all except Newfield, who, hearing a noise issue from the window as he was adjusting a sofa on the roof, peeped in, and discovered the passenger, foaming with rage, and demanding loudly to be let out.

“Very sorry,” said Newfield, “but it can’t be helped; the barricade can’t be pulled down now for the convenience of one private individual. I am sure, as a good citizen, you would not wish such a thing. It will only be a few hours’ imprisonment, unless, indeed, they knock the whole heap about with artillery, and then you will not stand much chance. Lord! how the splinters will fly!”

“Sir,” answered the enraged Frenchman, “you mock me, you laugh at me; if I ever escape from here, you shall repent your

conduct. I demand your card, if you are not a coward!"

"With the greatest pleasure in life, old boy!" answered Newfield, pulling out his card-case, and dropping a card in at the window; in return for which, he received the Frenchman's. "Adieu, old fellow, take care of yourself, and don't fret. . What is the chap's name," he added to himself, bringing the card nearer to a torch which was burning close by, by the light of which he discovered that the name of his present prisoner and future antagonist was Adolphe Dupin. He called out to his friends, who were helping to drag a huge cart to the top of the pile, to come and hear the whole story. When they heard that a man was in the carriage, forming part of the barricade, they were highly amused; but on his name being mentioned, Eglinton looked serious."

"If ever he gets out," said he, "you may as well make your will, Newfield. This man is a dead-shot, and one of the best fencers in Paris."

"So am I!" modestly rejoined Newfield,

who had never had a fencing lesson in his life, though he was a tolerable adept with the broadsword.

No one thought of going to bed that night, and when the morning broke, the streets were everywhere bristling with barricades, surmounted by men ready to defend them against anything—except cannons; and if Louis Philippe had made use of the artillery in the Carrousel, who can tell the result. Probably his son would have been on the throne at the present time; but the king would not believe those who described to him the real state of affairs, but thought that a popular ministerial combination would put an end to the whole disturbance.

Imbecility pervaded everything which was said or done, by those whose interest and wish it was to preserve order. Had they acted together, and with energy, the insurrection might have been put an end to before the day was half over. Instead of this, the stream went on increasing and gaining strength, until by noon it was irresistible.

As Newfield afterwards clearly expressed it, in a letter to a friend, "everybody was fighting everybody else, everywhere, for everything."

The king gave up all that was required; but the people were actually fighting, and it was impossible to make them hear or understand what was done. A parley was impossible, and if it had not been, the people did not know exactly what they wanted, except fighting.

Our four friends kept together in the earlier part of the day, but in the Place du Carrousel Stapleton and Newfield found themselves once more separated from the others. Soon after this the troops surrendered a quantity of arms, and our two friends each got a musket and a supply of ammunition; and with shooting-jackets, bonnet-rouges, cartouche-boxes at their backs, muskets over their shoulders, and swords by their sides, they cut very martial and revolutionary figures indeed. Hitherto they had only seen a little skirmishing, not attended with much bloodshed or danger, for they had

not been present at the massacre in the Hotel des Capuchins; but now they were to see some real fighting, for the cry, "To the Palais Royal," burst from a thousand voices, and they found themselves borne onward in the living tide. In a few minutes they were at the Palais Royal; and the crowd, emboldened by the impunity with which all their acts of violence had hitherto been met, rushed madly to the attack. But the appearance of the troops charged with the defence was different to that of the men who had refused to fire on their countrymen in the Rue St. Martin, or of those who had just yielded up their weapons in the Place du Carrousel. There was a sternness about their eyes, and a compression of their lips, which made Newfield exclaim to his friend—

"Those chaps mean mischief!"

And it was soon evident that they *did* mean mischief, for the head of the attacking column was suddenly arrested by a volley which strewn the ground with killed and wounded. The brave rushed to the front, the timid drew back. The military had now

no longer an unarmed mob to deal with. All those now engaged in the attack carried weapons of some sort; and the close and deadly volley of the soldiers was answered by a scattered, desultory, yet not ineffective fire from the assailants. The soldiers were used to fire-arms, and many of them good marksmen, while hundreds of the mob now had muskets in their hands for the first time. Still, the numbers of the latter supplied all deficiencies, and then, were they not Frenchmen?—and had they not tasted blood? The two young Englishmen did not, for some time, use their muskets; it went rather against their consciences to shoot at men with whom they had no quarrel, for no one earthly reason but because they happened to find themselves in a mob who *had* some quarrel with them. Especially as, if they had had their choice, their English sympathies would have been for Louis Philippe, not against him, simply because he was getting the worst of it. At last, however, during a charge made at the soldiery, in the hope of breaking through them, in which the

two friends were among the foremost, (for fighting with the bayonet seemed a fair, stand-up sort of thing, which two men might engage in though they had no quarrel; shooting a man they thought different,)—Newfield got “barked” in two places by musket-balls, and Stapleton received a bayonet thrust in the left shoulder. The pain of their wounds, when the gunpowder got into them, soon destroyed all feelings of squeamishness; and when the charge was repulsed, and they were driven with the rest to some distance, they began firing away at the soldiers with as little compunction as if they had been pheasants. This desperate fight—desperate indeed, considering it was all for amusement!—continued for two hours. At last the fire of the defenders waxed fainter; there was a rush, a struggle, one universal crash of fire-arms, a moment's undisturbed silence, a yell of triumph, and the populace were in the palace! Then, what a scene presented itself! The Republicans, fired with madness at the sight of regal paraphernalia, raged madly through the saloons, de-

stroyed the furniture, and seizing the throne, dragged it out and burned it amid the most frantic shouts of joy. Poor chair of wood and gilt ! They burnt it with as much apparent pleasure as the Papists would burn the Earl of Shaftesbury, or some gentlemen the Pope !

When there was nothing more left to gratify the mischievous propensities of the mob in the Palais Royal, they raised the cry, "To the Tuilleries !" and all rushed off in that direction. But they were deprived of the fun of another fight, for the garrison was withdrawn, and the gates open to receive them, and as they entered the Royal Family left. The scenes of the Palais Royal were here repeated. The palace was sacked, and the throne broken to pieces, and thrown out of window.

Where were Stapleton and Newfield just now ? Why, in the cellar, like sensible men ; and here they found Noel in the midst of a knot of vagabonds, walking into the rarest wines in the most thirsty manner. They were not slow to follow the example set

them, and the three ought to have had their portraits taken as they stood, blood-stained, singed, smoke-blackened, and armed, drinking the wine which poor old Louis had intended for his own particular tippie. When they returned, rather vinous, to the upper air, they discovered, by the following proclamation, that there would not be any more fighting for the present. A great many people got, for the first time, some inkling of what they had been fighting for from this same document, which glared from the walls:—

“Proclamation of the Provisional Government.”

(“A new government already!” cried Newfield, “why, where was the use, then, of getting rid of the old one?”)

“A retrograde and oligarchical government has been overthrown by the heroism of the people of Paris.

“The government has fled, leaving after it a trace of blood which precludes for ever its return.

“The blood of the people has flowed, as

in July; but this time the generous blood shall not be deceived. It has achieved a national and popular government, in accordance with the rights, the progress, and the will of this great and generous people."

Then came a list of the names of the provisional government, which bore no interest to the Englishmen, as they had heard few of them mentioned before. The last paragraph in the proclamation said—

"The Municipal Guard is dissolved. The guard of the city of Paris is intrusted to the National Guard, under the orders of M. Courtais, superior commandant of the National Guard of Paris."

"The Municipal Guard is dissolved!" read Newfield. "Gad! I 'dissolved' one or two of them myself!"

They now thought it would be a good plan to go home and get washed and dressed, especially as the wound in Stapleton's shoulder began to grow painful, and now, for the first time, they missed Eglinton.

"Where is he?" was the first question put to Noel.

"I do not know ; I forgot all about him ; we got separated in the attack of the Palais Royal. I have no doubt we shall find him at home. I will call at his lodgings to see if he is there ; if not, I will leave word for him to come to you. I will be with you in an hour, after I have had a warm bath. If you will get something ready to eat by that time, why all the better, for I have had nothing to-day but gunpowder."

They went home, and on "overhauling themselves," as Newfield called it, discovered that nothing serious was the matter, with the exception of the bayonet-thrust in Stapleton's shoulder. Whereupon, Newfield went out again, and, after some little difficulty, procured a surgeon, who dressed the wound. After which they got some food, and went to sleep on the floor, quite exhausted with fatigue and excitement.

The same thing happened to Noel, who, instead of returning in an hour as he intended, did not make his appearance until the next morning, when he discovered his friends fast asleep on the ground, just as they

had lain down on the previous evening. On awaking, they felt much refreshed in body, but their spirits were necessarily low and gloomy from the reaction of such extraordinary excitement. They were roused from their apathy, however, by the information that Eglinton had not made his appearance. It was immediately determined that Noel and Newfield should go in search of him, Stapleton having been persuaded, much against his will, to go quietly to bed and nurse his arm; for the surgeon had told him that if inflammation was to ensue, it might prove an awkward wound. The other two bent their steps to the Palais Royal, from before which all dead and wounded citizens had been removed. They then went the round of the hospitals, but without being able to see or hear anything of their missing friend. And, though they afterwards renewed their search with the utmost diligence, they never heard anything more of him.

The Orleans dynasty was overthrown. A Republic, the very thing which the great majority of the combatants least wished for,

established. The worst passions of the people had been excited, torrents of blood had been spilt, hundreds of souls had been suddenly sent before the judgment-seat of God, their hands yet reeking with blood, their lips yet vibrating with curses—for what?

CHAPTER XV.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

WHILE Stapleton was thus amusing himself in Paris, his place was supplied at home by his friend and mentor. Norton became a favourite with all, for, whether he was required to talk scientifically with the father of the family, visit the poor with the mother, walk or ride with the daughter, dance at the parties which were always got up in the neighbourhood at Christmas-time, or play blindman's buff at children's fêtes, he entered into whatever was going on with earnest good humour, and therefore acquitted himself with success. He

was very happy for the time, but the consequence of all this was that he fell most violently in love. When a quiet man, whose temperament is calm and benevolent, does transfer his affections from the rest of mankind to one individual, the attack is always very violent; when, in addition to this, his passions are for the first time fully aroused, the disease becomes well nigh incurable. Alas! poor Norton. What crime had he committed that he should fall in love? It is a spiritual small-pox, that love, fatal to almost every one not previously vaccinated with a few sham passions. In the present age people do not suffer from either complaint, love or the small-pox, so severely as our forefathers did; the tainting their blood with the matter from a cow guarding the bodies of our youth from the one, as the infecting their minds with dissipation preserves them from the other. Poor Norton! he had been vaccinated, but not dissipated. What an error in his education! It was a pity that Stapleton had not made a confidant of him, for the knowledge of his friend's

attachment would have preserved him ; but how should the noble, the clean-minded Norton imagine that Stapleton was meditating marriage with an innocent girl, while mixing with the lowest associates, and frequenting scenes of the coarsest dissipation. Poor Lotty never dreamed all this time that Norton was in love with her, and in the innocence of her heart she treated like a brother him who had never known a sister !

He had never attempted to hint to her at his affection ; he durst not do so. He was waiting for some opportunity which might discover the state of her heart, or, at least, give him some slight clue. Lovers are fond of waiting for these opportunities, and when they obstinately refuse to come, occasionally endeavour to make them. Such was the case with C——. Long had he doubted whether he had gained the affections of pretty Bessy J——, and glorious seemed to him the opportunity of discovering his fate when a water party at Southampton was projected. After a long consultation with his friend Jenkins, it was settled that C—— should fall

overboard ; and they determined that a squeak from Bessy would show friendship ; a scream, love ; a fainting-fit, devotion. The time came, C—— was a good swimmer, but it was a cold day ; however, he looked at his mistress, summoned up courage, and fell backwards into the water. Bessy fainted ! all was satisfactory then. Not quite ; C—— got the cramp from the coldness of the water ; the tide was strong, and by the time he was fished into the boat he was stone-dead !

That day two months Bessy became Mrs. Jenkins.

But the idea of tumbling into a river never suggested itself to Norton, and no natural danger had yet turned up. You can read the heart of *a man* sometimes by persuading him to take “a cheerful glass,” but ladies will *not* get tipsy—in public.

And yet Norton *did* discover the state of her heart, without letting her see into his own, but the means he used were so singular, so unexpected—at least by himself—that I tremble as I approach this part of my story, lest it should seem absurd and exaggerated

Nothing but personal knowledge of Norton could prevail on me to credit it myself; and as you, reader, have most probably not heard the account from that gentleman's own lips, I must entreat your pardon if the event of this chapter seems too unnatural.

On the evening of the 14th of January, 1848, some two hours after dinner, Lotty Pheeler reclined in an easy chair by the side of a roaring fire, in the drawing-room of Cranium Villa. The candles had not been brought in, but the room was perfectly well lighted by the fire, which was a blazing mixture of coal and dry wood. As the flickering light fell on her face, it was evident that something which was going on before her eyes, or passing in her mind, amused her. On the opposite side of the fire her mother sat knitting. Mr. Pheeler stood a little on one side of his wife, and Norton was stationed on the rug, near the younger lady's chair. No one else was in the room. Mr. Pheeler was speaking about something which had evidently formed the subject of previous conversation.

“Yes,” he was saying, “I have often tried on her, but without any success, and as you have been successful in several instances, suppose you try your powers now.”

“My success has only been in that which is very common, and the truth of which is owned by all, that is, in producing a species of heavy sleep, or trance. I have never even tried anything further ; indeed, I own I am incredulous about clairvoyance still, though my doubts are shaken by what you have advanced. But if you wish it, and Miss Pheeler has no objection—”

“Objection !” cried the old gentleman ; “a daughter of mine object to anything which aids the advance of science.”

Now Lotty did feel an objection, but she overcame it, rather than disappoint her poor old father, otherwise it was not pleasant for a young lady to be subjected to the earnest and long-continued gaze necessary to the inducement of mesmeric slumber. Some months ago, perhaps, she would not have minded it, but her love for Stapleton had *womanized* her feelings to a great extent ;

still, her predominant feeling on the occasion was a strong inclination to laugh; it was wonderful how much of the *little girl* she yet retained.

"May I presume?" asked Norton, in a hesitating voice.

"Yes, but it will be of no use, I can't be mesmerized, papa has often tried;" answered the patient.

Norton took up his stand before the chair where sat her he loved, took her hand in his, and gazed steadily in her eyes.

Oh! how the touch of that soft white hand thrilled through every nerve! how deeply the light of that blue eye pierced into his soul; his brain grew dizzy, his blood rushed to his heart with a violence which rendered it difficult for him to draw his breath, every pulse beat as though about to burst. For a short time his feelings were fearful, the cold sweat stood on his forehead from the intensity of his emotions, but, through all, the consciousness *that they were not alone* mixed with every feeling, and restrained it.

Poor Norton!

Soon the violence of this paroxysm subsided—as no human emotion can remain at its highest point long—and then his iron *will*, that strength of determination and resolution which he had cultivated from childhood, and which had borne him triumphantly through moral trials where *all* his friends and companions had surrendered, slowly regained the dominion of his breast. He was still in a dangerous position though, and he had much difficulty in fixing his will for some time. At last the brain gained permanent sway over the senses, and the only spirit within him was one concentrated mental command to the mind before him to own his power, or rather a stern, supernatural power which hardly seemed to be *his*.

His fair patient felt the change. At first her eyes had sunk before his ardent, impassioned gaze, but, as the spiritual mastered the sensual in his breast, she, too, felt the change, and her eyes unconsciously raised themselves to his. Thus they remained for half-an-hour, the deep silence being broken only by the click, click, click, of Mrs. Pheeler's knitting-

needles, and Mr. Pheeler was beginning to despair of any effect being produced, when his daughter's eyes became glassy, her head fell back, her arms dropped by her side. Norton now, for the first time, made several passes rapidly before her face, and then looking round, said to the other two, "She sleeps!"

"Do you think she is a clairvoyant?" asked the anxious philosopher. The knitting-needles stopped.

"Yes! I never felt like this before! I feel as if my mind could compel hers to anything. What book is this?" he added, turning to the sleeper, and taking at the same time a small edition of Horace from his pocket.

No answer was returned at first, though a perceptible change flitted across the features. After the question had been repeated several times, however, she replied—

"It is in Latin."

"Does she understand Latin?" asked Norton, turning to the others. On being answered in the negative, he bade the som-

nambulist look at the fortieth page of the book, and read the thirteenth line of the ode there. He knew somewhere about the line she ought to read, as the ode on that page was a great favourite with him, but he was not aware which line was the thirteenth, and he did not open the book to see. His reason for so acting was to discover whether the clairvoyant actually read from the book, or whether she only reflected the thoughts of the mesmeriser. She quickly decided that question by reading slowly, and with wrong accentuation—

“Quale portentum neque militaris
Daunias latis alit æsculetis,
Nec Jubæ tellus generat, Leonum
Arida nutrix.”

He turned to the place, and found that she had begun exactly at the thirteenth line. A strong temptation now came over Norton, an irresistible impulse seemed to force him towards it, and though he felt that he was acting a part not strictly honourable, in discovering her secrets in such a manner, he willed with all his power the question, “Do

you love?" No word passed his lips, but the mind to whom it was addressed heard it, and strove to resist the answer, which was, however, forced from her lips at last.

"Yes," was the whispered reply.

"Whom?" *willed* Norton, and his whole frame trembled, he felt sick and giddy as he leaned forward, hoping to hear his own name. He started back as if an adder had stung him. "How was it I never thought of this before!" he muttered. "Stapleton!"

His agitation was evidently communicating itself to his patient, he had heard that hysterical fits were often brought on by the nerves of the mesmeriser being unstrung, and by a violent effort of will subdued his feelings and awoke her.

"Have I been asleep?" she cried, jumping up.

"Yes, my dear, and I have been quite frightened," said her mother; "you have been reading Latin odes with your eyes shut, and all sorts of funny things."

Norton's abstraction during the rest of the evening was quite unaccountable to the rest

of the party, and when they broke up for the night he announced his intention of leaving next day, a determination which was eagerly combated by all parties, but most eagerly by Mr. Pheeler. Poor old gentleman, it was indeed provoking to lose such a treasure just as he had discovered its value. But arguments and entreaties were alike unavailing; to everything which was urged there was but one reply, "I am very sorry, but circumstances oblige me to go." Against this one gun three batteries were continually playing for half-an-hour, yet without the power to silence it. At last he found himself *alone*. An hour passed, it was midnight, and there he sat on his bed with his face buried in his hands. The hours passed, the long, cold, dreary hours. Darkness gave way gradually to the light of early dawn, till at last the bright sun broke forth in all his splendour upon another day, and then, for the first time, Norton rose from his seat of grief, pale and haggard indeed, but calm and composed. Not many men could have stood the brunt of the battle which had raged in his breast

throughout that weary night, but neither could many have suffered so much from so slight a cause as a failure in gaining the affections of a girl. But Norton was peculiarly constituted. He had never even imagined that he loved before, and he never loved again. His friends wondered at the gloom which hung over him for years, and which he never entirely threw off, but the cause they never even guessed. The Pheelers thought the only reason he left them was the one he gave: that he was obliged to go over to Ireland to look after his property. Even Lotty never knew of the conquest she had made. Norton was right not to seek for the sympathy which would have ended in gossip.

“The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with its joy.”

CHAPTER XVI.

DURING the whole time that he resided in Paris, Stapleton behaved very properly. Paradoxical being that he was, he learned morality at Paris ! Though he visited every place of gaiety he did not intrigue, though he went to several hells he did not gamble. There was a great deal which was new to see and hear, so that he did not feel the need of excitement extraordinary, and, perhaps, this was the principal reason that the love-lorn Damon "behaved as sich;" but he himself put it all down to his love for Lotty Pheeler, and there were times when he thought he had left the field rather precipitately. He might, at least, have struck

one blow before going into winter-quarters, and he determined to act in a more decided manner, to take the initiative in the next campaign, which campaign, the winter being now ended, he felt inclined to commence forthwith.

"At all events," he soliloquized, "I will return to England at once, for Paris is a most uncomfortable place just now. Ah, New-field," he continued, as that worthy entered the room, "I have just made up my mind to go home."

"Well, I shall not be sorry to accompany you, one cannot get a good dinner since the revolution ; just wait till I have killed one more Frenchman, and then we will go."

"Certainly, whom are you going to put to death ?"

"That chap we buried in the barricades. He got out at last, and has sent me a challenge. I have named you and Noel as my friends, and a fellow, with awful moustaches, will be here directly to confer with you. Ah ! here he is !"

A step sounded on the staircase, but it

turned out to be Noel, not the Frenchman. No sooner, however, had the new comer been informed of what was on the tapis, than another knock was heard, and shortly after, a gentleman, of military aspect, announced himself as M. Alphonse Dupuis.

"Gentlemen, I place my honour in your hands, don't break it," said Newfield, bowing himself theatrically into the bed-room.

After a few preliminary remarks, M. Alphonse Dupuis entered upon the subject on hand.

"My friend is greatly enraged," said he. "If it were an ordinary affair, if some mere words had passed in the heat of argument, the matter might be amicably arranged; but my friend was imprisoned for thirty hours, during which time he had nothing to eat and drink. I do not wonder at his being greatly exasperated."

"Mr. Newfield is willing to give ample satisfaction," replied Noel, "in any way which the custom of the country may point out."

It was then agreed that the antagonists

should endeavour to run each other through with small swords next morning early, in the Bois de Boulogne, and M. Alphonse Dupuis took a smiling leave.

"Can you fence well?" said Stapleton to Newfield, as the latter emerged from the bed-room.

"I don't know, I never tried."

"Never tried! why I thought you were a good swordsman, and we have preferred that weapon for you on that account."

"I am glad of it, I never was a good shot; and, besides, I have a strong repugnance to gun-shot wounds, bits of your clothing get carried into the wound by the ball and fret it, while a sword makes a clear cut."

While he was saying this, Noel detached two foils from the wall they ornamented, and, placing one in Newfield's hand, took up a fencing attitude. Newfield tucked up one arm behind his back, threw the whole weight of his body on his left leg, which he bent as far as he could, holding the foil in guard over his head.

"That will never do, man!" cried Noel;

you are not going to play at single-stick ! Put your arm so, and your leg so, and hold your sword thus ; that is better. Now, guard yourself, I am about to hit your top waistcoat button."

And he did hit his top waistcoat-button, and then the next button, and then every button in succession, from the top to the bottom, and then from the bottom to the top, then he took the alternate buttons, then every third. Then he gave him a few progs in the side, and a few more in the sword-arm, finishing off by sending his foil flying to the other end of the room. All this time, Newfield made continual and violent lounges at his antagonist without once touching him.

"Why, Newfield," exclaimed Stapleton, greatly alarmed, "had you fifty lives you would have lost them all by this time !"

"I hope this man is not so good a fencer as Noel," said Newfield.

"I hope not," echoed Noel, selecting a cigar from a box on the mantle-piece. "We must instruct you in the rudiments, and I know you have plenty of pluck, and will not

get excited, so we must hope for the best. You must forget the sword exercise, and throw the whole weight of your body forward when you lunge, not using your arm only."

After a good deal of teaching, Newfield managed better, for the practice of single stick, which Noel so much despised, had at least given him a certain quickness of eye and wrist, and a familiarity with his weapon, which made him a quicker learner than he would have been had he been ignorant of the use of any weapon whatever. Still, however, it was evident to his friends that he stood a very poor chance, and so they agreed, when they were left alone, after Newfield had gone to bed, for they sent him off early, promising to call him in time. Newfield himself, however, felt no fears for the result. By an extraordinary infatuation he could not see his own danger, and felt as firmly convinced of "spitting the Frenchman," as he called it, as a cook is of performing the same office for a goose quietly reposing on the kitchen-table.

The consequence was favourable to his present comfort, while it added somewhat to his chances on the morrow, for he slept through the night as calmly as if the weapons he was to fight with had the same buttons on the points as the foils with which he had so unsuccessfully engaged Noel. But the proverbial courage of seconds in a duel seemed to have deserted Stapleton. An indifferent observer would have taken it for granted that he was to fight, and that the other was to be his second. Neither he nor Noel went to bed that night, for even the latter, knowing poor Newfield's chance a very poor one, felt uncomfortable at the thought of an amusing friend being disposed of in so summary a manner. They sat up together all night, seeking for hope at the bottom—not of a well, with Truth—but of a bottle of brandy, and composing their disturbed spirits with many cigars. Bearing in mind, however, that a “seedy” appearance in the field would tend—if, indeed, anything could have that effect—to dishearten their friend, while it would lower the philosophical character of their country-

men in the eyes of their antagonists, they changed their clothes, and took especial care to have their chins and hats smooth, their hair and shirt-collars uncrumpled, when they went to rouse their principal. This operation of rousing was one of some difficulty. At last, however, Newfield was washed and dressed, and scalded, as to his throat, with hot coffee, and at a most unreasonable hour in the morning the three found themselves dawdling, in a voiture, along the Champs Elysees, towards the Arc de Triomphe. Newfield was in such high spirits, and so impudently confident, that he cheated his friends, despite themselves, into a belief that he might come off victorious. Coming after them, at some distance, they saw another vehicle, which contained their opponents. When they had passed the gate at the Arc de Triomphe, they turned to the left, and drove on to the spot agreed on the day before. Here they stopped and alighted, and shortly afterwards the other carriage arrived. The seconds saluted each other as if they had met for the most praiseworthy purposes, and proceeded to

hold a little conversation apart from their principals, which all ended in their telling the drivers of the carriages they had come in to remain where they were, and then diverging in a body from the road into the wood. The Frenchmen led the way directly to a spot most favourable for social murder, where, doubtless, they had often been for the same Christian purpose before; and, all preliminaries being arranged, the combatants took off their coats, and, taking the swords handed to them by their seconds, put themselves into the most fashionable attitudes for offensive and defensive operations.

I will not insult you, reader, by supposing that you have ever been foolish enough to fight a duel; but you may, when a boy, have been engaged in a "mill" with a school-fellow much bigger, stronger, and more artistic than yourself. If you have, you may remember that, without being actually frightened, your sensations, on taking off your jacket, waistcoat, and neck-cloth, were not actually pleasant. Such were the feelings with which Stapleton saw his friend begin to

peel. As for Newfield himself, he would have been alarmed if he could, but he could not. He was constitutionally fearless, so long as he had to deal with his fellow-men; with regard to supernatural terrors, the case was different. All he felt, as his sword clashed against that of his opponent, was, "Poor old chap! I won't kill him if I can help it!" They stood opposite to one another, with their blades touching, for several seconds, without any attack being made, the Frenchman being uncertain what kind of adversary he had to deal with, and Newfield not knowing exactly what was best to be done. At last, finding that his antagonist politely left it to him to commence, he made a furious lunge, which was easily parried and returned. On what little things our fate depends, the Frenchman's sword did not pass, as might have been expected, through his antagonist's body, for, by some lucky chance, Newfield managed to parry it, and the Frenchman, as he lunged, trod on a small frog that was taking a morning hop in the woods. Now, frogs are slippery fellows, and the best fencer

will lose his balance if he treads on one of them; and, though frogs' legs are good for Frenchmen's stomachs, frogs' stomachs are not good for Frenchmen's legs, and in this case the frog was avenged for his own fate and that of his race. The Frenchman's foot slipped, he lost his balance for the moment, and before he could recover himself, Newfield, forgetful of his previous lessons in stabbing, gave his antagonist a true single-stick cut across the wrist, with such force that, had he held a sabre, instead of a light small-sword, he would probably have severed the hand from the arm; as it was, the steel penetrated to the bone, and the sword fell from the wounded hand. The seconds ran forward, and great was the confusion; Mons. Alphonse Dupuis declaring that he had never seen such a proceeding; that it was against the laws of duelling, &c., &c.; but he was at length quieted by Noel, who asserted that it was the course always pursued in England.

"But then, sir, perhaps you fight with the sabre, like the Germans?" asked Monsieur Dupuis.

"Oh, no," answered Noel; "we fight as much with the small-sword as anything else," (mental reservation, for we never fight at all!) and if one combatant is placed by an awkward accident at the mercy of the other, it is customary for the fortunate one to disable the other by a cut across the wrist, especially where there is no animosity in the breast of him who thus has it at his option to kill or disable his antagonist. But, if the custom of this country is different, and Monsieur (a bow to the wounded man) and his friends wish it, Mr. Newfield, I am sure, will be happy to give the *coup de grace*; though, if Monsieur could manage to be satisfied by what has passed, I am sure we had all rather that so brave a spirit should not be extinguished." Here Noel gave the wounded man another bow, which was not returned, because he had fainted. His second, however, refused Noel's offer of adding to the "satisfaction" which had hitherto been obtained; and, having seen the enemy dressed, staunched, and borne to his carriage, with many more bows, they took

themselves home to a triumphal and somewhat noisy breakfast.

"You are certainly 'born to be hung,' Newfield," said Noel, when they had had a sufficiency of eating and drinking. "I would not have taken 500 to 1 on the matter ; I looked upon you as a dead man. But why did you not pink him when you had such a chance ?"

"I did not think of it. I was so accustomed to cut old Stevenson over the wrist when we played single-stick together, which we did every day at Cambridge, that when I saw a sudden opportunity, I did the same to this fellow. How well you got us out of the scrape, though, Noel. I thought those men were going to make a row about it."

"Well, I had to tell a few lies about it, certainly ; but what was I to say. It was fortunate Mons. Dupuis had never been in England, and knew not of our peaceable habits."

"Fortunate, too, that the whole affair happened here, instead of in England," replied Newfield ; "or proper damages for

false imprisonment the old boy might have got out of me."

"Well, my opinion is," said Stapleton, "that we have been making fools of ourselves for the last fortnight, and that the sooner we go home the better."

"Well, I am game to go to-morrow," said Newfield.

And the next day they went.

Two days after his arrival in London, Stapleton was entering his hotel, when a hand was laid on his shoulder; he turned and recognised Norton.

"Why, Norton, you have been ill!" was his first remark on seeing the thin and altered face of his friend.

"Yes," replied the other, "I have been ill, but I am better now."

"What has been the matter with you? But come up to my room, I have got a great deal to tell you."

When they reached his apartment, the door was closed, and Stapleton recounted his adventures during the revolution.

"Alas!" said Norton, when the account

was ended, "I begin to fear a Commonwealth is an impossibility."

"Why I never knew you were a politician," said Stapleton. "If you are at all fond of Republican doings, you had better go off at once to Paris; if you do not make haste the Republic will have come to an end, for things cannot go on long in the state in which I left them."

"No, no !" answered the other, "I never even hoped that a completely successful Republic could be established in a country where any other order of things had ever existed. I would not have the poor rise against the rich, I would have the rich assist the poor, I would not have a community of goods, unless the rich should give away their surplus property of their own accord. How little misery there would be in the world if we all helped one another to the best of our ability !"

Instead of which we all help ourselves to the best of our ability. But, Norton, I wish to speak to you about something which has no reference to politics. Did you not stay this Christmas at—at Cranium Villa ?"

By a strong effort Norton maintained his composure.

“ Yes,” he replied.

“ Did you see? that is, of course you did ; but did you like, or rather observe—bother ! The truth is, Norton, you must not tell any one.”

“ Not tell any one what? Are you cracked?”

“ Not quite, I hope. The truth is, then, I am in love with Miss Pheeler, and I do not know whether she will have me. Now, Norton, you have my secret, I trust to your honour not to tell it, I should get chaffed to death if you did. But I do not mind telling you, you will not laugh at me.”

It was well that Stapleton was too much absorbed in his own affairs to notice his friend's face as he spoke, for, in spite of himself, Norton could not prevent the agony of his heart from speaking for a moment in his countenance. It was only for a moment, however, and though his lip quivered, the expression of his face was calm as he answered—

“ I guessed as much, and though, of course, Miss Pheeler did not make me her confidant,

I am very much mistaken if she feels at all unfavourably towards you. It is but natural. You have known her from a boy, you have saved her life, and she does *not* know what a scamp you have been. If you are *sure* that you are thoroughly reformed, go and marry her. Dear me, it is four o'clock, and I have an engagement at half-past ! Good bye."

The trial had become too painful, and Norton, feeling that he could bear it no longer, fled. But it was the fear of *showing* that he suffered, not the suffering itself, that he fled from ; and no sooner had he reached his own apartment than he sat down and wrote a letter to the friend he had just left. Most men, in Norton's situation, would have hated the man preferred to themselves ; but Norton was not as other men ; he loved, but his own happiness was a very minor consideration with him when compared with the happiness of her he loved, and he never for one moment thought of supplanting his friend in her affections. The letter which Stapleton received that evening ran thus :—

" Dear Stapleton, I was sorry to be forced

away to-day, just as you had received me into your confidence on so interesting a subject.

“As I leave this for Ireland to-morrow morning, it may be some time before we meet again, and I therefore send you a few lines to assure you how heartily I wish for your happiness.

“From all I observed, while staying at Mr. Pheeler's, I feel sure that if you were to offer yourself as a husband for his daughter to-morrow, he would receive you with open arms, nor do I think that the lady herself would feel differently from her father.

“*Never make another bet.*

“I enclose my direction in Ireland, where I hope soon to receive a letter from you announcing your approaching marriage.

“Assuring you that no one can desire your happiness and that of the lady more than myself.

“I remain, &c., &c.,

“NORTON.”

“It must be so, Norton is always right,” murmured Stapleton, as he laid down the

letter. "By Jove!" he cried, starting up from the chair he had been sitting in, "I will go and make her an offer to-morrow."

CHAPTER XVII.

READER! have you ever been in a *funk*? If so, have you ever been in a *blue funk*? I am very sorry. 'Tis a low word, a very low word. But there is no other to express the idea, and under such circumstances what is to be done? "*Fright*" does not picture the feeling alluded to, no more does "*alarm*," nor "*terror*." No! "*Funk*" is the only word that will do.

Stapleton was in a blue funk. He was walking along a gravel path, which gravel path led him towards a window, which window was a glass-door which could be opened from the outside or the inside, and through this glass-door he could see pretty Lotty

Pheeler sitting by the fire, busily employed in copying a rose in worsted-work. One pretty little foot, covered by a pretty little slipper, rested on the fender, and as she leaned forward over her pattern, counting the stitches with her needle, Stapleton felt that he had never seen so beautiful a creature in his life.

And she *was* very beautiful, for her charms had that peculiar *freshness* so often found in English girls. There was a something about her, a light in the eye, a bloom on the skin, an absence of all affectation which distinguished her from others of equal though less attractive beauty. Stapleton grasped the handle of the door. Should he seize this opportunity, rush into the room, fall on his knees, and swear to possess her or perish in the attempt? Yes! he would!

He turned the handle with this intention, entered the room, and exclaimed in an impassioned tone—

“How d’ye do?”

As the young lady thought he was many miles away at that moment, she was rather

startled at seeing him so suddenly. Her agitation became apparent to the young man, who, of course, grew yet more moved himself.

Now, when two young persons of different sexes are alone in a room and suffering from agitation, I won't answer for what they may say and do. Stapleton felt half-choked, a great ball seemed to be rolling up and down his throat, rendering it very difficult for him to speak.

"It—is—a very fine—day," he announced with a solemnity most remarkable.

Surely there could have been no hidden meaning in such a sentence; and, yet, why did Lotty's hand shake so violently as she heard the tones of his voice?

The pause which ensued was most awkward; Stapleton felt that in one minute more he should look like an ass, so, with one violent effort, he blurted it all out.

"Lotty," said he; "it is no use concealing what I am wishing to say." Lotty got very pale, and her hand shook tremendously, Stapleton took hold of it, doubtless to keep it still.

"I have loved you all my life, I love you now, and I shall love you to my dying day."

He went on in this style, of course, but the reader shall not be any more bored by such stuff, he (the reader) having, doubtless, conjugated the verb "amo" very often himself. When the barriers which obstruct our speech on such occasions are once broken down, it flows on easily enough. Happy days! when the tumultuous whirl of feelings *really* obstructs our speech, afterwards we have to feign that agitation.

But Stapleton did not feign. He talked a deal of nonsense, it is true; but he deceived himself as well as Lotty, and she —— why she began to cry! and then came on a scene most delightful to assist in as *principal*, but exceedingly stupid and silly to hear about. A good dinner is a pleasant thing to eat, but not to talk of, and love-scenes are not unlike good dinners. First course—a little light talk to serve as fish or soup, just to prepare the way for the solids. Second course—the pith of the subject, the real interest of the interview, the meat, the

downright substantial declaration, followed by the third course—of sweets, trifles, jellies, vows, sighs, &c. That is also removed, and strong wine is placed before the guests, and if kisses are not stronger than the most fiery port may I never eat walnuts again! I do not quite like to run my simile into a corner; but when I remember that sometimes, in both cases, intoxication ensues

* * * * *

However, it was now a settled thing, the delight of the old birds, the gossip of the neighbourhood. Poor Lotty was immediately disliked by all the young ladies around; but that would not have made her unhappy had she known it, which she did not.

Great preparations were made. The Hall was fitted up to receive its mistress; and one morning Stapleton found upholsterers in his study. He turned them out, and as he took his way to Cranium Villa his face wore a more thoughtful expression than usual. The attempt on that snug little room brought all the joys of bachelor-hood before his eyes.

“Dearest,” said he, when he found himself alone with his mistress; “Dearest! I have something on my mind which I should like to speak about at once. You—you don’t mind smoking, do you?”

“Not in the least!”

“I knew you would not; what a darling you are!”

CHAPTER XVIII.

“WELL, Stapleton, my Benedict, how do you feel, old buffer? Why, he’s asleep, by Jove! —a regular Adelphi melo-dramatic victim, sleeping as soundly as a new-born babe on the morning of his execution. I allude, of course, to the victim’s execution, not the babe’s. Hallo! hi! Stapleton! Benedict! awake! come, get up and be spliced.”

“Yaw—haw—what’s the row? What, Newfield, is that you. Give us your fist, old boy; it isn’t twelve yet, is it?”

And Stapleton leaped out of bed like a shot.

“Why, it isn’t eight yet. When did you arrive?” he continued, looking at his watch.

“I got to Bristol late last night, slept

there, and came on here first thing this morning. Come to act as groom, and thought it might be part of my duty to rub you down. Well, this *is* a waistcoat ! Fancy *you* though getting married ! Why, I should have as soon expected to see *myself* twisted up in a connubial knot ! ”

“ Depend upon it, you could not do better. Take my word for it, Newfield, that a man—”

“ I know, I know. You remember the story of the fox whose tail was chopped off in a trap, don't you ? Besides, you have not tried a married life yet. Ah ! those merry days, you will never see them again. Never more, ah ! never more, for you will resound the joyous song from the depths of the flowing punch-bowl ; never more for you will the cigar-box unfold its sweets. Your cards must be discarded ; Caudle will flow where erst bishop spreads its more fragrant fumes. No more will your foot tread lightly in the mazes of the dance, in the festive halls, where Laurent and Jullien preside. Blue-eyed daughter of Vauxhall ! dark-eyed beau-

ties of the Jardin Mabille ! vainly shall you look for him in the brilliant saloon, or the shady walk. *Oi, oi !* Would not that sound well in a Greek chorus ? But seriously, old fellow, I congratulate you ; you will be much better married. You can afford it too. I wish I could. But come, victim, you must be dressed for the sacrifice !”

As may have been gathered from the foregoing conversation, it was the morning of Stapleton's wedding-day, and a very fine May morning it was. If it be true that “Happy is the bride whom the sun shines on,” Lotty ought to have been very happy. One would have thought the sunshine had been ordered with the wedding breakfast, so particularly brilliant was it as Newfield, throwing up the window, admitted it, together with the gushing song of a remarkably melodious lark into the bed-room.

“What a shot !” ejaculated that mercurial individual, gazing at the little bird who, poised high in the air, was making all that noise.

“What a Goth you are !” cried Stapleton,

“the idea of wanting to shoot the jolly little beggar who has come to give me a hymeneal ! He does not croak like you, old raven.”

“Talking in flowery comparisons, too !” replied Newfield, “well, you look like a poet, *you* do !”

Stapleton's appearance was certainly poetical. He was sitting in his night-shirt on the side of his bed, his eyes dazzled by the flood of light so suddenly let into the room, and his hair in that delightfully tangled state peculiar to gentlemen who do not wear nightcaps.

“Do I ?” he answered, “well, perhaps I do. I know I feel very jolly ; and as for all the nonsense you have been talking, I think it *would* do very well for a *Greek* ode, for the people who will be the losers by my reformation are certain gentlemen of the turf, *Graii juventus* : our friend Stephenson for example. I ought not to say that though, for he isn't so bad as all that, though he *has* bled me pretty freely. However, he is welcome, and so are all of them. I am sure I shall never game again. I have sown all my wild

oats, and am glad of it. No, I shall never play again !”

“ I am glad of it,” rejoined his friend, who, however, could not help remembering that he had heard much the same remark from the same lips before. That resolution had been broken ; would this one wear better ?

“ What are you thinking of, Newfield ?” Stapleton asked, after a pause of some minutes. “ You do not seriously think I shall ever repent, when it is too late ?”

“ Oh ! of course not.”

“ And I shall be very happy when settled down here amongst my tenantry ?”

“ Of course you will !”

“ And with the most charming wife in the world, and every comfort, I shall not—I cannot—want anything more !”

“ Of course not ! and how delightful it will be, when your sons grow up and go to college, and turn out exemplary characters, just like their father !”

“ Hum—they will be better than me, I hope !”

“ Like me, for example.”

"By the holy poker ! if they run the rigs you have done, I'll kick them out of the house, and refuse to pay their bills !"

"Quite right, and you will be quite sure to know all they do ; and then your conscience will bear you out so nicely, when you reflect on what a delightful example their father set them. 'If *I* could resist such and such temptations, why cannot they?' you may fairly argue."

"Bother ! I won't have sons ; or if I do, I'll drown them in a bucket, like puppies. Or if they won't drown, I won't send them to college."

"Well now, you are quite right. You will, of course, then, send them into the army, or to a German university—delightful places both for the inculcation of morality !"

"Better than Cambridge anyhow. Let us go and get some breakfast, I will adorn afterwards."

And getting into dressing-gown and slippers, Stapleton led the way to his last bachelor breakfast.

Oh ! for the pen of Miss Lydia Theresa,

the young (?) lady of my acquaintance, who writes so beautifully (the public will know whom I mean, when I say that she is the authoress of those delightful lines "To a Consumptive Butterfly")—Oh! for the pen of Miss Lydia Theresa to describe the wedding! I cannot do it; for to tell the truth, I consider weddings to be the stupidest things in creation, when you are not going to be married yourself, and Stapleton's wedding was like most others in his station of life.

The postboys wore extra-tight breeches, and extra-white gloves; the bride's-maids looked very pretty (especially Miss Arabella Plancher, who was one of them); the company looked very smiling. The father of the bride was dressed most extensively (a ragged little boy exclaimed "My eye!" on his first appearance, and was immediately annihilated by the beadle); the parson was bland, forgetful of the bye-path of mesmerism into which his parishioner had wandered; and the bride—oh! the bride—oh! lor—oh! muse, I mean—what was the bride, and how was

she dressed? The milliner's bill has not been yet found, or that was to have come in here, it has been mislaid, but in a future edition it shall appear.

Only one little episode occurred to disturb the gravity of the ceremony—

The clerk.—

What an extraordinary appendage to the Established Church that being is!—a sort of fugleman to head every regiment in the Church Militant.

The clerk was a very old man, with a brown wig and white whiskers; his nose was long, large, flat, and ornamented with three big, red, walloping lumps of hanging flesh; he had no forehead, and but one eye, and that squinted.

The clergyman came to that part of the service, “Wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife,” &c. &c., “as long as you both shall live?”

“Hi-i-i will!” responded this Adonis of a clerk, through his nose.

“The devil you will!” exclaimed Doctor Sarfe, who happened to stand near the desk.

It was too much for poor Newfield's gravity, he began to titter; and Miss Arabella Plancher's eye met his, and she began to titter, and all the others began to titter; but the service went on, and they managed to repress their mirth. Bless the man who made the marriage-service so short, and bless all clergymen who read it rather quickly, to make it shorter. 'Tis a frightful ordeal to go through. We are babies when we are christened, and don't feel inclined to laugh; but we are old enough to know that we are about to do a very laughable and foolish thing when we marry. And the poor bride! To have to show herself off like a learned pig or a wax-work, without making the people pay either! Bless them! they must be very fond of us—or of show—ever to marry at all!

The young ladies, of course, "did not think Lotty looked her best." Nice Lotty! I will lay my best gold pen to a stumpy quill that has been mended five times, that Helen herself never looked half so lovely.

And then came the breakfast,—which was

not a breakfast, nor a luncheon, nor a dinner, nor a supper, but a cross between all these meals. How beautifully the long table was laid out! There was no room in Cranium Villa large enough to hold the guests, so the *déjeuner* was laid in a large tent, erected on the lawn. They had a band of music, too, for Mr. Pheeler thought that, as he had but one daughter, he might marry her in style, without establishing a dangerous precedent in the family. Oh! that *déjeuner*!—what pains it had caused poor Mrs. Pheeler! How carefully jellies and all sorts of fine things had been arranged, to show off to the greatest advantage; and how beautifully flowers had been festooned above, shedding leaves, and occasionally a caterpillar, on the plates of the guests! And how bothered she had been to determine whether tea and coffee should be provided, and if people could drink such beverages at the same meal with champagne! There had also been an argument about buttered toast, but it had been decided that plenty of *buttered toasts*

would be provided impromptu in the course of the entertainment.

Every pains had been taken to secure a triumph, and a triumph it was, for the interior of that tent reminded one of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, minus the Barmecidè's feast. All were seated; knives and forks rattled, and champagne corks flew about like pellets from a pop-gun. A solemn pause, the tap of a fork on the table—and Mr. Pheeler rose to propose the health of the bride and bridegroom.

“Ladies—and gentlemen, (great applause,) it is with a variety of emotions that I rise to address you on the present happy, I may say auspicious, occasion. (Hear, hear.) The fond, if I may be allowed the expression,—the *inexpressible* feelings of a father in bestowing upon another his only—his much-loved daughter—are upon all occasions rather to be imagined than to be uttered. (Hear, hear.) But, in this instance you will sympathize more deeply with me, when I inform you that it was but a short time ago that I discovered that there was every probability

of my daughter's being a clairvoyant. (Great sensation, the clergyman being noticed by some to move uneasily in his chair.) I would not willingly have parted with her to any other man ungifted with the magnetic influence, for I am proud to say, gentlemen, that the forwarding of science has always had more weight with me than any private feeling. But, when I consider that to the noble courage of my son-in-law and Mr. Newfield I owe the lives both of my wife and daughter, (not to mention the many valuable specimens those rascals would doubtless have carried off,)—when I consider this, I say, and when I remember how noble, (hear,) virtuous, (a vigorous “Hear” from Newfield,) high-minded, (hear,) amiable, (hear,) and generous, (hear, hear,) that son-in-law is,—when I think of all this, I can lay my hand upon my heart and say—and say—and say,—(hear, hear,) and say, I say (great cheering,) my daughter couldn't have done better!” (Tremendous applause, in the midst of which Mr. Pheeler sat down.)

Take a glass of wine, Stapleton. No, not

champagne,—sherry,—there. You were never in such an alarmed state before—never! I know that you wrote a speech and learnt it, but it has gone entirely out of your head.—Well, never mind, get up and do your best.

“Ahem! (Hear, hear.) In rising—that is, I mean in getting up, or rising to propose!—no, I mean to return, yes, to return you my—that is, our—best thanks for the very kind manner in which you have drunk my—I mean our—best health. I beg to assure you, both on my own part and that of Miss—I mean Mrs., that is, my—I mean the bride (Hear, hear!)—that Mr.—I mean my father—has given me too good a character. (No! no! no! and great sensation.) We—that is I—no, we—are so overcome by our feelings, that we cannot express ourselves! (Hear, hear.) And so, perhaps I—we—had better sit down!” (Great cheering.)

The usual remark—oh, call it not a joke!—was then uttered about the bridesmaids, and the newly-married went away to get ready to start on their honey-moon. Oh!

Niobe ! what a dismal scene it was ! And then they *would* ring those bells ! Of all melancholy noises, next to the bag-pipes, those "merry" bells make the most melancholy. I was just going to describe them, but are they not written in "The Chimes?"

And yet they are not unmusical, those ringing bells, but they are melancholy. Not always that, either : who cannot remember when his heart beat to each stroke of the hammer ? They are melancholy for the same reason that old dance-music is melancholy. There ought to be a law that old polkas and waltzes should not be played in public. How the heart yearns upon old times as the well-known air strikes upon one's ear ! How many bright eyes that once flashed at the melody, have become dim since we last heard it ! How many a little hand, pressed then with ardour, is now a mass of corruption, or worse, raised against us ! How many a whispered word, long stored up in our memory, and hoped, aye, and wept over, has proved to be a lie !

It was hearing the Redowa polka played

on a barrel-organ outside the window, that threw me into that vein of thought; if you cannot sympathise with it, reader, I am glad of it, and congratulate you.

Stapleton could never give a very clear account of what he saw the first week of his marriage; and Mrs. Stapleton never would say anything about it; so, the collator of these memoirs must let them go off in their carriage-and-four in peace. Yes, it must be our sad lot to remain amongst the *débris* of the breakfast, and try to shake off the dullness which has overshadowed the whole party, as well as we can.

“One fool makes many!”—I beg pardon, “one marriage causes others;” and certain gossips of the party remarked that Newfield was “very particular” in his attentions to Miss Arabella Plancher. And, to own the truth, our friend did *not* find the time hang so heavily on his hands as others of the party did. Some of the most intimate friends of the Pheelers were to dine with them, and the day was to close with a ball; and I have the above gentleman’s authority for asserting

that the ball "went off" very well; and from other sources I happen to know that he danced with Miss Plancher four times before supper, led her down to that meal, and monopolized her hand for the rest of the evening, "sitting out" a few quadrilles, for the look of the thing.

He had been invited to stay a few days at Cranium Villa, and somehow the "few days" lengthened into a few weeks; and at the end of that time the sermons of the clergyman of the parish, or Mr. Pheeler's scientific discourses, had produced a miraculous effect upon his mind; for I find a letter directed to his friends, bearing a date corresponding with that time, stating that he no longer felt any dislike to going into the church, having been fully awakened to the folly, &c., &c.

Oh! pretty girls, who have pretty eyes and neat ankles, what a weight of responsibility rests on your well-turned shoulders! Ever since Eve ruined Adam, man has turned out good or bad, as you have influenced him! This is only a general rule;

there are heaps of exceptions ; yet still it is a general rule.

Newfield was not of a timid disposition ; he pressed the siege closely, and it was not long before the lively Arabella had consented to become a parson's wife. She who had often declared she would never marry a man who had not a town-house and an opera-box !

CHAPTER XIX.

LET us follow Norton to his estate in Ireland. It was situated in one of the most beautiful counties of the south, where mountain and lake, wood and river, are blended together with a beauty which makes the heart of the traveller to exclaim, "Here I would live, here would I die!" Every blade of bright green grass, every drop of the sparkling, gurgling brook, seems redolent of love, happiness, and peace. It is a spot where the Atheist might *feel* that he possessed a soul, where the voluptuary might look upon the blackness of his heart, and shrink back appalled; where the ambitious man might own (to himself) the folly of

ambition ; where the merchant might wonder how he could rest content in that dim office in the city, bartering his life for gold. Surely the inhabitants of such a country must be influenced in character by its surpassing beauty ? Surely they must be more simple, more innocent, more earnest, than other men ? Here, doubtless, we shall find true Arcadians, keepers of sheep ; men ignorant of business or politics !

See how gracefully that wreath of blue smoke curls up to heaven from the ground, even as we may fancy the smoke rose from the acceptable sacrifice of Abel, ere the evil passions first had birth in the breast of Cain. It rises from an illicit still ; it is the breath of one of the most powerful of the legion of fiends now devastating that unhappy country. But that building in the valley ! By the little mounds spreading around it, it should be a church ! Here, at all events, we have something in harmony with the scene ; here is something which speaks to us of heaven, of Love, of God !

From that church Murder is preached !

That building a house of God ! There religion, eternal happiness, eternal misery, are made mere puppets to secure the return of a candidate for Parliament ! There is it indirectly preached that the world was created and redeemed, the Bible written, eternal rewards and punishments instituted, that a parish priest might exercise an unlawful influence to foist a member into the English Senate ! It is a dangerous thing to speak slightly of any religion which holds sway over the minds of our fellow-mortals ; but how can charity be stretched to such limits as to sympathise with a religion, when its visible fruits are intimidation, perjury, and murder ?

Ireland ! most beautiful and most miserable ! Is it *impossible* that she should be reclaimed ? Can her people *never* forget, *never* forgive the injuries England has done her in past years, in consideration of her constant heartfelt efforts to make atonement ! It is Religion which has civilized most countries ; will Ireland's priests *never* learn that they are degrading and keeping their flocks down by preaching Rebellion ? Why that constant

cry of "Agitation, agitation?" Agitate a nation or a glass of dirty water, and you never get a prosperous people, or a clear draught. Let it alone, keep it still, and the scum sinks to the bottom. What but continuance of the same form of government has advanced America so rapidly? What but constant and violent "agitation" has retarded the progress of France? Agitation is gambling, and who ever heard of a rich gambler?

Norton's early dreams had been of the regeneration of mankind, Republicanism, the self-supporting system, education, abolition of war, every pretty theory so fascinating to the young philanthropist, had in turn claimed his enthusiastic attention. But now that he had a definite line of duty chalked out, now that he was called to action, he left off dreaming, and applied himself vigorously to reality. He felt that absenteeism was the curse of the country in which he held a stake, and he determined, at every sacrifice to habit and prejudice, to dwell where he might exert most influence for good on his own

estates. This resolution was the more easy to carry out, that he had nourished a hopeless attachment in his breast. Some men forget a love disappointment in a few weeks, others take to dissipation to drown the recollections which pain them, but men of Norton's disposition prefer retirement and country pursuits.

Norton entered upon his task with a determination to stimulate industry, to deal tenderly with prejudice, and, above all things, to conciliate the people. He well knew that he would be hated as a Saxon and a Protestant, but he hoped, by constant kindness and forbearance, to destroy all feelings of ill-will towards himself. He began by showing every respect to the priest of the district, consulting him upon the condition of the people, and the best method of improving them. But, unfortunately, the priest was an uneducated man; shrewd and cunning enough, but prejudiced, selfish, and as much disinclined to innovation as the poorest of his flock. Norton soon found that he thought the ejection of the pig from the hovel, as great an evil as the bringing the Bible into

it. Moreover, he was given to whiskey, and Norton was not, and it is a sign how far behind the rest of England in civilization certain districts of Ireland are, that *there* the drunkard despises the sober man. Thus deprived of all aid, Norton set to work alone. He endeavoured to persuade the people that dirt brought the fever, and as the fever had but lately made fearful ravages in the district, the peasantry were silenced, if not convinced.

Soon in many places neat little cottages usurped the places of the mud hovels in which the people had before existed, and with some difficulty one or two families were persuaded to own that they were not so very uncomfortable at the exchange. But the great difficulty was to get the people to work. Utterly devoid of forethought and ambition, there was only one point on which to assail them, and that was their domestic affection. It was a problem Norton could not solve,—the semi-barbarous state of a people so clever, so kind-hearted, and so moral, so far superior, as far as natural advantages went, to the

Englishman of the same class ; so inferior in the social scale !

And thus it was that Norton toiled, and laboured, and hoped on against hope. And at length he improved the apparent condition of his people. They grew cleaner, the men wore clothes, not rags ; the women and girls looked more dapper on market-days and Sundays. Men were oftener seen working in the fields, less seldom idling and smoking before their cottage doors. All seemed brighter, when an event occurred which converted the dawning good-will of the people towards their landlord into downright hate.

Not far from Norton's estate a Protestant church, served by a Protestant clergyman, and flanked by Protestant schools, had been erected. The society of this clergyman was a great boon to Norton, for he was the only companion who could advise or sympathise with him. Soon after, it was found that several poor families sent children to this neighbouring school. The priest discovered it, and threatened the parents, some of whom

withdrew their children; but others there were who braved the anger of the priest. Then came warnings, denunciations, excommunications; war was declared, Norton was denounced from the altar, and (natural consequence) he received, by post, letters informing him that if he stayed in the country he would be shot. Still he stayed; then came other notices, warning him of the day on which his life would be taken. Then he was actually shot at, though the would-be assassin was foiled in his attempt. But the only steps taken by Norton were to go round to all his tenantry and remonstrate with them. And somehow, whether it was that they were pleased with his spirit, or whether they thought it a pity to destroy so good a landlord, they did not again attempt his life; but there was a coldness, a suspicion in the reception of him, which he had not at first experienced.

And yet he was neither disgusted nor discouraged at the return made him for all his efforts.

“The ungrateful swine!” said a friend

who was staying with him for a short time ;
“ why throw any more pearls before them ?
Why not leave them to their adoration of crucifixes and filth ? ”

“ If I thought them *ungrateful*, ” answered Norton, “ I would leave them to-morrow ; but they are not ungrateful ; they look upon me as a fiend, come amongst them with fine words and seeming kind actions, to tempt them to the destruction of their souls ; you cannot expect them to be grateful, while they believe so ; and yet, if their religion was not quite so barbarous and incredible, I would join it to-morrow, if I could by so doing reclaim them ! ”

Go on, Norton ! be not discouraged. Unlike the Roman or Brahmin fanatic, you have devoted your life to a work truly grateful to posterity and to God.

CHAPTER XX.

Two years have elapsed since Stapleton's marriage, and this great hive—the civilized world—is subjected to a more than usual commotion. The man in the moon saw dark spectres converging from all parts towards one little bit of land in the middle of the sea—the attraction seeming to consist in something which glittered very much in the sunlight, and which occasionally dazzled the man in the moon's eyes.

It was the year 1851, and the Exhibition was open.

Some readers will remember the machinery, some the statuary; on the memory of some, the carriages will have made everlasting ruts; Colt's revolvers are the suns round

which the minds of others will turn ; but all remember the refreshment tables. At one of these tables was seated a party of four—two ladies and two gentlemen—all engaged in sipping ices.

“Yes,” said one of these gentlemen to the other, “I shall certainly introduce that system of draining I was speaking of ; and that chaff-cutter we were looking at just now appears to me to be a great improvement on the old ones.”

“Have you seen any of our old chums lately ?” said the other,—a grave-looking clergyman, with black trousers and white tie complete.

“Yes, I saw Stephenson the other day ; he is about to stand for the county of ——.”

“Nonsense ! Stephenson going into Parliament !”

“Why not ; he will not be the only goose in the capitol, will he ?” replied Stapleton.

“Certainly not ; yet ’tis sad to think, in these days of lax principles, that men like that should hold the destinies of the country in their hands,” answered Newfield.

"Was not that the sweetest robe, Arabella?" said one of the ladies; "I have been thinking how very pretty little Arthur would look in it."

At this moment a number of children, walking in an orderly manner, nicely dressed, and much astonished at all that met their view, drew near the party.

"Why, there are our school children, Arabella!" exclaimed the clergyman; "we must go and speak to them. We will be back directly, Stapleton."

"Well, Lotty, of all things, I should never have imagined that Newfield would have made such an exemplary country parson!" said Stapleton to his wife.

"I rejoice to see that Stapleton has settled down into so useful a member of society. There is nothing like marriage; is there, dear?" said Newfield, pressing his wife's arm.