

that was deficient. He succeeded with men, but the ladies were too much for him as yet.

"Those you've done up at Albany Street Barracks are famous: I've seen 'em," said Mr. Sherrick; and remarking that his guest looked rather surprised at the idea of his being in such company, Sherrick said, "What, you think they are too great swells for me? Law bless you, I often go there. I've business with several of 'em; had with Captain Belsize, with the Earl of Kew, who's every inch the gentleman—one of nature's aristocracy, and paid up like a man. The Earl and me has had many dealings together."

Honeyman smiled faintly, and nobody complying with Mr. Sherrick's boisterous entreaties to drink more, the gentlemen quitted the dinner-table, which had been served in a style of prodigious splendor, and went to the drawing-room for a little music.

This was all of the gravest and best kind; so grave indeed, that James Binnie might be heard in a corner giving an accompaniment of little snores to the singers and the piano. But Rosey was delighted with the performance, and Sherrick remarked to Clive, "That's a good gal, that is; I like that gal; she ain't jealous of Julia cutting her out in the music, but listens as pleased as any one. She's a sweet little pipe of her own, too. Miss Mackenzie, if ever you like to go to the opera, send a word either to my West End or my City office. I've boxes every week, and you're welcome to any thing I can give you."

So all agreed that the evening had been a very pleasant one; and they of Fitzroy Square returned home talking in a most comfortable friendly way—that is, two of them, for Uncle James fell asleep again, taking possession of the back seat; and Clive and Rosey prattled together. He had offered to try and take all the young ladies' likenesses. "You know what a failure the last was, Rosey?"—he had very nearly said "dear Rosey."

"Yes, but Miss Sherrick is so handsome, that you will succeed better with her than with my round face, Mr. Newcome."

"Mr. *What?*" cries Clive.

"Well, Clive, then," says Rosey, in a little voice.

He sought for a little hand which was not very far away. "You know we are like brother and sister, dear Rosey?" he said this time.

"Yes," said she, and gave a little pressure of the hand. And then Uncle James woke up; and it seemed as if the whole drive didn't occupy a minute, and they shook hands very very kindly at the door of Fitzroy Square.

Clive made a famous likeness of Miss Sherrick, with which Mr. Sherrick was delighted, and so was Mr. Honeyman, who happened to call upon his nephew once or twice when the ladies happened to be sitting. When Clive proposed to the Rev. Charles Honeyman to take his head off; and made an excellent likeness in chalk of his uncle—that one in fact, from which

the print was taken, which you may see any day at Hogarth's, in the Haymarket, along with a whole regiment of British divines. Charles became so friendly, that he was constantly coming to Charlotte Street, once or twice a week.

Mr. and Mrs. Sherrick came to look at the drawing, and were charmed with it; and when Rosey was sitting, they came to see her portrait, which again was not quite so successful. One Monday, the Sherricks and Honeyman too happened to call to see the picture of Rosey, who trotted over with her uncle to Clive's studio, and they all had a great laugh at a paragraph in the "Pall Mall Gazette," evidently from F. B.'s hand, to the following effect:

"CONVERSION IN HIGH LIFE.—A foreign nobleman of princely rank, who has married an English lady, and has resided among us for some time, is likely, we hear and trust, to join the English Church. The Prince de M—c—nt—r has been a constant attendant at Lady Whittlesea's chapel, of which the Rev. C. Honeyman is the eloquent incumbent; and it is said this sound and talented divine has been the means of awakening the prince to a sense of the erroneous doctrines in which he has been bred. His ancestors were Protestant, and fought by the side of Henry IV. at *Ivry*. In Louis XIV.'s time they adopted the religion of that persecuting monarch. We sincerely trust that the present heir of the house of Ivry will see fit to return to the creed which his forefathers so unfortunately abjured."

The ladies received this news with perfect gravity; and Charles uttered a meek wish that it might prove true. As they went away, they offered more hospitalities to Clive and Mr. Binnie and his niece. They liked the music, would they not come and hear it again?

When they had departed with Mr. Honeyman, Clive could not help saying to Uncle James, "Why are those people always coming here; praising me; and asking me to dinner? Do you know, I can't help thinking that they rather want me as a pretender for Miss Sherrick?"

Binnie burst into a loud guffaw, and cried out, "O *vanitas vanitawtum!*" Rosa laughed too.

"I don't think it any joke at all," said Clive.

"Why, you stupid lad, don't you see it is Charles Honeyman the girl's in love with?" cried Uncle James. "Rosey saw it in the very first instant we entered their drawing-room three weeks ago."

"Indeed, and how?" asked Clive.

"By—the way she looked at him," said little Rosey.

THE LADY'S REVENGE.

YOUNG, beautiful, accomplished, and even learned, was Miss Amarnth St. Quillotte, when she was deserted by her lover, and affianced husband, Mr. Emerond, the celebrated philosopher and *fort esprit* of my young days. Above all, she was amazingly rich, her father having been a West Indian planter in the days when West Indian and wealth were terms syn-

ononymous. The young girl had been sent over to England by her guardians in her fourteenth year, soon after becoming an orphan; and at twenty-one, beautiful and an heiress, was worth, one would have supposed, the constancy of any man. Mr. Emerond thought differently, however; and after four years' assiduous courtship, took the liberty of changing his mind. He ran away with a silly young girl from a boarding-school, without a pocket-piece even to her fortune; and in a farewell letter to his deceived mistress, coolly told her he found that within his breast which forbade him to be the slave of any woman. And the worst of it was, he had taught Amarynth to love—and need I say what Love is, when he dwells in the heart of an ardent young West Indian? In truth, it is more fervent and fatal in its consequences than colder minds can well imagine. When this love was slighted, repulsed, returned on the hands of her who had bestowed her entire heart on the faithless Emerond, there was a storm of passion kindled not easily allayed nor brought within the limits of reason. "Am I so ugly, then?" soliloquized the discarded beauty, looking in her mirror. The image reflected might, it is true, have been more serene, but, in its own peculiar style, could scarce have been more rare in its loveliness. A smooth olive skin, beneath whose deep hue burned in the velvet cheeks crimson roses; eyes large, dark, soft, and yet glowing; hair long, flowing, silken, by the side of whose jetty luxuriance the raven's plumage would have looked brown; a form slight, elegant, and thorough-bred; a mixture of Spanish and quadroon gracefulness; teeth—but there, I have no more hackneyed smiles at hand; pearls will not suffice; ivory grows yellow in remembrance of those bright, regular, dazzling teeth, which lighted the full crimson mouth, as it were, with a sunbeam. "Am I ugly?" The mirror said No—and it was broken to pieces by the impetuous bereaved girl.

"Of what use is beauty, when a pale skin, yellow hair, and lack-lustre eyes has robbed me of all that life held most dear? Oh, Emerond! my girlhood's idol, my womanhood's pride; come back, yes, come back, I will forgive all, I will." And poor Miss St. Quillotte woke up from her frantic apostrophes to find herself alone, the mirror in shatters, the room in confusion, her brain excited almost to madness, her bosom overcharged with grief to danger of suffocation. Her maid proposed to send for a physician, and was threatened with discharge for the suggestion. "Expose my wretchedness," said Amarynth, "to the eyes of the prying world? Get me some opium and leave me." She was obeyed in her last command; and for the first, Mrs. Abigail mixed a weak solution calculated to soothe but not to destroy. Miss St. Quillotte, however, slept not, but passed the night in meditation. She must be revenged—that she had determined on; her Creole blood demanded it. But how? To visit the guilty man with poison or a dagger was not exactly the

sort of revenge; to kill herself would be futile, inasmuch as she might not be able, in that case, to ascertain how he bore the blow. No, she must wring his heart living; she must prove how little she felt the stroke which in reality had crushed her ardent and haughty spirit to the ground. She would marry. True, Mr. Emerond's was the only offer she had ever received. For him she had spurned, trampled on all suitors, treated all mankind, for his sake, with such disdain, that her reported shrewishness became indeed "a scarecrow to her beauty;" but still she supposed that she could attract *somebody*, no matter who—at least her money would. Ah, there was indeed the rub. Give up liberty, wealth, liberty of thought even, perhaps, and all to a man whom, be he what he might, she must loathe—for the very name of man had suddenly become detestable. No, impossible! yet marry she must and would. To die Miss St. Quillotte, and bequeath her wealth to hospitals, parrots, and monkeys! There was no purer light shed on that rebellious soul, no thoughts of gentle ministrings, holy charities, pious sympathies, of drying the mourner's tears, or wiping the brow of sickness and pain. The frightful picture of an old maid, which flitted in the darkness of her overwrought imagination, was that of a splenetic being wallowing in cards and scandal, pampering overfed dogs and cats, sneered at by her acquaintance, reviled by her enemies. "I can never come to that," she resumed, as this horrible portrait rose before her eyes. "He shall not have that gratification. I will have a husband, but he shall be my tool, my slave; he shall be an image set up to sustain my dignity before the world, and he shall be obedient. Never, never can I love and honor any man after such treatment as I have experienced, never shall any man love me more—if man's love can indeed be any thing but mere pretense."

Now this kind of scheme was all very well in theory, but practically it was extremely difficult of execution, setting delicacy aside. If Amarynth really intended to reverse the general custom and propose to some gentleman, still the kind of proposal which only she would agree to, that of entire control over her husband's opinions and actions, was not likely to meet with acceptance. She paused as the many difficulties of her revenge rose in array before her; then suddenly flashed a thought. Was it feasible? Yes! it must, it should be!

Not far from Miss St. Quillotte's residence, which abutted on the Green Park, she remembered to have noticed a young man, whose occupation was—smile if you please, dear reader—a sweeper of the crossing. Amarynth, who frequently, attended by the faithless Emerond, or at times a single man-servant, promenaded in the park, which the garden of her house indeed overlooked, had noticed this person, partly because he looked superior to his menial occupation, and partly because, when she doled out her charity, he appeared to reverence the

beautiful Creole as something more than human. It was toward this creature of her beauty that her thoughts were now directed, certain the man was good-looking enough to be made a gentleman of, to hand her to her carriage, carry her fan in public, attend her to Ranelagh, the opera, the play-house, and to be set up to the world as a lawful defender and protector, and to wring the heart of *him*, the false, the vile, with indignant envy. He was poor, too—a main point—because no rich or independent man could possibly be reduced to such a mere poodle's existence. She spent a day in consideration; and the next morning sent her woman to summon the sweeper, as yet innocent of the strange honors awaiting him. Much astonished was Mrs. Abigail, too, at her mistress's new whim; but her place was good; she was discreet, and made no remark, not even to her fellow-servants.

It was a bitter, piercing day in January, when Paul Meredith was ushered into the splendid mansion of Miss St. Quillotte. He was half frozen, and had been blowing his numbed fingers for the last half hour to keep them from congealing.

Amarnyth was not far out in her conjecture. The poor young fellow had feasted his eyes so often on her loveliness, that passion had been nourished in the breast of that ill-fed, half-clothed, hopeless youth. Miss St. Quillotte had become his sun, and when he saw not that vision of haughtiness and beauty, the brightest summer's day was dark enough to him. But further than nourishing her lovely image in his outcast's breast, more than daring to dream of her when he laid his head on his miserable pallet in his garret, or of wondering at her dainty elegance and beauty, he had never aspired even in thought—it was not likely—the great and beautiful heiress, almost too precious for a poor fellow to speak to, save with downcast eyes and humility of tongue—to notice him, impossible. He knew, moreover, that the exquisitely-dressed gentleman who often attended was a favored suitor—so much common report had told the poor and humble road-sweeper; therefore, when he was shown into a noble room, replete with luxuries and elegance, he looked and wondered, and concluded he was about to become the object of one of those sudden and benevolent caprices with which fine ladies sometimes honor poor people. Little did he dream—but in the midst of his bewilderments and wanderings a bright vision appeared to him, alone—and oh, how glorious in its radiant and superb loveliness! The rich furniture, the perfumed air of the luxurious apartment, the beautiful and elegantly-dressed young woman who stood there before him, all combined to awe and abash the poor young man, who felt his unfitness to appear before wealth and refinement; and though, save for his soiled and coarse attire, scrupulously clean, his appearance was strangely out of character with all about him. Yet abashed though he might stand there, Miss St. Quillotte, on her

part, felt no less so. She was about to violate all those nice proprieties which fence in and invest women with the sanctity of respect. She was about forever to annihilate her own self-esteem, and— She paused. At that minute it would have been easy to dismiss the wondering sweeper with an inquiry, a present, any excuse; but the memory of Emerond, his slights, her still deep love, her passionate regrets, her gnawing wish that he too should be made to feel repentance; and she braced up her singular resolution. She spoke; Paul started as the clear, cold, haughty accents fell on his astonished ear. Amarnyth, who was easy enough to serve and live with, would not for worlds have spoken in such a tone to one of her humblest domestics.

"You are very poor," frowning as if she was denouncing a flagrant crime.

He raised his eyes—large, bright, and blue they were. Midst his poverty, this young man afforded the purest type of the Saxon race in the pride of manhood. A tall, well-knit frame, fair curly hair, a bright skin, and those clear eyes wherein you might, as in a mirror, behold every object near him reflected. He raised them to her. "I am poor, madam, very; but I am honest."

She curled her lip. Honesty, to her, was but a virtue of the most plebeian order—the saving grace of the very abject.

"I do not suppose you are going to rob me," she answered. A pause. "How would you like to be rich?"

"Madam!" He was so surprised at such a question, his face flushed, he thought the rich beauty had sent for him to mock him for her amusement. He turned, and bowing, prepared to go.

"Stay," said Miss St. Quillotte, reaching a chair, and sitting down, for she felt unequal to stand before that honest amazement and clear searching eyes any longer. "Stay; I have a great deal to say. I propose to bestow wealth on you—to make you rich—to make you, in short, a gentleman."

Bedreddin Hassan, when he was accused of making cream-tarts without pepper in them, was never so astonished as Paul.

"Madam!"

"Speak not—listen; I have things to say still more surprising: hear, but do not interrupt me. Do you comprehend, young man, how this wealth and station is to become yours? I will tell you; you must become—my husband."

It was fairly spoken now, and for some minutes a dead silence reigned throughout the spacious apartment. Neither could speak. Paul's face, which at the first receipt of this wonderful intelligence had lighted up with eagerness and joy, now subsided into gloom and doubt. Miss St. Quillotte's spirit rose.

"Perhaps," she said, haughtily, "I am rejected?"

"For the second time," whispered revenge.

"Madam," said the young man, "I am but a

poor fellow, earning a mere crust by the most degraded labor, but I have yet that in my keeping which is better in the eye of God"—he raised his eyes—those bright, unflinching eyes—reverently to heaven—"than wealth and rank without; I mean, madam, the honor of a man—a man who has never been debased, further than poverty can debase. I think I understand your ladyship"—here he blushed, stammered, hesitated: he was quite unskilled in the polite art of uttering disagreeable truths in an agreeable way. He continued—"My own poverty is irksome enough; I can not bear the burden of a fine lady's shame."

Amarynth started up; her Creole blood turned dark-red in her veins, and swept over her brow, face, and bosom. Here was a precious mistake indeed; the youth fancied her guilty of actual crime, and seeking to conceal her dishonor with the shelter of a husband's name. It was not an unnatural mistake, after all. She recovered. At least, here were noble qualities; stuff, which it is a pity is not oftener found in real, well-born gentlemen. She forced herself to explain. "You are very bold," she said, disdainfully, "but you are mistaken. Listen. He who sought my hand and fortune, and whom I have loved from girlhood, is false: by this time he has wedded another. My soul burns to be revenged, but the name and sight of man is hateful to me. In reality, I will never take on myself the duties or affections of a wife: it is for this I sent for you. You are poor; it will be something for you to be raised out of the mire of poverty and dirt." She sneered. "The ceremony of marriage will confer on you some advantages which wealth can give. In the eyes of the world you will be my husband; to me you must bind yourself by a solemn oath, a written bond, never to be more than you are at this moment, standing there, there, a beggar and an outcast." She glanced around her proudly, though to say truth, her pride at that minute was of the very basest kind—the pride of vulgar riches exulting in its power over honesty and virtue. Again there was a silence. Paul's head bent down on his breast, his eyes fixed on the polished oak floor. Miss St. Quillotte was exhausted; she rose up. "Remain here," she said, "for half an hour; deliberate on the advantages offered—an opportunity of fortune which few would reject in your circumstances. But make no mistake; you will be bound down strictly, and on the least attempt to alter the conditions of our contract, my wealth shall obtain a divorce, and you shall be cast forth to your original station. Remember, the title of my husband, the fortune of a gentleman, but from myself, only the consideration I afford to my *other* paid and fed lacqueys."

With this insolent speech, calculated indeed to crush the most humble, she left the room, and the young man mused on this singular adventure. At first, he was for starting off and leaving the rich lady—whose image, purer and fairer far than the reality, had filled his bosom, and

unconsciously had elevated his thoughts far above his seeming station—to seek some tool better fitted for so humiliating a position; but there arose a picture which effectually chained him to that room, and held him down as it were with chains of lead. This picture presented a bed-ridden woman, whose tender love for her son had been, spite of their wretchedness and want, his saving angel—his guardian spirit. To bestow on her last few remaining days comforts and luxuries unknown—to obtain medical aid hitherto above their greatest hopes—all this constrained him to hesitate and doubt as to whether he should indeed throw by the golden chance fortune had so strangely offered him. Few in his rank and circumstances would have paused a moment, but Paul Meredith was one of those rare human plants which, grown and fostered in a wilderness of weeds, yet loses none of its original purity and fragrance in its forced contact with vile things. His father, a private soldier, had perished in the American war; and his mother, a delicate woman who had followed the camp, returned to England on the cessation of hostilities between that country and America, bearing with her her infant son, then between five and six years of age. On her arrival in London, Mrs. Meredith, who had her own and her child's living to gain, was seized with rheumatic fever, and on her recovery she found she had lost the use of her lower limbs. Henceforth, the poor widow was bed-ridden. With the fortitude and courage which the poor so often display, she sought, by the aid of a kind neighbor or two, for needlework, and for a time managed to support herself and little Paul in decency. At length this resource—precarious in that day as I hear it is said to be in later times—failed. Then she knitted articles for daily use, and the poor boy went about the streets of London vending them for their bread. During this time the poor widow, who as times went was a fair scholar, taught the boy to read and write, and to pray for their daily food: simple teachings, yet the seed was sown on good ground, and promised, in spite of its precocious and forced knowledge of the world around, to bear the fruits of faith, honesty, and love.

Time passed—the widow and her son grew poorer each day; often fasting for long hours—he the sole attendant of her sick and painful bed. The boy might, like his father, have entered the service of his country—but could he leave his mother? She, whose riches he was; whose only hope in this cold, bleak, and rugged world, was the youth's filial love—alone rendering supportable her trials and privations.

This mother, then, was the thought which hindered Paul from departing out of Miss St. Quillotte's house faster than he had entered it. While he thought, and wondered, and hesitated, a servant entered bearing a salver filled with rich viands and generous wines. Poor human nature! I may not paint thee better than thou really art. Hunger and poverty drag down to earth the brightest and most soaring spirit. Paul

ate and drank—looked wistfully at the dainties, as he thought of the dear invalid in their poor garret, and, finally, made up his mind to accept the heiress on her own terms.

After all, do not think so meanly of him; he was but four-and-twenty, and perhaps there burned a latent hope within him that the object of his silent and humble passion might one day repent of her resolve.

She returned, and desired to know if his mind was settled. He, not without much embarrassment, for he was unversed in deceit, signified his acquiescence.

Amarynth's face brightened. After thus exposing her affairs to this creature, it would have been too dreadful to have been spurned by him. She placed a purse filled with gold in his hand, desired he would procure suitable attire, and return to her house at eight o'clock that evening, "when," she said, "I will have the contract between us prepared, and ready for signature. After that I will inform you when the marriage ceremony is to take place. Your name?" He blushed as he told it. He felt this mock-marriage was the only tarnish that honest name had known. She was pleased at its euphony. She had feared some terribly vulgar-sounding cognomen. "For the present," she said, with the air of a queen dismissing a courtier, "adieu. My woman will conduct you through the garden into the park. You will return to-night the same way: it is important that none of the servants should see you." And they separated, each with anxious thoughts: he to tell his mother this strange fortune; she to bribe and coax her lawyer, old Mr. Jeffries, whose aid was indispensable, into acquiescence with her strange whim.

Mr. Jeffries was an old solicitor, who had had the care of Miss St. Quillotte's affairs ever since her minority. He was a peculiar but not an unkindly old gentleman; and when Amarynth sent for him, and disclosing her forsaken plight, acquainted him also with her delectable plan of revenge, that sage counselor, first of all deliberately gazing at his client as she paced up and down her spacious library, which, being a *savante*, she used much as her usual sitting apartment, and then quietly decided she was very mad indeed. He soon found, however, that the form of her mental disease was that of obstinacy; and as it is certain that if all the obstinate people in the world were to be placed under surveillance, the population would thin too greatly, he next only deliberated how he might prevent the rash deed she meditated. I must, however, explain that Miss St. Quillotte kept silent as to the recent occupation of her intended spouse. Mr. Jeffries was led to suppose him respectable, though obscure. Never was there such a wearisome affair. It took two good hours to explain every circumstance to the old lawyer, and then he insisted, with the caution and circumspection of age, in going over every individual circumstance again. At last Amarynth fairly lost her temper. "Do as you please," she said; "either draw up the contract and settlements as I shall dictate, or I

will withdraw my affairs from your hands entirely, and employ some stranger, who will neither question my will nor judgment." Then self-interest prompted Mr. Jeffries to sigh, shrug his shoulders, and to mutter, "Well, I wish you may not repent, my dear;" which being rightly interpreted, meant, "I hope you will." He then sent for his clerk, and, under the dictation of Miss St. Quillotte, a deed of contract and settlement was drawn up. It would, of course, be impossible for me to transcribe that deed: in a word, it contained a contract of marriage between Amarynth St. Quillotte and Paul Meredith on the terms she had proposed—that, in consideration of a settlement of three thousand pounds per annum to be settled on the said Paul, he should entirely forego and resign the authority of a husband; that he was to attend her in public—but in private, separate suites of rooms should entirely separate the pair from the companionship of domestic life, save at dinner, or on the occasion of visitors being present; this last clause dependent on the will of the said Amarynth St. Quillotte. In fine, the young husband, or rather partner, was so hemmed in with conditions, that Mr. Jeffries, who took on this occasion twice his accustomed quantity of snuff, muttered that the man must be a perfect fool who could sign such a deed. The divorce threat was likewise to be enforced on the failure of the slightest of these conditions. The deed was not half copied, when Mrs. Abigail entering the room, made a sign to her mistress. The young lady nodded, and quitting the apartment, the woman returned, ushering in a youth on whom Miss St. Quillotte gazed with unfeigned surprise. The tailor—the hairdresser—had indeed worked a miracle. Paul, the sweeper, stood there—converted, not into a beau, but a gentleman—little else to betray his origin but his hands, brown and horny with hard work. It was gratifying, but she took no further notice of the young man than to reflect it was a good thing he looked so well. Mr. Jeffries, however, looked from one to the other of these young people. He took a vast pinch of snuff, and stopping his clerk's arm, took him aside, and conferred with that functionary for awhile. Then writing a memorandum he handed it over to the clerk, who resumed his labors. The night was far advanced when they were finished. The deed, by Miss St. Quillotte's desire, concluded with a solemn form of oath, by which both parties bound themselves to observe the conditions inscribed therein. Mr. Jeffries read over the parchment, and the contractors signed it. It was not without some trepidation that Amarynth beheld Paul approach the table for this purpose; but to her relief he *could* write his name, and that in a bold round hand, which would not have disgraced a clerk. During all this time he never once looked at his affianced wife, who on her part regarded him as little. Business over, the bride-elect named two days thence for the ceremony, which was to be strictly private; then all parties separated, to meet no more till the wedding-day,

when they were to be united at Mr. Jeffries's house by special licence.

That day came, and Paul Meredith, the cross-ing-sweeper, was united in marriage to Miss Amarynth St. Quillotte, the great West-Indian heiress. The remainder of his wedding-day was spent by the bridegroom in the apartment of his bed-ridden mother, for whom he had taken handsome rooms near the bride's house. That eccentric young lady spent hers in tears, sighs, and perpetual revertings to the man of her heart—now lost forever. A brilliant and a happy wedding it was truly.

Mrs. Meredith had no reason to fear her husband's intrusion—he never came, except when she summoned him to attend her abroad, and then it was, apparently, any thing but a pleasure to him. The marriage had been duly announced, and congratulations poured in from all Amarynth's friends. As for the bridegroom, he had never had any, except the penny pieman, who had, in the days of Paul's destitution, frequently given that young fellow a pie to take home to his mother. But the pieman knew naught of Paul's exaltation, and was therefore much mystified and astonished when a strange gentleman, who said he was Mr. Meredith's man of business, inducted him into a thriving trade in his own line, clogged only with the condition that he should never inquire into the name of his benefactor. I have heard Mr. Martin, the grandson of that pieman—who retired at eighty years of age, on a handsome fortune from the profits of the business—tell the story, and he mentioned how his grandfather learned the truth many years after from Mr. Meredith's own lips..... Paul engaged a gentleman to come daily and instruct him in various branches of knowledge, during the hours of leisure, when he was not in attendance on Mrs. Meredith or his bed-ridden mother. When the young man danced attendance on his haughty young wife, he could not avoid seeing how she was admired. Amarynth's marriage, indeed, seemed the signal for homage and adoration of all kinds from the other sex being lavished at her feet. When men no longer dreaded being entrapped into marriage, they were willing enough to admire. Some of these gallants strove to win the husband into intimacy, but that young gentleman, for so he now was in the eyes of the world, avoided all society, except that of his mother and his tutor. And time moved on.

Mrs. Meredith drank deeply of dissipation: wearisome were the balls, the ridottos, the *fêtes*, the parties at faro, she dragged her reluctant husband to. Paul soon wearied of fashionable life. People wondered at his quiet placidity, and passed on; it was nothing to the world, the distant terms that Mr. Meredith and his beautiful wife appeared on. Paul had soon satisfied himself that Amarynth's reputation was indeed intact. She flirted, it is true, and delighted in the thought that she sometimes with her wit, learning, and beauty, raised in some foolish heart a genuine flame, which she would encour-

age to the last, and then turn round and trample on the unfortunate as—she muttered—her heart had been trampled on. She little dreamed that of all the throngs who dwelt on her charms and delighted in her brilliant conversation, her husband was the most devoted and the most hopeless. How, indeed, could a man see that lovely creature in all the panoply of her beauty—all the *retenue* and finish of her fascinations, and not love her, even if he had not done so from the first. He loved her, indeed, differently from the time when she used to give him silver at the crossing; but not less passionately—far more so—increase of knowledge seldom lessens the passions.

Amarynth strove to keep within her heart the image of Emerond—for the sake of constancy, I grieve to say, that image grew daily fainter and fainter. It was, after all, but a waxen one, which the very heat of resentment and memory gradually melted. In spite of herself, his name no longer caused the blush, nor the throbbing of the heart, which used to follow on hearing of him. I verily believe his existence would have been entirely forgotten, but for the vast heap of his letters with which she fed the dying embers of her *grande passion*, and the lock of his hair, which she watered with her tears till the lachrymal fountain dried up, and refused to gush forth on any such occasion. Just about that time, too, Amarynth's interest was excited by elegant bouquets which were sent to her, accompanied with verses, which her really cultivated literary taste told her were far better than the bombast of the love lays of her day. Sonnets, mostly, the lines were in the form of—the versification not of the smoothest, perhaps, but the sentiments fresh, spontaneous, evidently from the heart. There was the fire of Ovid, without that bard's wantonness. Sometimes they imitated the verse of Horace and Virgil. It was much about that time, that Mr. Meredith had made such progress in Latin that he began to translate the *Æneid*. These verses dwelt greatly on the writer's ardent but hopeless love. She began with interest, and soon entertained an ardent curiosity to see her unknown adorer. She inquired respecting the messenger who brought these passionate effusions. No one knew. Every morning they were found on the marble table in the great hall passage; but no one, strange to say, could tell from whence the offerings emanated. Amarynth's thoughts wandered over her household; but there was no one in it with the least pretensions to reading or writing save old Dobbs, the house steward, and from him such things as flowers and verses were very unlikely. She was being handed to her coach one day by Mr. Meredith, when the mystery was solved. A small edition of Virgil dropped out of his vest while escorting his lady, and a paper in it floated to the feet of Amarynth. It was in the handwriting of the unknown. This, then, was the secret; quick as lightning it flashed on her; but she affected not to see, and as Paul, in some confusion, picked up the

paper, she glanced at him. She could not but marvel at the polish of his appearance. A pure mind and a gentle spirit go far indeed toward creating a gentleman, and Paul was that now in form and manners, as well as in heart and soul. Mrs. Meredith was lost in thought all that evening. Next day, Mr. Meredith sent her a hurried message—his bed-ridden mother was dying; would she spare his services till all was over? She desired to speak with him. He came, all disorder and agitation. All her beauty could not for one moment now attract his notice. "She is all I have in the world to love," he said. How chill those words fell on Amarynth's heart. "Stay," she said, hesitating; "I will go with you." He bowed, but expressed neither joy nor rapture. The coach was called, and for the first time Mrs. Meredith beheld her mother-in-law. The poor woman was all but expiring when they arrived. Paul whispered to her as he supported her dying head; she raised her eyes to Amarynth. "Ah, madam," said she, "let me thank you for all your goodness; but oh, my boy! ah, you know not what a heart you have slighted!" The poor mother grew speechless soon after, and expired on her son's bosom. Amarynth fainted, and knew not how she was taken home. The lady and her husband did not meet till the funeral was over. He started to see her black attire. "You are too good, madam," he said. Did she wish he had said something more? After all, she must own, he observed the terms she had dictated somewhat too literally—her vanity, ever sensitive, began to be wounded. Things, however, went on much as usual; the flowers and the sonnets, though, had ceased to arrive, and Amarynth was fain to console herself with those she had. It was strange how they began to supersede Emerond's letters. I think it was a month or two after, that Mrs. Meredith looked into her own heart one day, and appalled at the discoveries she made there, rose up, went to her bureau, seized those famous letters, and burnt them every one, finishing the bonfire with the lock of hair, which fizzed off on the top, with a hiss of contempt and anger like the last revilings of a disappointed demon. Mrs. Abigail received a hint one day, accompanied by a new Paduasie sacque, and soon afterward a lock of sunny hair was suspended in a locket, and worn next Amarynth's heart. How the waiting-woman got it, was best known to herself; perhaps Mr. Peruke, who every day dressed Mr. Meredith's hair, could have informed the curious inquirer.

Who can date the growth of love? In the history of the passions, time is trampled on. We may experience that to-day, which yesterday we had deemed utterly impossible. The son of Venus, and the son of Nox and Erebus, were not more different than Amarynth's deceased passion, and the pure love which began so gradually to steal over her heart. The one had led to violence, anger, revenge—the other was exalted till it finally aspired to heaven itself, for there only might she love, or acknowledge her

love. That fatal contract, that oath—the death of the happiness she might have known. She would have ceased almost entirely to go out, but that those occasions were the only ones on which she could feast herself with the contemplation of her soul's idol. Be sure, Mrs. Abigail, who was a very shrewd gentlewoman, soon found out the bent of her lady's mind; she, unbidden, related anecdotes of Mr. Meredith, his goodness, his charities, his self-denials. "We servants, madam, think he is an angel who has fallen among us;" and the tears stood in the woman's eyes. Amarynth would hear this till she could bear no more; she would send her maid away, and, burying her face among the cushions of a couch, sob her heart out. Oh, child, grieving for thy neglected and disdained toy! who can relieve or pity thee?

But one day she was startled by a request from her husband—how she loved that word now, and would roll it over her tongue, and mutter it, as something precious and consoling—to have a private audience. Mrs. Abigail brought the message—she had been weeping. "What is the matter?" said her mistress, a thousand fond fears fluttering at her breast. "The poor gentleman—my dear master—looks so ill—fear—die;" and Mrs. Abigail burst into a very Niagara of tears. Amarynth wept for sympathy. "Let him come," she said, "directly." O Heaven, *he was altered!* and yet there was an unwonted pride in his whole bearing. She felt, rich woman and beauty as she was, her inferiority. "Madam," he said, strongly but sternly agitated, "I have come to—to ask a favor, and to make a confession." She started. "Though I loved you long, long ere you took me, a poor wretch from the streets; yet my love is no longer to be borne. If I stay here, I must go mad or die. Oh, madam, that contract!—think you I would have signed it, but for the poor mother who bore me, and who was perishing in my sight when you raised me from the depths of poverty? Forgive my love; I can not help it. I have come to request you will do me one parting favor—purchase me a commission. I would be a soldier, madam; my father was one." She looked at him; she never inquired if he had had a father even. "Yes!" he pursued; "a brave, though a poor one; but I came not to trouble you with my family remembrances. I can live, madam, on my pay; your allowance I request permission to relinquish." "Wherefore?" Thus much, though choked, she contrived to say. "I can not longer subsist on your bounty. I have made much progress, madam, of late. Your wit and accomplishments stimulated me. I can not vie with your learning; but now I may pass unnoticed for ignorance. Forgive me, madam, and sometimes deign to cast a thought on him who adores you, silent and hopeless." Oh, how she longed to cast herself at his feet, to own her deep, her unalterable love—to bid him live for her—to—the freezing thought of her oath—bring perjury on both their souls! Horror! She could not speak;

he mistook her silence for anger, and drooped his head. "Go," she murmured; "I will write to you." He said no more, and withdrew. The commission was purchased, and sent him with this note:

"Your wish is accomplished, but I beseech you retain the income, which you have a legal right to. I need not say be brave; but bravery exists when human hope perishes. Happy are you in the sex which gives you that resource."

"AMARYNTH."

He departed the day after he received this. Here is his final farewell:

"Madam—Ask me not to comply with your request, lest, it being yours, I weakly acquiesce. A legal right? Let me trample on that, as I have on dearer rights which the law itself bestowed on me, when I became your husband. Fear not, madam, my oath is inviolate."

"MEREDITH."

Oh! bitterness of bondage, in which the next two years passed by. She heard of him, though. In 1780 a war commenced against Holland. Paul signalized himself; he gained the most rapid promotion. At last she saw him gazetted—a colonelcy. Alas! what cause was there for exultation. Now he was free of her—independent. She had long since discontinued to go out into public. She felt daily growing weaker. At last the thought occurred that if she died, some one must inherit her wealth. Strange not to have thought of it before. She sent for Mr. Jeffries, and communicating to him her love and wretchedness, conjured him to make her will. The old lawyer asked many questions; he seemed actually to gloat over Mrs. Meredith's distress. "He is coming home," he said, "I saw the arrival of the transport announced."

"Home! what home had he?" she bitterly asked. "At any rate he might be in time to see her die."

"Pooh! pooh!" said Mr. Jeffries, in the most unfeeling manner; "you'll live long enough, I warrant, to make the man's heart ache worse than it does now."

Ten days after that will was made, Mr. Jeffries drove up to Amarynth's door. An officer was with him. The servants crowded round, for they had recognized their master. They entered the library; Amarynth started up. She, too, knew that beloved face, brown though it was, and scarred on the brow with a soldier's trophy. Oath, or no oath, her impulse was obeyed; her arms were round his neck; her tears wetted his manly cheeks; she called him—husband.

He pressed her to his heart; words failed them both, they were awakening after that indulgence of suppressed love, to the fatal knowledge of the vow which intervened between them.

"One farewell," cried Paul, "and I go."

"Fiddlestick!" said Mr. Jeffries, flinging his brown tie right into the middle of the floor, and capering about with a shiny bald head. "I,

stupid prosy old lawyer though I be, foresaw this hour when I was manufacturing that rigmarole of a deed. You heard me read it once; hear it again. I just introduced a clause which will set all to rights." The oath was registered with a saving clause, that if both parties mutually agreed to hereafter renounce the conditions of the deed, and become man and wife actually, instead of a mere legal fiction, the said agreement was, by mutual consent, to be null and void.

Poor Mr. Jeffries, he was not heard to the end of his preamble. Locked in each other's arms, Paul and Amarynth, now lavishing on one another the dear titles of wife and husband, forgot any presence but their own, and, midst mutual forgiveness and confessions, and utterance of affection, Mr. Jeffries, quietly picking up his periwig, went down to announce to the assembled servants that their lady desired them to drink the colonel's health in a gallon bowl of punch.

It would have done you good to have heard the shout. They heard it not. Wrapped in one another's happiness, they asked none from the outer world. Theirs existed in their own exquisite contentment.

I have no more to relate. I have trespassed on my readers' patience too much as it is. They have long since been dust and ashes, but the son of their son, Paul Meredith, Esq., lives on his own estate in —shire, and perpetuates the virtues, the noble simplicity, the unostentatious charities of his progenitor.

MY SON, SIR!

WHEN first I laid eyes on James Caracole, Junior, he was veiled in a mist of the finest and whitest lace. Vapor seemed to have taken a pattern on purpose to enfold him; in a word, he was in his swaddling clothes. On that memorable occasion I bestowed upon him, in my sponsorial capacity, his name of James, adding thereto the more substantial gift of a richly-chased goblet of silver gilt, with his initials elaborately engraved on the bowl. Though it was the custom, and came in the common course of things, I often thought afterward that there was something fatally symbolical in this present of mine to my godson. A foreshadowing, as it were, of those twin cups which he was doomed to quaff to the very dregs—the cup of luxury and the cup of woe.

James Caracole, Junior, entered the world under the most favorable auspices. Life first shone upon him through lace curtains. His inert form first reposed in down and scented linen, and his earliest fall in life went no further than a velvet carpet of flowery design. He breathed the air of Fifth Avenue, and with it all the luxurious tastes secretly held in solution in the atmosphere of that enchanted region. He knew what it was to whirl through the town in a resplendent coach long before he was able to use the means of locomotion that nature had bestowed on him. He had ostrich plumes