

MEMORIES OF MEXICO.

THE first action fought by the American army in the valley of Mexico, on the 20th August, 1847, was at Contreras. It was an attack upon a fortified camp, in which lay General Valencia with 6000 Mexicans, composed of the remnant of the army beaten by Taylor, on the hills of Buena Vista. It was styled "The Army of the North;" most of the soldiers composing it being from the northern departments—the hardy miners of Zacatecas and San Luis Potosi—and they were esteemed "the flower of the Mexican army."

On the previous day powder enough was burned to have cured the atmosphere for twenty miles around, yet there was nothing done. We held the ground, however, in mud up to our ankles. In this we lay shivering under a cold drizzle until the morning. By daylight we were at it in earnest. During the night two of our best brigades had crept, unperceived, through the clay "barrancas" close up to the rear of the enemy's camp, ready to spring. At daybreak old Riley shouted, "*Forward and give them h—ll!*" and before our foes—not expecting us from that quarter—could bring their artillery to bear upon us, we were in the midst of them. The action lasted just seventeen minutes. At the end of that time we had laid our hands upon thirty of Valencia's cannon, and taken about a thousand prisoners; and had the satisfaction of seeing the rest of them, in their long yellow mantles, disappearing through the fissures of the lava fields, in rapid flight along the road to Mexico. We followed, of course, but as our cavalry had not been able to cross the Pedregal, and the enemy were our superiors in retreat, we were soon distanced. As we came down upon the village of San Angel, the occasional blast of a light infantry bugle, with the "crack—crack—cr-r-r-ack" of our rifles in front, told us that we had still more work to do before entering the halls of the Montezumas. We were, in fact, driving in the light troops of Santa Anna's main army, lying we knew not where, but somewhere between us and the far-famed city.

It is not my intention to give an account of the battle that followed, nor should I have entered into these details of the fight at Contreras, but to put the reader in possession of "situations," and, moreover, to bring to his notice an incident that occurred, during that action, to a friend—the hero of this narrative—whom I will now introduce. I was then a Sub., and my friend, Richard L—, was the captain of my company; young as myself, and full as ardent in pursuit of the red glory of war. We had long known each other, had gone through the campaign together, and, more than once, had stood side by side under the leaden shower. I need not say how a juxtaposition of this kind strengthens the ties of friendship.

We had come out of Resaca and Monterey unscathed. We had passed through Cerro Gordo with "only a scratch." So far we had been fortunate, as I esteemed it. Not so my friend;

he wished to get a wound, for the honor of the thing. He was accommodated at Contreras; for the bullet from an escopette had passed through his left arm below the elbow-joint. It appeared to be only a flesh wound; and as his sword-arm was still safe, he disdained to leave the field until the "day was done." Binding the wounded limb with a rag from his shirt, and slinging it in his sash, he headed his company in the pursuit. By ten o'clock we had driven the enemy's skirmishers out of San Angel, and taken possession of the village. Our commander-in-chief was as yet ignorant of the position of the Mexican army; and we halted, to await the necessary reconnoissance.

Notwithstanding the cold of the preceding night, the day had become hot and oppressive. The soldiers, wearied with watching, marching, and the fight, threw themselves down in the dusty streets. Hunger kept many awake, for they had eaten nothing for twenty hours. A few houses were entered, and the *tortillas* and *tasajo* drawn forth; but there is but little to be found, at any time, in the larder of a Mexican house; and the jail-like doors of most of them were closely barred. The unglazed windows were open; but the massive iron railings of the "reja" defended them from intrusion. From these railings various flags were suspended—French, German, Spanish, and Portuguese—signifying that the inmates were foreigners in the country, and therefore entitled to respect. Where no excuse for such claim existed, a white banner, the emblem of peace, protruded through the bars; and perhaps this was as much respected as the symbols of neutrality.

It was the season when fashion deserts the Alameda of Mexico, and betakes itself to *monte*, cock-fighting, and intriguing, in the romantic "pueblos" that stud the valley. San Angel is one of these pueblos, and at that moment many of the "familias principales" of the city were domiciled around us. Through the rejas we could catch an occasional glimpse of the inmates in the dark apartments within.

It is said that, with woman, curiosity is stronger than fear. It appeared to be so in this case. When the inhabitants saw that pillage was not intended, beautiful and stylish women showed themselves in the windows and on the "balcons," looking down at us with a timorous yet confiding wonder. This was strange, after the stories of our barbarity, in which they had been so well drilled; but we had become accustomed to the high courage of the Mexican females, and it was a saying among us, that "the women were the best men in the country." Jestings aside, I am satisfied, that had they taken up arms instead of their puny countrymen, we should not have boasted so many easy victories.

Our bivouac lasted about an hour. The reconnoissance having been at length completed, the enemy was discovered in a fortified position around the convent and bridge of Churubusco. Twigg's division was ordered forward to commence the attack, just as the distant booming of

cannon across the lava fields, told us that our right wing, under Worth, had sprung the enemy's left at the hacienda of San Antonio, and was driving it along the great national road. Both wings of our army were beautifully converging to a common focus—the pueblo of Churubusco. The brigade to which I was attached still held the position where it had halted in San Angel. We were to move down to the support of Twiggs' division, as soon as the latter should get fairly engaged. Our place in the line had thrown us in front of a house somewhat retired from the rest, single-storied, and, like most of the others, flat-roofed, with a low parapet around the top. A large door and two windows fronted the street. One of the windows was open, and knotted to the *reja* was a small white handkerchief embroidered along the borders, and fringed with fine lace. There was something so delicate, yet striking in the appeal, that it at once attracted the attention of L—— and myself. It would have touched the compassion of a Cossack; and we felt at the moment that we would have protected that house against a general's order to pillage.

We had seated ourselves on the edge of the banquette, directly in front of the window. A bottle of wine by some accident had reached us; and as we quaffed its contents, our eyes constantly wandered upon the open *reja*. We could see no one. All was dark within; but we could not help thinking that the owner of the kerchief—she who had hurriedly displayed that simple emblem of truce—could not be otherwise than an interesting and lovely creature.

At length the drums beat for Twiggs' division to move forward, and, attracted by the noise, a gray-haired old man appeared at the window. With feelings of disappointment, my friend and I turned our glances upon the street, and for some moments watched the horse artillery as it swept past. When our gaze was again directed to the house, the old man had a companion—the object of our instinctive expectation; yet fairer even than our imagination had portrayed.

The features indicated that she was a Mexican, but the complexion was darker than the half-breed, the Aztec blood predominated. The crimson, mantling under the bronze of her cheeks, gave to her countenance that picture-like expression of the mixed races of the Western World. The eye, black, with long fringing lash, and a brow upon which the jetty crescent seemed to have been painted. The nose slightly aquiline, curving at the nostril; while luxuriant hair, in broad plaits, fell far below her waist. As she stood on the sill of the low window, we had a full view of her person—from the satin slipper to the *reboso* that hung loosely over her forehead. She was plainly dressed in the style of her country. We saw that she was not of the aristocracy, for, even in this remote region, has Paris fashioned the costume of that order. On the other hand, she was above the class of the "*poblanas*," the demoiselles of the showy "*naguas*" and naked ankles. She was of the middle rank. For some

moments my friend and myself gazed upon the fair apparition in silent wonder.

She stood awhile, looking out upon the street, scanning the strange uniforms that were grouped before her. At length her eye fell upon us; and as she perceived that my comrade was wounded, she turned toward the old man.

"Look, father, a wounded officer! ah, what a sad thing, poor officer."

"Yes, it is a captain, shot through the arm."

"Poor fellow! he is pale—he is weary. I shall give him sweet water, shall I, father?"

"Very well, go, bring it."

The girl disappeared from the window; and in a few moments returned with a glass, containing an amber-colored liquid—the essence of the pine-apple. Making a sign toward L——, the little hand that held the glass was thrust through the bars of the *reja*. Being nearer, I rose, and taking the glass, handed it to my friend. L—— bowed to the window, and acknowledging his gratitude in the best Spanish he could muster, drank off the *agua dulce*. The glass was returned; and the young girl took her station as before.

We did not enter into conversation, neither L—— nor myself; but I noticed that the incident had made an impression upon my friend. On the other hand, I observed the eyes of the girl, although at intervals wandering away, always return, and rest upon the features of my comrade. L—— was handsome; besides, he bore upon his person the evidence of a higher quality—courage; the quality that, before all others, will win the heart of a woman.

All at once, the features of the girl changed their expression, and she uttered a scream. Turning toward my friend, I saw the blood dripping through the sash. His wound had reopened.

I threw my arms around him, as several of the soldiers rushed forward; but before we could remove the bandage L—— had swooned.

"May I beseech you to open the door?" said I, addressing the young girl and her father.

"*Si—sí, señor*," cried they together, hurrying away from the window.

At that moment the rattle of musketry from Coyoacan, and the roar of field artillery, told us that Twiggs was engaged. The long roll echoed through the streets, and the soldiers were speedily under arms.

I could stay no longer, for I had now to lead the company; and leaving L—— in charge of two of the men, I placed myself at its head. As the "*Forward*" was given, I heard the great door swing upon its hinges; and looking back as we marched down the street, I saw my friend conducted into the house. I had no fears for his safety, as a regiment was to remain in the village. In ten minutes after I was upon the field of battle, and a red field it was. Of my own small detachment every second soldier "*bit the dust*" on the plain of Portales. I escaped unhurt, though my regiment was well peppered by our own artillerists from the *tête de pont* of

Churubusco. In two hours we drove the enemy through the *garita* of San Antonio de Abad. It was a total rout; and we could have entered the city without firing another shot. We halted, however, before the gates—a fatal halt, that afterward cost us nearly 2000 men, the flower of our little army. But, as I before observed, I am not writing a history of the campaign.

An armistice followed, and gathering our wounded from the fields around Churubusco, the army retired into the villages. The four divisions occupied respectively the pueblos of Tacubaya, San Angel, Mixcoac, and San Augustin de les Cuevas. San Angel was our destination; and the day after the battle my brigade marched back, and established itself in the village.

I was not long in repairing to the house where I had left my friend. I found him suffering from fever, burning fever. In another day he was delirious; and in a week he had lost his arm; but the fever left him, and he began to recover. During the fortnight that followed, I made frequent visits; but a far more tender solicitude watched over him. Rafaela was by his couch; and the old man—her father—appeared to take a deep interest in his recovery. These, with the servants, were the only inmates of the house.

The treacherous enemy having broken the armistice, the storming of the Palace-castle of Chapultepec followed soon after. Had we failed in the attempt not one of us would ever have gone out from the valley of Mexico. But we took the castle, and our crippled forces entered the captured city of the Montezumas, and planted their banners upon the National Palace. I was not among those who marched in. Three days afterward I was carried in upon a stretcher, with a bullet hole through my thigh, that kept me within doors for a period of three months.

During my invalid hours L—— was my frequent visitor; he had completely recovered his health, but I noticed that a change had come over him, and his former gayety was gone.

Fresh troops arrived in Mexico, and to make room, our regiment, hitherto occupying a garrison in the city, was ordered out to its old quarters at San Angel. This was welcome news for my friend, who would now be near the object of his thoughts. For my own part, although once more on my limbs, I did not desire to return to duty in that quarter; and on various pretexts, I was enabled to lengthen out my "leave" until the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

Once only I visited San Angel. As I entered the house where L—— lived, I found him seated in the open *patio*, under the shade of the orange trees. Rafaela was beside him, and his only hand was held in both of hers. There was no surprise on the part of either, though I was welcomed cordially by both—by her, as being the friend of the man she loved. Yes, she loved him.

"See," cried L——, rising, and referring to the situation in which I had found them. "All this, my dear H., in spite of my misfortunes!"

and he glanced significantly at his armless sleeve. "Who would not love her?"

The treaty of Guadalupe was at length concluded, and we had orders to prepare for the route homeward. The next day I received a visit from L——.

"Henry," said he, "I am in a dilemma."

"Well, major," I replied, for L—— as well as myself had gained a "step." "What is it?"

"You know I am in love, and with whom you know. What am I to do with her?"

"Why, marry her, of course. What else?"

"I dare not."

"Dare not?"

"That is—not now."

"Why not? Resign your commission, and remain here. You know our regiment is to be disbanded; you can not do better."

"Ah! my dear fellow, that is not the thing that hinders me."

"What then?"

"Should I marry her, and remain, our lives would not be safe one moment after the army had marched. Papers containing threats and ribald jests have from time to time been thrust under the door of her house—to the effect that, should she marry 'el official Americano'—so they are worded—both she and her father will be murdered. You know the feeling that is abroad in regard to those who have shown us hospitality."

"Why not take her with you, then?"

"Her father, he would suffer."

"Take him, too."

"That I proposed, but he will not consent. He fears the confiscation of his property, which is considerable. I would not care for that, though my own fortune, as you know, would be small enough to support us. But the old man will go on no terms, and she will not leave him."

The old man's fears in regard to the confiscation were not without good foundation. There was a party in Mexico, while we occupied the city, that had advocated "annexation"—that is, the annexing of the whole country to the United States. This party consisted chiefly of pure Spaniards, "ricos" of the republic, who wanted a government of stability and order. In the houses of these many of our officers visited, receiving those elegant hospitalities that were in general denied us by Mexicans of a more patriotic stamp. Our friends were termed "Ayankeeados," and were hated by the populace. But they were "marked" in still higher quarters. Several members of the government, then sitting at Queretaro—among others a noted minister—had written to their agents in the city to note down all those who, by word or act, might show kindness to the American army. Even those ladies who should present themselves at the theatre were to be among the number of the proscribed.

In addition to the Ayankeeados were many families—perhaps not otherwise predisposed to favor us—who by accident had admitted us within their circle—such accident as that which had

opened the house and heart of Rafaela to my friend L—. These, too, were under "compromisa" with the rabble. My comrade's case was undoubtedly what he had termed it—a dilemma.

"You are not disposed to give her up, then?" said I, smiling at my anxious friend, as I put the interrogation.

"I know you are only jesting, Henry. You know me too well for that. No! Rather than give her up, I will stay and risk every thing—even life."

"Come, major," said I, "there will be no need for you to risk any thing, if you will only follow my advice. It is simply this—come home with your regiment; stay a month or two at New Orleans, until the excitement consequent upon our evacuation cools down. Shave off your mustache, put on plain clothes; come back and marry Rafaela."

"It is terrible to think of parting with her. Oh!—"

"That may all be; I doubt it not; but what else can you do?"

"Nothing—nothing. You are right. It is certainly the best—the only plan. I will follow it," and L— left me.

I saw no more of him for three days, when the brigade to which he belonged entered the city on its road homeward. He had detailed his plans to Rafaela, and bade her for a time farewell.

The other three divisions had already marched. Ours was to form the rear-guard, and that night was to be our last in the city of Mexico. I had retired to bed at an early hour, to prepare for our march on the morrow. I was about falling asleep when a loud knock sounded at my door. I rose and opened it. It was L—. I started as the light showed me his face—it was ghastly. His lips were white, his teeth set, and dark rings appeared around his eyes. The eyes themselves glared in their sockets, lit up by some terrible emotion.

"Come!" cried he, in a hoarse and tremulous voice. "Come with me, Henry, I need you."

"What is it, my dear L—? A quarrel? A duel?"

"No! No! nothing of the sort. Come! come! come! I will show you a sight that will make a wolf of you. Haste! For God's sake, haste!" I hurried on my clothes.

"Bring your arms!" cried L—, "you may require them."

I buckled on my sword and pistol-belt, and followed hastily into the street. We ran down the Calle Correo toward the Alameda. It was the road to the Convent of San Francisco, where our regiment had quartered for the night. As yet I knew not for what I was going. Could the enemy have attacked us? No—all was quiet. The people were in their beds. What could it be? L— had not, and would not explain; but to my inquiries, continually cried, "Haste—come on!" We reached the convent, and, hastily passing the guard, made for the quarters occupied by my friend. As we entered the room

—a large one—I saw five or six females, with about a dozen men, soldiers and officers. All were excited by some unusual occurrence. The females were Mexicans, and their heads were muffled in their rebosos. Some were weeping aloud, others talking in strains of lamentation. Among them I distinguished the face of my friend's betrothed.

"Dearest Rafaela!" cried L—, throwing his arms around her—"it is my friend. Here, Henry, look here! look at this!"

As he spoke, he raised the reboso, and gently drew back her long black hair. I saw blood upon her cheek and shoulders! I looked more closely. It flowed from her ears.

"Her ears! O God! they have been cut off!"

"Ay, ay," cried L—, hoarsely; and dropping the dark tresses, again threw his arms around the girl, and kissed away the tears that were rolling down her cheeks—while uttering expressions of endearment and consolation.

I turned to the other females; they were all similarly mutilated; some of them even worse, for their foreheads, where the U.S. had been freshly burned upon them, were red and swollen. Excepting Rafaela, they were all of the "poblana" class—the laundresses—the mistresses of the soldiers.

The surgeon was in attendance, and in a short time all was done that could be done for wounds like these.

"Come!" cried L—, addressing those around him, "we are wasting time, and that is precious; it is near midnight. The horses will be ready by this, and the rest will be waiting; come, Henry, you will go? You will stand by us?"

"I will, but what do you intend?"

"Do not ask us, my friend, you will see presently."

"Think, my dear L—," said I in a whisper, "do not act rashly."

"Rashly! there is no rashness about me—you know that. A cowardly act, like this, can not be revenged too soon. Revenge! what am I talking of? It is not revenge, but justice. The men who could perpetrate this fiendish deed are not fit to live on the earth, and, by heavens! not one of them shall live by the morning. Ha, dastards! they thought we were gone; they will find their mistake. Mine be the responsibility—mine the revenge. Come, friends! Come!" And so saying, L— led the way, holding his betrothed by the hand. We all followed out of the room, and into the street.

On reaching the Alameda a group of dark objects was seen among the trees. They were horses and horsemen; there were about thirty of the latter, and enough of the former to mount the party who were with L—. I saw from their size that the horses were of our own troops, with dragoon saddles. In the hurry L— had not thought of saddles for our female companions, but the oversight was of no consequence. Their habitual mode of riding was *à la Duchesse de Berri*, and in this way they mounted. Before summoning me, L— had organized his band—they

were picked men. In the dim light I could see dragon and infantry uniforms, men in plain clothes, followers of the army, gamblers, teamsters, Texans, desperadoes, ready for just such an adventure. Here and there I could distinguish the long-tailed frock—the undress of the officer. The band in all mustered more than forty men.

We rode quietly through the streets, and, issuing from the gate of Nino Perdido, took the road for San Angel. As we proceeded onward, I gathered a more minute account of what had transpired at the village. As soon as our division had evacuated, a mob of thirty or forty ruffians had proceeded to the houses of those whom they termed "Ayankeeados," and glutted their cowardly vengeance on their unfortunate victims. Some of these had been actually killed in attempting to resist; others had escaped to the Pedregal which runs close to the village; while a few—Rafaela among the number—after submitting to a terrible atrocity, had fled to the city for protection.

On hearing the details of these horrid scenes, I no longer felt a repugnance in accompanying my friend. I felt as he did, that men capable of such deeds were "not fit to live," and we were proceeding to execute a sentence that was just though illegal. It was not our intention to punish all; we could not have accomplished this, had we so willed it. By the testimony of the girls, there were five or six who had been the promoters and ringleaders of the whole business. These were well known to one or other of the victims, as in most instances it had been some old grudge for which they had been singled out as objects of this cowardly vengeance. In Rafaela's case it was a ruffian who had once aspired to her hand, and been rejected. Jealousy had moved the fiend to his terrible revenge.

It is three leagues from Mexico to San Angel. The road runs through meadows and fields of magueys. Except the lone *pulqueria*, at the corner where a cross-path leads to the hacienda of Narvarte, there is not a house before reaching the bridge of Coyoacan. Here there is a cluster of buildings—"fabricas"—that, during the stay of our army, had been occupied by a regiment. Before arriving at this point we saw no one; and here only people who, waked from their sleep by the tread of our horses, had not the curiosity to follow us.

San Angel is a mile further up the hill. Before entering the village we divided into five parties, each to be guided by one of the girls. L——'s vengeance was especially directed toward the *ci-devant* lover of his betrothed. She herself, knowing his residence, was to be our guide.

Proceeding through narrow lanes, we arrived in a suburb of the village, and halted before a house of rather stylish appearance. We had dismounted outside the town, leaving our horses in charge of a guard. It was very dark, and we clustered around the door. One knocked—a voice was heard from within—Rafaela recognized it as that of the ruffian himself. The knock was

repeated, and one of the party who spoke the language perfectly, called out:

"Open the door! Open, Don Pedro!"

"Who is it?" asked the voice.

"Yo," (I) was the simple reply.

This is generally sufficient to open the door of a Mexican house, and Don Pedro was heard within, moving toward the "Saguan."

The next moment the great door swung back on its hinges, and the ruffian was dragged forth. He was a swarthy, fierce-looking fellow—from what I could see in the dim light—and made a desperate resistance, but he was in the hands of men who soon overpowered and bound him. We did not delay a moment, but hurried back to the place where we had left our horses. As we passed through the streets, men and women were running from house to house, and we heard voices and shots in the distance. On reaching our rendezvous, we found our comrades, all of whom had succeeded in making their capture.

There was no time to be lost; there might be troops in the village—though we saw none—but whether or not, there were "leperos" enough to assail us. We did not give them time to muster. Mounting ourselves and our prisoners we rode off at a rapid pace, and were soon beyond the danger of pursuit.

Those who have passed through the gate of Nino Perdido will remember that the road leading to San Angel runs, for nearly a mile, in a straight line, and that, for this distance, it is lined on both sides with a double row of large old trees. It is one of the drives (*paseos*) of Mexico. Where the trees end, the road bends slightly to the south. At this point a cross road strikes off to the pueblito of Piedad, and at the crossing there is a small house, or rather a temple, where the pious wayfarer kneels in his dusty devotions. This little temple, the residence of a hermitical monk, was uninhabited during our occupation of the valley, and, in the actions that resulted in the capture of the city, it had come in for more than its share of hard knocks. A battery had been thrown up beside it, and the counter-battery had bored the walls of the temple with round shot. I never passed this solitary building without admiring its situation. There was no house nearer it than the aforementioned "tinacal" of Narvarte, or the city itself. It stood in the midst of swampy meadows, bordered by broad plats of the green maguey, and this isolation, together with the huge old trees that shadowed and sang over it, gave the spot an air of romantic loneliness.

On arriving under the shelter of the trees, and in front of the lone temple, our party halted by order of their leader. Several of the troopers dismounted, and the prisoners were taken down from their horses. I saw men uncoiling ropes that had hung from their saddle-bows, and I shuddered to think of the use that was about to be made of them.

"Henry," said L——, riding up to me, and speaking in a whisper, "*they* must not see this."—He pointed to the girls.—"Take them some

distance ahead and wait for us, we will not be long about it, I promise."

Glad of the excuse to be absent from such a scene, I put spurs to my horse, and rode forward, followed by the females of the party. On reaching the circle near the middle of the paseo I halted.

It was quite dark, and we could see nothing of those we had left behind us. We could hear nothing—nothing but the wind moaning high up among the branches of the tall poplars; but this, with the knowledge I had of what was going on so near me, impressed me with an indescribable feeling of sadness.

L—— had kept his promise; he was not long about it. In less than ten minutes the party came trotting up, chatting gayly as they rode, but *their prisoners had been left behind!*

As the American army moved down the road to Vera Cruz, many traveling carriages were in its train. In one of these were a girl and a gray-haired old man. Almost constantly during the march a young officer might be seen riding by this carriage, conversing through the windows with its occupants within.

A short time after the return-troops landed at New Orleans, a bridal party were seen to enter the old Spanish cathedral; the bridegroom was an officer who had lost an arm. His fame, and the reputed beauty of the bride, had brought together a large concourse of spectators.

"She loved me," said L—— to me on the morning this his happiest day; "she loved me in spite of my mutilated limb, and should I cease to love her because she has—no, I see it not; she is to me the same as ever."

And there were none present who saw it; few were there who knew that under those dark folds of raven hair were the *souvenirs* of a terrible tragedy. . . .

The Mexican government behaved better to the Ayancados than was expected. They did not confiscate the property; and L—— is now enjoying his fortune in a snug hacienda, somewhere in the neighborhood of San Angel.

THE POOLS OF ELLENDEEN.

JOEL JERDAN was a thriving retail hosier, in a close street at the eastern end of the vast metropolis. He had a snug little shop, and a nice, snug little wife, together with an annually increasing nice little family; and Joel himself, if we except one weakness, was the most diligent and steady little fellow to be found within the circuit where the musical bells of Bow are heard. Small in person, pleasing in exterior, and scrupulously neat in his attire, Joel Jerdan was always considered a peculiarly dapper, civil, smart tradesman. His father had pursued the same business in the same house; and though there were not large profits, there was certainly contentment, which Joel very wisely judged was far better. It did not require any vivid stretch of imagination to form a comparison between the venerable Izaak Walton, of piscatorial celebrity, and our hosier; for, like that

immortal angler, Joel was devoted to his calling and usually confined to precincts of no large dimensions, but making his escape whenever he could to enjoy the sole recreation of his existence—that recreation being the sport with which Izaak's name is ever associated.

Joel Jerdan was a worthy disciple of this renowned piscator—at least, he would have been had he strictly followed that master's injunctions; but, if truth must be all confessed, the *one* weakness already alluded to in our little hosier, consisted of indulgence beyond the bounds of strict sobriety, when any prolonged or favorable "sport" more than usually elated his spirits. On such occasions, Patty, his faithful wife, of course lectured the recreant hosier most severely; while he, shocked and humbled, meekly promised "never to do so any more," and kept his word until betrayed into temptation again. Being a water-drinker at home, from motives of prudence, not to say necessity, it did not require much in the way of stimulus to render poor little Joel addle-headed. Whenever he could spare an hour or two on the long summer evenings, after the business of the day was pretty well over, leaving the shop to Patty's care, away sallied Joel to the docks, there to watch his float and forget his cares, until night's sombre shadows warned him that all sober citizens were retiring bedward. It was only at rare intervals that Joel enjoyed a whole day's fishing; for, in the first place, he could not absent himself from pressing daily duties, and, in the second, he had no friend resident in the country within easy access, to whom he could resort for an introduction to babbling streams and flowery meads. He had toiled early and late, as his excellent father had done before him; and when Patty's brother retired from official life (he was a nobleman's butler), and became proprietor of a small public-house about fifty miles from London, situated on the banks of a river much resorted to by anglers, and sent a hearty invitation to Joel to come and visit him, what words may paint the bright anticipations of the exulting hosier? He had not been well of late—needed summer holidays; and, in short Joel could not resist the tempting offer.

Patty urged her husband with affectionate solicitude, to "keep watch" over himself; but she loved him too well, and was too unselfish, to object to his accepting her brother's hospitality. "Make hay while the sun shines, my dear," she said; "you may never have such another opportunity. Business is slack just now—besides, baby is weaned, and I can mind the shop with Charlie; only—" here there was a private whispered admonition, the tenor of which may be inferred from Joel's answer, accompanied by a hearty kiss: "I promise you, my ducky, that I will never taste a drop, except when I get wet-footed, and then only just enough to keep the cold out."

"Ah, that cold, Joel!" replied Patty, "it's a queer thing, *that cold is!* always trying to gain a footing, and nothing but a sip of brandy to keep it out!" And the wife shook her head.