

After her apprehension I visited this prison as her brother, and buoyed her up to the last with illusions of certain pardon and release, whatever the verdict, through the influence of my wealthy father-in-law, of our immediate union afterward, and tranquil American home. It is needless to say more. She trusted me, and I sacrificed her—less flagrant instances of a like nature occur every day. And now, gentlemen, I would fain be alone."

"Remorseless villain!" I could not exclaim under my breath as he moved away.

He turned quickly back, and looking me in the face, without the slightest anger said, "An execrable villain if you like—not a remorseless one! Her death alone sits near, and troubles me to all else hardened conscience. And let me tell you, reverend sir," he continued, resuming his former bitterness as he addressed the chaplain—"let me tell you that it was not the solemn words of the judge the other day, but her pale, reproachful image, standing suddenly beside me in the dock, just as she looked when I passed my last deception on her, that caused the tremor and affright, complacently attributed by that grave functionary to his own sepulchral eloquence. After all, her death can not be exclusively laid to my charge. Those who tried her would not believe her story, and yet it was true as death. Had they not been so confident in their own unerring wisdom, they might have doomed her to some punishment short of the scaffold, and could now have retrieved their error. But I am weary, and would, I repeat, be alone. Farewell!" He threw himself on the rude pallet, and we silently withdrew.

A paper embodying Justin Arnold's declaration was forwarded to the secretary of state, and duly acknowledged, accompanied by an official expression of mild regret that it had not been in time to save the life of Jane Eccles. No further notice was taken of the matter, and the record of the young woman's judicial sacrifice still doubtless encumbers the archives of the Home Office, forming, with numerous others of like character, the dark, sanguine background upon which the achievements of the great and good men who have so successfully purged the old Draco code that now a faint vestige only of the old barbarism remains, stand out in bright relief and changeless lustre.

MY NOVEL; OR, VARIETIES IN ENGLISH LIFE.

(Continued from page 543.)

BOOK IV.—INITIAL CHAPTER:—COMPRISING MR. CAXTON'S OPINIONS ON THE MATRIMONIAL STATE, SUPPORTED BY LEARNED AUTHORITIES.

"I was no bad idea of yours, Pisistratus," said my father, graciously, "to depict the heightened affections and the serious intentions of Signior Riecabocca by a single stroke—*He left off his spectacles!* Good."

"Yet," quoth my uncle, "I think Shakspeare represents a lover as falling into slovenly habits,

neglecting his person, and suffering his hose to be ungartered, rather than paying that attention to his outer man which induces Signor Riecabocca to leave off his spectacles, and look as handsome as nature will permit him."

"There are different degrees and many phases of the passion," replied my father. "Shakspeare is speaking of an ill-treated, pining, weebegone lover, much aggrieved by the cruelty of his mistress—a lover who has found it of no avail to smarten himself up, and has fallen despondently into the opposite extreme. Whereas Signor Riecabocca has nothing to complain of in the barbarity of Miss *Jemima*."

"Indeed he has not!" cried *Blanche*, tossing her head—"forward creature!"

"Yes, my dear," said my mother, trying her best to look stately, "I am decidedly of opinion that, in that respect, *Pisistratus* has lowered the dignity of the sex. Not intentionally," added my mother, mildly, and afraid she had said something too bitter; "but it is very hard for a man to describe us women."

The Captain nodded approvingly; Mr. *Squills* smiled; my father quietly resumed the thread of his discourse.

"To continue," quoth he. "*Riecabocca* has no reason to despair of success in his suit, nor any object in moving his mistress to compassion. He may, therefore, very properly tie up his garters and leave off his spectacles. What do you say, Mr. *Squills*?—for, after all, since love-making can not fail to be a great constitutional derangement, the experience of a medical man must be the best to consult."

"Mr. *Caxton*," replied *Squills*, obviously flattered, "you are quite right: when a man makes love, the organs of self-esteem and desire of applause are greatly stimulated, and therefore, of course, he sets himself off to the best advantage. It is only, as you observe, when, like *Shakspeare's* lover, he has given up making love as a bad job, and has received that severe hit on the ganglions which the cruelty of a mistress inflicts, that he neglects his personal appearance: he neglects it, not because he is in love, but because his nervous system is depressed. That was the cause, if you remember, with poor *Major Prim*. He wore his wig all awry when *Susan Smart* jilted him; but I set it all right for him."

"By shaming *Miss Smart* into repentance, or getting him a new sweetheart?" asked my uncle."

"Pooh!" answered *Squills*, "by quinine and cold bathing."

"We may therefore grant," renewed my father, "that, as a general rule, the process of courtship tends to the spruceness, and even foppery, of the individual engaged in the experiment, as *Voltaire* has very prettily proved somewhere. Nay, the *Mexicans*, indeed, were of opinion that the lady, at least, ought to continue those cares of her person even after marriage. There is extant, in *Sahagun's History of New*

Spain, the advice of an Aztec or Mexican mother to her daughter, in which she says—"That your husband may not take you in dislike, adorn yourself, wash yourself, and let your garments be clean." It is true that the good lady adds—"Do it in moderation; since, if every day you are washing yourself and your clothes, the world will say that you are over-delicate; and particular people will call you—TAPETZON TINEMAX-OSH!" What those words precisely mean," added my father, modestly, "I can not say, since I never had the opportunity to acquire the ancient Aztec language—but something very opprobrious and horrible, no doubt."

"I daresay a philosopher like Signor Riccabocca," said my uncle, "was not himself very *Tapetzon tine*—what d'ye call it?—and a good, healthy, English wife, like that poor affectionate Jemima, was thrown away upon him."

"Roland, said my father, "you don't like foreigners: a respectable prejudice, and quite natural in a man who has been trying his best to hew them in pieces, and blow them up into splinters. But you don't like philosophers either—and for that dislike you have no equally good reason."

"I only implied that they were not much addicted to soap and water," said my uncle.

"A notable mistake. Many great philosophers have been very great beaux. Aristotle was a notorious fop. Buffon put on his best laced ruffles when he sat down to write, which implies that he washed his hands first. Pythagoras insists greatly on the holiness of frequent ablutions; and Horace—who, in his own way, was as good a philosopher as any the Romans produced—takes care to let us know what a neat, well-dressed, dapper little gentleman he was. But I don't think you ever read the 'Apology of Apuleius?'"

"Not I—what is it about?" asked the Captain.

"About a great many things. It is that Sage's vindication from several malignant charges—among others, and principally indeed, that of being much too refined and effeminate for a philosopher. Nothing can exceed the rhetorical skill with which he excuses himself for using—tooth-powder. 'Ought a philosopher,' he exclaims, 'to allow any thing unclean about him, especially in the mouth—the mouth, which is the vestibule of the soul, the gate of discourse, the portico of thought! Ah, but Æmilianus [the accuser of Apuleius] never opens his mouth but for slander and calumny—tooth-powder would indeed be unbecoming to him! Or, if he use any, it will not be my good Arabian tooth-powder, but charcoal and cinders. Ay, his teeth should be as foul as his language! And yet even the crocodile likes to have his teeth cleaned; insects get into them, and, horrible reptile though he be, he opens his jaws offensively to a faithful denticular bird, who volunteers his beak for a toothpick.'" "

My father was now warm in the subject he

had started, and soared miles away from Riccabocca and "My Novel." "And observe," he exclaimed—"observe with what gravity this eminent Platonist pleads guilty to the charge of having a mirror. 'Why, what,' he exclaims, 'more worthy of the regards of a human creature than his own image' (*nihil respectabilius homini quam formam suam!*) Is not that one of our children the most dear to us who is called 'the picture of his father?' But take what pains you will with a picture, it can never be so like you as the face in your mirror! Think it discreditable to look with proper attention on one's self in the glass! Did not Socrates recommend such attention to his disciples—did he not make a great moral agent of the speculum? The handsome, in admiring their beauty therein, were admonished that handsome is who handsome does; and the more the ugly stared at themselves, the more they became naturally anxious to hide the disgrace of their features in the loveliness of their merits. Was not Demosthenes always at his speculum? Did he not rehearse his causes before it as before a master in the art? He learned his eloquence from Plato, his dialectics from Eubulides; but as for his delivery—there, he came to the mirror!"

"Therefore," concluded Mr. Caxton, returning unexpectedly to the subject—"therefore it is no reason to suppose that Dr. Riccabocca is averse to cleanliness and decent care of the person, because he is a philosopher; and, all things considered, he never showed himself more a philosopher than when he left off his spectacles and looked his best."

"Well," said my mother, kindly, "I only hope it may turn out happily. But I should have been better pleased if Pisistratus had not made Dr. Riccabocca so reluctant a wooer."

"Very true," said the Captain; "the Italian does not shine as a lover. Throw a little more fire into him, Pisistratus—something gallant and chivalrous."

"Fire—gallantry—chivalry!" cried my father, who had taken Riccabocca under his special protection—"why, don't you see that the man is described as a philosopher?—and I should like to know when a philosopher ever plunged into matrimony without considerable misgivings and cold shivers. Indeed, it seems that—perhaps before he was a philosopher—Riccabocca had tried the experiment, and knew what it was. Why, even that plain-speaking, sensible, practical man, Metellus Numidicus, who was not even a philosopher, but only a Roman Censor, thus expressed himself in an exhortation to the People to perpetrate matrimony—"If, O Quirites, we could do without wives, we should all dispense with that subject of care (*cà molestia careremus*); but since nature has so managed it, that we can not live with women comfortably, nor without them at all, let us rather provide for the human race than our own temporary felicity."

Here the ladies set up a cry of such indigna-

tion, that both Roland and myself endeavored to appease their wrath by hasty assurances that we utterly repudiated that damnable doctrine of Metellus Numidicus.

My father, wholly unmoved, as soon as a sullen silence was established, recommenced—"Do not think, ladies," said he, "that you were without advocates at that day: there were many Romans gallant enough to blame the Censor for a mode of expressing himself which they held to be equally impolite and injudicious. 'Surely,' said they, with some plausibility, 'if Numidicus wished men to marry, he need not have referred so peremptorily to the disquietudes of the connection, and thus have made them more inclined to turn away from matrimony than given them a relish for it.' But against these critics one honest man (whose name of Titus Castricius should not be forgotten by posterity) maintained that Metellus Numidicus could not have spoken more properly; 'For remark,' said he, 'that Metellus was a censor, not a rhetorician. It becomes rhetoricians to adorn, and disguise, and make the best of things; but Metellus, *sanctus vir*—a holy and blameless man, grave and sincere to wit, and addressing the Roman people in the solemn capacity of Censor—was bound to speak the plain truth, especially as he was treating of a subject on which the observation of every day, and the experience of every life, could not leave the least doubt upon the mind of his audience.' Still Riccabocca, having decided to marry, has no doubt prepared himself to bear all the concomitant evils—as becomes a professed sage; and I own I admire the art with which Pistratus has drawn the precise woman likely to suit a philosopher."

Pistratus bows, and looks round complacently; but recoils from two very peevish and discontented faces feminine.

MR. CAXTON (completing his sentence).—"Not only as regards mildness of temper and other household qualifications, but as regards the very *person* of the object of his choice. For you evidently remembered, Pistratus, the reply of Bias, when asked his opinion on marriage: *Ἦτοι καλὴν ἔξεις, ἢ αἰσχρὰν καὶ εἰ καλὴν, ἔξεις κοινήν· εἰ δὲ αἰσχρὰν ἔξεις ποινήν.*"

Pistratus tries to look as if he had the opinion of Bias by heart, and nods acquiescingly.

MR. CAXTON.—"That is, my dears, 'The woman you would marry is either handsome or ugly; if handsome, she is *koiné*, viz., you don't have her to yourself; if ugly, she is *poiné*—that is, a fury.' But, as it is observed in Aulus Gellius (whence I borrow this citation), there is a wide interval between handsome and ugly. And thus Ennius, in his tragedy of *Menalippus*, uses an admirable expression to designate women of the proper degree of matrimonial comeliness, such as a philosopher would select. He calls this degree *stata forma*—a rational, mediocre sort of beauty, which is not liable to be either *koiné* or *poiné*. And Favorinus, who was a remarkably sensible man, and came from

Provence—the male inhabitants of which district have always valued themselves on their knowledge of love and ladies—calls this said *stata forma* the beauty of wives—the uxorial beauty. Ennius says that women of a *stata forma* are almost always safe and modest. Now Jemima, you observe, is described as possessing this *stata forma*; and it is the nicety of your observation in this respect, which I like the most in the whole of your description of a philosopher's matrimonial courtship, Pistratus, (excepting only the stroke of the spectacles) for it shows that you had properly considered the opinion of Bias, and mastered all the counter logic suggested in Book v. Chapter xi., of Aulus Gellius."

"For all that," said Blanche, half-archly, half-demurely, with a smile in the eye, and a pout of the lip, "I don't remember that Pistratus, in the days when he wished to be most complimentary, ever assured me that I had a *stata forma*—a rational, mediocre sort of beauty."

"And I think," observed my uncle, "that when he comes to his real heroine, whoever that may be, he will not trouble his head much about either Bias or Aulus Gellius."

CHAPTER II.

MATRIMONY is certainly a great change in life. One is astonished not to find a notable alteration in one's friend, even if he or she have been only wedded a week. In the instance of Dr. and Mrs. Riccabocca the change was peculiarly visible. To speak first of the lady, as in chivalry bound, Mrs. Riccabocca had entirely renounced that melancholy which had characterized Miss Jemima: she became even sprightly and gay, and looked all the better and prettier for the alteration. She did not scruple to confess honestly to Mrs. Dale, that she was now of opinion that the world was very far from approaching its end. But, in the mean while, she did not neglect the duty which the belief she had abandoned serves to inculcate—"She set her house in order." The cold and penurious elegance that had characterized the Casino disappeared like enchantment—that is, the elegance remained, but the cold and penury fled before the smile of woman. Like Puss-in-Boots after the nuptials of his master, Jackeymo only now caught minnows and sticklebacks for his own amusement. Jackeymo looked much plumper, and so did Riccabocca. In a word, the fair Jemima became an excellent wife. Riccabocca secretly thought her extravagant, but, like a wise man, declined to look at the house bills, and ate his joint in unreproachful silence.

Indeed, there was so much unaffected kindness in the nature of Mrs. Riccabocca—beneath the quiet of her manner there beat so genially the heart of the Hazeldeans—that she fairly justified the favorable anticipations of Mrs. Dale. And though the Doctor did not noisily boast of his felicity, nor, as some new married folks do, thrust it insultingly under the *nimis unctis nari-*

bus—the turned-up noses of your surly old married folks, nor force it gaudily and glaringly on the envious eyes of the single, you might still see that he was a more cheerful and light-hearted man than before. His smile was less ironical, his politeness less distant. He did not study Machiavelli so intensely—and he did not return to the spectacles; which last was an excellent sign. Moreover, the humanizing influence of the tidy English wife might be seen in the improvement of his outward or artificial man. His clothes seemed to fit him better; indeed, the clothes were new. Mrs. Dale no longer remarked that the buttons were off the wristbands, which was a great satisfaction to her. But the sage still remained faithful to the pipe, the cloak, and the red silk umbrella. Mrs. Riccabocca had (to her credit be it spoken) used all becoming and wife-like arts against these three remnants of the old bachelor Adam, but in vain. "*Anima mia*—soul of mine," said the Doctor, tenderly, "I hold the cloak, the umbrella, and the pipe, as the sole relics that remain to me of my native country. Respect and spare them."

Mrs. Riccabocca was touched, and had the good sense to perceive that man, let him be ever so much married, retains certain signs of his ancient independence—certain tokens of his old identity, which a wife, the most despotic, will do well to concede. She conceded the cloak, she submitted to the umbrella, she concealed her abhorrence of the pipe. After all, considering the natural villainy of our sex, she confessed to herself that she might have been worse off. But, through all the calm and cheerfulness of Riccabocca, a nervous perturbation was sufficiently perceptible; it commenced after the second week of marriage—it went on increasing, till one bright sunny afternoon, as he was standing on his terrace gazing down upon the road, at which Jackeymo was placed—lo, a stage-coach stopped! The Doctor made a bound, and put both hands to his heart as if he had been shot; he then leapt over the balustrade, and his wife from her window beheld him flying down the hill, with his long hair streaming in the wind, till the trees hid him from her sight.

"Ah," thought she with a natural pang of conjugal jealousy, "henceforth I am only second in his home. He has gone to welcome his child!" And at that reflection Mrs. Riccabocca shed tears.

But so naturally amiable was she, that she hastened to curb her emotion, and efface as well as she could the trace of a stepmother's grief. When this was done, and a silent, self-rebuking prayer murmured over, the good woman descended the stairs with alacrity, and, summoning up her best smiles, emerged on the terrace.

She was repaid; for scarcely had she come into the open air, when two little arms were thrown round her, and the sweetest voice that ever came from a child's lips, sighed out in broken English, "Good mamma, love me a little."

"Love you? with my whole heart!" cried the stepmother, with all a mother's honest passion. And she clasped the child to her breast.

"God bless you, my wife!" said Riccabocca, in a husky tone.

"Please take this, too," added Jackeymo, in Italian, as well as his sobs would let him—and broke off a great bough full of blossoms from his favorite orange-tree, and thrust it into his mistress's hand. She had not the slightest notion what he meant by it!

CHAPTER III.

VIOLANTE was indeed a bewitching child—a child to whom I defy Mrs. Caudle herself (immortal Mrs. Caudle!) to have been a harsh stepmother.

Look at her now, as, released from those kindly arms, she stands, still clinging with one hand to her new mamma, and holding out the other to Riccabocca—with those large dark eyes swimming in happy tears. What a lovely smile!—what an ingenuous cauld brow! She looks delicate—she evidently requires care—she wants the mother. And rare is the woman who would not love her the better for that! Still, what an innocent infantine bloom in those clear smooth cheeks!—and in that slight frame, what exquisite natural grace!

"And this, I suppose, is your nurse, darling?" said Mrs. Riccabocca, observing a dark foreign-looking woman, dressed very strangely—without cap or bonnet, but a great silver arrow stuck in her hair, and a filagree chain or necklace resting upon her kerchief.

"Ah, good Annetta," said Violante in Italian. "Papa, she says she is to go back; but she is not to go back—is she?"

Riccabocca, who had scarcely before noticed the woman, started at that question—exchanged a rapid glance with Jackeymo—and then, muttering some inaudible excuse, approached the Nurse, and, beckoning her to follow him, went away into the grounds. He did not return for more than an hour, nor did the woman then accompany him home. He said briefly to his wife that the Nurse was obliged to return at once to Italy, and that she would stay in the village to catch the mail; that indeed she would be of no use in their establishment, as she could not speak a word of English; but that he was sadly afraid Violante would pine for her. And Violante did pine at first. But still, to a child it is so great a thing to find a parent—to be at home—that, tender and grateful as Violante was, she could not be inconsolable while her father was there to comfort.

For the first few days, Riccabocca scarcely permitted any one to be with his daughter but himself. He would not even leave her alone with his *Jemima*. They walked out together—sat together for hours in the *Belvidere*. Then by degrees he began to resign her more and more to *Jemima's* care and tuition, especially in

English, of which language at present she spoke only a few sentences (previously, perhaps, learned by heart), so as to be clearly intelligible.

CHAPTER IV.

THERE was one person in the establishment of Dr. Riccabocca, who was satisfied neither with the marriage of his master nor the arrival of Violante—and that was our friend Lenny Fairfield. Previous to the all-absorbing duties of courtship, the young peasant had secured a very large share of Riccabocca's attention. The sage had felt interest in the growth of this rude intelligence struggling up to light. But what with the wooing, and what with the wedding, Lenny Fairfield had sunk very much out of his artificial position as pupil, into his natural station of under-gardener. And on the arrival of Violante, he saw, with natural bitterness, that he was clean forgotten, not only by Riccabocca, but almost by Jackeymo. It was true that the master still lent him books, and the servant still gave him lectures on horticulture. But Riccabocca had no time nor inclination now to amuse himself with enlightening that tumult of conjecture which the books created. And if Jackeymo had been covetous of those mines of gold buried beneath the acres now fairly taken from the Squire (and good-naturedly added rent-free, as an aid to Jemima's dower), before the advent of the young lady whose future dowry the produce was to swell—now that she was actually under the eyes of the faithful servant, such a stimulus was given to his industry, that he could think of nothing else but the land, and the revolution he designed to effect in its natural English crops. The garden, save only the orange-trees, was abandoned entirely to Lenny, and additional laborers were called in for the field-work. Jackeymo had discovered that one part of the soil was suited to lavender, that another would grow chamomile. He had in his heart apportioned a beautiful field of rich loam to flax; but against the growth of flax the Squire set his face obstinately. That most lucrative, perhaps, of all crops, when soil and skill suit, had, it would appear, been formerly attempted in England much more commonly than it is now; since you will find few old leases which do not contain a clause prohibitory of flax, as an impoverishment of the land. And though Jackeymo learnedly endeavored to prove to the Squire that the flax itself contained particles which, if returned to the soil, repaid all that the crop took away, Mr. Hazeldean had his old-fashioned prejudices on the matter, which were insuperable. "My forefathers," quoth he, "did not put that clause in their leases without good cause; and as the Casino lands are entailed on Frank, I have no right to gratify your foreign whims at his expense."

To make up for the loss of the flax, Jackeymo resolved to convert a very nice bit of pasture into orchard ground, which he calculated would

bring in £10 net per acre by the time Miss Violante was marriageable. At this, the Squire pished a little; but as it was quite clear that the land would be all the more valuable hereafter for the fruit trees, he consented to permit the "grass land" to be thus partially broken up.

All these changes left poor Lenny Fairfield very much to himself—at a time when the new and strange devices which the initiation into book knowledge creates, made it most desirable that he should have the constant guidance of a superior mind.

One evening after his work, as Lenny was returning to his mother's cottage very sullen and very moody, he suddenly came in contact with Sprott the tinker.

CHAPTER V.

THE tinker was seated under a hedge, hammering away at an old kettle—with a little fire burning in front of him—and the donkey hard by, indulging in a placid doze. Mr. Sprott looked up as Lenny passed—nodded kindly, and said:

"Good evenin', Lenny: glad to hear you be so 'spectably sitivated with Mounseer."

"Ay," answered Lenny, with a leaven of rancor in his recollections, "You're not ashamed to speak to me now, that I am not in disgrace. But it was in disgrace, when it wasn't my fault, that the real gentleman was most kind to me."

"Ar—r, Lenny," said the Tinker, with a prolonged rattle in that said Ar—r, which was not without great significance. "But you sees the real gentleman who han't got his bread to get, can hafford to 'spise his cracter in the world. A poor tinker must be timbersome and nice in his 'sociations. But sit down here a bit, Lenny; I've summat to say to ye!"

"To me—"

"To ye. Give the neddy a shove out i' the vay, and sit down, I say."

Lenny rather reluctantly, and somewhat superciliously, accepted this invitation.

"I hears," said the Tinker in a voice made rather indistinct by a couple of nails which he had inserted between his teeth; "I hears as how you be unkimmon fond of reading. I ha' sum nice cheap books in my bag yonder—sum as low as a penny."

"I should like to see them," said Lenny, his eyes sparkling.

The Tinker rose, opened one of the panniers on the ass's back, took out a bag which he placed before Lenny, and told him to suit himself. The young peasant desired no better. He spread all the contents of the bag on the sward, and a motley collection of food for the mind was there—food and poison—*serpentes avibus*—good and evil. Here, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, there *The Age of Reason*—here *Methodist tracts*, there *True Principles of Socialism*—*Treatises on Useful Knowledge* by sound learning actuated by pure benevolence—*Appeals to Operatives* by the

shallowest reasoners, instigated by the same ambition that had moved Eratosthenes to the conflagration of a temple; works of fiction admirable as Robinson Crusoe, or innocent as the Old English Baron, beside coarse translations of such garbage as had rotted away the youth of France under Louis Quinze. This miscellany was an epitome, in short, of the mixed World of Books, of that vast City of the Press, with its palaces and hovels, its aqueducts and sewers—which opens all alike to the naked eye and the curious mind of him to whom you say, in the Tinker's careless phrase, "suit yourself."

But it is not the first impulse of a nature, healthful and still pure, to settle in the hovel and lose itself amid the sewers; and Lenny Fairfield turned innocently over the bad books, and selecting two or three of the best, brought them to the Tinker and asked the price.

"Why," said Mr. Sprott, putting on his spectacles, "you has taken the werry dearest: them 'ere be much cheaper, and more hinterestin'."

"But I don't fancy them," answered Lenny; "I don't understand what they are about, and this seems to tell one how the steam-engine is made, and has nice plates; and this is Robinson Crusoe, which Parson Dale once said he would give me—I'd rather buy it out of my own money."

"Well, please yourself," quoth the Tinker; "you shall have the books for four bob, and you can pay me next month."

"Four bobs—four shillings? it is a great sum," said Lenny, "but I will lay by, as you are kind enough to trust me; good evening, Mr. Sprott."

"Stay a bit," said the Tinker; "I'll just throw you these two little tracks into the bargaining; they be only a shilling a dozen, so 'tis but tuppence—and ven you has read *those*, vy, you'll be a reglar customer."

The Tinker tossed to Lenny Nos. 1 and 2 of Appeals to Operatives, and the peasant took them up gratefully.

The young knowledge-seeker went his way across the green fields, and under the still autumn foliage of the hedgerows. He looked first at one book, then at another; he did not know on which to settle.

The Tinker rose and made a fire with leaves and furze and sticks, some dry and some green.

Lenny has now opened No. 1 of the tracts: they are the shortest to read, and don't require so much effort of the mind as the explanation of the steam-engine.

The Tinker has now set on his grimy gluepot, and the glue simmers.

CHAPTER VI.

As Violante became more familiar with her new home, and those around her became more familiar with Violante, she was remarked for a certain stateliness of manner and bearing, which,

had it been less evidently natural and inborn, would have seemed misplaced in the daughter of a forlorn exile, and would have been rare at so early an age among children of the loftiest pretensions. It was with the air of a little princess that she presented her tiny hand to a friendly pressure, or submitted her calm clear cheek to a presuming kiss. Yet withal she was so graceful, and her very stateliness was so pretty and captivating, that she was not the less loved for all her grand airs. And, indeed, she deserved to be loved; for though she was certainly prouder than Mr. Dale could approve of, her pride was devoid of egotism; and that is a pride by no means common. She had an intuitive forethought for others; you could see that she was capable of that grand woman-heroism, abnegation of self; and though she was an original child, and often grave and musing, with a tinge of melancholy, sweet, but deep in her character, still she was not above the happy genial merriment of childhood—only her silver laugh was more attuned, and her gestures more composed than those of children, habituated to many playfellows, usually are. Mrs. Hazeldean liked her best when she was grave, and said "she would become a very sensible woman." Mrs. Dale liked her best when she was gay, and said, "she was born to make many a heart ache;" for which Mrs. Dale was properly reproved by the Parson. Mrs. Hazeldean gave her a little set of garden tools; Mrs. Dale a picture-book and a beautiful doll. For a long time the book and the doll had the preference. But Mrs. Hazeldean having observed to Riccabocca that the poor child looked pale, and ought to be a good deal in the open air, the wise father ingeniously pretended to Violante that Mrs. Riccabocca had taken a great fancy to the picture-book, and that he should be very glad to have the doll, upon which Violante hastened to give them both away, and was never so happy as when mamma (as she called Mrs. Riccabocca) was admiring the picture-book, and Riccabocca with austere gravity dandled the doll. Then Riccabocca assured her that she could be of great use to him in the garden; and Violante instantly put into movement her spade, hoe, and wheelbarrow.

This last occupation brought her into immediate contact with Mr. Leonard Fairfield; and that personage one morning, to his great horror, found Miss Violante had nearly exterminated a whole celery-bed, which she had ignorantly conceived to be a crop of weeds.

Lenny was extremely angry. He snatched away the hoe, and said, angrily, "You must not do that, Miss. I'll tell your papa if you—"

Violante drew herself up, and never having been so spoken to before, at least since her arrival in England, there was something comical in the surprise of her large eyes, as well as something tragic in the dignity of her offended mien. "It is very naughty of you, Miss," continued Leonard, in a milder tone, for he was both soft-

ened by the eyes and awed by the mien, "and I trust you will not do it again."

"*Non capisco*" (I don't understand), murmured Violante, and the dark eyes filled with tears. At that moment up came Jackeymo; and Violante, pointing to Leonard, said, with an effort not to betray her emotion, "*Il fanciullo e molto grossolano*" (he is a very rude boy).

Jackeymo turned to Leonard with the look of an enraged tiger. "How you dare, scum of the earth that you are," cried he,* "how you dare make cry the signorina?" And his English not supplying familiar vituperatives sufficiently, he poured out upon Lenny such a profusion of Italian abuse, that the boy turned red and white in a breath with rage and perplexity.

Violante took instant compassion upon the victim she had made, and, with true feminine caprice, now began to scold Jackeymo for his anger, and, finally approaching Leonard, laid her hand on his arm, and said with a kindness at once childlike and queenly, and in the prettiest imaginable mixture of imperfect English and soft Italian, to which I can not pretend to do justice, and shall therefore translate: "Don't mind him. I dare say it was all my fault, only I did not understand you: are not these things weeds?"

"No, my darling signorina," said Jackeymo, in Italian, looking ruefully at the celery-bed, "they are not weeds, and they sell very well at this time of the year. But still, if it amuses you to pluck them up, I should like to see who's to prevent it."

Lenny walked away. He had been called "the scum of the earth," by a foreigner, too! He had again been ill-treated for doing what he conceived his duty. He was again feeling the distinction between rich and poor, and he now fancied that that distinction involved deadly warfare, for he had read from beginning to end those two damnable tracts which the Tinker had presented to him. But in the midst of all the angry disturbance of his mind, he felt the soft touch of the infant's hand, the soothing influence of her conciliating words, and he was half ashamed that he had spoken so roughly to a child.

Still, not trusting himself to speak, he walked away, and sat down at a distance. "I don't see," thought he, "why there should be rich and poor, master and servant." Lenny, be it remembered, had not heard the Parson's Political Sermon.

An hour after, having composed himself, Lenny returned to his work. Jackeymo was no longer in the garden; he had gone to the fields; but Riccabocca was standing by the celery-bed, and holding the red silk umbrella over Violante as she sat on the ground, looking up at her fa-

ther with those eyes already so full of intelligence, and love, and soul.

"Lenny," said Riccabocca, "my young lady has been telling me that she has been very naughty, and Giacomo very unjust to you. Forgive them both."

Lenny's sullenness melted in an instant; the reminiscences of tracts Nos. 1 and 2,

"Like the baseless fabrics of a vision,
Left not a wreck behind."

He raised eyes, swimming with all his native goodness, toward the wise man, and dropped them gratefully on the face of the infant peacemaker. Then he turned away his head and fairly wept. The Parson was right: "O ye poor, have charity for the rich; O ye rich, respect the poor."

CHAPTER VII.

Now from that day the humble Lenny and the regal Violante became great friends. With what pride he taught her to distinguish between celery and weeds—and how proud too, was she when she learned that she was *useful*! There is not a greater pleasure you can give to children, especially female children, than to make them feel they are already of value in the world, and serviceable as well as protected. Weeks and months rolled away, and Lenny still read, not only the books lent him by the Doctor, but those he bought of Mr. Sprott. As for the bombs and shells against religion which the Tinker carried in his bag, Lenny was not induced to blow himself up with them. He had been reared from his cradle in simple love and reverence for the Divine Father, and the tender Saviour, whose life beyond all records of human goodness, whose death beyond all epics of mortal heroism, no being whose infancy has been taught to supplicate the Merciful and adore the Holy, yea, even though his later life may be entangled amidst the thorns of some desolate Pyrrhonism, can ever hear reviled and scoffed without a shock to the conscience and a revolt of the heart. As the deer recoils by instinct from the tiger, as the very look of the scorpion deters you from handling it, though you never saw a scorpion before, so the very first line in some ribald profanity on which the Tinker put his black finger, made Lenny's blood run cold. Safe, too, was the peasant boy from any temptation in works of a gross and licentious nature, not only because of the happy ignorance of his rural life, but because of a more enduring safeguard—genius! Genius, that, manly, robust, healthful as it be, is long before it lose its instinctive Dorian modesty; shame-faced, because so susceptible to glory—genius, that loves indeed to dream, but on the violet bank, not the dung-hill. Wherefore, even in the error of the senses, it seeks to escape from the sensual into worlds of fancy, subtle and refined. But apart from the passions, true genius is the most practical of all human gifts. Like the Apollo, whom the

* It need scarcely be observed, that Jackeymo, in his conversations with his master or Violante, or his conference with himself, employs his native language, which is therefore translated without the blunders that he is driven to commit when compelled to trust himself to the tongue of the country in which he is a sojourner.

Greek worshiped as its type, even Arcady is its exile, not its home. Soon weary of the dalliance of Tempé, its ascends to its mission—the Archer of the silver bow, the guide of the car of light. Speaking more plainly, genius is the enthusiasm for self-improvement; it ceases or sleeps the moment it desists from seeking some object which it believes of value, and by that object it insensibly connects its self-improvement with the positive advance of the world. At present Lenny's genius had no bias that was not to the Positive and Useful. It took the direction natural to his sphere, and the wants therein, viz., to the arts which we call mechanical. He wanted to know about steam-engines and Artesian wells; and to know about them it was necessary to know something of mechanics and hydrostatics; so he bought popular elementary works on those mystic sciences, and set all the powers of his mind at work on experiments.

Noble and generous spirits are ye, who with small care for fame, and little reward from pelf, have opened to the intellects of the poor the portals of wisdom! I honor and revere ye; only do not think ye have done all that is needful. Consider, I pray ye, whether so good a choice from the Tinker's bag would have been made by a boy whom religion had not scared from the Pestilent, and genius had not led to the Self-improving. And Lenny did not wholly escape from the mephitic portions of the motley elements from which his awakening mind drew its nurture. Think not it was all pure oxygen that the panting lip drew in. No; there were still those inflammatory tracts. Political I do not like to call them, for politics mean the art of government, and the tracts I speak of assailed all government which mankind has hitherto recognized. Sad rubbish, perhaps, were such tracts to you, O sound thinker, in your easy-chair! Or to you, practiced statesman, at your post on the Treasury Bench—to you, calm dignitary of a learned Church—or to you, my lord judge, who may often have sent from your bar to the dire Orcus of Norfolk's Isle the ghosts of men whom that rubbish, falling simultaneously on the bamps of acquisitiveness and combativeness, hath untimely slain. Sad rubbish to you! But seems it such rubbish to the poor man, to whom it promises a paradise on the easy terms of upsetting a world? For ye see, these "Appeals to Operatives" represent that same world-upsetting as the simplest thing imaginable—a sort of two-and-two-make-four proposition. The poor have only got to set their strong hands to the axle, and heave-a-hoy! and hurrah for the topsy-turvy! Then, just to put a little wholesome rage into the heave-a-hoy! it is so facile to accompany the eloquence of "Appeals" with a kind of stir-the-bile-up statistics—"Abuses of the Aristocracy"—"Jobs of the Priesthood"—"Expenses of Army kept up for Peers' younger sons"—"Wars contracted for the villainous purpose of raising the rents of the landowners"—all arithmetically dished

up, and seasoned with tales of every gentleman who has committed a misdeed, every clergyman who has dishonored his cloth; as if such instances were fair specimens of average gentlemen and ministers of religion! All this passionately advanced, (and observe, never answered, for that literature admits no controversialists, and the writer has it all his own way), may be rubbish; but it is out of such rubbish that operatives build barricades for attack, and legislators prisons for defense.

Our poor friend Lenny drew plenty of this stuff from the Tinker's bag. He thought it very clever and very eloquent; and he supposed the statistics were as true as mathematical demonstrations.

A famous knowledge-diffuser is looking over my shoulder, and tells me, "Increase education, and cheapen good books, and all this rubbish will disappear!" Sir, I don't believe a word of it. If you printed Ricardo and Adam Smith at a farthing a volume, I still believe they would be as little read by the operatives as they are nowadays by a very large proportion of highly-cultivated men. I still believe that while the press works, attacks on the rich, and propositions for heave-a-hoys, will always form a popular portion of the Literature of Labor. There's Lenny Fairfield reading a treatise on hydraulics, and constructing a model for a fountain into the bargain; but that does not prevent his acquiescence in any proposition for getting rid of a National Debt, which he certainly never agreed to pay, and which he is told makes sugar and tea so shamefully dear. No. I tell you what does a little counteract those eloquent incentives to break his own head against the strong walls of the Social System—it is, that he has two eyes in that head, which are not always employed in reading. And, having been told in print that masters are tyrants, parsons hypocrites or drones in the hive, and landowners vampires and blood-suckers, he looks out into the little world around him, and, first he is compelled to acknowledge that his master is not a tyrant (perhaps because he is a foreigner and a philosopher, and, for what I and Lenny know, a republican). But then Parson Dale, though High Church to the marrow, is neither hypocrite nor drone. He has a very good living, it is true—much better than he ought to have, according to the "political" opinions of those tracts; but Lenny is obliged to confess that, if Parson Dale were a penny the poorer, he would do a pennyworth's less good; and, comparing one parish with another, such as Rood Hall and Hazeldean, he is dimly aware that there is no greater civilizer than a parson tolerably well off. Then, too, Squire Hazeldean, though as arrant a Tory as ever stood upon shoe-leather, is certainly not a vampire nor bloodsucker. He does not feed on the public; a great many of the public feed upon him: and, therefore, his practical experience a little staggers and perplexes Lenny Fairfield as to the gospel accuracy of his theoretical

dogmas. Masters, parsons, landowners! having, at the risk of all popularity, just given a *coup de patte* to certain sages extremely the fashion at present, I am not going to let you off without an admonitory flea in the ear. Don't suppose that any mere scribbling and typework will suffice to answer scribbling and typework set at work to demolish you—write down that rubbish you can't—live it down you may. If you are rich, like Squire Hazeldean, do good with your money; if you are poor, like Signor Riccabocca, do good with your kindness.

See! there is Lenny now receiving his week's wages; and though Lenny knows that he can get higher wages in the very next parish, his blue eyes are sparkling with gratitude, not at the chink of the money, but at the poor exile's friendly talk on things apart from all service; while Violante is descending the steps from the terrace, charged by her mother-in-law with a little basket of sago, and suchlike delicacies, for Mrs. Fairfield, who has been ailing the last few days.

Lenny will see the Tinker as he goes home, and he will buy a most Demosthenean "Appeal"—a tract of tracts, upon the "Propriety of Strikes," and the Avarice of Masters. But, somehow or other, I think a few words from Signor Riccabocca, that did not cost the Signor a farthing, and the sight of his mother's smile at the contents of the basket, which cost very little, will serve to neutralize the effects of that "Appeal," much more efficaciously than the best article a Brongham or a Mill could write on the subject.

CHAPTER VIII.

SPRING had come again; and one beautiful May-day, Leonard Fairfield sat beside the little fountain which he had now actually constructed in the garden. The butterflies were hovering over the belt of flowers which he had placed around his fountain, and the birds were singing overhead. Leonard Fairfield was resting from his day's work, to enjoy his abstemious dinner, beside the cool play of the sparkling waters, and, with the yet keener appetite of knowledge, he devoured his book as he munched his crusts.

A penny tract is the shoeing-horn of literature: it draws on a great many books, and some too tight to be very useful in walking. The penny tract quotes a celebrated writer, you long to read him; it props a startling assertion by a grave authority, you long to refer to it. During the nights of the past winter, Leonard's intelligence had made vast progress: he had taught himself more than the elements of mechanics, and put to practice the principles he had acquired, not only in the hydraulical achievement of the fountain, nor in the still more notable application of science, commenced on the stream in which Jackeymo had fished for minnows, and which Lenny had diverted to the purpose of irrigating two fields, but in various ingenious contrivances for the facilitation or abridgment of

labor, which had excited great wonder and praise in the neighborhood. On the other hand, those rabid little tracts, which dealt so summarily with the destinies of the human race, even when his growing reason, and the perusal of works more classical or more logical, had led him to perceive that they were illiterate, and to suspect that they jumped from premises to conclusions with a celerity very different from the careful ratiocination of mechanical science, had still, in the citations and references wherewith they abounded, lured him on to philosophers more specious and more perilous. Out of the Tinker's bag he had drawn a translation of Condorcet's *Progress of Man*, and another of Rousseau's *Social Contract*. These had induced him to select from the tracts in the Tinker's miscellany those which abounded most in professions of philanthropy, and predictions of some coming Golden Age, to which old Saturn's was a joke—tracts so mild and mother-like in their language, that it required a much more practical experience than Lenny's to perceive that you would have to pass a river of blood before you had the slightest chance of setting foot on the flowery banks on which they invited you to repose—tracts which rouged poor Christianity on the cheeks, clapped a crown of innocent daffodillies on her head, and set her to dancing a *pas de zephyr* in the pastoral ballet in which St. Simon pipes to the flock he shears; or having first laid it down as a preliminary axiom, that

"The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself—
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,"

substituted in place thereof Monsieur Fourier's symmetrical phalanstere, or Mr. Owen's architectural parallelogram. It was with some such tract that Lenny was seasoning his crusts and his radishes, when Riccabocca, bending his long dark face over the student's shoulder, said abruptly—

"*Diavolo*, my friend! What on earth have you got there? Just let me look at it, will you?"

Leonard rose respectfully, and colored deeply as he surrendered the tract to Riccabocca.

The wise man read the first page attentively, the second more cursorily, and only ran his eye over the rest. He had gone through too vast a range of problems political, not to have passed over that venerable *Pons Asinorum* of Socialism, on which Fouriers and St. Simons sit straddling and cry aloud that they have arrived at the last boundary of knowledge!

"All this is as old as the hills," quoth Riccabocca irreverently; "but the hills stand still, and this—there it goes!" and the sage pointed to a cloud emitted from his pipe. "Did you ever read Sir David Brewster on Optical Delusions? No! Well, I'll lend it to you. You will find therein a story of a lady who always saw a black cat on her hearth-rug. The black cat existed only in her fancy, but the hallucination was natural and reasonable—eh—what do you think?"

"Why, sir," said Leonard, not catching the Italian's meaning, "I don't exactly see that it was natural and reasonable."

"Foolish boy, yes! because black cats are things possible and known. But who ever saw upon earth a community of men such as sit on the hearth-rugs of Messrs. Owen and Fourier? If the lady's hallucination was not reasonable, what is his, who believes in such visions as these?"

Leonard bit his lip.

"My dear boy," cried Riccabocca kindly, "the only thing sure and tangible to which these writers would lead you, lies at the first step, and that is what is commonly called a Revolution. Now, I know what that is. I have gone, not indeed through a revolution, but an attempt at one."

Leonard raised his eyes toward his master with a look of profound respect, and great curiosity.

"Yes," added Riccabocca, and the face on which the boy gazed exchanged its usual grotesque and sardonic expression for one animated, noble, and heroic. "Yes, not a revolution for chimeras, but for that cause which the coldest allow to be good, and which, when successful, all time approves as divine—the redemption of our native soil from the rule of the foreigner! I have shared in such an attempt. And," continued the Italian mournfully, "recalling now all the evil passions it arouses, all the ties it dissolves, all the blood that it commands to flow, all the healthful industry it arrests, all the madmen that it arms, all the victims that it dupes, I question whether one man really honest, pure, and humane, who has once gone through such an ordeal, would ever hazard it again, unless he was assured that the victory was certain—ay, and the object for which he fights not to be wrested from his hands amidst the uproar of the elements that the battle has released."

The Italian paused, shaded his brow with his hand, and remained long silent. Then, gradually resuming his ordinary tone, he continued—

"Revolutions that have no definite objects made clear by the positive experience of history; revolutions, in a word, that aim less at substituting one law or one dynasty for another, than at changing the whole scheme of society, have been little attempted by real statesmen. Even Lysurgus is proved to be a myth who never existed. They are the suggestions of philosophers who lived apart from the actual world, and whose opinions (though generally they were very benevolent, good sort of men, and wrote in an elegant poetical style) one would no more take on a plain matter of life, than one would look upon Virgil's *Eclogues* as a faithful picture of the ordinary pains and pleasures of the peasants who tend our sheep. Read them as you would read poets, and they are delightful. But attempt to shape the world according to the poetry—and fit yourself for a madhouse. The farther off the age is from the realization of such projects, the more these poor philosophers

have indulged them. Thus, it was amidst the saddest corruption of court manners that it became the fashion in Paris to sit for one's picture with a crook in one's hand, as Alexis or Daphne. Just as liberty was fast dying out of Greece, and the successors of Alexander were founding their monarchies, and Rome was growing up to crush, in its iron grasp, all states save its own, Plato withdraws his eyes from the world, to open them in his dreamy Atlantis. Just in the grimmest period of English history, with the ax hanging over his head, Sir Thomas More gives you his *Utopia*. Just when the world is to be the theatre of a new Sesostris, the dreamers of France tell you that the age is too enlightened for war, that man is henceforth to be governed by pure reason and live in a paradise. Very pretty reading all this to a man like me, Lenny, who can admire and smile at it. But to you, to the man who has to work for his living, to the man who thinks it would be so much more pleasant to live at his ease in a phalanstere than to work eight or ten hours a day; to the man of talent, and action, and industry, whose future is invested in that tranquillity, and order of a state, in which talent, and action and industry are a certain capital; why, Messrs. Coutts, the great bankers, had better encourage a theory to upset the system of banking! Whatever disturbs society, yea, even by a causeless panic, much more by an actual struggle, falls first upon the market of labor, and thence affects, prejudicially, every department of intelligence. In such times the arts are arrested; literature is neglected; people are too busy to read any thing save appeals to their passions. And capital, shaken in its sense of security, no longer ventures boldly through the land, calling forth all the energies of toil and enterprise, and extending to every workman his reward. Now, Lenny, take this piece of advice. You are young, clever, and aspiring: men rarely succeed in changing the world; but a man seldom fails of success if he lets the world alone, and resolves to make the best of it. You are in the midst of the great crisis of your life; it is the struggle between the new desires knowledge excites, and that sense of poverty, which those desires convert either into hope and emulation, or into envy and despair. I grant that it is an up-hill work that lies before you; but don't you think it is always easier to climb a mountain than it is to level it? These books call on you to level the mountain; and that mountain is the property of other people, subdivided among a great many proprietors, and protected by law. At the first stroke of the pick-ax, it is ten to one but what you are taken up for a trespass. But the path up the mountain is a right of way uncontested. You may be safe at the summit, before (even if the owners are fools enough to let you) you could have leveled a yard. *Cospetto!*" quoth the Doctor, "it is more than two thousand years ago since poor Plato began to level it, and the mountain is as high as ever!"

Thus saying, Riccabocca came to the end of his pipe, and, stalking thoughtfully away, he left Leonard Fairfield trying to extract light from the smoke.

CHAPTER IX

SHORTLY after this discourse of Riccabocca's, an incident occurred to Leonard that served to carry his mind into new directions. One evening, when his mother was out, he was at work on a new mechanical contrivance, and had the misfortune to break one of the instruments which he employed. Now it will be remembered that his father had been the Squire's head-carpenter; the widow had carefully hoarded the tools of his craft, which had belonged to her poor Mark; and though she occasionally lent them to Leonard, she would not give them up to his service. Among these, Leonard knew that he should find the one that he wanted; and being much interested in his contrivance, he could not wait till his mother's return. The tools, with other little relics of the lost, were kept in a large trunk in Mrs. Fairfield's sleeping room; the trunk was not locked, and Leonard went to it without ceremony or scruple. In rummaging for the instrument, his eye fell upon a bundle of MSS.; and he suddenly recollected that when he was a mere child, and before he much knew the difference between verse and prose, his mother had pointed to these MSS. and said, "One day or other, when you can read nicely, I'll let you look at these Lenny. My poor Mark wrote such verses—ah, he *was* a scollard!" Leonard, reasonably enough, thought that the time had now arrived when he was worthy the privilege of reading the paternal effusions, and he took forth the MSS. with a keen but melancholy interest. He recognized his father's handwriting, which he had often seen before in account-books and memoranda, and read eagerly some trifling poems, which did not show much *genius*, nor much mastery of language and rhythm—such poems, in short as a self-educated man, with poetic taste and feeling, rather than poetic inspiration or artistic culture, might compose with credit, but not for fame. But suddenly, as he turned over these "Occasional Pieces," Leonard came to others in a different handwriting—a woman's handwriting—small, and fine, and exquisitely formed. He had scarcely read six lines of these last, before his attention was irresistibly chained. They were of a different order of merit from poor Mark's; they bore the unmistakable stamp of genius. Like the poetry of persons in general, they were devoted to personal feeling—they were not the mirror of a world, but reflections of a solitary heart. Yet this is the kind of poetry most pleasing to the young. And the verses in question had another attraction for Leonard: they seemed to express some struggle akin to his own—some complaint against the actual condition of the writer's life, some sweet melodious murmurs at fortune. For

the rest, they were characterized by a vein of sentiment so elevated that, if written by a man, it would have run into exaggeration; written by a woman, the romance was carried off by so many genuine revelations of sincere, deep, pathetic feeling, that it was always natural, though true to a nature from which you would not augur happiness.

Leonard was still absorbed in the perusal of these poems, when Mrs. Fairfield entered the room.

"What have you been about, Lenny? searching in my box?"

"I came to look for my father's bag of tools, mother, and I found these papers, which you said I might read some day."

"I doesn't wonder you did not hear me when I came in," said the widow sighing. "I used to sit still for the hour together, when my poor Mark read his poems to me. There was such a pretty one about the 'Peasant's Fireside,' Lenny—have you got hold of that?"

"Yes, dear mother; and I remarked the allusion to you: it brought tears to my eyes. But these verses are not my father's—whose are they? They seem a woman's hand."

Mrs. Fairfield looked—changed color—grew faint—and seated herself.

"Poor, poor Nora!" said she, faltering. "I did not know as they were there; Mark kept 'em; they got among his—"

LEONARD.—"Who was Nora?"

MRS. FAIRFIELD.—"Who?—child—who? Nora was—was my own—own sister."

LEONARD (in great amaze, contrasting his ideal of the writer of these musical lines, in that graceful hand, with his homely uneducated mother, who can neither read nor write).—"Your sister—is it possible? My aunt, then. How comes it you never spoke of her before? Oh! you should be so proud of her, mother."

MRS. FAIRFIELD (clasping her hands).—"We were proud of her, all of us—father, mother—all! She was so beautiful and so good, and not proud she! though she looked like the first lady in the land. Oh! Nora, Nora!"

LEONARD (after a pause).—"But she must have been highly educated?"

MRS. FAIRFIELD.—"'Deed she was!"

LEONARD.—"How was that?"

MRS. FAIRFIELD (rocking herself to and fro in her chair).—"Oh! my Lady was her godmother—Lady Lansmere I mean—and took a fancy to her when she was that high! and had her to stay at the Park, and wait on her ladyship; and then she put her to school, and Nora was so clever that nothing would do but she must go to London as a governess. But don't talk of it, boy! don't talk of it!"

LEONARD.—"Why not, mother? what has become of her? where is she?"

MRS. FAIRFIELD (bursting into a paroxysm of tears).—"In her grave—in her cold grave! Dead, dead!"

Leonard was inexpressibly grieved and shock-

ed. It is the attribute of the poet to seem always living, always a friend. Leonard felt as if some one very dear had been suddenly torn from his heart. He tried to console his mother; but her emotion was contagious, and he wept with her.

"And how long has she been dead?" he asked at last, in mournful accents.

"Many's the long year, many; but," added Mrs. Fairfield, rising, and putting her tremulous hand on Leonard's shoulder, "you'll just never talk to me about her—I can't bear it—it breaks my heart. I can bear better to talk of Mark—come down stairs—come."

"May I not keep these verses, mother? Do let me."

"Well, well, those bits o' paper be all she left behind her—yes, keep them, but put back Mark's. Are *they* all here?—sure?" And the widow, though she could not read her husband's verses, looked jealously at the MSS. written in his irregular large scrawl, and, smoothing them carefully, replaced them in the trunk, and resettled over them some sprigs of lavender, which Leonard had unwittingly disturbed.

"But," said Leonard, as his eye again rested on the beautiful handwriting of his lost aunt—"but you call her Nora—I see she signs herself L."

"Leonora was her name. I said she was my Lady's god-child. We called her Nora for short—"

"Leonora—and I am Leonard—is that how I came by the name?"

"Yes, yes—do hold your tongue, boy," sobbed poor Mrs. Fairfield; and she could not be soothed nor coaxed into continuing or renewing a subject which was evidently associated with insupportable pain.

CHAPTER X.

It is difficult to exaggerate the effect that this discovery produced on Leonard's train of thought. Some one belonging to his own humble race had, then, preceded him in his struggling flight toward the loftier regions of Intelligence and Desire. It was like the mariner amidst unknown seas, who finds carved upon some desert isle a familiar household name. And this creature of genius and of sorrow—whose existence he had only learned by her song, and whose death created, in the simple heart of her sister, so passionate a grief, after the lapse of so many years—supplied to the romance awaking in his young heart the ideal which it unconsciously sought. He was pleased to hear that she had been beautiful and good. He paused from his books to muse on her, and picture her image to his fancy. That there was some mystery in her fate was evident to him; and while that conviction deepened his interest, the mystery itself, by degrees, took a charm which he was not anxious to dispel. He resigned himself to Mrs. Fairfield's obstinate silence. He was contented to

rank the dead among those holy and ineffable images which we do not seek to unvail. Youth and Fancy have many secret hoards of idea which they do not desire to impart, even to those most in their confidence. I doubt the depth of feeling in any man who has not certain recesses in his soul into which none may enter.

Hitherto, as I have said, the talents of Leonard Fairfield had been more turned to things positive than to the ideal; to science and investigation of fact than to poetry, and that arrier truth in which poetry has its element. He had read our greater poets, indeed, but without thought of imitating; and rather from the general curiosity to inspect all celebrated monuments of the human mind, than from that especial predilection for verse which is too common in childhood and youth to be any sure sign of a poet. But now these melodies, unknown to all the world beside, rang in his ear, mingled with his thoughts—set, as it were, his whole life to music. He read poetry with a different sentiment—it seemed to him that he had discovered its secret. And so reading, the passion seized him, and "the numbers came."

To many minds, at the commencement of our grave and earnest pilgrimage, I am Vandal enough to think that the indulgence of poetic taste and rev'rie does great and lasting harm; that it serves to enervate the character, give false ideas of life, impart the semblance of drudgery to the noble toils and duties of the active man. All poetry would not do this—not, for instance, the Classical, in its diviner masters—not the poetry of Homer, of Virgil, of Sophocles—not, perhaps, even that of the indolent Horace. But the poetry which youth usually loves and appreciates the best—the poetry of mere sentiment—does so in minds already over predisposed to the sentimental, and which require bracing to grow into healthful manhood.

On the other hand, even this latter kind of poetry, which is peculiarly modern, does suit many minds of another mould—minds which our modern life, with its hard positive forms, tends to produce. And as in certain climates plants and herbs, peculiarly adapted as antidotes to those diseases most prevalent in the atmosphere, are profusely sown, as it were, by the benignant providence of nature—so it may be that the softer and more romantic species of poetry, which comes forth in harsh, money-making, unromantic times, is intended as curatives and counter-poisons. The world is so much with us, nowadays, that we need have something that prates to us, albeit even in too fine an euphuism, of the moon and stars.

Certes, to Leonard Fairfield, at that period of his intellectual life, the softness of our Helicon descended as healing dews. In his turbulent and unsettled ambition, in his vague grapple with the giant forms of political truths, in his bias toward the application of science to immediate practical purposes, this lovely vision of the Muse came in the white robe of the Peacemaker;

and with upraised hand, pointing to serene skies, she opened to him fair glimpses of the Beautiful, which is given to Peasant as to Prince—showed to him that on the surface of earth there is something nobler than fortune—that he who can view the world as a poet is always at soul a king; while to practical purpose itself, that larger and more profound invention, which poetry stimulates, supplied the grand design and the subtle view—leading him beyond the mere ingenuity of the mechanic, and habituating him to regard the inert force of the matter at his command with the ambition of the Discoverer. But, above all, the discontent that was within him finding a vent, not in deliberate war upon this actual world, but through the purifying channels of song—in the vent itself it evaporated, it was lost. By accustoming ourselves to survey all things with the spirit that retains and reproduces them only in their lovelier or grander aspects, a vast philosophy of toleration for what we before gazed on with scorn or hate insensibly grows upon us. Leonard looked into his heart after the enchantress had breathed upon it; and through the mists of the fleeting and tender melancholy which betrayed where she had been, he beheld a new sun of delight and joy dawning over the landscape of human life.

Thus, though she was dead and gone from his actual knowledge, this mysterious kinswoman—"a voice and nothing more"—had spoken to him, soothed, elevated, cheered, attuned each discord into harmony; and, if now permitted from some serener sphere to behold the life that her soul thus strangely influenced, verily, with yet holier joy, the saving and lovely spirit might have glided onward in the Eternal Progress.

We call the large majority of human lives *obscure*. Presumptuous that we are! How know we what lives a single thought retained from the dust of nameless graves may have lighted to renown?

CHAPTER XI.

It was about a year after Leonard's discovery of the family MSS. that Parson Dale borrowed the quietest pad mare in the Squire's stables, and set out on an equestrian excursion. He said that he was bound on business connected with his old parishoners of Lansmere; for, as it has been incidentally implied in a previous chapter, he had been connected with that borough town (and, I may here add, in the capacity of curate) before he had been inducted into the living of Hazeldean.

It was so rarely that the Parson stirred from home, that this journey to a town more than twenty miles off was regarded as a most daring adventure, both at the Hall and at the Parsonage. Mrs. Dale could not sleep the whole previous night with thinking of it; and though she had naturally one of her worst nervous headaches on the eventful morn, she yet suffered no

hands less thoughtful than her own to pack up the saddlebags which the Parson had borrowed along with the pad. Nay, so distrustful was she of the possibility of the good man's exerting the slightest common sense in her absence, that she kept him close at her side while she was engaged in that same operation of packing up—showing him the exact spot in which the clean shirt was put, and how nicely the old slippers were packed up in one of his own sermons. She implored him not to mistake the sandwiches for his shaving-soap, and made him observe how carefully she had provided against such confusion, by placing them as far apart from each other as the nature of saddlebags will admit. The poor Parson—who was really by no means an absent man, but as little likely to shave himself with sandwiches and lunch upon soap as the most common-place mortal may be—listened with conjugal patience, and thought that man never had such a wife before; nor was it without tears in his own eyes that he tore himself from the farewell embrace of his weeping Carry.

I confess, however, that it was with some apprehension that he set his foot in the stirrup, and trusted his person to the mercies of an unfamiliar animal. For whatever might be Mr. Dale's minor accomplishments as a man and parson, horsemanship was not his forte. Indeed, I doubt if he had taken the reins in his hand more than twice since he had been married.

The Squire's surly old groom, Mat, was in attendance with the pad; and, to the Parson's gentle inquiry whether Mat was quite sure that the pad was quite safe, replied laconically, "Oi, oi, give her her head."

"Give her her head!" repeated Mr. Dale, rather amazed, for he had not the slightest intention of taking away that part of the beast's frame, so essential to its vital economy—"Give her her head!"

"Oi, oi; and don't jerk her up like that, or she'll fall a doincing on her hind-legs."

The Parson instantly slackened the reins; and Mrs. Dale—who had tarried behind to control her tears—now running to the door for "more last words," he waved his hand with courageous amenity, and ambled forth into the lane.

Our equestrian was absorbed at first in studying the idiosyncrasies of the pad, and trying thereby to arrive at some notion of her general character: guessing, for instance, why she raised one ear and laid down the other; why she kept bearing so close to the left that she brushed his leg against the hedge; and why, when she arrived at a little side-gate in the fields, which led toward the home-farm, she came to a full stop, and fell to rubbing her nose against the rail—an occupation from which the Parson, finding all civil remonstrances in vain, at length diverted her by a timorous application of the whip.

This crisis on the road fairly passed, the pad seemed to comprehend that she had a journey

before her, and giving a petulant whisk of her tail, quickened her amble into a short trot, which soon brought the Parson into the high road, and nearly opposite the Casino.

Here, sitting on the gate which led to his abode, and shaded by his umbrella, he beheld Dr. Riccabocca.

The Italian lifted his eyes from the book he was reading, and stared hard at the Parson; and he—not venturing to withdraw his whole attention from the pad (who, indeed, set up both her ears at the apparition of Riccabocca, and evinced symptoms of that surprise and superstitious repugnance at unknown objects which goes by the name of “shying”), looked askance at Riccabocca.

“Don’t stir, please,” said the Parson, “or I fear you’ll alarm this creature; it seems a nervous, timid thing;—soho—gently—gently.”

And he fell to patting the mare with greatunction.

The pad thus encouraged, overcame her first natural astonishment at the sight of Riccabocca and the red umbrella; and having before been at the Casino on sundry occasions, and sagaciously preferring places within the range of experience to bournes neither cognate nor conjecturable, she moved gravely up toward the gate on which the Italian sate; and, after eying him a moment—as much as to say, “I wish you would get off”—came to a dead lock.

“Well,” said Riccabocca, “since your horse seems more disposed to be polite to me than yourself, Mr. Dale, I take the opportunity of your present involuntary pause to congratulate you on your elevation in life, and to breathe a friendly prayer that pride may not have a fall!”

“Tut,” said the Parson, affecting an easy air, though still contemplating the pad, who appeared to have fallen into a quiet doze, “It is true that I have not ridden much of late years, and the Squire’s horses are very high fed and spirited; but there is no more harm in them than their master when one once knows their ways.”

“Chi vâ piano, vâ sano,
E chi vâ sano vâ lontano,”

said Riccabocca, pointing to the saddle-bags. “You go slowly, therefore safely; and he who goes safely may go far. You seem prepared for a journey?”

“I am,” said the Parson; “and on a matter that concerns you a little.”

“Me!” exclaimed Riccabocca—“concerns me!”

“Yes, so far as the chance of depriving you of a servant whom you like and esteem affects you.”

“Oh,” said Riccabocca, “I understand: you have hinted to me very often that I or knowledge, or both together, have unfitted Leonard Fairfield for service.”

“I did not say that exactly; I said that you have fitted him for something higher than service. But do not repeat this to him. And I can not yet say more to you, for I am very

doubtful as to the success of my mission; and it will not do to unsettle poor Leonard until we are sure that we can improve his condition.”

“Of that you can never be sure,” quoth the wise man, shaking his head; “and I can’t say that I am unselfish enough not to bear you a grudge for seeking to decoy away from me an invaluable servant—faithful, steady, intelligent, and (added Riccabocca, warming as he approached the climacteric adjective)—exceedingly cheap! Nevertheless go, and Heaven speed you. I am not an Alexander, to stand between man and the sun.”

“You are a noble great-hearted creature, Signor Riccabocca, in spite of your cold-blooded proverbs and villainous books.” The Parson, as he said this, brought down the whip-hand with so indiscreet an enthusiasm on the pad’s shoulder, that the poor beast, startled out of her innocent doze, made a bolt forward, which nearly precipitated Riccabocca from his seat on the stile, and then turning round—as the Parson tugged desperately at the rein—caught the bit between her teeth, and set off at a canter. The Parson lost both his stirrups; and when he regained them (as the pad slackened her pace), and had time to breathe and look about him, Riccabocca and the Casino were both out of sight.

“Certainly,” quoth Parson Dale, as he resettled himself with great complacency, and a conscious triumph that he was still on the pad’s back—“certainly it is true ‘that the noblest conquest ever made by man was that of the horse:’ a fine creature it is—a very fine creature—and uncommonly difficult to sit on,—especially without stirrups.” Firmly in his stirrups the Parson planted his feet; and the heart within him was very proud.

CHAPTER XII.

LANSMERE was situated in the county adjoining that which contained the village of Hazeldean. Late at noon the Parson crossed the little stream which divided the two shires, and came to an inn, which was placed at an angle, where the great main road branched off into two directions—the one leading toward Lansmere, the other going more direct to London. At this inn the pad stopped, and put down both ears with the air of a pad who has made up her mind to bait. And the Parson himself, feeling very warm, and somewhat sore, said to the pad, benignly: “It is just—thou shalt have corn and water!”

Dismounting, therefore, and finding himself very stiff, as soon as he had reached *terra firma*, the Parson consigned the pad to the hostler, and walked into the sanded parlor of the inn, to repose himself on a very hard Windsor chair.

He had been alone rather more than half-an-hour, reading a county newspaper which smelt much of tobacco, and trying to keep off the flies that gathered round him in swarms, as if they

had never before seen a Parson, and were anxious to ascertain how the flesh of him tasted—when a stage-coach stopped at the inn. A traveler got out with his carpet-bag in his hand, and was shown into the sanded parlor.

The Parson rose politely, and made a bow.

The traveler touched his hat, without taking it off—looked at Mr. Dale from top to toe—then walked to the window, and whistled a lively, impatient tune, then strode toward the fireplace and rang the bell; then stared again at the Parson; and that gentleman having courteously laid down the newspaper, the traveler seized it, threw himself on a chair, flung one of his legs over the table, tossed the other up on the mantle-piece, and began reading the paper, while he tilted the chair on its hind-legs with so daring a disregard to the ordinary position of chairs and their occupants, that the shuddering Parson expected every moment to see him come down on the back of his skull.

Moved, therefore, to compassion, Mr. Dale said, mildly:

"Those chairs are very treacherous, sir; I'm afraid you'll be down."

"Eh," said the traveler, looking up much astonished. "Eh, down?—oh, you're satirical, sir!"

"Satirical, sir? upon my word, no!" exclaimed the Parson, earnestly.

"I think every free-born man has a right to sit as he pleases in his own house," resumed the traveler, with warmth; "and an inn is his own house, I guess, so long as he pays his score. Betty, my dear!"

For the chamber-maid had now replied to the bell.

"I han't Betty, sir; do you want she?"

"No, Sally—cold brandy-and-water—and a biscuit."

"I han't Sally, either," muttered the chamber-maid; but the traveler, turning round, showed so smart a neckcloth, and so comely a face, that she smiled, colored, and went her way.

The traveler now rose, and flung down the paper. He took out a penknife, and began paring his nails. Suddenly desisting from this elegant occupation, his eye caught sight of the Parson's shovel-hat, which lay on a chair in the corner.

"You're a clergyman, I reckon, sir," said the traveler, with a slight sneer.

Again Mr. Dale bowed—bowed in part deprecatingly—in part with dignity. It was a bow that said, "No offense, sir! but I *am* a clergyman, and I'm not ashamed of it!"

"Going far?" asked the traveler.

PARSON.—"Not very."

TRAVELER.—"In a chaise or fly? If so, and we are going the same way—halves!"

PARSON.—"Halves?"

TRAVELER.—"Yes, I'll pay half the damage—pikes inclusive."

PARSON.—"You are very good, sir: but" (*spoken with pride*), "I am on horseback."

TRAVELER.—"On horseback! Well, I should

not have guessed that! You don't look like it. Where did you say you were going?"

"I did *not* say where I was going, sir," said the Parson, drily, for he was much offended at that vague and ungrammatical remark, applicable to his horsemanship, that "he did not look like it!"

"Close!" said the traveler, laughing; "an old traveler, I reckon!"

The Parson made no reply; but he took up his shovel-hat, and, with a bow more majestic than the previous one, walked out to see if his pad had finished her corn.

The animal had indeed finished all the corn afforded to her, which was not much, and in a few minutes more Mr. Dale resumed his journey. He had performed about three miles, when the sound of wheels behind made him turn his head, and he perceived a chaise driven very fast, while out of the windows thereof dangled strangely a pair of human legs. The pad began to curvet as the post-horses rattled behind, and the Parson had only an indistinct vision of a human face supplanting these human legs. The traveler peered out at him as he whirled by—saw Mr. Dale tossed up and down on the saddle, and cried out: "How's the leather?"

"Leather!" soliloquized the Parson, as the pad recomposed herself. "What does he mean by that? Leather! a very vulgar man. But I got rid of him cleverly!"

Mr. Dale arrived without further adventure at Lansmere. He put up at the principal inn—refreshed himself by a general ablution—and sat down with good appetite to his beef-steak and pint of port.

The Parson was a better judge of the physiognomy of man than that of the horse; and after a satisfactory glance at the civil, smirking landlord, who removed the cover and set on the wine, he ventured on an attempt at conversation. "Is my lord at the park?"

Landlord, still more civilly than before: "No, sir; his lordship and my lady have gone to town to meet Lord L'Estrange."

"Lord L'Estrange! He is in England, then?"

"Why, so I heard," replied the landlord; "but we never see him here now. I remember him a very pretty young man. Every one was fond of him, and proud of him. But what pranks he did play when he was a lad! We hoped he would come in for our boro' some of these days, but he has taken to foren parts—more's the pity. I am a reg'lar Blue, sir, as I ought to be. The Blue candidate always does me the honor to come to the Lansmere Arms. 'Tis only the low party puts up with The Boar," added the landlord, with a look of ineffable disgust. "I hope you like the wine, sir?"

"Very good, and seems old."

"Bottled these eighteen years, sir. I had in the cask for the great election of Dashmore and Egerton. I have little left of it, and I never give it but to old friends like—for, I think, sir, though you be grown stout, and look more grand,

I may say that I've had the pleasure of seeing you before."

"That's true, I dare say, though I fear I was never a very good customer."

LANDLORD.—"Ah, it is Mr. Dale, then! I thought so when you came into the hall. I hope your lady is quite well, and the Squire, too; a fine pleasant-spoken gentleman; no fault of his if Mr. Egerton went wrong. Well, we have never seen him—I mean Mr. Egerton—since that time. I don't wonder he stays away; but my lord's son, who was brought up here—it an't nat'ral-like that he should turn his back on us!"

Mr. Dale made no reply, and the landlord was about to retire, when the Parson, pouring out another glass of the port, said: "There must be great changes in the parish. Is Mr. Morgan, the medical man, still here?"

"No, indeed; he took out his ploma after you left, and became a real doctor; and a pretty practice he had, too, when he took, all of a sudden, to some new-fangled way of physicking—I think they calls it homy-something—"

"Homœopathy?"

"That's it—something against all reason; and so he lost his practice here and went up to Lunnun. I have not heard of him since."

"Do the Avenels keep their old house?"

"Oh yes!—and are pretty well off, I hear say. John is always poorly; though he still goes now and then to the Odd Fellows, and takes his glass; but his wife comes and fetches him away before he can do himself any harm."

"Mrs. Avenel is the same as ever."

"She holds her head higher, I think," said the landlord, smiling. "She was always—not exactly proud like, but what I calls gumptious."

"I never heard that word before," said the Parson, laying down his knife and fork. "Bumptious, indeed, though I believe it is not in the dictionary, has crept into familiar parlance, especially among young folks at school and college."

"Bumptious is bumptious, and gumptious is gumptious," said the landlord, delighted to puzzle a Parson. "Now the town beadle is bumptious and Mrs. Avenel is gumptious."

"She is a very respectable woman," said Mr. Dale, somewhat rebukingly.

"In course, sir, all gumptious folks are; they value themselves on their respectability, and looks down on their neighbors."

PARSON (still philologically occupied). "Gumptious—gumptious. I think I remember the substantive at school—not that my master taught it to me. 'Gumpton,' it means cleverness."

LANDLORD, (doggedly).—"There's gumpton and gumptious! Gumpton is knowing; but when I say sum un is gumptious, I mean—though that's more vulgar like—sum un who does not think small beer of hisself. You take me, sir?"

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"I think I do," said the Parson, half-smiling. "I believe the Avenels have only two of their children alive still—their daughter, who married Mark Fairfield, and a son who went off to America?"

"Ah, but he made his fortune there, and has come back."

"Indeed! I'm very glad to hear it. He has settled at Lansmere?"

"No, sir. I hear as he's bought a property a long way off. But he comes to see his parents pretty often—so John tells me—but I can't say that I ever see him. I fancy Dick doesn't like to be seen by folks who remember him playing in the kennel."

"Not unnatural," said the Parson indulgently; "but he visits his parents; he is a good son, at all events, then?"

"I've nothing to say against him. Dick was a wild chap before he took himself off. I never thought he would make his fortune; but the Avenels are a clever set. Do you remember poor Nora—the Rose of Lansmere, as they called her? Ah, no, I think she went up to Lunnun afore your time, sir."

"Humph!" said the Parson drily. "Well, I think you may take away now. It will be dark soon, and I'll just stroll out and look about me."

"There's a nice tart coming, sir."

"Thank you, I've dined."

The Parson put on his hat and sallied forth into the streets. He eyed the houses on either hand with that melancholy and wistful interest with which, in middle life, we revisit scenes familiar to us in youth—surprised to find either so little change or so much, and recalling, by fits and snatches, old associations and past emotions.

The long High-street which he threaded now began to change its bustling character, and slide, as it were gradually, into the high road of a suburb. On the left, the houses gave way to the moss-grown pales of Lansmere Park: to the right, though houses still remained, they were separated from each other by gardens, and took the pleasing appearance of villas—such villas as retired tradesmen or their widows, old maids, and half-pay officers, select for the evening of their days.

Mr. Dale looked at these villas with the deliberate attention of a man awakening his power of memory, and at last stopped before one, almost the last on the road, and which faced the broad patch of sward that lay before the lodge of Lansmere Park. An old pollard oak stood near it, and from the oak there came a low discordant sound; it was the hungry cry of young ravens, awaiting the belated return of the parent bird. Mr. Dale put his hand to his brow, paused a moment, and then, with a hurried step, passed through the little garden and knocked at the door. A light was burning in the parlor, and Mr. Dale's eye caught through the window a vague outline of three forms. There was an

evident bustle within at the sound of the knocks. One of the forms rose and disappeared. A very prim, neat, middle-aged maid-servant now appeared at the threshold, and austere inquired the visitor's business.

"I want to see Mr. or Mrs. Avenel. Say that I have come many miles to see them; and take in this card."

The maid-servant took the card, and half-closed the door. At least three minutes elapsed before she re-appeared.

"Missis says it's late, sir; but walk in."

The Parson accepted the not very gracious invitation, stepped across the little hall, and entered the parlor.

Old John Avenel, a mild-looking man, who seemed slightly paralytic, rose slowly from his arm-chair. Mrs. Avenel, in an awfully stiff, clean, and Calvinistical cap, and a gray dress, every fold of which bespoke respectability and staid repute—stood erect on the floor, and, fixing on the Parson a cold and cautious eye, said—

"You do the like of us great honor, Mr. Dale—take a chair! You call upon business?"

"Of which I have apprised you by letter, Mr. Avenel."

"My husband is very poorly."

"A poor creature!" said John feebly, and as if in compassion of himself. "I can't get about as I used to do. But it ben't near election time, be it, sir."

"No, John," said Mrs. Avenel, placing her husband's arm within her own. "You must lie down a bit, while I talk to the gentleman."

"I'm a real good blue," said poor John; "but I ain't quite the man I was;" and, leaning heavily on his wife, he left the room, turning round at the threshold, and saying, with great urbanity—"Any thing to oblige, sir?"

Mr. Dale was much touched. He had remembered John Avenel the comeliest, the most active, and the most cheerful man in Lansmere; great at glee club and cricket (though then stricken in years), greater in vestries; reputed greatest in elections.

"Last scene of all," murmured the Parson; "and oh well, turning from the poet, may we cry with the disbelieving philosopher, 'Poor, poor humanity!'"

In a few minutes Mrs. Avenel returned. She took a chair, at some distance from the Parson's, and, resting one hand on the elbow of the chair, while with the other she stiffly smoothed the stiff gown, she said—

"Now, sir."

That "Now, sir," had in its sound something sinister and warlike. This the shrewd Parson recognized, with his usual tact. He edged his chair nearer to Mrs. Avenel, and placing his hand on hers—

"Yes, now then, and as friend to friend."

(To be continued.)

* Mr. Dale probably here alludes to Lord Bolingbroke's ejaculation as he stood by the dying Pope; but his memory does not serve him with the exact words.

VICTIMS OF SCIENCE.

THERE is a proverb which says, "Better is the enemy of well." Perhaps we may go further, and say, that "Well sometimes makes us regret bad."

You would have confessed the truth of this latter axiom if you had known, as I did, an excellent young man named Horace Castillet, who had been gifted by Providence with good health, powerful intellect, an amiable disposition, and many other perfections, accompanied by one single drawback. He had a distorted spine and crooked limbs, the consciousness of which defects prevented him from rushing into the gaiety and vain dissipation which so often ensnare youth. Forsaking the flowery paths of love and pleasure, he steadily pursued the rough, up-hill road of diligent, persevering study. He wrought with ardor, and already success crowned his efforts. Doubtless bitter regrets sometimes troubled his hours of solitary study, but he was amply consoled by the prospect of fortune and well-earned fame which lay before him. So he always appeared in society amiable and cheerful, enlivening the social circle with the sallies of his wit and genius. He used sometimes to say, laughing: "Fair ladies, mock me, but I will take my revenge by obliging them to admire!"

One day a surgeon of high repute met Horace, and said to him: "I can repair the wrong which nature has done you: profit by the late discoveries of science, and be, at the same time, a great and a handsome man." Horace consented. During some months he retired from society, and when he reappeared, his most intimate friends could scarcely recognize him. "Yes," said he, "it is I myself: this tall, straight, well-made man is your friend Horace Castillet. Behold the miracle which science has wrought! This metamorphosis has cost me cruel suffering. For months I lay stretched on a species of rack, and endured the tortures of a prisoner in the Inquisition. But I bore them all, and here I am, a new creature! Now, gay comrades, lead me whither you will; let me taste the pleasures of the world, without any longer having to fear its raillery!"

If the name of Horace Castillet is unspoken among those of great men—if it is now sunk in oblivion, shall we not blame for this the science which he so much lauded? Deeply did the ardent young man drink of this world's poisoned springs. Farewell to study, fame, and glory! Æsop, perhaps, might never have composed his Fables had orthopedia been invented in his time. Horace Castillet lost not only his talents, but a large legacy destined for him by an uncle, in order to make him amends for his natural defects. His uncle, seeing him no longer deformed in body and upright in mind, chose another heir. After having spent the best years of his life in idleness and dissipation, Horace is now poor, hopeless, and miserable. He said lately to one of his few remaining friends: "I was ignorant of the treasure I possessed. I have